

Watch Out!

They're a Witch!

by

Campbell M Gold

(1994)

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What did you say? "Witch"? Surely, there are no "witches" today!

You'd be surprised! You only have to scan through the pages of popular fringe and occult magazines to find that witchcraft and its following is alive and well.

'Prediction', a popular European magazine, is typical of the occult press, and in any issue you will find occultists and witches offering their services openly.

Need a spell?

Get hold of the "Psychic Switchboard" where you can "Dial-A_medium", "Dial-A-Love-Spell", "Dial-A-Psychic Spell", or "Dial-A-Money-Spell".

Life getting you down?

Tanith, an "Experienced Occultist and witch", asks: "Can I help you with your problems? Love, money, job, health....?"

Feeling sick?

Ceridwen, the "Celtic Clairvoyant and Healer", offers "Readings and traditional potent workings. Knowledge of the future combined with direct Occult assistance."

Need something more powerful?

Nicholas Darkwood the Pyromancer can assist you with "The dynamic art of fire magick", with each spell personally consecrated by himself.

Are you under a curse?

Mazkuth, the "Supreme Master Magician" can help you, through the power of the Magus, by releasing good, and destroying evil.

These, and scores of other services appearing in occult magazines attest to the living presence of "The Craft" (Witchcraft).

Common questions regarding Witchcraft include: Is witchcraft growing? What is the foundation of modern witchcraft? What are the principles that guide the cult's adherents?

Gerald Gardner, in his book "Witchcraft Today", explains that witchcraft has become one of the fastest growing world-wide religions during the last one-hundred and fifty years.

Today's covens are many, widespread, and well organised - with aims that can be summarised in the

following words from a practising witch:

"Our gods desire good for us, fertility for man, beast and crops. When we die we go to the gods' domain. Where, having rested a while in their lively country, we are prepared to be born again on this earth. And if we perform the rites correctly, by the grace of the Great Mother, we will be reborn among those we loved. We will remember, know and love them again. Being born again we ever progress. What we endure here in this life fits us for a better one in the next. Thus the gods teach us to look forward to a time when we be not men any more, but a time when we become one with the Mighty Ones."

This expression of the "transmigration of the soul" is an important part of current witchcraft thinking.

The witch went on to describe the nature of the cult's religious activities:

"Ours is a religion of love, pleasure and excitement. Frail human nature needs a little warmth and comfort to relieve us from the hardness and misery of life, and from the cold austerity of the church's preaching - comfort on earth, not in some far-distant paradise beyond the grave. We worship the Divine Spirit of Creation, the Life-Spring of the world, and without which the world would perish. To us, it is the most sacred and holy mystery - proof that God is within us; whose command is: 'Go forth and multiply'. Such rites are done in a holy and reverent way."

Following their initiation, new witches are given a manuscript copy of the "Book of Shadows". This is the instruction manual of the order, and the initiate is told to copy it out in their own "hand of write". The rites described in the book are of "ancient work", but their exact origin is unknown. However, the pseudo-archaic English used in many renditions indicates a more recent adaptation (possibly 19th Century).

Through initiation, the key principle of "Getting Sight" (i.e. astral vision, and higher-self awareness) is imparted to the new member.

Describing the process of "Getting Sight", our witch said:

"In the Craft, we are taught to intensify the imagination at the same time controlling the blood supply. The circle being formed, and everything properly prepared, the aspirant should first bind, and then take the teacher into the circle. He then lightly uses the scourge. The teacher in turn binds the aspirant enough to retard the blood slightly. The teacher then uses the scourge with light, steady strokes. It is very important that the pupil should see the strokes coming as this greatly stimulates the imagination. This, with the light binding, slows down the circulation of the blood. As soon as the aspirant speaks or sleeps the scourging should stop. Be not discouraged if no results come at the first attempt, results usually occur after two or three attempts. It has been found that this practice 'doth often cause a fondness between aspirant and teacher'. It is for this reason that a man should only be taught by a woman, and a woman by a man. Man and man, and woman and woman should never attempt these practices together. May the curse of the Mighty Ones be on such as make the attempt."

In a typical coven there are three grades of witches:

First Degree - Priest (or Priestess) and Witch.

Initiation to this degree includes the "five-fold-kiss" (A kiss on the feet, knees, genitals, breast, and mouth), and the receiving of the 'Tools of the Art' (Typical Tools may include: The Pentacle - representing the Element Earth; The Cup - representing the Element Water; The Wand - representing the Element Fire; and the Athame or Dagger - representing the Element Air. Other Tools may include: Natural Brooms, Iron Cauldrons, Jewellery, Incense Burners, etc.).

Note: the Tools of the Art may vary from order to order.

Second Degree - Magus, if a man, Witch Queen if a woman.

Initiation to this degree includes "Scourging" and the enactment of the "legend of the Goddess".

Further consecration of the 'Tools of the Art' takes place.

Third Degree - High Priest or High Priestess.

Initiation to this degree includes ritual copulation (the giving of life) between the candidate and his initiator. Males typically have female initiators and vice versa (this has become less defined in the modern age of homosexuality). Also, further consecration of the "Tools of the Art" takes place.

What do people seek in witchcraft?

The answer to this question is found in "The Charge", a portion of the "*Book of Shadows*". "The Charge" speaks of the "gift" that will be given to the faithful seeker of light:

"I am the gracious Goddess who gives the gift of joy unto the heart of Man. Upon earth I give unimaginable joys; upon death, I give peace, rest and ecstasy. Nor do I demand aught in sacrifice."

Do practitioners of Witchcraft use drugs?

Herbs, and Natural Oils are routinely used in the craft and traditional covens; however, today it is not unusual for witches to use "hard" drugs in certain "less traditional" covens.

Will witchcraft survive?

Our witch answers:

"Looking at the modern esoteric world, it is assured that witchcraft and magic will always survive in some form or another. For, in spite of the negative connotations that have been associated with the craft, there is no doubt that it appeals to some of humanity's deepest instincts and needs."

Should witchcraft have a place in our society?

That is a question that can only you can answer.

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20092010