

Folk Magician's Notebook

New World Witchery
www.newworldwitchery.com

EPISODE LINK:

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May 2023

Hello & Welcome to the Folk Magician's Notebook!

These are short monthly episodes that will offer a brief overview of folk magical topics and information that might be useful to you over the coming month. As always, we highly recommend you also pick up a copy of a reputable and reliable almanac for folk magic, such as the Witches Almanac, Llewellyn's Witches' Datebook, or your local Farmer's Almanac.

Be well,

CORY & LAINE

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MOON NOTES

Full Moon date: The moon will be full on Friday, May 5th, and is sometimes known as the Flower Moon, Corn Planting Moon, or the Hare Moon.

New Moon date: The New Moon will fall on Friday, May 19th, during a transition between Taurus and Gemini.

Notable astrological dates/notes:

The month begins with a waxing moon in Virgo, making it a good time to set plans that you'll want to make happen over the next month (Virgos are very good at planning). Virgo is also considered a barren sign, meaning it's best for preparing garden beds and flower pots rather than setting things to start growing. The moon goes through Libra and arrives in Scorpio on the 5th, just in time for the Full Flower Moon. This is a time for fruition-fruiting and flowering-meaning spells you've set over the previous month should be reaching their peak now. It's also a good time to take flowers for use in magical work, too, such as gathering rose petals to make syrups for love potions (more on that later this episode). This month, though, there's a bonus as the full moon is also an eclipse! It's the first lunar eclipse of 2023, and since it's in the sign of Scorpio this is a good time to either seal up secrets or expose them. So if you've got something you need hidden away, put it into a dark jar and bury it during the eclipse, or spend some time doing divination to learn secrets that might otherwise stay hidden. The moon wanes through Sagittarius and Capricorn over the next week, and you may feel a shift in energies requiring more rest and less social time, or a need to do things that involve depth-whether that's planting potatoes or spending time working with some Otherworldly companions. The moon continues to wane through Aquarius and Pisces, so pay attention to "dark dreams," ones that may reveal hidden things to you or help you to integrate those shadow-y sides of yourself.

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MOON NOTES

Notable astrological dates/notes (Cont'd):

The moon moves into Aries on the 16th, however, when you may need to do some work to keep those shadow desires in check lest they become self-destructive (and also do some work to prevent garden pests or harvest fallen foraged materials for spellcraft). The New Moon on the 19th is in Taurus/Gemini, which makes it a good time for spiritual nourishment—doing divination for yourself or others, spending time in community or sharing a house/Red Meal with some coven-mates, and so forth. As the moon grows, you may find more conversations popping up around your magical work or your garden, which means lots of opportunities to learn. The sun also enters Gemini on the 21st, right as the moon shifts into Cancer, meaning more sociability but also a need to ground and be in your home space, too. It's a good time for “nailing down” work or putting bindings on your books before loaning them out. The month winds down shifting into Leo, then Virgo and Libra again, meaning it's time to look back at how your plans for the past month have played out and start making new ones for the month to come.



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DIVINATION NOTES

SPECIAL NOTE: Each month, Laine and Cory will pull cards for one another. We'll indicate the meanings of those cards in general, then read them for the other person specifically as a way to get a sense of how they are read in actual practice.

Playing Card of the Month: **The Six of Hearts**

For Cory's monthly card reading, this time I drew the Six of Hearts. The heart suit immediately tells us this card is about love, emotions, and family. The six in particular representing loyalty, longevity, and stamina. Think of a friendly family dog, loyal 'til the end. For Cory, this may mean that this month he needs to focus his energies on those he loves. I know his school year is coming to a close, and perhaps this card symbolizes taking a break from work and focusing on his emotional wellbeing and his family. However, it's important to remember that focusing on the ones you love should also include yourself. If you tend to spread yourself thin, taking time for yourself can be a great benefit for you and your loved ones. But let's not forget the longevity and loyalty part of this card. If you pull the Six of Hearts this month, it could also be the indicator of a start or beginning of something great- something that will last for better or worse.



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DIVINATION NOTES

Tarot Card of the Month: **The Emperor**

This month I pulled the Emperor from my Five Cent Tarot deck by Madam Clara. Normally the Emperor is a serious-looking man sitting on a stately throne, often carved with Aries symbols such as rams' heads. He is active, decisive energy, but also the power and authority associated with divine guidance. He can be stern, even authoritarian, but also fatherly and wise. On the Five Cent tarot card, he is an emperor penguin wearing a crown, standing atop an old victrola which can symbolize the wisdom of tradition and listening to the past. A pair of ram's horns curl beneath his feet, tying into that Aries energy, and he is ready to guide and direct you. In reading this for Laine, I see a desire to tap into that fatherly power, a need to weigh options and think about the lessons of the past. But rather than being trapped in indecision and executive dysfunction, this card demands that she make a clear choice and pursue it without hesitating. The lessons you needed to help you make this choice have all happened before, and you bear them inside you. You know what the right pathway is, so it is simply up to you to choose it and begin walking.



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DIVINATION NOTES

Folk Divination of the Month: The Calling Circle

This month we're looking at an old folk practice that I like to refer to as "the calling circle." This practice generally involves taking a young child (often at their first birthday) and presenting them with a variety of objects to choose from. Whatever they pick first tells something about their future. For example, here are three entries referring to this practice in Harry Middleton Hyatt's *Folklore of Adams County Illinois*:

"3529. On a boy's first birthday lay before him on the floor a deck of cards, a bottle, a Bible and a piece of money: if the deck of cards is selected, he will be a gambler; if the bottle, a drunkard; if the Bible, a preacher; and if the money, a hard worker.

3530. The day a boy is a year old put down before him on the floor a pocket-book, a whiskey bottle and a deck of cards: if he reaches for the pocketbook, he will be opulent; if for the bottle, a drunkard; and if for the cards, a gambler.

3531. A boy's future can be discovered on his first birthday by laying in front of him on the floor a book, a dollar and a hat: if he clutches the book, he will be a good learner; if the dollar, a miser; and if the hat, a stylish dresser" (All from Hyatt Co.)



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DIVINATION NOTES

Folk Divination of the Month: The Calling Circle (Cont'd)



Here's a version taken from my book, New World Witchery that uses this concept but allows for anyone to do it (even if you're not currently an infant, which you're likely not since you managed to download a podcast):

Have a trusted friend (or several) gather a group of objects for you. Preferably have them be a number with magical significance to you, such as seven or thirteen. Do not let them tell you what the objects are or how they interpret them, but simply let them bring them to a space where you can move around a bit. Draw a circle of space at least nine feet in diameter using chalk, flour, or something similar (this often works best outside). Sit in the center of the circle, and let your friend or friends blindfold you. Then, have your friends place the objects around the perimeter of the circle. When they are done, one friend should stand you up, hold you close and whisper "Find your way, sister." Reply by saying "I will find my way." Let her spin you around a few times (another opportunity to use magical numbers if you like), then stop and stand for a moment. Collect yourself and breathe in. Extend your hands. Turn in a circle. Wait and see if you feel a pull in any one direction or another. Follow your impulse and go where the pull is strongest. When you think you are close, you can reach down and feel for the object. Whichever object you touch first is the one that "called" you.

Take off the blindfold and examine the object. Think about what it means to you. It's fine to discuss the object's meaning with your friend if you like, but it will be most crucial how you interpret its meaning. Does it give you an idea of what comes next for you? Does it open up possibilities you hadn't considered? What does it say to you, and what will you need to do to take the next step on your way?



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PROVERB

A secret kept is your prisoner. Once told, you are its prisoner. (India)

FOLKTALE

This month, we have a tale of magic just bawdy enough for May Day and Beltane!

The Tale of the Basin-A folktale from England:

<https://sites.pitt.edu/~dash/type0571b.html#basin>

Questions:

1. When you think about spells for vengeance or justice, who do you envision deciding what is "fair" in those scenarios? Do you ever let the magic unfold its own version of those consequences?
2. Would you ever work a spell without a specific outcome in mind? Or would you ever be willing to work a spell where the magic determines the final outcome?



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CRAFT: ROSE SYRUP

This recipe is from our upcoming book, *Conjuring the Commonplace: A Guide to Everyday Enchantment and Junk Drawer Magic*, coming soon from 1000Volt Press.

May is when the roses start to bloom, and if you have a backyard full of roses, then you've also got one of the best-known love charms, too. For example, a trail of rose petals left from the front door to the bedroom is a relatively clear indication that you want to do more than change the sheets when your beloved arrives. Similarly, you can incorporate roses into love potions and even foods to give a little romantic boost to your magic.

Rose Syrup

For this recipe you will need:

2-3 cups of clean rose petals (make sure not to use any treated with insecticides)

1 cup of sugar

Water

Begin by lightly sweating the roses in a small saucepan with a lid over low heat. You'll begin seeing condensation forming on the lid eventually, which is the rose essence you're trying to extract. Before the petals can burn, stir them and add the water, about one cup or a bit more if necessary. Bring to a bare simmer and let the rose petals infuse for at least 30 minutes, until the flowers are wilted and translucent. Strain off the liquid and discard the solids, then return the liquid to the pan and add the sugar. Bring to a boil and let boil until the sugar completely dissolves and the mixture reduces a bit. Bottle the rose syrup and keep in the fridge for up to a week.



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CRAFT: ROSE SYRUP (CONT'D)

What do you do with rose syrup? Well, it's used in lots of Middle Eastern pastries, so it's a great way to add sweetness and a floral note to something like a slice of pound cake. Serve that to a potential lover with a few rose petals around the plate (not the cooked ones, save a couple fresh ones for this). You can even draw sigils and signs into the cake with the syrup, then brush a layer of syrup over them to hide them if you wish.

You could also vary the intent by using different colors of rose petals, too. Deeper reds might inspire more passionate love, while yellow petals alone could be used to spark jealousy or white ones might lead to marriage or a long-term romance. Of course, you can mix and blend the colors as you see fit, and all roses can be used to help with love or romance. You could also use this as a way to "sweeten" speech, keeping a little bottle in your purse or car and dabbing a drop on your tongue before you need to influence people in some way (like in a job interview or when asking someone to help you move).

Hope your magic is coming up roses all month long!

