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Diana's Bow Ritual "A" and "B"

Blacksun, Shadowhawk, Louise Owen, and Barb Lauderdale

Subseries 2: Esbats

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Greater Mysteries

The Goddess Diana is the Huntress of the forest, the one who relies on no one else for survival. She stands alone, steady, strong, and independent. When the New Moon rises in the sky it is Her bow, reminding us that She is beside us, within us. We are strong and free, able to face the challenges that are put before us. Her Light shines and grows as the Light within each of us. At the New Moon we celebrate our new beginnings!!

Subjects

Eleusinian mysteries
Diana (Roman deity)--Drama
MoonStone Circle (Coven)--Rituals--Texts
Aquarian Tabernacle (Wiccan sect)--Rituals--Texts
Aquarian Tabernacle (Wiccan sect)--Customs and practices
Esbat (Neopagan custom)
Mythological plays
Religious drama
Drama

Aquarian Tradition of Wicca

DIANA'S BOW RITUAL

"A" AND "B"

Unrestricted

Ritual presenters:

High Priestess (HPS)
High Priest (HP)

Maiden
Warder
Quarter Callers

Supplies:

On the main altar:

Diana crown (sized to fit officiating HPS)
Sacrament (one container for A, two for B, covered)
Diana image or symbol (optional)
Maya box (mandatory for A, optional for B)

By the altar:

Sword in scabbard
Prosperity cauldron

On the elemental altar:

Altar cloth
Four elemental symbols:
 incense in holder (already lit)
 candle lantern
 chalice with water
 cauldron with salt
Lighter or matches

At the gate:

Broom
Two bottles of anointing oil
Envelopes printed with Call
 to Mystery
Sheepskin/protective cloth
 for sword (on gate lintel)

*Let everything be cleansed and purified before the Gods. The **High Priestess** and **High Priest** and all facilitating the ritual shall perform their ritual ablutions, anointing, robing, and meditating before entering the circle.*

*When all are ready, they shall gather at the Circle in good time for the scheduled beginning of the ritual. The **High Priestess** shall instruct the **Warder** to give the First Call to Mystery 15 minutes before the ritual is to begin, and the Second Call 5 minutes before the ritual. At the second call, those who would attend should make their way up to the circle and wait outside. The ritual presenters shall gather inside for the Purification of the Temple.*

*The **HP & HPS** stand at the altar; the **HPS** wears a cloak covering the Diana robe.*

*The **Warder** stands by the gate on the northern side.*

*The **Maiden** takes up the broom and stands on the other side of the gate on the eastern side.*

*The **Quarter Callers** stand at the quarters across the circle from the directions they are to call.*

– **PURIFICATION OF THE CIRCLE** –

Warder: *(to the assembled people)*

The temple is about to be erected. Let all who enter in be here of their own free will.
Pray all be silent while the temple is purified.

Maiden: *(takes up the broom and sweeps around the circle widdershins)*

All things which evil or malignant be,
Know this place is not for thee.
Be thou gone! Depart from me!
And by my will, so mote it be!

(now sweeping deosil)

Red spirits and black,
White spirits and gray,
Come ye, come ye, come who may.
Around and about, throughin and throughout,
The good come in, and the ill **keep out!**

Everybody stamps twice on last two words.

Maiden returns broom to the east side of the gate.

East: *takes up incense from altar, salutes the East, walks once around circle deosil censing, and stands in the West to call towards the East.*

South: *takes up candle-lantern from altar, lights it, salutes the South, walks once around circle deosil, and stands in the north to call towards the South.*

West: *takes up chalice from the altar, salutes the West, walks once around circle deosil asperging, and stands in the East to call towards the West.*

North: *takes up salt from the altar, salutes the North, walks once around circle deosil scattering salt, and stands in the South to call towards the North.*

HP: *(takes sword and begins at the East side of the gate, ending at the northern side.)*

Oh thou circle, I conjure thee,
Sacred area of mystery:
A shield against evil shall you be,
And contain within all energies.
All this we claim by the majesty
Of *Diana!* – So mote it be!

*With the **Maiden's** assistance, places the sword above the gate (on the sheepskin), pointing to the East.*

HPS: By the conjuration of the elements,
let this circle be warded.

East: *(holding incense up towards the East)*

Guardians of the East,
Element of Air,
Breath of life
And winds of inspiration:
Blow away the clouds from our minds
And give us true vision.

South: *(holding lantern up towards the South)*

Guardians of the South,
Element of Fire,
Flame of self
And light of transformation:
Energize the life force in our bodies
And give us the power to make a change.

West: *(holding chalice up towards the West)*

Guardians of the West,
Element of Water,
Waves of feeling
And oceans of meaning:
Wash away our anger and fears
And give us purity of love and trust.

North: *(holding the salt up towards the North)*

Guardians of the North,
Element of Earth,
Fertile fields of sustenance
And mountains of treasure:
Manifest the dreams and feelings we toil for
And give us value in our lives.

HPS: *(takes a moment to feel the energy)*

The elements are in balance, which brings Spirit to the circle.

*Nods to the **Warder**, who leave the circle and goes to the fountain. As the **HPS** speaks, he demonstrates the ablutions and then leads the attendees through the gate once bidden.)*

HPS: Children of the Goddess and the God, bless and purify yourselves.
Anoint your head, heart, and loins with the waters of life and come onto this circle of worship in peace.

*As **Warder** returns through gate, the **Maiden** hands him one bottle of anointing oil, retaining the other. They take up their stations beside the gate and anoint the attendees as they enter, greeting each one:*

Thou art God/dess.

*As the people enter, the **HP** hands each one of the envelopes with the Call to Mystery, and (if necessary) indicates that they should proceed around the circle deosil.*

*When all have entered, the **Maiden** takes the broom and sweeps the gate. The **Warder** brings the sword down from the lintel (retaining the protective wrap) and lays it on the ground, still pointing towards the **East**, to establish the closing of the gate. Once this is done, the **Warder** and **Maiden** turn to the **HPS**.*

HPS: The temple has been warded, blessed, and sealed. If anyone feels they must leave before this rite is concluded, silently go to the gate where you entered and have the Warder give you exit. Do not break the circle.

*When she mentions him, the **Warder** steps forward slightly and raises an arm to be easily identified. He remains at the center of the gate, holding the energy, for the remainder of the rite.*

HPS: Let the Rite begin!

HP: Now is the time of Diana's Bow, when her crescent is visible in the sunset sky: the bow of the Huntress. It is the time of beginnings. Let this ritual be a worship of her and of your beginnings.

Help me call her to this rite. Look to your sheets entitled 'Call to Mystery' and follow with me.

*During the Call to Mystery, the **HP** faces each of the quarters in turn, returning to the center for the final couplet. All attending, including the **Quarters**, the **Maiden** and the **HPS** join in the response lines.*

– CALL TO MYSTERY –

HP: *(to East)* We seek Diana, Huntress of the Night –

ALL: – give us true vision this magical night.

HP: *(to South)* Our hands and hearts empower this call –

ALL: – we find Her within, or not at all.

HP: *(to West)* Heart joined to heart and lip to lip –

ALL: – five are the points of fellowship.

HP: *(to North)* Sow the seeds deep in fertile ground –

ALL: – let the Wheel carry us round and round

HP: *(returning to Center, joins HPS)* Harmony and balance are the way to power –

ALL: – we see this truth in every tree and flower.

*The **HP** kisses the **HPS**' hand and assists her to kneel. The **Maiden** moves to the altar and takes up the Diana crown, holding it over the **HPS**' bowed head, high enough so that it is visible. The **HP** invokes the Goddess.*

HP: Hail, Diana, Huntress of the Night;
Goddess of the Moon, bless this rite.

O Diana, your priestess willingly gives her body and heart so that you may walk in this circle of stars we have formed to worship you, goddess of groves and wells. Come, O come, majestic Diana: come unto this rite and begin again the mystery of the night.

(chants so that everyone joins in)

ALL: Hail, Diana, Huntress of the Night,
Goddess of the Moon, bless this rite!

*As the chant repeats and builds in energy, the **HPS** draws down the Moon and invokes the Goddess. When sufficient energy has built up, she raises her head; the **Maiden** crowns her and draws the cloak from her shoulders. The **Maiden**, **HP**, and **Warder** all kneel. Others in the circle may kneel as they choose. The **Quarters** do not kneel.*

HPS: Rise up, my children; look at me straight and true.

*All rise. The **Maiden** returns to her station with the cloak.*

{A}

HPS: Rise up, my children; look at me straight and true.

I am she who needs no other for support. I am within each and all of you, both high and low. I am she who begins new plans, gives new hope, and sustains the self against impossible odds. Look at me! You have called me into this form tonight, but I have been with you always. I do not need this mortal form for you to receive my blessing: for if you do not find me within, surely you will never find me without.

(picks up the Maya box from the altar)

This is my gift to all of you, my children. Within this box is my true face and form. Gaze inside and remember so you may recognize me when in need of my blessings. And when you are so in need, just say the name of this box, which is . . . “**Maya**”.

Hands the box to the HP, who repeats the name to begin the chant; all join in.

HP: Maya . . . Maya . . . Maya . . .

*Beginning with the **Maiden** and progressing deosil to end with the **Warder**, the **HP** opens the box to show each person its contents. The box must be opened at the correct angle for each person’s height (standing or sitting) so that they can see their faces in the mirrored interior.*

*As the **HP** progresses around the circle, the presenters raise the energy and tone of the chant and shift the sounds until the word “Maya” becomes “I am”. As the **HP** finishes, the **HPS** builds the chant to a peak.*

HPS: I am the Wolf, but do not fear me;
I am the Hound’s Cry that calls you near me.

I am the Arrow; your courage will brave me –
I am the White Deer; your shelter will save me.

I am the Singer – through song shall you find me;
I am your Voice and you will not bind me;

I am your Guide – leave your dark fears behind me;
I am your Path, and your first step will find me.

I am the Gods and if you won’t claim me,
Seal up your heart and never more blame me!

I am! I am! I am! I am! I am!

*The **HPS** builds the chant to a peak again and grounds it. She then goes around the circle, blessing the attendees.*

HPS: Now is the time for me to return to my hunt. Look to the sky each night and watch as I draw my bowstring. As it is pulled back, more of my power is available to each of you. Use it well.

My blessings to you all. Let the mystery of this circle live on in the days and nights to come. Farewell.

*Kneels to the ground by the altar and devokes. The **Maiden** replaces the cloak on the **HPS'** shoulders, removes the crown, and replaces it on the altar, directing the energy to the altar as she does so. The **Maiden** returns to her station.*

HP: *(assists the HPS to rise and offers her some of the sacrament from the altar)*

Rise up, my priestess, and take this sacrament of she whom you have served so well.

HPS: *(takes a bite of the sacrament and then shares a piece with HP)*

Thank you, my priest. And I would share with you. For only in giving and receiving are the forces of the universe multiplied.

*(to the **Maiden**)* The rite is done. Release the circle.

{B}

HPS: Rise up, my children; look at me straight and true.

Why have you called me from my hunt? What is it you need that you cannot provide for yourself? Speak truly, priest, of the needs of your people.

HP: We have gathered here to renew ourselves through worship of you, O Diana. We beseech you to give us energy to go on in our lives. Your crescent in the evening sky is our sign of hope. Teach us your secrets of how to sustain ourselves without dependence. We ask only this.

HPS: Do you think that I can give you energy? You see me alone in my hunt, but you do not see clearly.

What is my hunt without the quarry? What are my arrows without their target? What is your worship without me? What am I without you?

You can not give worship to me without my receiving it. I cannot be worshipped without giving it back to you. Of all the mysteries, this is the greatest: only in the giving and receiving are the forces of nature multiplied. You cannot give that which you have not received, and you cannot receive that which you will not give.

If it is energy you want, it is energy you must give. I cannot hold your hand if you will not hold mine.

*Grasps the **HP**'s right hand in her left.*

Now hold out your hand to another... and they to the next, and the next and the next.

*All join hands except the **Warder** and the **Quarters**. When they are ready:*

Now we will dance the Dance of Life. If any cannot join us in this dance, sit – clap and chant, and join us with your energy; and hold out your hand and I will touch it as we go by.

HP: Hail, Diana, draw your bow –

HPS: – raise the power, feel it grow!

*Both continue to repeat both lines of the chant. **HPS** leads a spiral dance, widdershins at first with the attendees facing inwards towards the center. She turns the dance around so that it continues deosil, facing outwards; as they move around the circle, she touches each person who is not dancing, including the **Warder** and the **Quarters**. The dancing and chanting builds to a peak and ends with a final shout.*

***HPS** returns to the altar, uncovers the two containers of sacrament, and presents them to the **HP** and the **Maiden**.*

HPS: Take this bread.

As a sign that you are willing to both give and receive, take a piece of this bread and feed it to the person next to you. While you do this, look deeply into their eyes and see me there. While another is giving this to you, look back into their eyes and recognize the holiness of *their* soul. In worship of that divine spark within another, you give true worship to me – and *I* to *you*.

Be both giver and receiver and you will be able to live in harmony with the universe.

*The **HP** goes to the person to the immediate right of the **West** quarter caller, and the **Maiden** goes to the person to the immediate right of the **East** quarter caller. They feed each with a piece of bread, and hand them the dish of sacrament, indicating that the recipient is to feed the person to his or her left, and pass the dish on. The **HP** and **Maiden** remain in place until the dishes have been passed around; when all have been fed, the **HP** will end up with the **Maiden**'s dish and vice versa. The **Quarters** are fed in turn, but the dishes are passed around them, as they will be holding their elemental symbols.*

*The **HP** and **Maiden** take the dishes of sacrament back to the center and feed each other. Then they turn back to the Goddess and offer the remaining sacrament to her.*

HPS: No, you have already given worship to me. Take what remains and give it to the animals that live in my groves. Give back to the earth, for you have received much from her.

Most of the remaining bread is scattered (to the inevitable delight of the dogs); some must be retained in one of the bowls.

HPS: Now is the time for me to return to my hunt. Look to the sky each night and watch as I draw my bowstring. As it is pulled back, more of my power is available to each of you. Use it well.

My blessings to you all. Let the mystery of this circle live on in the days and nights to come. Farewell.

*Kneels to the ground by the altar and devokes. The **Maiden** replaces the cloak on the **HPS**' shoulders, removes the crown, and replaces it on the altar, directing the energy to the altar as she does so. The **Maiden** returns to her station.*

HP: *(assists the HPS to rise and offers her some of the sacrament from the altar)*

Rise up, my priestess. The Goddess whom you have served so well has left you. Let me share her sacrament with you.

HPS: *(takes a bite of the sacrament and then shares a piece with HP)*

Thank you, my priest. And I would share with you. But we are wrong to think that she is gone. She is here with us all. For if you do not find her within, surely you will never find her without.

(to the Maiden) The rite is done. Release the circle.

– CLOSING OF THE CIRCLE –

Maiden: *(to North quarter caller)* Undo the wards! Begin at the ending and end at the beginning!

North: *(raising salt to North as before)*

Guardians of the North,
Element of Earth,
We thank you for the wealth you have provided.
Go back to your realms with our blessings in peace.
Hail and farewell!

West: *(raising chalice to West as before)*

Guardians of the West,
Element of Water,
We thank you for the meaning you have given to us.
Go back to your realms with our blessings in peace.
Hail and farewell!

South: *(raising lantern to South as before)*

Guardians of the South,
Element of Fire,
We thank you for the spark you have kindled within us.
Go back to your realms with our blessings in peace.
Hail and farewell!

East: *(raising incense to East as before)*

Guardians of the East,
Element of Air,
We thank you for your inspiration and vision.
Go back to your realms with our blessings in peace.
Hail and farewell!

HP: *(begins announcements)*

*Announcements will typically include upcoming events, classes, festivals, etc. The **HP** is not required to make all the announcements himself, but should be supported by the **HPS** and call on others in the circle as needed.*

Upcoming events will always include mention of future Diana's Bow, Full Moon, and Dark Moon rituals, with encouragement for anyone interested to talk to the ritual presenters about becoming more involved.

*The announcements conclude with the usual reminder that the ATC needs support of all kinds, including monetary; the use of the envelopes for cauldron donations is explained, with a reminder that donations are tax-deductible, and an admonition not to put any **empty** envelopes into the cauldron.*

*The cauldron is to be handled in circle only by the **HPS** and the **Maiden**. The **HPS** leads the blessing; all others are welcome to join in, in which case the **HPS** directs their energy to magnify with her own.*

HPS: This is the blessing of prosperity:
Threefold, sevenfold, ninefold, more –
All you give to the cauldron,
Seed-time to harvest,
So shall you receive!

*Gives the cauldron to the **Maiden**. Anyone may make contributions at this time; after the circle is opened, she hands the cauldron off to some other trustworthy woman, to take it down to the Retreat House. It is placed on the kitchen counter for the duration of the evening so that people who wish may contribute later.*

Warder: *(Takes the sword from in front of the gate, releasing the circle. Goes to the center of the circle, raises the sword and gestures widdershins.)*

The circle is open,
But never broken,
Merry meet, and merry part,
And merry meet again!

*The **Warder** returns the sword to the **HP**. After the attendees have left, the presenters gather at the altar.*

All: O spirits whom this circle has drawn,
We thank you and ask that you now be gone.
Go back to your realms with our blessings in peace:
As we do will, so mote it be.
With points drawn down, we make the slash,
Each to their own, from first to last!

*They ground the remaining ritual energy. The ritual implements are packed up and returned to their places in the Hecate shrine and the Retreat House; all presenters assist in carrying things down as needed. The **HPS** checks the circle and the shrine (or delegates this to the **Maiden**) to make certain all is in order for the next ritual.*

Unless further work is needed in the circle, or further consultation in the shrine, all return to the Retreat House to eat and socialize. Any newcomers should be located after the ritual and given a chance to ask questions, provide feedback, be offered encouragement, reassurance, support, etc.

Ritual authorship:

<i>Main ritual:</i>	<i>Bert Dudley (Blacksun)</i>
<i>Maya chant:</i>	<i>Blacksun and Shadowhawk</i>
<i>Prosperity chant:</i>	<i>Louise Owen</i>
<i>Alternate Maya chant:</i>	<i>Barb Lauderdale</i>

Blacksun's Notes on the Diana's Bow Rituals:

These are the Mysteries to be explored through ritual "A":

- *If you do not find her within, surely you will never find her without.*
- *Strength of character comes from within.*
- *The God and the Goddess are within each of us; only in their union is the Universe manifested.*
- *Worship of the God & Goddess is in service to the Life Force.*

These are the Mysteries to be explored through ritual "B":

- *Only in the giving and receiving are the energies of the Universe multiplied.*
- *Service to the community is a Path of Enlightenment.*
- *The Dance of the God & Goddess is the Life Force of the Universe.*
- *Service to the Life Force of the Universe is worship of the God & Goddess within each of us.*

Each ritual is designed to enhance, complete, and find new meanings in the other as well as to provide an opportunity by which one or more of the above named Mysteries can be discovered by the participants.

Purification of the Circle will take place *before* the people are admitted. The HPS or her deputy will pick those amongst the people who have attended before and who have expressed a desire to be part of the ritual presenters by performing the roles of Warder, Maiden and Quarter Callers. The purification takes place with the people observing from outside the stone circle.

A full complement of ritual presenters will be composed of: High Priestess, High Priest, Maiden, Warder and four Quarter Callers. The purpose of this arrangement is to establish a reward and involvement goal for those who may wish to go further than simply being part of the "people" who come to the rituals. The positions of Maiden and Warder will be filled only by those who have gone through all four Quarter Caller positions. The ritual will be primarily presented by the HPS and HP, but some parts may be handed over to the Maiden and Warder at the discretion of the HPS. It is even possible, with the agreement of both the HPS and the HP, for the parts of either the HP or HPS to be performed by the Maiden and Warder, but not both in the same ritual.

For both rituals, many of the parts will be the same. Where there are differences, the parts will be labeled "A" and "B".

It is the responsibility of the HPS to ensure that all presentation parts are filled before the first Call to Ritual is given. That is, before the first call is given, all of the ritual personnel *will be prepared and in the stone circle.*