



Magic from Mexico



Includes a Book of Shadows
MARY DEVINE, PH.D.

Revised Edition

The Living Light of *Brujería*

Even though modern faiths have attempted to drive the Great Mother from her throne, She lives on in the hearts and souls of Her people—and nowhere with more vitality than in the form of Guadalupe, Goddess of the *brujas*.

Magic from Mexico presents the secrets of *Brujería*, as revealed by sixteen real-life Wise Women in Mexico and America. Within these pages are the beliefs and practices of a magical and spiritual tradition that traces back to the very roots of the ancient Aztec culture, and adapts foreign influences to its own ends. Also, for the first time in publication, a Book of Shadows as transmitted by real, practicing *brujas*.

This is a book of wisdom, spells, laughter—and very serious convictions about human beings and the invisible world about us. Here is Goddess-centered magic, and a guide to the celebrations and worship of a belief system that is both ancient and very modern.

About the Author

Mary Virginia Devine, fondly known to many readers and friends as "Toci," has devoted the last three decades to the field of Mexican-American culture.

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MARY DEVINE, PH.D.

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Dedicated to America's Witch Queen, the Lady Sheba,
without whose works, wisdom, and
inspiration this could never have been written.

Prayer to Guadalupe

We greet thee and adore thee,
O Guadalupe,
Heavenly Rose,
Mystical Rose,
of Tepeyac Hill.
May thy fragrance bless our souls,
so sweet is thy savor,
Most Beauteous Rose.
Thine, too, is the power.
Give it to us women, who are Thy daughters.
Blessed art Thou through all eternity.
Amen.

Bless me, O Queen of eternal life.
Help me, O saints and ye Mighty Dead.
Hear me, O lonely souls and restless spirits.
I conjure thee in the name of Guadalupe,
thy sovereign redemptrix
from the flames of Purgatory.

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Preface

This book could offend many people.

Barring a few progressive priests, the Roman Catholic clergy may view it as an attack on the legend of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Indian Madonna venerated in Mexico since her alleged appearance in 1531. It is not. Rather, it is a study of the origins and development of the Guadalupe theme in a subculture of Mexican-American society, the magico-religious syncretic system known as Brujería.

With rare exceptions, Mexican-Americans may see in its pages a denigration of *La Raza* coupled with aspersions on the advances made by Mexican-Americans in recent decades. This book is neither. Instead, it examines a cult which owes its existence and survival to the centuries of suffering endured by the Mexican people, for whom I feel great respect and affection.

More than one dabbler in the occult may despise this book because it does not give complete instructions for

Preface

casting spells. To begin with, the practitioners of Brujería refused to divulge their deepest secrets. Considering that I was and remain a nonmember of their cult, I was lucky to learn what I did.

Furthermore, even if a Mexican-American witch (*bruja*) in a moment of weakness had revealed such material, I would not include it in a volume destined for public circulation. Brujería is nothing to play with.

Angriest of all could be the anthropologists, who may condemn this book for lack of scientific methodology and documentation.

When I began my research in 1966, I had found only two brujas who would permit themselves to be interviewed. One bruja referred me to another—sixteen in all—but it was a gradual process taking six not necessarily consecutive years to complete and involving work in four Midwestern cities.

At inception, I had no idea that I would encounter a full-fledged magico-religious system. At best, I had expected to find a collection of superstitions. I did not know exactly what I was dealing with or which points my questions should stress.

Consequently, the interrogation of the first four brujas was far from thorough. And though I backtracked whenever possible, I failed to locate two of them for further research. Hence, I cannot claim that my informants received identical sets of questions.

Another grave defect is the absence of taped material. Unfortunately, the brujas refused to let me record their voices. It was all I could do to persuade them to allow the transcription of their teachings into notebooks.

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In addition, anthropologists may not approve of the brujas' anonymity. Left to my own devices, I would have presented their legal names. As it was, at their insistence, I had to give them pseudonyms. All I can tell you is that they were distributed in time and space as follows:

Madison, Wisconsin (1966–67, four); Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1967–68 and 1973–74, two); Detroit, Michigan (1968–69, nine); and Port Huron, Michigan (1969, one).

Finally, a word about the writing style. The “you shoulds” and other constructions entailing use of the impersonal “you” and imperative forms by no means imply an endorsement of Brujería. I neither promote nor condemn the cult and its rites. The material in this book is presented for one purpose only—the reader's entertainment.

Enjoy!

—Mary Virginia Devine

Introduction

As a student of spiritual disciplines for more than a half century I have been impressed with the basic similarity of the “old religions” of every land and every culture. Once we peel off the veneer of man-made religions—those differences among the world religions that have led to wars and persecutions “in the name of God”—we find simple truths and magical technologies that speak from and to the soul of men and women everywhere.

It isn't always easy to find the old religion. The man-made religions have suppressed and repressed it as “superstition” or “devil worship,” and written their histories to support the supposed progress of the new ways. In that process of justifying the new ways, man has proclaimed superiority to and authority over women, over nature, and over defeated tribes, nations, and races, and the old gods and goddesses. But the old ways linger on in archetypal memory and in instinct, and bits and pieces from here and there can

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be assembled to reveal a comprehensive and inclusive spirituality of people, of nature, and of the divine.

America's oldest religion not only survives to this day, but has taken on "reborn" vigor, and is—perhaps—in the forefront of a total rebirth of religion as the "science and means to the integration of Man with the Earth and his own Soul."

When the Spanish priests sought to redirect the worship and devotion given to the ancient Aztec goddess *Tonantzín* by identifying Her as Our Lady of Guadalupe, they instead helped preserve the Old Religion of Mexico and the power of the village wise women, the *brujas*. Theirs was the religion of natural wonder and the finding of divinity in all life, and their wisdom was in finding within nature the herbs to treat the sick, to heal the wounded in heart and spirit, and the science to work with nature to make a better life. That natural science was sometimes called witchcraft, sometimes magic, and always was seen as rapport with the gods.

Always, when given the opportunity, the surviving folk-religion adapts to changing times and the needs of its peoples. The Old Religion of Mexico adapted—finding the Goddess just as powerful in Her new robes as in the old ones!

And the *brujas* continue to adapt to new needs and new influences—whatever works is incorporated into their folk-magic, and blended with that retained from the older religio-magical system that is rooted in the very Earth of the Americas. Today, Brujería reveals not only its ancient Aztec heritage (and the even older folk-magic of La Raza) and the Spanish Catholic overlay, but still newer adaptations from Americanized versions of Celtic Wicca, African-Haitian Voudoun, Puerto Rican *Santería*, and a revived reverence for its Aztec roots.

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As American Hispanics gain position and influence, Brujería is moving out of the barrios and finding a respected place in the mainstream of our interactive culture and contributing to the growing sentiment for noninstitutional nature magic and Goddess worship.

Yes, Guadalupe is the Goddess, and folk-magic always gives precedence to the Mother Goddess—for it is She who cares for the day-to-day welfare of Her children: the concerns of childbirth, and the health, fertility, prosperity, and happiness of the people.

And folk-magic is today being recognized as a valid form of psychotherapy. Dr. Carl Hammerschlag, the chief psychiatrist at a large state hospital, is quoted in *Science Digest*, June 1981:

All the research in psychotherapy had failed to demonstrate that one method is better than another. We have come to recognize that belief, as much as any other variable, is the best predictor of outcome. Also important are the personal qualities of the therapist, regardless of his system.

No longer are the *brujas* and other folk-magicians viewed with skepticism by modern scientists. Instead, even the more "orthodox" therapists are working openly with their peers in the other healing traditions. In some cities, the folk-healers serve as paraprofessionals for clinics and hospitals, and the National Institute of Mental Health sponsors a school in Rough Neck, Arizona, for Navajo medicine men, teaching both traditional healing chants and modern medical concepts.

Certainly, Brujería and the Church are not strangers to one another, for it is the Catholic Santa María, Mother of God, and Her saints that form the *bruja's* pantheon.

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Indeed, if "all Gods are but one God," then all religions are but variations of One Religion seen through the eyes and souls of the many peoples and cultures that constitute the One Human Family in all its varied richness.

As chapter two shows, Brujería recognizes this universality by identifying the Catholic saints with the Major Arcana of the Tarot cards. Chapter three demonstrates the practicality of Brujería's eclecticism in its bringing popular astrology together with the ancient concept of "guardian saints" of personal relationship with deific forces. Chapter four gives back to the modern world its much-needed natural cycle of seasonal rituals and celebrations; necessary to the re-establishment of unity between man and the ebb and flow, and the round of, life's energies in the natural world.

Chapter five gives religious experience back to the people—for anyone can invoke the descent and blessings of Guadalupe's Lunar Avatars. And the whole of Part II, the *Libreta*, shows how each one of us can become priests or priestesses in the Church of the Mother Goddess.

What are the "secrets" of a valid religio-magical system, and why publish the secrets of Brujería now?

First of all because secrecy itself may no longer be an essential ingredient to success in magic as it once was. As we come to understand more of the powers inherent in man, in that ninety percent of the mind's capacity that we don't presently use, we can better adapt the techniques of ritual and craft, of prayer and meditation, to the potential of today's better-educated man and woman.

As Dr. Hammerschlag, previously quoted, indicates, belief is fundamental to any therapy. But what is belief in actuality? Can "faith move mountains"? What is the power that a shaman channels from the spirit world into this one?

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A belief system automatically involves the devotee in a practice of "visualization" of figures that are archetypal, and any system of prayers and ritual brings "creativity" into that visualization. The devotee sees the Deity-figure and feels his or her request for help being answered. The Deity-figure is a living archetype—a psychic repository of universal power. Contact with the Deity, through visualizing the figure or symbol, opens up a channel to the specialized energies and knowledge that have become associated with it.

Through "worship" we give love and devotion to that archetype, raising up our own consciousness to attunement with the character of the Deity-figure visualized, and opening our own psychic channels so that we can receive the power thus invoked. In our prayers and meditations we have to specify—to "creatively visualize" how this power will be used to meet our needs. We ask for healing, or for money, or for love; we ask for ourselves or for a loved one, or even for the benefit of an entire family or community or the world; we see the Deity blessing us with the power; and we see this power transforming our world in fulfillment of our request. We see ourselves well again, with the money we need, loved and respected, successful in our work. We see the power channel through us to accomplish our goals, and to go beyond fulfilling our own needs to benefit others—for in all religions the concept of "tithing," of sharing in our blessings, is recognized as one of the essentials.

Some of the power channeled through us can even be "stored up" and held in a "battery" for future use by ourselves or other people. We can "charge" an object, an amulet or talisman, with the power we have invoked and received by directing the flow of energy (visualizing and feeling its

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passage) through our bodies and out through the hands into the object.

If we don't give as we have received—sharing the fruit of our magical work—the circuits we have opened in our own person can burn out, the channels can become clogged, the flow may dry up. Tithing need not be to the church; unless the church is part of your life and you know that the tithe is used for a purpose you can believe in. But sharing of your blessing in ways that you really believe are helpful to people, or animals, or causes, or the world in need will make the channels stronger and bring through the bounty of the universe into this material world.

The gods need us to reach up to them: our love and devotion is like the small current needed to activate our telephones so that we can reach across great distances and contact another person. Candles and incenses also are devices to transform energy from the physical plane into that of the astral world to strengthen the "image" of the Deity invoked, and thus increase the power available.

Candles may be anointed with oil (some use scented oils to affect an aromatherapy) both to increase the energy being transformed as the candle burns and to focus the devotee's thoughts and feelings on the character of the rite being undertaken. The offering of a candle, in this fashion, to a saint or to one of the avatars of the Goddess, is a kind of sacrifice—a giving of energy with love. The offering becomes a kind of magnet charging the area in which it burns with power from the Deity.

The images of the avatars (the various forms of the Goddess, of Guadalupe) and of the saints, and even of the *poderosos* (people of great power and respect who have

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died), are very powerful thought forms. These forms "specialize" the power that flows through the whole universe, and enable us to contact and channel that power as "blessings" to enrich and transform our lives.

The images that Brujería presents to us are alive and dynamic, are rooted in the very structure of the American Earth-world. Yes, Brujería is eclectic; its images and practices are drawn from many sources, and just as they are modifications of more ancient images and practices, so will there be more changes and more inspiration from other traditions and adaptations based on new knowledge and new experiments. But isn't that all part of the essential American character? To modify, to improve?

The "melting pot" draws from many sources and modifies them into something "new on the face of the Earth" while yet retaining something of the nature of the origins. Never can something foreign come to these shores and not itself be changed. Brujería transformed the Catholic Church and Tonantzin was born again as Guadalupe. The eagle that flies over the United States and Mexico is the thunderbird of the native peoples of the Land.

There is continuity in this land—we all walk upon the bones of our ancestors. The past speaks to us, and teaches us many wise things—we live in a different time and the teachings of the past must be modified to meet the needs of the present. But the changes go on, and we add to our heritage that it may evolve to fulfill the needs of the future.

Brujería has thrown off the bonds imposed by the Conquistadors, the Old Religion is freed of the torments of the Inquisitors, and the Children of the Goddess are free to build a new Pyramid to the Sun—an evolving New Age culture to restore the land and enrich the people.

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Goddess worship and the Craft of the Wise have always been the religion and magic of the folk, the people. It may be called by many names: Witchcraft, Brujería, Santería, Macumba, Wicca, Voudoun . . . each with its own variations of image and practice, but always with the same message—the gods are here now, waiting for each of us to call them and to experience the ultimate unity of God and Person.

We need all the wisdom and truth that these religious-magical systems have for us. The images and practices they use represents unique knowledge of the human psyche and of the universe, and of the flow of energy and life throughout. That's the second reason to publish the "secrets" of this *Magic from Mexico* now: we must invoke the powers and blessings of the Goddess in order to meet the severe challenges of our moment in history. Will we bring forth a New Age, or will the poisons of the dying age smother the achievements of our civilization that should be the heritage of tomorrow's children?

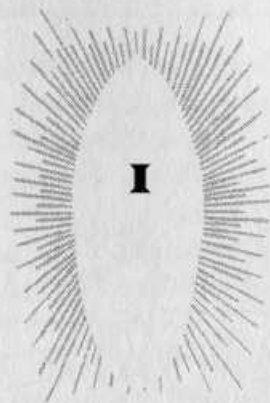
A "New Order of the Ages" must be called forth!

O Guadalupe,
hear your children.
We call to Thee,
we invoke Thy Presence
that the land and the people
may live in beauty and harmony.

Carl Llewellyn Weschcke
Publisher

Part I

A Study of Mexican-American Folk-Magic



Nuestra Señora La Todopoderosa

*Ask Guadalupe. She'll do it. She can do anything if
she feels like it.*

—Doña Jesusa
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

According to Spanish chroniclers, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to an Indian convert named Juan Diego on December 9, 1531, and informed him that she wanted a church constructed on the spot. Further apparitions produced a miraculous crop of roses in winter and an equally uncanny portrait of a brown-skinned Madonna imprinted on the Indian's mantle. Convinced by these prodigies, the local bishop yielded to Mary's demand. Thus was born the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

But that's not the way the archaeologists and folklorists tell it. Like many of the southern European Madonnas,



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

On December 9, 1531, at Tonantzín's chief shrine, Tepeyac Hill, near the hamlet of Cuautlalpan, Juan Diego had this vision of a dusky Madonna swathed in a star-spangled blue mantle standing on a golden crescent. Because the Spanish conquerors had difficulty pronouncing "Cuautlalpan," the dark goddess' name gradually became Guadalupe.

Nuestra Señora La Todopoderosa

Guadalupe is a pagan goddess in disguise. Long before the Spanish Conquest, the Aztecs had honored Tonantzín, "Our Mother," on the very same site.

Despite some overt male chauvinism, the Aztecs maintained a healthy respect for the feminine principle. Indeed, one of the highest offices for men bore the title Cihuacóatl, or "Snake Woman." And Cihuacóatl was just another manifestation of Tonantzín.

Aware that they could never eradicate her cult, the Spanish missionaries simply baptized Tonantzín and swathed her in Christian robes. Then they sat back and rubbed their hands with glee while the vanquished Aztecs flocked to the shrine.

What the clergy didn't know was the fact that Tonantzín wasn't an innocuous, run-of-the-mill mother goddess. Under the name Tlazolteotl, "Eater of Filth," she purified sinful humanity via confession to her priests and priestesses. And her priestesses held secret rituals to aid their followers. In other words, they were witches.

All unwittingly, the *padres* had helped preserve the paganism they'd yearned to destroy. By Christianizing Tonantzín, they'd made it safe for nominally Catholic Indians to venerate her, with the provision that they call her "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe" and attended Mass regularly.

As for the priestesses of Tonantzín, they received baptism like the rest of the unslaughtered Indians and went underground as *brujas* whose native magic lay hidden under a thick veneer of popular Catholicism.

One of Tonantzín's aspects was Coatlicue, "Serpent Skirt," alias the "Mother of the Gods." All the stellar deities were her children. To the *brujas*, the Catholic saints and angels up in heaven looked suspiciously like Tonantzín's children,

the star gods. So the denizens of Catholicism's paradise entered *brujería* as Guadalupe's "little ones" and servants. Even the strictest padre couldn't object to Indians revering the saints he and his associates had brought to Mexico!

Centuries before the Conquest, the Aztec religion had taught that after death the majority of human souls went to a vaguely unpleasant place called *Mictlán*. The *brujas* took one look at the Catholic Purgatory and its inhabitants the *ánimas* ("poor souls") and welcomed them as old friends under new names into the cult.

Of course, not everyone suffered in the Aztec afterworld. Great warriors slain in battle and women who died in childbirth enjoyed an exalted place in heaven. In the *bruja's* mind, these entities merged with the Catholic "blessed" who, though not canonized saints, might intercede for the faithful on earth. *Brujería* dubbed them the *poderosos* or "powerful ones" and assigned them a position beneath the angels but equal or slightly superior to the *ánimas*.

At the nadir of the Aztec religion's concept of the universe lies a type of hell divided into nine regions ruled by *Mictlantecuhtli*, the "Lord of the Dead" and governor as well of the Purgatory-like realm of *Mictlán* mentioned above. It took little imagination for the early *brujas* to connect this god with the Catholic Satan, his subjects with the demons, and his domain with the Inferno.

Within the Aztec state religion, priestly participation in human sacrifice was largely confined to males. Consequently, Catholicism's prohibition against women saying Mass didn't seem oppressive to the *brujas*. The Aztec priestess created life while the priest destroyed it to nourish the gods. Both were important and necessary. They complemented each other to perfection. If Catholic padres didn't

want women in the sanctuary when they offered the body and blood of Christ to appease a ravenous God the Father, that was fine. After all, the *brujas* didn't feel like admitting men, let alone Catholic priests, to some of their rites either. Besides, even if the *brujas* had harbored objections, fear of the Inquisition would have silenced them.

Confession, however, was a different matter. In the Aztec dispensation, priestesses as well as priests could absolve penitents. Thus the Catholic dictum that only a man could shrive sinners didn't sit well with the *brujas*. To get around this regulation while avoiding persecution as heretics, the *brujas* told their flocks to confess their misdeeds to the padres, but to bring their major sins and woes to a practitioner of *brujería*. (The information about the early *brujas'* attitudes toward the Catholic Mass and confession came from a young practitioner active in the Detroit area. To date, her statements have yet to be confirmed or contradicted in any printed data.)

Aztec ceremonials had involved lavish offerings of copal resin incense. So did the Catholic liturgy, albeit the missionaries' stinkum contained no copal and cost more. The ever-accommodating *brujas* decided that both types were good ritual fumigations. In time, the *brujas* actually came to prefer the Catholic product because it was easier to obtain and burned more evenly.

Likewise, Catholic holy water fitted into *brujería* because water, after all, had been ruled by an Aztec goddess and probable avatar of *Tonantzín*, *Chalchiuhtlicue* ("Jeweled Robe"). Catholicism's candles recalled the torches borne in processions as well as the sacred fires dedicated to *Chantico*, another deity related to *Tonantzín*, who presided over

cooking and housework. And images, especially those depicting Tonantzín-Guadalupe, were right at home.

Home, by the way, was where the brujas carried on, and still perform their magic. Women spent most of their time at home, so it served as an ideal base of operations for female adepts. Furthermore, any attempt to establish a temple would have led the brujas to the stake. The Spanish priests ran a tight little system in those not-so-good old days.

But not tight enough to strangle Tonantzín. Long after most knowledge of the Aztec state religion had died out among the masses and the old names were relegated to oblivion, she went marching on as Guadalupe. When the Spanish and, later, Mexican armies subdued the northern tribes, Guadalupe shared in the spoils.

While Guadalupe was gaining devotees and territory, her brujas were cleaning up, too. The conversion of the northern tribes to Catholicism not only gave the brujas more clients, but also exposed them to the herbal lore of the Yaqui *curanderas*, thus helping revive the almost-forgotten Aztec tradition of medicine. Contact with urban Latinos added European ceremonial magic and Allan Kardec's brand of Spiritualism to their system. And when the brujas left their homeland to settle in America's inner cities, they found a treasure trove of black folklore, Hoodoo, and Voudoun, which they promptly incorporated into their teachings. By the 1950s, Brujería had taken root in Mexican-American communities from Los Angeles to New York and from Tulsa to Detroit.

Back in 1968, a Detroit bruja told me that "the root is worth everything." Although she was speaking about a High John the Conqueror plant, her statement could apply to Brujería. Were it not for the roots of popular support, the

brujas would have been out of business years ago. A discussion of what keeps them going and why the people, even their victims, defend them could fill volumes. However, I'll try to keep it short and, hopefully, rational.

First of all, there's the bruja herself, the Most Pure of Guadalupe's representatives on earth. Without exception, the sixteen practitioners I met prided themselves on being *señoras sin macha*, or women whose sexual conduct was beyond reproach. Whatever their ethics might have been, their love lives were straight out of a pre-Vatican II Catholic marriage manual.

To the brujas, sex was designed to give women babies, not pleasure. The more than faintly disgusting orgasm was a male prerogative. Let men wallow in lust if they so chose; the spiritual daughters of Guadalupe were above such filth. When I mentioned the ancient Aztec aphrodisiac *toloachi*, explained its function, and informed them that early brujas might have used it, they expressed total disgust. One Madison practitioner even declared that I was no better than those *brutos* in trousers!

Many healthy babies were what the brujas wanted from sex. And in their non-Pill culture, many babies, usually healthy ones, were what they got. Out of sixteen practitioners, fifteen had borne five or more children, gigantic families by Anglo standards. Denied many opportunities by their society, the brujas had counted for something by following a strict sexual code and producing tribes of *niños*. Women desirous of children (and what traditionally reared Hispanic female isn't?) have only to look at the bruja's little ones to see that her fertility spells work. If the baby-making magic is good, clients are sure the rest must be pretty potent stuff. Hence, the bruja enjoys credibility.

Also contributing to popular faith in Brujería are the stories handed down from mother to daughter about the miracles wrought by practitioners. One Detroit-area informant (a nonbruja, by the way) told me four of these tales involving members of her family. Twenty years ago, her Auntie Pablita fell prey to "a cancer no doctor would touch." All seemed pretty grim for her, when a cousin suggested consulting a bruja. No sooner did the practitioner recite an Ave to Guadalupe and light a red candle "for power" than the disease vanished. (For the Latin texts of the Ave, the Credo, the Gloria, and the Pater Noster, please see chapter eight.)

But cancer cures were small spuds compared to other prodigious events caused by a bruja's spells. The same bruja who saved Pablita from an untimely grave also replaced cousin Jorge's deformed vertebrae with normal ones by praying to San Osorio, Brujería's patron saint in charge of bones. Later on, she helped Jorge's daughter Luisa win a college scholarship and kept cousin Pedro out of the army through a novena to Santa Catalina de Alejandría, the wheel-toting saint who governs good fortune.

Even those who don't accept the stories about Brujería's positive prowess frequently jump back into line when tales of its negative power worm their nasty way into a conversation. Going by the ones I've heard, they tend to fall into two categories.

The first group includes stories generally set somewhere in northern Mexico and dealing with Guadalupe's ability to punish individuals or families for their offenses against a bruja. For example, there's the classic about an inquisitive lad who spied on a practitioner during the performance of a secret rite. To teach him a lesson, Guadalupe "allowed" an

owl to take up residence in his stomach. Eventually, the ominous bird devoured his innards "just as he had tried to eat another's knowledge" (*el saber de otras personas*). Sad to say, the nosy fellow was a slow learner who failed to recognize his crime for what it was, let alone repent. So he died under "the curse of La Guadalupana" and went straight to Hell, where he now ranks as the stupidest devil.

In another legend, a dirty old man (*viejo verde*) made improper advances to an attractive but highly proper bruja. When she demanded an apology, he not only refused but also called her a prostitute (*puta*) and told her she was so ugly that even his sex-obsessed sons wouldn't rape her. That night the bruja recited a special prayer to Guadalupe, who transformed the entire clan into billy goats.

Tales of the second variety, however, rarely involve animals and tend to take place in contemporary America. For all of that, they still feature Guadalupe and stress the power of her brujas to call down her wrath on evildoers.

Not too long ago, a Chicago-area tavern owner tried to proposition his prettiest cocktail waitress. It just so happened that the girl's auntie was a bruja. The next day, his most expensive booze had turned to swill, "which is all that *La Guadalupana* gives to pigs."

But lubricous hooch pushers aren't the only modern recipients of Guadalupe's revenge. Because a Detroit girl was jilted, she hired a bruja to "close" her quondam fiancé's "paths" by burning a black candle to we-know-whom. From that day forth, the young man could never keep a job. Finally, out of sheer despair, he committed suicide and became another victim of Brujería.

To believers, however, both men were victims of their own sins punished by Guadalupe through the powers

vested in her brujas. This element of retributive justice works wonders for the cult's prestige. After all, in Brujería one can see the forces of goodness trounce evil every single day. And that's a reassuring spectacle for people struggling to survive in a hostile, often unjust world.

By the same token, most recipients of a bruja's curse don't complain because they feel they must have done something to deserve it. Indeed, one informant solemnly swore that a bruja's malediction, "like a mother's," harms only the guilty. If, by some error, the practitioner should ask Guadalupe to punish an innocent person, the hex would descend on "somebody who needs it."

The origins of this attitude are twofold. Most obvious is the age-old Catholic fixation on man's depravity and the necessity to atone for sin; suffer now or pay later in Purgatory or Hell. Less well-known are the indigenous sources of this stance. Long before the padres arrived, the Aztec priestesses of Tlazoltéotl had a form of sacramental confession. Furthermore, the Aztec hierarchy conducted grim penitential rites wherein men offered their blood to appease irate deities. Contrary to popular belief, the fall of the Aztec Empire failed to put an end to such practices; within the memory of living men, the Yaqui tribe indulged in equally masochistic rituals designed to propitiate the gods by displaying the sinners' willingness to suffer.

However humbly one must endure a bruja's curse, the wanions sent by a *diablero* or bad witch are a different matter. Because a *diablero's* hexes land on the just, one must combat them to the utmost of one's ability. And since one's ability in this area usually is nil, one must call in a powerful servant of Guadalupe, a bruja. So even the evil witches help boost Brujería.

Yet another factor promoting the cult is its accessibility. Need help? Don't despair. For members of the community and their friends, it's easy to arrange an appointment with the friendly neighborhood bruja. Like old-time physicians, most brujas will take emergency cases on a moment's notice and make house calls if age and distance permit. In other words, when you need a bruja, she's there.

Furthermore, once you've found your bruja, you can rest assured that the vast majority of her fees will be small when compared with other expenses in your budget. Want to make certain nobody breaks into your apartment? In exchange for a couple of bucks, the bruja will have Guadalupe put San Miguel, the conqueror of Satan, on sentry duty. Why not? Burglars must be a snap for an archangel accustomed to clobbering demons!

Finally, there's the element of participation. While Catholicism reduces its laity to bored bystanders, Brujería encourages its rank and file to assume an active role in ceremonies. This is especially true of women. The bruja casts potent spells for, and enjoys the feeling, however fleeting, that she has some control over her future.

And in her exultation, the client can reflect that the bruja is a brown-skinned woman like herself who serves an even darker goddess, ever-attentive to the cries of the oppressed, Guadalupe. With Guadalupe's aid, all evils can be banished to Hell, whence they came. Though today may be bad, Guadalupe through her brujas will make tomorrow better for her devotees.

Brujería sells the sensations of hope, participation, and power to the despairing, the excluded, and the powerless. With such a market, it's pretty hard to beat that merchandise.



The Bruja's Tarot

My cards say plenty, but my heart tells me more.

—Doña Clara
Detroit, Michigan

If hope, participation, and power form the foundation of Brujería, divination is a pretty important stone in the structure. After all, reason the brujas, plans, deeds, and the ability to control one's life don't amount to much without some knowledge of the future. How can you change coming events without peeking in the Book of Destiny to see what Guadalupe and her servants, the saints, have in store for you? You can't.

To remedy this situation, many brujas have taken up cartomancy with the Tarot. We don't know how long ago the Tarot came to Mexico, but if the pietistic and moralizing interpretations of the cards are any indication, I believe it arrived at a time when a Catholic veneer was

mandatory in the Spanish colonial age (1521–circa 1810). With zealous padres and Inquisitors on the prowl, one couldn't be too careful.

Thus, the Mexican Tarot may bask in centuries of tradition. Unfortunately, as the brujas I questioned admit, the type of Tarot pack they use does not. Because authentic Mexican Tarot decks are nearly unobtainable in the United States, my informants employ several versions of a pack originally designed by the British occultist A. E. Waite in the early twentieth century. (Many students now use the *Xultun Tarot* based on Mayan symbolism, while others prefer *The Witches Tarot*, designed by Ellen Reed to reflect American eclectic paganism.)

Since the Waite-style decks are readily available, the brujas recommend them. However, any standard Tarot pack with twenty-two major arcana and fifty-six minor arcana will suffice.

Once you have your preferably new set of Tarot cards, the brujas advise you to consecrate them by lighting a red candle “for power” on the night of the full moon and reciting an Ave to Guadalupe. Presumably this ritual will persuade the Virgin to bless your mantic efforts with accuracy.

The ceremony finished, wrap the deck in white silk “for purity” and put it in a plain wooden box never previously used or even intended for another purpose. If you don't possess such a receptacle, don't worry. Just wait until the next full moon and consecrate an ordinary box as you did the cards.

To keep your pack and its container potent, expose them each month to the rays of the full moon while you offer three Aves plus a white candle to Guadalupe. Unless you have insufficient funds, light a different candle every time,

if there's one thing Guadalupe hates, it's a cheapskate and she won't hesitate to revoke your powers should you deny her any due.

Of course, these rites will neither make you a bruja nor endow you with a practitioner's power. Even so, they're still strong enough to let you catch a glimpse of the future for yourself and others.

When you read the Tarot for a friend, remove the cards from their box with your left hand and say an Ave. Then you're ready to proceed with any of the three spreads (card arrangements) shown in Figures A, B, and C.

The *Santa Cruz* is used to determine whether or not your friend will get his wish. Have him shuffle and cut the cards three times “for the Most Holy Trinity” and return them to you. Then lay out nine cards as in Figure A (see the next page).

Turn up the first card. This shows your friend's state of mind. Then flip over cards two through four, which indicate people who may help him work toward his goal. Cards five and six warn of the obstacles preventing the realization of his desires, while seven and eight reveal the hidden enemies (if any) plotting against him. Finally, turn over card nine to learn the ultimate result of his efforts.

If your friend doesn't like the answer, tough tortillas! According to most of my informants, the *Santa Cruz* can be “made” only once for each wish.

Brujas rely on the *Santísimo Corazón* to help people with family troubles, feuds, and unhappy love affairs. Ask your friend to shuffle and cut the cards as many or as few times as he chooses while concentrating on his problem and praying to Guadalupe. When the cards feel “right” your friend should hand them to you, saying “*La Guadalupeana puede*

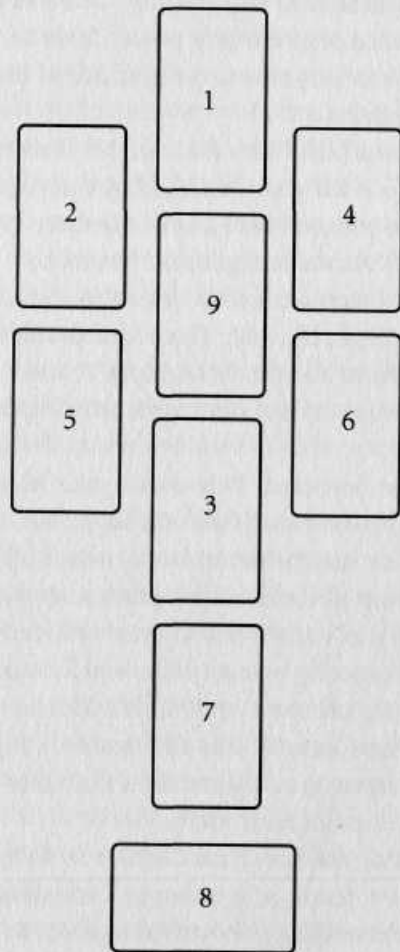


Figure A: La Santa Cruz de Calatrava
(The Holy Cross of Calatrava)

The Bruja's Tarot

todo" (Guadalupe can do everything). Then you should reply "*Bendita sea*" (Blessed be she) and arrange twelve cards to form a heart facing you as delineated in Figure B (see the next page).

The twelve cards stand for the Apostles, to whom you should pray for *el saber* (knowledge) before you turn over card one. Failure to invoke the Apostles renders a reading null and void, so don't forget to offer them at least a Pater Noster (Our Father).

Cards one through three signify the source of your friend's woes. Cards four through nine give advice about solving his problems. Most of the time, the reading ends with cards ten through twelve, which tell us if success will crown his efforts.

However, if your friend desires additional information about people supposedly responsible for his tribulations, have him manipulate the deck with his eyes closed and extract a card at random, which he should hand you sight unseen. This thirteenth card represents Judas Iscariot and, by extension, any enemies that cards one through three might have revealed. Invoke San Miguel, the Destroyer of Evil, and turn over card thirteen. If major arcanum thirteen (Death) gazes up at you, it means the foe will pass away soon, after which time your friend will enjoy at least a year of happiness. Should another card appear, disregard it "as you would Judas the Traitor."

Are you sure your sweetie isn't playing around? Do you wonder about your husband's mysterious trips to visit his sick aunt? Did the used car you just bought really belong to the little old lady from Pasadena? If you're troubled by doubts concerning anyone's veracity, El Evangelio is for

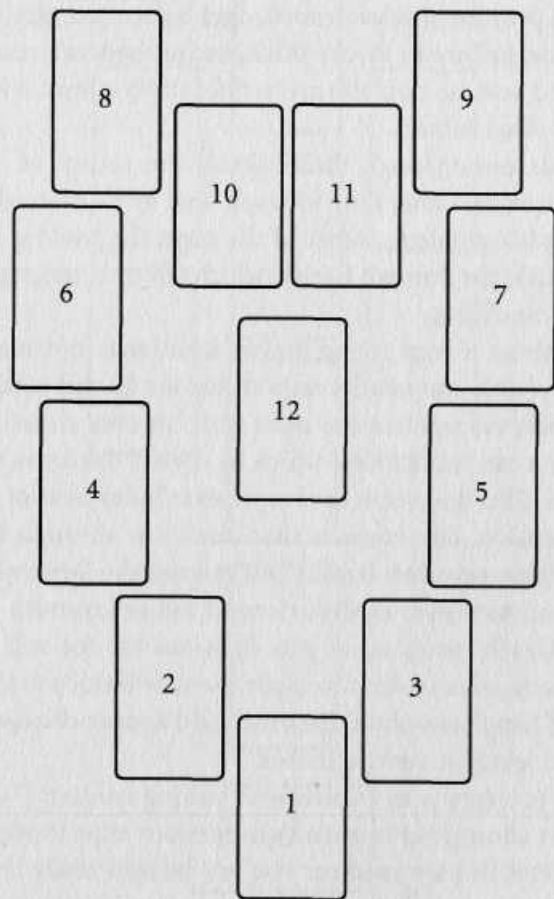


Figure B: El Santísimo Corazón de nuestra Señora de Guadalupe
(The Most Holy Heart of Our Lady of Guadalupe)

The Bruja's Tarot

you. According to the brujas, it invariably reveals the "Gospel Truth."

Unlike most Tarot spreads, this is one you can perform for yourself. And if your friend wants *El Evangelio*, he himself must fiddle with the cards and lay nineteen of them out as shown on the next page in Figure C. (To help their clients, many brujas have a sheet of oilcloth bearing the appropriate markings.)

Cards one through fourteen form the outline of the Gospel and reveal the reasons for your friend's uncertainty. Cards fifteen through nineteen make the cross on the Gospel cover, thus exposing the facts. If major arcanum fifteen (The Devil) appears anywhere in the cross, your friend is the victim of a lie circulated by an extremely sneaky person. To defeat this devious individual, he should study the remaining cards in the cross to find trustworthy people who can help him.

The spreads are all fine and good, but what does each card mean? Unlike most Tarot systems, the bruja's interpretation disregards inversion and assigns the same significance to a card whether its image is upright or reversed. Yet another distinctive feature of the bruja's Tarot is the ascription of a patron saint and spells involving his intercession to each of the twenty-two major arcana. Presumably, seeing a given saint's card in your reading means that you may need his supernatural services and should consider performing a rite to obtain them.

Since the major arcana outrank the other cards, let's begin with them:

0 ~ The Fool

Despite what European occultists may say about "sublime innocence," brujas see The Fool as exactly that. Whenever

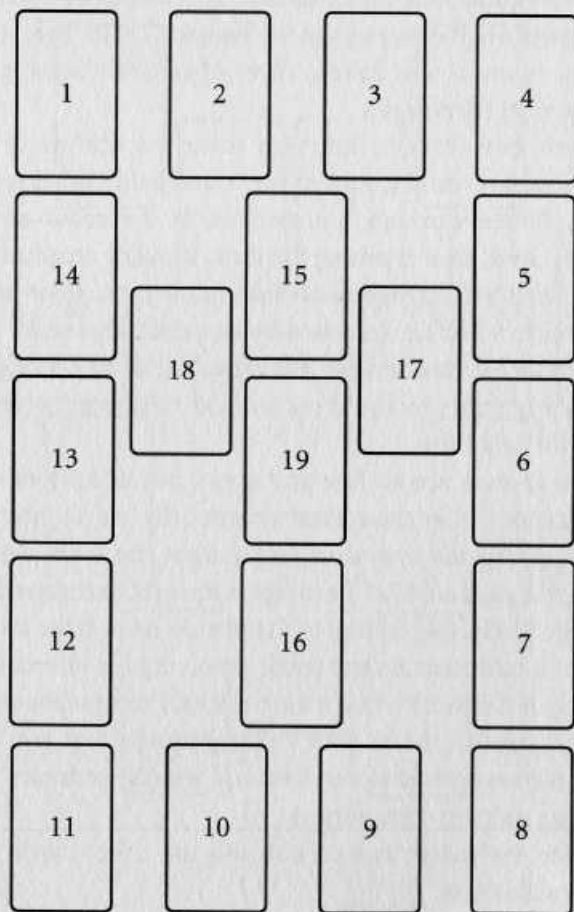


Figure C: El Evangelio
(The Gospel)

The Bruja's Tarot

The Fool turns up, it warns you to behave sensibly and shun stupid, loquacious people. Because he nearly flunked out of the seminary, San Jose de Copertino rules The Fool. Having come so close to failure, San Jose lends an attentive ear to the prayers of struggling students who burn incense in his honor.

1 ~ The Magician

The Magician indicates skill, shrewdness, and the guts necessary for attaining your long-range goals. Its ruler is San Cipriano, a noted adept before his conversion to Christianity. If you'd like to master the occult sciences, invoke San Cipriano every Saturday night and offer him a black candle shaped like a skull, "the vessel of wisdom." Hexed by a diablera? Have your bruja ask Guadalupe to send San Cipriano after the evil witch. Whatever method he may employ, this saint will teach her a lesson she'll never forget.

2 ~ The High Priestess

According to the brujas, The High Priestess stands for a wise, often elderly woman who dispenses good advice. If she appears in a reading near arcanum eighteen (The Moon), she's probably a bruja with decades of experience behind her. The High Priestess belongs to Santa Dolores, a form of Our Lady of Sorrows. Like San Cipriano above, Santa Dolores aids would-be occultists in exchange for black candles and Saturday-night prayers. Since she also rules the waning Moon, Santa Dolores will make your enemies fade away if your bruja gives her incense mixed with graveyard dirt and recites a certain secret spell. A word of warning: should you learn the right words (which is highly unlikely), don't attempt this spell on your own. In the hands of anyone but a bruja, it could backfire.

3 ~ The Empress

The Empress signifies success and good wages in a job-seeker's reading. In other contexts, this card indicates a happy pregnancy resulting in the arrival of a brilliant child. Santa Elena, the mother of Constantine the Great, presides over The Empress. Because Santa Elena discovered the remains of Christ's cross, brujas associate her with the removal of "crossed conditions," a type of hex formerly confined to African-American Voudoun. If you need to "get uncrossed," ask your bruja to invoke Santa Elena and anoint one of your household crucifixes with "uncrossing oil."

4 ~ The Emperor

Behold the most macho card in the entire Tarot! With The Emperor on your side, there's nothing you can't accomplish. In Brujería, San Luis Rey governs this potent arcanum. Ironically enough, San Luis is Louis IX of France, whose crusade against Islam ended in total failure. Despite this fiasco, brujas advise you to offer him incense before you embark on major projects like starting your own business or changing jobs. And since San Luis enjoyed a pleasant domestic life, newlyweds should give him large, sweet-scented white candles. Furthermore, couples whose bruja blesses them in San Luis' name will avoid serious spats and live to see their great-grandchildren.

5 ~ The High Priest

To brujas, The High Priest represents the Catholic clergy. If The High Priest appears in positions five or six in the Santa Cruz spread, it means that you haven't been praying enough for your wish. Presumably, regular attendance at Mass will shove the obstacles out of your path, thus enabling you to realize your fondest dreams. Should The High Priest show

up in positions fifteen through nineteen of the Evangelio, it hints that you ought to consult a padre before taking any action. San Pedro, the first pope, rules The High Priest. Properly invoked by a bruja, San Pedro will use his crossed keys of papal authority to "cross" or hex your enemies. If you offer him a white candle before a séance, he'll open the gates of Heaven, thus facilitating the attendance of good spirits. Apparently nobody's told San Pedro about Pope Leo the Thirteenth's decrees against spiritualism!

6 ~ The Lovers

The Lovers is just what it depicts, a happy couple. By extension, it can signify domestic bliss or even a good non-sexual relationship with your boss. Brujas put San Adán and Santa Eva, the earliest lovers, in charge of this card. Men desirous of their aid should purchase Adam-and-Eve roots and anoint them with "lovers' oil," "commanding balm," and liquor before wrapping them in red silk. Women in love are urged to invoke the holy pair and offer them two pink candles on the night of the Full Moon. Is lover-boy chasing loose women? Have your bruja say her special prayer to Santa Eva and wear the little red plastic heart she'll give you after the rite. Within a week, he won't even look at putas (prostitutes).

7 ~ The Chariot

Good luck follows anyone in whose reading The Chariot appears. Nearly as strong as The Emperor, it destroys the influence of adjacent "bad" cards. For workers, it augurs an extraordinary raise in pay or even an impending promotion. Students love to see The Chariot roll through their readings because it brings them lenient teachers and snap exams. San Martín, a martyred Roman cavalry officer,

commands The Chariot. If you're cursed with rich but stingy kin who refuse to help your side of the clan, give San Martín a red candle and some of your bruja's "money-drawing" incense. By the next Full Moon, he'll have those tightwads sharing their wealth just as he once tore his cloak in half to clothe a naked beggar.

8 ~ Justice

(Some decks list this card as number eleven.)

Watch out for the law and/or irate relatives if you've done anything to be ashamed of during the last lunar month. However, if you're innocent, Justice can denote a policeman who'll arrest your enemies. In positions fifteen through nineteen of the Evangelio spread, Justice reveals that the cops are hot on the trail of whoever looted your apartment or stole your car. What's more, they'll recover all or most of your property. Santa Débora, the Old Testament's sole female judge, presides over Justice. Do you want to win a legal case? Ask your bruja to offer Santa Débora three red candles together with a special prayer known only to practitioners. A word to the wise: make sure your cause is right and your opponents are wrong before you have your bruja invoke Santa Débora. Unlike the Voudoun spirits who handle legal matters, Santa Débora refuses to help criminals and cranks. If she thinks you're the party at fault, you'll not only lose the case but she'll hit you with legal complications beyond your wildest nightmares.

9 ~ The Hermit

The Hermit represents a wise old man such as your father, one of your uncles, or even your boss. If you're smart, you'll listen to his advice before you tackle a big project or try to

solve a long-standing personal problem. San Antonio Abad, a stern desert-dwelling monk, rules The Hermit. To banish house guests who've overstayed their welcome, pray to San Antonio while turning a broom upside-down and leaning it against your back door. By the next day, if not sooner, they'll be gone.

10 ~ The Wheel of Fortune

Whatever you do, don't gamble or buy a lottery ticket when The Wheel of Fortune appears in your reading because you'll only lose your money. To many brujas, it is in every way a "bad" card and a warning to shun risky activities for at least a week. In Brujería, Santa Catalina de Alejandría spins The Wheel of Fortune because Roman soldiers tortured her using a contraption that most artists depict as a disk or wheel edged with spikes. If you'd like Santa Catalina's aid in games of chance, contests, or even athletic competitions, give her white candles every Friday night. Want to win a scholarship? As an early woman intellectual, Santa Catalina's always happy to help deserving students of either sex provided they recite a special prayer available from their neighborhood bruja.

11 ~ Strength

(Some packs list this card as number eight.)

Here's another "bad" card in the bruja's deck. Although many European occultists see Strength as a symbol of man's ability to overcome vices and external enemies, most practitioners view it as an admonition not to take on more than you can handle. Since she supposedly tamed wild beasts like the lion on the card, Santa Marta controls Strength. Is your husband a vile bruto who enjoys belting you around? Santa

Marta and your bruja will beat the blazes out of him with a secret spell guaranteed to make a bigger, tougher man than his hide.

12 ~ The Hanged Man

Have you been committing felonies lately? The Hanged Man says you'd better mend your ways soon or God will get you even if the law doesn't. When The Hanged Man shows up in good citizens' readings, it portends altercations with one or more people who deserve to dance on air. San Andrés, who was crucified upside-down and whose martyrdom resembles the picture on most versions of the twelfth arcanum, holds sway over The Hanged Man. Because some legends stipulate that San Andrés' cross was x-shaped, a few brujas associate him with the power to overturn "crossed conditions" and cancel evil spells cast by diableras. Furthermore, one practitioner added that San Andrés helps worthy individuals find hidden treasures. X marks the spot.

13 ~ Death

Guess what? If Death appears in position thirteen of *El Santo Corazón*, your worst enemy will croak pronto. Elsewhere, it portends poor health for you or an impending death in the immediate family. San Lázaro, whom Jesus raised from the dead, rules the thirteenth arcanum. Brujas steeped in spiritualistic lore invoke San Lázaro to improve their mediumship. A second San Lázaro, the leprous beggar who perished at Dives' gate, not only shares control over this card but also helps brujas banish acne.

14 ~ Temperance

You'd best watch your pennies and your temper when the fourteenth arcanum greets your eyes. Rising prices, inflation, layoffs, and emotional outbursts capable of costing you your job loom on the horizon. In positions fifteen through nineteen of the Evangelio spread, Temperance warns you against rash actions which you could regret for the rest of your life. Santo Tomás de Aquino, the even-tempered "Angelic Doctor" of Scholastic Theology, looks after Temperance. One bruja even identified the angel on this card as Santo Tomás himself and used a sketch of the arcanum to represent him on her private altar because the only available statue bore a hefty price tag. Due to his great wisdom, brujas "consult" Santo Tomás when they don't know which spell will best serve a given purpose and client. Seven centuries ago, Santo Tomás condemned witches as traitors to God; either he's had a change of heart or the brujas put their whammy on him, because today he invariably gives them the right answers.

15 ~ The Devil

Somebody's been lying to you if The Devil occupies positions fifteen through nineteen of the Evangelio. When Satan pops up anywhere else in a spread, he says you've been straying from the straight and narrow *camino del bien*. According to a Port Huron bruja, the fifteenth arcanum may also indicate that your children are turning into little devils. So get back in line and/or curb your kids before real trouble erupts. Since San Miguel drove Satan out of Heaven, he keeps this card under his watchful gaze and archangelic thumb. Diableras working against you? Don't fret. Have your bruja invoke San Miguel who'll nullify their

spells and punish them until they apologize to you in person. According to one elderly bruja, San Miguel will smite the diableras with huge, itchy pimples and insomnia, so you should have some contrite visitors in a matter of days. Be a good Christian and forgive them, or San Miguel may transfer their afflictions to you.

16 ~ The Tower

Drive safely and stay away from ladders when The Tower appears in your reading. If you're an illegal alien the odds are twenty to one that the boys from Immigration will nab you within a week. And should you be tempted to commit a crime, don't. Apparently The Tower stands for hospitals, asylums, and other places of confinement like the pokey. Because Santa Bárbara's wicked father imprisoned her in a tower, this card falls within her jurisdiction. Other items under her dominion include thunder, lightning, and fire arms, so treat Santa Bárbara with respect. To obtain her protection during an electric storm, burn a white candle and some blessed palm leaves in her honor. Just bought a new rifle? Rub the weapon with oil consecrated by your bruja and offer Santa Bárbara a red taper. Do this at least once a month and she'll make you a mighty hunter. But be careful; should you misuse any firearm "dedicated" to Santa Bárbara by bagging human game, she may hurl a thunderbolt in your direction.

17 ~ The Star

Now here's a fine card. Doesn't Santa María wear a diadem of twelve stars? Of course she does, and that's why The Star is so potent that it automatically neutralizes a "bad" card if it lands near one. When The Star turns up next to The Devil

in positions fifteen through nineteen of the Evangelio, it means that your old demon of an enemy is about to pay for his misdeeds. Furthermore, from this day forth, he'll be utterly powerless. However weak your foe, Santo Domingo de Guzmán's benign influence in your life will grow stronger every hour as long as you acknowledge his rulership over The Star, recite the Rosary often, and present him with a white candle each Sunday. Why Santo Domingo governs The Star no bruja could tell me. Neither, for that matter, could any Catholic priest under forty. But an elderly nun unearthed the pious tale that Santo Domingo's mother dreamed of a dog marked with a white star before she brought him into the world; a few decades later, he founded an order called the *Dominicans*, a Latin name that can be translated as "Dominicans" or the "Hounds (*canes*) of the Lord (*Domini*)." According to the venerable sister, the stellar blaze on the dog's chest presaged Santo Domingo's brilliance coupled with his devotion to the Virgin, whom medieval Catholicism termed *Stella Maris* or "Star of the Sea." It's as good an explanation as any.

18 ~ The Moon

European occultists may view The Moon with jaundiced eyes, but the brujas love it. After all, Santa María is "the Moon of the Church" so arcanum eighteen can't be sinister. When The Moon gleams up at you from any position in the spreads, it augurs good advice, supernatural powers, and/or worldly gain. Queen of The Moon is Santa María as a pure maiden treading the lunar crescent and minus the customary veil, her long tresses swept by the night air and encircled by a halo composed of the twelve stars usually set in her crown. Would you like to be even prettier than you are?

Offer Santa María seven white candles. Then, gilded by their glow, say an entire Rosary. For best results, perform this rite at the new moon. Is your mother-in-law a bitter old biddy whose glance could turn wine into vinegar or make milk go sour? Perhaps you ought to sweeten her up. Give the bruja a snapshot of the caustic so-and-so. Then recite three Aves to Santa Maria and burn a large, preferably scented white candle. While you're busy at home, the practitioner will be saying one of her special prayers and smearing honey all over the photo. In less than a week, the acerbic old crow will coo like a sweet, motherly dove.

19 ~ The Sun

Although some European occultists practically venerate The Sun as a symbol of spiritual advancement or union with the infinite, brujas aren't all that enthusiastic. To begin with, they associate Old Sol with the scorching weather characteristic of the Mexican deserts and sections of our own Southwest. Then, too, there's the tradition in popular Catholicism associating heat with unpleasant places like Hell and Purgatory where "our sins are burned away." When The Sun sizzles away in positions fifteen through nineteen of the Evangelio spread and The Devil lurks nearby, it indicates that one who lied to you is already roasting down below. Elsewhere in this or any other spread, The Sun warns you to consume less fire water and/or watch your temper. Ironically, the gentle Santa Lucía keeps an eye on The Sun. Although none of the brujas I interviewed could tell me why she ruled this card, I think I've found the answer in the fact that Lucía is a derivative of *luz* (plural, *luces*), a Spanish word for "light" stemming from the Latin *lux*. Because the historical Santa Lucía was blinded by Roman soldiers, the bruja's saint supposedly improves

any devotee's sight provided three practitioners offer her a yellow candle "for his intention."

20 ~ Judgment

Have you been to confession lately? If not, see a priest *prontísimo*. Whenever Judgment appears, it points to unabridged sins or an uneasy conscience. San Gabriel, who'll blow that famous horn at the Last Judgment, rules this arcanum. Since many Tarot decks depict his instrument as a huge trumpet bearing a banner emblazoned with a cross, brujas implore his aid in "uncrossing" hexed clients. Want San Gabriel to blow away a woe? Give him three white tapers and wear a silver cross strung on a light blue ribbon. Should your affliction remain, buy a toy horn, have your bruja "dedicate" it to San Gabriel and say three Aves while she toots it as a salute to the saints hovering over the four corners of the earth; wherever San Gabriel may be, he'll hear the cacophony and fly to your assistance.

21 ~ The World

European occultists may not be able to agree on an interpretation of The World, but the brujas I contacted unanimously maintain that it represents a loose woman and, by extension, immorality. After all, isn't that sexy creature on the card nearly as naked as she was when her mother bore her? Where you find The World, the flesh and you-know-who can't be far behind. If The World turns up in a married woman's reading, it reveals that her mate is playing around with one or more floozies and spending his cash on them instead of his family. Should it land near The Sun in positions fifteen through nineteen of the Evangelio, it means that the offended wife must reach an understanding with

Magic from Mexico

the red hot *mamacitas* and that the latter may give her bad advice. Santa María Magdalena, the quondam prostitute who anointed Jesus' feet, governs this card. Would you like to rid your neighborhood of streetwalkers? Ask your bruja for some "go away" incense and a pinch of graveyard dirt. Then, when the moon begins to wane, offer the dust and stinkum to Santa María Magdalena. Burn a small black candle every night for a week. By the arrival of the new moon, there won't be a single sweet cream lady in the vicinity.

According to the brujas, the more major arcana in a spread, the greater the client's problems. Furthermore, the major arcana cancel out conflicting minor arcana.

Still, the cards in the four suits of minor arcana possess meanings and must be considered in a reading.

The first suit is **Pentacles**, alias Coins. Pentacles denote money and swarthy people:

King of Pentacles: a tall, dark man and/or a warning to be more economical.

Queen of Pentacles: a dusky married woman who watches her pennies.

Knight of Pentacles: a young person of either sex who hoards money or a small savings account.

Page of Pentacles: an industrious child or a raise in pay.

Ten of Pentacles: an admonition to share your wealth.

Nine of Pentacles: a hint that you should give more to the Church.

Eight of Pentacles: a warning to eschew games of chance.

Seven of Pentacles: a minor windfall.

Six of Pentacles: nasty news guaranteed to wreck your budget; loss of your job, illness, etc.

Five of Pentacles: debts galore.

Four of Pentacles: balanced budget or a legacy.

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Three of Pentacles: hard work ahead.

Two of Pentacles: financial stability for a lunar month.

Ace of Pentacles: a bonanza or the birth of a dark child.

Swords stand for conflict, family feuds, temper tantrums, and people with light olive complexions:

King of Swords: a no-nonsense man or, by association, the military life.

Queen of Swords: a peppery-tongued woman who nags everyone within earshot.

Knight of Swords: a sarcastic young man or a younger unwed version of the Queen.

Page of Swords: a temperamental brat.

Ten of Swords: trouble with in-laws or coworkers.

Nine of Swords: a warning that you should confess your most recent "acts of anger" to the Padre.

Eight of Swords: an admonition not to boast.

Seven of Swords: an argument you'll win at the cost of losing a good friend.

Six of Swords: an accident that could get you involved in a lawsuit.

Five of Swords: caution in speech strongly advised.

Four of Swords: rewards for self-control.

Three of Swords: a hint to be a wee bit more assertive.

Two of Swords: a stalemate in a long-term feud.

Ace of Swords: an apology from a former enemy.

On a gentler note, **Cups** represent affairs of the heart and light-skinned, dark-haired people:

King of Cups: a fine man who'll make an even better lover.

Queen of Cups: a virtuous married woman devoted to her home and children.

Knight of Cups: young, unwed models of the above.

Magic from Mexico

- Page of Cups:** obedient, soft-spoken children.
Ten of Cups: a lovers' quarrel.
Nine of Cups: a warning to preserve premarital purity "as God wills."
Eight of Cups: an admonition not to brag about previous conquests.
Seven of Cups: a wedding or alliance you'll regret for the rest of your life.
Six of Cups: brooding over past failures.
Five of Cups: disappointment in love.
Four of Cups: a smooth, stable love life.
Three of Cups: a message urging men not to be bashful.
Two of Cups: emotional balance.
Ace of Cups: a long, happy marriage and/or the birth of a child akin to the Page of Cups.

Finally, we reach the last suit, that of Wands or Rods. Wands govern activity in general and pallid, fair-haired people. Of the four suits, Wands are the least popular among brujas, the reason being that the persons they denote tend to be *Anglos*:

- King of Wands:** a harsh, overbearing, belligerent man with few if any redeeming traits.
Queen of Wands: a bossy, probably immoral woman who may possess the "evil eye." Living proof that "blondes are poison."
Knight of Wands: a young bully whose parents' clout keeps him out of jail. If female, a loud-mouthed slut.
Page of Wands: a spoiled child addicted to foul language, lying, and keeping back change from any errands he may perform.
Ten of Wands: woe caused by malicious people who lie for the sheer devilment of it.

The Bruja's Tarot

- Nine of Wands:** the need to repent one's sins.
Eight of Wands: a warning against "ugly actions" (*cosas feas*) that could destroy you.
Seven of Wands: a message from on high telling you that truth cannot stay hidden forever.
Six of Wands: an admonition to stop plotting against those who have done you no harm.
Five of Wands: envy rearing its head in your heart.
Four of Wands: peaceful enjoyment of your blessings.
Three of Wands: stupid enemies who, if left alone, will clobber each other.
Two of Wands: a squabble.
Ace of Wands: violence and chaos. One Detroit bruja swore that Ace of Wands appeared in ten consecutive readings the day before the Detroit riots of July, 1967.

Naturally, literal adherence to these interpretations would produce an incoherent mishmash. To obtain coherent messages from the Tarot, the brujas balance the cards, giving some more value than others.

As previously stated, major arcana obliterate the conflicting influence of minor arcana. For example, if The Devil landed next to the Ace of Cups, the latter's benign power would become null and void.

By contrast, minor arcana must interact and blend their meanings. Using her knowledge of her clients together with her intuition, a practitioner decides how much of each card's interpretation contributes its might to the synthesis. Thus, the Three of Swords (assertiveness) near the Five of Swords (caution) would have to merge, but in varying proportions depending on the bruja's hunches; a fiery-tempered lad would be told to "cool it" while a timid boy would receive a pep talk on the need for aggression.

Magic from Mexico

In the case of contradictory major arcana, the situation grows more complex. True, all major arcana are puissant, but some pack a stronger punch than the rest, especially The Emperor and The Chariot, which cancel out any evil influences and transform certain failures into triumphs. Suppose that The Emperor appeared adjacent to The Wheel of Fortune, which warns clients to avoid gambling in any guise. A fellow wondering whether or not he should buy a lottery ticket would follow The Emperor's sanguine advice and totally disregard The Wheel's gloomy portents. Also special is The Star, whose claim to fame is its ability to neutralize "bad" cards in its vicinity.

With the remaining major arcana, determining degrees of relative strength is strictly a touch-and-go proposition because the individual brujas harbor greatly differing opinions. Though Justice was an especially potent card to a Madison practitioner, a colleague active in the same city deemed it so weak that any of the other major arcana could "crush it like a fly."

If you'd like to read the bruja's Tarot, don't worry if you can't make head or tail of the cards at first. Even brujas spend years getting the hang of it. One had to study nearly half a decade before her mother, a Sonoran practitioner, would let her give readings for clients. Remember what Cervantes said: "*¡Ten paciencia y baraja las cartas!*" Patience, and shuffle the cards!



Star White, Star Bright

Our dear little Virgin wears a crown of twelve stars.

—Doña Marina
Detroit, Michigan

Even if you never master the bruja's Tarot, don't despair. Today's Brujería embraces the entire gamut of mantic arts, divinatory techniques, and occult sciences. Largely due to its popularity in the mainstream of American society, astrology is booming among the brujas. However the bruja's brand of star lore bears little resemblance to the variety expounded in contemporary magazines. For one thing, it requires little math; if you know your sun sign and can use an ephemeris to find your moon sign and your ascendant, you possess sufficient arithmetical expertise. You may also want to look up your moon sign, and ascendant, and other personal horoscope data, in the

easy-to-use tables found in *Astrology for the Millions* by Grant Lewi (Llewellyn Publications).

But religio-magical knowledge is a different matter. In *brujería*, each of the twelve zodiacal signs has its own patron saint who should be propitiated with specific prayers and candles offered at a stipulated time. To add to the complexity, there are three separate lists of tutelary saints. Since nearly every adult in the U.S. knows his sun sign, we'll begin with the solar roster.

If you were born under **Aries** (March 21–April 20), Old Sol gave you San Sebastian for a celestial advocate. Because he perished bristling with arrows, his devotees should wear or carry them as charms. San Sebastian's favorite prayer is the *Credo* (Creed), which he best enjoys if it's recited on Tuesday and arrives in heaven accompanied by a red candle.

Taurus (April 21–May 20), however, should address plenty of Aves to Santa María Magdalena and offer her a green candle every Friday. In memory of her famous anointing, the *brujas* have selected a vial of perfume as the proper charm for her subjects. But any luxury item (a Taurus-ruled field) will do.

Are you a **Gemini** native (May 21–June 20)? Lucky you! You have two patron saints, Cosmas and Damian. Martyred on the same day, they rank as heavenly twins. They were soldiers in this sinful world, so worshipers of Cosmas and Damian should wear miniature swords, preferably one for each *santo*. Like San Sebastian, they delight in the *Credo*. However, they want to hear it on Wednesday and favor multicolored candles rather than red ones.

With **Cancer** (June 21–July 22), we enter the realm of Santa Petronila. On Earth she cleaned and peddled seafood.

To honor her, *brujas* advise Cancers to wear charms shaped like crabs or lobsters and offer her Aves and white candles each Monday.

As we might have anticipated, the *brujas* have awarded **Leo** (July 23–August 22) to San Leo. If you came into the world under his sign, give him plenty of *Glorias* and gold candles every Sunday. Also, don't forget to wear San Leo's little crown-shaped charm.

Next comes **Virgo** (August 23–September 21), the heavenly mansion of Santa Bárbara. Apparently this saint's palm of martyrdom reminded the practitioners of the foliage borne by Astraea, the virgin goddess of justice who ruled Virgo back in ancient Rome and still does in some European manuals of astrology. Whatever the reason for Santa Bárbara's clout, the fact remains that she likes to receive Aves and multicolored candles on Wednesday from people wearing reliquaries stuffed with blessed palm.

Artistic **Libras** (September 22–October 23) should rejoice in their patron, San Elegio the goldsmith. And San Elegio celebrates when his people wear miniature scales, recite the *Credo*, and offer him scented green tapers each Friday.

Born while the sun sojourned in **Scorpio** (October 24–November 22)? Then your holy prexy and leader is the mythical Santa Salvada ("Saint Rescued"), the princess San Jorge is said to have saved from the clutches of an equally mythical dragon. Oddly enough, the eagle is the chosen charm for Scorpio—an indication that some of the *brujas* have been studying European astrology, which lists that bird along with the dragon and the scorpion as "aspects" of the eighth sign. Scorpio natives anxious to please Santa Salvada should give her dark red candles and Aves on Tuesday.

You'd better recite lots of Credos and burn purple candles every Thursday if you're a **Sagittarius** (November 23–December 21), because San Gregorio's a sensitive old dude. Having been a pope, he runs a tight organization and feels no qualms about punishing negligent underlings by withdrawing his protection. If you want to remain on good terms with him, wear his crown-shaped charm or, better yet, display his statue in your living room.

Capricorn babies (December 22–January 20) are stuck with a stern spiritual mother, Santa Catalina de Sena, whose black robes fit this sign's traditional association with Saturn. Catalina de Sena derives a modicum of satisfaction from Aves and black candles presented on Saturday night when everyone except you is out painting the town red. Unlike the other saints in this roster, Catalina has no charm.

After Catalina de Sena's grim realm, **Aquarius** (January 21–February 19) comes as a welcome relief. Although the biblical San Jaun Bautista was a fanatic, Brujería's version is a jolly fellow who loves spirited liquid refreshment. If you're an Aquarius, wear his little keg or pitcher charm and feel free to say your Glorias and burn any type of candle whenever you want. So long as you think of him once in a while, San Juan Bautista is happy.

Equally genial is Santa Marina, the presiding genius of **Pisces** (February 20–March 20). In Brujería, her nautical name coupled with her rulership of the celestial fishes caused practitioners to depict her as a mermaid much like the Brazilian goddess Yemanjá and the Puerto Rican Yemaya. Maybe Santa Marina's attributes entered the Mexican-American cult via contact with Puerto Rican santeros, because the quasi-historical saint of that name revered in Catholicism is depicted as an austere-looking gal in a

monk's habit. Pretty mermaid or ascetic, Santa Marina likes to hear Aves and see lovely violet-blue candles each Thursday. And she revels in beholding her people draped with silver chains and fish-shaped charms. However, like San Juan Bautista above, she doesn't insist on rituals.

So much for sun-sign astrology à la bruja. Now dig out your ephemeris and see where the moon was hiding when you were born. Sometime in its history—probably not so many decades ago—Brujería evolved a list of female saints in charge of guiding the moon during its journey around the zodiac. In the tradition of the solar saints, these lunar ladies aid devotees who offer them white candles each time the moon revisits its natal position.

Was the silver orb gliding through **Aries** when you arrived? Then you owe allegiance to the mild-mannered Santa Inés, a virgin martyred by Roman executioners in her early teens. At first glance, she's a strange ruler for Aries the Ram. However, Catholic iconography depicts her with a lamb, so there may be some method to the brujas' moon madness.

Lunar **Taurus** belongs to Santa Tecla, an apocryphal companion of San Pablo. Supposedly God rescued her from a brace of ferocious bulls, after which act of divine intervention Santa Tecla resumed helping San Pablo preach salvation unto the heathen. In view of the historical San Pablo's misogynous dictum that women must keep their heads veiled and their mouths shut, the legend of Santa Tecla sounds like a lot of bull.

Folks born when the moon cruised through **Gemini** get a double dose of sanctity in the form of Santas Felicidad and Perpetua, who appeared on the lions' menu nearly eighteen centuries ago. Despite their nasty demise,

Felicidad and Perpetua function as bearers of good fortune because their names mean "happiness" and "forever" respectively.

Apparently, pungent puns abound in *brujería*. Since **Cancer** governs domestic affairs and *casa* is the most popular Spanish word for "house," Santa Casilda presides over lunar Cancers. Moon-in-**Leo** people don't fare much better, subject as they are to Santa Leocadia.

But **Virgo**, the sign of labor, flourishes under the lunar guidance of Santa Armela, a seventeenth-century French charwoman who became a mystic. Having known poverty and grinding toil, Armela never fails to aid desperate job-hunters and employees struggling to improve working conditions.

Unfortunately, lunar **Libras** are stuck with a dud, Santa Justina, who probably got the job because her name recalls Justicia, the gal who's been holding a set of scales for the last two thousand years. All Santa Justina ever did was turn Cyprian the Magician into San Cipriano the Martyr. Some trick.

Blessed with a **Scorpio** moon? Then Santa Marta, the practical half of the Mary-and-Martha tandem, will help you keep house, fix delicious meals, and rid your home of vermin—scorpions, presumably, included.

If you're a lunar **Sagittarius**, your patroness is a Christianized version of ancient Rome's favorite Moon goddess and celestial archery champion, Diana the Huntress. True, the *brujas* swear that their Santa Diana is the martyr of that name, but I have my doubts because Catholic saints generally don't stand around in the nude and all the images of Santa Diana I saw on *Brujería* practitioners' altars were naked as jaybirds.

As in the solar list, **Capricorn** natives languish under the dominion of a nun. This time, however, Santa Escolástica the Benedictine wields the scourge. Why Capricorn should serve as a zodiacal convent no *bruja* could tell me. Perhaps it may have something to do with the sign's reputation for sterility.

Moon-in-**Aquarius** people get a better deal from Santa Zita, an ex-servant who must have lugged many a jug of water. Labor's friend, Santa Zita specializes in flooding mean employers with freak accidents that damage property while leaving workers unscathed.

Finally, lunar **Pisces** swims along through life under the gentle tutelage of Santa Margarita. Since her name means "pearl" and connotes affluence, Santa Margarita sees to it that her clients never lack the good things of this world before she welcomes them to heaven and distributes deeds to mansions not built by human hands.

Had enough? The *brujas* haven't, because there's a third roster dealing with the rulership of ascendants, alias "rising signs." If **Aries** peeked over the horizon at your birth, you owe Santa Teresa de Lisieux at least one white candle per annum. As "The Little Flower," she governs spring, which opens with that sign. So give Santa Teresa scented tapers on the vernal equinox and you'll enjoy a prosperous season. **Taurus** ascendants lie beneath the sway of San Jose, who celebrates a major feast on May 1. To keep him happy, burn a red candle in his honor once a year. Born with **Gemini** rising? You have two saints, Santa Praxedes and Pudenciana, to propitiate with a pair of black tapers.

With **Cancer** for a rising sign, you'd better offer San Aloísio a white candle on his "spiritual birthday," June 21. And **Leo** ascendants desirous of power should pay homage

to the regal but mythical *Santa Reina* ("Saint Queen") with a large red candle and incense. Those blessed with **Virgo** rising, however, need only give San Isidro the farmer a tiny black taper. Indeed, one bruja informed me that this earthy, hardworking saint asks for nothing lest any demand of his impose a burden on poor, harried people.

Less lenient is Santa Verónica, whose veil bears a portrait of Christ and who presides over the artistic **Libra** ascendants. For her, only the best scented white candles are good enough. Equally fussy is Santiago Matamoros, who likes his devotees to offer him large red candles in a secluded spot; since **Scorpio** is associated with secrets, most practitioners deem his request appropriate. Santa Olalla, though, couldn't care less about minor details. So long as her **Sagittarians** give her black candles, she's satisfied.

Burn a big white candle on December 21 if **Capricorn** rose at your birth. All Capricorn ascendants are the spiritual property of Santo Tomás el Apostol, who observes a feast on that day and expects his subjects to join in the fun. Failure to make the appointed offering on the above-specified date has been known to result in year-long droughts, nonfunctioning household appliances, and mysterious hexes which defy removal until Santo Tomás has been pacified.

Fortunately for **Aquarius** ascendants, Santa Isabel never demands tribute or carries grudges. Whether or not you give her a red candle, she'll help you. In many respects, Santa Isabel resembles her genial son San Juan Bautista, who rules Aquarius in the solar roster.

Finally, the **Pisces**-rising crowd must present Jónas with three black tapers, one for each day he spent inside that famous whale. True, Jónas won't curse you if you forget, but

he may not remember to bless you, either. So if you want his benediction, don't let this annual rite slip your mind.

After wading through the solar, lunar, and ascendant-oriented lists of saints, one is tempted to dismiss the brujas as madwomen turned loose with a manual of hagiology. But wait. Irrational though the rosters may seem, they follow a plan.

For example, European solar astrology classifies odd-numbered signs as "masculine" (Aries) and even ones as "feminine" (Taurus). A glance at Brujería's list of sun sign saints reveals that the "masculine" divisions of the zodiac have male rulers (Aries-San Sabastian) while the "feminine" signs lie beneath female sway (Taurus-Santa María Magdalena). In its own fashion, the brujas' lunar roster adheres to the tenets of European occultism and ceremonial magic which designate the moon as a "feminine" heavenly body and associate it with white objects; all the moon sign saints are females who exact offerings of white candles from their devotees. Long before Jung expounded his *animus-anima* theory, adepts throughout the world maintained that each male entity possesses a female "essence" and vice versa. Furthermore, some schools of European astrology taught that this element of the opposite sex and other components of the "inner self" appear in the rising sign. Turning to Brujería's list of ascendant-ruling saints, we find that all the "masculine" signs have feminine patrons (Aries-Santa Teresa de Lisieux) while males govern "feminine" segments of the zodiac (Taurus-San José).

How old are the above lists? Probably not too ancient. Whoever compiled them must have been educated enough to read books on European occultism, Roman mythology

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("Santa Diana"), and astrology. Until roughly fifty years ago, there weren't too many rank-and-file Mexican women who could decipher a printed word, let alone study recondite tomes and ceremonial magicians' grimoires. (The previous statement is not meant to denigrate Mexican women; the shame lies not in their ignorance but in society's refusal to educate them.) What's more, one of the saints on the rising sign roster (Santa Teresa de Lisieux) wasn't canonized until 1925.

Like Topsy, Brujería just grows, adding new elements with every passing year. The "dear little Virgin" loves to change her crown.

Star White, Star Bright

Sun Sign Attributions

Zodiacal Sign	Ruling Saint & Feast Day*	Prayer	Candle	Day	Charm or Metal
Aries	San Sebastián January 20	Credo	red	Tues.	arrows
Taurus	Santa María Magdalena July 22	Ave	green	Fri.	vial of perfume
Gemini	Cosmas & Damián September 27	Credo	multi-colored	Wed.	2 small swords
Cancer	Santa Petronila May 31	Ave	white	Mon.	crab or lobster
Leo	San Leo April 11	Gloria	gold	Sun.	gold crown
Virgo	Santa Bárbara December 4	Ave	multi-colored	Wed.	reliquaries stuffed with blessed palm
Libra	San Elegio none	Credo	green	Fri.	scales
Scorpio	Santa Salvada none	Ave	dark red	Tue.	eagle
Sagittarius	San Gregorio March 21	Ave	purple	Thu.	pope's crown
Capricorn	Santa Catalina de Sena April 30	Ave	black	Sat.	(none)
Aquarius	San Juan Bautista June 23-24	Gloria	(any)	(any)	keg or pitcher
Pisces	Santa Marina none	Ave	violet-blue	Thu.	silver chains and fishes

*The Saints' Feast Days do not fall within the familiar birth (Sun) sign dates.

Moon Sign and Rising Sign Attributions

Zodiacal Sign	Saint Ruling Moon Sign and Feast Day	Saint Ruling Rising Sign and Feast Day
Aries	Santa Inés January 21	Santa Teresa de Lisieux March 21
Taurus	Santa Tecla September 23	San Jose April 30–May 1
Gemini	Felicidad & Perpetua March 6	Praxedes & Pudenciana July 21 & May 19
Cancer	Santa Casilda none	San Aloísio June 21
Leo	Santa Leocadia none	Santa Reina none
Virgo	Santa Armela none	San Isidro March 22
Libra	Santa Justina September 26	Santa Verónica none
Scorpio	Santa Marta July 29	Santiago Matamoros July 25
Sagittarius	Santa Diana none	Santa Olalla none
Capricorn	Santa Escolástica February 10	Santo Tomás Apostol December 21
Aquarius	Santa Zita none	Santa Isabel November 19
Pisces	Santa Margarita July 20	Jónas none



Days and Deeds

There are days and then there are days.

—Doña Rosario
Detroit, Michigan

When I began my research, I was all agog at the possibility that I might find the brujas following the Aztec calendar (a solar calendar containing eighteen months of twenty days duration plus an inauspicious period of five days; in addition, the priests used the *tonalpohualli*, a cycle of two-hundred-sixty days) and observing Indian holidays that were ancient long before the Spaniards landed at Vera Cruz. No such material came to light.

Apparently, the padres did a thorough job of liquidating the native astronomer-priests, because every bruja I questioned adhered to the Gregorian calendar and celebrated Catholic holy days. However, being brujas, they added that the main reason they kept the Christian feasts was the

extra power then available for the casting of particularly potent spells.

The bruja's year gets off to a good start with *Circuncisión* (January 1). Not only is it an auspicious day for beginning major spells, but it is also a fine time to wilt the wayward whangdoodles of erring husbands. And if you have a bad habit you'd like to "cut away," *Circuncisión* is when to begin.

Next on the agenda is *Los Reyes*, alias Epiphany (January 6), an orgy of gift exchanging held to honor the Three Wise Men while enriching countless merchants in every barrio. Canny businesswomen, the brujas cash in on *Los Reyes* by blessing or unhexing stores in return for modest fees and accepting presents from grateful clients.

When *Candelaria* (Candlemas, February 2) arrives, most practitioners brighten their friends' lives by "consecrating" white tapers to Guadalupe and burning large red candles "for good luck." Five out of the sixteen brujas interviewed also observed this feast by blessing any babies born to their clients within the last year—an obvious echo of the Virgin's presentation of the infant Jesus in the temple at Jerusalem, the event Catholicism commemorates as the "Purification of Mary." Although the Madonna had to make an offering of turtledoves, the brujas' followers generally receive this service gratis.

February frequently brings Lent, a liturgical season of importance to brujas only inasmuch as the Church's stress on spiritual preparation for Easter induces the customarily apathetic elements to ponder the eternal verities and, hence, visit their neighborhood practitioner for Tarot readings. Lent may play a prominent role in Mexican folklore, but among brujas its significance is strictly commercial.

With March comes *Anunciación* (March 25), another source of revenue. Has your boyfriend in the army forgotten to write you? Perhaps misguided spirits are clouding his mind. To get those billets-doux flying in your direction, you need San Gabriel, the Angel of the Annunciation. Walk, don't run, to your nearest bruja. In exchange for a few dollars, she'll send San Gabriel after the nasty spooks and, by the middle of April, you'll be swimming in love letters.

Yet another *Anunciación* spell involves asking San Gabriel to make your favorite fellow pop the question. Give the bruja a photo of your lover, another of yourself, and a white seven-day candle. After she blesses the candle, "buy" it from her with a two-dollar bill, in token that "two are really one." That night, light the candle and recite three Aves in honor of San Gabriel. While you're praying, the practitioner should be pasting the pictures together and chanting a secret incantation. Unless the "spirits are working against you," you'll be engaged within a lunar month.

Easter often arrives in April, but you won't hear about it in Brujería-oriented circles. The big day in that month is the Feast of San Jorge, which falls on the April 23. Since San Jorge slew a wicked dragon, brujas invoke his aid in smiting evildoers. Bugged by obnoxious neighbors? Worry not. Have your bruja offer San Jorge a large black candle shaped like a devil along with one of her special prayers. Then take the graveyard dirt she'll give you and sprinkle a little of it near their front door. San Jorge will visit them with an affliction necessitating their permanent removal from the vicinity.

When April leaves, May comes in with a bang. The first honors *San José el Obrero*, the patron of workers and job seekers. Because San José married and supported the Virgin in spite of her peculiar pregnancy, brujas rely on him to

find husbands for unwed mothers-to-be. A kind saint, José tackles this often challenging chore in return for a small red candle and a brief secret prayer recited by the bruja. Furthermore, he expects no gratitude. However, there's a catch—the husband snared by San José can't be the coming child's father since the saint himself had to provide for a child he didn't sire.

Speaking of woe, two days later the practitioners enjoy a golden opportunity to locate and destroy the sources of sorrow plaguing their clients. May 3 is *Cruces*, the day on which Santa Elena supposedly found the crosses used by Christ and the Good Thief. It's also the day practitioners work overtime searching for "crossed condition" hexes and smashing them with "high altar" incense, holy water, and orisons to Santa Elena.

After *Cruces*, the brujas wait for nearly six weeks before their next red letter day but the extra business renders the delay tolerable. On June 13, Brujería honors *San Antonio de Padua*, the saint in charge of recovering lost items and turning desperate spinsters into wives. Because the most potent spells involving San Antonio must be cast on his feast, the practitioners' waiting rooms overflow with clients. Lost a valuable object like a diamond ring or an important document? Bring your bruja a handwritten description of it together with a small statue of San Antonio. She'll whisper one of her special prayers, wrap the image in the paper, and fasten it with a piece of red grocery string. Pay her whatever she asks "for the package" and throw it into the first body of water you pass on your way home. If the missing item hasn't been destroyed, you'll regain possession of it within a year.

Would you like San Antonio to catch you a husband? Just follow the above procedure, substituting a brief essay

on the ideal spouse for the description of the lost valuable. Properly performed, the spell should bag Mr. Right.

Ten days after San Antonio takes his leave, the *Noche de San Juan Bautista* makes the scene. Due to the influence of Puerto Rican Santería, recent decades have seen San Juan's popularity soar and the observances in his honor blossom into full-fledged fiestas. Like the santeras and many early creole Voudoun queens, the brujas conduct clandestine rites on San Juan's vigil and the feast which follows (June 24).

Sad to say, I was unable to finagle an invitation to one of these sessions, nonbrujas being totally excluded. However, a reliable informant gave me the following account of a *Noche de San Juan* celebration which took place on a Madison, Wisconsin, beach in the mid-sixties.

Shortly after ten in the evening, the brujas converged on the previously selected spot and built a small fire with "blessed" wood they brought with them. Then they removed their shoes "out of respect for holy ground" and stood in a circle reciting *Aves*. The prayers over, each practitioner removed a white candle from her purse and ignited it in the flames. Secret incantations followed until approximately midnight, when the brujas waded into Lake Mendota up to their knees, extinguished their candles in the water, and uttered a brief orison beginning, "We bow to thee, San Juan," while standing in that position. With a shouted "amen," the participants rushed out of the lake, smothered their almost-dead fire, and went their separate ways.

July passes sans any special events until July 31, which brujas see as a particularly auspicious occasion for "binding" the forces of evil. Modern Catholicism honors San Ignacio de Loyola on this date. However, the practitioners

couldn't care less about him, preferring to observe the vigil of *Cadenas* (Saint Peter's Chains) instead.

Has somebody inflicted a stronger than average hex on you? July 31 is the day to have your bruja return the *wanion* to its sender. Give her a slip of paper inscribed with a large "X" reminiscent of San Pedro's crossed keys, the symbol of papal authority. Pray to San Pedro while the practitioner "draws down" his power to "magnetize" your sketch. Then go home and burn it, preferably at midnight, thus releasing San Pedro's anti-jinx prowess. Armed with his keys and chains, the famed "fisher of men" will catch the evil spirits, throw them into irons, and deposit them on your enemy's doorstep. When dawn arrives, their fetters will vanish and they'll persecute your foe until he visits a bruja on the next vigil of *Cadenas*.

Two weeks later, Brujería celebrates a happier holiday, *Asunción* (August 15). Since the "dear little Virgin" floated up to heaven on that day, it's a superb time to work spells for raises in pay and locating economical lodgings in nice neighborhoods.

So if you'd like more green stuff, have your bruja "consecrate" a white candle to Santa María. Then buy some of her "money drawing" incense without haggling over the price. Burn a little of it at sunrise during the next nine days. By the end of this "novena," either you'll receive your raise or find a more lucrative job.

Sick of the slum? Then offer three small white candles to the Virgin while reciting a special prayer available from your practitioner. In a few weeks, you should hear about a decent house or apartment situated in a good district and well within your budget.

If *Asunción* is cheerful, the next big day for brujas is a fiesta. There isn't a good spell that can't be improved by "reinforcing" it on September 8, *Navidad de la Virgen*. So if your San Antonio rites have yet to recover your missing ring or snare you a husband, now's the hour to give them a boost via plenty of Aves and pretty decorations on your household altar. If you fix a feast for your family, make sure to invite Santa María (through your bruja) and put a few wrapped candies at the foot of her statue.

A week later, however, Santa María and her practitioners lay aside their gala array in commemoration of *Los Siete Dolores* (September 15). Gone for the nonce are the white tapers and sweets while heavy black candles and bitter herbs hold sway. Only two of my sixteen informants would discuss the spells cast on this date and they took great pains to explain that the appointed rites were not for the uninitiated (see chapter two for more information about Santa Dolores).

Fortunately, the gloom and the secrecy depart by the second of October, when the brujas propitiate the *Angeles Guardianes* with white candles and flowers. If genuine blossoms are prohibitive, the practitioners adorn their altars with the plastic article. But artificial or otherwise, the blooms please the guardian angels.

Want good luck and "protection" during the coming year? Offer your personal guardian angel a white taper and nine Aves, "one for each choir of Angels." Unless evil spooks are on the prowl, you should enjoy perfect safety for twelve months.

But malevolent spirits can turn up anywhere and there just might have been one lurking in the shadows while you said those nine Aves and burned that candle. So, play it

smart. Have your bruja “strengthen” your guardian angel by giving him perfume, candy, and a “perfect” white flower. Properly performed, this rite should guarantee your immunity from misfortune until October 2 comes again.

The rest of October flies by without incident until October 31, the vigil of *Todos los Santos*, when good practitioners are busy burning “high altar” incense to cement their friendship with all the saints and angels. Sad to say, the diableras or evil witches are equally occupied, cramming hexes and deals with their favorite demons into every potent moment of the vigil. So rank-and-file followers of Brujería sprinkle holy water around their windows and doors “to keep the bad things out” on the eve of Todos Santos. One, deeming holy water too weak, fumigated her apartment with an anti-jinx aerosol spray!

But the scary stuff’s only beginning. November 2 brings *Ánimas*, alias All Souls’ Day, when untold millions of souls usually confined to Purgatory invade this world. According to a rapidly fading Catholic tradition, these suffering spirits return to beg for prayers and Masses. Brujería accepts this belief with the addendum that the poor souls may need a practitioner’s services along with a priest’s.

True, most of these ghostly guests are fairly well behaved; were they malicious entities, they’d have been condemned to Hell rather than sentenced to a sojourn in Purgatory. But sometimes, in their desire for attention, they cause the type of nasty phenomena parapsychologists ascribe to poltergeists. So if you think your domicile’s haunted, summon the padre. And if he won’t—or can’t—evict the spirit, call a bruja.

With your spook situation under control, it’s time for some recreation. If games of chance are your meat, don’t

forget to offer *Santa Catalina de Alejandría* a queen-size white candle on her feast, November 25. This, plus one white candle each Friday, will make you lucky. Of course, should you be a professional gambler, you’ll need a stronger and more complicated ritual performed by a bruja. When Santa Catalina’s day dawns, wipe your underarms and brow with a white handkerchief. Then, fasting, give it to your practitioner, who’ll asperge it with holy water. After whispering secret prayers to Santa Catalina, she’ll stuff the hankie into a small red silk bag and “sell” it to you. As in most spells involving a “sale,” pay her whatever sum she may ask. So long as you keep the charm on your person and give a tithe of your winnings to charity, you’ll never lose.

A few days later, Advent fills conventional Christians with eager anticipation of the Redeemer’s birth. Brujas, however, thrill neither to Advent nor Christmas. In Brujería’s calendar, the most important feast enlivening December is the “great day” of Guadalupe, which brujas prefer to observe on December 8 or 9.

The festivities begin on December 8, when the practitioners clean and redecorate their shrines “to make them fit for La Guadalupana.” Each image must be dusted and “blessed”—no small task for affluent brujas whose altars may display as many as thirty statues. Old votive lights go into storage while huge beeswax candles take their place. Finally, the entire room is decorated with tinsel and artificial flowers.

For many brujas, December 8 is strictly a glorified version of cleaning day. But one sect, no doubt influenced by Puerto Rican Santería, holds its initiation rites on Guadalupe eve. (For detailed accounts of various initiation

rites used in santería, see Migene González-Wippler's excellent *Santería: The Religion*, Llewellyn Publications.)

Of sixteen practitioners, fourteen swore that there are no ordination ceremonies in their cult. According to the majority, a would-be bruja studies under the supervision of her mother or an aunt until the latter is satisfied that the candidate has mastered the material. Then the proud teacher throws a small party for her colleagues and announces that her pupil is a bruja. And that's all, folks.

But that's nothing in the eyes of the minority. To satisfy them, a novice must be *escogida*, "chosen" by Guadalupe before she may claim her title.

Naturally, the ritual is off-limits to nonmembers, but one of the women who experienced it was willing to divulge a few details.

First of all, the candidate had to fast for at least twenty-four hours before the ceremony. At sunset, she bathed in a lukewarm herbal brew, after which her *madrina* (sponsor) arranged her hair and dressed her in a rose satin robe. Prayers and incantations followed for nearly two hours. Then the novice's instructor and the *madrina* swathed her in a long blue mantle like Guadalupe's. Around eight, other brujas started straggling in and lecturing the candidate on her future responsibilities. Finally, shortly before midnight, the practitioners formed a circle around the novice and implored Guadalupe to possess her.

And Guadalupe descended to choose her priestess, just as the deities of Puerto Rican Santería have done for centuries. Exhausted, lightheaded from fasting, and suggestible, my informant felt herself become one with Santa Maria. As participants would later tell her, she danced, wrapped her teacher and *madrina* in the blue cloak, and

collapsed to the floor—all excellent signs of Guadalupe's favor and omens presaging an outstanding career. Our Lady had spoken!

Perhaps the adherents of the minority sect use the glorious December 9 to recuperate from their initiation rites, but most brujas are up and going by dawn. After preparing a special breakfast for their families, the practitioners exchange greetings (and, often, small gifts) with their clients in the shrine.

But, inasmuch as it's such a "powerful" day, the brujas do more than socialize. Whenever possible, they perform an elaborate ceremony designed to "call down" Guadalupe's benediction on their kin and close friends. And, in return for a small fee, some practitioners will bless new cars in the Virgin's name by anointing the tires with consecrated oil.

Thus ends the bruja's book of days, a roster of Catholic feasts reckoned according to the Gregorian calendar. Not one vestige of the Aztec calendar remains. However, I would be remiss were I not to indicate that the Catholic liturgical year imposed by the Spaniards contains relics of European Witchcraft, the pre-Christian Old Religion which once held sway from the Balkans to Britain. Unable to stamp out the pagan observances, Rome gave them Christian names.

Although some disagree, most experts on European Witchcraft maintain that its adherents celebrated eight Great Sabbats. Of these, four are observed by brujas, albeit as Catholic feasts. The first was Candlemas, "The Feast of the Waxing Light," (February 1–2), which Catholicism baptized as "The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary." Among brujas, Candlemas is known as Candelaria. Next came Rudemas (April 30–May 1). Rome gave April 30 to

Magic from Mexico

Saint Walpurgis, nullifier of witches' spells, and devoted May 1 to commemorating Saint Helena's alleged discovery of Christ's cross. Later, when Church-induced fear of witches had waned, the hierarchy retired Saint Walpurgis, moved the supposed finding of the cross to May 3, and bestowed May Day on Saint Joseph the Workingman, whom brujas revere as San José. Three months later the Old Religion observed Lammas (July 31–August 1), which Rome turned into a variety of holidays, finally settling on the feast of Saint Ignatius Loyola (July 31) together with the vigil and feast of Saint Peter's Chains (July 31–August 1). Brujas call it Cadenas. Best known of the ancient Sabbats was Hallowmas (October 31–November 1). Under Catholicism, Hallowmas was transformed into All Saints and the brujas' Todos Santos.

All four of these Christianized Sabbats rank as powerful dates in Brujería. So ironically enough, the Catholic Church helped transmit vestiges of European Witchlore to Indian practitioners. (See the following table and chapter ten for evidence that many brujas observe all eight Great Sabbats.)

Days and Deeds

A Bruja's Book of Days

January 1	Circuncisión
January 6	Los Reyes
February 1–2	CANDLEMAS, Candelaria*
March 21–22	VERNAL EQUINOX, Vigil & Feast of Santa Teresa la Florecita**
March 25	Anunciación (observed March 21 as Vernal Equinox in the Libreta)
April 23	Feast of San Jorge
April 30–May 1	RUDEMAs, Vigil & Feast of San José, el Obrero
May 3	Cruces (observed May 1 as Grand Festival in the Libreta. Originally Cruces fell on May 1st)
June 13	Feast of San Antonio de Padua
June 21–22	SUMMER SOLSTICE, Vigil & Feast of San Aloísio
June 23	Noche de San Juan Bautista (the original Summer Solstice Festival given in the Libreta).
June 24	Feast of San Juan
July 31–Aug. 1	LAMMAS, Vigil & Feast of Cadenas
August 15	Asunción
September 8	Navidad de la Virgen
September 15	Los Siete Dolores

Magic from Mexico

- September 21–22 **FALL EQUINOX**, Vigil & Feast of San Mateo el Apostol (observed as San Mateo Evangelista in the Libreta)
- October 2 Ángeles Guardianes
- Oct. 31–Nov. 1 **HALLOWMAS**, Vigil & Feast of Todos Santos
- November 2 Ánimas, or Día de Difuntos
- November 25 Feast of Santa Catalina de Alejandría
- December 8–9 Vigil & Feast of Nuestra Señora Guadalupe
- December 21–22 **WINTER SOLSTICE**, Yule, Vigil & Feast of Santo Tomás el Apostól

*Semibold type indicates the Grand Festivals.

**Observed on October 2 in the Catholic calendar.



Nights and Needs

You must pay attention to the moon.

—Doña Marina
Detroit, Michigan

Our Lady is the Moon of the Church.

—Doña Clara
Detroit, Michigan

The four Christianized Sabbats discussed in the last chapter aren't the only elements of European Witchcraft in Brujería. Although the brujas employ the Gregorian calendar, traces of lunar reckoning turn up in certain spells; for example, an Anunciación rite is supposed to make your lover propose marriage within a lunar month. But, more important, there's Brujería's tendency to see the Virgin as a deity ruling the waxing, full, and waning moons just as European Witchcraft's many-named Goddess presided over the lunar phases.

Pre-Christian Europe viewed the waxing moon as a tender maiden, the youthful aspect of its primeval Goddess. Among brujas, there's a trend toward associating the barely nubile Madonna of the Immaculate Conception with the waxing moon and the rites best performed at that time. Under the title *La Purísima*, the young Virgin helps money multiply, cures baldness, and supervises the harvesting of herbs.

Need extra cash? Offer *La Purísima* a silver coin and a small white taper accompanied by a special prayer available from your bruja. By the time the full moon arrives, you should be rolling in moolah. But be careful. Don't forget to thank *La Purísima* and give her a huge white beeswax candle, or your new wealth will melt away in two weeks.

If lack of hair is your problem, don't fret. See that lovely flowing mane, *La Purísima's* crowning glory? You, too, can sprout luxuriant locks. Provided you have a practitioner daub your dome with "consecrated" oil while you recite an Ave, *La Purísima* will send you an inch of hair every four weeks.

Should you be a bruja versed in plant-lore, *La Purísima's* the Madonna for you. Herbs garnered beneath her sway are especially potent. First, get a knife with a blade curved like the crescent moon. Then say three Aves and chant a secret incantation asking the Virgin to bless your efforts.

Armed with her benediction and your trusty knife, harvest your herbs. Clean and put away your blade with a prayer. Finally, lay the herbs at the foot of *La Purísima's* statue and burn a white candle in token of gratitude.

But suppose you've already collected and processed your herbs. Then you'll need the Madonna in her maternal aspect, *La Madre de Dios*. Like the fertile, motherly avatar of pagan Europe's Goddess, *La Madre de Dios* rules the full

moon and all spells pertaining thereto. Would you like *La Madre de Dios* to "strengthen" dried herbs you want to use in medicinal teas? Then offer her a candle—either red or blue will do nicely—and expose them to the rays of the full moon for an hour.

In keeping with her maternal attributes, *La Madre de Dios* promotes fertility in man and beast. Before introducing your cattle to that handsome stud bull, have your bruja invoke *La Madre de Dios* and put whatever she gives you into their feed and/or water. The result should be plenty of contented gravid cows who'll give you healthy calves galore.

If you'd like to become a mother, offer *La Madre de Dios* a large white candle together with a prayer obtained from your practitioner. Do this on the night of the Full Moon for nine successive lunar months and you'll get in the family way.

Once you're pregnant, you may want to determine your baby's sex; despite biological facts, the brujas maintain that the fetus is neuter until the third trimester, so you have ample time to cast your spells. Want a son? Burn a white man-shaped candle blessed by your bruja and eat spicy foods. If daughters are more in your line, give *La Madre de Dios* a white candle shaped like a woman and gorge on eggs and sweets.

As befits the patroness of maternity, *La Madre de Dios* also cures female complaints. Painful menstrual cramps disappear if you have your bruja burn a large dark red candle for your "intention" while imploring the Blessed Mother to expunge the "curse of Eve." Delayed menstruation ceases to be a problem after the practitioner gives *La Madre de Dios* three scarlet tapers and as many Aves followed by a libation of red wine. Purportedly your

monthly discharge will flow "as quickly as the wine" ran out of the bottle.

Of course, if you have too much of a good thing, your bruja will offer La Madre de Dios a large black candle and a prayer begging her to "cleanse" your womb. Should the candle and the prayer prove ineffective, the practitioner may sell you a hankie dipped in red food coloring which you must bury in a graveyard, preferably after sundown. And if that doesn't work, she'll most likely give you an herbal brew whose ingredients no bruja of my acquaintance would divulge. Take it often and you'll enjoy regular, brief menstrual periods.

Had all the children you want? Though brujas are reluctant to talk about it, they have a spell guaranteed to put a period to your periods. Bring the bruja a handkerchief containing pinches of dirt from nine cemeteries, one "for each month of pregnancy." While she burns three large black candles and chants a hymn honoring La Madre de Dios, you must whisper to the Madonna, telling her that your maternal cares have become more than you can handle. Then the practitioner will return the hankie with instructions for its disposal and a box of herbs to be taken daily in tea. Naturally, the herbal mixture is an unrevealed trade secret of Brujería. However, when a Detroit bruja showed me some of the ingredients, I recognized pennyroyal and mugwort.

With motherhood behind you, you enter the realm of Nuestra Señora de los Siete Dolores and the waning moon. Centuries ago, European Witches depicted the goddess of the waning moon as a hag or crone. Brujería doesn't go that far, but it makes it clear that Dolores (as we'll call her for short) has endured countless trials; those seven swords protruding from the Madonna's breast denote only the worst of her manifold tribulations.

Unfortunately, even the most talkative practitioners tend to clam up when noninitiates mention Dolores. Going by what little I could learn, her spells are potent foe-removers designed to make obnoxious people fade away while the moon wanes.

As La Purísima, La Madre de Dios, and Dolores, the Blessed Virgin Mary reigns supreme over the moon. But, if we can believe a Detroit bruja, the Madonna keeps other outfits in her lunar wardrobe as well.

According to my informant, Santa María assumes a different guise each time the moon enters a zodiacal sign. Furthermore, whenever the silver orb visits a sign, Santa María "activates" its special powers. To tap this source of supernatural energy, devotees should contemplate Our Lady and concentrate on their objectives while offering her a blue candle. To contact these special powers, visualize the Goddess (Santa Maria) in the different colored robes and adornments described in the text as you offer prayers, meditations and rites during those lunar signs. (See Llewellyn's *Moon Sign Book* or *Astrological Calendar* for tables showing the moon's signs and phases each year.)

When the moon glides through Aries, its patroness lets down her tresses and dons the simple white robes Brujería claims she wore at her Annunciation. In this apparel, Santa María grants strength to the weak and assertiveness to the timid. After all, wasn't she a frail, pavid maiden when Gabriel brought her the astonishing tidings? Having experienced timorousness, the compassionate Madonna will do all she can to help those so afflicted.

The arrival of the moon in Taurus is the signal for Santa María to swath herself in the dark blue or even black garments associated with *Nuestra Señora del Buen*

Consejo, Our Lady of Good Counsel. Somberly clad, she dispenses prudent advice by drawing on the infinite store of sapience which is hers by virtue of her title in the litanies, "Seat of Wisdom."

A Gemini moon means it's time for the Virgin to trade in her dismal weeds for a purple gown and a golden crown signifying her double dominion over heaven and earth. As *Nuestra Señora la Reina*, Our Lady the Queen, she aids her votaries by inspiring them to say the right things at the right time. Those eager to acquire wit and courtly eloquence should cultivate her.

With the entrance of the moon into Cancer, Santa María wraps herself in the drab mantle she wore when she paid her famous call on Santa Isabel, her kinswoman and friend. Dressed in her Visitation garb, the Virgin improves domestic relationships. Bedeviled by household strife? Pray to *Nuestra Señora de la Visitación*.

The advent of luna in Leo adorns the Virgin with cerulean velvet and gold embroidery suitable for her journey to heaven. Under her title of Our Lady of the Assumption, she helps people rise above worldly woes by elevating their thoughts to a higher plane.

After the moon begins its trip through Virgo, the Madonna temporarily shelves her glad rags in favor of nondescript garments. *Nuestra Señora del Nombre*, Our Lady of the Name, improves her clients' ability to remember and apply practical information. If you can't cope with daily affairs or keep forgetting addresses, give her an Ave and she'll make sure you muddle through.

Once the moon floats into Libra, Santa María resumes her finest raiment and garlands her neck with a plethora of chaplets. *Nuestra Señora del Rosario* fosters art, music, and

the devotion whose name she bears. Would-be singers should ring their necks with finely wrought rosaries. (Methinks the budding songsters should conceal the beads lest some conventional Catholics wring their necks for misusing sacred objects.)

Under the Scorpio moon, the Virgin casts away her falals and becomes the austere child she was when her parents presented her to God in the Temple at Jerusalem. In this form, she governs secrecy and seclusion. Saddled with inquisitive neighbors? She'll fix them.

The moon in Sagittarius brings Santa María the blue and white costume she wears in paintings inspired by the legend of the Miraculous Medal. Since she holds sway over the institutional Church, she's the one you need to make the padre say a High Mass for five bucks instead of his customary trespot. (This statement concerning Mass stipends should not be construed to mean that Catholic priests are mercenary. Rather, it indicates that a Detroit bruja sees them in that light.)

Trouble with the boys from Immigration? Better pray to *Nuestra Señora la Poderosa*, Our Powerful Lady, when the moon's in Capricorn. Draped in black from head to toe, she'll bend government agencies like soft tortillas.

The Aquarius moon beholds the Virgin as Our Lady of Lourdes clad in a trim blue and white outfit similar to the one she wore back in Sagittarius. Logically enough, paranormal healing of the type connected with Lourdes is her area of specialization. In exchange for a blue candle, she'll conquer every disorder from acne to zoster.

Last of all (in Pisces) comes the puissant, azure-clad *Estrella del Mar*, Our Lady the Star of the Sea. Armed with a magic wand, she banishes demons. However, the blue can-

de you give her merely attracts her attention; for fiend-eradication, see your bruja.

Like the practitioner(s) who concocted this system, many British Witches comb the printed word for names applicable to their Goddess during the moon's journey through the zodiac. Indeed, an English Witch of my acquaintance claims her colleagues have been doing this ever since literacy became common among the well-to-do farmers in the early 1600s.

But the Detroit bruja's roster of Madonnas isn't nearly as old as the earliest Witches' lists. One of its aspects of Mary, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal (moon in Sagittarius), didn't exist until Catherine Labouré experienced an interview with the Virgin in 1830. Another Madonna, Our Lady of Lourdes (moon in Aquarius), didn't drop in on Bernadette Soubirous until 1858. With such recent Marian avatars, it can't be ancient.

Furthermore, I'd wager that the bruja's list first saw the light of day in the United States. Had it been compiled in Mexico, La Guadalupana, Nuestra Señora de Regla, and other Hispanic Madonnas would have been included.

Of recent vintage, the roster probably came into being as the result of contact between the brujas and British-influenced American Witches during the 1950s when the latter began fraternizing with other occultists. Possibly a bruja—maybe even my informant—liked the way some Yankee practitioners invoked their mighty Goddess as Bellona when the moon entered Aries, Europa during its sojourn in Taurus, etc. And so the bruja composed her zodiacal rosary of Madonnas, each an aspect of the same all-powerful lady.

Imitation and eclecticism? Yes. And therein lies the secret strength of Brujería.

The Visions of Our Lady

Moon's Phase or Sign	Guadalupe Appears as	Visualize Her as this Avatar	Special Blessings & Powers Received
New and Increasing	La Purísima	Young Virgin, The Maiden	Money increase, hair growth, herb harvesting
Full	La Madre de Dios	The Mother, The Matron	Fertility, aids "female" prolems, strengthens herbs
Decreasing and Dark	Nuestra Señora de los Siete Dolores	The Wise Old Woman, The Grandmother	Remove foes, wisdom of ages, balanced benevolence
Aries	Santa María	in white robes, her hair down	Strength, assertiveness
Taurus	Nuestra Señora del Buen Consejo	in dark blue robes	Common sense, practical advice
Gemini	Nuestra Señora la Reina	in purple robes & a golden crown	Wit & eloquence, correct speech
Cancer	Nuestra Señora de la Visitación	in gray robes, with ornaments	Domestic harmony
Leo	Nuestra Señora de la Asunción	in robes of cerulean velvet, gold embroidery	Spiritual thoughts, rise above adversity
Virgo	Nuestra Señora del Nombre	in plain robes, without ornaments	Improves memory, practicality

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Moon's Phase or Sign	Guadalupe Appears as	Visualize Her as this Avatar	Special Blessings & Powers Received
Libra	Nuestra Señora del Rosario	in fine robes, with rosary, and a garland in her hair	Art, music, good singing voice
Scorpio	Nuestra Señora de la Presentación en el Templo	in austere robes	Secrecy and privacy
Sagittarius	Nuestra Señora de la Medalla Milagrosa	in blue & white robes	Persuasiveness
Capricorn	Nuestra Señora la Poderosa	in black robes	Influence & authority, power over officials
Aquarius	Nuestra Señora de Lourdes	in blue & white robes	Healing
Pisces	Estrella del Mar	in azure robes	Psychic powers, protection



The Spirit of the Thing

The spirits are all around us by day and by night.

—Doña Isabel
Detroit, Michigan

As we've seen, the cult of Tonantzín, Catholicism, ceremonial magic, African-American Voudoun, the occult sciences, and European Witchcraft have contributed to the evolution of Brujería. But, important though they are, another force has been exercising its influence—Allan Kardec's Spiritism (see David St. Clair's *Drum and Candle*, Doubleday, for even more information about Kardec).

Allan Kardec was hardly the man most likely to serve as a mentor for Mexican witches. He was born Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail, the scion of an old and solvent bourgeois family, in Lyon, France on October 3, 1804.

However, the spirits saw fit to change his grandiose name to Allan Kardec and he wrote under that nom de plume, so we'll use it here.

The first fifty years of his life don't concern us. But in 1855, Kardec attended a séance at Madame Plainemaison's salon in Paris. From then on, he grew increasingly obsessed with the great beyond.

Two years and ten mediums later, Kardec published *The Book of Spirits*, a compendium of over a thousand questions answered by discarnate entities. This was followed by *The Book of Mediums* and *The Gospel According to Spiritism*.

Despite a spate of publicity, neither Kardec nor his teachings had much impact on the French occult community. And after a couple of years, his handful of disciples in other European nations lost interest. But Kardec's Spiritism caught on in, of all places, Latin America.

In 1858 a Brazilian aristocrat brought a copy of *The Book of Spirits* to his homeland when he returned from a tour of France. Evidently, the friends to whom he lent his unusual souvenir found it fascinating, because Portuguese and Spanish translations were rolling off the presses within a decade.

We don't know exactly when some of the Spanish copies reached Mexico, but I'd guess they made the scene before 1900; by that date Mexican clerics were hurling anathemas at the urban middle classes for fiddling with planchettes, consulting "Ouija" boards, experimenting with table-tipping, and reading "heretical" books. A few of these heterodox tomes might have been Kardec's.

Whenever Kardec's Spiritism entered Mexican culture, once it came it took firm root. In time, that root went deep

enough to reach the proletariat, from whose ranks Brujería drew and continues to draw the bulk of its practitioners.

True eclectics, the brujas adapted what they could use while rejecting the rest. Since Kardec's espousal of reincarnation didn't agree with their Catholic view of the hereafter, the practitioners discarded it. By the same token, his blanket condemnation of alcohol, tobacco, and red meat struck the brujas as ridiculous; one active in Madison went so far as to say that Kardec banned these goodies because he had "too weak a stomach" to appreciate them himself and didn't want anyone else to enjoy what he couldn't.

On the other hand, the practitioners loved Kardec's teachings about ghosts and his explanation for haunting. It made perfect sense to brujas that the souls of murder victims would hang around the site of their violent demise in quest of vengeance. And even with angels on the job to lead the newly dead before God's tribunal, it was possible that one who passed away suddenly might be so confused that he'd hover near his surviving kin until somebody equipped with the proper expertise helped him adjust to his new environment.

In Kardec's Spiritism, this entailed having a medium contact the spirit to urge him to renounce earthly ties and advance to a higher plane of being to rest in preparation for his next incarnation. Among brujas, it came to mean having a practitioner conduct a ritual for his repose and/or a rip-snorter of an exorcism.

Do you think that uninvited guests from the other side are raising a rumpus in your home? See your bruja for a reading. If her cards and intuition reveal supernatural influences at work, she'll sell you a white seven-day candle which you must burn for the spirits' eternal peace.

Magic from Mexico

Most of the time this satisfies the ghosts, who supposedly fly off to heaven to be judged or return to Purgatory like good little ánimas. However, some souls are persistent enough to require a bruja's personal attention.

The night before her house call, the practitioner will fortify herself with rosaries and secret prayers imploring Guadalupe's aid. According to one informant, the vigil may last three hours. Then, on the morning of the big day, the bruja will wash her hands in an herbal solution, don perfectly clean clothing, and pack her bag with holy water bottles, white chalk, tapers, small candle holders, and matches.

If age, weather, and distance permit, she'll walk to your home. On arrival, she'll knock thrice and wait silently until you welcome her; should she speak first or enter without a verbal invitation, all her spells will be nullified.

Once inside, the bruja will go on a tour of inspection, seeing if she can feel the presence of spirits and determine where they've established their headquarters. Often she'll need less than five minutes to locate the "cold spots" where the discarnates dwell.

Because the average bruja respects the ánimas and sympathizes with their plight, she'll begin with a ritual for their repose. Taking a stick of white chalk from her bag, she'll inscribe an equilateral triangle on the floor. Even if the chalk marks are barely visible, the symbol retains its potency. At each of the points she'll place a white candle, beginning with the apex and ending with the corner on the left. Then she'll whisper one of her secret prayers, collect her fees, and leave, allowing you to keep the candles with their holders. For best results, let the tapers burn out; if you extinguish them, you may offend sensitive spooks who'll interpret this action as an impolite attempt to speed their departure.

The Spirit of the Thing

Ninety-nine out of a hundred times, the above rite will soothe troubled spirits and persuade them to go back where they belong. Unfortunately, your gaggle of ghosts may have serious business to transact or suffer from sheer cussedness to such an extent that they refuse to leave.

At this juncture, many practitioners will recommend a padre's services. After all, in traditional Catholic theology, any validly ordained priest possesses power sufficient to dominate a wayward spook. However, despite what you may read in tabloids or see in films, most padres won't touch anything smacking of ghosts. Before they can consider taking a case, they must obtain their bishop's permission. And most post-Vatican II prelates don't want their subordinates dabbling in hocus-pocus or embarrassing Holy Mother Church in the press. So you and your problem will end up back in your bruja's home office.

Now the practitioner has two options. If she's mediumistic or knows a good psychic, she may attempt to establish contact with the spirits in the hope that they'll tell her what they want. For this rite, the bruja and/or her medium must spend an entire night in prayer, after which the customary herbal *lavabo* and clean clothes are in order.

Once ensconced in your home, the practitioner will draw two large interlaced triangles—like the Seal of Solomon—on the floor with a previously unused piece of white chalk. A white candle must be placed in each of the corners. Then you must put a chair or stool in the center of the symbol and invite the medium to be seated.

With this, the medium should go into a trance, enabling the spooks to speak through their "channel." If you address them courteously, they'll render a detailed account of their needs with directions for satisfying them. Whatever they

demand should be given them; from what my sources told me, the souls' requests may range from High Masses to a dish of corn meal mixed with pepper to a libation of rose perfume poured on their graves at midnight. No matter how silly it may sound, gratify their whim and they'll never bother you again.

But suppose your bruja isn't mediumistic or can't find a psychic willing to officiate. Then she must select the second alternative—exorcism.

As in old-fashioned Catholicism, the practitioner's preparations for an exorcism are rigorous. She must spend nine days in prayer. During this "novena," she mustn't see any other clients or give advice over the phone. All her psychic energy must be focused on ridding your home of unwanted ánimas.

On the great day, your bruja must wash her hands thrice in her herbal decoction and dress in brand-new white clothing. Except for a cross or a medal, she must eschew jewelry. If married, she must remove her wedding band and lay it near her statue of Guadalupe. Then, concentrating on La Guadalupana, the practitioner will sally forth to banish your spooks.

Invited in, the bruja will mark an equi-armed cross with white chalk on every door frame and windowsill in your home, attic and basement included. Picking up her bottle of holy water, she'll dare the spirits to do their worst. If your case conforms to those I heard about, rapping, the levitation of small objects, and sounds best described as uncanny should answer her challenge. Worry not. Your stalwart practitioner is on the job. Wherever she detects ánimas, she'll sprinkle a few drops of holy water while reciting one of her secret prayers. Since this type of orison must be

changed each time she performs an exorcism, the bruja doesn't mind if you memorize and repeat a few words. Indeed, some even welcome such audience participation. Just don't pass them along to people outside your immediate family.

According to my informant, this ceremony invariably de-spooks a home within fifteen minutes after the last chalk cross has been drawn. To thank Guadalupe and your bruja, give the former a large beeswax candle and the latter a white envelope stuffed with cash.

Ghosts aren't the only spirits brujas must deal with. Thanks to the influence of European ceremonial magic, Brujería boasts a complete set of *elementales* (sometimes called *espíritus elementarios* in the Southwest and other regions) or nature spirits capable of causing all sorts of problems because their stupidity leaves them open to exploitation by devils.

Like the elementals in medieval grimoires, the bruja's come in four subspecies: gnomes (earth), undines (water), sylphs (air), and salamanders (fire). Of this quaternity, the last are the most dangerous owing to their incendiary proclivities. With or without a demon to egg them on, salamanders commit arson for the sheer pleasure of seeing something—or somebody—burst into flames. In many respects they resemble the pyromaniacal poltergeists discussed in parapsychology texts.

Cursed with some of these spectral firebugs? Then call your practitioner, who'll bless what's left of your property and recite a prayer which runs something like this, but in Spanish: "O Lady, grant that I may vanquish these spirits of fire as thou in thy purity didst extinguish the flames of lust." After this orison, she'll asperge you and your kin with

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holy water while ordering the salamanders to shun you “through time and eternity.” Unless the elementales are working for a devil, they’ll depart instantly.

But should they be in some evil entity’s employ, stronger measures are indicated. Your practitioner will have to perform a rite redolent of old horror flicks designed to banish the demon and kill the elementales.

In addition to being the *retardates* of the spirit world, elementales are mortal and, hence, lower in the hierarchy than any human endowed with an everlasting soul. Consequently, your bruja can exterminate the flame freaks provided she uses the right weapon.

Among practitioners, the only proper tool for the job is a “consecrated” sword very much like the instruments brandished by ceremonial magicians and some Gardnerian Witches. Not every bruja owns one, so you may have to wait a month or more before she can find one to borrow for the occasion.

Once she’s obtained a trusty blade, she’ll select an evening for the ceremony. Though opinions differ, a night when the waning moon transits the watery sign of Pisces is deemed best for slaying fire spirits. When the chosen date arrives, you and your family must evacuate your home before sundown, leaving the keys with the bruja.

As soon as you’re gone, the practitioner will “erect” a magic circle on the living room floor. Around the outer ring she’ll place thirteen (count ’em) large white candles. Then she’ll enter the circle with the sword and light the candles. And wait.

Within a few hours, the salamanders should materialize as sparks outside the circle but the bruja won’t budge an inch. Instead she’ll utter a secret incantation guaranteed to

The Spirit of the Thing

lure the elementales within a foot of the circle—and slashing range. Adios, elementales.

Deprived of its stooges, the demon will raise a ruckus in an attempt to scare the practitioner out of the circle and into his clutches. If terrifying sounds and flying objects don’t dislodge her, the fiend will appear as a hunchback with talons in lieu of fingers.

To vanquish the demon, the bruja must grasp the sword by the blade, thus raising aloft its cruciform hilt. Then, before the devil can duck, she must bash it with the cross, whereupon it will vanish in a puff of fetid smoke.

Still holding the blade, the practitioner should say an Ave to Guadalupe and extinguish the candles. Mission accomplished.

When you return at daybreak, she’ll unlock the door and hand over the keys. Before she leaves, give her a white hankie stuffed with paper money.

Like the good guys in old movies, the bruja always wins in the end.



7

Dirty Work at the Crossroads

The diablera is the enemy of goodness.

—Doña Olalla
Detroit, Michigan

When the bruja isn't busy banishing demons or smiting elementales, she fights her foremost foe—the diablera. As practitioners see her, the diablera is evil personified.

Where the bruja upholds strict sexual morality, the diablera endorses promiscuity and homosexuality. The bruja loves children—a segment of the population shunned by diableras unless they need “bait” to attract demons in rites no bruja would discuss. With her herbs and prayers, the bruja rids her clients of diseases frequently inflicted on them by the diablera. The bruja rarely pronounces a curse, but when she does, its recipient deserves it. The diablera

showers maledictions on the just. While the bruja serves Guadalupe, the diablera lives up (or down) to her name by working for *El Diablo*.

Not having interviewed any diableras, I lack firsthand information anent their nefarious deeds. However, the brujas filled me in on their enemies' plots and how to foil them. (See the discussion of major arcanum fifteen, The Devil, in chapter two for an antidablera spell.)

Like the stories about brujas cited in the first chapter, the practitioners' tales concerning diableras fall into two distinct categories. The first group embraces narratives usually set in northern Mexico or the Southwest "a long time ago." By and large, the stories in this collection read like material culled from medieval Inquisitional records, pre-Vatican II religious magazines, and gross humor publications.

For example, there's the classic about the diablera who became enamored of a handsome fellow half her age we'll call Pedro. By way of additional complications, her darling was married, had three children to support, and loathed the very sight of the diablera. So the evil crone bewitched Pedro in such a way that he beheld a monster with a burro's head whenever he saw his wife. Once she'd made him afraid to look at his spouse, the diablera cast another spell which made him perceive her as a lovely maiden. Under her influence, the young man abandoned his family and went to live with the diablera. What's more, Pedro started giving her everything he earned.

This went on for over a month. Finally, the deserted wife could stand it no longer. So she contacted a bruja who fixed the devil's servant.

Invoking the saints, the bruja gave her client an herbal salve and instructed her to smear some on her brow. Then,

after saying an Ave, the girl was to anoint her little ones' foreheads and take them to visit the diablera while Pedro was at work.

The next day, the diablera had four uninvited guests whose mere presence threw her into convulsions of terror: San Miguel and the Trinity. Thanks to the bruja's unguent, the husband-stealer saw the wife as Satan's conqueror while the children appeared as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Then, as if that weren't enough, the bruja herself arrived, whereupon the diablera experienced an unwanted vision of Guadalupe.

We don't know what the practitioner did, but when Pedro returned to the diablera's house, all he found was a deformed female burro that kept nuzzling him until he fled in disgust. That night he begged his wife to take him back. Henceforth, Pedro was a model husband and father. As for the diablera, she was never seen again—at least in human form.

A more harrowing story about diableras tells how a coven of them propositioned an attractive young fellow named Carlos. Being virtuous, he repulsed their advances. In retaliation, the diableras smote him with impotence and horrible sores resembling the ravages of "certain diseases."

Fortunately, Carlos had a smart wife who found out about the evil witches and consulted a bruja. Without delay, Guadalupe attended to the devil's minions.

When the diableras located a willing stud, they found he couldn't perform. Instead of servicing them, he let out a howl and headed for the hills. His cry woke the villagers, who scurried out to investigate. What they saw was guaranteed to give them nightmares for weeks—a gathering of naked, bald women covered from head to toe with boils.

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The diableras went to their grave in that condition, stoned to death on the spot by the peasants. As soon as the last one perished, Carlos regained his health and virility.

Malevolent though these diableras were, at least they were heterosexuals. The worst diableras are lesbians who try to force their dubious attentions on normal women. (These views only reflect the attitudes of the original narrator.) In the days when Porfirio Díaz ruled Mexico (circa 1870–1910) a girl named María lived in a town near Guadalajara. Life for María and her parents was good until a diablera took a perverse fancy to her. Nothing María could say or do deterred the evil witch from attempting to paw her. Her father tried shooting at the diablera, but the latter's spells deflected his bullets.

At last María's mother decided it was time to take action. She paid a call on a bruja, who told her to smash any spider that might invade María's room that night.

Just as the bruja said, a hideous spider materialized next to María's bed. Luckily, her mother picked up a stick and reduced it to a pulp. Come dawn, the diablera was nowhere to be seen. The people wondered and then shrugged their shoulders; perhaps she'd finally learned that María wasn't her kind of girl. But that afternoon, a stranger arrived babbling about a woman's corpse. When the police went to check his story, they found the crushed remains of the diablera pinned beneath a fallen tree.

Scary stuff, isn't it? Even so, in some respects it's tame compared to the diablera stories in the second group, the tales based on events which supposedly occurred in modern America. For one thing, the contemporary U.S.A. is a lot closer to barrio-dwellers than the Mexico of Porfirio Díaz. Furthermore, the narratives in category two are much more plausible and, hence, much more frightening. People

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who can laugh about squashed spiders turning into equally squashed diableras think twice before dismissing the idea that one person can influence another via telepathy. An example should suffice.

Sometime in the late 1960s, a diablera fell in love with a married man. However, once he spurned her, her adoration turned to unadulterated hatred. So to destroy him and his spouse, the diablera cast a nasty spell. Every evening at midnight she lit a black candle while concentrating on making her victim kill his wife. Visions of murder haunted him day and night. After a few weeks of this, he was on the verge of insanity.

When his wife observed his nervous behavior, she ran off to see her bruja. It didn't take the practitioner long to figure out what was going on and she provided an antidote for the diablera's psychic venom. Each night, the wife was to burn a white candle and meditate on Guadalupe's ability to protect her own. Within nine days, the diablera's evil vibes had returned to her, scrambling her brain and driving her to suicide. Case closed. Chalk one up for the brujas.

So much for stories. Now let's imagine there's a diablera eager to wreck your life. Did she hex your store? If you'd like sales to bounce back, visit your bruja. In exchange for a nominal fee, she'll give you a little red velvet bag containing dried herbs and magnetic lodestones "to draw customers." Hang it near the front door and you may not be able to handle all the business. But be careful; this spell has a catch. Unless you donate a tenth of your profits to charity, Guadalupe may send your clientele to your competitors.

Work for somebody else? Then the diablera will try to get you laid off or even fired. If nothing bad has happened (yet), safeguard your job with a spell from your bruja,

who'll offer three white tapers to Guadalupe. Should your position be in serious jeopardy, she'll give the Madonna five white candles plus a secret prayer. If your boss just handed you your walking papers, then the bruja must perform a two-pronged rite designed to restore your livelihood while punishing the diablera.

This means you'll have to spend part of your undesired leisure collecting earth from seven different cemeteries. Mix your soil samples and wrap the mess in a red hankie. Then, when the moon is waning, bring it to the practitioner. She'll recite one of her secret prayers to San Miguel and give you a white seven-day candle for you to burn each night when you rattle off your Aves. A week later, you'll either have your old job again or find a better one.

Now, to chastise the diablera, ask the bruja for your *bandanna* full of graveyard dirt. The next day, throw it into the first body of water you see on your way to work. In a lunar month, the old so-and-so will lose every cent she owns and/or begin a term in the pokey. Furthermore, as soon as she leaves jail, she'll ooze along to another state and never again show her face where her name is mud.

Perhaps the diablera's an envious biddy who begrudges others the goodies she can't afford. If so, she just might have caused the crash that crunched your brand-new car. See your bruja soon. Unless practitioners have changed since the late 1960s, she'll insist on blessing your woe-be-gone vehicle. First she'll anoint the steering wheel with "protection" oil and stuff two "luck-drawing" lodestones in your glove compartment. Then she'll circumambulate your auto whispering an incantation. Your car may remain a junker, but you'll never be involved in another accident. In fact, if we can believe one informant, you won't even get

any parking tickets. And, if the bruja recites a certain prayer while stroking the damaged areas, the diablera's auto will sustain similar injuries. Should the evil witch be careless, worry not—she'll break one of her legs.

But maybe your diablera isn't content to ruin your property and prefers to hurt you instead. Being malice itself, she has several methods from which to choose. Severe headaches? Can't keep your mind on what you're doing? It could be that the diablera's "piercing your brain." Every evening she takes a black candle shaped like a person of your sex and rams an old-fashioned hatpin into its brow. No wonder you've had all those migraines. To save your sanity, have the bruja baptize a white candle with your name, bless it, and burn it on her altar during the recitation of a rosary. Within a week your headaches will disappear and the diablera will go mad with pain.

Speaking of agony, does your chest feel like somebody plunged a knife in your heart? Perhaps the diablera's been thrusting her rusty blade in one of those black candles we keep hearing about. Ask your bruja to offer Guadalupe three white candles and a red-frosted cake shaped like a heart. After the ceremony, give the cake to the first stray animal you see. Your discomfort should vanish in three days. As for the diablera, she'll suffer an attack of angina pectoris she'll never relegate to oblivion.

Maybe you're accident prone. No doubt some diablera's been "tangling your feet" because she enjoys seeing you bumble along in misery. If you'd like to navigate sans fear of pratfalls, buy a goat's hoof from your bruja. Goats are notoriously sure-footed, so some of their coordination should rub off on you. Hide the hoof under your bed for a week. Then fix the diablera by burying it in a cemetery or

dumping it in the garbage. From that day forward, the evil witch won't be able to walk without banging into objects. Furthermore, she'll never regain her balance because the cure entails incantations chanted over the same goat's hoof you inhumed in the graveyard or sent to the dump. If your municipality incinerates its garbage, the diablera will not only stumble but also suffer from bunions 'til the end of her days.

But the wickedest diableras won't draw the line at damaging your possessions or hurting you. No, if she's a powerful servant of Satan, the diablera will hex your loved ones, especially the children. Are the kids off their feed? It could be the diablera's using them to attract devils in the same way you'd bait your hook with worms to catch fish; after the evil witch snares and harnesses the fiends, the little ones will be goners, so see your bruja soon.

Bring the practitioner some of the youngsters' dirty clothing. Praying over the garments, she'll decide what you must do to rescue them from the demons. Whatever the bruja says, do it, even if it means strewing blue powder around your home, rubbing "consecrated" oil on the television set, gulping down cups of herbal brews, or pouring a pint of holy water over your freshly washed dishes.

Once your children are safe, it's time to clobber the diablera with *el ataúd*, the coffin spell. Take a cigar box, load it with graveyard dirt, and give it to your practitioner. She'll keep it under her altar for three days. When that time expires, she'll return it to you sealed with red and black wax. Ask her how much she wants for this "package" and pay the stipulated amount without haggling. Then bury the box in a cemetery—preferably a Protestant or secular one since evil things don't belong in holy ground.

As the container deteriorates, so will the diablera. When it has rotten away, that old hexmonger should be pushing up stinkweed.

Maybe you recoil from murder. Worry not, Brujería offers a creative alternative. Why not torment the diablera by constraining her to perform good deeds? Buy a white candle shaped like a woman, asperge it with holy water, and leave it with your bruja. Practitioners refuse to divulge what they do to the candle, but the results are well known; within a lunar month, the diablera will smile and distribute alms to all the poor people in her neighborhood.

Like the syndicate, the ever-inventive bruja will meet your needs.



A Bruja's ABC

Without knowledge, we have nothing.

—Doña Francisca
Detroit, Michigan

ABAJO: Literally, “down below.” By extension, it denotes Hell.

ACEITE: “Oil.” Some brujas employ one or more varieties of oil in their magic. While the majority of my informants obtained their aceite from occult supply firms, three compounded their own. Lamentably but understandably, these adepts refused to reveal their formulas. However, one practitioner divulged the recipe for an oil-based paste said to be excellent for banishing enemies: Take a tablespoonful of olive oil, add another of graveyard dirt, and mix the ingredients with the index finger of your left hand. Sprinkle the goo with black pepper. Then smear it on a photo of your foe and bury it, preferably in a cemetery. As the picture

deteriorates, the old so-and-so it represents will feel increasingly uneasy. Before a lunar month has elapsed, he'll apologize for all the grief he's given you and flee to another state.

AGUJA: "Needle." In Brujería an aguja is a *dagyde* used to work image magic. Is that crotchety old woman across the street spreading vicious gossip about you? Now's the time to teach her a lesson by sending her a case of "the burning tongue" (*la lengua ardiente*). Buy a black candle shaped like a woman. With your aguja, scratch the slandermonger's initials on its face. Dip the needle in the spiciest sauce you can find and ram it into the image's mouth. Then light the candle, concentrate on that nasty chatterbox, and extinguish the flame. The next day, if not sooner, you'll have a contrite visitor who'll promise never to lie about you again. Forgive her "as God orders" (*como Dios manda*). After she leaves, remove *la lengua ardiente* by reciting an Ave to Guadalupe and extracting the needle. Cleanse your aguja with holy water and put it away. Scrape the initials off the candle with your magic blade (*cuchillo*). Finally, dispose of the image by incineration or burial in a graveyard.

ALTAR: Like its pré-Vatican II Catholic counterpart, the bruja's altar generally faces the wall rather than the congregation. Since marble altars can run into big money, most practitioners use dressers or sideboards. Nearly always, the altar will feature a large image of Guadalupe flanked by tall white candles. Depending on the individual bruja's income and devotional inclinations, as many as thirty statues depicting sundry saints and angels may share the altar with several small crucifixes and assorted

votive lights. The bruja's altar possesses several advantages over the ecclesiastical variety. As already noted, it's usually cheaper. In addition, because it began life as a dresser or sideboard, objects can be stored in it or even tucked under it for safekeeping. And because it's lighter than the marble article, the bruja's altar is easier to move when necessary.

ÁNGELES: "Angels," specifically Santos Rafael, Miguel, and Gabriel. Although older practitioners insist that there are only three important angels, a couple under-forty brujas who've read the Lady Sheba's works revere Azriel/Uriel and advise seekers of creative inspiration to invoke him.

ANGLO: A light complexioned, English-speaking non-Chicano. The bruja's Tarot tends to associate the suit of wands with Anglos.

ÁNIMA: A human soul consigned to Purgatory after physical death.

ÁNIMAS: All Souls' Day (November 2). Nonbrujas in the Hispanic community observe it as *Día de los Difuntos*, "Day of the Dead."

ARAÑA: "Spider." According to elderly practitioners, demons and diableras can transform themselves into arañas. Finding a cobweb in your otherwise immaculate home is a sign that somebody's trying to hex you. Clear away the web and burn a small white candle "for protection." If more webs appear, consult your bruja, who'll give you an envelope of white powder and teach you a short prayer. Sprinkle the powder on your doorstep or in the hall outside your apartment. Then whisper the orison and relax secure in the knowledge that the hex will return to its sender within three days.

ARROZ: "Rice." A venerable Old World fertility symbol adopted by Brujería. Instead of wastefully throwing rice at newlyweds, some brujas recommend feeding them a few well-cooked grains as soon as they emerge from the church. If we can believe an elderly practitioner, brides who eat rice right after their nuptials will bear plenty of healthy children while grooms who partake of arroz will never lack the money necessary for their support and education.

AVE: The Catholic "Hail Mary," possibly the most popular prayer in Brujería. Spanish and English versions are acceptable, but most of the brujas I met use the original Latin text in their rites:

Ave María

gratia plena

Dominus tecum.

Benedicta tu in mulieribus

et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus.

Sancta María,

Mater Dei,

ora pro nobis peccatoribus

nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.

Amén.

BARRIO: The Hispanic section of an American city.

BENDECIR: "To bless."

Bendita sea María: "Blessed be Mary."

Que Dios te bendiga: "God bless you."

BOTÁNICA: A religious goods store located in the barrio and generally, though not always, run by a practitioner of Puerto Rican santería. Probably owing to their large families and domestic responsibilities, my informants didn't operate *botánicas*. True, the brujas carried merchandise

obtained from occult supply companies, but they concealed it under or even inside their altars.

BOTELLA: "Bottle." Are you vexed and perplexed? If everything seems slightly awry without any readily apparent cause, you just may be the victim of a small-scale hex. To shoo away your malaise, put seven iron nails and a pinch of salt in a bottle. Then add some of your *aguas menores* ("urine"), seal the vessel with red wax, and inhume it in a graveyard. Soon whoever cursed you will suffer from ennui coupled with a multitude of small annoyances. What's more, he'll have to endure them for a lunar month. Perhaps I'm wrong, but I think this spell may be an attenuated version of one or more used in England and on the Continent to torment an adept allegedly guilty of inflicting a major malediction on an innocent person. According to a British Witch of my acquaintance, victims of unjust wanions would bury bottles containing pins and urine in the belief that they'd give the practitioner so much pain that she'd lift the curse. A kindred spell from Italy supposedly sends witches to an unspecified but excruciating death. And a Bavarian friend of mine states that he knew farmers who'd boil urine in a copper pot to "punish" sorceresses for injuring their livestock.

BRUJA: Literally, "witch." A female practitioner of Brujería. In areas of the Hispanic world where bruja has come to mean "diabolist," priestesses of Brujería call themselves *santeras*.

BRUJERÍA: "Witchcraft" in general and the Mexican magico-religious system in particular. Like European Witchcraft, Brujería is divided into sects. Of the sixteen

brujas I met, fourteen belonged to one subcult while two followed a branch of Brujería heavily influenced by the Puerto Rican magico-religious system of Santería. Additional sects exist in this country, but I wasn't able to interview their members. Please see Sects.

BRUJO: "Warlock." Men rarely play a major role in the varieties of Brujería I studied. In Mexico, however, brujos wield considerable power; among the Yaqui Indians, they well-nigh control the cult.

BRUTO: "Beast." Despite brujería's condemnation of lesbianism and the average practitioner's love of family life, most priestesses call men brutos. *Hombres son brutos:* "Men are beasts." *Darle de comer al bruto:* "Give your man plenty of good food (to keep him happy)." *Domar al bruto:* "To tame your man" (by doctoring his vittles with mild herbs said to sweeten masculine dispositions).

BRUXAS: The witches burned by the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal. Some *bruxas* might have settled in Mexico during the Spanish colonial era (roughly 1521–1810). Though most types of Brujería confer only one degree, the old Spanish and Portuguese cult had three: *feiticeyra*, *alcoviteyra*, and *bruxa*.

BUHO: "Owl." The ominous bird of wisdom whose reputation goes back to ancient Greece, where the owl symbolized the sapient goddess Pallas Athena. In Brujería, owls warn devotees of impending peril. Should you hear a buho hoot thrice, you're in danger. Whatever you're doing, stop long enough to recite an Ave "for protection." If you're sincere and haven't intentionally harmed anyone in the recent past, Guadalupe will shield you from whatever may be lurking in the shadows. Speaking of lurking in the shadows, don't ever

spy on brujas, or you could end up with an owl in your stomach. Please see Lechuza and Tocolote.

BULTOS: Statues of saints. Please see Santos.

CACA: "Excrement." Brujas employ the term to denote lies told by misguided believers anxious to enlist a practitioner's aid in projects no upstanding, well-informed witch would touch. Happily, justice triumphs in the bruja's world because even if purveyors of caca should deceive her, a spell cast at their request will come to naught. An experienced bruja will sense it's failure, determine the cause, and proceed to give the liars their just deserts. Please see Mientes.

CADENAS: The Feast of Saint Peter's Chains (July 31–August 1). Corresponds to Lammas in Wicca.

CALAVERA: "Skull." The Aztecs revered skulls as symbols of Mictlantecuhtli, the tutelary god of death. Catholic art practically wallowed in skulls between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. And "Old Simon," the skull and crossbones, has played an honorable role in some branches of European Witchcraft for hundreds of years. With such a history behind it, the skull should be important in Brujería. Unfortunately, my findings on this point are inconclusive. It's true that seven of my informants kept skulls in their shrines, but three of them were plastic replicas of the type used in some medical courses. Were the practitioners' skulls serving as symbols of death and regeneration or were they props displayed to set an eerie mood? Whenever I broached the subject, the brujas evaded the question, one even teasing me about my empty cranium. But this is not to say that sects of Brujería openly interested in the skull and its occult significance aren't active in the United States. A friend who must

remain nameless found a group of Hispanic adepts near Albuquerque who contemplated an equi-armed cross decorated with nine skulls during their rites.

CALDERA: "Cauldron." An important tool in European and American witchcraft. As yet, this venerable symbol of the maternal principle has seen little use by the brujas I studied. However, I've heard that practitioners active in the Southwest make extensive utilization of calderas in the preparation of herbal brews.

CÁLIZ: "Chalice." Though the chalice has represented the female principle in European witchcraft for centuries, it is a relative newcomer to Brujería. Going by what practitioners told me, brujas didn't have chalices until the 1920s or 1930s. And then, as today, the *caliz* on the altar frequently was a red glass goblet employed as a receptacle for currency donated by grateful believers. As knowledge of Wicca and its influence increase among Mexican-American adepts, this situation should change.

CAMINO DEL BIEN: The straight and narrow path leading to heaven.

CANDELARIA: The Feast of the Purification of the Virgin (February 1-2). Its counterpart in Gardnerian Wicca is Candlemas.

CARNE: "Meat." According to one Madison-area practitioner, a diablera can use meat to lure elementales and compel them to do her evil bidding. Exactly how the satanic adept forces the nature spirits to obey her remains unclarified, but the bruja swore that all the diableras learn the secret at their initiation. Furthermore, the worst diableras aren't satisfied with enslaving lowly elementales. No, they want larger game, like devils, which they supposedly

attract with human flesh. If we can lend my informant credence, the diableras eventually become infected with their servitors' craving for carne. So, should you suspect somebody of being an evil witch, leave a plate loaded with putrid meat where she can find it. Invariably, a genuine diablera of long standing will devour the offal. And even a young diablera will fondle and nibble on the mess.

CASA DE DIOS: "House of God." Among brujas it signifies (1) a Catholic church and (2) The Tower, the sixteenth major arcanum in the Tarot. Oddly enough, some French occultists also call this card "The House of God" (*Maison [de] Dieu*). Less peculiar is the fact that the Aztecs applied the term "House of God" to their temples. Please see *Teocalli*.

CENIZAS: "Ashes." Have you burned any papers while casting a spell? If so, don't dump the ashes in the trash or your magic may backfire. Instead, gather the cenizas, put them in a box, and seal it with red wax. Then, when the moon's gliding through one of the earth signs (Taurus, Virgo, or Capricorn), gently bury the container while you recite an original prayer thanking Guadalupe for her aid.

COMADRE: A confidante or female friend. Also a form of address among brujas in one sect I studied.

COMADREJA: "Weasel." Comadres may be good, but comadrejas are universally abominated by the older practitioners. For one thing, diableras often assume this shape to suck babies' blood. Worse yet, demons become incarnate as huge comadrejas who kill children for the sheer devilment of it. And as if that weren't bad enough, one species of spectral weasel spends its evenings suffocating whole families in their sleep.

COMIDA: "Meal." In Brujería, a comida is a dish loaded with food and left in the graveyard as a present for (usually) good spirits. Though the spooks don't consume the vittles, they still appreciate the kind thought. Americans may deem this practice outre, but traditional Mexican culture sees nothing strange in offering nourishment to noneating entities. Every year, thousands of people converge on the cemeteries south of the border to observe Día de Difuntos (November 2) by feasting near their loved ones' remains. As part of the celebration, many put delicacies and bottles of tequila on the graves so the departed won't feel excluded from the fun. Giving spirits food is by no means confined to Mexico and Brujería. Throughout the New World, syncretic cults adhere to this custom. In New Orleans, Voudoun priestesses present Saint Expédite with pound cake and leave candy next to Marie Laveau's tomb. To honor their favorite *loas* (deities) and pacify angry ghosts, Haitian Voudoun practitioners offer them a variety of goodies ranging from cooked rice to fruit soaked in fine cognac. Puerto Rican santeras treat their supernatural beings to an equally varied menu. And in Brazil, *umbandistas* prepare elaborate offerings called *despachos*, which may include as many as a dozen courses plus liquor neatly arranged on spotless napery.

COMPADRE: The male equivalent of a comadre. Hence, a buddy or colleague.

CONSAGRAR: "To consecrate."

COPAL: Resin employed as incense by the Aztecs and Mayas. Today the Indians of southern Mexico continue to use copal in their magic, burning it in small clay thuribles similar to those wrought in the pre-Columbian era.

According to a quondam missionary who saw contemporary Maya-Quiches offer it to the Virgin, copal yields heavy fumes and dense, blue-tinged smoke.

COSAS FEAS: Literally, "ugly things." Among brujas the term serves as a euphemism for illicit sexual acts, a category embracing every amatory delinquency from sodomy to the omission of prayers before intercourse. Since a practitioner functions as a mother confessor, she hears about cosas feas for hours on end. After a day whose revelations would make a pornographic novel read like a missal, the adept may feel that she herself could do with some form of purification; one bruja active in Port Huron laves her ears with holy water.

CREDO: The Nicene Creed. Most brujas of my acquaintance prefer the Latin to the Spanish text:

*Credo in unum Deum
Patrem omnipotentem
factorem coeli et terrae
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.
Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum
Filium Dei unigenitum.
Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine
Deum verum de Deo vero.
Genitum, non factum
consubstantialem Patri
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines
et propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis.
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine
ET HOMO FACTUS EST.*

*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis
sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas.
Et ascendit in coelum
sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est
cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos
cujus regni non erit finis.
Et in Spiritum Sactum,
Dominum et vivificantem
qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.
Qui cum Patre et Filis simul adoratur
et conglorificatur,
qui locutus est per Prophetas.
Et unam sanctum catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum Baptism
ain remissionem peccatorum.
Et exspecto resurrectionem mortu orum.
Et vitam venturi saeculi.
Amen.*

CUCHILLO: "Knife." While Gardnerian Witches have two knives, the black-handled athame and the white-handled bolline, the brujas I met used only one. Ideally, the cuchillo should have a sickle-shaped blade. Most practitioners employ it to harvest herbs. How long they've wielded luniform knives is a moot question. Back in the Aztec era, most ceremonial knives (*itztli*) possessed relatively straight blades which tapered to a point. And modern Mexican Indians tend to use plain, utilitarian knives in their magic for the simple reason that elaborate tools lie beyond their ken and their budget. I could be incorrect, but I suspect that the crescent-shaped blade ousted

the straight variety within the last fifty years, and that the transition took place on U.S. soil. In America, many rank-and-file *Chicanas* acquired formal education and gained access to grimoires, studies of European Witchcraft, and manuals of mythology. Perhaps a bruja came across an article on the golden sickle with which the ancient Druids garnered their sacred mistletoe. Or maybe a picture of the Roman goddess Ceres, bearing her traditional half-moon blade, struck the practitioner's fancy. Whatever the source of inspiration, the bruja most likely associated the curved knife with the Madonna's lunar crescent.

CURANDERA: A woman healer, generally an herbalist. Not all brujas are curanderas and not all curanderas practice Brujería or Santería. Although the word curandera is Spanish, female healers have tended ailing Indians since pre-Columbian times. Under the Aztec dispensation, women dominated popular medicine. During the Spanish colonial period, they retained their ascendancy because white, male, university-trained physicians rarely accepted Indian patients. For most post-Conquest natives, the curandera was the only source of medical care. Today, despite a century and a half of national independence and fifty years of socio-economic reform, the situation remains much as it was in the viceregal age. Please see *Yerbas*.

CURANDERO: The curandera's male counterpart. In the Southwest, some curanderos specialize in setting broken bones and treating dislocated limbs. To the best of my knowledge, Northern barrios are well-nigh devoid of curanderos.

DIABLERIA: A witch who worships Satan, hence the bruja's enemy. Please see chapter 7 and Comadreja.

DIABLERO: A Satanic warlock. Diablos ply their nefarious trade in Mexico, but they're almost extinct in Mexican-American communities outside the Southwest.

DIABLO: Satan or, more loosely, any devil or demon. *Tras la cruz se esconde el diablo* ("Tras" would be replaced by "Detras de" in so-called correct Spanish): "The devil hides behind the cross." As in European and American folklore, lefties are said to owe Satan one day's work per week. Sinistrals eager to escape from his talons should bathe their ill-omened hand in holy water every morning.

ELEMENTALES: Nature spirits. Elementales come in four subspecies, each governing an element: gnomes (earth), undines (water), salamanders (fire), and sylphs (air). Unlike human souls, elementales are mortal.

ENAGUAS: A wrap-around cotton skirt worn by Aztec women and, hence, by the ancient priestesses of Tonantzín. To make an enaguas, take a piece of material large enough to go around your waist at least one and a half times. Then gird your midsection with a long, narrow sash (*faja*). Theoretically, the *faja* should keep the enaguas in place. However, in actual practice, some very un-Aztec buttons or fasteners may be necessary. The enaguas corresponds to the kirtles donned by some British Witches. Please see *Faja* and *Huipil* for the rest of an Aztec priestess' wardrobe.

ENCANTAR: "To enchant."

ESCOGER: "To choose." In some sects, a bruja regards herself as a person chosen (*escogida*) by Guadalupe. The probable origins of this concept in *brujería* invite speculation. Back in pre-Hispanic times, "chosen women" served the god Tezcatlipoca. When Catholicism arrived in

Mexico, it brought with it the idea that God singles out certain people to receive "extraordinary graces." After all, didn't the Bible declare that, "Many are called, but few are chosen."? And contact with Puerto Rican Santería in U.S. barrios exposed brujas to the belief that saints determine who'll serve them, often revealing their decision via possession. Any or all of these influences could have led some brujas to see themselves as Guadalupe's elect.

ESPADA: "Sword," specifically the blade used to slay elementales and banish demons. The espada corresponds to the ceremonial magician's sword and the coven sword wielded by Gardnerian witches. How old is the espada's role in *brujería*? Methinks it's far from ancient. Among the Aztecs, swords were unknown. Once Cortés smashed their empire, weapons of any type became off-limits to most Indians. And even native men-at-arms in Spanish pay rarely bore swords because the espada denoted high social status. With independence and over a century of revolutions, the old taboos broke down. But though a peasant could now own a sword, its price put it beyond his reach. Perhaps I'm wrong, but I don't believe that the espada appeared in *brujería* until the 1920s, when U.S. priestesses of the cult started reading about ceremonial magic and European Witchcraft.

FASCINAR: "To fascinate" or "to bewitch."

FAJA: The cotton sash Aztec women employed to hold up their enaguas. A yard or so of wide, heavy ribbon would make a fine *faja*, but the genuine handloomed article from Mexico is even better. These strips of material have been cropping up in American boutiques so you stand a good chance of obtaining one minus excessive effort and expense.

GATO: "Tom cat." To brujas, *El Gato* denotes Satan. Among my older informants, the feeling prevailed that only a diablera would keep a male feline as a pet. Since the domestic cat came from the Old World, the senior practitioners probably derived their ailurophobia from Spanish sources. Certainly, the Inquisition took (and inflicted) great pains to inculcate this attitude. More than one seventeenth-century bruxa was tortured into "confessing" that she'd adored Satan in feline form. And as late as the supposedly enlightened nineteenth century, many Spanish celebrations featured the incineration of live cats in the town square. Because *El Gato* served as the Devil's fleshly vehicle, no torment was too cruel for him to endure. With so much antifeline prejudice in Spain, it's no wonder that some found its way to colonial Mexico, where it influenced Brujería.

GLORIA: A prayer popular in Brujería-oriented circles. Though Spanish and English translations exist, most of the adepts I interviewed used the Latin text:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

Laudamus te.

Benedicimus te.

Adoramus te.

Glorificamus te.

Gratias agimus tibi

propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus

Rex coelestis

Deus Pater omnipotens.

Dominie Fili unigenite

Jesu Christe.

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.

Qui tollis peccata mundi

suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris

miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus

tu solus Dominus

tu solus altissimus

Jesu Christe.

Cum Sancto Spiritu

In Gloria Dei Patris.

Amen.

GRIMORIO: A book of rites and spells. Unlike the libretas (q.v.), the grimorios and their contents are exposed to public scrutiny. Proud of being the first literate woman in her family, one elderly practitioner invited me to spend an afternoon examining her grimorios. If my notes and memory serve me right, she possessed over a hundred volumes in her library, including three editions of *The Secrets of Albertus Magnus*, *The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*, and a manual of Pennsylvania Dutch magic (*hexerei*).

GUADALUPE: The Mexican Madonna; see chapter 1.

GUIRNALDA: Literally, "garland." The red cord used by some brujas to inflict impotence on brutos. According to one informant, the guirnalda is similar to the Gardnerian cingulum. Whatever its name, the adept's cord is an ancient tool. The Koran mentions it in a condemnation of women who cast spells by blowing on knots. Some Sufi sects employed cinctures, a practice which they might have transmitted to Templars stationed in the Near East.

And from Bulgaria to Catalonia, the Catharist adepts (perfects) wore a type of cingulum. Was the "garland" known in Mexico before the Spanish Conquest? It's a moot question. The Aztecs and Mayas had knotted cords but, as far as we can determine, they employed them in penitential practices. So it's anyone's guess when Brujería acquired the guirnalda.

HUEVOS: "Eggs." Want to grow luxuriant tresses like the Madonna's? Then say an Ave and eat a minimum of two eggs every day (You may not want to try this if you are watching your cholesterol level!) If you yearn to sport an ankle-length mane, offer Santa María Egipcíaca a secret concoction said to contain raw eggs and brown sugar. Since Santa María Egipcíaca roamed the deserts of North Africa clad in nothing but her hair, she'll send you a veil of lustrous locks.

HUIPIL: The Aztec and Maya women's blouse or dress. There are as many lengths and styles of *huipiles* as there are Indian villages in Mexico. If you'd like to make the type of huipil worn by the pre-Hispanic Aztecs, take at least two yards of white cotton. Cut a hole in the center for your head. Then fold it in half and sew up the sides, leaving openings for your arms. To decorate it, paint or embroider geometrical designs around the neck and hem. This variety of huipil resembles the long, loose robes used by many European and American Witches.

IGLESIA: "Church." Brujas employ the term to designate the institutional Catholic Church rather than a particular building or an assembly of rank-and-file Christians. Towards the iglesia, the older practitioners harbor ambivalent attitudes. On the one hand, the senior brujas

see themselves as devout women who venerate the saints, attend Mass regularly, and deposit cash in the collection basket "because God and Guadalupe want us to support the priests even though they make big mistakes." On the other hand, the elderly adepts view some clerics as greedy; one Detroit bruja called the padres the "gimme boys." Grave doubts about sacerdotal masculinity surfaced in Milwaukee, where a practitioner described several priests as *maricones* ("fairies"). And all my older informants resented certain Anglo clerics' hostility to brujas. Among the under-forty crowd, there's a strong tendency to sever personal ties with the iglesia while continuing to use its prayers in magic. The youngest of my sources was a firm believer in the recitation of Aves, but her children attended public schools and she vowed she'd "never give a cent" to the Church.

JESÚS: Jesus, whom the brujas I met rarely invoked because they believed that all the "true power" resided in Guadalupe. However, there are sects of Brujería in the Southwest and Mexico which grant Jesus equality with his mother. And I've heard that one branch of the cult active in Texas accords him superior status. But, ironically enough, that group is said to exclude men from its priesthood.

JOSÉ EL OBRERO, SAN: The feast of Saint Joseph the Worker (May 1), which corresponds to Rudemas in Gardnerian Witchcraft.

KARDEC, ALLAN: The founder of Spiritism. Please see chapter 6.

LABORES: "Chores." *Labores* denotes a practitioner's routine duties, which range from cleaning her santuario to the mechanical recitation of prayers. Please see Quehaceres.

LADRÓN: "Thief." By and large, brujas despise larceny in any form. This being the case, most of them gladly help victims recover stolen property. Please see chapter four for information about San Antonio's prowess as a restorer of purloined possessions. But let's assume you don't want to wait until San Antonio's feast (June 13) to obtain restitution. Then you need Dismas, the Good Thief who was crucified with Christ. Offer him a candle—any kind will do—and implore his aid. Because Dismas barely made it into heaven, he's tickled pink when suppliants invoke him as a saint. Unfortunately, his powers don't always equal his happiness, so you may end up in the bruja's waiting room on San Antonio's day despite Dismas' efforts on your behalf. As far as we can tell from studying their penal code, the ancient Aztecs loathed the light-fingered fraternity as much as modern brujas do. But we have no record of the rites Aztec adepts performed to make thieves return their ill-gotten gains.

LATÍN: Although brujas speak Spanish, they prefer Latin, the language of the pre-Vatican II Catholic Church, for use in many of their rites. Since their command of Latin tends to be weak, the brujas borrow and modify Catholic prayers rather than compose Latin orisons from scratch.

LATINO: A person of mixed Hispanic and Indian heritage. In areas of Mexico and Guatemala, many of the urban Mestizos call themselves Latinos or Ladinos to lay emphasis on their European ancestry and differentiate themselves from the rural Indians. Among the older brujas, Latino is a derogatory term applied to snobs.

LECHUZA: "Owl." Practitioners disagreed as to whether lechuza and buho denoted the same avian species.

According to two informants, buho signifies a large owl while lechuza means one of the small fry. By way of additional distinction, an old bruja stated that lechuzas devour candles filched from churches, a belief probably based on the Spanish tale about the owl that consumed an unidentified cathedral's supply of tapers and holy oils.

LIBRETA: A secret handwritten book of rituals and spells analogous to the Gardnerian *Book of Shadows*. In contrast to the grimorios, libretas almost never emerge from hiding in the presence of nonbrujas. In 1974, a practitioner told me that a libreta must be destroyed after its owner's death. I may not be right, but I think that Brujería recently appropriated this regulation from a similar precept contained in the Lady Sheba's *Book of Shadows*. Until roughly the last fifty years, most brujas couldn't read, let alone write a book.

LIMPIEZA: "Cleanliness." Like Gardnerian Witches, the majority of my informants were staunch advocates of cleanliness. Whenever possible, a practitioner should dust her images and change the altar cloth each week. Because she's a spiritual daughter of La Purísima, a bruja must keep her santuario spotless and free from cobwebs, whose sudden appearance indicates that diableras disguised as spiders have attempted to profane the shrine. Interestingly enough, the Aztec witches waged unending war on dirt. Their tutelary goddess, Tonantzín-Tlazoltéotl, wielded a fierce broom.

LOBO: "Wolf." Hence, an untrustworthy, vicious person. When I transcribed this word in 1974, I thought that I'd found traces of an ancient connection between Brujería and Gardnerian Wicca, which employs "lupe" ("wolf") in

an analogous context. Then I asked my informant where she'd learned to use lobo in this manner and I discovered a contemporary link; seeing "lupe" in the Lady Sheba's works, the bruja became so entranced with the expression that she tendered it into Spanish. However, there's a venerable linguistic tie uniting "lupe" and lobo. Originally, both stemmed from the Latin name for "wolf"—*lupis*.

LUNA: "Moon." For lunar lore, please see chapter 5. A poetically inclined young bruja views the moon as Guadalupe's celestial ship. Whenever the silver orb's especially beautiful, this adept says that "the Little Virgin's in her boat": *La Virgencita está en su barca*.

MACHO: Literally, "male." By extension, it means "strong." The Emperor, the fourth major arcanum, is the most macho card in the bruja's Tarot.

MADRINA: A would-be bruja's sponsor at her initiation in one sect. The Gardnerian handmaiden performs a similar function when she blindfolds the postulant before he enters the circle.

MAÍZ PINTO: A colored grain of corn used by Yaqui Indian adepts to slay their enemies. The maíz pinto spell has been part of Mexican magic for centuries. Ancient though it may be, only one of my informants had heard of the maíz pinto and she learned about it from a book.

MALAQUÍ, SAN: Saint Malachy, putative author of a series of prophecies concerning the papacy. One of Malachy's vaticinations treats Paul the Sixth's successor, whose motto will be *De Medietate Lunae* ("About the Half Moon"). Most interpreters see it as an indication that the Occident will do battle with the Moslem world during his pontificate. But several young practitioners construe it to

mean that he will declare the Virgin divine in a futile effort to woo female converts.

MANTO: "Mantle," specifically the long azure cloak which covers Guadalupe from head to toe. In some pictures, small gold stars adorn the garment, in which case it bears the name *manto de estrellas*. Please see Vestido Rosado for the remainder of Guadalupe's costume.

MAÑANITAS, LAS: "The Morning Sun" or "Sunrise Serenade." Without a doubt, *Las Mañanitas* is the most popular hymn honoring Guadalupe. Since the century began, Hispanists have transcribed dozens of verses. Lamentably, one of the variants they (and I) have yet to record is the secret one sung by some brujas to a melody slightly different from the Spanish colonial original.

MARIMACHO: "Mannish woman." Among brujas, the term signifies a diablera because of the sapphic tendencies frequently ascribed to the latter.

MARIPOSA: "Butterfly." Seen any yellow mariposas this morning? If so, you can look forward to a week of good luck. But should some dark lepidoptera flit into view, say an Ave or you'll lose a substantial sum of money before sunset.

MAXTLI: An Aztec loincloth, customarily made of cotton. Contingent on a tribesman's status, his maxtli might be short and plain or richly embroidered and edged with fringe. Methods of tying the maxtli varied, but most old manuscripts show it knotted in front. Others, however, depict it as two wide flaps of material suspended fore and aft from a wide belt. With such great latitude, almost any type of modest, comfortable loincloth would be suitable. Sad to say, some padres didn't see it that way. Aghast at

the Indians' alleged indecency, the clerics made them wear loose ankle-length pants. Please see Tilma for the rest of an Aztec's wardrobe.

MEDALLAS: "Medals," particularly those depicting saints or their attributes. Due to economic considerations, most of the medallas available in the barrio are inexpensive aluminum items. In some instances, like San Jaun Bautista's tiny keg-shaped charm, they're costume jewelry novelties pressed into service by the ever-inventive brujas. Just bought a new medal? Make sure your practitioner blesses it before you wear it for the first time. If you can't visit her soon and feel an overwhelming urge to don your medalla, dip it thrice in a holy water font. But don't forget to see your bruja within a lunar month because your personal benediction has a nonrenewable life of four weeks.

MESA QUE HABLA, LA: Literally, "the talking table." Among brujas influenced by Spiritism, la mesa que habla is a table through which discarnate entities transmit messages via rapping on its surface or tapping its legs against the floor. To experiment with la mesa, "bless" a small table by reciting a prayer of your choice. Then get three or more people to sit around it with their fingertips lightly touching its top. If possible, have the group sing a hymn or chant the following: *Alabada sea la Santisima Madre de Dios* ("May the Most Holy Mother of God be praised"). According to my informants, you should receive answers to simple yes/no questions on your first attempt. But don't omit the religious preliminaries, or your furniture could become a hostel for hostile spooks.

MESTIZO: A person of Indian and Spanish ancestry. Most Mexicans are Mestizos.

MIENTES: "You lie." Though changing mores are softening its impact, *mientes* remains one of the worst insults in the Mexican-American lexicon. Some brujas use it to banish minor demons who, being as proud as the proverbial Lucifer, depart in a huff rather than endure a lowly woman's billingsgate. Apropos of vituperation, you may get more than the rough side of her tongue if you lie to a bruja. My source in Port Huron claims that a fellow who fibbed to her mother the practitioner wound up covered with huge boils that failed to respond to treatment until he admitted his prevarication and apologized. Another latter-day Ananias received a permanent case of impotence plus five years in the pokey because he used lies to enlist a bruja's aid when he was on trial for sexual assault. So, however great the temptation to twist the truth, give your adept the straight facts.

MISA: The Roman Catholic Mass. The Credo, Gloria, and Pater Noster used by brujas come from the Mass. So does a type of magic power, if we can believe the elderly practitioners. Though younger adepts may scoff, the old-timers recommend a veritable *grimorio* of spells involving church attendance. Are you single, thirty, and desperate? Don't fret. Instead, go to Mass every morning for a lunar month and wear a white rosary around your neck at Sunday services. When the padre elevates the Eucharist, beg Guadalupe to send you a mate. If you follow these instructions and eschew cosas feas (q.v.), you'll enjoy wedded bliss within a year. Worried about a job interview? Just hear three Masses in one day, pray to San Jose el Obrero, and carry a hankie sprinkled with holy water in your pocket. Either you'll land the position or you'll find a better one before the lunar month expires. And if you're

a medium whose powers have emulated the famous Old Gray Mare, you need a spiritual tonic only the Mass can provide—the Eucharist. Go to communion dressed in blue and/or white. Provided you concentrate on the Virgin while you receive the Host, your psychic faculties will regain their pristine strength by the next full moon, if not sooner. Incidentally, a Brazilian cult analogous to Brujería also taps the Catholic liturgy's magic power; before a young *candomblé* adept can officiate as a priestess (*filha de santo*), she must attend Mass clad in her patron saint's favorite color.

MUCHACHITA: "Little girl." A pink or light red candle shaped like a woman. Is your wife turning into a bitter shrew? Buy a muchachita, have your bruja bless it, and put it in a dish containing white sugar. Then light the candle while concentrating on your sour-tempered spouse. In no time, her disposition should sweeten.

MUCHACHO: "Boy." A red candle shaped like a man. If your husband ogles putas (q.v.), buy a muchacho and cover its eyes with a small strip of white cloth. Then pray that Guadalupe will keep him faithful, remove the blindfold, and light the candle. Do this each lunar month and your mate will never stray.

MUCHO DINERO: "Much money." Need cash in a hurry? Offer Guadalupe a silver dollar or a peso while saying the following:

Necesité mucho dinero.

Todo me faltaba.

Ofrecí a la Virgencita una moneda

y mucho dinero me dió.

(I needed lots of money./ I lacked everything./ I offered the Little Virgin a coin/ and she gave me plenty of cash.)

Then repeat a secret prayer available from your bruja and drop the coin in a poorbox. The next day you should receive a large lump of moolah. Enjoy it, but don't forget to donate a tenth of your windfall to charity or Guadalupe may take back her largesse with interest, leaving you poorer than you were before.

MUÑECA: "Doll." Any image used by a practitioner to cast spells. From what I've heard, the older adepts employ several types of handmade effigies. Unfired clay figurines bearing an enemy's name are tossed into rivers in the belief that their conversion into mud will weaken the foe. Corn husk or straw poppets receive a loving burial in the fields to promote fertility; more than one Anglo farmer has hired a bruja to boost his yield per acre by planting a pair of them. Like their counterparts in some regions of Mexico, U.S. adepts knead dough into tiny images designed to help women bear healthy babies. And those brujas influenced by Puerto Rican Santería sew little black rag dolls whose mere presence pulls customers into their lucky owners' stores. Among the younger practitioners, candles shaped like people are the most popular variety of muñeca. Coming in several hues and both genders, these waxen images serve a multitude of purposes, Want to smash an enemy? Buy a black muñeca of the appropriate sex, give it to your bruja, and rest assured that justice will be done. If your mate's misbehaving, you need pink or red muñecas, like the muchachita and the muchacho. As for white muñecas, they're "adequate" (*bastan*) for nearly any spell requiring effigies. So if you can't obtain red or black ones, a white waxen image will suffice.

NAHUATL: The Aztec language. Due to renewed interest in their Indian heritage, a few young brujas have started to employ Nahuatl terms in their magic. One practitioner of my acquaintance wears Aztec-inspired garments when performing secret rites. In addition, some nonbrujas anxious to recapture their pre-Hispanic past have begun a revival of the Aztec faith and tongue.

NAIPES: Literally, "cards." To brujas, naipes means the Tarot. *Me dicen los naipes:* "The cards tell me." *No está en los naipes:* "It isn't in the cards." Please see chapter two for a discussion of los naipes.

NEGRO: "Black man." Depending on the individual practitioner's beliefs, negro can denote Satan, Doctor John (a noted nineteenth-century Voudoun priest), or San Martín de Porres, a Peruvian mulatto whose spirit supposedly locates lost and stolen articles.

NEGRITO: A subspecies of demon easily banished by offering three white candles and an Ave to Guadalupe.

NOMBRE DE LECHE: Literally, "milk name" and, hence, the nickname borne by an infant prior to baptism. Among elderly brujas, there's a strong belief that babies should be christened within a week of their arrival. If the little ones retain their nombre de leche longer than seven days, they run a grave risk of developing criminal tendencies. Perhaps this notion is a holdover from the era when padres encouraged the early baptism of neonates lest they die unsprinkled and, thus, unfit to enter heaven. Then, again, it may also indicate the survival of an Aztec custom hidden beneath a Christian veneer. Back in pre-Hispanic times, Aztec wise women purified newborns with water.

NOMBRE DE PILA: "Baptismal name." Want to dominate an enemy? Write the name he received at the font on a scrap of paper blessed by your bruja. While concentrating on him, tear it to shreds, burn the fragments, and put the ashes in your left shoe. By the end of three days, your foe will have apologized for his misdeeds and offered to serve you in any capacity you may choose.

NOVIA: "Fiancée" or, more loosely, "girl friend." If your intended has been flirting with other fellows, take her photo and daub the eyes with a honey-based preparation available from your practitioner. As long as you keep the picture in a secluded place, your sugar will only have eyes for you.

NOVIO: "Fiancé" or, less strictly, "boy friend." Is your romeo a roamer? To cure his wanderlust (or wandering lust), buy a pair of lodestones, bury one in your back yard, and slip the other into his coat pocket. Even if your novio finds and discards the lodestone, he'll still experience an overwhelming desire to bask in your presence. A word to the wise, however. Should your family move, make sure you dig up your lodestone and plant it near your new residence or your boy friend will spend hours loitering around the old homestead. Please see Piedra Imán.

ODILIA, SANTA: Saint Odile, the protector of soldiers stationed abroad and the tutelary saint of prophecy. Supposedly, a medieval document attributed to her foretold World War II. During the 1940s, pamphlets about her predictions were bestsellers in U.S. barrios. Though Odilia's cult declined after 1945, it enjoyed a resurgence twenty years later, when thousands of Mexican-Americans served their country in Southeast Asia. If your lover's

in the army, have your bruja offer Santa Odilia a white candle for his safe return. Like to become a seer? Then fast three days and implore the saint to share her mantic power with you.

OJO DE DIOS: A diamond-shaped charm symbolizing the "Eye of God" and popular in the Southwest. Only two of the sixteen practitioners I contacted knew anything about it, but they deemed it important as a demonifuge.

ORACIÓN: Any prayer, secret or otherwise. An eclectic cult, Brujería uses prayers in three languages: Latin, Spanish, and English. As previously noted, the Latin pleas for divine aid came from the pre-Vatican II Catholic liturgy. Most of the Spanish oraciones, a category reportedly including the secret prayers, were composed by practitioners "years ago" (*en los días de antano*). But the English orisons are of relatively slight antiquity and even less magic efficacy. Remember Santa Justina from chapter three? If you offer her a white candle plus the following circa 1965 prayer, she may help you beat a traffic ticket:

*O Blessed Justina
whose name is justice*

bring thy poor servant thy justice. Amen.

On second thought, though, invoking Justina may not be such a brilliant idea because the last guy she tried to help, San Cipriano, ended up a Christian martyr after she conned him into renouncing magic.

OUIJA BOARD: An instrument consisting of a small triangular pointer on legs which rests on a larger oblong board bearing the alphabet, numerals, and words. According to spiritualists, discarnate beings can spell out messages when one or more receptive people lightly touch the little

pointer. Since roughly 1900, the Ouija has been known in Mexico and we have records indicating that even a president of the republic, Francisco Madero (d. 1913), experimented with one. However, just two of my sources employed Ouijas and both insisted that the device was "dangerous" since it could become "obsessed" by evil entities. So before you use your Ouija, sprinkle it with holy water, offer Guadalupe an Ave, and banish all "impure thoughts" from your mind.

PATER NOSTER: The Latin text of the "Our Father":

*Pater Noster,
qui est in coelis,
sanctificetur nomen tuum.
Fiat voluntas tua sicut in coelo et in terra.
Panem nostrum quotidianum
da nobis hodie
et dimitte nobis debita nostra
sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nos tris.
Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.
Sed libera nos a malo.
Amen.*

PIEDRA IMÁN: "Lodestone." Lodestones may amuse rockhounds, but these tiny bits of magnetite are serious business in Brujería. Like Puerto Rican santeros and African-American Voudoun adepts, the brujas view the piedra iman as a "money drawing" magnet. If you yearn for wealth (and who doesn't?), buy two lodestones, anoint them with "lucky" oil, and give them to your bruja. When she returns your piedras imanes, they'll be sewn inside a little yellow silk bag along with a few pennies, an unspecified herb, and a pinch of brown sugar. Purchase the

"package" without haggling over the price, hide it in your dresser, and look forward to a bright financial future. But, as in most kindred spells, the brujas warn the recipient to share his new mazuma with the poor, or Guadalupe may withdraw it for bestowal on a more generous person.

PODEROSOS: Literally, "the powerful ones." Among brujas, the term denotes souls of the uncanonized blessed in heaven who can help believers. John F. Kennedy was a popular *poderoso* during the sixties. The late president may be modern, but the invocation of poderosos is an ancient component of Brujería, stemming as it does from the Aztec tenet that the spirits of brave warriors and women who died in childbirth ascended to a pleasant region of the afterworld from which they could intervene in earthly affairs. When Catholicism arrived, it imposed a variant of this teaching by fostering private devotion to the holy, if unsainted, souls in paradise. And contact with some American Witches could have strengthened belief in the poderosos because certain branches of the Craft honor the "Mighty Ones" or the "Mighty Dead."

PULQUE: A potent brew produced by fermenting maguey juice. In pre-Conquest Mexico, it was sacred to Mayahuel, who might have been an orgiastic avatar of Tonantzin. If I can trust one informant, a few adepts active south of the Rio Grande use it in their rites, pouring it on the ground as a libation for the gnomes, who like a nip now and then.

PUTA: "Whore." As befits representatives of the Most Pure Guadalupe, the brujas I met took a dim view of prostitutes. *El diablo chinga a las putas y las putas chingan a los varones. Por eso hay maldad en este mundo:* "Satan swives the trulls and they screw the men. That's why there's evil in this world."

QUEHACERES: "Chores." To practitioners, all boring but necessary tasks like casting routine spells fall into this class.

RAZA, LA: "The Race." The Mexican people in general and the Mestizos in particular.

REBOZO: An oblong shawl with which the Mexican peasant woman has covered her hair ever since Catholicism rendered her subject to San Pablo's misogynous dress code. Some U.S. brujas employ rebozos as altar cloths. Apropos of rebozos and practitioners, if your mother-in-law's a trifle sulky, bring your bruja a few threads from the scarf she wears at Mass. After the practitioner whispers a secret prayer, she'll return them wrapped in a soft, colorful piece of silk. Buy this "package" and carry it always. Provided you keep it handy, your mother-in-law will be as cheerful and as easy to handle as the little bundle.

RESGUARDO: A talisman invented by Puerto Rican santeras but popular among devotees of Brujería as well. The resguardo consists of a small red silk bag stuffed with a secret mixture of chopped herbs and brown sugar. Its exterior features a tiny aluminum sword. Santeras maintain that the spathiform ornament symbolizes Lord Chango's power to ward off evil spirits and attract good fortune. Furthermore, Santería teaches that a damaged sword must be replaced lest the resguardo become worthless. However, the brujas hold that an imperfect resguardo can regain its original potency if you asperge it thrice with holy water. Properly sprinkled, the recharged talisman will serve its purpose until more pressing matters lead you to consult your practitioner and, presumably, purchase a "fresh" (*fresco*) resguardo.

RETABLOS: Primitive paintings of saints. Please see Santos.

ROSARIO: The rosary, a devotion ascribed to Saint Dominic, aka Santo Domingo de Guzmán (1170-1221). Allegedly, the Madonna handed Domingo the first string of prayer beads, a tale which amuses hierologists, who point to the sacred chaplets fingered by devout Moslems and Mahayana Buddhists centuries before his birth. According to a British Witch who must remain nameless, Domingo copied the rosary from a group he persecuted, the Albigensians, who used their knotted cinctures to count their prayers. Whatever its true origin and age, the rosary claims many devotees among the older brujas. Got a cold? Hang a red rosary around your neck and Guadalupe will cure you pronto. If you've been victimized by a gaggle of gossips, you can break up their gabfests just as quickly. Get a rosario belonging to one of the old biddies. Then break it into as many pieces as there are scandalmongers and drop each fragment in a different cemetery. Before the next full moon, the hags will be so busy squabbling with each other that they'll leave you in peace.

RUBIAS: "Blondes." Blondes may have more fun, but they're nothing but a pain in the bruja's book. To begin with, the golden gals look like Anglos, the traditional exploiters of La Raza. With their aureate tresses, they beguile Chicano husbands into committing adultery. And, as if that weren't bad enough, a lot of rubias are unwitting vectors of the evil eye. To counteract their baneful glances, say Aves galore. Incidentally, male occultists in Mexico take a kinder view of rubias. One of the best-known manuals of magic consulted south of the border has a garish cover which depicts a happy wizard causing an entity to materialize as a naked blonde.

SAGRADO: "Sacred."

SAL: "Salt," especially the blessed variety used by the Catholic Church as a sacramental. Whenever the elderly brujas can obtain it, they dissolve sal in their holy water to "double" its potency. To the younger practitioners, any salt will improve the padre's brand of H₂O. And some youthful adepts who've read about Wicca employ a totally nonecclesiastical saline solution to purify themselves. But sal has other purposes in Brujería as well. Want to fix that vile bruto down the block who beats his wife until she bleeds? Take a photo or sketch (*dibujo*) of the nasty wretch, scratch its surface with an *aguja* (q.v.), and pour blessed salt over the "wounds." Henceforth, he'll writhe in agony whenever he tries to strike her. Or, if rewarding kind friends is more to your liking, write their names on separate scraps of white paper, sprinkle them with salt, and put them all in a large silver locket—silver being the lunar metal par excellence in ceremonial magic and witchcraft. This spell works best beneath the puissant rays of the full moon. But, whenever and wherever you cast it, you can be sure that the beneficiaries will reap a rich guerdon of good health, domestic felicity, and more than enough money for life's pleasures.

SANTERA: A bruja in regions where the word Brujería possesses a negative meaning or a female practitioner of Santería.

SANTERÍA: (1) Brujería in certain areas of the Hispanic world and (2) a syncretic magico-religious system based on Yoruba beliefs and Catholicism found in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Brazil. During the last forty years, Caribbean Santería has grown so prevalent in northern barrios that syncretized

Yoruba deities and Puerto Rican charms like the *resguardo* (q.v.) now occupy an important place in some branches of the Mexican-American cult. However, Guadalupe and the spells of *Brujería* appear not to have been absorbed by *Santería*, which tends to change more slowly than its Chicano counterpart. Please see *Las Siete Potencias*.

SANTOS: "Saints." In *Brujería*, *santos* can denote either the holy, albeit nondivine, entities mentioned above or their images. Before roughly 1900, depictions of the saints came in two categories, *bultos* (hand-carved wooden statues) and *retablos* (paintings generally executed on boards). Today, these objects are so rare that they turn up in museum collections of Mexican art, if at all. With *bultos* and *retablos* out of circulation, the contemporary *bruja* utilizes plaster effigies, holy cards, and religious prints from Italy. Examples of modern Mexican craftsmanship seldom adorn the American practitioner's altar. Throughout my research, I beheld only two native figurines: a painted clay image of Guadalupe from the state of Guerrero and a tin effigy of San Jorge made near Mexico City.

SANTUARIO: A *bruja*'s shrine; the room where she keeps her altar and receives her clients.

SECTS: To the best of my knowledge, nobody has enumerated, let alone studied all the branches of *Brujería*. Going by what I've heard since 1966, at least eight separate sects are active in the Midwest alone. If we add the legions of autonomous practitioners in the Southwest, the Californian subcults, and the *Santería*-influenced groups on the East Coast, it's likely that distinct schools of Mexican-American magic may number in the dozens. By extension, it's equally probable that many Chicano adepts may reject some or even all of the teachings discussed in this book.

SEDA: "Silk." On the whole, *seda* is the practitioner's favorite material for making *resguardos* (q.v.) and other cloth talismans. At today's prices, however, the average *bruja* has to settle for synthetics.

SEÑORA SIN MANCHA: A morally decent woman. Because she's a spiritual daughter of Guadalupe, a *bruja* should be a *señora sin mancha*.

SIETE POTENCIAS: "Seven Powers," a septet of West African (Yoruba) deities syncretized with Catholic saints, who dominate the pantheon of *santería*. Giving the Yoruba names first, the roster runs as follows:

Obatalah—*Jesus as Lord of Purity*;

Eleguah—*San Antonio*;

Chango—*Santa Bárbara*;

Ogún—*San Pedro*;

Qrunlah—*San Francisco*;

Yemaya or Yemanjá—*Nuestra Señora de Reglá*;

Oshun or Ojun—*Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre*.

Some years ago, a sect of *Brujería* active on the East Coast added the *Siete Potencias* to its hagiology. Later, when the group in question expanded its membership, the cult of the "Seven Powers" reached Detroit, where I found it in 1968–69. Since *Brujería* usually modifies whatever it borrows from other faiths, major differences exist between the *Siete Potencias* of *Santería* and those invoked by some Chicano adepts. First of all, *Brujería* demoted the "Seven Powers" from the paramount rank they held in the Caribbean system; mighty though they may be, the *Siete Potencias* serve the Virgin and do her will. Guadalupe, not the "Seven Powers," presides over the *bruja*'s heavenly hierarchy. Secondly, owing to the relative paucity of African

influence in Mexican culture, the Siete Potencias quickly shed their Yoruba names. Finally, three of the sacred septet were replaced with other holy entities because two were aspects of the All-Powerful Lady and one was an avatar of her son. Among brujas, it seemed outrageous that such exalted beings should fraternize as equals with mere saints. So the practitioners substituted Santa Blanca for Jesús, Lord of Purity—an excellent choice because *Blanca* signifies “white.” Nuestra Señora de Reglá ascended to a higher plane as an avatar of the Madre de Dios, thus vacating a place for Santa Marina, whose name connotes the ocean tides associated with the former. Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre rose to merge with a similar Madonna known in American Catholicism as Our Lady of Charity (Caridad). To fill the empty space, the practitioners drafted the ever-popular Santa Catalina de Alejandría and her wheel of fortune. Will the cult of the Siete Potencias persist in Brujería? Only time will tell. I suspect that the “Seven Powers” will hang around as long as the rank-and-file devotees want them. Pleasing the so-called common people through eclecticism and flexibility lies at the very heart of Brujería.

SOL, EL: “Sun.” Back in pre-Hispanic times, solar deities like Tezcatlipoca and Huitzilopochtli occupied an august position in the Aztec pantheon. And even today, thousands of Mayas adore “Father Sun,” offering him prayers and copal at ostensibly Christian fiestas. So logically, we’d expect to find Old Sol dominating Brujería. Well, somewhere there may exist a branch of the cult devoted to the sun, but the practitioners I met possessed scant enthusiasm for the golden orb. Apparently, the scorching climate of northern Mexico and our Southwest alienated their

predecessors so much that most vestiges of the Aztec solar cult were burned away.

SONORA: A state in northwestern Mexico from which many of my informants traced their ancestry. The term *diablera* is said to be of Sonoran origin, one folklorist even restricting its use to Indians from that state. Maybe *diablera* once was confined to Sonora, but today it crops up in the speech of people whose progenitors hailed from nearly every northern and central Mexican region; for example, a bruja whose grandparents came from Jalisco told me the story of María, a girl victimized by a *diablera*, which appears in chapter seven. Please see Yaqui and Yori.

SOPA: “Soup.” To brujas, *sopa* is an synonym for “herbal brew.” *Sopa buena:* “good soup,” i.e., an especially potent batch.

TACO: (1) The Mexican sandwich, a tortilla filled with meat, cheese, vegetables and/or other goodies, and, by extension (2), any spell requiring plenty of ingredients and skill to cast.

TÁLAMO: Literally, “bridal chamber.” In Brujería, it denotes a secret spell used by matchmakers.

TEOCALLI: A Nahuatl term for the “House of God.” The close resemblance between the Nahuatl word for “deity” (*Teo*) and its Greek equivalent (*Theo/Theou*) has led many scholars to suspect that either the ancient Hellenes visited the New World or the Grecian and pre-Columbian cultures stemmed from a common source—Atlantis.

TILMA: An Aztec cloak, often woven of coarse maguey fiber. In 1531–32, the Virgin of Guadalupe allegedly imprinted her image on a tilma belonging to a poor

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Indian convert named Juan Diego. Going by the sketches in sixteenth-century manuscripts, tilmas came in various lengths and widths. On the whole, the higher a man's rank, the longer and wider his tilma grew. And as an Aztec rose in the social hierarchy, the tilma's material changed from maguey cloth to a cotton so fine that the Spaniards at first mistook it for silk. If you'd like to make a tilma, take a square or oblong of any fabric and hem it so it won't unravel. Then drape it over your back and fasten it by knotting the two uppermost corners over your chest or off to one side.

TÍO TACO: A Mexican-American "Uncle Tom." To brujas, there exist few creatures lower than a Tío Taco.

TOCOLOTE: A Nahuatl word for "owl" currently popular among the younger practitioners who employ it to designate any wise individual.

TODOS SANTOS: The Feast of All Saints (October 31–November 1), the bruja's equivalent of the Gardnerian Hallowmas.

TOLOACHI: A mixture of herbs used as an aphrodisiac by some Aztec sorceresses. Reportedly, some Central Mexican adepts still compound and utilize toloachi, but my informants knew nothing about it. Furthermore, when I discussed the preparation and its alleged effects, the brujas accused me of wallowing in smut "like those animals in pants." Please see chapter one for a resumé of the practitioners' attitudes anent sexual matters.

TONANTZÍN: "Our Mother," the Aztec goddess who became Our Lady of Guadalupe. In keeping with her lofty position, Tonantzín possessed numerous avatars. Under the title Cihuacóatl ("Snake Woman"), she ruled parturition and



TONANTZÍN / TETEOINAN / TIAZOLTEOTL

The Great Mother Goddess in Mexican magic who became identified with the Spanish conquistadores' Santa María, who in turn was transformed into Our Lady of Guadalupe.

welcomed women who died in childbirth to her western paradise. So respected was Cihuacóatl, that the second highest male official of the Aztec Empire routinely assumed her name. As *Ixcuina* ("Four Faced One"), Tonantzín governed the quarters of the universe and, possibly, presided over rites conducted at the crossroads like the Greco-Roman goddess of magic, Hecate Triformis. When pre-Hispanic priests hailed Tonantzín as Teteoinan ("Mother of Gods"), they honored her for engendering the pantheon. To good witches and priestesses, she was *Tlazoltéotl* ("Eater of Filth"), who purified humanity by devouring its sins. And untold thousands devoid of esoteric knowledge called her Toci ("Grandma"). From the mountains to the coastal lowlands, the Aztec Empire rang with her praises. But, despite her ancient renown, only a couple young brujas recognized Tonantzín. When I attempted to explain the connection between Tonantzín and Guadalupe to some of the elderly adepts, they nearly ejected me from their homes. Please see chapter one for additional data on Tonantzín and the evolution of Brujería.

TORTILLAS: Disks of unleavened corn bread, sometimes called "Mexican pancakes" and distant relatives of the American "flitters" mentioned by the Lady Sheba in her works. Brujas employ soft tortillas in several spells. Is somebody spreading vicious lies about you? Fold a tortilla, fill it with hot seasonings, and bury it, preferably in a cemetery. Within a week, the prevaricator will apologize to you. If you'd like to influence another person, concentrate on him while you bend nine tortillas. For best results, have him eat at least one of the pancakes you manipulated. Trouble with neighbors? Tear a tortilla in

half, whisper their names thrice, and give the pieces to the first dog you see.

UITZILINTZIN: The subspecies of hummingbird used by the Aztecs to cast love spells. Accounts vary, but most agree that a lonely maiden would wrap a stuffed uitzilintzin in yards of multihued cotton thread and wear the resultant bundle over her heart. Though none of my informants had heard of the uitzilintzin, one old bruja recommended a tiny pink silk bag crammed with scented goose down as a sure-fire mantrap.

VARA: "Wand." Only the younger adepts who'd studied the works of Gerald B. Gardner and the Lady Sheba employed wands in their magic. To the elderly practitioners, varas labored under the handicap of association with the unpopular suit of wands in the minor arcana of the Tarot. Please see chapter 2.

VASO: "Water glass." Want to keep your bedroom free from hostile spooks? Then set three vasos of holy water on your dresser and slip off to slumberland secure in the knowledge that spectral intruders won't draw nigh unless they're of the good variety. If you can't obtain enough holy water to fill a triad of tumblers, use three vasos of ordinary H₂O, but first burn a cone of incense or the liquid may attract mischievous undines who could flood the premises. Should you feel the urge to learn the future, take a clean glass and a big sheet of white paper. Then "consecrate" a pencil by reciting your favorite prayer and print the alphabet in a large circle. Turn the vaso upside-down in the center, lightly rest the tips of your index fingers on its bottom, and concentrate on your question. In no time, the tumbler should begin to spell out an answer by circling the appropriate letters.

VESTIDO ROSADO: "Pink dress," specifically, the roseate robe worn by Guadalupe in most prints. The garment is loose, ankle-length, and comes equipped with moderately full sleeves covering her wrists. At the risk of sounding sacrilegious, Guadalupe's dress resembles a Victorian nightgown. In one sect, postulants don the vestido rosado at their initiation. Please see Manto for the rest of the costume and chapter four for a brief discussion of the rite.

VIEJO VERDE: "Dirty old man." Among brujas, who represent the Most Pure Guadalupe on earth, a viejo verde is fair game for any type of punitive spell. Please see chapter 1.

VIGILIO: "Vigil." Like many European and American Witches, brujas begin their observances the night before a holiday.

YAQUI: A tribe of Pima Indians native to Soñora. Thanks to several forced migrations designed to facilitate their exploitation as cheap labor, Yaqui Indians now reside in most states of Mexico and the U.S. In addition to their acceptance of minute wages for arduous toil, the Yaquis have acquired a reputation for skill in magic. Though scholars debate its precise nature, most now concede that the Yaqui system stresses the carefully supervised use of hallucinogens for consciousness expansion. On a different level, some branches of Yaqui witchcraft place great emphasis on the power believed to reside in specially-treated grains of corn, feathers, and quartz crystals. Evidently, absence from Sonora and time have exacted their toll, because all the Chicano adepts of Yaqui descent I met either were totally unaware of their ancestors' teachings or admitted that they'd picked up a smattering of tribal lore by skimming through the series of bestsellers by Carlos Castañeda.

YERBAS: "Herbs." Since the pre-Columbian era, Mexican adepts have enjoyed great renown as herbalists whose concoctions allegedly banish diseases beyond the curative capacity of conventional medicine. However, the brujas I met didn't enjoy their fame and, if we exclude the time one practitioner showed me some mugwort and pennyroyal used to treat "female complaints," no specific remedies were revealed. There were several reasons for the bruja's reticence. First of all, they saw herbalism as a field whose mastery demanded years of intense study. In half-taught hands, a smidgen of plant lore could do more harm than ignorance. Furthermore, the adepts were only too aware of the statutes against the unlicensed practice of medicine which could be interpreted as banning botanical healers. And finally, there were the federal regulations about the use and possession of controlled substances. Back in the 1960s, many narcotics agents deemed Mexican-American herbalism a front for traffic in peyote and marijuana. This being the case, brujas understandably refused to discuss the fine points of plant lore with Anglos. Please see chapter 5 for what little I managed to learn concerning the harvesting and preparation of herbs. (For information on the magical aspect of herbalism, see *Magical Herbalism* by Scott Cunningham, Llewellyn Publications.)

YORI: A Yaqui term denoting a non-Yaqui Mexican. One of my younger informants appropriated the word from a popular anthropological study and applied it to uninvited guests, thus rendering Yori analogous to the "cowan" of Gardnerian parlance.

ZANAHORIAS: "Carrots." Though American folklore associates carrots with good eyes, Brujería stresses their resemblance to a different part of the male anatomy. If

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your hubby's been chasing gals half his age, have your bruja break a raw zanahoria in two and feed you the pieces. Before half a lunar month elapses, baby dolls will fill your mate with nothing but intense nausea. Impotence? Eat three large carrots at sunrise. Unless you've "earned" the malfunctioning of your male functions by committing cosas feas (q.v.), everything should be better than normal within a week.

Part II

Libreta de Brujería— A Book of Shadows*

*The following material was excerpted from a private *Libreta de Brujería* collected, translated, and edited by author Mary Virginia Devine with the permission of its owner.

Introduction

A girl's worst fiend is her dogma.

—Old Adage

Though it hurts, I'll have to say it: I goofed.

When I finished *Brujería* in 1976, I pontificated that Mexican-American adepts would never let their Book of Shadows appear in print.

Well, I was wrong. I'd failed to allow for differences of opinion within the Mexican-American community. Even in the conservative Midwest, some practitioners of *Brujería* had begun to question the need for total secrecy. By 1978, many of my informants had concluded that they should share a few rites and spells with the general public.

Decisions developed into deeds on October 11, 1979, when a Wisconsin bruja I'll call Doña Teresina graciously permitted me to examine a copy of her sect's *Libreta* and transcribe selected passages.

True, the following material is not a complete Libreta. But despite its expurgated state, it has retained enough of its distinctive flavor to give you a taste of Mexican-American magic.

At the risk of playing the goetic gourmet, let me warn you that you're going to savor a syncretic salmagundi. For starters, during the early sixteenth century the brujas combined the cult of the Aztec moon goddess Tonantzin with Roman Catholicism, whose pervasive influence changed the Lunar Lady's name to the Virgin of Guadalupe, transformed her children the Star Gods into saints, and filled her liturgy with Latin prayers. The following three hundred years saw the adepts add vestiges of Basque witchcraft and Romany lore contributed by minor heretics whom the Inquisition had banished to Mexico. Between 1850 and 1970, elements of European ceremonial magic, the occult sciences, Allan Kardec's Spiritism, Puerto Rican Santería, and African-American Voudoun as exemplified by the spells ascribed to Marie Laveau entered the Mexican-American craft. Finally, the last third of our century is witnessing the gradual merger of Mexican-American magic with Wicca.

A tentative recipe for Brujería could read: take a pinch of everything and mix it well. With this thought in mind, ¡buen apetito!



Domestic Starts

Home is where the Art is.

—A Wiccan Rede

According to Doña Teresina, if you'd like to practice brujería, the first essential is a spot (*sitio*) set aside for rituals. Anything from an elaborate magic room (*despacho*) to a corner of your basement will do.

On the night of the new moon, clean your incantation station, face the north, and chant:

<i>My house is thine,</i>	<i>Mi casa es tu casa,</i>
<i>O Queen of Heaven.</i>	<i>O Reina del Cielo.</i>
<i>Welcome, Little Virgin.</i>	<i>Bienvenida, Virgencita.</i>
<i>Bless thy home.</i>	<i>Que tú la bendigas.</i>
<i>So mote it be. So</i>	<i>Así sea. Así será.</i>
<i>shall it be. Amen.</i>	<i>Amén.</i>

The next day, find an old dresser to serve as your altar. Whether it's a family heirloom or an acquisition from the

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local thrift store, it will fill the bill provided you put it against the north wall and stand before it intoning:

<i>O good creature of wood, I offer thee to the Virgin so that you may aid me always. So mote it be. So shall it be. Amen.</i>	<i>Te ofrezco a la Virgen, buena criatura de madera para que me ayudes siempre. Así sea. Así será. Amén</i>
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Now comes the toughie. In one day's shopping you must buy a white altar cloth (mantel), a glass for holy water (vaso), a thurible (cencero), incense (incienso), two tall white tapers (velas) plus their holders (portavelas), a votive light (luz votiva), and a large statue of Guadalupe (La Guadalupana).

Wait until sunset. Silently spread the cloth on your altar. Fill the glass with holy water—the priest's brand or your own mixed with salt will suffice—and stand it in the lower left-hand corner. Put incense in your thurible and set it in the lower right-hand corner. Place the votive light in the center. Insert the white candles in their holders at the upper left and right, making sure there's adequate space between them for the image.

Elevate your statue and "enthroned Guadalupe." Gaze at her flanked by the tapers. "Cleanse" your lips with a drop of holy water. Ignite your incense. Light the votive candle and the tapers at the Madonna's left and right. (See Figure D.) Pause and greet Guadalupe as follows:

<i>Welcome Little Virgin and great treasure, to my home. Bless me and guide me every- where. So mote it be. Amen.</i>	<i>Bienvenida, Virgencita, gran tesoro del hogar. Que tú me bendigas. Que tú me guíes en casa u otro lugar. Así sea. Así será. Amén.</i>
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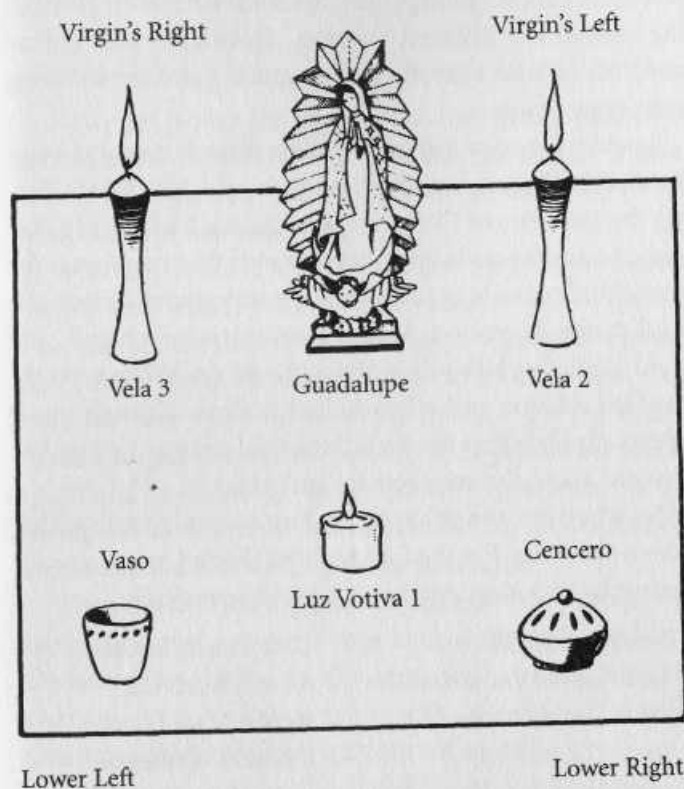


Figure D: Doña Teresina's Altar Arrangement
Numbers show order in which candles should be lighted.
Use reverse order when extinguishing them.

Bow to Guadalupe nine times, thrice, and then once more (thirteen obeisances in all). Blow out the candles in reverse order of lighting them. Meditate on the Virgin until the incense has finished burning. Then leave your shrine and ponder your next project—acquiring and consecrating your magic tools.

Luckily for your budget, Brujería doesn't demand ivory handled bollines or wands inlaid with gold. Like Wicca during the centuries of Christian persecution, traditional Mexican magick favored simple implements that could pass for household utensils in the event of a surprise visit from the local padre. In modern Mexican-American witchcraft, one plain knife (*cuchillo*) does the work of the Wiccan black-handled athame and white-hafted bolline. Though many adepts stipulate that the *cuchillo* should possess a curved or crescent blade, the requirement isn't rigid. •

So when the moon's waxing, buy a simple knife which takes your fancy. On the first night of the full moon, consecrate it by exposing it to lunar rays while reciting:

<i>Now the little Moon</i>	<i>Ya la lunita, lunita.</i>
<i>has arisen in grandeur.</i>	<i>ha salido grande.</i>
<i>Behold a tiny Moon of</i>	<i>Aquí está mi lunita.</i>
<i>mine. O Lady, help it</i>	<i>O Señora, ayúdame a</i>
<i>grow. So mote it be.</i>	<i>crecer. Que así sea.</i>
<i>So shall it be. Amen.</i>	<i>Así será. Amén.</i>

The next evening, use your *cuchillo* to cut a thin branch from any tree you like. Early Mexican adepts preferred sticks of *nogal* or willow which could be explained as rods for disciplining their offspring if the priest asked any questions. Whatever wand you select, hold it high beneath the rising moon and chant:

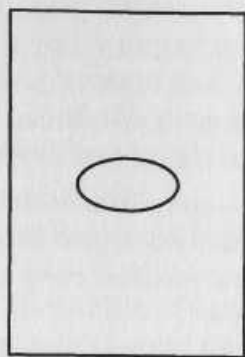
<i>Little magic wand of</i>	<i>Vara, varita</i>
<i>mine, do my will both</i>	<i>mágica mía.</i>
<i>night and day. So mote</i>	<i>Haz mi voluntad</i>
<i>it be. So shall it be.</i>	<i>de noche y de día.</i>
<i>Amen.</i>	<i>Así sea. Así será. Amén.</i>

Now that you've got your tools—only two are necessary according to Doña Teresina—store them in your dresser-cum altar. Visit your sanctuary and meditate every night until the next new moon.

With the lunation comes your last preparatory project, buying and blessing your ritual raiment. (See Figure E.) Purchase three yards of white cotton, a white silk ribbon or cord, and a solid silver medal depicting Guadalupe. Cut a hole for your head in the cloth and sew up the sides to make a huipil, the official garb of Aztec priestesses and the unofficial costume of many modern Mexican Indians. String the medal on the cord and knot it to produce a necklace. Store the robe and medal in your altar.

Then, on the first night of the full moon, don your robe, hang your medal around your neck, and begin the Rite of Consecration (*Rito de Consagración*) which not only charges your paraphernalia with power but invokes Guadalupe's benediction on yourself as well.

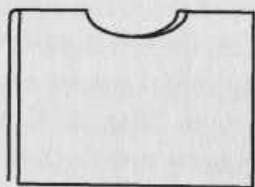
Ignite your incense, the vigil light, and the tapers flanking your Madonna. Purify your lips with a drop of holy water and bow once, thrice, and then nine times to the Virgin. Solemnly intone:



Three yards of white cotton cut for huipil



Medal of Guadalupe on a white cord



Finished huipil

Figure E: A Bruja's Regalia

Domestic Starts

Oh my lady of Guadalupe, Oh Queen of Heaven, Oh Moon of Our Church, Oh sovereign light of wisdom. To thee I dedicate my entire being. May thy purity cleanse me from all evil.

O Señora de Guadalupe, O reina del cielo, O luna de nuestra iglesia. O luz soberana de la sabiduría. A tí dedico todo mi ser. Que tu pureza me limpie del mal.

(Here sprinkle yourself with one, three, and nine drops of holy water.)

May thy holiness shield me from the Devil and his demons from Hell.

Que tu santidad me proteja del Diablo y de los demonios del infierno.

(Elevate thurible once, thrice, and nine times. Fold hands, bow head, and recite:)

*Strengthened by the holy
Fragrance of thy love, I
dare to say—
Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among
women and blessed is
the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus. Holy Mary,
Mother of God, pray
sinners now and
at the hour of our death
Amen.*

*Fortificada con la
fragancia sagrada
amor, me atrevo
decirte— Ave María,
gratia plena, Dominus
tecum. Benedicta tu in
mulieribus. Et benedic-
tus fructus ventris tui
Jesu. Sancta María,
Mater Dei, ora pro for us
nobis peccatoribus.
Nunc et in hora mortis
nostri. Amén.*

Magic from Mexico

Bow nine times, thrice, then once more. Extinguish the candles in reverse order of lighting them. Let the incense burn itself out as a symbol of your self-immolation in Guadalupe's service.

While the above rite won't make you a bruja in the eyes of conservative practitioners, many young adepts accept anyone who's performed it as a colleague. They reason that if Guadalupe lets you consecrate yourself, she's chosen you to join their ranks.

Though solo practitioners of Brujería exist, Doña Teresina's friends work in groups of thirteen or fewer people analogous with Wiccan covens (*cofradías*). Like the Hidden Children of the Goddess, many Mexican-American covens have thirteen new moon ceremonies (*ritos del novilunio*) and thirteen Full Moon Esbats (*tertulias del plenilunio*) per annum. When this custom entered Brujería is a mystery; some informants traced it back to the Aztec dispensation while others ascribed it to the Basque witches, whose moon goddess Mari commanded them to hold meetings (*conciliabules*) at each lunation and full moon.

Whatever its origin, the new moon rite is observed in one form or another by every Midwestern *cofradía* I've contacted. Usually the eldest adept serves as high priestess (*señora*) and hostess. Once the coveners (*comadres*) have gathered in her home and donned their regalia, the high priestess leads them into her magic room, lights her incense and candles, and begins:

*High Priestess—
Blessed by Guadalupe.*

*Señora—
Bendita sea la
Guadalupeana.*

Domestic Starts

*Covener—
Now and forever.*

*Comadre—
Ahora y siempre.*

*High Priestess—
Let us pray.
Moon, little Moon,
Blessed Lady,
we greet thee
giving thee
great respect.
And in exchange
thou dost give us
the greatest of all
powers.*

*Señora—
Oremos.
Luna, lunita,
Señora bendita
te saludamos
a tí damos
el gran respeto.
Y en turno
tu nos das a noso-
tras los poderes de
los más grandes.*

High priestess and coveners pause to envision themselves pulsating with puissance warranted to wax along with the moon.

*High Priestess—
Thou little Moon,
Moon so small
thou shalt grow,
thou shalt grow.*

*Señora—
Tú lunita
pequeñita
vas a crecer,
vas a crecer.*

*Covener—
The Little Virgin
doth decree it.*

*Comadre—
La Virgencita
lo manda, manda.*

*All—
Amen.*

*Señora y Comadres—
Amén.*

(The señora and her coveners cast new moon spells and transact business. To adjourn the meeting and dismiss the *cofradía*, the high priestess blows out the candles and declares:)

Magic from Mexico

<i>High Priestess—</i>	<i>Señora—</i>
<i>Now's the time.</i>	<i>Ya es tiempo.</i>
<i>Our task is done.</i>	<i>Ya se acaba.</i>
<i>But we'll gather</i>	<i>Pues nos veremos</i>
<i>again, when Our</i>	<i>cuando manda</i>
<i>Lady of Guadalupe</i>	<i>Nuestra Señora</i>
<i>doth decree it.</i>	<i>La Guadalupeana.</i>
<i>So shall it be.</i>	<i>Así será.</i>
<i>Amen.</i>	<i>Amén.</i>

(Whereupon the brujas bow nine times, thrice, and once more to the Madonna and disperse.)

Roughly two weeks and many a spell later, our adepts will reunite for Brujería's equivalent of the Wiccan Esbat, the Full Moon Assembly. When they've come together, properly robed and adorned with medals, the high priestess welcomes them to her despacho, lights her incense and candles, and asperges her coveners with holy water. Then all bow once, thrice, and nine times to Guadalupe:

<i>High Priestess—</i>	<i>Señora—</i>
<i>Moon, Moon, great</i>	<i>Luna, luna, luna</i>
<i>Moon, shine, Oh</i>	<i>grande, brilla, luna de mi</i>
<i>Moon of my love</i>	<i>amor. O Señora, Virgen</i>
<i>Oh Lady, our most</i>	<i>nuestra la más poderosa;</i>
<i>mighty Virgin; give</i>	<i>danos, danos, danos,</i>
<i>us, give us, give us,</i>	<i>danos, danos, danos,</i>
<i>give us, give us, give</i>	<i>danos, danos, danos, de</i>
<i>us, give us, give us,</i>	<i>tu potencia y esplendor.</i>
<i>give us thy power</i>	
<i>and radiance.</i>	

Domestic Starts

(Señora and coveners stop to concentrate on themselves luxuriating in Lady Luna's luminous largesse. After the pause, they chant in chorus:)

<i>All—</i>	<i>Señora y Comadres—</i>
<i>They are nine,</i>	<i>Nueve son,</i>
<i>they are nine,</i>	<i>nueve son</i>
<i>the nine powers</i>	<i>los poderes</i>
<i>which the Virgin</i>	<i>que la Virgen</i>
<i>sent as holy gifts</i>	<i>de regalos santos</i>
<i>to earth: to know,</i>	<i>envió del cielo a</i>
<i>to cut, to bind,</i>	<i>nuestra tierra:</i>
<i>to change, to dare,</i>	<i>el saber, el cortar,</i>
<i>to open, to close,</i>	<i>el ligar, el cambiar,</i>
<i>to will, and the</i>	<i>el osarse, el abrir,</i>
<i>rarest of all, to</i>	<i>el cerrar, el desear,</i>
<i>keep silent.</i>	<i>y el más raro de todos,</i>
	<i>el callarse.</i>

(Here the Libreta calls for a moment of complete silence while the adepts work on developing their psychic faculties. The high priestess terminates the quiet time by raising her right hand and saying:)

Speak, my coveners. *Hablad, comadres mías.*

(The practitioners cast full moon spells and attend to the cofradía's business affairs, if any. After these activities, the señora faces her altar and whispers:)

<i>High Priestess—</i>	<i>Señora—</i>
<i>My Lady Moon,</i>	<i>Yo me callo</i>
<i>I shall conceal</i>	<i>tus secretos,</i>
<i>thy secrets,</i>	<i>mi Señora de la</i>
<i>I promise thee,</i>	<i>Luna. Te lo</i>
<i>I promise thee.</i>	<i>prometo, lo prometo.</i>

Magic from Mexico

(High priestess and coveners bow nine times, thrice, and once more to Guadalupe. The señora then dismisses her people:)

*High Priestess—
Go in peace,
the peace of silence,
knowing that silence
is golden, but the
source, the holy
source of power is
our silver Moon.
So mote it be.
So shall it be.
Amen.*

*Señora—
Idos en paz, la paz
del silencio. Sabed
que es de oro el
silencio, pues de
plata es la luna,
la fuente, la
fuensanta del poder.
Así seá. Así será.
Amén.*

(The high priestess blows out her candles, taking care that the last one lit is the first one extinguished.)

Technically speaking, the meeting is adjourned, but many covens linger to enjoy a potluck meal. Perhaps this custom is a legacy from the Basque witches, whose Esbats finished with feasting. Yet another probable link with the European Craft may be found in the fact that some *cofradías* call their Full Moon Assemblies *bailes* ("dances"), a venerable word in the vocabularies of Basque witchcraft and British Wicca, whence it whirled its way into the early American Craft language still spoken in the hills of eastern Kentucky. (For more information about these topics, see Lady Sheba's *Witches' Workbook*, Kensington Publishing; or *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft* by Raymond Buckland and *Wicca* by Scott Cunningham, both available from Llewellyn Publications.)



Eight Is Great

Ya gotta roll along with the year or it'll roll all over ya.

—Doña Teresina

After the lunation and full moon rites, festivals (called *fiestas grandes* by Doña Teresina; *fiestas mayores* by most other informants) analogous with the Wiccan Sabbats should come as no surprise. When researching the subject back in 1970, I found the brujas observing only six of the eight fetes, the Autumnal Equinox and Yule being absent from the Mexican-American Craft Calendar.

Score another goof for this author. According to Doña Teresina, most Mexican adepts have kept the entire ogdoad from time immemorial. Moreover, they've adhered to the venerable Craft tradition of performing their rites on the eve (vigilio) of each festival.

Owing to the readily apparent Catholic influence, the brujas use the Gregorian calendar, which begins its year on January 1 rather than December 21. Thus, the first *fiesta grande* is Candlemas / Candelaria.

Candlemas / Candelaria

(The señora decorates her altar with blue and gold artificial flowers. When her comadres have assembled, properly robed and wearing their medals, she conducts them to her sanctuary, where she lights her incense and candles in the usual order. Then the high priestess bows once, thrice, and nine times to the Virgin [thirteen in all], purifies her coveners with holy water, and chants:)

High Priestess—

O Lady of Candlemas,
light of lights, lamp
of the heavens, and my
torch, show me all I
yearn to know.

Señora—

Luz de luces,
luminaria del cielo
y atorcha mía,
O señora de la
Candelaria, muéstrame
todo que quiero saber.

(Here she elevates the vigil light once, thrice and nine times. The señora and her comadres recite in unison:)

All—

Behold the ray,
ray of the sovereign
light, which
illumines us.
Behold the ray
of light which
guides us, guides us,
guides us all the way
to heaven.

Señora y Comadres—

Aquí está
el rayo de luz,
el rayo de la luz
soberana que a
nosotras nos alumbra.
Aquí está el rayo
de la luz que nos guía,
guía, guía hasta
el cielo.

(The adepts pause to envision themselves receiving spiritual enlightenment from Guadalupe. Then the high priestess intones:)

High Priestess—

Behold the light.
Behold by soul.
Light and soul,
soul and light
unite. Now
they are one.

Señora—

Aquí la luz,
aquí mi alma.
La luz con el alma y
el alma con la luz
ya se mezclan.
Son una.

(The coveners reply:)

Covener—

Glory be to the soul.
Glory be to the light.
Glory be to Our Lady
of Candlemas.
Amen.

Comadre—

Gloria al alma.
Gloria a la luz.
Gloria a Nuestra
Señora de la
Candelaria. Amén.

(The señora and her comadres bow nine times, thrice, and once more to the Virgin. The high priestess blows out the candles in the customary sequence.)

Though the Sabbat's over, the brujas may stay to socialize and partake of a feast fixed by the señora. Six-and-a-half weeks later, the coven will have another fiesta grande to celebrate.

Spring Equinox / Anunciación or Flores

(The high priestess adorns her altar with blue and white flowers, silver crescents, and gilded paper cut-outs depicting angels. After her coveners have donned their regalia, the señora welcomes them to her magic room. Then she lights the incense and candles, pays her traditional thirteenfold obeisance to Guadalupe, asperges her coveners, and prays:)

Magic from Mexico

High Priestess—
O Virgin, Immaculate
Queen of the Heavens
and of the earth, O
Moon of Our Church,
harken unto me as thou
didst harken unto the
great lunar archangel.

Señora—
O Virgen, purísima
reina de los cielos y
de nuestra iglesia,
de la tierra, O luna
Escúchame así como tú
escuchas las palabras
del gran arcángel lunario.

(High priestess and comadres together:)

All—
Praised be Saint Gabriel,
Archangel of the Moon,
the true and trustful
messenger, O Little
Virgin, thus spoke Saint
Gabriel.

Señora y Comadres—
Alabado sea San
Gabriel Arcángel
de la luna mensajero
verdadero y veraz.
O Virgencita,
así te dijo San Gabriel.

(The señora genuflects, rises, and chants:)

High Priestess—
O my queen, thou
who dost conceal
within thee the
peerless, priceless
pearl, thou art the
Mother of God
and I am thy slave.

Señora—
O mi reina, tú que
escondes en tí la
perla sin par ni precio,
Madre de Dios eres y tú
esclavo soy.

(The high priestess elevates her thurible once, thrice, and nine times, while saying:)

Eight Is Great

High Priestess—
Thus did the great
Archangel Gabriel
address thee. O
Mother whose child
I am, grant that I may
tell thee of my woes.

Señora—
Así te habló el gran
Arcángel San Gabriel,
O madre cuya hija soy,
permíteme que te
hable de mis dolores.

(Here the señora and her coveners mention their problems, including those submitted by their clients who'd prefer to approach Guadalupe through an adept. This done, the high priestess and her comadres recite:)

All—
O Consolartrix,
the entire world
adores thee. O
flower of virtue,
we render unto
thee great gratitude.
Now vouchsafe us
the fragrance of
thy blessing. Grant
that thy slave the
great Saint Gabriel
may aid us and
shield us from evil.
So mote it be. So
shall it be. Amen.

Señora y Comadres—
O Consoladora
a tí te adora
el mundo entero.
O flor de la virtud,
mil gracias te
damos. Danos la
fragrancia de tu
bendición. Haz que
tu esclavo el gran
San Gabriel nos
ayude y nos proteja
del mal Así sea. Así
será. Amén.

(The brujas bow nine times, thrice, and once more to the Madonna. The high priestess extinguishes the candles, thereby concluding the ceremony. However, coveners often hang around for snacks.)

The Brujería's Fiestas Grandes

Date	Fiesta Grande	Wiccan Sabbat*	Catholic Holy Day
Feb. 2	Candelaria	Candelmas	Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary
March 21	Anunciación or Flores (kept on March 25 by some brujas)	Spring Equinox	Annunciation (moved to March 25 in the sixteenth century)
May 1	Cruces	Rudemas	Holy Cross
June 21	San Juan Bautista (observed on June 23 or 24 by some)	Summer Solstice or Beltane adepts)	St. John the Baptist (shifted to June 24 in the sixteenth century)
August 1	Cadenas	Lammas	St. Peter's Chains
Sept. 21	San Mateo Evangelista	Autumnal Equinox or Samhain	St. Matthew the Evangelist
Oct. 31– Nov. 1	Todos los Santos	Hallowmas	All Saints
Dec. 21	Santo Tomás Apóstol	Yule or Winter Solstice (Wiccan New Year)	St. Thomas the Apostle

*The Wiccan Sabbats given here follow the calendar given by the Lady Sheba in her works (i.e., *Witches' Workbook*). Other Witch traditions name the Sabbats (in the same sequence of dates as given): Imbolc, Vernal Equinox, Bealtinne (or Beltane), Summer Solstice, Lughnasadh, Autumnal Equinox, Samhuinn (or Samhain), Winter Solstice (or Bruma). In addition, it should be noted that, for Witches following the Celtic tradition, the New Year starts with Hallowmas, October 31, at sunset. An interesting discussion of calendar symbolism and festival dating may be found in book one of *The Magical Philosophy* by Denning and Phillips (Llewellyn Publications).

Their next Sabbat will arrive on the night of April 30, the vigil of Rudemas / Cruces.

Rudemas / Cruces

(The señora trims her altar with red flowers and crimson crosses. Her wand rests in front of the vigil light. If possible, the coveners should bring their wands to this rite. When they've gathered, correctly clad and equipped, the high priestess invites them into her despacho. She lights the incense and candles as usual, purifies her coveners with holy water, and greets the Virgin with one, three, and nine bows. Then she intones:)

High Priestess—

*Tender Mother, thou
who didst stand at
the foot of the cross,
cross of thy son,
cross of thy love, help me.*

Señora—

*Madre pia, tú que
estabas al pie de
la cruz, la cruz de
tu hijo, la cruz de
tu amor, ayúdame.*

(Here the señora genuflects and elevates her wand once, thrice, and nine times while the comadres hold theirs aloft. All chant:)

All—

*Crosses and wands
are born from the
same tree. The crosses
slay but the wand
giveth life. Behold the
wand which bestoweth
life, the wand which
conquereth evil, the wand
which smiteth demons.*

Señora y Comadres—

*Del mismo árbol
nacen las cruces
y las varas, las
cruces que matan
y la vara que da
vida, la vara que
vence el mal, la
vara que castiga
a los demonios*

Magic from Mexico

(Now the high priestess and her coveners concentrate on the crossed condition hexes they'll smash for their clients. The señora turns counterclockwise, stands with her back to the altar, and brandishes her wand proclaiming:)

High Priestess—

I have the power.

I am the power.

Vile demons and

foul fiendlets,

behold, behold,

behold the hard

and bitter rod

of thy punishment,

the fierce whip

of the sweet Virgin.

Señora—

El poder tengo.

El poder soy.

Mirad, viles demonitos,

duendes feos y chiquitos.

Mirad, mirad la vara

áspera y dura

de vuestro castigo,

gran látigo ardiente

de la Virgen dulce y

suave.

(The demons disciplined and their victims freed, the high priestess turns deasil towards her altar and announces:)

High Priestess—

My lady Mother,

at last thy justice

is done.

Señora—

Muy señora y madre

mía, ya tu justicia

se ha cumplido.

(High priestess and coveners lower their wands and chant:)

All—

Wands and crosses,

crosses and wands

both come forth

from the same tree

of life. The demons

are vanquished.

Señora y Comadres—

Las varas y las cruces,

las cruces y la vara

brotan del mismo

árbol de la vida.

Vencidos los demonios.

Libres los oprimidos.

Eight Is Great

*Their captives have
been delivered from
evil. So mote it be. So
shall it be. Amen.*

*Así sea. Así será.
Amén.*

(Señora and comadres make their traditional thirteen reverences to Guadalupe. The high priestess extinguishes her candles in the customary order. The Rudemas rite is finished, but feasting may follow.

A fiesta grande will take place at the Summer Solstice, when local cofradías unite under the leadership of the senior señora to celebrate.

Summer Solstice / San Juan Bautista

(This time there's no need to alter the altar. After all, who's going to cram several covens into the average high priestess' magic room? Instead, tradition and common sense command-cum-commend the great outdoors, preferably a lakeshore location adjacent to John the Baptist's favorite fluid. Each bruja arrives at the prearranged site bearing a small log and one white taper. The señora has her people pile their wood for a bonfire while she consecrates it:)

High Priestess—

I bless thee, o good

creature of wood, so

that the flame within

thee may emerge,

illuminating the night

and purifying us from

all evil. So mote it be.

So shall it be.

Señora—

Te bendigo, buena

criatura de lumbre

para que el fuego

adentro de tí salga

alumbrando la

noche y limpiando

a nosotras del mal.

Así sea. Así será.

Magic from Mexico

(The coveners continue their work, responding to their high priestess:)

*Covener—
Amen, amen, amen*

*High Priestess—
O Saint John the
Baptist, thou great
patron of purity,
cleanse our souls
from sin.*

*Covener—
Cleanse our souls.
Amen.*

*High Priestess—
O Saint John, it is
true that without thy
redeeming baptism,
there is no salvation.*

*Covener—
Save us. Amen.*

*High Priestess—
O Saint John, the
Little Virgin hath
declared unto us that
thou art her best be-
loved cousin. Give us,
then, the first and best
fruits of thy power.*

*Comadre—
Amén, amén, amén.*

*Señora—
O San Juan Bautista,
tú que eres el gran
patrono de la pureza,
purificanos las almas
del pecado.*

*Comadre—
Purificanos las almas.
Amén.*

*Señora—
O San Juan, verdad es
que sin tu bautismo
redentor, no haya
salvación.*

*Comadre—
Sálvanos. Amén.*

*Señora—
O San Juan, nos dijo
la Virgencita que eres
su primo predilecto.
Danos a nosotras las
primicias de tu poder.*

Eight Is Great

*Covener—
Give us power. Amen.*

(The señora lights the fire and exults:)

*High Priestess—
Behold the power of
our beloved Saint John.*

*Covener—
We see it and
give thanks.*

(Here follows a secret prayer which Doña Teresina didn't permit me to read, let alone transcribe for publication. Then the brujas form a circle and dance deosil around the blaze, chanting an unspecified number of Hail Marys:)

*All—
Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among
women and blessed is the
fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now
and at the hour of our
death. Amen.*

*Comadre—
Danos el poder. Amén.*

*Señora—
Aquí está el poder de
nuestro San Juan querido.*

*Comadre—
Lo vemos y le rendimos
mil gracias.*

*Señora y Comadres—
Ave María, gracia
plena, Dominus
tecum. Benedicta tu
in mulieribus et
benedictus fructus
ventris tui Jesu. Sancta
María, Mater Dei, ora
pro nobis peccatoribus
nunc et in hora
mortis nostri. Amén.*

(This may continue until midnight, when the high priestess proclaims:)

*High Priestess—
Now is the time.*

*Señora—
Ya es hora.*

Magic from Mexico

*Covener—
We know it.*

*High Priestess—
We shall obey.*

*Covener—
Glory be to the light
of the world, the Moon
of our church, and Her
cousin, the King of the
Lakes.*

*High Priestess—
This is true, my
coveners. Give
me thy candles
and let us keep vigil.*

(Comadres line up single file, eldest first. The señora blesses and lights their tapers reciting a prayer Doña Teresina refused to divulge because "them words are so holy they could carry ya to heaven." Then the adepts, led by the youngest covener, enter the water holding their candles aloft and intoning:)

*All—
Let us baptize
ourselves, for
'tis Saint John's
Eve. Let us rejoice,
for 'tis Saint John's
Eve. Little Saint John,
free us from evil.
Bathe us in thy heavenly*

*Comadre—
Lo sabemos.*

*Señora—
Obedeceremos.*

*Comadre—
Gloria a la luz del
mundo, y a la luna de
nuestra iglesia, y a su
primo el rey de los
lagos.*

*Señora—
Verdad es, O
comadres. Dadme
vuestras velas porque
vamos a velar.*

*Señora y Comadres—
Vamos a bautizarnos,
noche de San Juan.
Vamos a alegrarnos,
noche de San Juan.
Santo San Juanito,
liberanos del mal.
Que tú nos bañes
con la luz del cielo,*

Eight Is Great

*light, thy good fortune,
and thy power.* *con la buena suerte,
y con tu poder.*

(The brujas pause silently to make wishes for their clients as well as themselves. They bow deeply and recite a series of magic words which I'd learned by accident but promised Doña Teresina not to reveal. She did, however, give me permission to state that one of them is probably a Hispanic distortion of *moztli*, an Aztec term denoting rain or lustration. When the last word has been spoken, the adepts douse their candles in the lake and head for the beach led by their señora and the oldest comadres. If possible, the brujas maintain total silence as they put out their fire. Only gestures of farewell are exchanged as they go their separate ways.)

Maybe the covens won't mingle until the next Midsummer's Eve, but the adepts belonging to each *cofradia* will assemble for a rite on the last night in July.

Lammas / Cadenas de San Pedro

(The altar is decorated with gold and white paper cut-outs of the crossed keys and papal tiara to honor Saint Peter, the first pope. Properly robed and adorned with medals, the brujas follow their high priestess into her shrine. The señora lights her incense and candles, asperges her coveners with holy water, and salutes the Virgin by bowing once, thrice, and nine times.)

*High Priestess—
O Queen of Heaven,
we need thy aid.
Quickly, quickly
send to earth*

*Señora—
O Reina del Cielo,
tu ayuda necesitamos.
Pronto, pronto envía
a la tierra al vicario tuyo,*

Magic from Mexico

thy vicar, Pope
Peter. Give him,
give him the twin
keys, the master keys
of thy power.

el Papa Pedro. Dale, dale
las llaves gemelas que
son llaves maestras de tu
poder. que son llaves
maestras de tu poder.

(Here the high priestess elevates her glass of holy water thirteen times while she and her coveners whisper the names of clients they'd like to see liberated from the fetters of poverty. Then the señora intones:)

High Priestess—
Bless this water,
Saint Peter, with
thy keys so that it turns
into holy acid. May thy
consecrated acid dissolve
the chains of deprivation.
Come, power!
Come, wealth! Amen.

Señora—
Con tus llaves
bendice el agua,
O San Pedro Que el
agua se cambie en
vitriolo santo. Que
el consagrado ácido devore
las cadenas de la pobreza.
¡Ven, poderio!
¡Ven, riqueza! Amén.

(The adepts concentrate on their clients' future prosperity, all chanting:)

All—
Now the good people
are free. The acid
has devoured their
shackles. The
destitution demons
are drowning in
vitriol, dragged
down by the remains
of the chains. Ah,

Señora y Comadres—
Ya libre la gente
decente, pues el
vitriolo se ha
comido las cadenas.
En el vitriolo se
ahogan los demonios
de la pobreza con
los vestigios de sus
cadenas. Ay, que

Eight Is Great

what huge tears the
demons let fall from
their dead, black
eyes. Perfect goodness
is victorious.

lagrimonas se vierten
de sus ojos negros y
muertos los demonios.
Se ha triunfado
la bondad perfecta.

(The brujas pause to give thanks. Then the señora exclaims:)

High Priestess—
Glory be to Guadalupe.

Señora—
Gloria a la Guadalupeana.

Covener—
Glory be to Saint Peter,
Her faithful servant.

Comadre—
Gloria a San Pedro,
su servidor fiel.

High Priestess—
Long live abundance!

Señora—
¡Viva la abundancia!

All—
So mote it be. So shall
it be. Amen.

Señora y Comadres—
Así sea. Así será.
Amén.

(The high priestess and her coveners bow nine times, thrice, and once more to the Virgin. The señora extinguishes her candles in the customary order.)

Officially, this concludes the Cadenas rite. Unofficially, the adepts may stay to cast prosperity spells and consume "rich foods" (comidas ricas) provided by their high priestess. In a month and a half, the señora will need more magnificent munchies for the Autumnal Equinox Sabbat.

Autumnal Equinox Sabbat / San Mateo Evangelista

(The left-hand side of the altar features a crown of red flowers commemorating Saint Matthew's gory martyrdom. On the right-hand side, we find a quill pen, ink, and a clean sheet of white paper. When the brujas have donned their robes and medals, the high priestess admits them to her sanctuary. She lights her incense and candles, purifies her coveners with holy water, and pays Guadalupe the traditional homage of thirteen bows. She solemnly intones:)

High Priestess—

*I enter into the altar
of Our lady and into
the Most Holy Queen's
tabernacle, the abode
of truth. O Saint
Matthew, thou who art
blessed and crowned
in heaven, tell me the
Gospel truth.*

Señora—

*Entro en el altar de
Nuestra Señora y en el
tabernáculo de la Reina
Santísima donde se
domicilia la verdad.
O San Mateo, tú que eres
bendito y coronado
en los cielos, díme
la verdad del Evangelio.*

(The comadres add their prayer:)

Covener—

*O, Saint Matthew, grant
that we learn it. O, Saint
Matthew, grant that we
believe it. O, Saint Matthew,
grant that we defend it.*

Comadre—

*O San Mateo, haz que la
aprendamos. O San
Mateo, haz que la crea-
mos. O San Mateo, haz
que la defendamos.*

(Here the adepts pause to ponder their clients' questions and quandaries. The señora picks up the pen, dips it in the

ink while reciting a secret series of magic words, and transcribes messages from Saint Matthew which will later be interpreted and communicated to the clients. When the high priestess has finished taking dictation, she thanks Saint Matthew:)

High Priestess—

*Great gratitude be
thine, o martyr and
evangelist who never
lies. Grant that I
may imitate thee.*

Señora—

*Te doy mil gracias y
grandes, O mártir y
evangelista cuya lengua
no miente nunca. Haz
que yo te emule a tí.*

(The señora genuflects, puts on the crown of crimson blossoms, and turns clockwise to face her comadres, who shout:)

Covener—

*We see the truth and
we shall proclaim it!*

Comadre—

*¡La verdad vemos
y la proclamaremos!*

(The high priestess then doffs the garland and passes it to the eldest covener, who relays it to the next in order of seniority, etc., until the youngest bruja receives it, dons it, removes it, and returns it to the señora. All chant:)

All—

*We have the truth.
We are the truth.
Amen.*

Señora y Comadres—

*La verdad tenemos.
La verdad somos.
Amén.*

(The high priestess and her comadres bow nine times, thrice, and once more to the Madonna. The señora blows out her candles in the usual order.)

Though the ceremony's over, the brujas linger to scrutinize the screeds, help themselves to flowers from the crown

for future use in an unrevealed spell, and enjoy a meal prepared by their high priestess.

There's more feasting on the brujas' agenda six weeks or so later, when they celebrate

Hallowmas / Todos los Santos

(The señora ornaments her altar with orange and gold blossoms, particularly the huge calendulas known in Mexico as the "flowers of death." A green skull image candle in an orange dish takes the place of the vigil light which usually stands in front of Guadalupe. After the coveners have assembled properly robed and wearing their medals, the high priestess conducts them to her shrine. There she lights the incense and candles as custom decrees, asperges her comadres with holy water, and pays the Virgin the traditional thirteenfold obeisance. Then the señora intones:)

High Priestess—

*Bless me, o Queen
of eternal life.*

*Help me, o saints
and ye Mighty Dead.*

*Hear me, o lonely souls
and restless spirits. I
conjure thee in the name
of Guadalupe, thy sov-
ereign redemptrix from
the flames of purgatory.*

Señora—

*Bendígame, O Reina de la
vida eterna. Ayúdame,
O santos y difuntos
poderosos. Oídme, O
ánimas solas y espíritos
intranquilos. Vos
conjuro en el nombre
de la Guadalupeana,
vuestra redentora
soberána de las llamas
del purgatorio.*

(The señora elevates the skull image candle and turns clockwise to salute the four quarters of the universe—east, south, west, and north. Facing north, she holds the candle above her head and chants:)

High Priestess—

*Come one, come all.
Our lady commands
thee. Obey me,
her servant and
child. Speak with me
o my brethern,
Our Mother desires it.*

Señora—

*Venid todas. Nuestra
Señora lo manda.
Obedecedme a mí porque
criada y hija
suya soy. Hablad
conmigo, O hermanos.
Lo quiere nuestra Madre.*

(The high priestess lowers the skull image candle and returns it to the altar. In total silence, the adepts await a sign from the dead. Any strange sound or animal cry is deemed a token of their presence. The señora welcomes the spirits:)

High Priestess—

*Behold, thou hast come
as befits good children
of the best mother.*

Señora—

*Aquí estais, hijos
buenos de la
mejor de las madres.*

(Now the high priestess and her coveners whisper the names of "beloved souls" with whom they seek contact. According to Doña Teresina, convincing messages invariably arrive. However, there's a catch. Unlike Saint Matthew's "Gospel truth," these bits of news from beyond can't be written down but must be committed to memory. When the spirits have cut the communication, the señora bows nine times to the altar and dismisses them:)

High Priestess—

Thank you, spectral

Señora—

Gracias, hermanos

Magic from Mexico

<i>brethern. May Our</i>	<i>espectrales. Que</i>
<i>Lady bless you.</i>	<i>Nuestra Señora os</i>
<i>Go in God's</i>	<i>bendiga. Idos en</i>
<i>heavenly peace.</i>	<i>la paz celestial de Dios.</i>

(Then she genuflects thrice to bid the saints and Mighty Dead farewell:)

<i>High Priestess—</i>	<i>Señora—</i>
<i>Many thanks, o</i>	<i>Muchas gracias, O</i>
<i>Mighty Dead and</i>	<i>difuntos poderosos y</i>
<i>blessed saints,</i>	<i>santos benditos, por</i>
<i>for helping us. Go in</i>	<i>habernos ayudado. Id en</i>
<i>God's heavenly peace.</i>	<i>la paz celestial de Dios.</i>

(Finally, the high priestess prostrates herself and exclaims:)

<i>High Priestess—</i>	<i>Señora—</i>
<i>Great gratitude be thine,</i>	<i>Mil gracias a tí, O</i>
<i>O Lady of Guadalupe,</i>	<i>Señora de Guadalupe,</i>
<i>our Mother and Queen.</i>	<i>Madre y Reina nuestra.</i>
<i>Give us thy blessing.</i>	<i>Danos tu bendición.</i>

(The señora rises and blows out the candles in the usual sequence. The comadres adjourn to the high priestess' kitchen for a feast. Some covens follow the food and finish the festival with a rite wherein the brujas form a circle and pass what's left of the green skull image candle from covener to covener while the señora stands in the center reciting:)

<i>High Priestess—</i>	<i>Señora—</i>
<i>Little skull,</i>	<i>Calaverita verdecita,</i>
<i>so small and green,</i>	<i>enseñame la vida</i>
<i>show me the new</i>	<i>nueva de la sabiduría</i>
<i>life of wisdom</i>	<i>escondida en la</i>

Eight Is Great

<i>hidden in death.</i>	<i>muerte.</i>
<i>Thou art beautiful,</i>	<i>Bella, fuerte</i>
<i>strong, and mine.</i>	<i>eres mía.</i>
<i>Each night, each day,</i>	<i>Cada noche, cada</i>
<i>with me you'll stay.</i>	<i>día, estarás conmigo.</i>

(Then the high priestess takes the skull image candle and buries it in her backyard "so wisdom will never leave the cofradía.")

I'd like to report that the Mexican-American Wise Ones celebrate Yule with feasting and dancing, but thanks to Catholic influence coupled with the imposition of the Gregorian calendar, Brujería doesn't share Wicca's concept of the Winter Solstice as a New Year Festival. Instead of reveling in the return and rebirth of the Sun, Mexican-American adepts honor Saint Thomas the Apostle by begging him to bolster their belief in their own paranormal powers. With these thoughts in mind, here's Yule.

Yule / Santo Tomás Apóstol

(The altar is garnished with greenery to symbolize living faith and the growth of one's spiritual faculties. When the comadres have donned their robes and medals, the señora leads them to her despacho where she lights her candles and incense, asperges her coveners with holy water, and greets Guadalupe with the customary reverences. Then she invokes Saint Thomas:)

<i>High Priestess—</i>	<i>Señora—</i>
<i>O great Apostle Thomas,</i>	<i>O gran Apóstol Tomás,</i>
<i>thou who didst vanquish</i>	<i>tú que vences a la duda,</i>
<i>doubt, grant that we may</i>	<i>haz que alcancemos a la</i>
<i>achieve the same victory.</i>	<i>misma victoria.</i>

Magic from Mexico

(The high priestess and her comadres chant in unison:)

All—

We believe it. We'll achieve
it. We are witches. We have
powers: to know, to cut, to
bind, to change, to dare,
to open, to close, to will,
and best of all, to be silent.
Ah-HAY, ah-HAY, ah-HAY,
ah-HAY, ah-HAY, ah-HAY,
ah-HAY, ah-HAY, ah-HAY,
and now we'll be silent.

Señora y Comadres—

Lo creemos. Lo haremos.
Brujas somos y los
poderes: el saber, el cortar,
el ligar, el cambiar, el
osarse, el abrir, el cerrar,
el desear y mejor, el callarse.
Ajé, Ajé, Ajé, Ajé,
Ajé, Ajé, Ajé, Ajé,
Ajé, Ajé, y ahorita
nos callamos.

(The señora and her coveners bow nine times, thrice and once more to the Virgin. The high priestess extinguishes her candles and conducts her coveners out of the shrine. The comadres quietly go their separate ways.)

What ajé means and how it got into Brujería is anyone's guess. I suspect that it may be a recent borrowing from Puerto Rican and Cuban Santería, whose adepts shout *aché*, an ancient Yoruba word for "power," in their rites. Then, again, both ajé and aché could go back to pre-Christian Celtic Europe where Witches used "ee ai" as a cry to raise power and boost fertility. Today, a vestige of this practice survives in the chorus of a popular Anglo-American folk song, "Old McDonald's Farm": "ee-eye, ee-eye oh." (See Gavin and Yvonne Frost's *The Magic Power of Witchcraft* for a delightful discussion of "ee-eye" and its origin.)



But Nine Is Divine

Glory to Guadalupe in the highest!

—Doña Teresina

Great as the eight fiesta grandes may be, none can hold a candle to the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (*Fiesta de la Guadalupana*—see next page for altar arrangement). Both the Moon Madonna and her special day have their roots deep in the Aztec substratum of Mexican culture.

Before the Spanish Conquest, Guadalupe was Tonantzín Cuahtlalpancihueteotl, the Lunar Lady and Queen of the Waters whose chief temple stood atop Tepeyac Hill outside the village of Cuahtlalpan. Unable to eradicate her cult, the padres adopted Tonantzín as a Marian avatar and mangled Cuahtlalpan into Guadalupe.

History reveals that the clerics also appropriated one of Tonantzín's festivals, the Descent of Rain (*Atemozli*), a

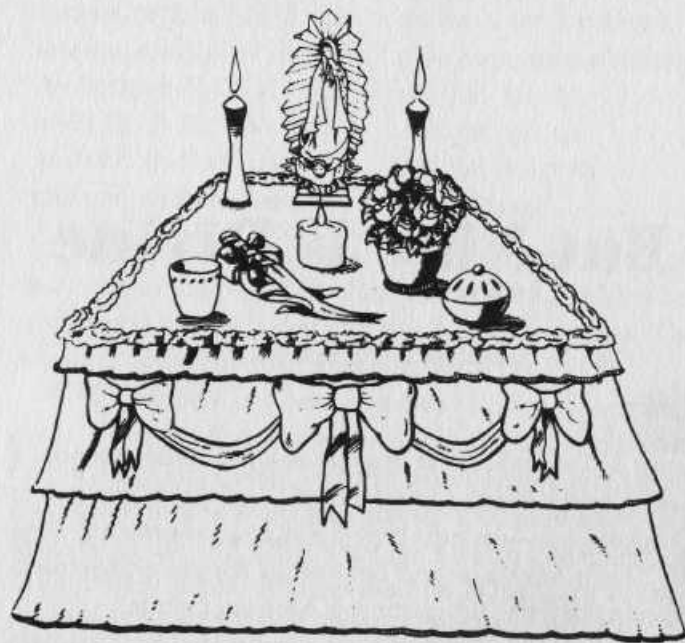


Figure F: Fiesta de la Guadalupana
Altar arrangement for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the most important fiesta grande in Brujería.

But Nine Is Divine

twenty-day celebration which started on December 9. The early ecclesiastical chronicles state that Guadalupe appeared to an Indian named Juan Diego on that date. And for over two hundred years, that was her official, church-approved fiesta. But around the middle of the eighteenth century, fanatical priests afire with desire to extirpate the pagan past persuaded the Vatican to transfer the fete to December 12, where it has since remained.

Except in Brujería, that is. No Roman bureaucrat was going to tell Tonantzín's priestesses when to honor her. So the brujas still observe the fiesta on the "glorious ninth."

In keeping with the age-old custom of holding vigils as preparation for a holy day, most Mexican-American adepts spend December 8 readying their shrines. After the chores are out of the way, the average bruja charges her image of Guadalupe by placing her right hand on its head and chanting:

*The Queen of the Universe,
She Who did reveal unto us
Her love at the proper time,
now descends from the
heavens to the hills
of Tepeyac.*

*Desde los cielos
hasta los cerros del
Tepeyac ya se baja
la Reina del Mundo,
la que en buena hora
nos mostró su amor.*

(Then the adept pauses to meditate on Guadalupe. When she senses the Virgin's presence, the bruja bows once, thrice, and nine times while whispering:)

*My Lady, Thou art most
welcome. Receive, I pray
Thee, my filial love.*

*Muy bienvenida,
señora mía. Recibe, pues,
mi amor filial.*

Magic from Mexico

Should the practitioner own statues of Christ, the saints, or "powerful ones" such as the late John F. Kennedy, they get a simple benediction consisting of one bow plus the following:)

<i>May Guadalupe bless thee, I follow thee because the Lady doth guide thee. Amen.</i>	<i>Que la Guadalupe te bendiga. La señora te guía. Por eso te sigo. Amén.</i>
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So far, so easy. But what if the adept's a señora instead of a comadre? Then her work's just beginning. A high priestess has to decorate her altar with paper rosettes, ribbons, and bows featuring red, white, and green—the national colors of Mexico. A big bouquet containing at least one scarlet rose for each of her coveners must stand in a brand-new vase between the thurible and the vigil light. She's got to adorn the handle of her knife with crimson ribbons. (The end result of her time and toil should look like Figure F.)

By midnight, the señora's ready to welcome her comadres, light her incense and candles, asperge the coveners with holy water, give Guadalupe the customary thirteen reverences, and lead the cofradia in a rousing rendition of the "Supreme Prayer" (Oración Supreme):

<i>All— We greet Thee and adore Thee, O Guadalupe, Heavenly Rose, Mystical Rose, of Tepeyac Hill. May Thy fragrance bless our souls, so sweet is Thy savor, Most Beauteous</i>	<i>Señora y Comadres— Te saludamos, te adoramos a tí, O Guadalupe, Rosa del cielo, la Rosa Mística del Tepeyac. Que tu fragancia a nuestras almas bendiga, tan olorosa, la más</i>
--	--

But Nine Is Divine

<i>Rose. Thine, too, is the power. Give it to us women, who are Thy daughters. Blessed art Thou through all eternity. Amen.</i>	<i>bella rosa eres tú. Eres también el poder. Dalo a tus hijas, nosotras mujeres. Por los siglos de los siglos de los siglos, bendita eres. Amén.</i>
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(The high priestess and her coveners pause to meditate on the Madonna and the miracles she's wrought during the previous year. Then the señora elevates her knife once, thrice, and nine times while intoning:)

<i>High Priestess— Crimson Rose of the Moon, Thou art truly blessed. O Lady, grant that Thy spirits of lunar power place themselves beneath my dominion, obeying me, Thy servant. Ah, vouchsafe that they treat me sweetly, thereby enriching Thy savory odor, o Flower of Good Love.</i>	<i>Señora— Verdad es que bendita eres, Rosa Bermeja de la Luna. O Señora, haz que tus potencias lunarias se pongan sujetas a mí, la criada tuya. Ay, haz que se comporten dulcemente conmigo y que sus hechos enriquezcan a tu buen sabor, O Flor del buen Amor.</i>
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(Now the high priestess cuts roses from the bouquet and distributes them to her coveners in order of seniority. To each comadre, she proclaims:)

<i>High Priestess— Behold the Supreme Rose, the only Rose of Good Love.</i>	<i>Señora— Aquí está la Rosa Suprema, la única Rosa del Buen Amor.</i>
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(On receiving her rose, the covener replies:)

(This is no mere flowery verbiage. Preserved and dressed with an unspecified oil, the roses become puissant charms for attracting good husbands and promoting painless parturition. Once everyone has a rose, the señora chants:)

<i>High Priestess—</i>	<i>Señora—</i>
<i>We shall venerate it</i>	<i>Siempre la veneremos,</i>
<i>forever, because within</i>	<i>porque dentro de ella</i>
<i>it we behold the Little</i>	<i>a la Virgencita</i>
<i>Virgin.</i>	<i>veremos.</i>

(In unison, the high priestess and coveners shout:)

<i>All—</i>	<i>Señora y Comadres—</i>
So mote it be.	Así sea. Así será.
So shall it be. Amen.	Amén.

(The brujas bow nine times, thrice, and once more to the Madonna. The señora extinguishes her candles in the customary order and stands by the exit. As her comadres file out, they may give her envelopes of cash referred to as "fertilizer for the rosebush.")

Our brujas may feel bushed, but they'll be up bright and early on the "glorious ninth." Whether she's a high priestess or a covener, the rising sun will find our adept in her kitchen fixing a special breakfast for her family. Whatever else appears on the matutinal menu, the bruja's sure to make a plate of thirteen *gorditas* ("fat girls"), a dish probably derived from the cornmeal cakes the priestesses of Tonantzin baked and distributed as tokens of the goddess' bounty.

Alas, the Libreta omits the recipe for gorditas. No doubt it assumes that any practitioner worth her salt knows how to prepare them. For you readers in an adventurous mood, here's a recipe popular in the Midwestern barrios.

For the dough you'll need:

1 lb. *masa* (stone-ground cornmeal)
 ½ cup sifted wheat flour
 ½ to 1 cup water*

**different types and batches of masa may vary in absorbency*

¾ cup finely grated cheese
 1 tsp. salt
 2 tbsps. shortening or corn oil

Mix the masa, sifted wheat flour, and water to form a stiff dough. Add the grated cheese and salt with more water if necessary. Knead the lump and divide it into thirteen equal pieces. Now put the shortening or corn oil in a skillet over medium heat. Flatten the chunks of dough into pancakes (tortillas). Fry them, making certain they're browned on both sides. You can enjoy them as they are or follow the advice of a Mexican-American chef who keeps them warm in the oven while fixing a topping:

3 tbsps. corn oil
 1 tbsp. finely minced onion
 1 clove of garlic, ditto
 1 cup *frijoles refritos**

**Mexican mashed beans available in many supermarkets*

Sour cream to taste

Put the corn oil in your skillet. Add the onion and garlic, stirring until they become translucent. Pour in the frijoles refritos. Mix and cook until heated through. Plop the topping on your pancakes, garnish with sour cream, and serve.

Plain or fancy, once her gorditas are ready, the bruja blesses them by praying: ~

Magic from Mexico

*Little Virgin, thou who
art the Mother of Corn,
the salt of the earth, and
the waters of the heavens,
bless my "little fat girls"
so they may guard
my jewels (i.e., family).*

*Virgencita, tú que
eres del la Madre del Maiz,
de la tierra la sal,
del cielo las aguas,
bendiga mis gorditas
para que ellas guarden
a las joyitas mías.*

With breakfast over and the dishes done, our adept receives visits and gifts from her clients, casts special unrevealed spells, and gets ready for the finale of the fiesta, the Light of the World Rite (*Rito de la Luz del Mundo*).

At sunset, the bruja summons her husband and children to her kitchen, where she lights a large white candle and intones:

*O Little Virgin, we've
honored Thee with a vigil.
Now Thou dost repay us
with the Light of the World.
For this great favor,
we thank Thee.*

*Hemos velado a tí,
Virgencita. Pues
nos bien con
la Luz del Mundo.
Por esta merced te
rendimos gracias.*

Starting with her mate, each member of the adept's family tells Guadalupe what he's liked about the past year and what he hopes the next twelve months bring him. Either parent may speak for babies and toddlers too young to talk. Then the bruja picks up the candle and leads her clan to the shrine. She puts it down in front of her image of Guadalupe and conducts her kin in the "Valedictory Chant" (*Canto de Despedida*):

But Nine Is Divine

*Farewell, Little Virgin
Who doth radiate the
true light. Thou art the
Queen of the Universe
Whom all doth adore.
Though in heaven Thou
dwest, Thou hast sent
Thy bright celestial light
unto us earthlings. Do
Thou enchant us, now
and forever! So mote it
be. So shall it be. Amen.*

*Adios, Virgencita de
truela luz verdadera
derramadora. Del
universo eres la reina
y a tí todo ser adora.
En los cielos moras pero
aquí en la tierra nos has
dado tu luz celestial y
brillante. ¡Que nos
encantes ahora
y siempre! Así sea.
Así será. Amén.*

(Whereupon, the adept blows out the candle and sets it aside for future use in top secret spells.)

Spells and Smells

Ya gotta know what to throw and when to throw it.

—Doña Teresina

Perhaps we'll always be in the dark about the spells involving the Light of the World candle, but Doña Teresina has kindly consented to reveal several hitherto hidden spells together with their related recipes.

To get your magical studies off to an auspicious start, she recommends mixing up a batch of Three Wise Men Oil (*Aceite de los Tres Reyes Magos*):

At the new moon, take three ounces of olive oil, nine drops of frankincense oil, three drops of myrrh oil, and a pinch of "spiritual gold" (saffron). Shake well and apply to a yellow image candle depicting an oriental master. Put the candle in a gilded china saucer, light it, and recite thrice:

Spells and Smells

*The sage helps me learn
everything. I'll work
hard and be a real scholar.
All knowledge will be mine.
My mind will be as clear
as the river. So mote it be.*

*El sabio me ayuda para
que todo se aprenda.
Hacendosa, estudiosa yo
seré, yo seré. Todo el saber
será mío. Clara mi mente
así como el río. Así sea.*

The river or any natural body of water is where your candle and the dish go after the rite. Toss them into the water and don't look back.

With a wiseman from the Mystic East coaching you, you'll soon be ready to try a practical spell guaranteed by Doña Teresina to materialize moolah. Wait until a lunation (new moon) in an earth sign (Taurus, Virgo, or Capricorn) and prepare some Sacred Rose of Tepeyac Oil (*Aceite de la Rosa Sagrada del Tepeyac*):

To three ounces of olive oil, add three drops of rose essence, three drops of clove oil, and a dash of cinnamon powder. While you're stirring your stuff, meditate on Guadalupe's generosity. Thanks to the miraculous roses and the mysterious painting she gave Juan Diego as souvenirs of her appearance atop Tepeyac Hill, he enjoyed a life of luxury supported by the church. (In a popular version of the legend, Bishop Juan de Zumarraga shares his palace with Juan Diego and the latter's uncle.) Properly propitiated, she may do the same for you.

So, once your oil's ready, use it to dress a large gold-colored sun image candle. Beneath the rays of the waxing moon, light your candle and intone:



NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL PERPETUO SOCORRO

A holy card of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is used in Mexican-American image magic to acquire and keep a lover. Tie your special someone's photo to the reverse of the holy picture with a white ribbon from a bridal bouquet. Whisper, "*Virgencita, ayúdame*" (Little Virgin, help me), kiss the photo, and toss the package into a body of water.

Magic from Mexico

All things come from the Moon. Even the Sun comes from the Moon. O Moon, I desire a sunbeam, the solar ray forever exiled to the earth. From thy silver, O Queen, give me a sunbeam, give me gold. So mote it be. So shall it be. Amen.

De la luna viene todo. De la luna aún el sol. O luna, quiero el rayo del sol, el rayo para siempre desterrado a la tierra. De tu plata, O Reina, dame el rayo del sol, dame el oro. Así sea. Así será. Amén.

By the next new moon, you should have more big bucks than you can spend. Don't be greedy and do donate at least ten percent to charity or Guadalupe may withdraw her largesse.

With financial woes out of the way, you'll want somebody to share your good fortune, a special guy or gal who loves you for your personality instead of your purse. For this you'll need True Love Incense (*Inciense del Amor Sincero*). When the moon is full, take equal parts of pulverized charcoal, orris root powder, patchouli powder, and finely ground cinnamon. Mix thoroughly, put in your thurible, and ignite.

While your incense is burning, concentrate on your ideal mate and make a batch of Come and See Me Oil (*Aceite Ven a Verme a Mí*):

To three ounces of olive oil, add twelve drops of patchouli essence plus one drop of clove oil. Smear on a white image candle depicting the appropriate sex for your prospective spouse. Then light the candle and say the following prayer to Saint Valentine:

Spells and Smells

O my saint, I am lonely. Help me, great saint, for thou knowest all the mysteries of the human heart. Give me what I desire. Give me a good husband (good wife) who will follow thy law of true love. So may my love be. So shall my love be. Through thy power, O blessed Valentine. Amen.

O mi santo, te digo que me hallo en la soledad. Ayúdame, gran santo, tú que conoces al corazón humano y que sabes todos sus misterios. Dame lo que quiero. Dame un buen esposo (buena esposa) que siga tu ley del amor sincero. Así sea mi amor. Así será mi amor. Por tu poder, O Valentín bendito. Amén.

The following full moon should find you well on the road to married bliss.

Let's assume Saint Valentine's led you to the altar and thence to the proverbial rose-covered cottage. You're both happy and that's how you'd like to stay. To keep fiends from blasting your blessedness, Doña Teresina suggests an old standby derived from African-American Hoodoo and Voudoun, the Adam and Eve spell. Buy a pair of Adam and Eve roots (*raíces Adán y Eva*), enough red flannel and thread to make two small bags (*resguardos*), and a couple of needles. Then, some nice night when Lady Luna's waxing in a Venus-ruled sign (Taurus or Libra), sit down together and sew two little pouches.

The husband should stash the female root in his bag while the wife envelopes the male root in her *resguardo*. Now chant in unison:

Magic from Mexico

*Eve holds her Adam,
Adam holds his Eve.
They're one and so are we.*

*Eva tiene a su Adán,
Adán tiene a su Eva.
Son uno y uno somos.*

For best results, recharge your roots every full moon by exposing them to lunar rays and dressing them with Paradise Ungent (*Aceite del Paraíso*), a mixture of equal parts of patchouli oil, vanilla extract, rose essence, and sandalwood oil.

But what if Saint Valentine goofed by sending you a dud of a dude or a moll of a doll? Maybe your sweetie's gone sour. Or perhaps you rubbed the wrong recipe on your roots. To prevent your honey from doing anything funny, whip up a bottle of Dominating Oil (*Aceite Dominante or Dominador*):

Add three ounces of olive oil, a drop of clove oil, and a dash of red food coloring. Dab some on a photo of your mate while repeating:

*I command.
Thou dost obey me.*

*Yo te mando.
Tú me obedeces.*

For wayward wives and most hell-raising hubbies, this spell should do the trick.

However, since we live in a patriarchal society, mean, meandering males may require sterner measures. When the moon's waning, fix your philanderer with a batch of I Tame My Straying Animal Oil (*Aceite Yo Domo a Mi Bruto Andariego*):

Take three ounces of olive oil, one clove of garlic, a minced onion, and three drops of mint oil. Heat but don't boil, strain the mixture, and apply it to a red cotton cord. Wait until your man's asleep and tie the cord around his right ankle. Firmly grasp the cord and whisper:

Spells and Smells

*O my Lady of Guadalupe,
Thou beholdest Thy daughter
whose fine burro doth dirty
deeds. O my Mother, grant
that my dear brute will walk
tamely along the straight and
narrow path. May thou be
blessed, my lady. Amen.*

*O mi Señora de
Guadalupe, ves aquí
a tu hija cuyo burro
bonito hace cosas
feas. O Madre Mía,
haz que mi bruto
querido ande mansamente
por el camino
del bien. Bendita seas,
señora mía. Amén.*

Now remove the cord and store it in a secret place. During nine successive nights, knot the cord while envisioning your mate faithful and well behaved. By the last evening of your novena, he's bound to vow that he'll never even look at floozies, let alone step out of line with them.

Your next step is one in line with your maternal instinct, motherhood. On the night before a lunation, mix up a supply of Moon Oil (*Aceite de la Luna*):

Add twelve ounces of olive oil, thirteen mugwort leaves, and a dash of white rose essence. Gently warm your Moon Oil and pour it into a fruit jar, leaves and all. Every night, rub some on your stomach and within a lunar month you'll be in the family way.

Pregnant women need to preserve their good health. In Brujería, that means eating lots of eggs, cheese, beans, and oranges as well as shunning booze and cigarettes. Although tobacco's out, you can enjoy another type of smoke outdoors which comes recommended by the celestial patron of physicians, Saint Luke's Incense (*Incienso de San Lucas*):

Magic from Mexico

Take equal parts of pulverized charcoal, pine needles, and copal resin chips. Greet each full moon by burning this mixture under the stars and reciting a brief prayer nine times:

*O Saint Luke,
protect us with thy odors
of sanctity and hygiene.
Amen.*

*O San Lucas,
protéjenos con tus olores
de la santidad y de la
sanidad. Amén.*

So now you have wisdom, wealth, a happy marriage, an heir, and your health. Guess what else you've got—trouble. As Doña Teresina views the situation, such consistent and persistent good fortune is sure to attract envy, resentment, and gossip from certain nasty people who'd rather tear you down than build themselves up through knowledge and hard work. To repel and reform these gabby goof-offs, you'll need a reversible black and white winged devil image candle. When the moon's waning, anoint the base of the candle with Turn Around Oil (*Aceite Vuélvete*):

Add three ounces of olive oil plus a glob of axle grease. Then light the candle and chant:

*The devil's outside.
The angel's inside.
Die, devil, so that an
angel may emerge
from this body.
Amen.*

*El diablo afuera.
El angel adentro.
Muérete, diablo,
para que del cuerpo
salga un angel.
Amén.*

That's exactly what will happen. As the candle burns and the opaque white core flows over the black exterior, a demon will join the heavenly host. In the meantime, your detractors should be undergoing a spectacular conversion



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE ZAPOPAN DEL CAMINO

"Our Lady of the Road" is a new incarnation of Xochiquetzal ("Blossom Plume"), the pleasure-giving aspect of Tonantzin. She is dressed in scarlet robes bedecked with multicolored flowers and a heaven blue shawl trailing feathery fringe. According to Mexican-American image magic, pictures of this avatar purchased and blessed on October 4 will ward off colds, storms, and earthquakes.

Magic from Mexico

to decency, diligence, and minding their own business. They may even apologize to you and beg your forgiveness. Be a "child of Guadalupe" and pardon them or she may let the local hags hack your reputation to hell.

The inferno's a place nobody wants to claim as his eternal abode. If you'd like to save your family from a one-way trip to Sizzle City, cast the following spell on All Soul's Day (November 2). Buy as many white skull image candles as there are members of your clan, arrange the candles in a circle, and rub them with Salvation Oil (*Aceite de la Salvación or Salvador*):

Mix equal parts of olive oil and rose essence plus a pinch of salt. While you light the candles, say thirteen times:

*We are the salt of the
earth which is lost. We
are the perpetual rosary.
Amen.*

*La sal de la tierra somos,
somos la sal que nunca se
pierde. Somos el rosario
perpetuo. Amén.*

Not only will you and your kin avoid eternal damnation, but Guadalupe will also shield you from bankruptcy, robbery, auto accidents, and undeserved visits to the pokey.



Roots and Redes

I ain't no dope!

—Doña Teresina

Apparently trips to the hoosegow are a dire deterrent to dabbling in controlled substances, because my informant repeatedly refused to discuss "bad, crazy plants." Between the drug laws and the statutes against practicing medicine minus a license, it was tough to extract any herbal lore from Doña Teresina. The material she finally allowed me to transcribe from her *Libreta* dealt with the use of botanicals in spells rather than healing or exploring psychic dimensions.

Is your mate exploring somebody else's physical dimensions? Take a photo of your spouse and cover it with Love Dust (*pólvora del raíz del amor*, alias orris root powder). Trace your initials in the powder and seal the picture in a pink envelope. Keep it in a secret place and recharge it via exposure to lunar rays at each full moon. Henceforth, you'll

never have to worry about adultery adulterating your favorite adult.

If juvenile delinquency's the problem, vanquish your young ones' yen to be yahoos by smearing High John the Conqueror Oil (*Aceite de San Juan Conquistador*) on their heads while they sleep. Then, at midnight, dress a High John the Conqueror root with your oil and bury it in your backyard to hold them close to the old homestead during those dark hours when temptation abounds.

Speaking of temptation, you can cool anyone's larcenous lust for your valuables by sprinkling them with Good Thief Water (*Agua del Buen Ladrón*), which you should make on a Friday during the hours of the crucifixion (12:00–3:00 P.M.). Take two complete five-finger grass plants (*cincoenramas*) and boil them in holy water. Once you've asperged your possessions with this brew, no power on Earth can persuade a robber to touch them.

But what if you want your property to appeal to people? Though you despise thieves, you'd like customers to covet and buy your merchandise. Get a big comfrey root (*consuelda*), wrap it in gold foil, and stash it under the counter near your cash register. Within a week, your clientele and revenue should double.

Then, again, maybe you work in an office. You don't own a shop and haven't sold anything since you helped your kid brother run his lemonade stand. You want a raise but your boss is a monster who'd extract blood from a stone.

That's just what you need: a lodestone (*pedra imán*) plus a lump or stick of dragon's blood resin (*sangre del dragón*). Carry the lodestone and the dragon's blood for at least three days. Then, at the new moon, pray to Saint Martha. Since Martha tamed ferocious beasts, she's the gal who'll

gentle your employer, making him feel drawn to you by the power she'll infuse into your lodestone. Though he may never figure out the real reason, he'll up your salary by one digit.

Digits call to mind manual labor. Should you work with your hands, be sure to wash them every morning with essence of masterwort (*esencia de imperatoria*), produced by soaking an entire masterwort plant in a stoneware crock of rainwater. Do this and you'll be a universally respected, well-paid master of your craft. (An indication of the relatively recent and urban origin of these spells is that Doña Teresina knew of none to help farmers boost their productivity and income. Another point favoring their modern, nonrural provenance was the *Libreta's* admonition to "buy" (*comprar*) the botanicals rather than search for them.)

Apropos of the Craft, young brujas ought to keep a Solomon's seal root (*raíz del sello de Salomón*) near their altars so Guadalupe can use it to send them sapience exceeding Solomon's proverbial wisdom.

Wise sayings have been a part of Mexican magic for centuries. Just as Wicca has its *redes*, so Brujería has its *refranes*.

Like the Wiccan maxims that associate the wolf (lupe) with evil, Brujería's adages unanimously give this creature bad press. (For some charming Wiccan sayings about wolves, see Lady Sheba's *Witches' Workbook*.) Though neither my informant nor her mentors had ever set eyes on a specimen of *Canis lupus*, wolves vastly outnumbered the other animals mentioned in the *Libreta's* *refranes*.

Perhaps the Anglo world sees foul birds of feather flocking together, but Mexican-American adepts believe that "wolves of the same breed travel in the same pack" (*Andan*

juntos los lobos de la misma camada). The prosaic dictum that bad habits are contagious appears in the *Libreta* as “he who runs with the wolves soon learns to howl” (*Quien con lobos anda, a aullar se aprende*).

Red flags may signal danger to gringos, but Mexican-American witches advise “keeping your eyes peeled for the wolf’s ears” (*Mirar bien las orejas del lobo*). The traditional admonition not to rear serpents in your bosom emerges from the *Libreta* as “raise wolves and they’ll rip out your heart” (*Cria lobos y te sacarán el corazón*). A mundane warning to look out for intruders or traitors becomes “there’s a wolf in your kitchen” (*El lobo está en la cocina*).

In lieu of the leopard incapable of changing his spots, brujas point to the wolf who persisted in plotting mayhem even though he’d lost his fangs (*El lobo mudará las dientes pero no las mientas*). And rather than snort that an unlikely event will occur when elephants roost in trees, Mexican-American practitioners assert that it will take place “when the wolf grows wings” (*Cuando el lobo críe alas*) or “when the she-wolf marries the pope” (*Cuando la loba se case con el papa*).

A truly envious deceiver is “slyer than the wolf” (*Más astuto que el lobo*), “trickier than a wolf in the dovecote” (*Más embustero que el lobo en el palomar*), or “lies faster than a wolf can trot” (*Miente más que anda el lobo*). Luckily, someone—namely the bruja—is smarter: “the wolf knew a lot, but the wisewoman who killed him knew more” (*Mucho sabía el lobo pero más la sabía que lo mató*). And “even in death, the wolf is bad” (*Lobo muerto ya malo*).

Several domestic animals don’t fare much better. A warning not to tease idiots comes out as “joke with the jackass and he’ll kick you in the face” (*Burlaos con el burro, y te pateará en la cara*). The need for less talk and more

action turns into “a meowing cat is a rotten mouser” (*El gato maullador nunca es buen cazador*). An evil oldster is “like a cat with nine lives but no soul” (*Como gato de nueve vidas y alma ninguna*).

On the other hand, dogs enjoy a fine reputation for fidelity and loyalty. If your husband’s “as faithful as a mastiff” (*Fiel como el sabueso*), he’ll never stray. She-goats revel in renown for their intelligence. A good high priestess is “as wise as an old nanny” (*Sabia como la cabra vieja*). And concord-loving coveners who eschew conflict resemble “matched teams of horses that go well together” (*Comadres buenas se ven como las yeguas que apelan bien*).

In the realm of inanimate objects, an old Wiccan standby claims first place—the broom. As in Anglo folklore, “a new broom sweeps clean” (*Escoba nueva barre bien*). Furthermore, “you can’t keep house without one” (*Sin escoba no hay hogar*). Litterbugs and other disorderly types are “like broken brooms” (*Como escobas desatadas*) that leave dirty straw all over your home.

The magical blade makes its appearance in an exhortation to focus one’s attention and channel one’s power: “remember that a real knife ends in a point” (*Recuerda que el cuchillo se acaba en un punto*). Finally, “a good book is your best friend” (*Buen libro, mejor amigo*).

Conclusion

What ya read is what ya'll be.

—Doña Teresina

Probably as compensation for centuries of church-enforced illiteracy, most Mexican-American witches are ardent bibliophiles. In fact, I attribute much of the eclecticism apparent in Brujería and the Libreta to the adepts' fascination with the printed word.

If we can trust the scant available documentation, prior to 1850 Mexican magic consisted largely of orally transmitted Indian traditions and vestiges of Basque witchcraft buried under a heavy layer of compulsory Catholicism. By making public secular education readily accessible to city dwellers, the revolutionary hero Benito Juárez (d. 1872) helped alter the course of brujería's evolution. Learning their ABC's in an atmosphere open to Anything But Clericalism prepared many urbanites to welcome ideas that didn't arrive stamped with an imprimatur.

Magic from Mexico

Thus, when Allan Kardec, the founder of Spiritism, published his *Spirits' Book* (1857) and *Mediums' Book* (1861), an eager audience awaited them in Mexico's urban areas. Within less than fifteen years after their release, Mexico City and Guadalajara could boast flourishing Spiritist newspapers as well as publishing houses that specialized in Spanish translations of European occult literature. By 1900, Mexico's towns were flooded with enticing volumes ranging from *The Secrets of Albertus Magnus* to Madame Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*.

Needless to say, the urban brujas weren't idle. As the rituals and spells divulged by Doña Teresina reveal, these adaptable adepts borrowed extensively from manuals of ceremonial magic, the occult sciences, and Spiritism. When José Vasconcelos' mass literacy crusade hit the rural regions a generation later (circa 1925), their country colleagues quickly made up for lost time.

The vast migrations of Mexicans to the U.S. between 1940 and the present have exposed the brujas to additional literary influences. Contact with African-American Hoodoo and Voudoun practitioners has introduced them to spellbooks purportedly penned by Marie Laveau and Doctor John. Meanwhile, in our northeastern cities, Puerto Rican santeras have shared their grimoires with Mexican-American witches. Most recently, the Lady Sheba's Wiccan works have delighted the brujas.

Already, some Mexican-American high priestesses are revising their Libretas to conform with the Lady Sheba's *Book of Shadows* (1972), admitting men to their covens, and replacing Catholic saints with pagan deities. Others, particularly in the Midwest, are seeking initiation into the Gardnerian Craft. It is only a matter of years before Guadalupe

Conclusion

sheds the Judeo-Christian veil and shines forth as Herself: the Gracious Moon Goddess, Mother of Gods and Men, Queen of Heaven and the Universe.

Epilogue

Endings are beginnings in disguise.

—Doña Clara
Detroit, Michigan

Now that we've discussed the history of Brujería, studied its less-arcane teachings, and examined its terminology, it's time to reach a few conclusions that can help us envision the cult's future.

As we've seen, Brujería is a syncretic system; down through the centuries the Aztec religion, Catholicism, European Witchcraft, Allan Kardec's Spiritism, ceremonial magic, and the occult sciences have contributed their mites to its might. Like all viable systems, Brujería adapts itself to changing times and tastes.

For example, thanks to the popularity of astrology in contemporary America, many of the brujas have expanded their stellar lore. Given continued general interest in star

science, I predict that the brujas of 2000 C.E. will devote more of their effort to astrology, some even earning degrees in the field.

But if astrology is waxing, the influence of Catholic dogma is slowly but steadily waning in U.S. barrios. Consequently, a long-term view of Brujería's evolution must include the diminution of Vatican-approved theology's impact. True, the Virgin Mary will remain, but not as the submissive Messiah-machine touted by Rome. Already the Madonna, not her son, dominates Brujería. If current trends persist, by the end of the century, the bruja's Guadalupe will have regained the divine status she possessed when she was the Aztec goddess Tonantzin.

Apropos of the Aztecs, methinks the present emphasis on their culture in Mexican-American circles will speed the return of the ancient deities. Ever since Mexican-Americans have enjoyed access to books treating their past, some of them have started to invoke Aztec gods in lieu of Catholic saints. Indeed, nonbrujas in the Madison and Milwaukee barrios have already organized clubs dedicated to restoring the Aztec religion. Within a couple decades, a sect of Brujería probably will establish covens like those formed by the long-gone devotees of Tonantzin-Tlazoltéotl.

But covens also call to mind European Witchcraft. Among brujas under forty, knowledge of the Old Religion is widespread. The practitioners I contacted after 1972 owned and read the works of Gerald B. Gardner and the Lady Sheba. I may be wrong, but it's just a matter of years before at least one branch of Brujería revises its Libretas in conformity with *The Book of Shadows*, confers three degrees rather than the present one, and organizes covens of thirteen or fewer people under the direction of a high priestess.

Furthermore, because men play a significant role in the European Craft, we can expect to see brujos, some of whom may officiate as high priests. And the position of maiden or summoner will appeal to young practitioners who have yet to master their cult's deepest secrets.

In short, the Brujería of 2000 C.E. may develop into a syncretic magico-religious system different from the one prevailing today. *Bendita sea María* may become "Blessed be Tonantzin." Systems and names may change. But, as Robert Graves and Pearl Buck so often have stated, the Eternal Mother abides.

Part III

Appendices

Appendix A

Doña Teresina's Background and Biography

Like many of her European counterparts, Doña Teresina comes from a long line of witches. For at least three centuries, her ancestors practiced Brujería in a village near the city of Nombre de Dios (Durango State, Mexico). Currently, several of her maternal aunts and cousins continue the family tradition in northern Mexico, Arizona, and the Midwest.

Though Doña Teresina never learned her exact date of birth, she knows that she was born in a migrant camp outside Encino, California, sometime in July of 1940. Her widowed mother and her maternal grandmother brought her up, teaching her Brujería, needlework, and "the three Rs" after harassment by Anglo classmates forced Teresina to quit school in the second grade.

Appendix A

However, it was from a maternal aunt, Doña Rosario, that she gained access to Brujería's Book of Shadows. On December 9, 1957, Teresina became a bruja and began copying Doña Rosario's Libreta, a task that occupied most of her spare time until June 21, 1963.

Today Doña Teresina lives in a small Wisconsin town where she serves her people as a "spiritual daughter of Guadalupe."

Appendix B

Doña Teresina's Libreta

The manuscript I examined on October 11, 1979 consisted of approximately two hundred ruled pages measuring 10 by 8½ inches bound in a spiral notebook. A removable folder of green taffeta lavishly embroidered with crimson roses and a satin-stitch picture of Guadalupe appearing to Juan Diego concealed its cardboard covers.

The text was written in an exquisite Spencerian hand, probably a pedagogical legacy from Doña Teresina's grandmother, who had attended a convent school during the early teens of this century. Occasionally, a page illuminated with colored pencil and gilt paint punctuated the flow of penmanship.

The first page proclaimed the date "el 9 de diciembre, 1957 A.D.," the fiesta of Guadalupe and the day on which Doña Teresina commenced transcribing her Aunt

Appendix B

Rosario's Book of Shadows. The colophon featured an intricate drawing of Our Lady of San Juan surmounting the date of completion, "el 21 de junio, 1963 A.D.," and the gilt inscription *Alabada sea nuestra Madre* ("May our Mother be praised").

Appendix C

Linguistic and Chronological Considerations

Ever since certain scholars began questioning the authenticity of the Spanish quotations in Carlos Castañeda's *Teachings of Don Juan* (1968), many researchers in the field of Mexican folklore have grown reluctant to publish any material that deviates from the canons of Academic Spanish.

Count this author among them.

So to set the record straight, let me state that the *Libreta* is not a specimen of standard "school Spanish." The text is a *mélange* of non-Academic Colonial Spanish, the syncretic Tex-Mex dialect, and borrowings from American English (*pochismos*).

Contrary to the contentions of some Hispanists, Spanish didn't acquire rigid rules of grammar and syntax until the eighteenth century, when the Royal Academy issued its decrees on the subject. Mexico had been conquered and

colonized for over two hundred years before any attempt was made to standardize and relate Spanish usage.

Furthermore, most of the conquistadores, early settlers, and padres came from the provinces rather than the Castilian cities where “correct Spanish” first appeared. They spoke dialects that would have horrified the Royal Academy. It was their transplanted patois and not the Castilian “school Spanish” that Mexico’s Indians learned and passed along to their descendants.

As for the English influence detectable in the vocabulary and syntax of some passages, we must remember that Mexico and the U.S. have been in close contact since the 1840s, which witnessed the Mexican-American War and the opening of the Southwest to Anglo pioneers. In Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico, the Spanish and English tongues took less than a century to blend into a widely spoken pidgin called Tex-Mex. Meanwhile, the hordes of gringo mining engineers and businessmen who flocked to northern Mexico during the days of Porfirio Díaz (1872–1910) left ample traces of their sojourn in the anglicized dialects prevalent in that region and the American terms (*pochismos*) used throughout the country.

End of linguistic history lecture. Though somewhat tedious, it may help us determine the approximate time when the rituals assumed their current form. Because its presence is a well-nigh infallible sign that a text postdates the middle of the last century, English influence is the crucial factor.

Alas for the antiquarians, Doña Teresina’s *Libreta* is a recent redaction. An obvious borrowing from English greets our eyes in the New Moon Rite, where whoever penned the first manuscript of this version chose to employ

en turno for “in turn” rather than the “correct” idioms *en reciproque* or *en cambio*.

Likewise indicative of English influence is the Tex-Mex syntactic practice of placing the adjective before the noun it modifies. Examples from our text include *buena criatura* (altar consecration rite and Saint John the Baptist/Beltane Sabbat), *gran tesoro* (enthronement of altar image rite), *viles demonitos* (Holy Cross/Rudemas Sabbat), *gran latigo* (*ibid.*), *buena hora* (Guadalupe rite), and *buen sabor* (*ibid.*). Though “correct” Spanish doesn’t totally forbid such forms, they’ve been confined to proper nouns plus a handful of traditional phrases (*buena suerte*: “good luck”) and greetings (*buenos días*: “good day”).

Given these signs of English influence, I’m inclined to classify the rituals as late nineteenth-century or early twentieth-century revisions of material that could go back to the Spanish Colonial era (1521–1820). The suspiciously Anglo phrase *buen libro* (in lieu of the standard *libro bueno*) in the last of the proverbs leads me to put the *refranes* in the same category. As for the spells, their heavy debt to African-American Hoodoo and Voudoun suggests that they didn’t enter the *Libreta* until the 1940s, when wartime conditions forced Mexican-Americans and African-Americans to share the same neighborhoods.

Finally, let me note that these linguistic and chronological technicalities are secondary at best. After all’s said and done, the validity of a Book of Shadows does not depend on its age, ethnic origin, or pedigree. With this thought in mind, I wish you Our Lady’s blessing.

Appendix D

The Eightfold Path and the Five Essentials

These are the ways to the center. Always there must be the Five Essentials, but all the Paths cannot be combined in one ritual. Paths 1, 3, and 6 combine well; as do 3, 4, and 5. Paths 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are excellent together.

The Eightfold Path

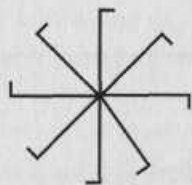
1. Meditation or concentration. Forming a new mental image of that which is desired, and "Seeing" it fulfilled with faith that it can and will be fulfilled and determination to go on willing until it is. Also called: Creative Visualization.
2. Trance, astral projection, inner programming, path-working. Also called: Psychic Conditioning.
3. Rites, chants, spells, runes, charms: the mental direction of energy flow. Also called: Ritual Magic.

Appendix D

4. Incense, wine, herbs, Soma Kundalini, the Middle Pillar. Also called: Opening the Gates.
5. The Dance and kindred practices that raise the Crone of Power.
6. Self-control, breath control, blood control (the Cords), posture. Also called: Yoga.
7. Discipline.
8. The Great Rite: spiritual and physical union of male and female. The Magic of Sex.

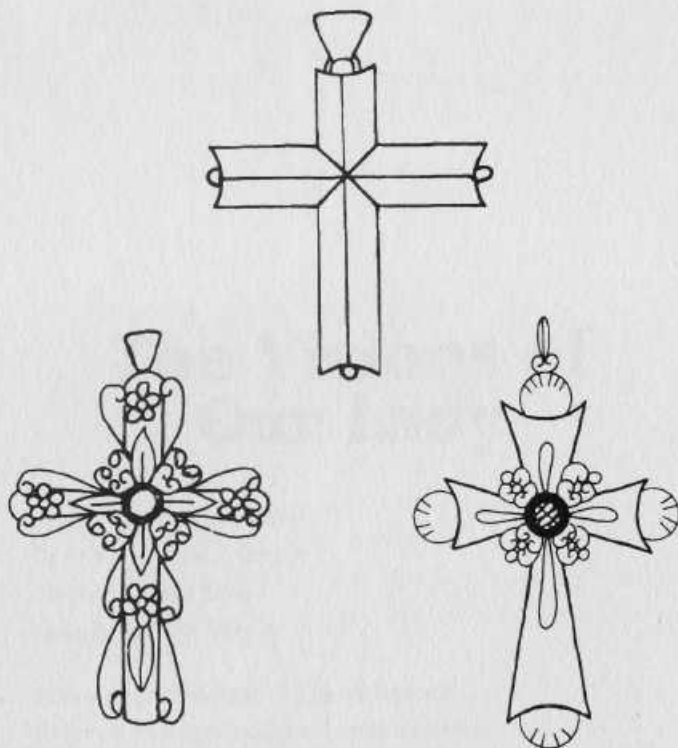
The Five Essentials

1. Intention. You must be determined to succeed.
2. Preparation. You must be fully prepared with all that is required before starting a ritual.
3. Purification. Nothing, not physical disturbances nor mental wondering, should interfere with the ritual. Discipline should reinforce your concentration.
4. The Circle. Your place of working (circle, temple, sanctuary) must be properly formed, purified, and consecrated.
5. The Tools. All the implements of ritual must be consecrated, dedicated to their religious and magical functions.



The Eightfold Path to the Center

Appendix D



MEXICAN CROSSES THAT DEPICT THE EIGHTFOLD PATH

Mexican crosses in the author's collection similar to those worn by modern Midwestern brujas. All three display an eight-rayed motif reminiscent of the Gardnerian Wicca symbol denoting the Eightfold Path to the Center.

The Visions of Our Lady

*From Heaven descended
In triumph and splendor
To give us Her favors
Guadalupe the Virgin.*

*Favor your children, O Guadalupe
O favor us your children, Guadalupe.*

*O chosen Juan Diego
She appeared to your eyes
When you crossed the hill,
Of the Queen of the skies.*

*Favor your children, O Guadalupe
O favor us your children, Guadalupe.*

Magic from Mexico

*On your fine ayate,
She of the Indies
Left us Her image
The Guadalupe Virgin.*

*Favor your children, O Guadalupe
O favor us your children, Guadalupe.*

*O you are Guadalupe
White flower of olive
You appeared to us,
Once and for always.*

*Favor your children, O Guadalupe
O favor us your children, Guadalupe.**

* Based on a ballad recorded in *Idols Behind Altars*, by Anita Brenner (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929), pages 152–153.

The Visions of Guadalupe

In the following pages we have produced simple drawings of the manifestations of Guadalupe described in chapter five.

These illustrations are intended as aids to the imagination in visualizing the Goddess during prayers, meditations and rites to make contact with the powers and blessings inherent in these special forms in which She appears.

In visualizing, follow the descriptions given below the illustration. Only the most important details are listed; in your imagination more details may appear. While visualization is itself a “mental” process, you must give the Image energy from your heart—feeling love with all your heart for Guadalupe! Mentally and emotionally say and feel what you seek from Her, and then experience those blessings flowing through Her eyes to yours and through Her palms to your uplifted hands. In your vision, She may even be seen to smile upon you as She answers your needs.

Magic from Mexico

Choose the manifestation that most closely identifies with your needs, and then review them in the simplest terms and images before you start your ritual, selecting the time in accordance with the moon's phase or sign. And, remember, as pointed out in the text, to tithe from your blessings. As you receive, you must also be a channel! Tithing need not be to the Church, nor to foundations or agencies—but to wherever you perceive the aid you can channel will be most helpful.



LA PURÍSIMA

Ruler of the New Moon

Visualize Her as the Young Virgin, robed in white with a blue sash. Her long flowing hair is not hidden with a veil. She stands upon the waxing crescent moon. Her blessings include the growth of money and luxuriant hair, and the successful harvest, especially of herbs.



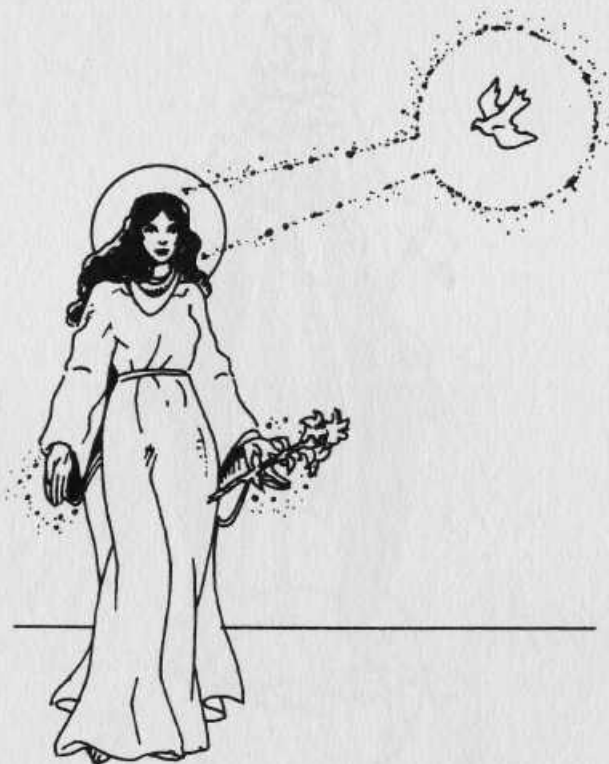
LA MADRE DE DIOS
Ruler of the Full Moon

Visualize Her as the Mother of God, robed in white with a blue cloak. Her hands are covered with jewels from which rays of power reach Her children. She stands upon a Full Sphere surrounded with twelve stars, for She is the Queen of the Universe. Her left foot is on a green serpent, showing that She rules all life. Her blessings include fertility, aid to mothers, help for "female problems," and She strengthens herbs.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LOS SIETE DOLORES
Ruler of the Dark Moon

Visualize Her as a wise, matronly woman, robed in blue with gold trim, Her head covered with a veil. There are seven swords in Her heart. Her blessings include the wisdom of the ages, benevolence, removal of all foes. It is She who aids those leaving this life.



SANTA MARÍA ÓR LA ANUNCIACIÓN

Ruler of the Moon in Aries

Visualize Her as a young maiden robed all in white, with the Holy Spirit entering into Her. Her hair is long and uncovered. Her blessings include strength and assertiveness.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL BUEN CONSEJO

Ruler of the Moon in Taurus

Visualize Her with dark blue robes. Her hair is covered to show that She is concerning Herself with practical matters. Her blessings include practical advice and commonsense understanding.



NUESTRA SEÑORA LA REINA

Ruler of the Moon in Gemini

Visualize Her dressed in purple robes, with a golden crown of twelve stars upon her head, standing on the crescent moon. She is the Queen of Heaven and Earth. Her blessings include the power of correct speech, wit, and eloquence.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA VISITACIÓN

Ruler of the Moon in Cancer

Visualize Her dressed in gray robes without ornamentation. While dressed plainly, She is not somber but rather filled with inward joy. Her blessings include domestic harmony.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA ASUNCIÓN

Ruler of the Moon in Leo

Visualize Her in robes of sky-blue velvet, with gold embroidery. She has loosened Her golden girdle from Her waist so that it may fall toward Earth as a connection between Heaven and Earth. She is bathed in golden light from above as She ascends toward heaven, but Her love is still directed to Her children on Earth. Her blessings include spiritual attainment and help to rise above adversity.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL NOMBRE

Ruler of the Moon in Virgo

Visualize Her in plain, wheat-colored robes, without ornaments, but with a large gold "M" embroidered on Her breast—for in all Her manifestations She is always Mary/María/Mari—the Great Mother. In Her arms She holds the ripened wheat and corn of the harvest—for She rewards those who have the vision to plant a part of the previous harvest as seed, who have the patience and faith to cultivate and nurture, and the practicality to reserve part of the new harvest for the future. Her blessings include memory and practicality.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL ROSARIO
Ruler of the Moon in Libra

Visualize Her in fine red robes and a rich blue cloak, seated upon a golden throne. She wears a fine rosary, and has a garland of roses in Her hair. Bouquets of roses are strewn at Her feet. Her blessings include art, music, and a fine singing or speaking voice.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA PRESENTACIÓN EN EL TEMPLO
Ruler of the Moon in Scorpio

Visualize Her as a young girl of ten or twelve years of age, dressed in simple, austere robes, but with dancing feet. She has been presented by Her parents to God in the temple, and Her dancing expresses Her inward and secret joy. Her blessings include the protection of your privacy and the power that flows to those secrets that we nurture in our heart—our dreams and visions and personal goals.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA MEDALLA MILAGROSA

Ruler of the Moon in Sagittarius

Visualize Her in white robes and a blue cloak, with rays of power reaching from Her hands to the two medals at Her feet. These are really the two sides of one medal. It is She who gives power to all medals and talismans, whose power must flow through your hands when you charge an amulet. Her blessings include the powers of persuasion and personal protection.



NUESTRA SEÑORA LA PODEROSA

Ruler of the Moon in Capricorn

Visualize Her all robed in black from head to toe. She is like a wealthy and powerful Mexican grandmother to whom all give respect and obedience. Her word is law! Her blessings include influence and authority, power over officials.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LOURDES

Ruler of the Moon in Aquarius

Visualize Her robed in white with a sky-blue sash, and yellow roses on Her feet. Her hands are raised in a healing gesture. About Her head is a halo of twelve stars. Her blessing is that of healing.



ESTRELLA DEL MAR

Ruler of the Moon in Pisces

Visualize Her in azure robes, a single five-pointed star above Her head radiating light and protection to all of us sailing on the seas of life. She stands above the waters, to Her left we see a sailing ship. Her hair is unadorned but She has a halo of twelve stars. Her blessings include the development of psychic powers and protection.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA SOLEDAD

Some adepts of Brujería view this manifestation of Guadalupe as an augury of the long-awaited New Age (*Edad*) of the Sun (*Sol*). To prepare themselves, and to help the transition to this New Age, these "Wise Ones" identify with this God-form. At dawn, they visualize themselves clad in the Madonna's pyramid-shaped cope, holding what we see here as an inverted pentagram in Her hands. However, as seen through Her eyes (that is, the adept visualizing herself as the Goddess) the pentagram appears in its upright, positive position symbolizing the power to banish or transmute negative forces.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE MONSERRAT Our Lady of Monserrat, the "Black Isis"

According to one story, a Moor sculpted the statue of a dark Madonna shortly after his people invaded Spain in 711. Another story has it that St. Luke sculpted it and left it in a cave near the Monastery of Monserrat near Barcelona, Spain.



ST. MARTIN DE PORRES

Patron of Paranormal Powers

St. Martin, a mulatto friar living in Peru 300 years ago, was famed both for his good works (caring for the sick, feeding the hungry) and his amazing powers (clairvoyance, telepathy, faith healing, psychokinesis, levitation, and bilocation). According to tradition, lighting ten black candles for St. Martin and seeking his aid will endow you with psychokinetic powers; gazing at his likeness and praying to him will give you clairvoyance; burning a single scented black candle each evening for a year while praying for his aid will give you healing powers.

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