



QUAREIA—THE INITIATE

Module IX—Working with the Spirits of
the Land

Lesson 5: Mountains and Caves

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WELCOME

Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.

The Quareia takes a magical apprentice from the beginning of magic to the level of adeptship and beyond. The course has no superfluous text; there is no dressing, no padding—everything is in its place and everything within the course has a good reason to be there.

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So remember—in order for this course to work, it is wise to work with the lessons in sequence. If you don't, it won't work.

Yours,

Josephine McCarthy



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Lesson 5: Mountains and Caves

In the last lesson we looked at a typical romantic fairy tale, and while such interactions do happen with seemingly-benign beings, in truth many encounters with faery beings and land beings can be terrifying and, at times, dangerous. This is particularly true of land and faery beings connected to mountains and caves.

When I was a child I read a lot of Nordic faery tales, and while they were often scary I always thought that they were just tales. It was only later, as an adult, when I travelled and stayed in such areas, that I learned the truth: not only were they not simply stories, but the power of the beings described in them was way beyond anything I had encountered before.

And these beings are everywhere around the world: each culture has its own tales, but they all reveal the same underlying principles. By reading these stories a magician can learn what sort of power is in what area and whether they can work with it or should step carefully and quietly around it.

In past lessons we have looked at various powers that reside in mountains and caves, from deities, serpent power, and so forth. In this lesson we will look at the land/faery beings found in mountainous areas. They can be the deadliest mountain beings of all: they are often vast and powerful, they have a long reach, and they rarely like humans.

As a magician I have worked with these beings for a long time, as have other magicians I work with. All us have learned firsthand of their power and danger. Magicians cross paths with these powers when their work is very much focused on the tides of fate playing out in a nation and on a land. They can also appear when an adept spends time in an area where these beings are very active: an adept might slip under the radar for one night, but the second time they sleep there, they will become visible.

I do not know why this 'one night of invisibility' occurs, only that it has happened this way repeatedly for me and other magicians. My guess is that it is similar to how the body's immune system works, as the body and the land are both vessels for life. The body has its immune system, and so does the land. When a body first encounters something, it learns to recognise it and prepare a defence against it, whatever it is. If it is not of the body then the body will likely treat it as an intruder. The second time the body encounters it, it has its defences primed and ready. This is why the first dose of something never triggers an allergic reaction; it is always the second time, or a subsequent one, that the body's defences swing into action.

This has frequently been my experience when I have stayed in mountainous areas or areas riddled with caves. My first night is always peaceful, my second night is disturbed, and my third and subsequent nights become a battle against a hostile energy. This does not happen in every mountainous or cavernous area, but it does happen with some. Where I grew up had large hills and deep caves nearby, and they always responded well to me. Often they even protected and shielded me: they knew me from birth and my body and its energy knew them. When I go back to that area as an adult, the beings there treat me as family, and they have helped me powerfully on more than one occasion.

But when I have moved to strange lands with mountains and caves, or when I have visited such areas, I have been met with varying levels of initial hostility. A magician who works with visionary magic is a bright light easily spotted by these beings, and there is no real way to mask that. Because of your magician's energetic visibility, you are treated as a possible threat until proven otherwise.

Because of this, I have learned to tread very carefully and respectfully in such areas, and always to introduce myself in vision rather than just book into a motel and watch TV. The first thing I do is to reach out to connect with whatever is in the area and ask permission to stay there briefly. Not only is this good manners, but it also shows the beings that you are not a threat: you are not there to harm them, and you recognise that you are on their territory. The wilder the area, the more you need to

make this connection.

The other thing to be aware of is that as a magician working with deep and Divine powers, you are constantly working magically, even when you are not aware of it. This is something that took me a few years in my thirties to understand. So when you turn up to one of these powerful areas, you are often not there by chance: the fates have a way of moving you around the chessboard so that your power and skills are placed where they are needed.

I have lost count of the number of times I thought I had planned a trip spontaneously, only to find beings waiting for me when I arrived. And trust me, when you do interact and work with these great powers, you will know about it: there is no subtlety to their power, and your work/interaction will often be greeted by high winds or sudden thunderstorms, sudden minor earthquakes, strange behaviour from the animals, and so forth—you get a big reaction from the local land powers, particularly the first time you visit or do work there.

We'll look at mountains and caves separately, because even though they are of each other, the beings that flow through them are very different in their actions and interactions. We will look at the two different powers that present; then we will look, and work with, their magical aspects.

Mountains

The mountains land beings reside on can be male or female (a god or goddess, a king or queen). And not all mountains are equal: some are very powerful and some are not. Throughout the world myths and legends have survived in various forms of the powerful beings that live on or within mountains, such as the Yeti, Krampus, Trolls, Jötnar, and Bjergtrolde. If your country has mountains, then you will certainly find legends about the beings who reside in them if you do some research.

Particular mountains often have legends of children going missing, people being taken into them only to reappear many years later, and of strange lights appearing over them, strange storms that come from them, and so forth. When you see these legends connected with a mountain, you can guess that it is probably a powerful mountain. In some cultures the mountain will be revered; in other cultures, avoided.

The beings that reside within or around mountains are important for magicians, as without their cooperation you cannot really access the mountain's power for magical work. If the work is beneficial for the mountain power then these beings will either be friendly or conspicuous by their absence. If the work is not in the mountain's interests or you are approaching it in a poorly thought-out way then you will probably be confronted by them and harassed—hence it is useful to know them.

Magical work with mountains is as old as magic itself. All mountains have taproots into the Underworld, all mountains are vessels, and mountains particularly hold powers such as fire, air, or *earth light*, the bright energy that bursts from the ground, whose release can sometimes be observed in an earthquake. Earth light is a pure inner power from deep within the land. It is connected with goddesses such as Brid/Brigh/Breed, a British goddess who later became Brigit.

These energies and powers can be used by the magician, who can also work in service to the land with these powers. Magically, as you should know by now, mountains connect with wind, utterance, swords, and the Underworld fire and light that forges the Sword. Behind that understanding are the powers of the Grindstone, the Limiter, and the Inner Mountain of Understanding (in the Death Vision) where the magician can step off to enter inner realms (hence the connection with ascending/-mountains).

In the tale of Exodus in the Pentateuch, Moses climbs a mountain to gain the Word of God. We all presume that a mountain is central to this tale because it takes you closer to the stars and 'up' in terms of Divinity. That is partially true, but the mountain is also the vessel of air, the container of the Word, and the vessel that receives the sacred sword.

All this has powerful inference for a magician, particularly if they work in service to nations, groups, and lands. Putting the utterance or sword of power in a stone is one thing; putting it in a powerful mountain is another. It is an act that can change the fate of a nation and people. To do such work it must be necessary, and the magician must be on good terms with the mountain's beings if he or she is to not be attacked, blocked, or locked down.

These beings can appear as part animal,¹ part human. The more dangerous the animal, the more dangerous the being. For example, after you have peeled away the superficial layers that have built up around a *Krampus* (St Nicholas, chains, and so forth), what you are left with is a mountain-dwelling being that is part goat, part human, and hostile.

¹Like a goat, a bear, a lion, etc.

In mythology the Krampus tends to harass children, young people, and folks who wander in the mountains, particularly in winter. That is the *mildest* form of these mountain beings: a lot of such mythology is rooted within these inner beings, and subsequently dressed up in stories. A goat being is scary, but it will not tear you to pieces. A vast bear with huge claws or a lion being with sharp teeth is far more of a threat: these inner images have built up as a vocabulary that can tell us just how deadly these beings can be... or not.

So how and why would a magician work with them? They are go-between personalities that interact with all living beings and the mountain's consciousness. They guard, tend, interact, and generally hang out with mountain powers, and they are a layer of consciousness that you can often hit if you go to mountains without the shielding of magic or in ignorance. If you go with magical intent to work in a way that the mountain consciousness has need of and/or has asked for then you are unlikely to see these beings—and if you do then they will guard you rather than threaten you. Similarly if a person wanders physically onto a mountain area guarded by these beings, then if they are harmless they will be ignored. If a person who is a potential threat or particularly interesting to these beings, then the beings will appear and will interfere with them.

Many of these areas have legends about how people were threatened, trapped, injured, or taken by these beings. Yet other people can wander about in perfect safety. It seems to boil down to the individual, the timing, the season, and so forth.

For magicians, however, there is no mild, invisible time to visit these places. Your magic comes with you, and your presence will elicit a reaction. If you find yourself in such a place and are having nightmares, experiences, and so forth, and you have no specific reason to be there, then either get out, take the risk of making friends—which may or may not work—or do a job while you are there.

If you want to work with a mountain and have a good magical reason then first go in vision and present yourself to its beings. Tread carefully, never get defensive or angry, and always be totally honest with them. The magical reasons for working with mountains are varied, but they are all connected to work with the stone shield, the sword, utterance, or fire.

Vision method for making contact

Always work this method with a mountain or large hill on the landmass where you live, so that the work you do is relevant to the land. It is pointless working with a mountain on the other side of the planet if you cannot go there at least once to have a physical presence there.

When you go in vision to meet these beings who dwell on or in mountains, remember that they are not deities and can be harmful or hostile at times. Because of this, until you have forged a friendship or connection with them, go with another being. This can be a contact that you work with in your magical space, a contact out of the Inner Library, or it can be a creature from the land where you live with whom you have made a connection.

You can access these beings by approaching the mountain either through the inner landscape, through the Inner Library, or over the magical north threshold with focused intent. A very powerful way to approach a mountain and its inner inhabitants is to go deep down into the Underworld to the cave with the Foundation Stone, find the air hole in the cave roof that corresponds to that mountain/range, and then ‘flow up’ that hole. This brings you to the inside of the mountain from a powerful place. Then you can step through the mountain’s caves out onto its surface. If the mountain’s deep consciousness accepts you then the beings on the mountain’s surface will also accept you. It is a tougher way to get there and a riskier one, but it paves a deeper path to the many layers of beings that operate within the mountain: it is very much an explorer’s way of doing things.

Choose one of those ways and go to a mountain or large hill steeped in folklore. Connect with its beings, then also with the mountain’s deeper deity power. And when you get back, write everything up immediately.

Once this connection has been made and you have been accepted, you can go back to work on, or with, the mountain when you need to. What that may involve will be made apparent to you in time, if it is necessary.

Caves

Caves, whether they are in mountains or not, are another powerful tool for the magician. You have already done quite a bit of work with them.

Whereas mountain power is often most conducive to the present and future, caves are about the past and the Underworld. The deity powers in caves are usually female, and they often have 'male' guardian beings.

Caves are worked with a lot in magic: they can be places to rest, regenerate, and to commune with the female power of the land. They can also be worked with to utter within, working with an octave of the utterance of creation flowing into the vessel—the land. The guardians and beings that live within and around caves are pretty distinct from the beings that appear when you are trying to reach into the power of the mountain. And the faery beings deep in caves are often an older line of being, and not so human-friendly.

The best way to learn about a cave's power, if one is near you, is to go and stay in it overnight. Sleep and dream there, and also lie in its stillness and let the beings come close to you. Physically spending time in a cave can teach you a great deal more than going there in vision. If you can work in vision *within* the cave then you are far more likely to get real contact with these beings, particularly if you show that you are willing to be helpful if needed. Some caves are not safe for this magical work: you will find that out soon enough, so that you can get out.

Also remember that some caves are not safe for wholly practical reasons: if you are not used to working in caves, and the cave is on an active faultline, then going in and triggering things may not be too safe. Also, if you do decide to explore a cave then make sure it has no hidden pitches (drops) and that it does not flood from rainfall. If you are not an experienced caver with equipment, never go deep in a cave, just go far enough to be in darkness and not to be disturbed—and always read up on the mapping of the cave first, so that you know all its physical dangers.

If there are no caves around you to explore then the lesser option is to visit one in vision. Your past visions with caves were structured so as not to trigger any guardians, both through the way that you got there and what intent you held. But if you find your own way to a cave in vision then you will likely trigger the beings that guard it or live nearby, which gives you the chance to interact with them. Such exploration of caves would be useful to you, and the knowledge you will gain will help you in your future work.

Task: Mountain and cave folklore research

There are powerful mountains and caves all over the world that have legends attached to them. Research various mountain and cave legends from around the world—and even if you have done this before in your training, do it again now, as you will probably spot more clues. The stories and myths you find will teach you a great deal about the various beings that can be found in these places.

In truth, faery and land beings are as numerous and diverse as humanity. Think about it: humans from different continents differ very much in appearance, culture, health, habits, language, and so forth. On a continent there are different countries with major differences between them. Within a country there are regional differences, and even within extended families there are differences. The same is true of faery and land beings: the diversity of presentation, language, personality, energetic makeup, and so forth is vast. Because of this is impossible to cover in lessons all the different types of beings that you are likely to come across.

And within that diversity is also individualism: just like humans, each being has its own unique and complex personality. No matter how much I wrote, I could never cover all the variables. All I can do is give you some basics for some of the more common beings; the rest you will have to find out for yourself through experimentation and awareness.

Once you have built methods for finding and interacting with a few of these beings then, just like learning about different people and learning how to make friends in strange places, the more you do it, the better you will get at it.

From a magical perspective try to widen your experiences relative to land features: attempt to make contacts in deserts, forests, mountains, rivers, caves, etc. Keep good notes that you can refer back to, as something seemingly unimportant could very well become really important in the future. I have found this to be truer of faery work than any other kind of magical work: it is odd, unreliable, tricky, unpredictable, and sometimes downright weird.

Many myths and stories will give you pointers about how to approach these beings: often they will tell you of certain taboos, gifts that have worked well, and what sort of things they do in a particular area.

Also look up the relationships in particular areas between plants and the faery beings. Late nineteenth century and early twentieth century texts are best for such things. Not only do these plants indicate associated beings where they grow profusely, but the magician can learn to work with the plants in various alchemical ways. We will look at this in the next lesson. So go and do some exploring, then write down all your findings.

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