

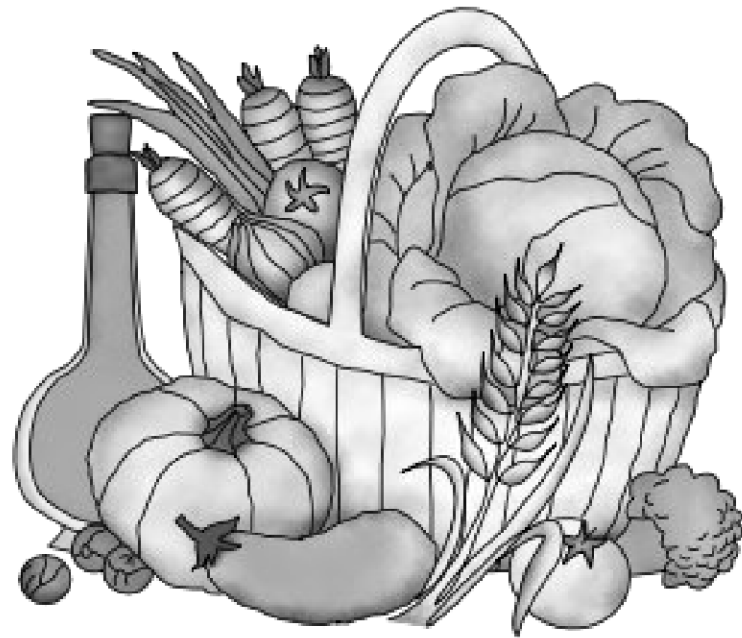
The Autumn Rite

Written by Casey Giordino

Roughly two weeks before you plan to perform The Wincrowing, begin thinking about your petition and collecting any ritual supplies you might need to gather. Because we are in the ebb cycle of the Wheel of the Year and the Celestial Orb (the symbol of male virility) is on the wane, Gay witches preserve their Soma for their own vitality. No Soma Candle or fetish anointing is performed for this ritual. Instead, the petition is a mental one held internally with reflection and thought throughout the season, as is appropriate to the Saturnine nature of this rite. Autumn is the best time to take stock of the situations you find yourself in, account for your successes, and catalogue the places where you failed to achieve your desired results. It's a good time to do any "course corrections" and get back on track with your goals. The harvest symbols remind us of the Law of Compensation and just rewards for our efforts. We reap that which we sow.

In addition to the normal altar items, you will need a few necessary things for this seasonal rite:

- in the center of the altar will sit the harvest basket with a bounty of fruits and grains appropriate to the season
- this bounty should include the ritual cakes and the wine
- also inside the harvest basket will be a stalk of wheat or an ear of corn (which is called the Corn Wolf)
- the ritual incense
- a strong herbal infusion of chamomile, spearmint, and passionflower to help with the post ritual shamanic journey as you drift off to sleep



The Wincrowing





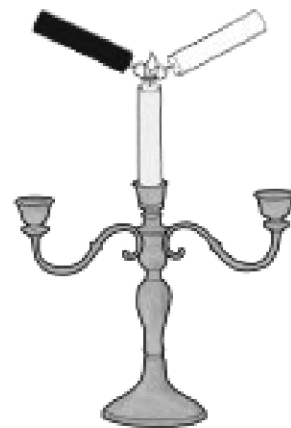
Preparation

On the night before the Autumn Rite, enter the sanctum and stand before the fully constructed altar. Ignite the pillars of severity and mercy with the sacred flame from the last ritual or spell. Once the sacred flame has been appropriately transferred, the old red, orange, or yellow may be placed in a candlestick and carried out of the sanctum after the ritual to burn out on its own.

Hold the pillar of severity in your left hand and the pillar of mercy in your right hand. Lift them up above your head and say:

**"DEEP WITHIN THE PRIMORDIAL NIGHT,
THE GODS DIVIDED IN A FLASH OF LIGHT."**

Bring the candles down in front of you touching their flames together over the central candle to ignite the sacred flame when you say the word "light."

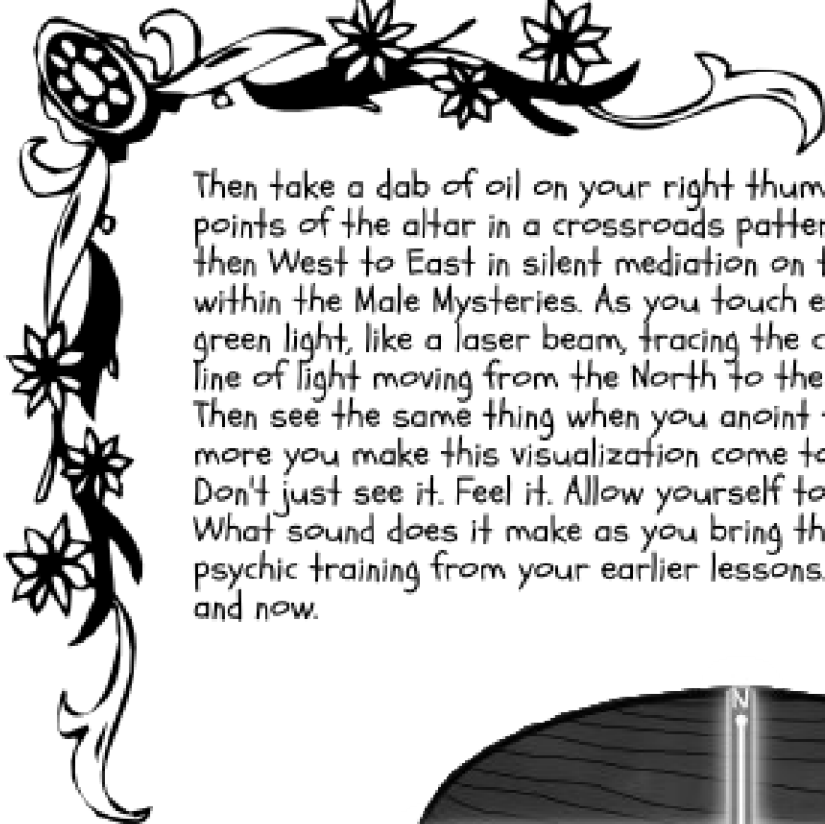


Pick up the bell and move to the East of the sanctum. Moving deasil to the South, West, North, and back to the East, ring the bell thrice saying:

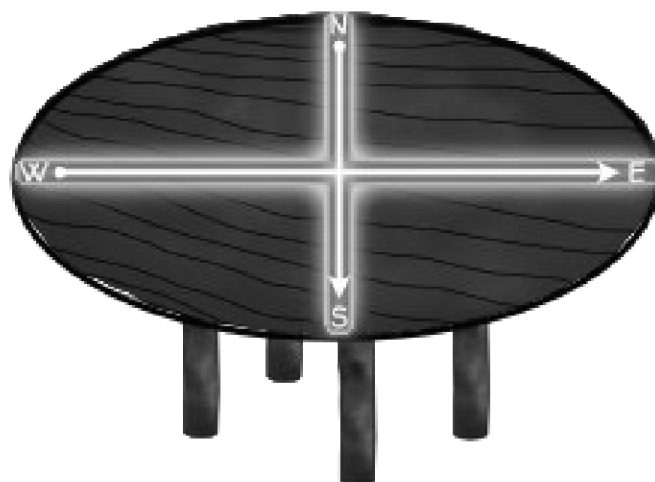
**"SCATTER ON THE WINDS OF FATE, THE EVIL WOES
AND THE BANEFUL HATE."**

Setting the bell back upon the altar, take up the oleum maleficis, hold it between your hands in a prayer position at your heart for at least three heart beats as you pay attention to your breath. With your eyes closed, contemplate the working that you are about to do, and take a moment of silent reflection to connect with your gods.






Then take a dab of oil on your right thumb and anoint the four cardinal points of the altar in a crossroads pattern, moving first North to South then West to East in silent mediation on the symbol of the crossroads within the Male Mysteries. As you touch each point, visualize a vibrant green light, like a laser beam, tracing the crossroads over the altar. See a line of light moving from the North to the South as you touch each point. Then see the same thing when you anoint the West and the East. The more you make this visualization come to life in your mind, the better. Don't just see it. Feel it. Allow yourself to feel the altar vibrate. Hear it. What sound does it make as you bring the altar to life? Use all of your psychic training from your earlier lessons. Bring those skills to bear here and now.



The oil is then placed back upon the altar, the candles are snuffed out in this order: the pillar of mercy, the pillar of severity, and the sacred flame. Any items not necessary for the next night's ritual are removed from the altar before leaving the ritual chamber in silence lit only by the light of the previous rite's sacred flame candle.

Seal the room off to await the next night's ritual, and then allow the last bits of the previous sacred flame to burn out on its own before going into your ritual the next night.





Operation

On the day when you are set to do the Autumn Rite, enter the Sanctum about an hour prior to the ritual. Set the incense burning upon the Altar. Allow this charcoal to burn out before beginning the ritual.



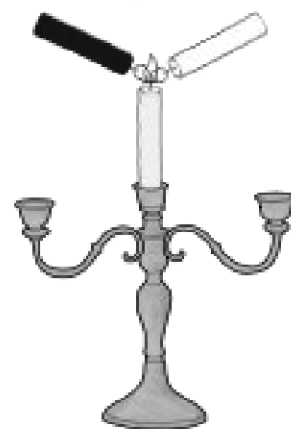
At the time of the ritual, enter the room in total darkness and begin moving widdershins to the altar in the center. Into the empty chalice, place a teaspoon of salt and say:

**"AND THE EARTH WAS BARREN WITHOUT GROWTH OR
LIFE.
ALL PERSEVERED AT PEACE AND IN DARKNESS."**

Ignite the pillars of severity and mercy respectively. Again, repeat the process of transferring the sacred flame from the night before when you performed the altar consecration. Take up the pillar of severity in your left hand and the pillar of mercy in your right, hold them up above your head and say:

**"DEEP WITHIN THE PRIMORDIAL NIGHT,
THE GODS DIVIDED IN A FLASH OF LIGHT."**

Bring the pillars down in front of you touching their flames together over the central candle to create the sacred flame when you say the word "light." During the rest of the ritual, all candles will be lit from the central sacred flame.





Hold the chalice up in front of the three-branched candelstick and say:

"AND ONCE CAST, THE ETERNAL AND PRIMORDIAL
FIRE
RADIATED OUTWARD TO SPREAD HEAT AND LIGHT."



Light the charcoal in the thurible with the Sacred Flame (if it is not already lit), and, when glowing, place incense upon it. If you are just lighting the charcoal now, take this time for quiet reflection on the purpose of your ritual. Center and fully align yourself with your purpose. Pass the chalice through the incense smoke, saying:

"AND THE HEAT AND LIGHT CREATED VAPOR,
THAT ATMOSPHERIC AIR THAT MEDIATED LIFE."



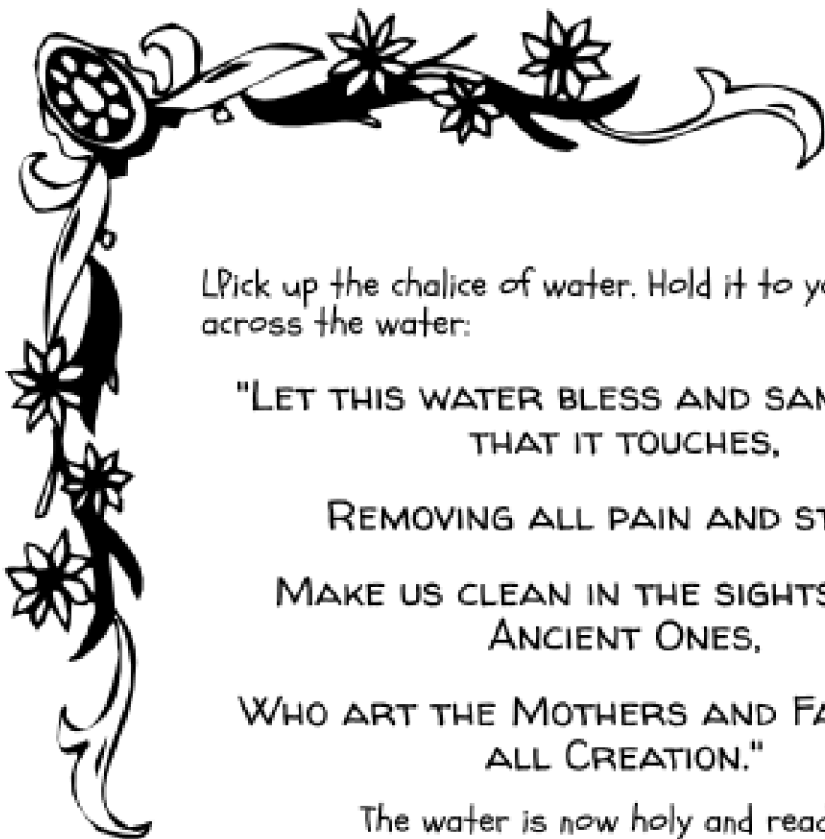
Pour water over the salt in the chalice and say:

"AND THROUGH HEAT AND VAPOR CAME
CONDENSATION,
WHICH BUILT UP AND FELL DOWN UPON THE BARREN
EARTH."



Sprinkle a little hyssop into the water and say:

"AND THIS WATER SHOOK THE EARTH AND CAUSED
ALL GROWTH TO RISE UP FROM THE SOIL,
REACHING UPWARDS TO THE SOURCE OF LIFE, THE
PRIMORDIAL FIRE."



Pick up the chalice of water. Hold it to your lips, and breath the incantation across the water:

"LET THIS WATER BLESS AND SANCTIFY ALL
THAT IT TOUCHES,

REMOVING ALL PAIN AND STRIFE.

MAKE US CLEAN IN THE SIGHTS OF THE
ANCIENT ONES,

WHO ART THE MOTHERS AND FATHERS OF
ALL CREATION."



The water is now holy and ready for use in your ritual.



Take up the athame. Moving to the North of the sanctum, point the blade to the ground and imagine creating a boundary as you circumambulate widdershins, moving North, West, South, East, and back to North again. Walk in silence, concentrating on the idea that you are slicing through the ether as you walk. In your mind, see the blue-gray mist of the astral light part for you.

Having circumambulated the Circle, replace the athame upon the altar. Pick up the water and move widdershins back to the North of the circle. Asperge the ground with the holy water as you circumambulate North, West, South, East, and Back to North again. Then ceremoniously pour the holy water into the pitcher in the West, making the entire contents of the pitcher holy as you do so.

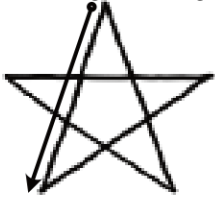
Replace the chalice upon the altar, and then carry the incense around the circle, starting in the North and circumambulating West, South, East, and back to the North. Replace the incense upon the Altar.





Quarter Calls

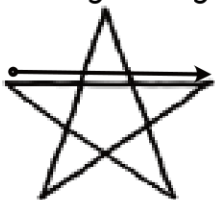
Pick up the salt, and move widdershins back to the North. Draw an Earth Invoking Pentagram with the Salt dish and say:



"I SUMMON, STIR, AND CALL THEE UP,
OH YE MIGHTY ONES OF THE NORTH, ELEMENT OF
EARTH."

Take a pinch of salt and drop it on the paten. Then place some salt on your tongue before replacing the salt dish back on the Altar.

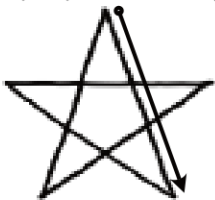
Moving to the West Gate, pick up the pitcher of water and draw a Water Invoking Pentagram with it and say:



"I SUMMON, STIR, AND CALL THEE UP,
OH YE MIGHTY ONES OF THE WEST, ELEMENT OF
WATER."

Now pour the pitcher of water into the basin. Make sure to empty it of all water.

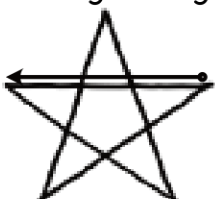
Pick up the sacred flame from the three-branched candlestick on the Altar and move widdershins to the South Gate. Draw a Fire Invoking Pentagram with the sacred flame as you say:



"I SUMMON, STIR, AND CALL THEE UP,
OH YE MIGHTY ONES OF THE SOUTH, ELEMENT OF
FIRE."

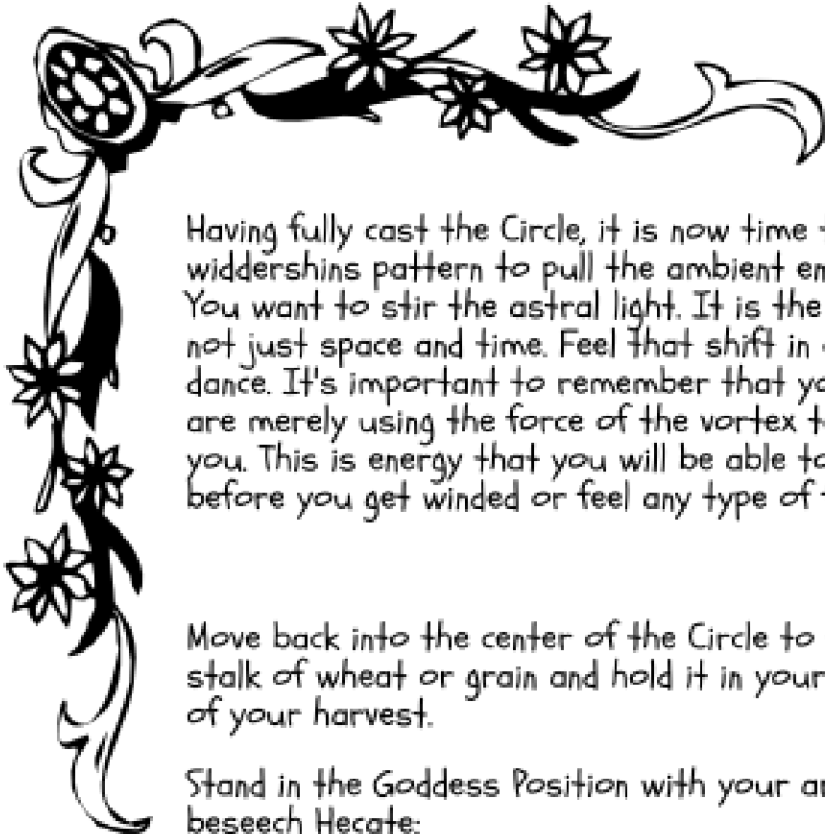
Light the fire candle in the South before placing the sacred flame back in its place upon the altar.

Pick up the thurible with your right hand and move widdershins to the East Gate where the fan resides. Pick up the fan and clack it open. Then draw an Air Invoking Pentagram with the incense as you say:



"I SUMMON, STIR, AND CALL THEE UP,
OH YE MIGHTY ONES OF THE EAST, ELEMENT OF
AIR."


Now fan the incense at the East Gate before replacing the fan (still open) back in the East Quarter of the Circle and the incense back upon the altar.



Having fully cast the Circle, it is now time to get it whirling. Dance lightly in a widdershins pattern to pull the ambient energies of Nature into your circle. You want to stir the astral light. It is the ether that you move through now, not just space and time. Feel that shift in consciousness take hold as you dance. It's important to remember that you are not yet raising energy. You are merely using the force of the vortex to pull energy into your circle with you. This is energy that you will be able to program with your intention. Stop before you get winded or feel any type of fatigue.

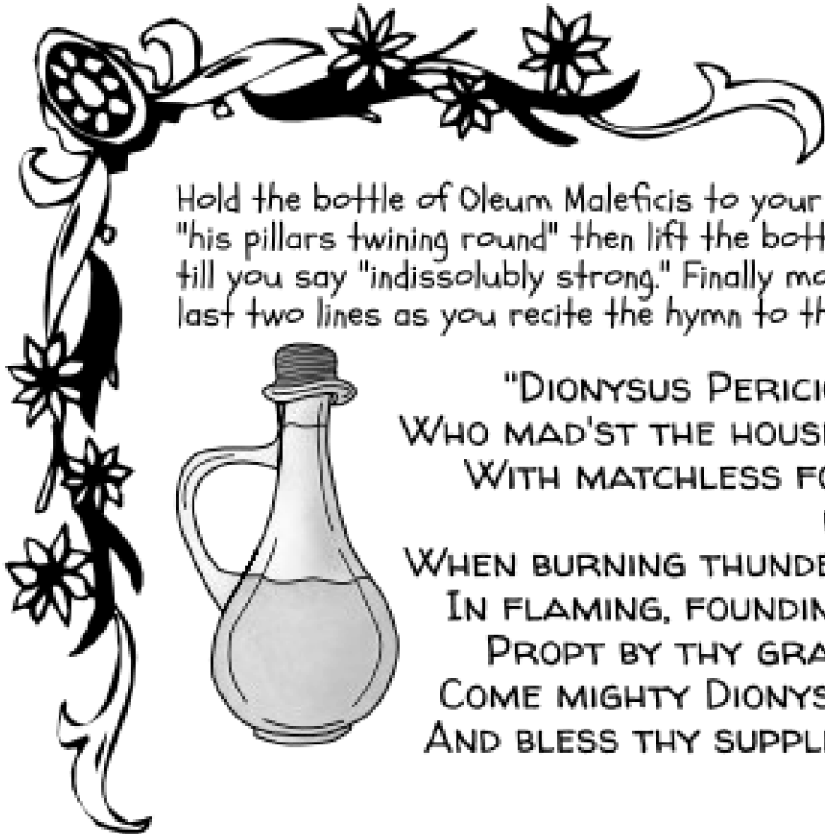
Move back into the center of the Circle to the south of the altar. Pick up a stalk of wheat or grain and hold it in your dominant hand. This is the symbol of your harvest.

Stand in the Goddess Position with your arms reaching up for the sky, and beseech Hecate:



"NURSEMAID TO THE ANTAIAN QUEEN,
TORCH IN HAND, REVEALING THAT WHICH IS
UNSEEN;
WHO WIDELY WAND'RING ONCE, BROUGHT
SWEET RELIEF,
TO THOSE IN TROUBLE, FACING THE
PROFOUND'ST GRIEF.
UNCOVERING PROSERPINE, HER DAUGHTER
PURE
IN DREAD AVERNUS, DISMAL AND OBSCURE;
MAIDEN, MOTHER, CRONE, THRO' THE WORLD
YOU STRAY
DIONYSUS, ATTENDING LEADER OF THE WAY;
COME, MUCH INVOK'D, AND TO THESE RITES
INCLIN'D,
THY MYSTIC SUPPLIANT BLESS, WITH FAV'RING
MIND."

Add the symbol of your harvest to the oleum maleficis. Add more carrier oil if needed.



Hold the bottle of Oleum Maleficis to your groin until you get to the words "his pillars twining round" then lift the bottle up to your heart. Keep it there till you say "indissolubly strong." Finally move the bottle to your head for the last two lines as you recite the hymn to the Dionysus:



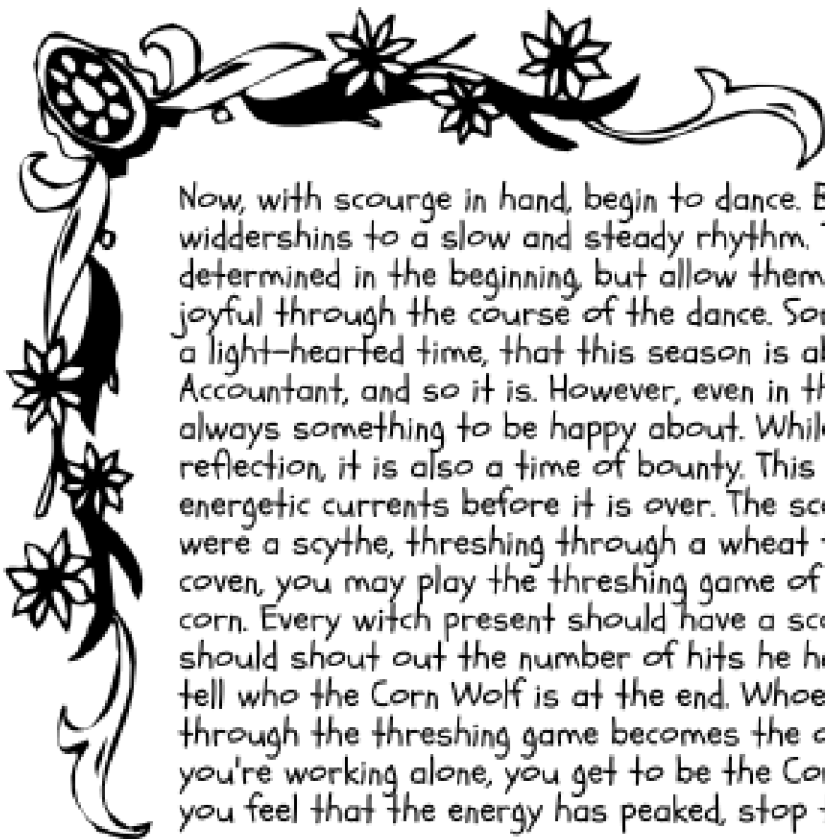
"DIONYSUS PERICIONIUS, HEAR MY PRAY'R,
WHO MAD'ST THE HOUSE OF CADMUS ONCE THY CARE,
WITH MATCHLESS FORCE, HIS PILLARS TWINING
ROUND,
WHEN BURNING THUNDERS SHOOK THE SOLID GROUND,
IN FLAMING, FOUNDING TORRENTS BORNE ALONG,
PROPT BY THY GRASP INDISSOLUBLY STRONG.
COME MIGHTY DIONYSUS TO THESE RITES INCLIN'D,
AND BLESS THY SUPPLIANTS WITH REJOICING MIND."

Place the flat blade of your athame over the Harvest Basket as you say:

"HEAR ME, GRACIOUS GODDESS, LET MY HEART AND YOURS
ALIGN.
ANSWER ME, O BULL-HORNED DIONYSUS, GOD OF MAGIC, JOY,
AND WINE.
BLISS OR SORROW IS OURS TO KEEP.
AS WE'VE SOWN, SO MUST WE REAP."

Each witch present takes a piece of fruit from the basket. As you hold your hands over the piece of fruit, pray silently, thinking about your seasonal petition and how it impacts your yearly goal. Then partake of the fruits of your personal harvest while communing with your Gods. Use this harvest, which is yet another example of Cakes, and this Wine, to accumulate the power of the elements within yourself so that you may channel that energy through the rest of this rite.





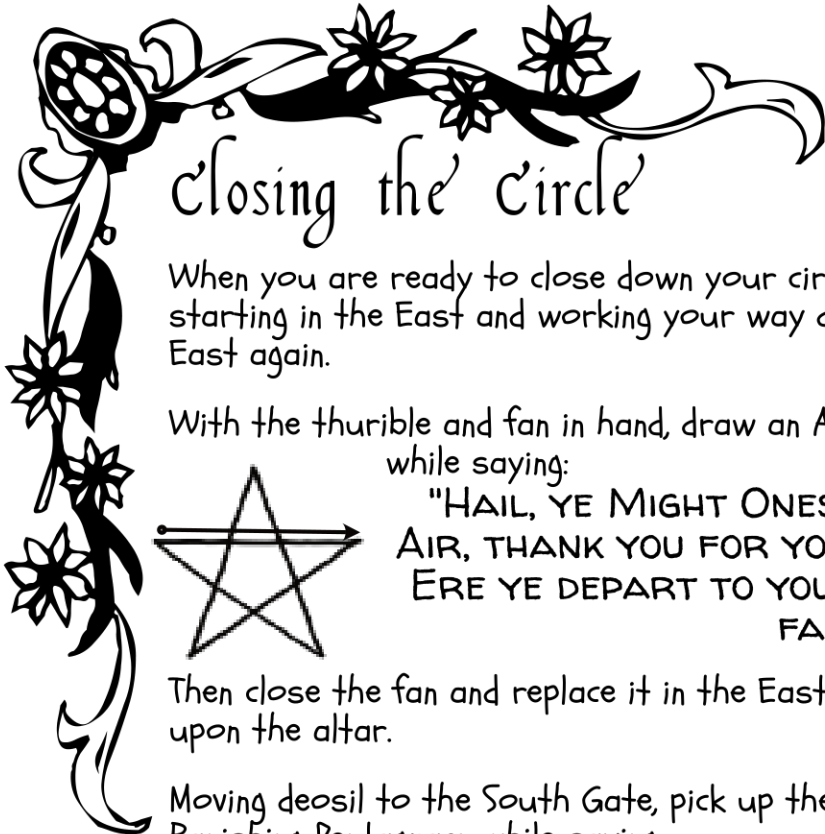
Now, with scourge in hand, begin to dance. Begin by treading the round widdershins to a slow and steady rhythm. The steps should be heavy and determined in the beginning, but allow them to become faster and more joyful through the course of the dance. Some might tell you that this is not a light-hearted time, that this season is about getting right with the Cosmic Accountant, and so it is. However, even in the most trying times, there is always something to be happy about. While this is a time of personal reflection, it is also a time of bounty. This dance should embody both energetic currents before it is over. The scourge should be used as if it were a scythe, threshing through a wheat field. If you are working in a coven, you may play the threshing game of trying to cut the last stalk of corn. Every witch present should have a scourge. Whenever he is whacked, he should shout out the number of hits he has received so that it's easy to tell who the Corn Wolf is at the end. Whoever gets the most whacks through the threshing game becomes the official Corn Wolf for the night. If you're working alone, you get to be the Corn Wolf. Congratulations! When you feel that the energy has peaked, stop the game.

The witch with the most whacks picks up the Corn Wolf from the Harvest Basket and says:

"THE MAD DOG IS IN THE CORN!"

The Corn Wolf should be kept in a safe place until it's time to Bury the Carnival in the Spring. Then it may be used as part of the stuffing for the Wild Man poppet.

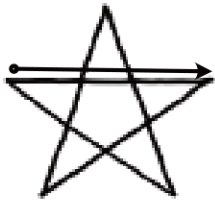




Closing the Circle

When you are ready to close down your circle, reverse the order of casting by starting in the East and working your way deosil around the circle back to the East again.

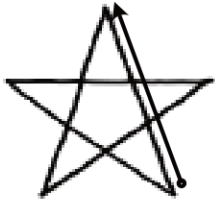
With the thurible and fan in hand, draw an Air Banishing Pentagram in the East while saying:



"HAIL, YE MIGHTY ONES OF THE EAST, ELEMENT OF AIR, THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE AT THIS RITE. ERE YE DEPART TO YOUR LOVELY REALMS. HAIL AND FAREWELL."

Then close the fan and replace it in the East Quarter. Place the thurible back upon the altar.

Moving deosil to the South Gate, pick up the fire candle and draw a Fire Banishing Pentagram while saying:



"HAIL, YE MIGHTY ONES OF THE SOUTH, ELEMENT OF FIRE, THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE AT THIS RITE. ERE YE DEPART TO YOUR LOVELY REALMS. HAIL AND FAREWELL."

Blow out the fire candle before replacing it in the South of the circle.

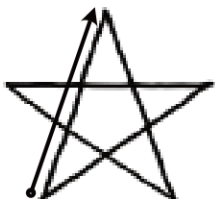
Moving deosil to the West Gate, take up the empty pitcher and draw a Water Banishing Pentagram while saying:



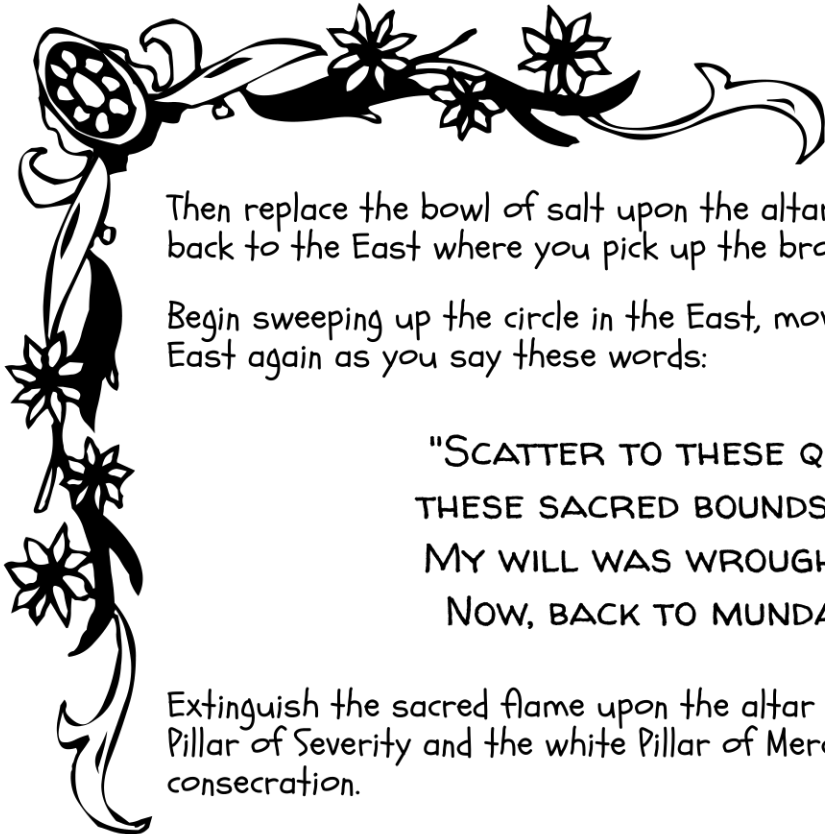
"HAIL, YE MIGHTY ONES OF THE WEST, ELEMENT OF WATER, THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE AT THIS RITE. ERE YE DEPART TO YOUR LOVELY REALMS. HAIL AND FAREWELL."

(If performing outside, it might be appropriate to dump the basin of water upon the ground.)

Moving deosil pick up the bowl of salt as you circumambulate to the North Gate, then draw an Earth Banishing Pentagram while saying:



"HAIL, YE MIGHTY ONES OF THE NORTH, ELEMENT OF EARTH, THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE AT THIS RITE. ERE YE DEPART TO YOUR LOVELY REALMS. HAIL AND FAREWELL."



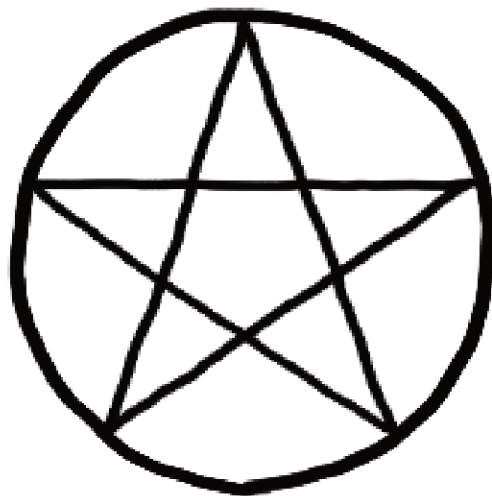
Then replace the bowl of salt upon the altar in its place before moving deosil back to the East where you pick up the broom.

Begin sweeping up the circle in the East, moving deosil South, West, North, and East again as you say these words:

"SCATTER TO THESE QUARTERS FOUR,
THESE SACRED BOUNDS EXIST NO MORE.
MY WILL WAS WROUGHT. THIS I KNOW.
NOW, BACK TO MUNDANE LIFE I GO!"

Extinguish the sacred flame upon the altar and preserve it to light the black Pillar of Severity and the white Pillar of Mercy during the next ritual's altar consecration.

Later that night, before you retire to sleep, brew yourself a strong herbal infusion of chamomile, spearmint, and passionflower as you think about the Corn Wolf and the role of the male witch as werewolf. Think about the Night Battles of rustic Italian witchcraft and drift off to sleep as you give yourself the subtle command to join the Night Battles as one of the "good walkers" on the astral.



THE SABBAT HAS BEEN KEPT!