

# ENCHANTED LIVING

ISSUE NO. 62 SPRING 2023

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— THE YEAR OF THE WITCH —  
*The* **SPRING WITCH** *Issue*

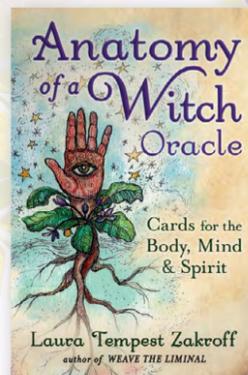
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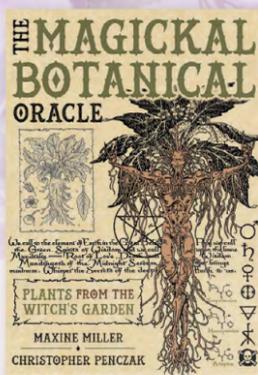
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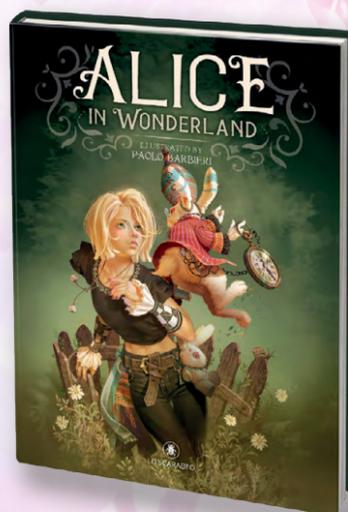
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A Masque for the Four Seasons (1909), by Walter Crane



We knew that our readers loved witches, but when our Vintage Witch issue from last autumn sold out before the season even ended—a first for *any* of our issues, even the most beloved—we realized just how much. And so we decided to do something we’ve never done before: devote a whole year to witches, season by glorious season. As you well know, as much as we love Halloween—and all those October witches with red and yellow leaves swirling around them—witchiness does not begin or end there. The sort of lovely everyday witchiness we celebrate, and possibly even encourage, means attending to nature and the seasons and the phases of the moon all year round.

So here is spring!

In this, our first issue of this Year of the Witch, we wanted to celebrate springtime and new growth and renewal and flowers and bright green foliage, and we wanted a sparkling and frothy witch right on the cover—a witch who wears pink and wanders the fields, who crafts bright floral besoms and celebrates Ostara with flowers and cake, who plunges her hands in the dirt and helps bring the earth back to life, and who fills her home with herbs and plants.

And because not all enchantresses wear pointy hats, we’ve filled these pages with magical ladies like Walter Crane’s embodiments of the seasons (above); the bad-luck-having, spring-bringing Persephone; the Fates and the Graces; cover photographer Savannah Seeger’s fae creatures, bedecked in antlers and elaborate headdresses; and Waterhouse’s Flora and the Zephyrs, as well as the ultra-mystical Circe, who, as Kirsty Stonell Walker describes, is “untroubled by any threat offered by the world of men as she can swiftly dispense with them.”

After all, as Theodora Goss points out in her first of four seasonal meditations, “being a witch isn’t just about knowing how to find significance in a deck of illustrated cards or how to heal a broken heart with a magical potion, or how to weave a spell out of spiderwebs and morning dew. It involves being in conversation with the whole of creation.” In her “Spell for a Celebration of Life,” poet Allison Church urges us to “Decant a song from a stream / of clouds, a melody of stars spilling / through a stained glass window. / Dance in the living room; dance / while branches sway and leaves twirl / and the wind carries you away.”

We hope you enter—and enjoy!—a similar celebration in all the pages that follow.

Love,

*Carolyn Turgeon*

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# ENCHANTED LIVING

VOLUME 62 | Spring 2023

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# CONTRIBUTORS

*Enchanted Living's Spring Witch Issue*



**Allison Church**

Allison Church is a poet, freelance writer, and erstwhile teacher. Many students called her “Leaf Teacher” because she spoke to them about the plants on the perimeter of the playground, mixing make-believe potions of dandelion and plantain. She studied forest and field as a child, Romanticism during college, and Druidry as an adult, always inspired by the magic of the natural world. “Each season has its beauty,” she says. “Spring is known for the trefoil or shamrock, a wonderful symbol of triplicity. The vociferous wind always speaks to me, but the spring wind sings and dances.” You can find her poetry in *The Hopper*, an environmental literary magazine.



**Kinuko Y. Craft**

Legendary artist Kinuko Y. Craft has been inducted into the Illustrator Hall of Fame and has received more than a hundred awards for her richly detailed images. Her work ranges from fairy tales and folklore to Shakespeare, historical themes, and modern literature. As a master storyteller, she transports viewers to realms of myth, mysticism, and magic with her paintings, drawn from the world’s greatest stories. Her art can be found in prominent private and public collections such as the Smithsonian, the Museum of American Illustration, and the National Geographic Society. “Painting is my word,” she says, “my language, my poetry, my therapist, my food. It is who I am.”



**Stephanie Law**

Stephanie Law’s images trace the boundary between dream and reality. She delves into the pictorial language of allegory, explores mythology in new contexts, chases tiny worlds of wonder from an insect’s viewpoint, and highlights the beauty of growth and decay found in nature. Growing up in California, Law has been surrounded by the wealth of natural inspiration all around her. The twisting boughs of live oaks from the hills near her home insinuate themselves into her paintings. The chaos of nature’s wild growth and, conversely, the beauty of decay echo in the textures and fractal patterns of her work.



**Suzanne Lemmon**

Suzanne Lemmon is a self-taught artist from Western Pennsylvania who’s inspired by nature, fantasy, fairy tales, enchanted forests, witch legends, and lore. In her Etsy store, the Witch and the Goddess, she sells unique handmade pieces that bring the outdoors inside, featuring dried florals, preserved greenery, and foraged elements. She loves creating art and tools of the craft to make others feel happy and magical and connect to their inner witch. She lives in a magical forest with her husband of twenty-seven years and the two youngest of their four children. They also have two boxer dogs, three cats, two Nigerian Dwarf goats, and more than sixty houseplants.



**Joy Marshall**

Joy Marshall is a fantasy photographer, writer, and witchy woman. She lives in Massachusetts with her two cats, boyfriend, and a bunch of plants. She enjoys reading any fantasy book she can find, playing RPG video games, hiking, and gardening. While she practices and studies a few witch paths, she feels most connected to that of the green witch. She loves nature and plants and has always had a natural inclination toward herbalism and gardening. As a visual artist, she loves creating green witch scenes filled with dried herbs, stacks of books, and the illusion of magic—as she does in her lush photography for this issue, starting on page 56.



**Gina Spriggs**

Gina Spriggs is an author, master tarotologist, holistic intuitive, mentor, and owner of Curio, Craft & Conjure, in Charlotte, North Carolina. In each role, she helps heart-centered, free thinkers discover their own magick by helping them align their intuition, power, and purpose. Her program, *The Art of Intuitive Tarot*, based on her best-selling book *The Intuitive Tarot Workbook*, has a global cult following and has helped more than 34,000 people quickly and easily learn tarot. “Spring supports a witch’s reset button,” she says, referring to her piece in this issue. “Spring supports our birthright of new beginnings.”

## WAYS TO SHOW A WITCH YOUR LOVE

by Susann Cokal

- ✿ Crystals are always appropriate, especially in natural stone. All colors are welcome. Give diamonds if you must, but we like cracks and rough edges.
- ✿ Help her groom her familiar. Brushing fur is a great act of love. Even greater: If you are very brave and very, *very* in love, trim its claws.
- ✿ Witches adore antique mourning jewelry, especially when it holds tokens from the long-departed loved one. Victorian hairwork weaves this world together with the next, with your witch’s heart in the center of the web.
- ✿ Plant a pansy (in French, a *pensée*) to show him he’s in your thoughts. Extra love for a black one.
- ✿ If you’re feeling creative, paint, photograph, or embroider your witch a personal set of tarot cards. You might be tempted to depict the two of you as the Lovers, but it could be an even more profound declaration to scatter your witch’s portrait among all the major arcana. Even the Fool and the Hanged Man have positive meanings—as long as you don’t present them upside down.
- ✿ Black lace is a classic gift, representing the veil between ordinary humans and the spirit world. If your witch prefers solids, think silk chiffon or velvet.
- ✿ Witches never get tired of books. Whatever their specialty may be, there is a book to please your witch. You know they’ll love a fat tome about spell casting or a slim volume on poisons, but have you thought of a novel? Witches are rich in imagination, and fiction helps them stretch their powers into other times, other minds.
- ✿ There’s nothing wrong with a hug or a kiss either. A loving touch is always magical.
- ✿ So is a handwritten letter. Let the ink be your heart’s blood, dripping emotion onto the page. It’s your own incantation and charm.
- ✿ It may sound old-fashioned, but the blood of an enemy is appropriate for any occasion. What will she do with it? Maybe you don’t want to know *everything* about your witch yet.



OUR COVER STORY

SIMPLY SAVANNAH ART

*Witches, Goddesses,  
and the Fae*

BY CAROLYN TURGEON

Model: Nala Botoma Diallo @nalabala4  
Designer: Glimmerwood @glimmerwood  
MUA: @muanessa

Savannah Seeger, a.k.a. Simply Savannah Art, has long filled our social media feeds with dazzling, otherworldly visions of witches, goddesses, and fairies of every color, with giant shimmering wings and headdresses and swirling gowns, long tresses in shades of green and blue and lavender. We loved her frothy springtime enchantress in joyful hues of mint green and filmy pink—and thought she might be the perfect way to begin our “year of the witch,” along with her other visions shared on these pages. Below, we ask Seeger about her art.

**Enchanted Living: Can you tell us a bit about yourself?**

**Savannah Seeger:** I'm a twenty-six-year-old full-time travel fantasy photographer and metalhead. I live in Wisconsin with my dog Ludo but travel as often as I can to magical destinations. I started this photo journey in 2017, trying to make a living from seeing the world and photographing mystical beings at the same time. I've been to twelve countries so far and plan to keep the number growing. If I'm not on shoots or in nature, I am painting, at a concert, staring at my sword collection, or crafting wardrobe for my next shoot.

**EL: Can you talk about our cover image and the inspiration for this springtime witch?**

**SS:** Glimmerwood, a designer, sent me images of this beautiful set she created, and I was so taken aback by its originality and beauty. I wanted to do this piece as much justice as I could, and Nala was the perfect fit to bring it to life! When I saw the colors of the gown I knew it had to have some pastel pumpkins to go along with it. So I painted those up, wagoned the pink pumpkins into the woods, got Nala into wardrobe ... and the springtime witch was born.

**EL: Do you have any thoughts about witches generally?**

**SS:** My mom would always tell me stories of my great-great-grandmother Lena who came from the Black Forest of Germany. She'd make herbal mixtures in a tree stump under the full moon. Lena would then take these mixtures and give them to my great grandpa (her grandson) to help him heal from whatever ailment he had at the time. This story I was told made a big impact on my young mind and has carried over to my adult life and into my own spirituality. I know a lot of people say it, but it truly does run in my blood.

**EL: Your use of color is so striking and positive and bright. Can you talk about that?**

**SS:** Thank you! As far as the color in my artwork, I really want to make the model and the earth surrounding them one cohesive piece. If the color in the raw image doesn't mesh well, I fall into my fantasy world and create color patterns that bring the fantasy world in my head to the viewer. My hope is that the viewer will make up their own narrative and escape the mundane day to day.

**EL: And what inspires you?**

**SS:** My biggest inspiration would have to be Brian Froud. If not for his creature creations in the film *Labyrinth* (a film I played on repeat as a child) I probably wouldn't be here in this wonderful magazine. I can also relate to his use of nature in his works. I went as far as traveling to Wistman's Wood in England, where he draws a lot of his inspiration, to do my very own photo shoot. (It's the image of the woman standing next to the mossy rock.) The trees and moss there are not of this world, and when I made the connection from reading his books, I knew I had to go there too. I also made sure to put his art all over my home to always feed into my own creativity.

And then shows like *Game of Thrones* and *House of the Dragon*—with their stunning array of costume pieces and armor—always stun me with inspiration. Heavy metal tracks from the 1980s and '90s with fantasy-infused lyrics always make me want to grab my camera right away and make magic. I pull inspiration from many sources!

**EL: Would you call these images witchy, goddess, fairy-esque, or a combination of those?**

**SS:** I would consider these images to be a combination of all of these. I feel you can't have one without the other. Witches

respect the fae and the goddess within.

**EL: Can you talk about the diversity of your images?**

**SS:** When someone looks at my images, the first thing that I want to come to their mind is, “Wow, that could be me.” I never want anyone to feel like they cannot be a part of the fantasy realm or that fantasy has exclusions. No one left behind. Having diversity in my work means so much to me for this particular reason.

**EL: Any stories you'd like to share?**

**SS:** There are *so* many stories that I could share about my adventures, my photo shoots: Breaking my ankle in California carrying a silicone mermaid tail down the stairs to the beach and still finishing the shoot. Photographing fairies in the mossy rocks of Iceland in a rainstorm. Stumbling across castles in Ireland with a model and getting stunning shots. Getting lost in the jungle in Guam hiking miles and miles to a cave with a camera bag and mermaid tail in hand. Taking road trips with friends and shooting in the fjords of Norway. Driving the autobahn in Germany and doing sunrise photo shoots in Hamburg. Wandering the Highlands of Scotland, jumping fences with a local model to take photos by a Highland Coo. I could go on forever! I'm so grateful for the memories.

**EL: And then, do you have any favorite springtime rituals?**

**SS:** In Wisconsin as soon as springtime hits and the long winter is finally over, I am back in the woods going on long adventures with my dog Ludo. I consider this my ritual, getting back in touch with nature again. It's like catching up with a friend you haven't seen in a while.



See more of *Simply Savannah Art* at [simplysavannahphotography.com](http://simplysavannahphotography.com) or on Instagram @[simplysavannahart](https://www.instagram.com/simplysavannahart).

Model: Morgin Riley  
Headpiece: Miss G Designs  
@missgdesigns



*Model: Serenna @thefairyhollow  
Designer: Firefly Path @fireflypath*



*Model: Tathariel @tathariel  
Designer: Firefly Path*



*Model and Designer:  
Creature of Habit @creaturehabits*



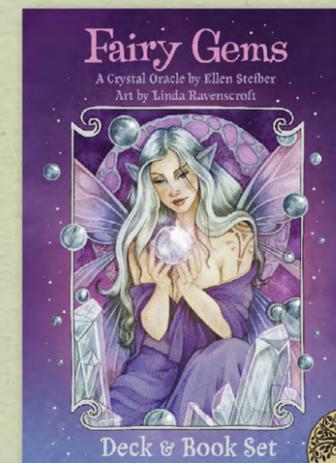
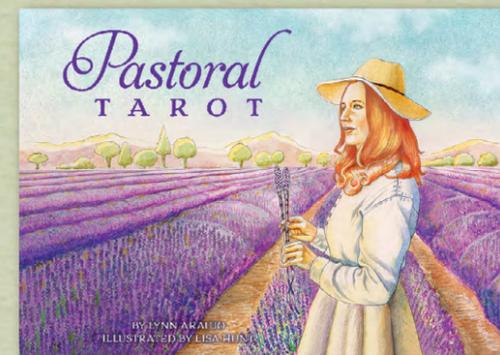
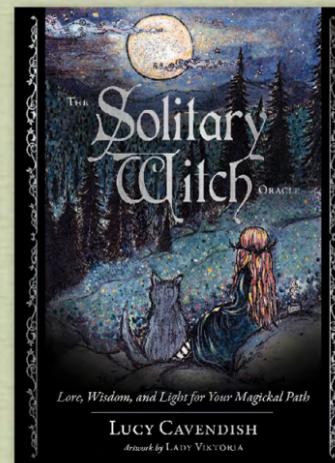
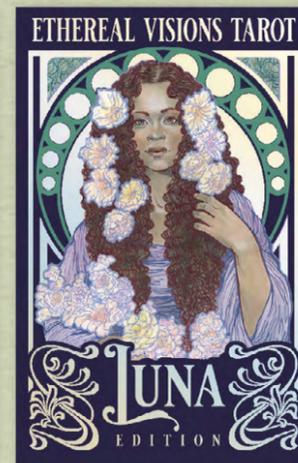
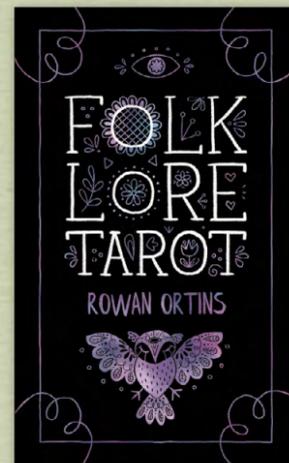
*Model: Morgin Riley  
Headpiece: Miss G Designs  
Designer: Firefly Path*

Model: Bernice Ayite-Atayi @bernice\_ayite  
 Headpiece: Miss G Designs  
 Designer: Crystal Ann Designs  
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Photograph by Ellen Tyn



## THE WITCH IN SPRING by Theodora Goss

**W**ake up, wake up! say the first snowdrops. Their green stems poke through the snow, and their delicate hanging bells quiver in the cold air. All winter, you have been curled into yourself, like a fox in its den. You have drunk teas or tisanes, wrapped blankets around yourself, written in your journal—because winter is all about inner journeys,

about dreams and imagination and that mysterious central core of ourselves that we call the soul. You have been curled up around that core, doing the work of being. But now it's spring, and it's time to wake up again. The world is just outside your kitchen door, waiting for you.

The first step is simply to walk outside and breathe deeply.

It is cold, and your exhalation is a cloud of visible vapor, like ectoplasm. But the sunlight is warm on your face, and look—suddenly the crocuses are blooming, purple and yellow and blue. The sky is blue as well, rather than the gray of winter, and you feel a surge of energy as though spring itself is rushing through you, like electricity through a wire. It's time to turn on, light up, start going about your witchy business and changing the world.

First on the agenda is spring cleaning. You can't start sweeping the sky before you sweep out your own house. Rouse your broom, which has been hibernating all winter. What do brooms dream about? Perhaps the same thing as the trees, whose buds are just starting to blossom. Of course you could ask—talking to inanimate objects is Witchcraft 101, and listening to them, really listening, is 102. It's easier than communicating with animals, which means learning to convey meaning through scent, sight, and gesture as well as sound. Bee language, for example, is mostly dancing, somewhere between ballet and modern. Witches are multilingual—you have to be, to speak with the universe.

Sweep out the house—brooms, even witches' brooms, are as useful for that as for flying. Sweep out all the dust, all the failures and disappointments of the last year. (Inevitably there will be some.) Wash the windows and mirrors so you can see clearly. For witches, mirrors are also windows—who knows what you will see through them? Make sure your workshop is tidy for the new year. Do you have enough tail of newt (ethically sourced from the newts themselves)? Is your jar of liquid moonlight running low? What about the crystalized violet petals you use to scent your lotions? Are there any cracks in the globe of rose quartz you consult to foretell the future (well, the *possible* future)? Alternatively, if you use a silver basin and fountain-pen ink, do you need to buy a new jar of Midnight Blue or Viridian Green (your favorite colors)? If you need to, order supplies from the catalog: lovers' tears, dragon breath, aniseed (although that's for making cookies). While you're at it, order a new charger cable for your laptop, because you need to be ready for Zoom meetings with your fellow witches. Of course it's nice to meet in person, but your friends are scattered all over the world, from Singapore to Sydney to St. Louis. Wash out your cauldron—or if you don't have one, your pots and pans. They're really just as useful.

Don't be surprised when your familiar suddenly pops in. "Oh, there you are," you'll say to Tobias, or Cordelia, or whatever it has chosen to call itself. Familiars, as you know, get to choose their own names and shapes. Yours could be a cat (so traditional), an owl, an iguana—or if you're adventurous, maybe even a snake. The one thing familiars always have in common, as witches know, is that they're helpful and annoying in equal measure. Tobias the beagle won't help you with spells unless he gets walked twice a day, and he has a habit of reciting favorite bits from Shakespeare in the middle of the night. Cordelia the tortoiseshell tabby claims the most comfortable armchair for her own and refuses to eat generic cat food even though you tell her you're not made of money. How much does she think witches make, anyway?

Once your house is in order, with the clean white sheets of the resident ghosts hanging on the line, smelling of lavender fabric softener, it's time to tend to your garden. By now the crab apples are blooming—their small, sour fruit will be perfect for jam and crab apple dolls, just in case you need to curse anyone in autumn. The irises are poking their pointed spears out of the ground. "Bonjour," you say to some of them, "Konnichiwa" to others. (Irises always speak either French or Japanese.) Check on the herb garden to make sure it's doing well, that the thyme has survived under the snow. You'll need it for any spells involving time because, as you know, the universe appreciates puns and metaphors. Make sure calendula and valerian haven't taken over your garden, although they're so useful for making tinctures, especially for inflammation or insomnia. Cut back any dead canes on the wild roses that are so good for face creams or tonics for when your customers have an uncomfortable cough. Make sure to sow basil seeds—you'll need the basil later for your famous pasta sauce.

And what about the larger garden out there? Check on Mother Nature's garden—the forest and fields, the rivers and even the ocean. How are they doing? After all, being a witch isn't just about knowing how to find significance in a deck of illustrated cards or how to heal a broken heart with a magical potion (alternatively, a cup of coffee and a good, long talk), or how to weave a spell out of spiderwebs and morning dew. It involves being in conversation with the whole of creation. So when you have time, ask the frogs in the pond how many flies they're catching this year. Ask the migrating ducks how their journey went, where they came from and where they're going. Ask the mountains to sing you their favorite songs. Wave to the clouds, and watch as they wave back with puffy white hands. As you walk, pick up trash by the side of the path, recycle—that's a kind of magic as well, a transformation. There you are, the witch in spring, walking through the woods with Archimedes or Jellylorum or Bob the Iguana on your shoulder.

All winter, you traveled on an inner journey, but it's time to make some outer journeys now, whether to Paris or the post office. It's time to say hello to your neighbors, whether they are the bats that come chittering around your attic at night, the elderly couple (a retired school teacher and an army veteran) next door, or the barista at your local coffee shop, who also makes magical potions. It's time to start the work of doing.

*Wake up, wake up.* It's a big world out there. Let's start making some magic.



*Theodora Goss is the World Fantasy, Locus, and Mythopoeic Award-winning author or editor of nine books, including the short-story and poetry collection Snow White Learns Witchcraft and her trilogy that began with The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter and ended with The Sinister Mystery of the Mesmerizing Girl. Follow her on Instagram @theodoragoss.*

*Follow artist Ellen Tyn on Instagram @liskin\_dol.*

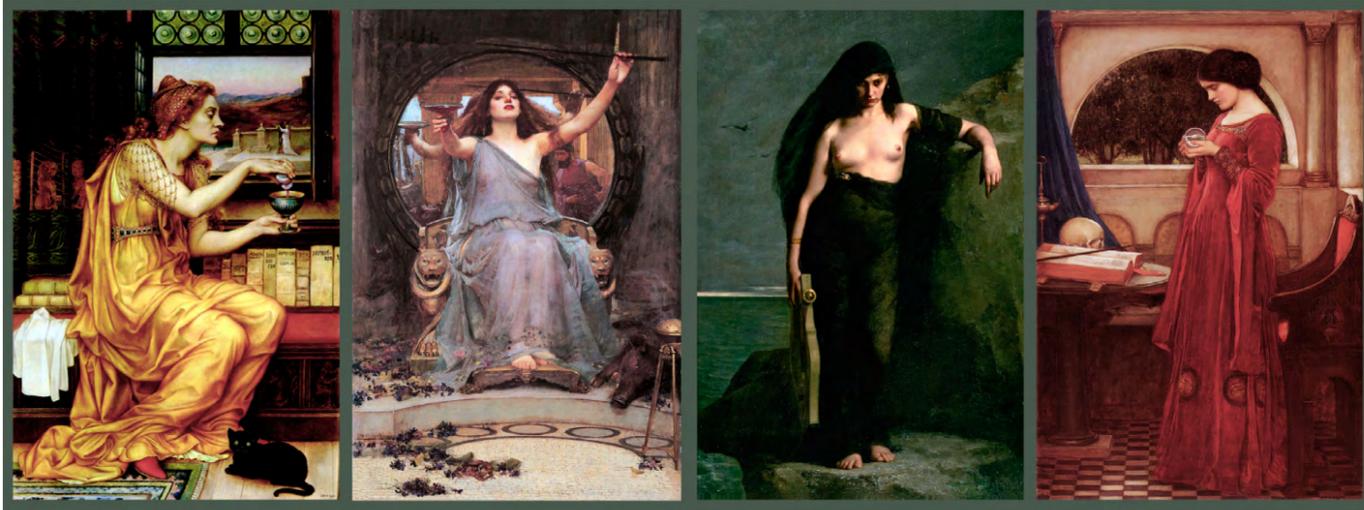


Image Courtesy Art Renewal Center

*Flora and the Zephyrs* (1898),  
by John William Waterhouse

# AT HOME: GREEN WITCH STYLE

by Rona Berg



**T**he green witch is an herbalist, a healer, a woman whose actions and aesthetic are inspired by nature. Spring is high season for green witchery, when the intoxicating scent of garrigue—wild herbs warmed by the sun—is in the air. And any time is a good time for a green witch to take inspiration from the outside world and bring it indoors.

In her book *The Green Witch*, Arin Murphy-Hiscock writes, “Most people on the green witch path have a strong connection to their surroundings. They instinctively seek to create an environment that supports harmony, communication, and a natural flow of energy.” And let’s not forget beauty, which is essential when it comes to creating a tranquil and joyous space.

Does this sound like you? Maybe you are a green witch after all!

## Pre-Raphaelite Sorceresses

These beautiful tiles from William Morris Tile, above, feature Pre-Raphaelite sorceresses from the work of Evelyn De Morgan, John William Waterhouse, and Charles Mengin. As these images work their magic, they transform any room into a dreamy place, whether they are on the kitchen backsplash, in the bathroom, or near the fireplace mantel. [williammorristile.com](http://williammorristile.com)

## Just a Little Green

The plush leaf pillows and blankets from Green Philosophy Co. are intended to bring a little bit of the outdoors in. One day the owner went searching for plant-themed novelty decor items and couldn’t find them. So she decided to create her own based on the idea that nature-inspired things put us in a better mood by putting us in touch with the natural world. [greenphilosophy.co](http://greenphilosophy.co)

## Found & Foraged

If you are really lucky, you’ll be able to score a flour-sack kitchen towel at a yard sale, but don’t count on it! These beauties are hard to come by. That’s why we are excited to share the Found & Foraged Kitchen Towel, now available in our own *Enchanted Living* store. It’s inspired by foraging, with a pattern of sweet clover, wild leeks, horsetail shoots, and ostrich ferns. Highly absorbent, flour sack towels are also highly durable! They are made in the U.S., screen-printed on the softest cotton with eco-friendly inks. [enchantedlivingmag.com](http://enchantedlivingmag.com)

## Swept Away

The lovely besom on the facing page comes from Blue Cypress Botanicals, who we featured in our Autumn Vintage Witch issue. A besom is a broom made from a bundle of twigs that are artfully tied to a pole. Besoms are made at the Wabi Sabi Broom Shop at the Blue Cypress School of Holism, which also includes an apothecary, in the beautiful Texas Hill Country. [bluecypresschool.org/brooms](http://bluecypresschool.org/brooms)

## Faux Bois

Virginia-based artist Diane Husson, founder of Faux Bois Furniture, creates beautiful pieces that take inspiration from nature. *Faux bois*, which means “false wood” in French, testifies to her creative approach to materials. Her tables and benches, made from steel and high-tech cement mixes, feature woven “twig” bases and are perfect for indoor hallways and outdoor gardens. They are romantic and beautiful and will last forever! [fauxboisfurniture.com](http://fauxboisfurniture.com)

## We Are Growing!

The elaborate mugs emblazoned with herbs, crescent moons, and other symbols of the natural world at the Mystical Crow are unique and utterly beautiful. The artist is a painter and potter and also sells apothecary items and more. [mysticalcrow.com](http://mysticalcrow.com)



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# VERONICA VARLOW

## *Life of a Love Witch*

These words are a sign. Taking the time out for yourself at this very moment is a choice, and here you are. This, my enchanted darling, is the moment in your story where the snowy owl comes sweeping down from the sky, carrying a cream-colored envelope in its claws. Your name is scrawled upon the envelope in bold, black script. You do what you have always known you would do if this ever happened: You reach out your hand and accept the magical letter.

Welcome! You are cordially invited to explore the secrets of the seasons at the Varlow Academy of Magick on the pages of each edition of *Enchanted Living* for 2023! I am honored to be your witchy guide as we dive into the mysteries, lore, and tradition of each season. Get ready to amplify your personal power with seasonally crafted initiations. The time has come for you to step into your own seasonal sorcery!

### **Before We Begin: What Is a Witch?**

Words are wands, and for me, I name that magick part of me Witch. I want to briefly address what that word means, because it has been misunderstood and maligned in the past. For me, I believe that witches are world builders. The idea of witchery is to imagine your beautiful life and then bring it into existence with the help of nature, the ancestors, and your spirit guides and guardians. In Spectaculus Witchcraft and at the Varlow Academy of Magick, we say, “See it. Be it. So be it!” after each spell we cast. These magick words mean: See yourself in your imagination doing your dream, then take action steps to become that dream, and with the help of nature, the spirit guides and guardians, may that dream be created into reality! In case you were wondering, you do not have to give up your chosen religion or practice to be a witch. I’ve known many a Jewish witch, Buddhist witch, Christian witch, and so on.

Oftentimes as we grow up, the world causes us to doubt our magick, and many people give it up, but not you! Not me! You are here, reading these words right now for a reason, and my mission is to be present here as a friend to you in each issue and remind you of the magick that you have always possessed inside of you. Have no doubt, it is there. It has always been there and always will be. Sometimes, with the practice of rituals and spells,

you will remember more of the deeper, hidden, beautiful magick within you. Without further ado, let’s begin our seasonal, magical adventures together!

### **Welcome to the Season Where the Song Returns**

Take my hand. I have woven a crown of daisies for both of us. There is no need for shoes here in this land, for after a long winter, it will revive your spirit to put your bare soles on the ground. When we celebrate and connect with each season of nature on our beautiful planet, we forge a deeper connection to the earth that we live on. This, in turn, makes us feel a greater responsibility for protecting her and, ultimately, makes this a better place for all of us to live.

### **THE BOHEMIAN MAGICK SPRING TRADITIONS**

Springtime, as a season, is a powerful new beginning where the world is blooming once again. It is a perfect time for love magick, beauty magick, and planting the seeds for your own gorgeous future. So here are some of my spring witch spells that are rooted in Bohemian Magick tradition and given a dash of creative spice from me!

- Enchantment Spell: “Baby birds grow up to sing their first song in your hair!” My Grandma Helen taught me at a young age to leave some strands of

my hair out for the birds to build their nests. Simply brush your hair, take a few of the strands from the brush, go outdoors, and place a small rock to hold one side of the strands to keep them from blowing away in the wind. Place near a feeder or where birds gather. By this point in my life, many generations of baby birds have sung their first songs nestled in my hair, and I feel that enchantment swirl around me! Now you can bring this tradition from my Ancestors to you and your family!

- Springtime Lore: If you walk in the forest with bare feet and step on calendula petals, you will learn the language of the birds. Calendula is also known as the flowering common marigold, which you would recognize by their sunny yellow and orange petals that spark springtime joy!
- The Adventure of March 4th: My Grandma Helen loved words and language, so she proclaimed that March 4th was a day to “march forth” into something you’ve never done before!
- To Dream of Your Future Love: Find a small piece of fallen birch bark. (Don’t take it from a living tree.) With a pair of scissors, cut the bark into the shape of a small heart. Now press the heart-shaped bark into a large locket; scroll it into a small bottle necklace; or make a small hole at the heart’s top center,

attach a jump ring, and wear it on a silk cord or ribbon. Wear this talisman beginning on the first new moon after the spring equinox to the first full moon of the spring. On the evening of the full moon, bury the heart-shaped birch in the ground. Chant three times: “I plant the seed with this enchanted tree, to reveal the name of my love to me.” Then close the chant with the words: “See it. Be it. So be it.” By the summer solstice, you will have received a sign about your future love!

- **To Enchant Your Beauty for a Year:** At the break of dawn on Beltane (May 1), place the palms of your hands in the grass to collect the morning dew. Dab the dew across your face, your neck, and over your heart. Then stand tall, hold your palms to the sky, and confidently say three times, “Beauty blossoms eternal and divine, enchanted and royal, I claim it as mine.” Then say boldly, “See it. Be it. So be it.” Clasp your hands together over your head in one loud clap. The spell is cast!
- **Protection Magick:** Did you know that the phrase “knock on wood” comes from the old magick lore that if you needed help or protection in the forest, you would knock on a tree and the spirits of the forest (known as the dryads) would arrive to protect you?

### YOUR SPRING WITCH INITIATION RITUAL

#### You will need:

- 9 bay leaves
- 9 spring flowers
- A fine point black marker
- 9 tealights
- A cauldron or a fireproof bowl
- A book of matches
- Spoon
- 3 spoonfuls of earth from where you live

Perform this ritual between the new moon and the full moon in March, April, or May.

This is an outside ritual, but if that is not possible, perform it indoors and open your windows so that the beautiful springtime breeze will find you!

This initiation includes candles and open flame, so heed all fire-safety rules and work with care!

On the day that you are doing this ritual, make sure that you take off your shoes and put your bare feet upon the earth. Even if you plan to do this ritual inside, take a moment prior to the ritual to do this, because you want to connect with the powerful energy of Mother Earth and bring that magick to this initiation with you.

Dress up for your ritual in a way that feels appropriate to you. Gather your cauldron, spoon, spring flowers, bay leaves, marker, tealights, and matches and find a place where you can spread out and be undisturbed.

- Imagine the diameter of a six-foot circle. Make sure that you have cleared space around you for this circle. When I do solo magick rituals, I imagine a glowing purple six-foot circle on the ground. See the circle in your mind. Use your pointer finger as a wand and walk clockwise outside the circle, using your finger to point out where you are drawing it. As you move around the circle, say, “This magick circle is my sacred space, I am protected in this place.”
- Stand in the center of the circle. Hold your palms up to the sky and call in your spirit guides and ancestors to help you in this process. An example would be: “Mother Nature, Beloved Spirit Guides and Ancestors, please stand at my side to help manifest my spell into reality. Thank you for being here with me.” Whatever you decide to say, speak it aloud from your heart. (My definition of ancestors includes both blood relations and also anyone who helped color your life and raise you. So your ancestors could include your great-grandmother, your sweet great aunt Edith, and also someone who has influenced you greatly, like David Bowie, Martin Luther King Jr., Frida Kahlo, or Mr. Rogers. Call on them for guidance. Make your magick personal.)
- Now sit down in the center of your

circle. Place the nine bay leaves and the marker in front of you. Say aloud: “How do I want to bloom this year? In what nine ways do I wish to bloom?”

Allow yourself time to think about this. Imagine you are seeding your beautiful garden of life right now. You can say personality traits, goals, dreams, and ways of being. Keep each “seed” to three words or less. It just has to make sense to you. Examples might be: My book. Community. Adventure. Playtime. New witch friends. Bike riding. Songs.

- With the marker, write a different word wish on each of the nine bay leaves.
- Place the bay leaves evenly around you in a full circle. Make sure there are about thirty-six inches between your body and each bay leaf in the circle. (If you are outside and it is windy, place a small stone or stick to hold down your leaves from blowing in the wind.)
- Place eight tealights around the circle. Place one tealight in between each set of bay leaves with room between them, so that bay leaves and tealights alternate in a full circle around you.
- Take the spoon and scoop three spoonfuls of earth inside the center cauldron or fireproof bowl in front of you. Place the ninth tealight on top of the dirt inside the cauldron.
- Face east. East is the springtime, the element of air and new beginnings. Begin with the first bay-leaf wish closest to the east. Read the wish on it and imagine what your wish looks like clearly in your mind until you feel it! Example: For my seed wish, “my book,” I imagine writing in the sunshine by the river in the Catskill Mountains. I imagine writing at this place because it inspires me and it is a real place that I am familiar with. You see, attaching your dreams to anchors in reality (like physical places that you know) makes a really strong spell! Then I imagine the euphoria of seeing my book finished, picturing the cover with my name on it. Then I imagine signing my books at a bookstore with a crowd. Now I am *feeling it!*

Our feelings can’t decipher between reality or imagination. If you indulge a full daydream, your heart and mind will feel it as if it is actually happening! Do this process with each bay-leaf wish and then lay one spring flower upon each wish as a blessing for it to flower and bloom.

- Light your center cauldron tealight with a match. Then take a second match, light it from the cauldron tealight, and then light the tealight in the direction of east in your circle. Continue by lighting the tealights one wick to another moving clockwise. (If a candle goes out in the wind, take an unlit match, light it from your cauldron center flame, and then relight the wick that went out.)
- You are surrounded by a lit circle of tealights, bay-leaf wishes, and spring flowers. Your center cauldron is lit in the middle with you. Say this chant three times out loud: “Bay leaf,

cauldron, flowers, and flame, nine sweet wishes that I do claim. Bloom and blossom, thrive and grow, reach to the sky with strong roots below. Bloom and blossom, grow and thrive, with each passing day, I feel more alive.”

- One by one, starting with the bay-leaf wish closest to the east, say the words written upon it out loud and then safely burn it in your cauldron. My Grandma Helen would say that when we burn our wishes, the smoke that goes up in the air is the script writing for the spirits to read. This process raises your wishes to the heavens, to the stars, to the cosmos, and to all the supernatural.
- Once all of the bay leaves are burned in the center cauldron, stand up tall. Hold your hands to the sky and say: “Thank you Spirits, Thank you Ancestors, Thank you Mother Nature for this springtime. May my wishes bloom with you! See it. Be it. So be it!”
- Blow out the circle of tealights. Gather

the flowers and bring them inside. Now it is time to take a bath and place the flowers in the water with you. If you don’t have a bathtub, fill a large bowl with water, place your feet inside (to bless the soles of your feet), and sprinkle the flowers into the water. May every step you take in spring move you forward to your very own blooming!

Thank you for joining me this season and for having the courage to bloom in your magick with the springtime. May all the sweet abundance of the returning sun shine upon you, mighty and powerful spring witch!



*Veronica Varlow’s best-selling book Bohemian Magick is now available everywhere—packed with secret spells and rituals passed down from Grandma Helen. Read more about it, as well as about her Witch Camp and Love Witch Tarot School, on [lovetwitch.com](http://lovetwitch.com). Find Veronica on Instagram @veronicavarlow.*



“What ever thou will’st thy will may do”:  
**GLINDA THE GOOD WITCH**

by Sara Cleto and Brittany Warman

When you think of the good witch Glinda, you most likely picture a woman with red hair, an enormous, frothy pink dress, and a truly impressive amount of sparkles. You probably think of bubbles and magic wands, and—let’s face it—a slightly cloying voice. This image of the character, depicted by Billie Burke in the famous 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*, has been cemented in Western consciousness as much as her counterpart, the mean, green Wicked Witch of the West. If you’re a fan of Broadway, you might also think of a calculating popular girl named Galinda with a secretly good heart in the 2003 musical *Wicked*, by Stephen Schwartz and Winnie Holzman, based loosely on Gregory Maguire’s 1995 novel.



But there’s a lot more to Glinda than these adaptations reveal. In L. Frank Baum’s original novels about the land of Oz (1900–20), Glinda is among the most powerful magic users there. One of her strongest gifts is the ability to control the weather (as hinted at in the 1939 film, when she summons snow to counteract the sleep of the poppies sent by the Wicked Witch of the West). She’s a wise ruler in her own right—of the country in the South of Oz, not the North—and she is a protector of Princess Ozma, the rightful ruler over all the countries of Oz. There are multiple allusions to her great age, though she consistently appears young. The red hair is there, but she’s usually described as wearing white, and she owns a workshop full of fascinating objects. (In fact, she’s a bit of a scientist!) One of those objects is the Great Book of Records that allows her to know everything that happens in Oz. While she is consistently called “good,” she is not averse to using her skills to threaten, coerce, and wage war when necessary. She even commands an army of all female soldiers.

Still, a witch that is, overall, shown to be an exceptionally good and kind character in a story was pretty revolutionary for the time that Baum was writing. Most of this characterization was due to the fact that the author modeled Glinda on his mother-in-law, Matilda Joslyn Gage. Gage, a suffragist and abolitionist, was—by all accounts—a formidable and impressive woman. She famously argued that the women called witches and burned at the stake were much more likely to have been doctors and scientists who threatened the status quo of men’s exclusivity in such positions. She believed that these women were branded as

evil to prevent them from taking power away from men. The good witch was Baum’s tribute to her as a scientist *and* a sorceress.

And let’s not overlook the fact that setting Glinda up as a beautiful, kind, incredibly powerful witch probably scored Baum major points with his mother-in-law in reality!

In the books, it’s Glinda who most often saves the day. She is powerful, independent, and kind without being easy to take advantage of. She knows her own mind and makes her own choices. She is ruthless when she must be, though always in service of what she has determined to be the greater good. Her many years of rulership have meant that she has often pulled strings behind the scenes and shaped the world of Oz more than most know.

In 1852, Matilda Joslyn Gage gave a speech at the National Woman’s Rights Convention in which she argued passionately for the rights of women. She concluded with these words:

Work sows the seed:  
 Even the rock may yield its flower:  
 No lot so hard, but human power,  
 Exerted to one end and aim,  
 May conquer fate, and capture fame!  
 Press on!  
 Pause not in fear:  
 Preach no desponding, servile view—  
 What ever thou will’st thy *will* may do.  
 Work on, and win!  
 Shall light from nature’s depth arise,  
 And thou, whose mind can grasp the skies,  
 Sit down with fate, and idly rail!  
 No—*onward!* Let the Truth prevail!

Words for witches to live by, right?

*The Wizard of Oz* 1939 MGM film with Billie Burke as Glinda the Good Witch of the North. Pictorial Press Ltd/Alamy Stock Photo

*Sara Cleto and Brittany Warman are folklorists, authors, and teachers, as well as co-founders of The Carterhaugh School of Folklore and the Fantastic, which you can read more about at carterhaughschool.com.*



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 WWW.THEWITCHESMOON.COM



# Persephone, My Dear

LISTEN TO YOUR MOTHER, NOW ... by Susann Cokal

**A**h, Persephone, it was never your fault! Whatever gifts you were born with—be they beauty, innocence, certain (dare I say) bewitching qualities, or merely because you *were* born into a family of gods—we all know that what happened was not your fault. The long winter, well, *maybe*, but life is what you make out of difficult circumstances.

Do I need to remind you that you have responsibilities up here too? The mortals are waiting for us to appear, *together*, so the spring Mysteries can begin. So you are being very naughty, lingering here at the edge of the Underworld, pouting about a husband you don't like and a lover who didn't want to stay down there with the two of you.

Oh no, Adonis doesn't think any less of you because of where you live! But understand also that the boy is mortal, and that place—

I always think of you in sunlight, my dear. Never, never in shadows! You must know that. All those months after you first disappeared, while I searched and searched, I wouldn't let a single blade of grass grow, lest a vine or a branch be hiding you. It was a long time before Helios told me what he'd seen—yes, I agree, I was annoyed with him too for keeping the secret so long—but at least then I knew where to look, and it wasn't in sunlight.

One moment there you were, as merry as you please, strolling through an Eleusinian meadow with Artemis and those silly sea nymphs. I picture you gathering juicy treasures of berries and flowers, laughing at the stains your fingers left as you wiped them on your white chiton ... those reds and blues and pinks and greens ...

If I blame your prissy cousin Artemis for anything, it was for scolding you then, for holding your chin in her hand and wiping your mouth with her hem and asking: "When *will* you grow up?" For

I understand that it was her voice that attracted the beast.

Hades. My disgusting little brother. I grew up with the fellow chasing me around and pulling my pigtailed, holding me down and belching into my face. I wouldn't have wished him on my worst enemy, let alone on my own daughter.

Well, maybe I'd wish him on Artemis now. Honestly, the earth splits asunder at your very feet, and a monster grabs one of your friends and pulls her into the earth—wouldn't you tell someone? The girl's mother, for example? But no, she went running off through the forest with her dogs and her bow and arrows, calling herself the moon, and I had to hear it from the sun.

But I'm the Mother Goddess; my job is to empathize. I've tried to understand Hades just seizing you like that, and your half-sister Aphrodite encouraging him ... Well, she was jealous is all, because you're every bit as pretty as she is. I'm sure Adonis thinks so too. And you know she really loves you, because when she found that infant curled up in a box, she brought him straight to you. It's just bad luck that when he grew up, both of you fell in love with him.

I talked it all over with Zeus while you were away, and I do believe he meant to be fair. Zeus catches a lot of blame in this family. He was trying to please everybody (which is impossible, you know) when he decreed that Adonis would live with you for four months and Aphrodite for four months, and then wherever he liked for the rest of the time.

So Adonis did not choose you this winter—maybe he's waiting for you aboveground now! Come see! ...

No, no, I'm not choosing sides against you; I only want us all to get along and have a great summer together. I'm trying not to be so *angry* all the time.

Fine, my dear, you're stuck being Queen of the Underworld. There are worse

things you could be. Rude, for example. You might say it's inevitable that you forget yourself and your manners when you're down there feasting with ghosts half the year. But Persephone, if you want someone to fancy you, do not let your husband's bad habits become yours!

All right, I'll give an example. Hermes and I also worked through a few issues recently, and he told me that last summer, he chased you through one of those fields up north. He said he almost caught you too, but as soon as he touched your elbow, you—my dear, he said you *snorted* at him. Now, that doesn't sound like a harbinger of springtime sweetness, does it? Can you understand why Adonis would be put off, hearing something like that?

Oh, certainly, "When in Rome ..." But this is not Rome *or* the Underworld. Ghosts may snort; Olympians do not.

And haven't I always told you to be careful about accepting hospitality if you don't want to linger? You're the one who ate those pomegranate seeds—six of them, greedy girl—when Hades offered them to you. It was your own choice.

So maybe I do blame you, just a bit. But you know how much I love you. And you love Adonis, so please think how he feels, finding out that you expect him to join you—and your husband—on the other side of the Styx! But he *might* fall for the girl who comes bursting through the earth every March in her clean white chiton, setting the meadows abloom with a touch or a word ...

Be that girl.

Now, take my hand; it's time. I'll pull you the rest of the way into the light. I have a sheaf of wheat for you, and I'll carry oats and poppies, just as usual. We have a year's worth of harvest to seed.

You deserve to be loved for yourself, not your manners or your address. And do you know who loves you that way? Family. Especially your mother.

Now, don't keep me waiting!



*Persephone's Return*  
BY KINUKO Y. CRAFT

*Circe Offering the Cup to Ulysses* (1891),  
by John William Waterhouse



Image Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

# ALL POWERFUL, ALL ALONE

by Kirsty Stonell Walker

Once upon a time there was a talented young painter who fell in love with a beautiful sorceress. This love lasted from one end of his career to the other and would cause him to create multiple works on the same subject. Her raven locks, imperious gaze, and gauzy gown haunted his dreams, and he returned again and again to her story, each time showing her sadness and isolation. At the beginning of his career, the painter depicted the sorceress bewitching a hero with her beauty and power. The hero looked uncannily like the painter himself. By the end of his career, the painter showed his beloved witch as pensive and alone, wounded by her actions and the harms bestowed upon her in return. The artist was John William Waterhouse and his beloved sorceress, painted numerous times between 1886 and 1914, was Circe.

Waterhouse was first inspired by the sorceress that would haunt him for the rest of his career in 1886. Although unnamed in *The Magic Circle*, the beautiful woman brandishing a staff is undoubtedly Circe. In his later pictures she is often framed by a circle or arch, the sign of both sun and moon, and her long dark hair frames a face of intense emotion and concentration. She is a solitary figure, alone with her magic, observed by creatures who regard her reverently. This is her magic, her power and passion, and within the magic circle is fire, flowers, and light. Outside is dust and desolation, murmuring that a woman who is self-sufficient has everything she needs within her space. She has her circle of protection against the world; within that circle she is life itself.

Circe is a deeply mystical figure, the child of, according to various legends, Helios the sun god and Hecate, goddess of moonlight and witchcraft. Her power and wisdom caused her to withdraw to an island named Aeaea where she lived her peaceful life of solitude, pausing only to turn those who disturbed her into animals. That is where Waterhouse placed her in *Circe Offering the Cup to Ulysses* (1891). This grand goddess sits on her throne, her wand aloft and potion raised. She is aloof, untroubled by any threat offered by the world of men as she can swiftly dispense with them. If we needed proof of this, at her feet slumbers a snuffling fat pig, a crewmate of Ulysses's who had annoyed her by helping himself to her food. Circe, in her infinite power, used her potions not to kill but to reveal. If these men wish to act like pigs, then so be it: Pigs they are.

Ulysses approaches this beautiful, wicked witch, his hand on his sword. In the epic poems that mention Circe, the undefeatable woman is quickly defeated in the way only a confident man with a big sword can (in tales written by men, of course). Circe has bewitched his crew and turned them to swine, but Ulysses has placed his trust in a holy plant that will protect him, an antidote against such a piggy fate. We would

recognize this flower as the snowdrop, but the ancient name is moly. Ulysses uses the power of holy moly to fend off the irresistible power of the enchantress. In Waterhouse's painting, however, the moment of male triumph hangs in the balance as he approaches but does not strike, seemingly hypnotized by her aura. In the bright circular mirror that frames Circe, we see the face of the cautious hero, and it is a self-portrait of Waterhouse. Why is he hesitant? A pause could cost him his humanity, unless he really wants to end his days with a snout and trotters. There is a hint in Ulysses's expression that he does not desire to conquer but to honor the strength of an equal and create a bond. Waterhouse's Ulysses doesn't draw his sword against this enemy; he watches, acknowledges, and admires. Ulysses's magic protects him, and he convinces Circe to join him, un-pig his crew, and be a part of his adventures—well, at least until he goes home to his wife. As powerful and formidable as Circe seems, her weakness is men who ask for her help.

Ah, her ability to fall fast in love becomes her undoing, which Waterhouse revealed in his 1892 painting, *Circe Invidiosa*. As the envious woman (the *Invidiosa*), Circe is extremely dangerous; she has all the power but seemingly no control when it comes to love. Glaucus, a sea god, beseeched all-powerful Circe to help him win the heart of the beautiful Scylla, who was repulsed by him as he was a tad ... fishy. Circe, being a contrary sorceress and not as shallow as Scylla, in turn fell in love with Glaucus and asked him to come away with her to her little love island. His refusal sparks the fire of jealousy within Circe, a dangerous thing in a woman that strong. In *Circe Invidiosa*, she is tall and imposing, pouring poison into the bathing pool where Scylla swims. Circe is given extra height, rising above her destruction on a sea monster who supports her. As the poison that Circe pours will transform the beautiful into the grotesque, the viewer is left to wonder what creature that serpentine coil of darkness was before the poison was poured into the pool. When Scylla walked into her favorite pool, the dark magic turned her legs into six barking dogs. As curses go, that is an unusual one, but Scylla became a fearful monster who lived out her days attacking ships that sailed too close. Circe, unlucky in love and vengeful in rejection, retreated to her island, alone again at last.

As he approached the end of his life, Waterhouse returned for a final time to his seductive sorceress. Here she is not envious, destructive, or imperious; in *Circe* (1911–14) the mighty enchantress sits at her table and thinks. In the oil sketch, sometimes entitled *The Sorceress*, Circe leans on her wand distractedly, her magical paraphernalia surrounding her and two exotic jungle cats watching her keenly. Deadly potions spill, the magical text goes unheeded, the leopard growls for his former human life, but Circe is lost in thought. By the time Waterhouse

*Circe Invidiosa* (1892),  
by John William Waterhouse



Image Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

*Circe (The Sorceress)* (1911),  
by John William Waterhouse



Image Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

completed his final oil painting from this sketch, all that is left is Circe, sitting at her table alone, thinking. Her marble table is clear, the magical scroll is neat, and her potions are safely in their bulbous vessels. What is Circe thinking about? With all her power, she is alone but conflicted. Her expression is peaceful but just a little sad. When it comes down to it, the men she had loved were not hers to love and the ones she despised, she turned to animals. As binary choices go, that's one that would make you a little wistful, to say the least.

When I see Circe, I see a woman tired of the world's nonsense. All she wants in life is to be left alone, peaceful on her island with all her power. She does not bother anyone until they bother her, and it is invariably men who do so. There is no doubt that Circe's power is what draws them to her and attracts their attention. All that power residing in one woman appears a waste when they could be using it. Make a woman love me, make my quest successful, cleanse my sins—the men who ask her help want two things: They want to win without too much effort, and they want to be right. None of the things that are asked of the mighty Circe benefit anyone but the men who ask. No wonder she turns them into animals, when it is their basic animal desires that they show her.

The solitude of Circe is where she is safe and others are safe from her power. But as a resource it seems that she is irresistible, no matter the danger. *The Magic Circle* (1886), which you can see on page 58, shows a woman in a space of her own creation,

blooming and shining. She is harming no one, but she still she seems threatening. This is not *Circe Invidiosa*, the envious, destructive woman who is spurned in love and seeks to ruin love for everyone. This is the same woman who sits peacefully at her table, in a work from almost thirty years later, with her magic, in contemplation. What is she thinking about? Is she sad? None of that is our business. As such, Circe becomes a metaphor for so many things: power, science, the will of the people—powerful, mighty things that so many confident, hungry men think they can use for their own benefit. No wonder she looks tired and wistful in Waterhouse's final image. Maybe he could finally see that her loneliness was not a source of sadness but a protection. In *The Magic Circle*, the sorceress stands within the circle, alone, locking out the world and the animals that watch her. Circe's sadness is not that she is alone but that we will not leave her alone. Her thoughts are not on her vengeful deeds but the idea that there is not another soul in the world who appreciates the absolute majesty of her power. She is alone, she is sad, but ultimately she is at peace.



*Kirsty Stonell Walker is a writer and researcher whose passion is bringing forward the stories of women who might have otherwise vanished in history. She's the author of Pre-Raphaelite Girl Gang and Light and Love and Stunner, a biography of Pre-Raphaelite superstar Fanny Cornforth. Visit her on Instagram @kstonellwalker.*



# MINI FLOWER BESOMS

*A Tutorial by*  
Suzanne Lemmon  
a.k.a. The Witch and the Goddess

## BROOM SPELL

*“Sweep, sweep, sweep the ground,  
All negativity shall be bound.  
I banish all that is profane,  
Only positivity shall remain.”*



One of my absolute favorite things to create is a floral besom. I've been making them for years, and every single one is unique. I never know how one will look until it's done. Each is more magical than the last. They're perfect for practicing witches, but they also blend in as pretty home decor for those still in the "broom closet."

To create these besoms, I combine different dried flowers, herbs, crystals, and charms. I use foraged sticks for the handles and decorate them with ribbons, twine, dried fruits, pinecones, flowers, and any other natural element that has personal meaning. Every flower, herb, and component has its own special correspondence, and combining them with the symbolism of the witch's besom leads to a magical piece of art that is personal, intentional, creative, and meaningful.

It's easy to make a besom of your own, as I show in this tutorial. It doesn't take much in the way of materials or special skills—if you can make a bouquet of flowers, you're already halfway there! Finding the perfect stick for your handle is one of the best parts of the experience: Take a walk through the woods, explore your local park, or just look around your backyard to find a truly unique stick that calls to you. After all, every witch needs a broom. Why not make yours personal and meaningful, full of lovely things that speak to you and you alone?

# Mini Flower Besoms

Suzanne Lemmon



## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- A stick suitable for a broom handle, found or foraged, 1 inch to 1½ inches in diameter and at least 15 inches long
- 1 or 2 bunches dried or faux filler, such as baby's breath, caspia, or broom bloom
- 5 to 8 stems, dried or faux flowers
- Accents, such as crystals, single flowers, pinecones, bells, charms, etc.
- 5 feet, strong twine
- 2 feet, hemp cord or waxed linen
- Heavy duty scissors or floral cutters
- Hot glue gun and glue sticks
- Preserved moss

## INSTRUCTIONS:

**Step 1:** Gather your materials and assemble on a large workspace.

**Step 2:** Make a large bouquet with your filler and flowers, mixing and layering as you would a bouquet of flowers. Assemble it so that most of the florals will be visible from the front and sides.

**Step 3:** Hold the bouquet at the bottom with one hand and trim excess stems with scissors or floral cutters, leaving the stems about 3 inches long.

## Step 4:

With your bouquet on your workspace, carefully separate the stems to make an opening for the handle.

## Step 5:

Place 4 inches of the stick (the broom handle) inside the stems of your bouquet.

## Step 6:

Using your hemp cord or waxed linen, tie the bouquet tightly 3 inches up from the bottom of the stems, wrapping it around several times. This is your first tie, to keep the bouquet together while you tie it a second time with twine.

## Step 7:

At this point you can carefully turn and adjust your handle so it will lay flat for hanging. Check to see if your bouquet is lined up on your handle as you would like it. If it lies nice and flat on your workspace, it will hang nicely on your wall.

## Step 8:

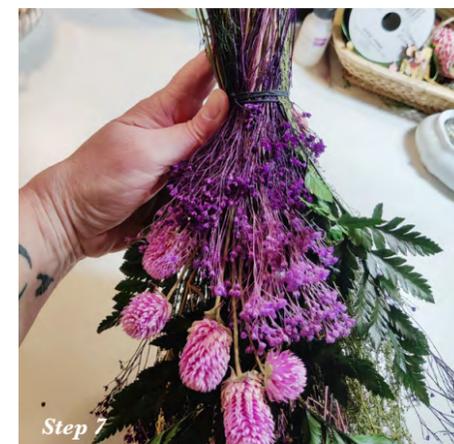
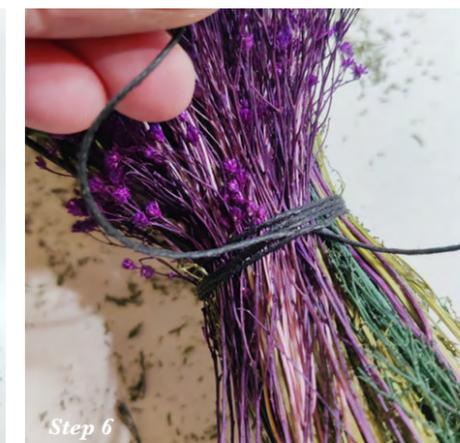
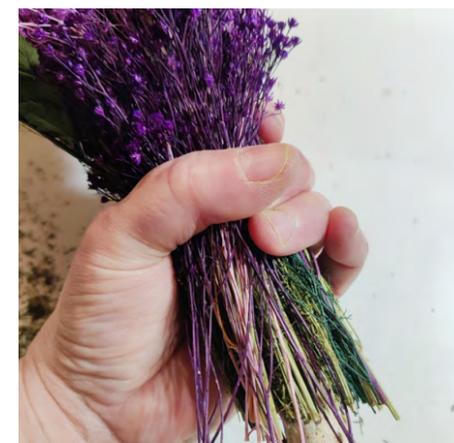
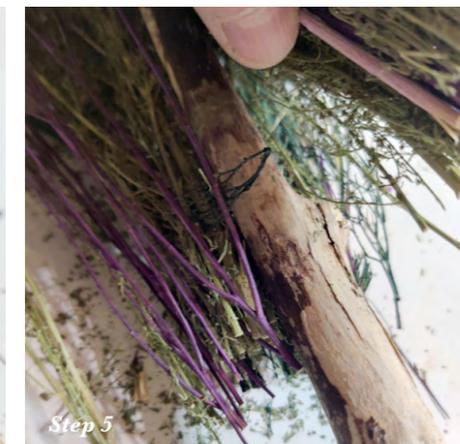
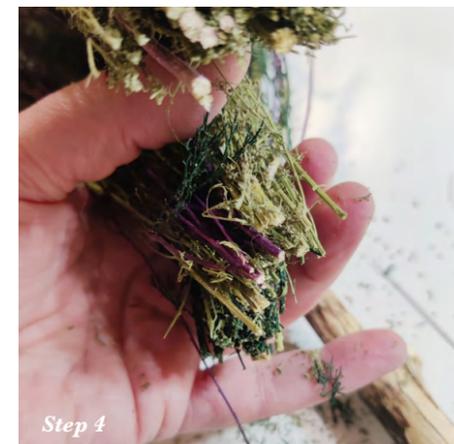
Using your twine, tie a knot in the same place you tied the first knot with the cording. The knot should be in the back, with a tail hanging down 8 inches.

## Step 9:

Start wrapping the twine tightly around the stems while holding the tail in place. Wrap as tightly as possible to keep your bouquet and handle in place.

## Step 10:

Once you've wrapped the stems, leave about a half inch of stems unwrapped. Tie a tight knot with the remaining tail of the twine. At this point your broom is assembled, and you can start adding your magical accents.



## Mini Flower Besoms

Suzanne Lemmon



Step 11



Step 12



Step 13



Step 14

### Step 11:

To add a crystal, create a base for the crystal by hot-gluing a small amount of preserved moss to the bouquet right below the handle. Hot-glue or tie your crystal to the broom.

### Step 12:

Add more flowers or accents with hot glue.

### Step 13:

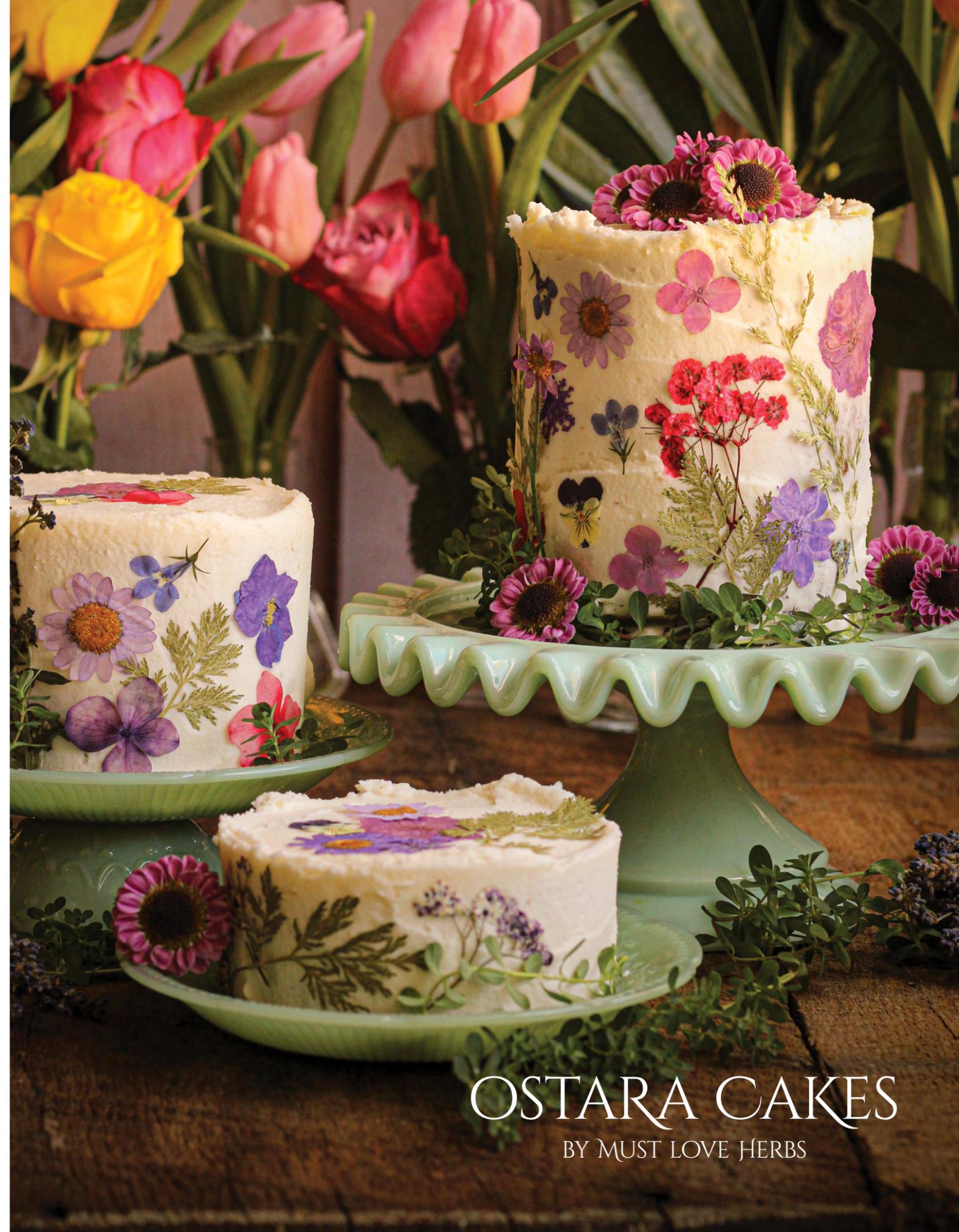
Wrap twine at the top of the handle for hanging.

### Step 14:

Decorate the handle as you like by wrapping ribbon around it and gluing on natural elements like dried fruits, flowers, crystals, etc. There are endless possibilities to make it your own magical creation!



Find more of Lemmon's creations at [etsy.com/shop/thewitchinthegoddess](https://www.etsy.com/shop/thewitchinthegoddess), or follow her on Instagram @[thewitchandthegoddess](https://www.instagram.com/thewitchandthegoddess).



OSTARA CAKES  
BY MUST LOVE HERBS



stara, or the spring equinox, is a time of promise. It's a time to revel in the awakening of Mother Nature from her restful winter slumber. For me and so many others, it's a time of celebration.

Honey is one of the beautiful foods associated with Ostara. Along with honey you will also see dishes rich in eggs and edible spring foliage, both of which can be found in these Honey Ostara Cakes. They make the perfect conversation piece for a spring tea party to celebrate the abundance ahead. Squash blossoms stuffed with creamy cheese and herbs add the savory and precious element every tea party needs.

Ostara Blessings!

**INGREDIENTS**

**For cake:**

- 3 cups flour, plus more for dusting
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 cup coconut oil, liquified
- 1 1/4 cups brown sugar
- 1/4 cup honey
- 5 large eggs

**For icing:**

- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons honey
- Splash of heavy whipping cream

**DIRECTIONS**

**For cake:**

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Grease and flour your 6-inch cake pans.

In a medium bowl combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.

In your stand mixer, cream together the coconut oil, sugar, and honey until fully incorporated. Add in the vanilla. Add the eggs one at a time. After all eggs are added, turn the mixer off and scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl, making sure nothing is unmixed.

With the mixer on low, add the buttermilk and the flour mixture to your butter-and-sugar mixture by alternating between flour and buttermilk until both are gone.

Pour the batter into your greased pans, and bake for about 30 minutes or until a



toothpick inserted in the middle of a cake comes out clean.

Allow the cakes to cool in the pans for at least 10 minutes. Flip the cakes out carefully onto a wire rack and allow to cool for another 30 minutes. While the cakes cool, you may begin preparing the icing.

**For icing:**

In a medium-size mixing bowl,

combine the confectioners' sugar, cream cheese, and honey. Use an electric mixer on medium speed, mixing thoroughly until icing is smooth and creamy. Frost the cakes by spreading icing between each layer and on the outside of the cakes. Decorate with fresh or pressed edible flowers and herbs. Store in the fridge until ready to enjoy!



## Fried Squash Blossoms

Must Love Herbs



FRIED SQUASH BLOSSOMS

### INGREDIENTS

Male squash blossoms (approximately 10)  
1/3 cup cream cheese, softened  
1/3 cup goat cheese, softened  
1 tablespoon chives, diced  
2 teaspoons fresh mint, roughly chopped  
3/4 cup all-purpose flour  
3/4 cup club soda  
Vegetable oil  
Salt, to taste  
Pepper, to taste

### DIRECTIONS

Prepare your squash blossoms by removing the stamens as well as any debris. Set aside.

Mix together cream cheese and goat cheese. If mixture is too thick, add a splash of milk.

Add green onions, salt, and pepper to cheese and mix until incorporated. Form enough small logs out of the cheese to fit inside the blossoms.

Carefully open your blossoms enough to add the cheese inside. Repeat until all blossoms are filled. Set aside.

In a large frying pan, add oil, approximately 1 inch deep in your pan. Heat at medium high to optimal frying temperature, between 350°F and 375°F.

While oil is heating up, make your batter by combining flour, salt, pepper, and club soda in a mixing bowl. Mix until free of lumps.

Once oil has reached optimal temperature, begin coating your blossoms in the batter. It's best to cook them three at a time. Once in the oil, the blossoms will need to be gently splashed on top with oil to make sure the batter doesn't slide off while the bottom cooks. Flip gently once. Each blossom will take about a minute or less to cook. Place fried blossom on a rack or a towel-lined plate. Repeat until all blossoms are cooked.



Allow to cool slightly before eating—and then enjoy!

Follow Lauren May on Instagram @mustloveherbs and visit her website, [mustloveherbs.com](http://mustloveherbs.com).

Chocolate is like music for the tongue.  
Marvin Lynch - Chocolatier

# Marvin's Confections

TAME YOUR CRAVE

[marvinsconfections.com](http://marvinsconfections.com)

# MACBETH'S THREE WEYWARD SISTERS

BY SUSANN COKAL

We know Shakespeare's Scottish play so well that if we are actors, we dare not speak its name aloud, lest we bring a terrible fate upon the production—and maybe ourselves. We especially love the women in it, the three Weird Sisters and Lady Macbeth: Whenever the would-be King of Scotland waffles, they are there to lure or goad him onward. We shiver with dread from the moment the curtain lifts and witches walk onstage, asking, "When shall we three meet again? In thunder, lightning, or in rain?" All of the above, please—we're looking forward to it.

Everyone looks forward and onward in this play, plotting to get what they want as they have their fortunes told. It's when they look back on what they've done that things really get crazy. So yes, the witches say, they need to meet as soon as a certain Macbeth and Banquo stumble through the storm. It seems the trio commonly known as the Weird Sisters have a plan.

Here's a hint: They chant the paradoxical creed that sets up the play's delightfully tormented plot: "Fair is foul, and foul is fair," before taking off "through the fog and filthy air."

So, fellow audience, what do we think: Can a Scotsman with big dreams put his trust in these paradox-spouting witches? Well, why the murky hell not? We want to see what happens when he does. This is Shakespeare; we know that by the end, almost everyone who matters will be dead.

That's how the wyrd works.

Because, you see, the modern text is deceptive. In the First Folio—the first printed version of the play, which appears in a collection dating to 1623—these sisters are not *weird*, they are "*weyward*": likely to lead someone astray. Both words are related to the Anglo-Saxon *wyrd*, meaning fate. So the deceitful sisters are more than strange, more than spooky: They are the Fates of classical myth, duplicitous, sly, capable of spinning a plotline and cutting it short for sheer fun. Proof that life is what happens when we're busy making other plans. And—oh, Will, you can be so prim!—

that trusting in any sort of necromancy is a very bad way to run your life.

Cases in point: When another supernatural sororal triad crosses Macbeth's storyline within the tartan of the play, they knot it up. A deep dive into mythology shows that gruesome threesomes tend to outmatch Willful humans.

## The Weyward Plot

First, a refresher on the twists and led- astrays of the play itself.

When Macbeth and his friend Banquo stumble in fresh from a battle, they greet the sisters in a most ungallant manner. Banquo does most of the talking here, asking his friend, right in front of the witches themselves,

—What are these,  
So withered, and so wild in  
their attire,  
That look not like th' inhabitants  
o' th' Earth  
And yet are on 't?

Chivalry dies entirely when he turns to the sisters and demands:

—Live you? Or are you aught  
That man may question?

Oh no, he should not have said *question*. The sisters deliver some cryptically worded prophecies that boil down to this: Macbeth will become Thane of Cawdor, then king. Banquo, however, will be the father of kings, "Lesser than Macbeth and greater." "Not so happy and yet much happier." All this even though King Duncan has two sons of his own who stand to inherit.

In the next scene, Macbeth finds out that he is in fact now Thane of Cawdor and has just enough time to prepare for a visit from King Duncan. He sees yet another paradox: "Nothing is but what is not"—that is, nothing seems to exist except what hasn't happened *yet*. Which must mean that the future is bright, correct? Correct, says his Lady. She even thinks they can hurry the prophecy along if her husband only screws his courage to the sticking place. He does, and they tidy up the mess together.

The next morning, after a visitor discovers the body, Duncan's two sons

flee in fear for their lives. Macbeth seizes the crown ... and at the same time is seized by paranoia, because the more you have, the more you have to lose. What about Banquo's future kings? Easy enough: Have a henchman murder the man and his son. But the son escapes, and then Banquo's ghost comes haunting, and Lady Macbeth isn't as cuddly as expected ...

Panicking, Macbeth seeks comfort with the witches. You know this scene; you've likely chanted, "Double, double, toil and trouble / Fire burn and cauldron bubble," a time or two yourself.

The Weyward ones conjure a series of ghosts. The spirits predict that Macbeth will rule Scotland until Birnam Wood comes to his castle (*Impossible!* he thinks in relief), and that no man of woman born will be able to hurt him. (*There's no other way to be born, hurrah!*) But the mood goes down when he insists on asking about the Banquo thing. A series of eight figures appear, wearing crowns, with Banquo's ghost at the end, grinning and pointing proudly at the kings.

By the by, the actual monarch King James I (who was also James VI of Scotland) was considered to be descended from Banquo in the ninth generation, which essentially puts him into the play too. When it was performed at court, all eyes must have gone to him at this moment.

Devastated, Macbeth shakes himself free of the enchantments, only to hear that his wife has gone mad *and* Duncan's son Malcolm has raised an army and is about to attack.

The battle resolves the paradoxes. The sisters' predictions left a few parts out, or Macbeth interpreted them too literally. Malcolm's army camouflages itself with branches tied to their helmets; it looks to Macbeth as if Birnam Wood has arrived. And when the late King Duncan's old friend Macduff swoops toward Macbeth, sword out, he clarifies an important point: Macduff was never born *per se*, but "from his mother's womb untimely ripped."

Whoops. Fair *is* foul when you trust the wyrd.

## Three Weyward Sisters

Susann Cokal

### Fateful Sources

This wild story, including the three witches, comes from Scottish history as it had been established in Shakespeare's day. It's also a product of its time, of course—a time when witches (and supernatural sisters) were very much on the public's mind, as something bad and real and dangerous.

Shakespeare wrote the 2,100-line tragedy around 1606, when King James I occupied a united throne. Nineteen years earlier, James's mother, Mary Queen of Scots, had been executed for treason and, in some accounts, also accused of witchcraft. A mere ten years after that, James published his own *Daemonologie*, a hefty investigation of witchcraft, fortune telling, and, yes, all manner of demons, broken tidily down into four categories.

Shakespeare's other major source was Raphael Holinshed's 1577 *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*. It was

Holinshed who dubbed the witches of Scottish history “the weird sisters, that is (as ye would say) the goddesses of destinie.” Shakespeare went with *weyward* because he was Shakespeare, and he had very more words and plays inward.

I am tempted to point out a pattern among the sources here: 1577, 1587, 1597 ... But there is danger in appearing to trust too much to numeric coincidence. Under the rules of *Daemonologie*, one might be accused of attempted divination. Shakespeare broke the pattern by presenting the play at court in 1606—or so we are told. We can't be *sure* it wasn't 1607, or what that would mean. So much of the past is a fiction, rewritten to fulfill the prophecy of the present.

### The Cruel Fates

The three Fates of classical mythology make the play's witches seem like playful kittens. These sisters give you life, but

they also make you suffer and die. When a child is still in utero, Clotho starts spinning the threads of its life, twisting them on her spindle. Lachesis is the measurer, deciding how much life an individual gets—and how many troubles. Atropos cuts the thread, determining when you'll shuffle off your mortal coil. Not one of them is known for compassion.

The Weyward Sisters may horrify Macbeth and Banquo with their beards and otherworldly appearance, and nobody would call them sisters of mercy, but still—the gals do have a sense of humor that the Fates do not. They know they're not nice; they revel in that. And yet I, at least, get the sense that they aren't exactly malicious. When Macbeth demands to know more about the Banquo prophecy, they do warn him, “Seek to know no more.”

Maybe they mean it. Or maybe they know the warning will drive him crazy with desire to know, because the true transgression—in the play and in King James's *Daemonologie*—may be neither murder nor even ambition but saying that we find supernatural approval for the bad things we do to get ahead. *It's out of my hands*, you might say; *it's fate*.

But, my lord, *is it*? The three witches may conjure visions and prophecies, but are they really in charge of Macbeth's fate? We don't see them scheming to do anything but talk to him. So they are no longer Holinshed's “goddesses of destinie”; they are impish tricksters who may try to tweak destiny but do not control it. This is the 1600s; we believe free will exists.

To quote another play, “The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves.”

### A Beautiful Gorgon

Sometimes the old gods got a bit kicked around too, just like mortals. When King Duncan's old friend Macduff stops by Macbeth's place to say hello, it becomes his fate to discover the bloody corpse.



*Perseus and the Graiae* (1892),  
by Edward Burne-Jones



*Medusa* (Laura Dreyfus Barney)  
(1892), by Alice Pike Barney

Then he rushes to Lennox and Macbeth, thundering, “Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight / With a new Gorgon!”

Unaware that his host has in fact already seen the sight (and done the deed), Macduff is saying that it's too horrible for words, but, you know, the others may as well look and be petrified too—if not literally turned to stone, at least scared senseless. And so another set of Wyrd Sisters enter the play's world.

When we speak of Gorgons, we usually mean three sisters born to the primordial Greek sea god Phorcys and goddess Ceto: Stheno, Euryale, and Medusa, who is the most famous, the youngest, and the only one we know to

have been both mortal and beautiful. At least according to the later Roman poet Ovid, Medusa was born so beautiful that Neptune (Poseidon) fell in love with her, and he acted upon his passion in a temple dedicated to Minerva (Athena) ... which made straitlaced Minerva so angry that she turned Medusa's beautiful golden locks into snakes and made her so hideous that one look at her would turn all humans and some gods into stone.

That's right, Gorgons can be created, not just born, and you don't want to cheese off the wrong goddess. But there is power in scary looks as well as beautiful ones—and in the old stories, an ugly woman was less vulnerable than a pretty one. I think it's appropriate that

Medusa's name means “queen.”

There was (is?) some good in all three Gorgon sisters, though you had to know how to find and use it. When Medusa's dying blood hit the sea, for example, two children were born, one of them Pegasus. If you took blood from the right side of a Gorgon, you had a healing elixir; if you took it from the left side, you got a nasty poison. Even now, people decorate their homes with pictures of Gorgons to scare evil away.

Lonely, confined to an island, tremendously powerful but unable to use those powers themselves, hunted down for sport ... I want to give them all a hug. Their sisters, though ... another story.

## Three Weyward Sisters

Susann Cokal

### The Graeae

Shakespeare's witches have even more in common with another set of girls born to Phorcys and Ceto. The Graeae came out of the womb already aged and gray-haired, sometimes identified individually as Alarm, Horror, and Dread. They lived on their own island and plotted the destruction of cities.

Why? Well, why does anyone want to do such things? Because we're hurt and we want to hurt back. And because, for the various supernatural sister trios, it's *fun* to mess with humans and their little plans.

But the Grays' global destruction is probably even now stuck at the plot stage. Not only were these sisters born old and world-weary, they also had just one eye and one tooth to share. They had to hand the bits around, taking turns.

The imperfect vision shared by three women ties right back into the Weyward Sisters; their own sight is fine, but they delight in others' blind spots. (What *fun*!) Some of the visions they give Macbeth are as slyly confusing as their words are; he puts a lot of faith in what he sees, even when he addresses a soliloquy to a phantom dagger: "Mine eyes are made the fools o' th' other senses / Or else worth all the rest." Whether his eyes are being tricked or functioning better than any other sense, the hallucination guides him toward what he really wants, which is to kill Duncan. So off he goes to the murder, inspired by a knife that he himself suspects is "a false creation from the heat-oppressed brain."

This soliloquy makes some people think Macbeth is already as batty as his Lady will be later. With their tunnel vision, the ill-fated couple lay waste to their little corner of Scotland.

### The Graces

Not all beviies of three were hideous, malevolent, cold-hearted, or scheming. Some were party girls. The Graces, for example, devoted their immortality to beauty and pleasure, their time to hosting celebrations for the gods and inspiring

creativity in humankind. Many a statue and brooch has been fashioned in their honor—usually three girls with arms entwined, clad in filmy frocks or not at all.

We need only remember what ambition did to Lady Macbeth to see the dangers this alluring trio might pose. Inspiration goes hand in hand with ambition, showing a mortal how to get what she wants. Be careful what you wish for—especially once you figure out how to get it.

Case in point: Lady Macbeth did not plan ahead for her own conscience, which sees Duncan's blood soaking her palms. Her sleepwalking, hand-scrubbing scene is one of the play's greatest moments:

Out, damned spot—out, I say! [...] Hell is murky ... Fie, my lord, fie! A soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

Well, we did rather hope he would ...

This little speech shows the uselessness of planning, as Lady M mingles the present (the imagined stain, the murky hell) with the past (the moment just before the stabbing). She thought there would be nothing to fear in a future in which she and her husband would be all-powerful, but her scheme failed to account for mundane details such as the volume of blood in the human body. With a mind tangled in a fatal web, Lady Macbeth will commit suicide in the last act.

Coincidentally, the Graces were also associated with the underworld as part of the annual Eleusinian Mysteries, which celebrated Persephone's return from Hades. Persephone's symbolic rebirth offered the possibility of an afterlife, and the Graces were the promise of beauty and joy in it.

So maybe there's hope for the Macbeths after all. Or maybe Banquo's ghost is the only one who deserves any joy at all.

Hell is murky indeed.

### The Fate of the Folio

Also murky, some scholars point out, is the Scottish play itself. It is the shortest of Shakespeare's tragedies (and among the shortest of his plays in general); it seems to leave a few things out. For example, this question is so widespread it's almost a folkloric joke in its own right: How many children does Lady Macbeth have? If Macbeth wants his kids, rather than Banquo's, to carry on as kings, shouldn't we know that they ... exist? Shakespeare was a fan of foils and doubles (and triples!), so it does seem odd that the families aren't set up for comparison.

And is Macbeth himself barmy, or only his lady? She hallucinates in her sleepwalking scene; he hallucinates in his soliloquy and quite possibly when he sees those future kings.

Most of all, *Why don't we see more of the witches?* They're everybody's favorite part.

The play had never been published before the First Folio of 1623, when Shakespeare had been dead for seven years. The text had to be cobbled together from handwritten passages and actors' memories of playing the roles. It is often speculated that they simply forgot some.

But perhaps there were lines and scenes that they edited out as they recited—perhaps some deemed unlucky by 1623, when James I was in the last years of his life. Or an editor, transcriptionist, or typesetter may have taken it upon himself to remove incendiary bits later on—some versions of the Folio are considered more accurate than others.

Or ... perhaps it wasn't just a fault of the transcription or of actors' faulty memories or editing. Perhaps Atropos cut Macbeth and *Macbeth* off too early.

There, I wrote out the title at last—let the Wyrd Sisters come for me too!

*Susann Cokal has tempted fate in four witch-forward novels so far. Visit her online at [susanncokal.net](http://susanncokal.net).*



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# A WITCH PREPARES FOR WALPURGISNACHT

## The Most Famous Statue You've Never Heard Of

by Susann Cokal

We love the sinuous lines and asymmetry of Art Nouveau for celebrating natural beauties, from flowers to insects to—above all—the human female. That female generally has willowy limbs and small breasts, a rounded bottom, flowing hair, and (sometimes) butterfly wings. She is an era's ideal.

*Witch Doing Her Toilette for Walpurgisnacht* has some of those features, minus the grace and the prettiness that one expects from, say, a poster by Alphonse Mucha. Here is a woman with limbs outflung and hair wild; only a stray lock slips between her legs and offers a bit of conventional modesty. Her smile is unruly too. She is sexy. She has a broomstick. And what she is doing—trimming her toenails with a large pair of scissors—had never been seen in sculpture before 1896, when *Witch* went on display in Vienna's Künstlerhaus.

*Women's bodies live, she seems to say. They grow; they have their own power. Perfection does not.*

The fact that her maker was also female made *Witch* doubly shocking. And fascinating. Revolting. Scandalous. Irresistible. And eventually *Witch* was repressed, while the sculptor, Teresa Feodorovna Ries, fell from a pinnacle of fame into decades of obscurity.

Viennese city archives record that Ries was born Jewish in Budapest in 1866, although some writers prefer the less plausible date of 1874 and a Russian birthplace. She'd already done a lot of living by the time she carved her witch. She'd been married, had a child, lost that child, and divorced; she'd begun art school in Moscow, then argued with a professor and been expelled.

And so she came to Vienna. It might seem like an odd choice.



Women were not allowed to enroll in any art school in the city, and they were banned from life-drawing classes (Nudes! Oh no!). And yet despite all the limitations, women were very much a part of Vienna's avant-garde, accounting for about a third of its artists. They formed associations to support each other and get their work seen; they put on exhibitions of their own and joined in bigger ones with the likes of Gustav Klimt.

For a price, women could also arrange private lessons and mentorship. Ries convinced an Academy professor, Edmund Hellmer, to take her on. Hellmer gave Ries some studio space and invited her to work on his commissions. They would appear, of course, under his name.

In her 1928 autobiography, *The Language of Stone*, Ries describes the genesis of *Witch*. She had stayed late at the Academy to study plaster models of hands and feet, and when she was leaving, she tripped on a broom. Ideas flooded her:

*Beautiful hands and feet, toilette, broom, witches' Sabbath, a witch who so enchanted and enchants, who has power over humans, power, power—my fantasy took flight, and my thoughts had taken form. I created the witch after an Academy model named Anna Faust ... Faust—witch—witches' Sabbath!*

The critics loathed what she had done. One response sums up the established art world's general opinion: "How can she justify having made a horrific grimace out of noble marble?" But Klimt loved it, and so did Emperor Franz Joseph. Commissions for public and private artworks followed. In the early 1900s,

Ries became a well-known sculptor and controversial public figure, with several pieces mounted around Vienna. She had taken a gamble by displaying her *Witch*, and it paid off—but things could easily have gone the other way and left her without a career. Easily.

The 1930s brought changes from which no amount of fame could protect Ries or her *Witch*. In 1938, when Nazi Germany annexed Austria, Jewish artists were evicted from state-sponsored studio space. Their creations were seized, perhaps to be destroyed. Ries's *Witch* disappeared, along with her other work. In 1941, in her seventies, Ries herself fled to Lugano, Switzerland, where she lived until her death in 1956. She never produced another sculpture, and she died not knowing what had happened to the ones she left behind.

The Nazis effectively erased Ries and the era's other women artists from history. For decades, students of art probably never heard of her unless they'd dug deep into an archive, hunting

*"Beautiful hands and feet, toilette, broom, witches' Sabbath, a witch who so enchanted and enchants, who has power over humans, power, power ..."*

precisely for forgotten sculptors. This, in fact, is what Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber was doing when she found *Witch* and several other pieces stored in a shed outside Vienna, defaced with red spray paint.

Cleaned up, the sculptures were featured in a 2019 Viennese exhibition, "City of Women: Female Artists in Vienna, 1900–1938." Ries's *Witch* was the star attraction—but minus her scissors and the hand that held them. Those are still missing.

In a way the mutilation makes sense: If you're afraid a woman might cut off your power, you break hers off first.

I mourn the loss of the *Witch's* hand. But at the same time, I see new power in its absence. Now her body is even more open, more visible, more disruptive than ever. And Ries will not be forgotten again.

Image: TFR Archive, Photo by Valerie Habsburg.

Visit Susann Cokal online at [susanncokal.net](http://susanncokal.net) or Instagram @susanncokal.

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# Homage to the GREEN WITCH

BY CAROLYN TURGEON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE WITCHING HOUR PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographer Joy Marshall, model (and wingmaker) Tatiana Pimentel, and jeweler artist Jen Parrish-Hill of Parrish Relics collaborated on this shoot to celebrate the green witch in all her guises, filling Parrish-Hill's kitchen at Frog Hollow—her magical abode in the hills of Massachusetts you might remember from our summer 2016 issue—with dried flowers, baskets, bottles, trinkets, and as many bright green plants as possible. “It was easy to envision what a green witch would do in that space,” Marshall said after. “Jen’s kitchen is naturally a green witch haven!”

Marshall would know, being a bit of a green witch herself. She fills her north-facing house with plants in the winter, and every day they remind her that spring is coming. She has jars and jars of dried herbs she’s collected over the years, as well as pine needles from past Christmas trees and petals from the first pollinators she grew from seed. “They’re memories,” she says, “and when I add them to spells, I’m adding pieces of my past to empower my future.”

How does Marshall define a green witch? A green witch, she says, is “someone who bases their rituals and power off nature.” Their tools are plant-based. They have a deep connection to nature, the forest, and, of course, plants. They often have vibrant flower gardens and abundant veggie gardens. “If you have a green thumb,” she adds, “you may be a green witch!” So what better time to celebrate her than right now? “In the spring, we can plant the seeds to grow,” she says. “We set our intentions into the earth. We take everything we learned about ourselves during the winter and implement new ways of being for the spring.”

The team also recreated John William Waterhouse’s 1886 painting *The Magic Circle* (pages 58 and 59) in the woods around Jen’s house. The focus of the painting, Marshall says, is the witch’s power. “She is creating magic as she closes the circle around her, and it’s clear the magic comes from herself.” The image was not planned, but Marshall was struck by the idea after seeing a tree stump “framed by those gorgeous leaves and lit by early morning light.” Parrish-Hill pulled out one of her own necklaces and a dress handmade by *Enchanted Living* art director Lisa Gill, and together the women styled the scene.

Ultimately, witchcraft means empowerment, Marshall says, and these images capture that. “It’s about learning to still your busy mind and trust your inner power, your intuition. You don’t really need tools to be a witch, you just need yourself and your innate power.” Marshall’s own practice involves a lot of meditation, developing self-trust, and intention setting. “I try to live closely with the seasons and nature. I love studying different

paths and incorporating bits of what I’ve learned into both my practice and my art. As I get older, I’m beginning to build a community of witchy women. We all have different interests and paths, but together we learn, support and empower each other.”

As part of her work as the Witching Hour Photography, Marshall consults with clients to discover the story they’re trying to tell, the inner, most powerful self they’re trying to express. “Clients generally show up to their shoot wearing jeans and a T-shirt and not really knowing what to expect,” Marshall explains. “Then we get them into their first costume, usually an elaborate fantasy dress, and put a crown on their head, and they instantly stand a little taller. It’s around this time they realize that we are creating a story and they’re the main character. For the whole day, the narrative revolves around them. They become the fantasy version of themselves. It’s very empowering.”

Occasionally, something even more magical happens: “Every once in a while I work with someone who hasn’t felt like themselves in a while. They’re nervous to get their picture taken, but they do it anyway. Then I get a good shot, and I show them how they look in the back of the camera. All that anxiety falls away when they finally get the opportunity to see themselves for who they really are. I’ve had clients burst into tears and tell me that they haven’t seen themselves that way in a long time.” Then the client steps back into their power—their own magic circle—and shines for the rest of the session.

## A Simple Green Witch Ritual

by Joy Marshall

Write down your personal goals for the growing season on a piece of paper. Then take some wildflower seeds and place them with the paper in an envelope. Seal it with love and wait for the weather to warm. Go outside and plant the seeds, but leave the intention-setting paper be. When the fall comes, harvest what you grew. Dry whatever you planted and then add it back to the envelope with your intentions. Seal it, and on the winter solstice, open the envelope and read your intentions and make some magic with the dried plants, or keep the dried plants and use them to decorate ... Do whatever feels good in the moment!



Follow Joy Marshall on Instagram @thewitchinghourphotography.



Model: Tatiana Pimentel  
@teepimentel  
Jewelry: Parrish Relics  
@parrish\_relics









## MURMURATIONS: A SPELL FOR THE SPRING EQUINOX

*by adrienne maree brown*

Let us remind the world  
How many shades of green there are  
How, together, we look like life itself  
How tender the dirt gets in spring

Let us burst open, one multitudinous bud  
Unfurled by that internal pressure of petal  
Ripe, yes, and soft  
You will learn to inhale us

Let us punch up from the earth, a lava  
Bright and abundant dreams of tomorrow  
Flowing molten and free  
Turning ignorance to ash

Let us act like we got some roots  
Know that we are held deeply  
Even as we dance towards the golden breast of the sun  
life delectable again

Let us remind ourselves  
That life moves ever towards life  
This is the season of our nectar  
Beloveds this is the season worth the sting



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writer, editor, activist, social justice facilitator, coach, speaker, and doula  
adrienne maree brown at [adriennemareebrown.net](http://adriennemareebrown.net).*





## Featured Artist

### PARRISH RELICS JEWELRY

You likely recognize Jen Parrish-Hill's adornments from this magazine, not only in the previous photo shoot but multiple others, if not your own social media feeds or—if you're very lucky—your own private jewelry box. From the enchanted confines of Frog Hollow, she crafts finely detailed sculptures and then, using the ancient lost wax method, casts them in recycled sterling silver and bronze. She hand-finishes each amulet and applies patina to create a time-worn appearance and one-of-a-kind individuality. These are Parrish Relics.

Parrish-Hill has designed collections for the Edward Burne-Jones exhibition at Tate Britain and more recently for an exhibition on medieval martyr Thomas Becket at the British Museum. That collection includes a floriated clover amulet inspired by the Miracle Window of Canterbury Cathedral (seen at left). "I really enjoy working with museums to find a spark that bridges the past to the present," she says. "It is always an honor to be asked to interpret these treasures with my own small voice."

Parrish-Hill has lived at Frog Hollow for the past eight years, nestled in a hemlock forest alongside a stream, with her first love David, their rescue dog Grady, and their cats Shadow and Galatea. Living in this enchanted setting, she finds herself more and more inspired by nature and the way "everything thrives

by being intertwined." With her jewelry designs, she weaves her fascination for medieval art and architecture with a "reverence for the natural in a way that pays tribute to both." William Morris and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood were masters at this, she says, and a huge source of inspiration for her, especially with "their attention to the details of the smallest flower to the mythic stories they told so well through stained glass, paintings, and so many of the decorative arts."

With each amulet sold, Parrish-Hill donates a percentage of the proceeds to "wonderful charities and organizations that help make the world a better place." The Oak Bower Collection, featured on the previous pages, benefits the Old Growth Forest Network, which protects forests across the U.S. For the collection, she chose "stained-glass colors that recall each season here in our corner of the forest, held within a frame of Victorian-style oak leaves, branches, and acorns." The wild animals around them—like the hare above that shimmers under thin layers of mica (found locally) and held within a bronze frame of two branches creating a gothic arch—are an important part of a flourishing ecosystem, she says. "My intention is to create amulets that honor them as the sacred beings that they are, along with our trees, rivers, and native plants."

*Find more of Parrish-Hill's work @parrishrelics.com.*

# WHICH WITCH ARE YOU?

*Discovering Your Brand of Magic* by Gina Spriggs

The label “witch” is one that more and more people are getting comfortable with. Others—undeniably powerful and gifted—remain *uncomfortable* with it. For some, the word (and practice) of witchcraft is a fad. For us, however, it is a declaration of power, strength, and sovereignty.

On your witch journey, you may discover the many ways you can reclaim your power and practice your personal brand of witchery. Between Wiccan, Pagan, Lucumi, Santeria, Norse, Hoodoo, and other traditions, it is easy to get confused when starting out.

Many folks are happy to tell you how it’s done, but to me being a witch means considering all information presented to you and determining the best fit for yourself. There are many witch basics, but your opportunity is to personalize even the basics and create your own practical path.

One common practice witches around the world honor is to follow the cycle of seasons for energetic clues as to how to honor ourselves. Spring is all about renewal and rebirth. I invite you to discover and explore the many ways you can renew your practice or discover your brand of personal witchery without the confines of dogma. Did you plant any seeds of intention last fall that are ready to sprout?

At my store, Curio, Craft & Conjure, we honor magical traditions from around the world. I am partial to Hoodoo, but I label myself as an Intuition Witch, and as such, I honor my guidance above all resources. My guidance leads me to have certain practices and work with entities from around the world.

An Intuition Witch follows no one. She discovers and embraces her personalized practices without the need for rules or other people’s practices. She creates her own relationships with the entities, energies, seasons, and spirits she chooses to support her. When you discover or create your own brand of magic, you will begin to define and create rituals that are most effective for you.

Which leads us to the elephant in the room: *How do you discover your brand of magic?* While many assume that your astrological chart can give you a clue, there is more to it than that. As a double Scorpio with a Pisces moon (and a natal chart with five planets in Scorpio), it would be easy to assume that I would create my magic with water, yet my favorite elements to create with are fire and earth. (Think candle magic and crystal grids.)

Creating, also known as manifesting, is an everyday occurrence. *Manifesting* was a buzzword for a while, but now it almost feels slimy. Many people offered ways to manifest that didn’t work. Why? Because no one thing works for everyone, not medicine, standards of beauty, weight-loss methods, health recipes, manifesting methods, healing methods—or magic.

So while people think that magic is something you have to learn how to do, the fact is that we all do it all the time.

Let’s go deeper. Manifesting, to me, is *creating something* out of *nothing*. Healing (to me) is *turning something* into *nothing*. Manifesting is magic. Healing is magic. Magic can help create something *you desire* (or not) out of nothing or turn something *you don’t want* (like a tumor) into nothing.

We are always creating. The real question is: Are we always creating what we desire? The real answer? No.

That said, in terms of healing or banishing, my personal favorite magical elements are *water* and *air*. (Think spiritual baths and smudging.) Our opportunity is to recognize that we are *always creating* and, from there, to understand *how* we create (whether we like what we have created or not).

To determine which kind of witch you are, ask yourself the two questions below, and use the list as a reference for your answers:

Which of these practices do you lean into most?  
Which do you use to heal, and which do you use to manifest?

## RITUAL AND ELEMENT

- **Crystal Gridding:** Earth
- **Mojo Bags and Spell Bottles:** Earth
- **Candle Magic:** Fire
- **Burning bowls:** Fire
- **Incense:** Air
- **Mantras, Incantations, Affirmations, and Prayer:** Air
- **Lake, Ocean, or River Clearing:** Water
- **Smudging:** Air and Earth
- **Spiritual Baths:** Water and Earth

If you find that you lean into a specific element, congratulations—you have discovered your element! If you find that you use a combination of elements, determine if you lean into certain energies for manifesting and others for clearing. Experiment with the elements by creating your own practices or trying rituals you find intriguing.

One of the best ways to track which elements work for you is by journaling your results in your grimoire and revisiting it so you can re-create your most successful rituals.

And keep in mind that, as children of Gaia, we are all earth witches.

Follow Gina Spriggs on Instagram @ginaspriggs.



## RITUAL

It’s never too late to plant your seeds of intention. This spring, what would you like to give birth to?

### Spring Ritual

Lean into spring and borrow from all the elements to manifest your desires:

- Set your intentions.
- Write them on bay leaves.
- Take a spiritual bath with Epsom salts and Florida Water to release what holds you back.
- Light a white seven-day candle.
- Burn the bay leaves with the flame, allowing the smoke to carry your prayers to the spirit world.
- Do something practical that moves you in the direction of your dreams.

*The Crystal Ball, Restored Version (1902), by John William Waterhouse*

Study for *Maidens Picking Flowers by the Stream* (1911), by John William Waterhouse



Image Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

# The Witch's Secret

BY MONICA CROSSON



**T**here was something strange about the cottage at the end of Willow Lane. The breeze was always scented with rose, the rain fell in sideways sweeps, and the frogs who lived near the pond croaked throughout the dark winter months. The women who occupied the cottage spoke in hushed tones even among themselves. And the girl who called them her mothers had grown up thinking anyone who spoke above a whisper was screaming at her. But as strange as these women may have seemed to outsiders, people flocked to the tiny shop attached to the cottage. It promised strange salves, teas, and tinctures guaranteed to soothe dry skin, mend broken bones, or heal a broken heart.

It was the young girl who collected the ingredients that were crucial for the women's recipes. Her mothers were far too busy blending herbs and stirring up their salves and tinctures. And it was a large white hare who was in love with the moon that advised the girl on what to gather.

The hare, it was said, was a witch in disguise who kept to the forest's edge and nibbled on such delights as toe of frog and the Englishman's foot, tangled among the flowers of death, whose purple blossoms gave away their location under the dark canopy of trees.

"What should I gather today, hare of the wood?" the girl would whisper to the long-eared shapeshifter.

Sometimes the hare would answer, "seed of the bird's nest." Other times it reminded her that the tail of the rat was ready for the taking.

Yes, it was these strange ingredients that brought in the townsfolk. How exotic they thought it to smear on salves containing the devil's milk or macerated dead man's bells. Or to drink healing teas that contained guts, paws, wings, or eyes. And the women who created them held back their smiles as the residents confided that

they didn't mind at all that their favorite balm contained part of an eagle or a cat. Just as long as they felt some sort of relief from their affliction.

The young girl would roll her eyes as the townsfolk left clutching bags as if they were holding something forbidden and therefore secret. The girl knew there really was nothing to tell. No devil's milk or eyes or guts or even a whisker from a cat were in those balms and tea blends. The strange ingredients were merely plants that grew in the townsfolk's own backyards.

The girl's mothers would wink to the child as a reminder to never tell a soul. But as the shop closed its doors for the evening, the women whispered and chuckled to themselves over their own cleverness. And on those nights when the moon was full, the women and the girl would go to the forest's edge to find the large white hare gazing at the moon and sometimes shape-shifting back into the witch who had once operated the shop many years before the women were born. It was she who reminded them to keep to the old names of the plants so that no one would know their secrets.

## Plant Folk Names A Little History

In spring, one should be suspicious of witches disguised as hares. At least that's what I've been told. So, if you're wandering near the garden's edge as spring unfolds and spy a rabbit nibbling on a toe of frog or the Englishman's foot that is tangled in flowers of death, you should probably ... well, just wiggle your toes in the loamy soil and allow the lemony light to caress your cheek, as there is nothing to fear.

A hare in the garden is an auspicious sign. And if you're lucky enough to see the long-eared creature shape-shift back into its witchy form, you might ask it about moon rites and messages from your dearly departed. As far as toe of frog, it's

an old folk name for buttercup (*Ranunculus* spp.) and Englishman's foot is common plantain (*Plantago major*). Flower of death is another name for periwinkle (*Vinca minor*).

Our gardens are steeped in the memory and folklore of those ancient wise women and cunning men who came before us. They were the healers, midwives, and herbalists who knew the secrets of both cure and curse held within the plants that grew along the hedgerows, within the cover of the forests, and in the garden. The herbalist was both respected and feared; their humble door would be tapped when one needed seed of the bird's nest (Queen Anne's lace) for contraception or the berries from the waythorn (buckthorn) to purge oneself of foul humors.

Throughout history, and specifically before binomial classification was invented, commonly used plants and herbs had been given different names based on their attributes, growth habits, or even the specific problems they were used for. Our ancestors knew *Digitalis purpurea* by folk names such as foxglove, fairy gloves, fairy bells, fairy fingers, and goblin gloves, to reflect its connection with the fae. It has also been called dead man's bells, giving an insight to its poisonous nature. Less commonly known are names like flop-dock, pop-dock, cowflop, flop-poppy, and rabbit's flowers, a reference to the plant's large, downy leaves. Depending on where you live, you may call *Centaurea cyanus* a bachelor's button, or you may refer to it as a cornflower or blue cap. But did you know that *Cichorium intybus* is also sometimes referred to by the same folk names? You may also know it by its most common name of chicory—but you can see how it can become confusing.

It wasn't until the mid-1700s that Carolus Linnaeus gave us the binomial or two-name system of classification that grouped plants according to similarities. The first name, or genus, is a capitalized

## The Witch's Secret

Monica Crosson

noun denoting related groups of organisms. The second name, or species, is always lowercase and describes one kind of plant within a genus. Combined, the genus-species provides a unique botanical classification for each individual plant. You will notice that scientific botanical names for plants are also always in Latin, as it helps prevent confusion caused by multiple and often contradictory common names.

Though I always use a plant's scientific name when researching or purchasing plants and I adore the old-fashioned folk names that inspire one to dream of an English cottage garden, my favorite names are the grislier folk names associated with witchcraft. There is no evidence to prove it, but if you read enough books on plant folklore, you'll find it suggested that cunning folk were specifically careful to guard their herbal secrets and would come up with odd-sounding folk names for the plants they regularly used so their herbal secrets could not be copied. More practically, it's hard to forget a plant called devil's apple or five fingers, making the remembering and passing on of plant knowledge much easier.

Sometimes body parts served as code

for the part of the plant used in a spell or herbal remedy. For example, "hair of" could refer to dried roots or herbs or stringy stems. But "guts" too referred to both roots and stem. "Blood" could refer to sap, and the "eye" could refer to a seed.

Eye: inner part of a blossom or seed  
Guts: roots and stalk  
Hair: dried or stringy herbs and roots  
Head: flower  
Heart: bud or seed  
Genitalia: seed  
Tail: stem  
Toe, leg, wing, paw: leaf  
Tongue: petal

Animals too were used to reference the herbs that filled a witch's larder. Examples include:

Bat: holly  
Cat: catnip  
Dog: grasses  
Eagle: garlic or fenugreek  
Frog: cinquefoil  
Lamb: lettuce  
Nightingale: hops  
Rat: valerian  
Toad: toadflax or sage

Woodpecker: peony  
Weasel: rue

As the witchcraft hysteria settled over Europe during the Middle Ages, the village wisewomen, midwives, and healers were looked upon as being in league with Satan, and many of the plants they used were thought to be of the devil. So many common herbs used in medicine and magick took on demonic names.

Examples include:  
Devil's apple: datura  
Devil's cherries: belladonna  
Devil's eye: henbane, periwinkle  
Devil's flower: bachelor's buttons  
Devil's oatmeal: parsley  
Devil's guts: bindweed  
Devil's milk: celandine  
Devil's nettle: yarrow

Folk names give us a surprisingly accurate insight into the magickal and medicinal nature of the herbs that grace our surroundings, and I hope my simplified look into the quaint and sometimes grisly history of plant names piques your interest enough for you to continue researching plant lore on your own.



*The Love Philtre* (1914),  
by John William Waterhouse

### A GREEN WITCH'S HEALING SALVE

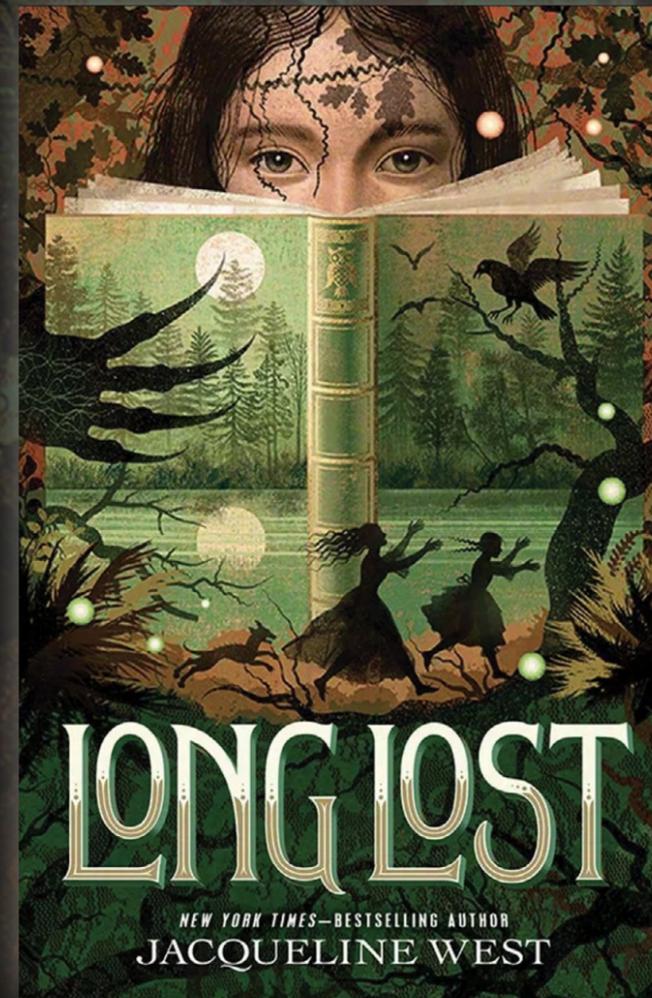
Great for minor rashes and abrasions, chapped, or dry skin.

*You will need:*  
2 tablespoons chopped white bird's eye (chickweed)  
1 tablespoon chopped ass ear (comfrey)  
1 tablespoon chopped Englishman's foot (common plantain)  
20 to 30 drops essential oils (optional)  
1 cup olive oil  
¼ beeswax pastilles

Chop fresh herbs and add to a pan with the oil just covering herbs. Heat on low for approximately 15 to 20 minutes to infuse. Strain out herbs using a muslin-lined sieve. In a double boiler, melt beeswax over low heat. Add infused oil and stir until well mixed. Remove from heat and add optional essential oils. Pour mixture into containers and allow to cool completely. Makes about four 1-ounce containers.



Monica Crosson's latest book is *Wild Magical Soul: Untame Your Spirit & Connect to Nature's Wisdom*. Follow her on Instagram @monicacrosson.



Once  
there were  
two sisters  
who did  
everything  
together.  
But only one of them  
disappeared.

Eleven-year-old Fiona has just read a book that doesn't exist.

Alone and out of place after her family's move to Lost Lake, Fiona ventures to the town's mansion-turned-library. There she finds a gripping mystery novel about a small town, family secrets, and a tragic disappearance. Strange similarities blur the lines between the novel and her new town.

And when she looks for the book again, it's gone. Almost like it never existed.

Fiona discovers it's not a novel, but the true story of an unsolved century-old crime filled with clues to the mystery. Lost Lake is a town of restless spirits, and Fiona will learn that both help and danger come from unexpected places—maybe even the sister she thinks doesn't care about her anymore.

New York Times-bestselling author Jacqueline West weaves a heart-pounding, intense, and imaginative mystery that builds anticipation on every page, while centering the strong and often tumultuous bond between sisters.

Learn more at [Long-Lost-Book.com](http://Long-Lost-Book.com)

More books and poetry at [JacquelineWest.com](http://JacquelineWest.com)

Summer Goddess (2020),  
by Margo Selski  
Oil on linen



## THIS YEAR'S ENCHANTED LIVING AWARD WINNER

We're excited to feature one of the two winners of the Art Renewal Center's 16th International ARC Salon Competition's special *Enchanted Living Award*: Margo Selski's *Summer Goddess*. (Stay tuned for the second winner in our summer issue, and find out more about the competition at [artrenewal.org](http://artrenewal.org)!) After choosing this gorgeous piece, we wanted to find out more from the artist herself.

**Enchanted Living: Can you tell us about your work generally? What fascinates and inspires you?**

**Margo Selski:** In my surreal and magical realistic oil paintings, I'm known for women in ornate garments and armor from the 14th to 16th centuries, oversize rabbits in oxford wing-tip shoes, insects on leashes, dresses covered in crying eyes, and young lady underwater gardening societies. I'm influenced by fairy tales, mythology, and my Southern Gothic upbringing. I am drawn to mysteries that are quirky, dark, nuanced, and hidden beneath layers of lush beauty.

**EL: How did *Summer Goddess* come about?**

**MS:** My painting *Summer Goddess* was inspired during the spring and summer of 2020 as I explored a wooded area called Sleepy Hollow. This small patch of wild is tucked just over the railroad tracks outside the Lowertown area of St. Paul, a short walk from my sixth-floor industrial art studio. Each time I returned to my studio, I daydreamed of the busy vibrations of the insects, the smell of the earth, and the intense colors of nature. The pandemic summer was a difficult time in isolation with my teenage daughter suffering from a blood disorder and grieving the loss of lives to Covid. Those walks fed my soul and filled me with a sense of awe and gratitude. I went through many interpretations of ancient mythological nature deities. These goddesses were based on those which later became witches in Western culture. Often after a walk, I would add or rework an element to the painting. One evening at dusk, I watched rabbits stretch high on their hind legs nibbling bits of bark off of saplings, and soon after a rabbit in wing-tip oxfords and striped socks emerged onto the canvas. For me, the painting allowed



nature into my brick-and-mortar studio and surrounded me with flora and fauna.

**EL: We feel like there's a strong witchy vibe in the image. Did you mean to capture that?**

**MS:** I'm inspired by the same things that inspire witches: the care, growth, and healing effects of plant life, insects, and animals. Painting all three phases of the pomegranate—berry, flower, and fruit—I explored the rich mythology of death, fertility, and power. The Mother Nature Goddess's skirt is a massive honeycomb teeming with bees that I associate with fertility. I gave her an anthropomorphic rabbit familiar who, for me, symbolizes wisdom, resourcefulness, luck, and fertility.

**EL: Can you tell us a bit about your process?**

**MS:** Recently I became nostalgic for both the darkness and the beauty of my Southern roots. I began to explore how to stretch and exhibit my current work

so that there could be a contrast between the refined nature of the traditional oil painting and the unrefined essence of the raw materials. I stretch the Belgian linen onto stained oak supports with a combination of sinew (thread made from fibrous bands of animal tissue) and imitation sinew (man-made thread of synthetic fibers coated in beeswax). After stitching or quilting a border with thread, I primed the surface with rabbit-skin glue and a thin layer of clear gesso. I chose this path because it was familiar to me growing up in rural Kentucky. I remember strapping quilts onto wooden supports, stretching and tanning deer hides, pulling sinew from animal tendons, preparing looms for weaving rugs, and creating crude gourd drums with bits of hide and sinew. With this new approach, it is my intention to draw the viewer first into the elaborate refined fantasy of my oil painting before being pulled back to the reality and simplicity of linen, rabbit skin glue, sinew, and wood.

**EL: And, finally, how do you stay enchanted?**

**MS:** In my studio, I am working on an experimental technique that I find enchanted. I call it the *planned pentimento*. I have paintings where over time eyes weep, lyrics of a song emerge and float from a singer's lips, a butterfly rises from a cocoon, a child's white cat-eared cap turns pink, and a ghost twin joins her sister. In art history, a pentimento is an artistic mistake in which an earlier image reappears after it has been changed or painted over. I intentionally hide images and words under thin opaque layers of handmade oil paint, and over time they reveal themselves on the surface of my paintings.



See more of Selski's work at [margoselskiartist.com](http://margoselskiartist.com).



Photography by  
**EMMANUEL TECLES**  
@tekprod\_photographies

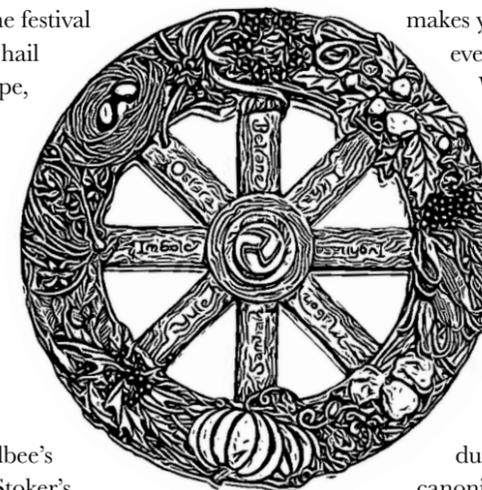
# WALPURGISNACHT

## THE SECOND HALLOWEEN

by Susan Ilka Tuttle

**H**ave you heard of the springtime festival called Walpurgisnacht? If you hail from northern or central Europe, you are most likely familiar with this nighttime party with witchy roots. If you live in the United States, like me, you probably haven't, unless you're a pagan or witch who revels in such celebrations or someone who has noticed references to Walpurgisnacht in famous pieces of music, art, theater, and literature: Luis Ricardo Falero's painting *Walpurgisnacht*, Felix Mendelssohn's cantata *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*, Goethe's *Faust*, Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, and Bram Stoker's short story "Dracula's Guest" all depict the mystery and the macabre of this enchanting, eerie night.

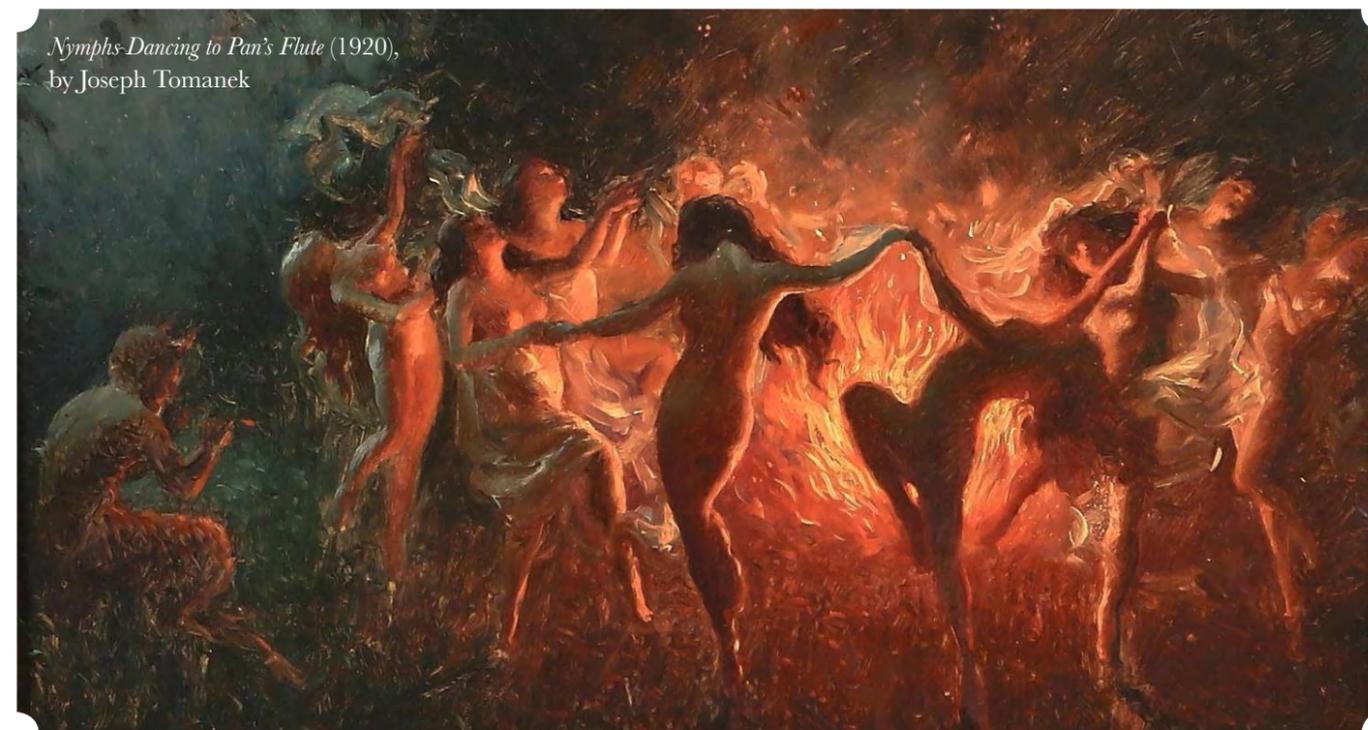
As a pagan witch, I observe the eight holidays of the neo-pagan Wheel of the Year, called sabbats. The sabbats are based on seasonal ancient pagan celebrations that correspond with solstices (winter and summer), equinoxes (fall and spring), and cross-quarter days (days that fall equally between a solstice and an equinox). On April 30 of each year, the witch's wheel



makes yet another turn, and I like to kick off the eve of Beltane with the coinciding holiday, Walpurgis Night (also known in Germany as Hexennacht), as it tickles some of my ancestral pagan roots. And I'll admit, it is a good excuse for a spooky party with Halloween-like elements. This modern-day European and Scandinavian festival is actually a blend of both Christian and ancient pagan Celtic and Germanic celebrations. It's named after Walpurga, a young British nun and Christian saint who lived as a missionary in the Frankish Empire during the eighth century. Observance of her canonization day, May 1, eventually fused with Norse celebrations of spring and Beltane.

Beltane and Samhain (which coincides with Halloween) are six months apart and directly opposite each other on the Wheel of the Year. (When it's Beltane in the Northern Hemisphere, it's Samhain in the Southern Hemisphere). Pagans often refer to Walpurgisnacht as the second Halloween. It is customary to dress up as a witch, devil, or other supernatural being and go trick-or-treating in the village of your town. Like Samhain,

*Nymphs Dancing to Pan's Flute* (1920),  
by Joseph Tomanek



# Walpurgisnacht

Susan Ilka Tuttle

it is thought of as an in-between astrological event where the veil between the earthly realm and spirit world is said to thin, making it an opportune time to communicate with spirits and the fae. Bonfires are lit to keep malevolent spirits at bay, and there are parties with food and drink and ceremonies where you can release negative energies and experiences from the year by writing them down on paper and tossing them into the bonfire. Traditionally, it is customary to drink alcohol and make noise to both ward off negative energies and welcome the souls of departed loved ones. It is also customary to make offerings of the deceased's favorite foods.

There are regional variations of this holiday. For instance, many Germanic people celebrate an old belief that thirty witches across Europe mounted their broomsticks at night and flew to Brocken (the highest part of the Harz Mountains in north-central Germany) to gather and welcome the return of spring. Organized community festivities abound in the Harz Mountain region on Walpurgisnacht, including bonfires, partygoers in witchy costumes, springtime rituals, customary food and drink, fireworks, and entertainment in the form of jugglers, magicians, bands, comedians, and dance.

Since many of us probably won't make it to the Harz Mountain region to join in the fun, we can make some of our own dark merriment on this evening. Here are some ideas for celebrating at home:



- Write down negative memories, thoughts, and feelings from the year that you would like to release and toss these slips of paper into your bonfire.
- Just like at Samhain-time, the veil is said to be thin on this evening. As a spirit medium, I don't necessarily believe it's actually thinner, but with all the collective energy around spirit communication on this night, it can make it easier to connect. That being said, Walpurgis Night is an opportune time for spirit communication and divination practice with such tools as tarot, runes, pendulum, and automatic writing.
- Watch a spooky flick. If you're an isolated witch like me, consider having a virtual watch party with witchy kin.
- Play some atmospheric music. Do a search for "Walpurgis Night" on Spotify, and you'll find a treasure trove of celebratory tunes.
- Read some old ghost stories by candlelight and nibble on some chocolate treats.
- Brew yourself a cup of mugwort tea (avoid if pregnant). Mugwort is known as the witch's flying herb and can produce some interesting vivid dreams: visualize yourself flying to Brocken. To make, use a tablespoon of dried herb per cup of boiling water. Steep 15 minutes, strain out plant matter, add honey to sweeten, and enjoy. Mugwort is somewhat bitter and a mild sedative, so avoid driving or operating machinery after consuming it.

This nighttime magical celebration continues until the next day, May 1, which is Beltane. Beltane marks the beginning of fertile spring, and the beginning of the days of light returning in full glory.



Susan Ilka Tuttle is a green witch, herbalist, spirit medium, author, and photo artist living in rural Maine. Enjoy her book *Green Witch Magick*, where she explores thirteen essential herbs for the witch's cupboard through herbalism and magic-based projects. Visit her botanicals shop at [inthewoodbotanicals.com](http://inthewoodbotanicals.com), learn about her spirit mediumistic readings at [susantuttlespiritmessenger.com](http://susantuttlespiritmessenger.com), and follow her on Instagram @whisper\_in\_the\_wood.





## How to Create an Altar

by Allison Church  
Art by Stephanie Law

Find the central theme  
of your life — everything  
revolves around this.

For instance, the central theme  
of my life is doubt,  
and my altar is a skeptical half-hope  
of dead flowers and tarot cards.

Add candles — the color  
of the candles depends  
on who you are.

For instance, I was born  
into the sky like a bird,  
like a dim star, a treetop silhouette,  
and all my candles are blue.



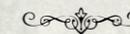
## Spell for a Celebration of Life

by Allison Church  
Art by Stephanie Law

Skip the eye of newt; concentrate  
on the eye of the needle —  
stitch a dream in silver thread.

Decant a song from a stream  
of clouds, a melody of stars spilling  
through a stained glass window.

Dance in the living room; dance  
while branches sway and leaves twirl  
and the wind carries you away.



Read more from Allison Church on Medium @mosslevel.

*The* GREEN WITCH  
*Gathering*

BY TRICIA SAROYA



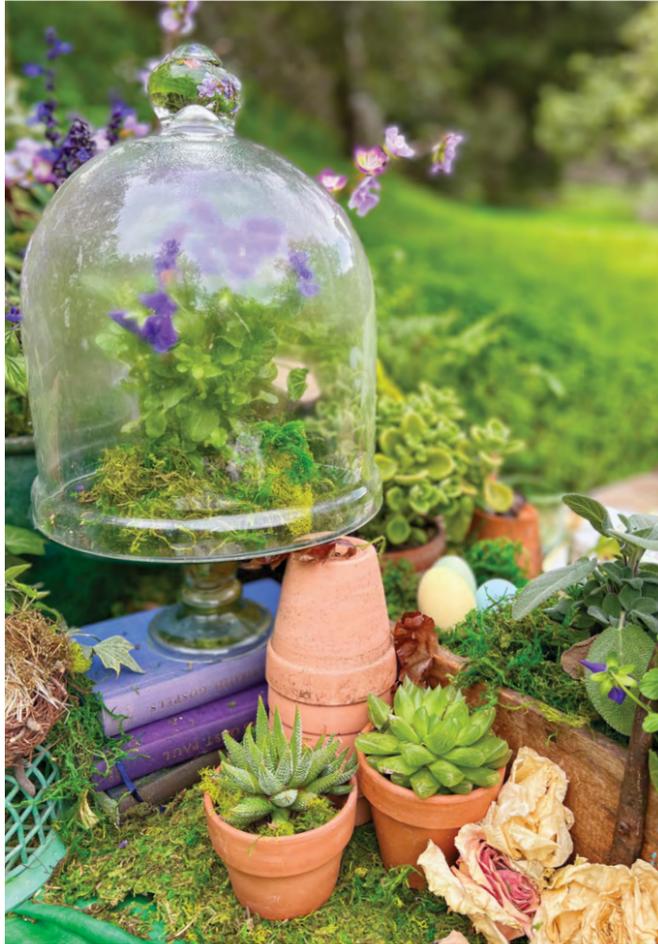


For me, the witch is the wise woman of the village. She's knowledgeable in the healing arts, she grows herbs and plants, and she's in tune with the rhythms of nature. She is eternally young with a spark of magic in her eye, no matter the age of her body, for she is in touch with the beauty and awe of the world and remains her precious eternal child. In spring she revels in new growth, both in nature and herself. It's a time for the turning of the soil and planting of seeds both in nature and within our lives—a time to start enacting the dreams we envisioned during long winter nights. It is a time of becoming, a quickening of our souls.

In honor of this time, I've created a green witchy table bursting with spring treasures and set for a sweet lunch with your best magical friends. I wanted it to look like we pulled up cushions to our garden's potting table, lush with plants and flowers and all the details of a gardener's lair. I included lots of small potted herbs and plants, and natural bits and bobs like nests of eggs, feathers, and crystals. Of course there must be magical mushrooms and tiny spell books too. I envision the setting as a cross between a gardener's workbench and a nature scientist's laboratory, all mixed with a touch of magic, because for me that is what a green witch is.

## The Green Witch Gathering

Tricia Saroya



### How to:

- Any place in the garden or nature can work. First, lay down a large area rug and then place plywood on cinder blocks. Cover with a large linen to hide your structure and sprinkle cushions around.
- You can actually use a potting bench as a table and pull up stools (if it's tall) or chairs (if it's table height). If the table is super rustic, that's even better, as it adds to the ambiance. You can use place mats to protect your dishes if desired.
- A simple folding table in the garden can work beautifully. Simply cover it with linens and bring in the rustic touch with planks of wood or piles of pots and plants.

### Fun details:

- Give out packets of seeds or bulbs as favors.
- Have your guests write their wishes on paper made with natural fiber laced with seeds. When they plant the paper, as the seeds grow so will their wishes.
- Don't be afraid of a little dirt and moss; it is good for the immune system!
- Have your guests share their favorite gardening tips on recipe cards to be added to each other's "spell" books of garden tips.
- Give bundles of herbs as favors with scrolled information on their magical properties.
- Other ideas for favors could be

- sachets of homemade potpourri, tea, and cooking herbs.
- Serve herbal-infused food and tea to complete the theme.

Whatever you do, remember to celebrate the turning of the season as a time of new beginnings, of growing and becoming. Go outside and revel in the beauty and magic of Mother Nature!



*Tricia Saroya calls herself a "creatix," an out-of-the-box artist that imagines beauty in a multitude of mediums. For more creative magic, follow her on Instagram @triciasaroya or visit her webpage at triciasaroya.com.*

# MA CULLINANE

## GRIMALKIN'S CURIOUS CATS

### APRIL 2023

WWW.CROWTAROTSHOP.COM



## Featured Artist

RED.FOX.CHILD

Mihaela Prižmić, a.k.a. @red.fox.child, is a twenty-six-year-old artist who lives in the Croatian countryside, close to the lush woodlands that are a never-ending source of inspiration for her creations. At school she studied botanical illustration and environmental science, and she feels a kinship with artists of old who “preserved a spirit of particular time in our history.” She hopes that in a world that’s “experiencing such a fast change nowadays,” she can “preserve every possible piece of it through art in hope it might give a certain kind of meaning to someone someday.”

For years, she says, she’s been working on creating a coherence between the style of her art and her green-witch lifestyle. Green witchery is something she’s been drawn to since she was a child, crafting mud potions in her garden and making sketches of the various ingredients. And the beginning of spring always brings magic as well as new inspiration to her life: “When flowers, tiny plants, and leaflets finally start to appear all around, my mind also gets overgrown with new ideas for my crafts—surely green magic at its finest.”

We imagine her in the forest even as we speak, searching for plants and mushroom specimens, observing all manner of creature—including the sweet frog above—in fine green-witch artiste fashion.

Find more of Mihaela Prižmić’s work on Instagram @red.fox.child.



*Green Witch*

# *The Beauty of* RENEWAL

*Alise Marie, The Beauty Witch®*

**T**he first scents of newly arisen green stir her senses, carried on the still-cool, rousing breeze, as the vague hint of sweet florals tickles her nose. It is now that the witch arises from her winter sleep, feeling clear and fully rested. The heavy blanket of soft, nurturing quiet is now somehow too weighty, and she desires to shed layers, stretching her limbs to take up space once more. Instinctively she wanders out in the first light of morning to gather dew—the ambrosia of youth and beauty. Her age is irrelevant, because she in her ancient wisdom knows that renewal is the calling card of spring. It is not a time for making up lost moments of lying dormant in her beauty but rather an embrace of this maiden breath of a continuing cycle, wherein one must change her rituals to suit the season at hand. It is understood that she has carefully tended to her beauty during the icy months, fortifying her powers both inside and on the surface. She is a witch, after all, and knows that her potency lies first and foremost in caring for herself. Now, with a spin of the earth's wheel, a current spell must be cast.



The changing seasons, in all their awe and excitement, still invite challenges. We are vulnerable to mercurial weather patterns that can bring forth myriad undesirables: erratic skin, a drop in immunity, and all the internal storms that come along that create an outer drop in vibrancy and confidence. Witches know how to align with seasonal treasures—we attune to nature in all her glistening splendor and her wild fury—and as we prepare to rise up and out into the world like new buds, beauty rituals are the prayers, the *worship*, that provide both spiritual and physical roots for seducing your dreams into coming true.

My offerings to you, *mes chères*, in this season of renewal, have been carefully conjured to prepare you with beauty potions to align you with both the

detoxifying necessities of now and the body's yearning for fresh nourishment. A generous dose of solar fire is mingled in to give your winter self a playful, friendly shove out into life, should you need it, and an added shot of vitality if you don't. Either way, your magic is glamorously enhanced!

The bright catwalk stars of the verdant runway are a bountiful blend of charmed favorites and mysterious muses. **Primrose** opens the show with her Venusian gifts of beauty and love, aided and abetted by none other than Freya, who ups the potency and protection. Primrose banishes dryness, adds immense moisture via essential fatty acids, encourages cellular regeneration and ceramide production, and soothes the scalp for new hair growth. Joining

her are the classic lines of **rosemary**, a solar herb of fire and protection, alongside love, passion, and healing. She grants new hair growth, boosts immunity, wards off infection, and firms and tightens the skin. Buoyant **basil** adds to the scene with perhaps a surprising dash of beauty benefits: a strong fire vibration entwines with healing, love, protection, and wealth magic hand in hand with antioxidant prowess, immune boosting, detoxifying, and cleansing (especially excellent for acne and inflamed or sensitive conditions). Spring conjures visions of lilacs, but here I've given things a twist: **Neem**, or Indian lilac, is a sacred flower that is fabulous for both hair and skin. It conditions for a healthy scalp, promotes new growth, and adds glorious shine. In addition, its antimicrobial gifts and fatty acids keep skin clear, reduce redness, and hydrate as it delays the visible signs of aging. It is said that drops from the elixir of mortality fell upon the neem tree, thus granting it divinity. It also provides protection by warding off negative energies. Our closing act is none other than lovely **peony**, filled with fiery solar powers. This elusive beauty heals scalp irritations, seals the hair shaft, banishes dryness, and makes frizz nothing but a bad dream.

Such a stunning retinue, along with a few guest stars, make for quite the glamorous consorts this season and will have you ready and glowing during this most gloriously green spell our beloved earth casts. My offerings to you, mignonettes, are best concocted at a new moon, and can be repeated each month of spring.

You'll want to prepare by first creating a batch of what I'm going to simply refer to as an herbal brew. Combine three stalks of fresh rosemary, a tablespoon of dried neem flowers, and six large basil leaves in a glass jar. Heat one cup of pure water to almost boiling, then pour the water over the blend. Allow it to steep for 10 to 15 minutes to get a nice, strong infusion. Strain the brew into another jar or cup, and allow to cool before mixing into your topical potions.

## MAIDEN'S MANE

### Hair Masque

*Conjures one or more treatments, depending on hair length and texture*

- ½ very ripe banana, mashed*
- 3 tablespoons herbal brew*
- 1 teaspoon peony oil*
- 1 teaspoon primrose oil*

First, mash your bananas as finely and smoothly as possible—the riper the banana, the better. You'll want it to have a creamy consistency for ease of both application and rinsing. I find using a mortar and pestle followed by a brisk whisk does a fairly decent job of blending it. Pour it into a very pretty bowl, then add the peony and primrose oils. Whisk them together, then add the herbal brew to thin it. Give it another good whisk just before using the masque, as the oil can separate a bit. Apply the masque to dry hair, roots to ends, massaging in gently as you go. Pile hair on top of your head, and secure it with a pelican clip. (If you want to add heat via a cap, even better.) Let it rest on your head for 10 to 15 minutes, or more if you like, then wash it out thoroughly with a gentle shampoo. If your hair is fine or oily, or if you just crave extra volume, a second wash would be best. Run a tiny amount of your regular conditioner on the very ends, rinse, and style as usual. Your tresses are left glossy, detangled, and beautifully conditioned. Regular use will promote strong, new hair!

**Banana** added here provides a creamy, nutritive base. As a sacred food of ancient India, our humble friend has surprising beauty benefits. Loaded with vitamins, it restores, moisturizes, and protects from UV damage. Bananas also bring love, abundance, and heightened spirituality.

## THE MORNING BRIGHT

### Facial Exfoliant and Masque

*Conjures approximately three treatments*

- 1 tablespoon flaxseed meal (finely ground flaxseed)*
- ½ teaspoon primrose oil*
- ½ teaspoon peony oil*
- 1 to 2 tablespoons herbal brew*



**Beauty Witch Secret:** Yield to the sensuality of spring by indulging in a favorite ritual of mine: Apply both masques while soaking in a bath bedecked with flowers!

In a small bowl, combine the flaxseed meal and the oils. Add the herbal brew and mix well. Though you will choose very fine flax meal (it is easily found pre-ground, or you can even grind seeds in a spice grinder yourself), it will still be a somewhat chunky potion, similar to a *gommage*. It's just the nature of masques that contain certain types of flours or dry ingredients. But I love their power! If you find you want the masque a bit thinner, add more brew and mix it again. Apply to a clean face in my favorite two-step ritual that guarantees both gorgeous skin and a highly relaxing, stress-relieving experience: First, massage a layer of masque into your skin using circular motions. Really get *into* it. It feels sublime! Don't neglect your neck, décolleté, and the back of your hands either—they are starving, trust me.

After you've revved your complexion with this gentle but most effective exfoliation, then apply a second, thicker layer on top. You will want to *press* the masque into your skin this time, rather than rubbing it in. Fill in any spots that look sparse, then go and relax. Leave it on for at least 10 to 15 minutes, then rinse well with warm water. Follow it with a cool splash, then apply sunscreen or crème as needed. Your skin will be soft, smooth, velvety, and entirely incandescent. Since this recipe creates several treatments, store it covered in the fridge and use it within a week to *build* that glow.

**Flaxseed** is rich in nutrients and good fats, in particular the oft-elusive omega-3s, feeding the skin with vitamins and leaving it soft, dewy, revitalized, and entirely glowing.



**GREEN WITCH**

**Elixir**

*Conjures one large or two small beverages*

- 1 cup honeydew melon, diced
- ½ cup hempseed milk
- 1 spring of fresh rosemary, leaves only
- 6 leaves of fresh mint
- 3 leaves of fresh basil
- Juice of one lemon
- Stevia or monk fruit to taste

In a high-speed blender, combine the honeydew, hemp milk, lemon, and fresh herbs. Blend the mixture until completely smooth. *Please note that vortex, or bullet-style, blenders are the only way to go really when using any kind of plant power, especially fresh greens and herbs. Other models simply will not purée*

*nearly as smoothly, and you may find yourself with an unappetizing texture.* Taste it. It will be fresh, sweet, slightly creamy, and bursting with bright energy. I never add additional sweeteners here, but feel free if you desire. This is delightful at room temperature, but glorious chilled on a warm day. And yes, you can always add a splash of spirits for a high-vibration beauty cocktail.

Refreshing, succulent **honeydew** is rich in beautifying vitamin C. It hydrates and keeps your belly happy while strengthening bones. Ruled by the moon, honeydew brings healing and purification. Powerful, water-ruled **hempseed** bestows the magic of healing, love, psychic visions, and potent meditation. Its tiny seeds are packed with nutritious vitamins, minerals, fiber, amino acids, and they are a good

source of plant proteins and omega oils. Cheeky **mint** is Mercury-ruled and gifts us with abundance, healing, protection (and a little lust!) alongside calcium, vitamins, minerals, and anti-inflammatory powers. Luscious **lemon** adds the finishing note with a lunar vibration, bursting with high vibrations of vitamin C, antioxidants, and cleansing prowess entwined with love and happiness magic.

**Beauty Witch Secret:** Add a quarter cup of cooked quinoa before blending for a blast of plant-powered, easily absorbed protein. This powerhouse seed is naturally gluten free, voluptuous in its nutrition, fiber-rich, and stabilizes blood sugar, all without that annoying bloat.

*Alise Marie is the author of The Beauty Witch's Secrets: Recipes and Rituals for the Modern Goddess available wherever books are sold. Find her at thebeautywitch.com and on Instagram @thebeautywitchofficial.*

*“Spring fever, spring is here at last. Spring fever, my heart’s beating fast. Get up, get out. Spring is everywhere.”—Elvis Presley*



**W**hen tiny leaves sprout from withered boughs and buds shake off the frost and begin to bloom, the magic of spring always makes me feel like dancing with the flowers. There are so many reasons why spring makes us feel good! Exposure to sunlight increases serotonin in the brain, which elevates the mood. It decreases melatonin in the body during the day and increases it at night, which can help improve sleep.

Spring is also a time of transition for the skin. As the weather warms, it’s a good idea to go for a facial to jump-start skin-cell turnover. Swap out heavy creams for lighter lotions, and keep a facial mist handy to cleanse, detox, and hydrate. And look for products with these beautiful herbs and flowers!

**PRIMROSE**

Evening primrose oil is a bit of a cure-all, with emollient properties that soften and smooth the skin, enhance elasticity, and reduce the appearance of roughness, lines and wrinkles, and dry, dull skin.

**Hollybeth Organics Face & Neck Elixir**

An intoxicating blend of extraordinary flower oils—camellia, evening primrose, sunflower, sea buckthorn, rose geranium—and carrot (rich in vitamin A), this USDA-certified organic beauty secret is nourishing and hydrating and will work its magic on dry skin.

**ROSEMARY**

I grow a small rosemary bush in my backyard, and whenever I need an energy boost, I step outside, rub a couple of leaves between my fingers, and inhale the delicious aroma. It immediately perks me up, which is also what rosemary does for the skin.

**Erbaviva Organic Lip and Cheek Balm**

This adorable little stick is not only an incredible deal; it is something you will always want to carry with you. It will become as indispensable as your cell phone! Loaded with antioxidant-rich rosemary and calendula extracts, shea butter, and soothing essential oils of chamomile and lavender, the cheeky little balm soothes, moisturizes, elevates the mood with aromatherapy, and gives a bit of a glow to the skin.

**MINT**

Everyone expects mint in their toothpaste, but the zesty herb has many more effective uses in beauty and personal care. Peppermint and spearmint stimulate the circulation and revive tired and achy feet. Plus it’s an antibacterial, which makes it perfect for natural deodorant.

**Soapwalla Sensitive Skin Lavender Mint Deodorant Cream**

Soapwalla is one of the first natural deodorants and an early brand to formulate deodorant cream, which is applied to the skin with fingers. With

vegetable powders, charcoal, and clay to absorb moisture and lavender, and peppermint and palmarosa to inhibit bacteria, this formulation is free of baking soda and gentle enough for sensitive skin. And it works! The baking-soda-free formula is ideal for those with reactive underarms.

**LILAC**

Lilac is a heady, fragrant bloom that evokes hot, sultry nights and the buzzing of cicadas. With powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, lilac leaf stem cells can help promote skin-cell turnover and skin renewal. Lilac is antibacterial and antifungal—it eases irritation and is good for blemished skin.

**Kypris Clearing Serum**

An excellent antidote to oily, blemished skin, this serum contains zinc, lilac leaf stem cells, and AHAs, which help exfoliate. (The serum also helps reduce ingrown hairs from shaving, waxing, or other methods of depilation.) Tea tree and lavender also fight against blemishes.

—Rona Berg



**RAINBOW CURVE CORSETRY**

“This piece was inspired by the old chestnut tree out in front of my cottage. The moist Irish weather forms the perfect climate for a whole micro ecosystem to thrive on its trunk. All the layers of mosses, lichens, ferns, and foliage combine to create some wonderful textures. I can only imagine all the magical creatures that call this place their home.”

*Title:* Fern Corset

*Artist:* Rainbow Curve Corsetry @rainbowcurvecorsetry

*Materials and techniques:* coutil, moiré silk, felt mushrooms, hand embroidery, beading, free-motion embroidered moth, silk ivy leaves

*See more on Instagram @rainbowcurvecorsetry.*



# THE LADY LICHEN

by *The Wondersmith*

**I**t's okay to be sensitive, you know. Most exceptionally beautiful things are, my dear. Take the beautiful *Lobaria pulmonaria* that graces my teapot and hangs from my hair. It may look tough like dragon's skin, but it thrives only in the cleanest of forests. Its presence here is a sign that this is a place where the air is pure. Here, have a cup brewed from the herbs in these woods. It will enliven you.

You don't need to harden yourself to the world, darling. Perhaps the world is simply too harsh for you. Some of us seek out clearer spaces and calmer lives while others thrive in the chaos. Neither path is wrong. It's harmful only if it's the wrong path for *you*.

Are you easily hurt or overwhelmed? Are you particularly in tune with the burdens of others? Do you pay attention to the little details that so many others seem to miss? Believe it or not, you are just like me. Well, minus the chlorophyllous complexion, of course. The calmness you feel in my presence is a result of my own greatest strength: softness. It takes great bravery to hold onto that precious softness in the face of the external chaos and pressures of the world, but I can see that spark in your eyes. You are strong enough to do it. Protect it like the soft and vulnerable treasure it is. Hold it close and whisper kind things to it. It won't always be easy, but it will be worth it.

And when the world starts to feel like too much and you need a break, you are always welcome in my green cathedral. The mosses will cushion you. The trees will shelter you. And my voice will always be but a whisper away.



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## LUNGS OF THE FOREST

Lichens are known as the lungs of the forest both because they indicate that the air is pure and because several types can aid in supporting our lungs as well. Many people mistake lichens for a kind of plant, but they are actually a symbiosis of fungi and algae. If you decide to forage your own, keep in mind that lichens grow very slowly and are an important part of the forest ecosystem, so try to use only the lichens that have fallen to the ground on broken branches. If you do harvest from trees, do so carefully and sparingly. As with any wild plant, fungi, or lichen, make sure you are 100 percent sure of its identification before you gather any. You should also consult with your doctor before trying any new herbal remedy.

**Lungwort** (*Lobaria pulmonaria*) is named both for its lung-like appearance and for its long history of being used to treat ailments like pneumonia or asthma. It is typically taken as an infusion in hot water, which can then be sipped like tea or inhaled as a facial steam to help clear out gunky lungs. It's a lovely bright green and has a distinctive texture that reminds me of dragon skin.

**Usnea** (*Usnea* spp.) This silvery lichen is also known for its effect on the lungs. I love foraging for usnea since the identification between it and similarly colored lichens is so fun! True usnea has a tiny white elastic thread inside the lichen's sheath. Gently breaking the larger fibers apart will reveal it, and it's even more dramatic if the lichen is wet. Usnea is fairly common throughout the American West and typically grows in clean, slightly damp areas of the forest on conifer trees. It's a wonderful support for respiratory ailments and can be taken for acute symptoms or as a general tonic. Its constituents are alcohol-soluble, so the most potent preparations of usnea are tinctures. That said, it's still effective in water infusions as well

**Turkey tail** (*Trametes versicolor*) This is a fungus rather than a lichen, but it is worth including in this list for its immune-boosting benefits. While turkey-tail mushrooms aren't known specifically for their effect on the lungs, they are particularly powerful at strengthening the immune system and assisting your body in fighting off infections. These mushrooms are flat, fan-shaped, and often striped with many colors, sometimes including blue and red. They grow on deadwood, particularly in damp regions. They've been used for thousands of years to treat many ailments, including coughs and breathing difficulties.

**Mullein** (*Verbascum thapsus*) This is a plant, but I've included it for its respiratory benefits. It makes a great addition to a lung-supporting tea or tincture. I always think of this plant as "mama mullein" because its presence is so soothing to me. Mullein is one of the first plants to grow in disturbed soil (like a construction zone or burned area), and it helps prepare the scene for many more plant friends. With such soft leaves and deep veins, mullein turns dewdrops into sparkling diamonds. Mullein is a beautiful pioneer. The most remarkable thing about this familiar plant is its ability to help with lung-related issues. The herbalist Darcy Williamson told me that she's seen rolled-up

mullein leaves smoked like a cigarette as an emergency stand-in for an inhaler during asthma attacks she witnessed while on backcountry expeditions where emergency care wasn't available. (Of course if you have asthma, you should definitely use your inhaler—this is for emergencies only!) Mullein is also a common addition to herbal smoking blends for its soothing nature. That said, you don't have to smoke mullein to get its benefits; a safer way to consume it is to brew it as a tea and then strain really well through a clean cloth to ensure none of its little fibers get into your digestive system, as they can be irritating.

**To make a tea:** Blending any combination of these four foraged ingredients together creates a great tonic for respiratory ailments. First, make sure everything is completely dry. I like to roll the usnea into little balls so it mixes in with shredded dried mullein or crumbled lungwort a little more neatly. The resulting tea will have a strong earthy flavor, so feel free to add in some other flavors as well! I would recommend mint (for soothing the stomach), elderflower (for reducing the temperature of a fever), or chai spices (because they are warming and taste delicious). To brew, cover about a tablespoon of the mixture in boiling water and steep for 10 minutes. Strain well through fabric to remove any hairs, then reheat and stir in a little honey if you'd like. Sip slowly and picture all of that foresty fresh-air goodness heading down to your lungs as you drink it. This tea can be drunk regularly through the season to act as a tonic for those with asthma or chronic respiratory ailments, or it can be consumed at the onset of respiratory complaints like coughs.





CANDY CAP  
LOG CREPE CAKE

**T**his stunning cake is a delight of flavors and textures. It's definitely a love letter to the woods. Not only is it decorated with turkey-tail mushrooms sculpted out of chocolate; it also gets its unforgettable flavor from fungi as well! Candy cap mushrooms are several species in the *Lactarius* family that have an intense maple flavor and fragrance once dried. They are one of my absolute favorite secret ingredients to add to dessert recipes like this one! If you can't get your own, you can substitute two teaspoons of maple extract instead.

This forestry cake has a rich, strong maple flavor with a slight kick of alcohol swirled through a silky ganache, layered between tender gluten-free crepe-like cakes. It's all the woodsy, earthy warmth you'd want from a log cake, without tasting even a little bit like a stump. It's definitely a project—perfect for a peaceful day in the kitchen with few other expectations. If you're someone who bakes for pleasure or comfort, you'll love this. Just remember to give yourself plenty of time and space to create it so you don't burn yourself out. The same activity can turn from replenishing to depleting so quickly when you add time pressure. You'll make the candy-cap-mushroom-infused ganache first so it has time to cool and thicken slightly while you prepare the cakes.

**Candy Cap Mushroom Ganache**

- 2 cups chopped dark chocolate
- 1½ cups canned coconut cream
- 1½ tablespoons ground candy cap mushrooms
- 2 tablespoons bourbon

**Directions:**

Put the chopped chocolate in a large heat-proof bowl.

Add the coconut cream and candy cap mushrooms to a small saucepan. Heat until just barely simmering. Turn off the heat and let steep for 30 minutes, then heat to barely simmering again. Add the bourbon. Pour the mixture over the chopped chocolate.

Let sit for 5 minutes, then stir until smooth. Keep somewhere warm while you prepare the cakes, so you can spread the ganache on in a thin layer using a clean paintbrush.

**Cake**

This cake is based on a Brazilian cake called *bolo de rolo*, where thin layers of cake are baked on cookie sheets, then spread with guava jam and rolled up into beautiful, delicate slices. I decided to use the same technique but instead fill my cake with candy cap ganache. It's an unusual way of baking cakes, but the results are worth it!

- 2 cups white sugar
- 2 cups butter, room temperature
- 10 eggs, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons maple extract
- 1 cup flour (I used gluten-free)
- ½ cup almond flour
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons powdered candy cap mushrooms

**Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 450°F with a rack in the middle.

In a small bowl, whisk the flour, almond flour, and cornstarch together.

Cream the butter and sugar together in a large bowl until light and fluffy.

Add the eggs, one by one, beating well after each addition, alternating with 3 tablespoons of the flour mix after each one. Beat in the maple extract.

Add the remaining flour and candy cap mushrooms and beat until smooth.

Grease a 13-by-18-inch silicone baking mat on a cookie sheet.

Use a clean, wide brush to spread the dough very thin on the silicone mat.

Bake until the dough is opaque and doesn't stick to your finger when pressed, about 3 minutes. (Keep a close eye on it!)

While it's baking, spread out a cotton dishtowel and dust with powdered sugar.

Turn the cake out onto the dishtowel immediately after removing it from the oven. Slice it in thirds lengthwise. Spread the ganache on the cake while it is warm using another clean

paintbrush, then start rolling one of the strips, using the towel to assist you.

Once the first strip is finished, roll the second strip around it.

Continue this process with the rest of the batter until you have a round cake formed. Let chill until the ganache sets up. While the cake is chilling, prepare the decorations!

Carefully trim the top of the cake with a very sharp knife.

**Turkey Tail Decorations**

These add a little realism to the cake, while also hinting at its foresty flavors.

- 8 ounces white chocolate melting wafers
- 1 teaspoon ground black sesame
- 1 to 2 teaspoons black cocoa powder
- 1 to 2 teaspoons cocoa powder
- 1 to 2 teaspoons butterfly pea powder or blue food coloring
- Piping bags with small tips
- Parchment paper

**Directions:**

Add the white chocolate melting chips to a silicone bowl. Microwave it in short 15-second bursts, stirring well with a silicone spatula after each time. Stop when most of the chocolate has melted and continue stirring until the rest has melted as well.

Divide the white chocolate into several small bowls. Tint them various shades of gray, brown, and blue to your liking. Leave one white. Transfer them all to small piping bags.

Set down some parchment paper on a cool surface. Pipe the edge of a mushroom with the white chocolate, creating a wavy design. As it sets up, you can pipe the next color inside it, making sure it has full contact with the interior of the white chocolate. Continue layering colors until your mushroom has a flat side (which will go into the cake) and a ruffled side to stick out. Let set up.

# The Lady Lichen

The Wondersmith

## Edible Moss Cake

This can be torn and attached to the cake to make really realistic, believable moss. To get the right texture, you'll need to use a microwave oven and some disposable plastic cups—the cake must stick to the sides of the cup to stay airy. Make sure the cups you use are microwave-safe (and recyclable!).

- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 30 grams (about 1½ tablespoons) honey
- 3 tablespoons gluten-free flour
- 1¼ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon high-quality green matcha

## Directions:

In a small bowl, whisk together the egg and sugar until light and frothy. Add the honey and whisk again.

Sift in the flour, baking powder, and matcha. Gently fold in using a rubber spatula, keeping as much air in the mix as possible

Fill a disposable microwave-safe cup a third of the way full with the mixture, using as many cups as necessary to take care of all the batter. The reason for the disposable cups is that the cake needs to stick to the sides as it climbs to retain its texture, a bit like an angel-food cake.

Microwave the cups for 50 seconds,

then turn them upside down on a cooling rack and cool completely

Cut each cup with scissors to gently pull the cake out. Tear into irregular pieces for a realistic look.

## Bark

- 12 ounces chocolate melting chips
- Leftover chocolate ganache, cooled until a spreadable consistency
- Matcha and cocoa powder

## Directions:

Melt 6 ounces of the chocolate melting chips in the microwave in 20-second bursts, stirring well after each one to avoid overheating. Pour the melted chocolate out onto a large sheet of parchment paper and spread it thinly with a rubber spatula. Place another layer of parchment paper on top and smooth it out into an even layer. Roll the parchment up into a cylinder about 4 inches in diameter and refrigerate it until the chocolate has set. When you unroll it, you'll have a bunch of curved chocolate shards.

Add a layer of slightly thickened ganache to the outside of the cake. Press the chocolate shards into the side so that they are curving inward. They should cover the outside of the cake completely, extending a little bit past the top. Refrigerate the cake to let the chocolate firm up.

Melt the remaining chocolate coating, then use a clean brush to brush it onto the sides of the cake. It's okay if there are lumps—this will make it look more realistic! Make sure to cover the whole outside completely. While the chocolate is still warm, use it to secure the white chocolate turkey-tail mushrooms and the edible moss.

Let the chocolate set up, then dust with cocoa powder and matcha powder for a realistic mossy-log appearance.



Follow Miss Wondersmith and her many Wondersmithing adventures on Instagram and Facebook @misswondersmith, misswondersmith.com, or become part of her Wondercrew at patreon.com/misswondersmith.

# Things We Love

Spring 2023



Artist Ann Wood's realistic paper flowers and botanical art. See more at woodlucker.com.

# A Spell for SUMMONING SPRING

by Briana Saussy

Spring does not need to be summoned. It will come in its own time and its own way to grace the land around us. It always does. For me, in my area, I know spring is well and truly on the way in early March, when the mesquite trees are heavy with their delicate yellow blooms and the wildflowers begin showing off all over the place. The first to arrive is pink primrose, and that is followed by bluebonnet, Mexican hats, and paintbrush, and last are the wild white poppies with a shock of hot pink at their center. This is how spring settles itself into the land where I live.

But sometimes spring and the energy it carries with it do need to be invited to grace our inner landscapes and the situations we hold in our hearts and minds.

Sometimes what a relationship needs is the enchantment of pulsing, verdant life.

Sometimes what a cold heart longs for is the spell of sunlight and warm breezes running across your face.

Sometimes we need to dance and pray and make love to the sound of birdsong and the sight of bare tree limbs budding out with promise.

Sometimes our inner lands, our soul soil, have been encased in the winter—of heartbreak, of mourning, of grief, of anxiety, of fear—for too long, and it is time for something else, a new kind of magic, time to invite in spring in.

And so, I give you, a spell to do exactly that:

Hold in your heart and mind the places that feel barren and cold.

Touch with your hands, your breath, hallowed dreams that once were bold.

Feel your beating heart of muscle, oxygen, and light.

Draw its energy into your palms until you feel them shining bright.

Go out into wood, into field, into street. Gather up paperwhite, rose, crocus, and new oak leaf.

Gather seeds, a pot, a cup of water, some good black earth.

Take your goods, go home, spread them out, prepare your work.

Place paperwhite in the north, rose in the south, circle with bloom and leaf.

Crocus kisses the west, while little oak leaf calls in the warmth of east.

Light your candles, pray your prayers, let sacred smoke fill the air.

Fill your pot with half the earth, enfolding within your seeds with care.

Place the pot in the center so it is the eye of the circlet of leaf and flower.

Root your feet down onto the earth,

into the earth, calling on spring's power. To fill your body from toe to tip, to unfurl its green vines in hair and in hip.

Know that each balmy breath summons into your life spring sweet.

And feel it warm your bones, those frozen places, with its new gentle heat. Calling back to life all that you feared was frozen, gone, or dead.

Shaking and swaying you gently until that old, winter skin is shed.

Now, pulsing as you are with light, life, warmth, and all that is new, fill the pot with earth until it is full, then water it so that it is sweet with dew.

Say then these words over earth and seed:

Spring, sweet spring, it is your time to lead.

Make yourself a nest in my heart, belly, and head.

Call back to life what had been foresworn as dead.

As these seeds push through earth seeking the light,

restore energy, vitality, verdancy, and bloom to my life.

As these seeds unfurl, preparing to flower and fruit,

cover me with your warm breezes from crown to root.

Spring, sweet spring, wash your wild wonder over me.

As I ask, so it is, has been, and shall now be.

Thank your allies in the north, the east, west, and south.

With prayers, blown kisses, or sweet thank-yous from your mouth.

Blow your candles' good work forward, gather up leaf and bloom.

Set your pot of seeds and life where it's kissed by the sun, graced by moon.

Offer up rose and crocus, oak leaf, and paperwhite,

under the dark velvet sky of a new moon night.

Snuggle down, under blanket, under downy bird wing.

Your spell has been spoken, now await the arrival of spring.



*Briana Saussy is an author, storyteller, teacher, spiritual counselor, and founder of the Sacred Arts Academy, where she teaches magic, divination, ceremony and other sacred arts for everyday life. She is the author of Making Magic: Weaving Together the Everyday and the Extraordinary, and Star Child: Joyful Parenting Through Astrology. See more at [brianasaussy.com](http://brianasaussy.com).*

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## FOR THIS ISSUE, WE ASKED, “WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE SPRINGTIME RITUALS?”

Spring truly begins for me once I've caught sight of the season's first wisteria flowers coming into bloom. Their abundance of blossoms casts a subtle yet unmissable shade of lavender against the backdrop of newly grown leaves. I'll gently gather the pale purple blooms into my hands while breathing in their clove-like, floral perfume as deeply as possible—filling my lungs, and spirit, with their ethereal essence. —*Kambriel*

Cutting rushes to make Brigid's crosses. Burning the ones from last year and setting intentions on what I want this year to be for myself and my loved ones. Cutting wild grapevines in the forest and wrapping and weaving the vines into wreaths. Waiting for the crocuses to pop through the earth. Planning flowers to plant in the garden. Enjoying foraging in the woods with my children. —*@thewillowandthevine*

My springtime rituals all revolve around my yard—clearing away last's seasons leaves and dead plants once it's warm enough for the pollinators, prepping soil, blessing seeds and bulbs, hanging birdhouses to welcome back my bird friends and encourage them to raise their families with us ... I always find it so grounding to reconnect with the waking earth after the cold and dark of winter. —*Vanessa MacNeil*

I dye eggs for Ostara, and when I'm done using them as a seasonal decoration, I crush the shells and save them to use the different color correspondences in magical crafts. —*Katy Fae*

Each year, on the first day of spring, we burn our winter wreath and garlands and replace them with fresh flowers. —*Andrea Qureshi*

On the morning of May 1, I collect drops of dew in a tiny bottle using a medicine dropper to keep on my altar. This Beltane dew, appearing at dawn out of thin air, reminds me to be on the lookout for other magical transformations throughout the spring season. —*Pamela Russell*

Each spring, my two sisters and I take a road trip to visit our magical Auntie Sue. She always has some wonderful activity or crafting planned—we once did a barefoot snow walk, we've made soap and learned wood burning. Then we usually stay up late chatting, feasting, drinking, cuddling pets. It's become a bit of a tradition, and it always leaves me feeling enchanted. —*Amy Jane Von Purr*

Chatting with my bee friends who visit my garden daily in the spring. They adore my peonies very much. —*@daniellesigwalt*

As a witch and an artist, my favorite is watching the way my craft and artworks shift with the season. My spells and color palettes match nature's renewal, and my drawings and paintings reflect the blossoming flowers and emerging animals. —*@kalystafelines*

Gazing at the tulips that come out of the earth and smelling the spring air. Going on a walk in nature to see the changes that spring brings. —*@juneballion*

Being a wildlife photographer I love welcoming the return of all the birds. I have a favorite pond that I visit every day to see who has arrived. —*@maryleeagnew*

Collecting the dandelions and white clover in my area to dry for tea. Giving back to the wildlife with food and water. Making sun water and using it for herbal teas. Using the spring rainwater for art magic. Setting up an altar for the season—I like to do a bird's nest and add lots of nature, grasses. It's a great time to make different iced teas, and you can use herbs that are in season or possess the magical properties you wish to gain. —*@shewantsrevenge*

One of my favorite spring rituals is to go wandering barefoot in nature after the final winter frosts are winding down and the new green growth is just starting to come alive with the warmth of spring. —*Jillian Homen*

Not magical at all but spring cleaning. Opening the windows and doors to let out the stale air of winter and let the house be refreshed with spring air. It's like breathing deeply. Sweep out the dust and worn out winter blues to welcome in all the warmth and joy of renewed life of spring. Finish it off (and it takes days!) with a bouquet or three of fresh flowers inside the house and water bowls outside for critters. —*Alicia Hitomi Carroll Arnold*

STAY TUNED AS WE CONTINUE ENCHANTED LIVING'S

# The Year of the Witch

Photo by Val Gleason

SUMMER WITCH  
AUTUMN WITCH • WINTER WITCH

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