

# The Book of Novicia, Chapter Eight



## *The Organization of a Spell*

### ***Have you ever seen a cat's tail twitching?***

Something similar happens to Witches when Magick is compulsory. It could be an actual physical sensation, probably originating in the area of the solar plexus or coccyx (tailbone) or it may just be a nagging feeling... a feeling that seems to say "something is missing" or "something is amiss".

In this lesson, we're going to draw on what you've learned about Witchcraft so far. but, first, we're going to talk more about what being a Witch means to you.

### **How do you spell W-I-T-C-H?**

There is a lot of confusion in our lore about Witches -- what Witches are and what they are not. A lot of different, even contradictory, portrayals exist within how Witches are defined. Anthropologists will tell you that cultures are affected, sometimes even determined, by their fiction and not their fact. Your culture's view of Witches has made an indelible impression on your psyche, consciously and subconsciously. **One of your first-year accomplishments must be to examine the various views of "Witch" and determine how these may influence your personal identity as Witch, for better or worse.** If there is a personal demon named "Witch", it's must be called forth (metaphorically) conquered and banished. I'm referring, of course, to personal conflicts – some of which may be beneath the surface you usually probe. If you have a conflict originating from the Christian view that there is inherent good or evil in Witchcraft, that doubt must be eradicated or it will manifest itself as failed or diluted results. If you absorbed this misinformation in early childhood, it can be difficult, but not impossible, to extract.

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Eight

*Here are some popular characterizations of Witches with which we are all familiar.*

1. Witches as supernatural creatures that happen to look human.
2. Witches as evil “man-haters” who have made a pact with “The Devil”.
3. People who are born Witches because of a particular or mutated genetic strain that enables them to access parts of the brain that are largely dormant in normals.
4. People who have a natural talent for Witchcraft like extrasensory perception.
5. Witches who are made Witches by choice through education.

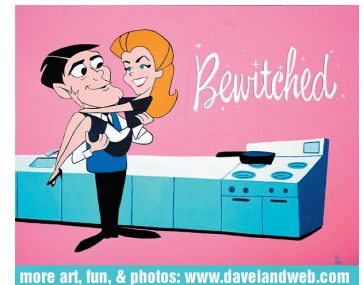
*Now for the truth about Witches.*

**1 and 2. Witches as supernatural creatures that happen to look human and Witches who have received special “powers” as the result of contracts with “The Devil”.**



I have combined these two because they have so much in common. These are the types of Witches who appear most often in literature. I suspect that’s because the idea is intriguing, exciting, titillating and, often, scary. In other words... fun. These Witches cannot usually be recognized as extra-human visually, but may only be known by their deeds. All the more scary... and fun.

They are a paradox of portrayal. We are at home with the visual of Snow White’s stepmother as Witch Hag. We are at home with the visual of Samantha Stevens, the comedic housewife from TV’s “Bewitched”. We are at home with the visual of the seductress who forever carries the burden of the Eden fable as does Morgan le Fay in the common Arthur. When we think or say the word “Witch”, perhaps all these images run through our mental catalog on some level. If these portraits



## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Eight

have no more substantive meaning for you than, say, the Tooth Fairy, then they are not likely to interfere with your Magickal efforts. You can hold the vision and definition of Tooth Fairy in the memory banks of your mind without processing the information as true or real on any level; conscious or subconscious. But, if you happened to have been taught as a child that there is an actual “The Devil”, you need to mentally frisk yourself for any lingering idea that there is a correspondence between Witchcraft and “evil”. If you find a thought parasite like this, banish it as if it was a demon. If this is a problem that persists, there is nothing like a serious academic study<sup>1</sup> of the history of “The Devil” to land him squarely in Tooth Fairy territory. Do Witches as “supernatural” creatures actually exist? I’ve lived too long to say definitively no, but, at present, I have no reason to think so. *However, the manipulation of reality, whether instantaneous or not, would be considered supernatural by most people and any of us can learn to do it.*

### **3 and 4. People who are born Witches because of a particular or mutated gene or an innate talent.**

Again, I’m going to combine these two and call them Natural Witches. These people have a knack for Magick and can produce dramatic effects completely unintentionally, without specialized knowledge or conscious purpose. If they ever connect the dots, they may be horrified by some of the results left in their wake. Things that would never be wished or wanted on a conscious basis, may be carried out by the subconscious who knows or cares nothing about ethics or morality, if you will. These people must come to the study of Witchcraft from the far end of the spectrum, as a means of controlling natural talent for the sake of social responsibility rather than learning how to manipulate reality.



**Maleficent, the Magnificent gets my reward for fairy tale Uberwitch.**

### **5. Witches who become Witches or Sorcerers or Wizards by study.**

These are most often represented in the pop culture by men; a result of the fact that

<sup>1</sup>. The definitive work on the subject is *Ann Moura's New History of Witchcraft* published by 7th House.

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Eight

widespread education of women is fairly recent in our history. Women are not often depicted as Sages with the scholar's long robes, surrounded by books and parchment to indicate academic achievement, a raven or owl to indicate the Magickal nature of the work, a skull to indicate knowledge of human anatomy for medical purposes and a burning candle to indicate dedication and commitment. Nonetheless, this very Witch, the one not commonly represented by popular culture models, is the one most prevalent in our society. If you are a woman who is not a Natural Witch, and you are acquiring knowledge and practice of the Craft by study, you do not find many role models in our lore. So you have probably adopted and adapted from a sampling of others to help form your Witch identity.

Stay in touch with *your* Witch identity. It may shift over time as different aspects of the Craft grab your attention. How you see yourself as a Witch or Magician is part of how you approach the Organization of a Spell.

You now have sufficient tools at your disposal to organize spells efficiently and effectively; to their highest and best use. The rest of the Chapter is devoted to a list of decisions (or choices) you will make during your preparation. Let's put your building blocks together.

**KEY: The spell begins when you make a commitment to a casting. The energy begins to build when preparation commences.** (I advise you not to discuss the details with others, not just until after the spell, itself, is complete, but not until after you are sure your results are tallied. Your thoughts on spell preparation become recorded notes. Jot down now. Revise later if necessary.)

*NOTE: A few of you are logical by nature and are several steps ahead of me. Others of you may have a natural Magickal instinct which, once awakened, will help you make choices. For the rest, I have broken the process down to a series of steps to be followed in order. There will come a time when you will not have to rely on a list. This series of steps will eventually become second nature to you.*

### 1. **What and When**

I'm certain you know this, but let me say it just the same. I'm not just the author of *Seasons of the Witch*. I'm also a user. The planners were originally conceived as my personal system. Sometimes I look ahead for a couple of months to see if a particular PowerDay coming up might hold some useful energy or essence for me, but, most of the time, it's the other way around. I realize that I need some of this or that. I need to pull something to me or send something away. Armed with that purpose I go to the calendar to find out what date will be the next time when my efforts may be multiplied with astrological cooperation.

If you use *Seasons of the Witch* as a system, the "what" determines the "when". They are inextricably tied together. **The first decision you will make is "What" – the nature of the casting.**

In *Seasons of the Witch*, PowerDays that are capitalized have major energy and can boost the power of your spell a lot. PowerDays that are capitalized and are in **BOLD**, and there are not many, can boost the power of your spell a WHOLE lot. These days come with so much Magickal influence they can make even beginners and less serious Magicians look good.

There are also major PowerDays that occur rarely – perhaps just once in the year. It goes without saying that you should not cast unnecessary spells, but I would also say not to let these opportunities get by you if the focus is at issue in your life. Maybe you don't need a mortgage this very minute, but you plan to buy a house sometime during the next year. A "Borrow Money" spell with a future mortgage in mind is like an insurance policy to streamline the process.

As to other items of focus, the first lesson of your first year targeted the most difficult aspect of Magick – knowing yourself. Hopefully, that self-examination has continued to simmer on the back burner. Plus, a lot can happen in seven months. Your ideas about what you want may have changed or refined. It's not unusual to change your mind about what you want – even big things – largely because people with good imaginations can

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Eight

check off items on their list by experiencing through non-physical means. The reason why I don't call this "visualizing" is because, when you get good at it, the sensations is not just visual. They are tactile and audio.

### ***The Alternate Reality Experience***

You can "see" yourself in your house by the sea, but you can also hear the seagulls and the waves crash. You can feel the wind billowing your skirt and the warmth of the sun on your skin as you stand on your deck admiring the view – mistress of all you survey. This is actually experience in an alternate reality, the one you created in your mind. And, because you're so good at this, you not only experience the movie moments associated with living in a house at the beach. You also experience trying to keep the windows clear of the gummy fog that forms perpetually, trying to find one thing you own that doesn't have sand in it, being unable to sleep when others want to party on the beach late at night, the sky-high insurance premiums, the mildew that forms if the air-conditioner is turned off for two minutes, and so on and so on. You may not live through the beach-house dream in physical reality, but you are satisfied with the experience in alternate reality and you're ready to move on.



Choose spells that address what you really want and not what advertisers hope they have brainwashed you into believing you want. **Check your Magickal temperature often.** **Choose spells that address what you really want now.** Don't continue to cast for something you no longer want just because you failed to recognize you no longer want it.



## 2. *Small, Medium or Large*

One of the reasons why we, at Seasons in Avalon, have insisted on screening for mature personalities is because **Magick often requires the ability to honestly self-assess and use the good judgment.** When you were an adolescent, as I'm sure you remember, everything in life was either a catastrophe or a glimpse of the Rainbow Bridge. As you grew older and more experienced, you were able to discern the shading on the continuum that connects these polar opposites.

You must decide whether the problem, challenge or desire you are addressing is small, medium or large. This is important because, as you learned in Chapter Two, **KEY: Your ability to cast is finite.**

**If you throw everything you have at every casting, soon you will have nothing left to throw.** You must pace your Magickal expenditure the same way you ration your body's resources throughout the day. You know about how much fuel your body has to go on and, whether you know it or not, you're a genius at subconsciously gaging how much energy you can expend in a day and still make it safely to bedtime. Your body's reserves must be recovered through periods of rest. If you cast frequently and indiscriminantly, you are in danger of running down your Magickal power generator because you didn't allow for periods of sufficient recovery. I can't give you an exact formula because everyone is different, but here is a very loose guideline to get you started. Small = up to twice per week. Medium = up to once per week. Large = 1-2 per month.

## 3. *Resistance calls for persistence*

Will the spell be a single event spell or a campaign; meaning an eight-day spell (ex. Being Monday, End Monday), a thirty-day spell (ex. Begin June 11th, end July 9th) or a sixty-day spell (ex. Begin June 11th, bolster July 9th, end August 6th).<sup>1</sup> This choice should be made before proceeding. It is a stage in your plan that informs other choices.

<sup>1</sup>. Sometimes Power energies present on consecutive days of the week. This is an opportunity for an eight-day spell. Sometimes you will find the same Power energy occurring two or three months in a row. These are opportunities for 30 or 60 day spells.

## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Eight

A **single event spell** is like a complete story. It has a beginning, a middle and an end. At the end of this spell you will release the energy that has been building, free to turn your complete, undivided attention to other matters. A **campaign**, however, isn't over until the last installment is finished. See *60 Day Spell in General First Year Questions for the "Braided Bridge" technique*. In the case of an extended spell, you close the Circle you open each time, as you would if it was a single event spell, but you do not disperse the energy that has been assigned, by your Magickal mind, to address the focus of this spell work. You will continue to allow this Magick to simmer on the back burner.

You don't need to be told what needs your attention. If one of your BASIC needs<sup>1</sup> is not being met, that focus is at the top of your short list.

Let's take health as an example.

- a. If your health issue is a seasonal allergy and you want to lessen the effects for the next couple of months, a "small" spell will do; single event, minor power energy or none at all, minimum expenditure of effort.
- b. If your health issue is, say, PMS or other hormonal variations that threaten your equilibrium on a regular basis, you probably need a single event, "medium" to "large" spell.
- c. If your health issue is chronic in any sense of the word, that is a definite "large" spell. If, after some time has passed (at least months), it has persisted without change, consider throwing everything you have at it including campaign status. Big problems require big Magick and attention to planning. If you perform a "large" spell and do it right, you will need a period of recovery. How long is



<sup>1</sup>. Basic needs: food, water, clothing, shelter, health.



## The Book of Novicia, Chapter Eight

highly individual, but can be determined partly by your level of motivation. If you feel joyless about an impending casting, as you might feel about an unwelcome chore, you need a longer period of recovery before you resume Magickal activity. You can practice divination. You can practice psychic skills. You can participate in Pagan observances. You can even plan future spells. But refrain from actual casting until your feeling of “want to” returns.

**CAUTION: Magick is not a substitute for following the rules of the mundane world. It is a support or magnifier.** *In other words, if your finances are a mess, Magick may give you temporary monetary relief – once or twice – but you still have to dig deep and do the work to correct the money management issue before you can expect to manifest more.*

### 4. **MINOR SPELLS - Balancing**

I hesitate to talk about spells in terms of “urgent” or “critical” need because it implies rapid results which can never be guaranteed. So, let’s say instead that you have a problem that is an irritant and will feel better if you are Magickally proactive. Even though you know your results may take some time to manifest, you want to get started now, but there’s no corresponding PowerDay available in *Seasons of the Witch*.

No problem. Just use the waxing moon to draw the positive side of the issue to you and the waning moon to push it away. Notice I said “and” and not “or”. The combination of a spell to magnetize with a spell that repels the same thing or essence is very powerful. It’s like balancing the scales. Cast during times when the moon is not void-of-course.

This works very well for S-M issues.

The rest of the list is an exercise in combining and utilizing what you have learned in earlier Chapters. Refer to your notes if needed.

**5.     *Where will you cast?***

If you aren't able to make choices about "where", just skip this step and go on. If you have choices available, reach out with your Magickal Eyes to determine the place of optimum characteristic and energy to cast for a thing or essence.

**6.     *Will you use Practical or Ritual Magick?***

**7.     *Will your spell include a meditation?***

**8.     *What tools will you use, if any? Will you need to gather particular tools or materials?***

**9.     *Will you compose chants or quatrains ahead of time? Do you need to write out a script or program?***

In the beginning you may want to use a short-hand checklist for spell creation.

1.     What and When?
2.     What size spell?
3.     How often?
4.     Balancing minor spells
5.     Where?
6.     Practical Magick or Ritual Magick
7.     Include meditation or not.
8.     Tools, props, costume, etc?
9.     Precomposition.

## *Assignments:*

**Your first assignment** for this lesson is to spend a quiet time alone, it may be a few moments, it may be longer, calling a visual of what it means to be a Witch who is also a powerful Magician. If you were granted the popular notion of supernatural powers to perform Magick instantaneously with a word or gesture, what would that look like on you? Look at the first picture your imagination shows you and make as many mental notes as you can before your conscious mind begins to alter the picture. Where are you? What are you wearing? What do you look like? Are you using tools? What, exactly, are you trying to accomplish Magickally? The answers to these questions will give you a treasure chest of clues as to who you are Magickally and that information can be used to accelerate your effectiveness.

**Your second assignment** is to find a PowerDay within the next moon cycle that appeals to you as an opportunity to cast for something you either want (waxing) or don't want (waning). At this point, you have a lot to work with Magickally and a lot of choices to make. Remember that this is as much what you've learned about yourself as it is what you've learned about external Magick.

**You put a little in, you get a little out. You put a lot in, you get a lot out. Commit yourself to the spell or don't do it. Magick is not for the half-hearted.**

***Magickal Notation:*** Don't forget your journaling. The keeping of a Witch's Diary is a big part of the process. No detail is too unimportant to record.

Your Chapter Eight notes will be about planning a spell making choices from everything you've learned so far. Chapter Nine will be about Full Moon Magicks - alligning with natural lunar power.