

A Short Course in Scrying

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Introduction

This paper was written in response to requests by participants of the “enochian-1” and “Praxis” internet discussion groups; it first appeared as a series of posts on those groups in early 1997. The current version has been slightly rewritten to enhance the clarity of the presentation, and to include a small amount of additional material.

The techniques described herein are adaptations of techniques I learned from two sources. The first of these is Mr. Brian D., who taught me the basic method many years ago. The second is Mr. Paul Solomon and his group, the Fellowship of the Inner Light, who had transformed that method into the foundation of their system of spiritual work.

Special thanks also to the “secret chiefs” of the Fellowship, for their direct and effective contribution to my work at a critical point. Some debts can never be repaid; the best that can be done is to pass on what was given.

Chapter 1. Preliminary Considerations

To begin, the reader should understand that scrying is as much a learned skill as is reading or ice-skating. Persistent practice is necessary to teach the nervous system how to do it, even where the person has some innate talent. And as with other learned skills, there is a learning curve. At first there will be a long period when you don't seem to be making any significant progress. Then things will suddenly fall together and your practice will improve markedly in a short period, before leveling off again at something close to your highest level of skill.

It is best to expect a learning period of several months; don't expect quick results. It is likely that you will have occasional sessions where things work much better than usual. Don't be too encouraged by these, as it is likely that you will fall back to a lower level in the next session. When an improvement lasts for a week or more, you are justified in judging it a genuine advance.

Before getting to scrying techniques as such, I want to discuss the various kinds of distractions that can cause trouble for beginners, and suggest some solutions. Distractions can be generally classified in three types:

- Physical distractions. E.g., itches, muscle aches and twitches, etc.
- External distractions. House and street noises, other residents of your home, etc.
- Mental distractions. The internal "chatter" that we are all prone to.

Four of the traditional practices of yoga are intended to reduce and eliminate such distractions. Asana and (to a small extent) pranayama deal with physical distractions; pratyahara with external distractions, and dharana with mental distractions. These high-discipline practices are more than most people will need for our current purposes; perfection isn't necessary, just something "good enough". But those who find they do need more than the simple techniques described here may wish to look into them.

One tradition of asana practice seeks to eliminate physical distractions by training the body to remain in a single posture for long periods of time. The muscles are trained to maintain a state of tension such that the body remains locked into the chosen posture. The lack of movement reduces the intensity of the body's sensory signals to the brain. That is to say, repetitive, unchanging signals are completely processed at the pre-conscious level and are never brought to the attention of the conscious mind. Unfortunately, the traditional practice usually produces extreme pain for a long period before the muscles are trained to a given posture.

The same effect can be produced without the painful intermediate stage by achieving a state of profound physical relaxation. The nervous system doesn't care

why it is getting repetitive signals from the body, but only that it is so. Lack of movement engendered by relaxation is just as good at producing such signals as is lack of movement produced by muscle locking.

The practitioner should begin by choosing a comfortable posture that can be maintained without muscular tension. A sitting posture is recommended over a supine position, since relaxing while lying down easily leads to sleep. I preferred to sit cross-legged on a bed, with my back supported by a pillow against the wall. A high-backed easy chair is as good. All that matters is that you can be perfectly relaxed in the position without falling over.

A certain type of breathing can help promote relaxation. Take a deep gulp of air through your mouth, breathing from the belly; don't strain to take in the maximum. Hold it as long as is comfortable, and then release it, allowing the weight of your ribs and the natural tension of your diaphragm to push the air out of your lungs without forcing it. Relax for a moment at the end of the breath. Repeat for one minute, or until you start to feel dizzy. You will find that as you release the breath, all your muscles have a tendency to loosen. (This type of breathing is, perhaps not coincidentally, identical to the way one takes a joint of marijuana.)

Once you are comfortable and have done the breathing, begin to work at relaxing each muscle in your body individually. Start with the scalp and face, and work your way down the body, working outwards from the spine at each level. Complete relaxation of any muscle will be accompanied by a pleasant "melting" sensation; try to make your whole body feel as if it has melted into a puddle of warm pudding.

By the time you have reached your feet, you will probably find that your face and scalp muscles have tensed up again, just from your concentration on the task. Start again at the top and work your way down, repeating as often as needed to get to a state of complete relaxation. When the physical relaxation is complete, try to extend it to the inside of your head as well, letting your awareness float in a warm internal glow.

While this exercise is simple and easily mastered, it is very important. Most of the other forms of distraction that practitioners encounter are accompanied by tension reactions in some part of the body. An extreme example is the "startle" reaction, in which some small noise triggers a state of high alert in your body; your heart suddenly jumps and increases its rate of beating, and every muscle in the body suddenly tenses. The parts of the mind responsible for these reactions and distractions are often not directly accessible to consciousness; but since body and mind influence each other, you can begin to subvert and eliminate the reactions by eliminating their physical manifestations.

The other aspect of controlling distractions is to understand the nature of the human mind. Each of us is not a single being, but a multitude. Our minds are composed of many "sub-minds", each with its own special functions. Some of these

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(the visual sub-minds, for instance) are so intimately connected with our consciousness that we never notice their functioning unless something goes seriously wrong. Others act with greater independence. But while they are not accessible in the same way that, e.g., the language forming parts of the mind are, there is communication back and forth between them, and between them and the conscious mind.

The conscious self, the part of the mind that calls itself "I", is supposed to function as a mediator, arbiter, synthesizer and director between these other aspects of our being. Its function is to take the results of their work, compare and evaluate them, make use of them to act in the world, and direct their future work on the basis of the results obtained. When there are conflicts between different sub-minds, the conscious self is supposed to "keep the peace" by balancing their respective needs and viewpoints.

Unfortunately, human evolution is not yet at the point where the consciousness automatically functions in the best way possible. The capability for it to do so is there, but it requires training and experience to develop its proper relationship to the other sub-minds. Lacking that training, we too often end up acting as censors and tyrants rather than mediators, suppressing troublesome messages from these parts rather than dealing with them. And as often as they are suppressed, they leak up through some other channel, producing distractions and what Crowley called "breaks" in one's practice.

The key to permanently relieving both physical and mental distractions is to deal with them in the right way, immediately, as you become aware that they are occurring. You have to re-condition yourself into the desired response while the distracting sensations or thoughts are still present in your mind, and the physical tensions are still in your body. The sub-minds aren't particularly time-conscious; they understand what is happening "now" much better than events in the past or future.

Once you have achieved a state of physical relaxation, try just sitting in the relaxed state, with your mind not focused on any particular thing and with no intention of doing anything else for a while. It is a sure bet that after a few minutes, some part of your mind will take the opportunity to bring its own concerns to the surface, and you will start talking to yourself mentally about whatever it is concerned with.

As soon as you realize you are following some line of thought, stop and assess your body's state. Do the relaxation exercises until you are back in a completely relaxed condition. Then imagine that you are extending that relaxation to the part of your mind that brought up the thoughts you were thinking. Imagine that part enveloped and permeated by a warm, melting glow, while simultaneously you talk to it, telling it: "Relax, be still, there is nothing you need to do right now." Successful relaxation of a sub-mind through this procedure will produce a sensation of a sudden, mildly pleasurable energy-release in some part of your brain, sometimes accompanied by a sensation of "clearness".

It is likely that by the time you get one sub-mind quieted -- or even while you are still working on it -- another part will pop up with a different thought-train. Keep working on the first instance and ignore the new one. Don't be concerned if you don't get to everything that comes along during this practice; the things you miss are certain to show up again at a later time. Do one thing at a time and don't jump around. If you forget what you are doing somewhere in the middle of things, just start over with the relaxation exercises, and unfocusing your attention.

This same technique can be applied to external disturbances. The only difference is that when telling the disturbed sub-mind to relax, you tell it that the noise or other distraction is unimportant and not worth attention.

The Fellowship of the Inner Light teaches a slight variation on this method, which some people may prefer. They use a particular biblical (?) phrase when speaking to the sub-minds; it is almost a mantra in their version of this practice. The phrase is: "Be still, and know that I Am god." The intent of this usage is to assert the conscious self's rightful place as director and decision-maker, while at the same time acknowledging the existence of the sub-minds as quasi-separate entities.

And rather than just sitting with one's attention unfocused, they prefer that the practitioner use a mantra: "Eheieh", meaning "I am", the highest name of God in the Hebrew cabala. The mantra should be spoken internally, in a relaxed and casual manner; i.e., whenever the practitioner happens to think of it, rather than in steady repetition. I personally find that the use of a mantra tends to produce tensions rather than alleviate them, but this may not be the case for others.

Continued use of this simple practice will, over time, result in a profound reduction in the amount of verbal "noise" your mind produces, and make it substantially easier to concentrate on the visual images of the "magickal space" techniques to be described in the next section. You don't have to be proficient at this before going on to create a magickal space; the two efforts can be done in parallel, with each reinforcing the other.

Chapter 2. Creating a magickal space

The foundation of all magickal work is the imagination. The part of the mind that creates images serves as a meeting ground between the conscious mind, the unconscious parts of our being, and the magickal universe at large. Visual symbols are the primary means by which meaning is communicated in the magickal worlds. The more flexible you make your imagination, the more effective your magickal work can be.

The best exercise I know of for developing the imagination is called "creating a refuge" or "creating a magickal space". I first learned the technique from a Vietnam War veteran. He said that the U.S. Army Special Forces taught it as a means of maintaining a sense of privacy, personal integrity, and personal space under conditions -- as in Viet Cong POW camps -- where these things would be deliberately denied to him by his enemies. When I encountered the Fellowship of the Inner Light a few years later, I found that they were teaching essentially the same technique for purposes of self-mastery and spiritual development.

Once you become practiced in the method it requires no special physical place; it is completely "portable" and can be done anywhere you can sit and relax for a moment. I have used it effectively in many "un-magickal" environments; e.g., a crowded government office, a busy commercial hotel, and in the middle of the Las Vegas COMDEX show.

The basic idea is very simple. You make up an imaginary world that you would enjoy being in, and then you imagine yourself walking around in this world. Not much different, in principle, than what people do in any ordinary daydream. But here the idea is to work for consistency, so that it appears the same every time you enter it, and to continually add details to it. With practice and familiarity this imaginary world will begin to take on a sense of being a "real" place, not real in the same way as the physical world, but having permanence and a separate existence nonetheless.

For purposes of illustration, I am going to describe one of my own magickal spaces, one that I no longer use. It is important to understand that at every step, the images you use should be those that feel right to *you*; this is to be your own private space and its contents should always come out of yourself and be meaningful to you. Your space may resemble mine in some aspects; if so, that is all right. More likely it will not, and that too is perfectly appropriate.

The steps described here should be done sequentially, but you do not have to be perfect at any step before going on to the next. Right from the beginning, you can work on several steps in a single session. However, in any given session most of your attention should be given to the earliest steps in whatever group you are

working on. As each step becomes more familiar it will take less practice to reach a satisfactory level and you can naturally give more attention to the next.

Establish the boundaries

Until your magickal space is well established, you should begin every session by affirming its invulnerability. Imagine that your space is invisible to any being but yourself, and is impenetrable by any force or person without your express, conscious permission. Think up an image of your space's boundaries that reflects these ideas. I imagine my magickal spaces as "pocket universes" that, seen from the outside, are so tiny as to be lost in the immensity of our own universe; seen from inside, they are as big as I want or need them to be. Other people I know of imagine theirs as surrounded by an adamantine shell, or by a science-fiction force field that "bends" all forces so that they bypass it.

Once you have the boundary of your space established, imagine yourself inside it. As you enter into it, feel all the pressures and demands of your daily life being locked out behind you, unable to follow you in. Imagine that they became completely disconnected from you at the moment you entered your space. They are not trying to force their way in; they can not even sense your space or yourself inside it and are drifting away without finding anything to attach to. Feel yourself to be totally safe, totally free of any connection to the mundane world.

This matter of feeling safe is very important. As in the relaxation exercises, the feelings you generate are the way you tell the unconscious parts of yourself, the "sub-minds", what to believe and how to act. As far as they are concerned, what you feel is what is real; tell them something often enough, and they will begin to cooperate in making it so, to an extent you could not manage with your conscious resources. If you feel safe and free from pressure in your magickal space, then in a short time you will actually *be* safe and free there.

Create the landscape.

Once you have established a secure space, take some time to think about the general layout of your world. Decide on the major features of the landscape, what sorts of buildings or other structures you want. Make a mental map of the areas in your world that you will want to visit most often. Once you decide on these major features, they should not change.

A few ground rules for inventing your world:

- You should keep the contents of your world absolutely private. Do not speak of them to anyone, and do not write them down anywhere. This first world is going to be your secret refuge and workplace, and much of its protection comes from no one knowing what it is like. Once you have

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the technique down, you can build other magickal spaces for public purposes.

- Make your world much bigger than you could maintain by conscious use of your imagination. Create as many detailed areas as you want, but surround these with large regions whose landscape is only known in a general way, and whose specific content is unknown. These allow room for expansion, and for the "surprise me" exercises later on in this paper.
- Make the world a place where you feel comfortable and safe, so that it reinforces the impressions established in the previous step, and make it a place where you can have fun.
- You can populate your world if you wish, but DO NOT, under any circumstances, use images of living people in your world. For some time, all of the contents of your world will be a reflection of yourself in one way or another. There is a possibility that images of people will be "taken over" by some unconscious part of your mind as a vehicle of expression. If you use images of real people, the behavior of the image may carry over into your relationships with the real person, with ill effect.

Begin to build your world by picking one location within your "map" of it, and imagine yourself standing at that spot. Fix the relationships between various landmarks in your mind, and see them surrounding you at the proper angles and distances. Fill in the details to the degree that you would actually be able to see if you were standing at a similar spot in the real world.

For example, one of my magickal spaces has a landscape of hills and ravines covered by a thick forest like pre-colonial America. The central area contains a rather utilitarian castle on a low bluff overlooking a large river meadow. A small tame river meanders along one edge of the meadow. Various outbuildings and special-purpose areas are dispersed in clearings in the nearby forest.

I began to build this world by imagining myself standing in the meadow, looking north. I can see the green grasses, small colorful wildflowers, and an occasional cowpie nearby. Animal paths wander about, and a more direct human-made path goes from the bluff to the river. The bluff appears to be made of flaky granite, and the castle is right on the brink of it; a couple of winters' worth of erosion to the bluff might undermine the nearest wall. I can only see all of one castle wall from this position, and part of another; I can just barely see the top of a tower above the wall. All of the walls are made of dressed gray stone without mortar. Below the castle a tunnel or gate is cut into the bluff at the meadow level.

Turning to the east, I see that the bluff gradually reduces in height towards the south, coming down to the meadow somewhat south of my current position. I can see the end of a dirt road where it curves off the bluff and into the meadow. More forest rising behind the road implies that the ground beyond is higher. I know from my "map" that there is an area of grassland a mile or two in that direction.

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Looking south I see that the river continues in that direction, and passes through a cut in the hills several miles away. Sunlight glares off the entire length of the river in that direction; a haze prevents me from seeing anything beyond the gap.

Looking west, I see that the river is fairly shallow at this point; small ripples cover its surface as if it were flowing over a gravel bar. The forest beyond it is edged with undergrowth, mostly honeysuckle bushes, which has been tramped down in places as if by animals coming for water. Paths leading into the forest quickly disappear into the shadows of the trees.

You do not need to fill in all the details of the scene consciously; in fact, it is better to encourage your imagination fill in many of the details by itself. Give it the general outline and let it show you what you should see in such a location. E.g., instead of trying to imagine each blade of grass and wildflower in the meadow, I would let my unconscious do so. If I liked what it did, I would send it a feeling of approval; if I didn't like it, I would tell it to try again, and turn away for a moment to let it change things.

Once you have the view from a particular location fixed fairly well, move to other nearby locations -- twenty to thirty yards away, for outdoor locations -- and imagine what things would look like from this new position. What does the changed perspective reveal that was hidden before? What was unseen from the previous location that can be seen now? (Note that perspective in magickal space is never quite the same as it is in the physical world, though the difference is hard to quantify; you will not be able to make things appear in precisely the way you see natural objects.)

Keep moving to new locations and build up an image of the scene as it would be seen at each one, until you have a good sense of the place as an actual "space". In the example space, I spent some time going to various positions in the meadow, noting that less of the castle was visible close to the bluff, more of it from farther away; noting the colored gravel in the riverbed, and how it made a ford across the river, etc. Then I went up to the castle and looked outward from positions on every side of it, seeing the wider landscape, filling in the positions of various known places in the forest, deciding how far the grasslands extended behind the castle, and so on. Do this for your own space.

When you have established the perspective from several locations, try moving smoothly between them, with the parallax of the surroundings changing continuously, as it does when you move about in the physical world.

At first you will find that your perspective on your world has a tendency to withdraw from the scene; your imagination will try to view it as if seen through a window, or on a movie screen, or like a tableau in a museum. Whenever you notice this has happened, firmly place your viewpoint back inside the scene, and fix it there by turning and looking at what is in every direction around you.

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Also at first, your world will tend to be still and tableau-like, a frozen image. Once you have the appearance of things fairly well established, try bringing some action into the scenes. Let grass and tree limbs be blown by breezes, and hear the sounds the wind makes. Watch water move and hear the sounds it makes. Add some living creatures to the landscape and let them move around in ways appropriate to their natures.

It is also important that you stay relaxed throughout the exercise; doing this work should be like a relaxing daydream, not requiring fixed concentration and alertness. Do the relaxation exercise before starting each session, and do it again if you find yourself getting tense at any time during the session. Let your mind do as much of the work as it can without conscious decisions on your part, and encourage it to do more.

You should spend at least several weeks on this exercise, and as much more as you want. Take your time, relax, and give as much work as you need to filling in the details in all the important locations in your world. Indoor locations should be given as much time as the general landscape. The more thoroughly you do the work in these early stages, the more effective your scrying will be later.

Establish a body in the magickal space

The final step in the basic process of creating a magickal space is to create a body for yourself within that space. Up to this point in the exercises, you have been pretty much a naked viewpoint, seeing the world but not interacting with it to any great extent. Now you need to build up an image of your body within the space, and learn to use it. To do this, you need to develop a conscious awareness of the sensory surface of your body and of its kinesthetics, and duplicate these in an "astral" body. Judging from accounts by students at the Fellowship of the Inner Light, this part of the work gives people the most difficulty, and people will have widely varying degrees of success in it.

Before entering your magickal space, stand up and relax, preferably without any clothes or jewelry. Close your eyes and put your attention onto your skin. Even without anything touching you, you should be able to feel a sense of activity or sensitivity in your skin, a "readiness to feel". Note the way your body's shape is outlined by the skin sensations.

Next, plan out some series of movements that will move every part of your body in turn, through most of its range of movement. Tai Chi or Yoga exercises are good for this if you know them. Still keeping your eyes closed, go through the movements and note how each part of your body feels in different positions, and note what your kinesthetic sense tells you about the positioning of your limbs as you move.

Finally, do the same sequence again with your eyes open. This time pay attention to the way what you see of your body changes as you go through the

movements. Pay particular attention to your hands and arms. Try to consciously associate the image of your body with the sensations you get as you move.

Each of these three steps focuses on one of the major aspects of your body image: your sense of the body's boundaries, its internal sensations, and its appearance to your eyes as you interact with your surroundings. Under normal conditions, these sensations are usually unconscious, and are always secondary to whatever activity you are engaged in. You need to be aware of them consciously in order to build yourself a second body inside your magickal space. If you wish, you can do these exercises separately from your practice in your space, until you are ready to make your magickal body.

Once you are ready, sit down and go through the relaxation exercises, and enter your magickal space. Once there try to feel as if you have a body in the magickal space that feels exactly like your physical body, but is completely separate from the physical. Go through the three steps in your imagination, and try to duplicate all the sensations you had while doing them physically. By doing this you will, over time, gradually build up a perception of your "astral body" as a distinct entity, within and a part of your magickal space.

After finishing this exercise in each session in your magickal space, spend some time just moving around your world, touching and manipulating things as if they were physical objects. Things you touch should give sensations appropriate to their nature; bricks and stone should feel hard and rough; metals should feel cool, with textures appropriate to their shape; wood should feel warm and grainy, etc.

If you have rituals that you do on a daily basis (and haven't already started doing them in your magickal space) create a dedicated place in your magickal space for ritual work and begin doing them there as part of this practice. The regular, repetitive movements of ritual work will serve to reinforce your body image, and doing the rituals will begin to turn your space from a mere refuge into something useful for your magickal work. In particular, I would recommend practicing the Golden Dawn's pentagram and hexagram rituals; these will be important later, as a means of testing the visions you obtain when you start scrying.

Potential Problems

The most common problem people encounter in this part of the work is maintaining a consistent shape for their body. They find that even after long practice their head and arms will remain reasonably well defined, but the rest of their imaginary body has a tendency to blur into amorphousness. This is a reflection of the relative density of nerves in the physical body. Eighty percent of our sensory and kinesthetic nerves are in the head and hands; half of the remainder are in the upper chest, shoulders and arms. Our perception of the rest of the body is substantially more vague, and depends as much on sight as on direct sensory connections. When one tries to build an astral body, the mind tends to give each part of it a size proportional to the relative nerve densities.

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This is really not so bad. You don't need legs in the magickal space, since you are moving yourself around by your volition rather than by pushing yourself with muscles. You *do* need arms and hands to do the gestures of magickal rituals, and lips and jaws to speak the words. If you find that after some practice you can't maintain a full body image, don't worry about it; just get by with what you do have, and imagine the rest of your body concealed by a robe or other loose garment.

The second problem people have is that their physical body twitches or moves when they try to move their magickal body. They unconsciously tense up the physical body, trying to "lock" it so that it won't follow along with the magickal body. This is a matter of lifelong habit, of associating the sensations of movement with the volitional act of moving your muscles. One has to disassociate the sensations from the volition, and another simple exercise will help.

In your magickal space, imagine you are standing with your arms held out in front of you, palms facing downwards. Now imagine that you are turning them so that the palms face upwards, but that you are turning them *entirely with your eyes*. That is, you see them turning over, and feel the sensations of the changed position, but you don't involve the part of your mind that moves the muscles. You should *see* your arms move without willing them to move. (In fact, you are directing your will through your visual centers instead of your muscles, but it should not seem like you are willing it, at first.)

The first few times you do this, your physical arms are almost certain to tense up into rigidity. When you notice this happening, stop and do the relaxation exercises until your body is loose again, and then go back to trying to move your magickal hands again.

Once you succeed in turning your astral hands over without tensing your physical hands, you should try moving the fingers individually. Curl each one over onto the palm, and straighten it out again. Again, do the relaxation exercise whenever your physical body tenses up. When you succeed in moving the individual fingers without tensing up, try various coordinated movements: clenching your fists, grasping objects, karate chops, Vulcan greeting-gestures, and so on.

The hands are the hardest part of the magickal body to separate from the physical, because major portions of our nervous systems go into controlling their movement. Once you have managed to dissociate movement of your magickal and physical hands, the rest of your body will be very easy, and can be done with similar exercises, if necessary.

Chapter 3. Putting your magickal space to work

Concerning symbols

By the time you have worked the exercises in the previous sections for a few months, you will have established a solid foundation for all your future magickal work. Practically every magickal and meditation technique you will ever encounter is a variation or extension of the skills you have learned in building your magickal space.

Every person will have a different level of peak performance with these techniques. Only a rare few are able to enter wholly into the magickal space, and become entirely unconscious of their physical body; for these people, the end result of this work is indistinguishable from the classical descriptions of astral projection. Most people will find that a certain portion of their awareness remains "outside", and that the intensity of the sensations they have never attains the brightness and clarity of normal perception. I fall at the low end of this latter category myself; in my visions, colors are more implied than they are perceived directly, and most of the time I need to focus intently to perceive fine details.

Being able to put all of your awareness into the magickal space is not necessarily an advantage. What matters more is that you make the best use of the level of skill you do have. It is the meaning you can extract from your experiences, the insights you gain into yourself and the world, and the uses to which you can put them, that count the most. Bright and glorious visions are nothing, if they have no useful content or if your awareness and understanding are not (gradually but permanently) expanded thereby.

Having established the basics, in the following sections we are going to look at various exercises, all of which are forms of "scrying". Before going into the details, we need to consider -- in a general way -- the nature of the things that a person experiences while scrying.

Dreams, it is often said, are the realm of symbols; the same is true of scrying. But while the symbols of dreams are usually expressions of processes happening below the conscious level of awareness, the symbols seen in scrying are often (in an ideal world, always) the expression of processes and events occurring *above* the level at which consciousness resides. They are the lowest and most readily apprehended aspect of processes that the consciousness can not yet completely encompass. In a sense, the symbols you see are no more than anchor points; a convenient means by which your awareness is given a connection to something coming from outside its current scope.

The form of the symbol does not necessarily bear any direct relation to the nature of that to which you are being connected. Some symbols -- such as the Greek gods or the cabalist's Tree of Life -- have forms that directly reflect some aspect of the inner reality. Others have connections that are largely a matter of convention; they relate to particular aspects of the inner reality only because we habitually use them in such a way. The cabalistic color attributes are in this category. And others yet are seized upon to serve the needs of the moment, and have no particular meaning outside the context of the vision in which they occur.

But in all these cases, when a symbol is seen in a vision it has a direct connection to some magickal power, archetype, thought-form or entity. In order to get the greatest benefit out of your scrying, you must continually attempt to sense *beyond* the visible or verbal symbol, extending your awareness along the path it provides to apprehend that which it embodies.

Accomplishing this is a delicate task. The relaxation exercises described previously again become important, this time the portion of them dealing with quieting the mind. This is important in two ways: first, because the mind's internal chatter will tend to overshadow and conceal that which is being communicated through the symbol, and second, because active parts of the mind will attempt to twist the meaning of the symbol to fit with their own preconceptions.

This is especially the case where the practitioner has personal desires that relate to the information being conveyed, or where the person's self-image feels threatened. If your conception of yourself is dependent on a particular world-view and the information does not accord with that view, it will be almost impossible for you to see it clearly.

To reduce the possibility of this happening, you should also work consciously to develop a mental state of unattachment towards the content of your visions, a deliberate disregard for any personal significance they contain, and a deliberate refusal to evaluate the contents for truth or falsity. Critical evaluation of the results of a scrying session is definitely necessary, but the time for that evaluation is *after* the session is completed. While the work is proceeding, you should seek to be in a perfect state of suspended judgment; neither believing nor disbelieving anything that you see or sense, simply seeking to receive the symbols and their attached meanings precisely as they present themselves.

When using scrying techniques in magickal work, you are always trying to penetrate unknown "territory". Any work that can result in a spiritual advance will be, by definition, at least partly outside the scope of your current perspective and understanding. Like anything truly new, it takes the mind a while to adjust and be able to see it clearly. Further, the meanings behind any symbol can have many different levels; it may take a long time for these to "soak in" to your awareness, and the final significance may be very different from the first, superficial appearances. In my own work, it has sometimes taken up to a year and a half, with repeated exposures, before I fully comprehended what I was being shown. Thus, no

evaluation you make should ever be so definite that you cannot change it or add to it; all meanings should be tentative until they have been repeatedly reinforced by additional experiences.

I cannot give any assurance as to the manner in which the meanings attached to a symbol will appear to a particular person. I do not have enough information from other people to characterize any particular way as "typical". In my own case, they come in two or three ways, depending on the amount of power I have managed to invoke and how high above my normal level of consciousness I have managed to raise my awareness.

Usually, they appear as groups of thoughts or associations that appear simultaneously in my mind with the words spoken by some entity, providing a detailed context for the words; it is as if the thoughts out of which the entity produced the words were being transmitted along with the words. If I am looking at a visual symbol rather than hearing words, then they appear as sudden detailed "realizations" of what the symbol is intended to represent, which appear instantly in my awareness.

Less frequently, the hidden meaning of symbols appears as an entire story line. A long series of events appear in the mind as if some part of myself had been taken away, taken on a long tour through magickal spaces, and was then returned to the exact moment in time from which it had left. The complete tour is instantly "remembered" as it happened, even though for my conscious awareness, no time at all has passed.

In the rarest case, the meaning appears to my awareness as a tightly bound packet of mystical energy, which sits in my mind and gradually "unravels" itself into words, images, and meanings over a period ranging from minutes to weeks. These "packets" seem to be some magickal equivalent of books. Their content usually does not seem to be directed at the particular person receiving them, but rather at some general audience; and the content is often radically different from the perspectives and ideas the seer would normally be interested in.

You should not take these as being the only ways in which the meanings behind symbols can present themselves to you; you may find that some other means is more typical for you. But if you do happen to receive information in any of these ways, you can feel confident that you have had some success in this matter.

The Magickal Mystery Tour

The first scrying technique is very simple, and can be very entertaining. The results you get with this method can range from silly to sublime, from inconsequential to important, depending on the conditions of the moment. This method lets you acquire a feel for the ways in which your unconscious mind symbolizes things, and gives you some practice in doing so in a non-critical situation.

Enter your magickal space and re-affirm your safety there, using the method previously described. Then go to some familiar outdoor location in your space, and look around to establish your bearings and the relative positions of the other familiar regions.

Having done this, imagine that these familiar territories are surrounded by vast areas about which you know nothing as yet, in which anything at all might be happening at any given moment. Decide that you are going to take a walk and look around some part of those areas. Then look around you again, pick a direction, and start walking. As you move out of your familiar areas, don't try to imagine that you will find any particular features in the landscape, and don't try to look for any particular thing. Let your imagination fill in the features of the areas you pass through without interference.

Move around in the wilderness until you find some interesting item. It might be an interesting natural feature, an object, a building, a person or animal. Examine the object or explore the building, remembering that everything unusual has some sort of meaning in a magickal space. If nothing clear comes to you, move along in the direction you were going. Sometimes it happens that several locations in sequence tell a story that isn't clear until you have been to all of them; other times, the first locations you come to are simply not very important.

Talk to a person or animal as if they existed independently of yourself; treat them with the respect and politeness you would give to any stranger you encounter in an isolated place. Try to maintain a friendly and unthreatening attitude no matter what the being does, and remember that since all this is taking place in your private world, you are perfectly safe. Don't try to script their actions, just let them speak and act spontaneously. Asking a being you meet to tell you about itself and what it is doing will nearly always get a positive response.

If the being does not acknowledge your presence, or does not respond to your queries, then watch what they are doing for a time, until you don't see any point in continuing to do so. Then move on to another location. If they do respond, then when you have run out of questions ask them if there is anything else interesting to see in the neighborhood, and follow any directions they might give you.

Usually such explorations will tell you something about yourself, your life-situation, or the current conditions surrounding your magickal work. It will all be in symbolic form, of course; the obvious meaning of the events won't always be their deepest significance. But once you understand the symbolism, the results usually turn out to be something useful or interesting, though not always important.

This method is particularly good for those times when you know something important is going on in the magickal side of your life, but you can't tell what it is. It is also very good for any situation where you aren't certain what questions you should be asking. To use the method in such a way, hold the idea that you need information or answers in your mind while you are picking the direction for your

tour, and try to sense the direction in which the answers lie; there will always be such a direction. Then go in that direction and continue finding interesting things until you feel like you have received all of the answer; this will usually manifest as a sense of relief or a reduction in some vaguely-sensed pressure. Then consider the things you have seen in relation to your current situation; the meanings they contain will usually provide essential clues you need.

The Magick Mirror

The next method is very close to a "classical" scrying method, save that the appurtenances are astral rather than physical. The method is capable of endless variations, of which only a few will be described.

Pick a convenient location within your magickal space. If you intend to scry in conjunction with invocations of magickal forces, a consecrated temple or magickal workroom would be the best place; otherwise, any place where you feel most comfortable and secure.

In that place, imagine a frame, as for a large mirror. This should be at least your own height, and of a width such that all of it can be in your field of vision at the same time. Now imagine that this frame contains a sheet of glass. But rather than being a silvered mirror the glass appears to contain a deep, transparent blackness; as if behind the glass were a void of indefinite extent.

You can get an idea of the correct appearance -- and construct a physical magick mirror at the same time -- by taking a piece of half-silvered or quarter-silvered glass (from a scientific supply house) and laying it on a piece of good-quality black velvet. Look into this under very low illumination and it will seem to have an indefinite depth; that is, it will seem to have depth, but you will be unable to tell exactly how deep it is.

You should at the same time imagine, and *feel* a total confidence, that the answer to anything you look for will appear to you in this mirror. Don't get bogged down in how the mirror does this, simply generate an emotional confidence that it works.

The basic use of this mirror is fairly simple. You hold the thought of what you want to know about in your mind, and then you imagine that the mirror is "tuning in" to that thought, using the thought to make a connection to some place where the answer can be found. Once you feel that the mirror is tuned, release the thought and wait in mental silence for images to arise out of the darkness of the mirror. And as with the "mystery tour" technique, the images will be accompanied by meanings that you will be able to "hear" or sense in your mind.

There are several variations on the basic method for different purposes. Once you get accustomed to the basic method, you can make use of those described or invent your own. As you come to be familiar with the method, your own intuition

will become a better guide to its use than any "official" technique; do not be afraid to experiment.

For psychometry, hold an object in your (physical) hand, and imagine that there is a link between it and the mirror. Then look to the mirror to reflect the "impressions" contained in the object. If it is an object that is connected by use to some person, you must specify that it is impressions of the person that you want, not impressions of the object itself; otherwise you may get some odd results. For example, I once tried to psychometrize a flint knife-blade, and got a geological history of the stratum from which the flint had come. Its connections to its rocky origins were stronger than its connections to the persons who had made and used it, and these came across most intensely.

You can also "psychometrize" a person -- give them a "life reading" or answer specific questions -- by holding their hands and looking to your magickal mirror to reflect impressions you get from their spirit. This is more difficult, takes more practice, and works best when you have no personal relationship with the person in question. It should never be done with people with whom you have an emotional entanglement of any sort.

To get basic ideas and meanings related to visual symbols, imagine the symbol drawn on the face of the mirror in glowing lines. Then imagine that you are pushing the symbol into the mirror, so that it recedes in the distance and eventually vanishes from sight. Sending the symbol into the mirror "tunes it in"; wait in mental silence for images to arise, and these will bear in some way on the symbol.

Magickal invocations can be used to enhance the power of the mirror. As an example, you might want to explore the nature of the element of Fire. You could begin by performing the Lesser Pentagram ritual to banish extraneous influences, directing that the banishing include the mirror. Then you could use the Greater Pentagram ritual to invoke the element of Fire. When you have a strong sense of the element's force being present, direct that force into the mirror. Simultaneously imagine that the force is not only tuning the mirror to the element, but is also charging it up and clearing the channels so that the mirror works with its best effect. Or alternately, you could request that the archangel or angel of the element appear to you in the mirror and answer your questions.

With any of these methods, the images you get will at first be vague and static. But with practice the images will sharpen, expand and become active, presenting whole landscapes and long story lines that dramatically present the answers you are seeking. The mirror will seem to become a window opening on the part of the astral plane that relates to your search.

Once you achieve this, the mirror can be used as a "gate", an opening through which you can travel directly to the plane being viewed, to experience events there first-hand. From the standpoint of initiatory magick this is the preferred mode of operation, since it immerses your awareness in the power you are exploring.

Immersion increases the potential for real and lasting changes in awareness and enhances your power to achieve insights and realizations from the invoked power.

To convert the mirror to a gate, imagine that the image in the mirror becomes three-dimensional, as if you were actually looking through a window at a real place instead of just seeing a picture of it. Then imagine that the glass of the mirror dissolves and vanishes while the image in the mirror remains in place. Or if it is easier for your mind, imagine that the glass is in fact a hinged window in a frame, and open the window.

You will usually find that unless your being is totally in tune with the force you have invoked, you will have some difficulty passing through the frame and into the world on the other side. The Golden Dawn's "Sign of the Enterer" will help to overcome the resistance. Stand just short of arm's length from the gate; raise your arms directly above your head, and then bring them down and forward with the fingers straight, while at the same time taking a step forward. Alternately, pull your hands back so that they are close to your body at shoulder level, and then extend your arms sharply forward while taking the step. Imagine that these gestures are punching a hole in whatever is resisting your entry, and that the momentum of your forward movement is carrying you through the gate and into the world beyond. If you still feel resistance once you are through the gate, repeat the gestures again.

Once you are through the gate, look around and make note of everything you see. Start with the major features of the landscape, then focus in on the details. If you have invoked the power correctly, you should see objects and events that reflect parts of the power's nature.

It is good practice to test the world you enter, and any beings you encounter, to ensure that they are in fact related to the power you invoked, and are of a good nature. The means of testing will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

If you find that you have difficulty turning the mirror into a gate, or that the mirror won't give you images of complete landscapes and story lines, a variation on the magickal practice of pathworking will help. The practice as described below is halfway between scrying a simple symbol and doing a freeform exploration of an invoked force, and will thus assist in the transition between them.

Pathworking

The term "pathworking" is used for several different practices, ranging from simple meditations through programmed visualizations to visions and astral travel. What they all have in common is the use of symbols traditionally associated with the "paths" of the Tree of Life, e.g., the Tarot trumps. These symbols have been in use for long enough that stable regions reflecting their power have been established in the inner planes. By using the symbols in these practices the person connects to those regions and can learn something of the realities behind the symbols.

Preliminary Steps

1. Pick a visual symbol for the path you want to explore. Tarot cards are good starting points. The cartoon-like images of the Rider or Wang decks are preferable to detailed images like Crowley's deck; the bright, flat colors of these cards encourage your imagination to fill in the blanks. We'll use the Rider deck's "Fool" card as an example.

2. Review what you know about the correspondences of the card. Read what your available sources have to say about the card. Then go on to some unconnected activity for a while and let your unconscious absorb the information; let it make its own connections and conclusions without any effort by your conscious self.

Using the example card, what comes immediately to my mind: The Fool is generally attributed to the element of Air and the path of Aleph. In the Golden Dawn version of the Tree, the path of Aleph connects Kether with Chokmah. In Achad's version of the Tree, it connects Malkuth with Yesod. The Fool is a primal form of Air, more cosmic and less "earthy" than the Tarot suit of Swords. In the cabala, it represents both the "mind" or "intellect" aspect of being and the Yetziratic, "formative", or "Son" aspect of the IHVH sequence. In the Enochian elemental sequence it represents the creative Ideal manifested by the divine, which is the basis for further development and full manifestation through the other elements. In the structure of the planet Earth, it is the atmosphere which lies between the spirit-aspect of the planet's magnetosphere and the water-aspect of the oceans. And so on.

3. Study the card and note the details, and also note any connections that come to mind. Consider the figure in the card; what does his/her posture, gestures, expression, etc. say about his attitude and emotional state? Where does his attention seem focused? Try to get some idea of the type of personality being expressed.

Ex: The cliff on which the Fools stands seems to be colored using three of the Malkuth colors: black, olive, and russet. The Fool's boots are citrine, completing the foursome. The mountains in the background are in a Yesodic violet, with snowy tops reflecting the light of the Sun, which is colored in Kether's white. The sky, dominant in the picture, is an Airy yellow, slightly darker than the citrine of his boots.

The Fool's outer garment is green with ivy patterns, reminding me of the Green Man of Celtic mythology and Malkuth again. The lining is red, reminiscent of both Fire and the sexual energy of Mars. There are wheels embroidered on the garment, which brings to mind another card, The Wheel of Fortune, attributed to Jupiter, who is Lord of the Air. There are also Fleur-de-Lys on the garment, which are either Lilies (Malkuth, according to Crowley) or Irises (Yesodic by color and shape).

His inner garment is white, again suggesting Kether. A feather is mounted at the front of his hat, and its shape suggests the Uraeus serpent of Egyptian costume,

or the feather of Maat. He carries a rose in his left hand and a staff with a bag at the end (rather phallic) in his right.

The Fool's head is bent back, his eyes focused on something in the distance that only he can see. His posture is somewhat pretentiously "sensitive", the sort that you would see the French Sun-King use in one of his dances. Overall he reminds me of a Galliard poet of the 13th century, a noble's over-educated younger son, wandering and pretending to be a minstrel while eschewing mundane tasks. He is about to walk over a cliff. The dog at his heels seems either playful or trying to call his attention to his immediate danger.

You don't have to go into such detail as in the example; if you are just starting out in magick, you probably won't have the resources to do it. The important thing is to note the details, and try and interpret the figure's expression and posture, and the acts in which he seems to be engaged.

These first three steps are preparatory, and should be done before beginning the main part of the practices. Once you have done them, let the information float in your unconscious for a few hours or a day while you do other things. The idea is to gently focus the unconscious on the subject matter, and to let it absorb the information and ideas without your conscious interference. This makes it more willing to participate in the practices, and enhances its ability to make connections with the magickal region behind the card.

Main Practice

4. Sit down and do the relaxation exercises, as described in the earlier section.

5. Place the card in front of you so that you can look at it without straining your eyes or changing your relaxed position. Look at the card without deliberately focusing on any one point; let your eyes move from point to point within the picture in their normal scanning motion.

6. Now enter your magickal space and get your awareness firmly established there. Go to the place where your magick mirror is located and stand where you can view it head-on. Imagine the image from the Tarot card in the mirror, so that it completely fills the frame. Then look at the landscape in the picture; think of what it would look like if it were real and not just a cartoon image. Try to see the image as a three-dimensional world behind the glass of the mirror. Think about the parts of the landscape that are hidden beyond the window frame and fill them in. Keep the colors more or less the same, but fill in the details; build up a picture as if that world were a real place that you can see. Feel free to incorporate details of real places you have seen in your life. (But DON'T use real people as models for the figures.)

Ex: The mountains in the Fool card remind me of the Swiss Alps, violet-tinted rock with permanent snow-cover at their summits. I fill in the picture with the appropriate details of ravines, rockslides, etc. The cliff on which the fool stands

looks to me as if it is some sort of moss-covered granite, and the sharpness of the drop suggests that a glacier carved it out. The same glacier would have carved a deep, rounded valley below, and I imagine it being there, with fields of grass and copses of pine and fir trees, perhaps with the rooftops of a village small in the distance.

The Fool is walking towards the window, so there must be a trail down into the valley hidden behind the outcrop. I imagine a trail following a curve upwards around the end of the valley to end at the outcrop. I imagine this outcrop is on the side of a mountain the summit of which is somewhere to the right of the visible area.

7. Next, imagine that you have jumped through the window frame and are standing in the world you have been looking at, but at some moment in time just before the living figures of the card appeared on the scene. Don't try to move through the mirror, just make an instant transition to the place you just imagined. If you have to, build the landscape up again from scratch, but with you inside it.

Turn around and look at the surroundings from your new viewpoint; get a 360-degree view, and fill in the parts of the landscape that were behind your original view through the window. (The window, incidentally, should not be visible.) Imagine what your other senses would tell you if you were in a similar physical location, and add those in to your impressions of this place.

Ex: Looking back towards the window's position I note that the mountains get lower in that direction, and gradually fall off into rolling farmlands in the far distance. A large lake (like Lake Lucern or Geneva) can be seen just at the edge of visibility. I can see the mountain on whose side I stand, and can see directly the path I had previously imagined behind the outcrop. This path comes up to my current position, then curves around the mountain and up to a pass in the middle distance. Looking down into the valley below, I see that there are light clouds between the village and myself, giving the impression that I am in a world above the normal world. I can feel and hear the wind blowing around me, and there are faint scents of pine, grass, and flinty rock in the air, as well as an ozone-tinge of freshness. Faint sounds of human activity come from the village.

8. Spend some time getting the scene and your viewpoint firmly in your imagination. Don't worry if details change or shift, and don't expend any effort trying to change them back. Just get the major outlines and positions firm and let the small details change as they will. Think of how places look in your regular daydreams; often there is very little detail, and what detail is there is more often implied than actually seen. As you continue the practice over weeks or months, your unconscious will gradually learn to fill them in and keep them steady without conscious effort.

9. The next step is in some ways the most difficult, and in some ways the easiest. We have all had daydreams in which we invented face-saving dialogs for some embarrassing past occurrence in our life. In others, we imagined the events and interactions we would like to see happen in some future meeting, or some situation

we would like to be in but cannot attain in the mundane world. What you do in this step is basically the same. The only difference is that you shouldn't have any particular desire to control what the other characters say, but instead want to see what they say of themselves.

What you want to do is imagine a scenario by which the Tarot card's person arrives at the location where you are standing, and begins to converse with you. Using our example, you could think that you hear someone singing in the distance behind you. You turn and look down the trail, and see the fool climbing it, followed by his dog. He sings a cheery tune as he walks. As he comes close enough to hear you, you call out and wave to him; he looks up and waves back. He comes closer and steps onto the escarpment where you stand. He smiles and walks to the edge of the cliff, looking outwards. He stretches his arms and takes a deep breath of the fresh mountain air, and for a moment he is posed in exactly the way he is shown on the Tarot card. Then he turns to you and asks, "Where away, traveller?"

The idea behind this is to give your unconscious mind a credible reason for believing you to be in a situation where you can talk to the card's character. The part of your unconscious that touches the imagination doesn't believe in hypothetical situations; to it, things are either real or they aren't, but anything that is reasonably consistent will be accepted as real. This part of your unconscious mind plays the character's part while your conscious mind plays yourself. This same part reaches out into other parts of your minds and into the magickal realms and pulls in information to use in building its characterization.

9. Now that the character is present, you can ask him questions about himself, the various symbols of his clothing and appurtenances, and about the environment in which you find yourselves. Always act as if the character were a real person, independent of yourself. Treat him with the respect of equals; never act superior to him, and never, ever threaten. If he doesn't want to answer a particular question, don't press. Answer any questions he poses honestly, to the best of your ability. But at the same time don't allow yourself to be threatened or cowed; demand that your interactions be on a basis of equality and nothing else.

Another thing to remember is that in this phase of the exercise there are no wrong results, only results you don't understand. If something seems out of place with the nature of the card, don't reject it. Simply admit that you don't understand and file it away for later consideration. Generally you should follow along with whatever happens; there is no way you can be hurt, so there is no reason not to do so.

10. When you start to tire, or the character indicates he has had enough, it is time to end the exercise. Say goodbye to the character, turn and walk away until he is out of sight. Then "jump" back through your magick mirror and turn around; see the point you just jumped from through the mirror, even if this is not the same point that was there at the start. Then imagine closing the mirror so that it only shows its usual deep blackness.

After leaving your magickal space again, spend a few moments focusing your attention on various objects in your physical environment. Get up and walk around, stretch yourself, get a drink or go to the bathroom, or some other mundane task. Then sit down again and write down what happened during the exercise, in as much detail as you can. Record what was said, any ideas that happened to pop into your mind, and any changes in the scenery or movements into other scenes.

It sometimes happens that unexpected things occur during this exercise. For instance, the character might come up behind you and say hello while you are still working on the landscape. Usually it's best to go along with these happenings rather than insist on following the various stages in order.

Once the character appears, then the rule is to allow whatever wants to happen, as in the "mystery tour" exercise. You should not worry much about keeping the environs steady. The character might change the landscape to make a point, or introduce creatures or objects. Other things might appear and disappear spontaneously. You sometimes find yourself and the character transported to an entirely different scene. All these things are acceptable, and should be taken in a spirit of non-judgmental interest. Remember that the logic of visions is the logic of dreams, where such events are not at all unusual.

After you have worked with this method for a week or two using various Tarot images, try again to invoke a force using a ceremony and getting a response through your mirror. The practice of creating landscapes in the mirror should have overcome any difficulty in that regard. If you still have trouble, try combining the invocation with an appropriate Tarot image.

Chapter 4.

Testing your visions

It is usually a good idea to apply tests to the images you get in scrying, and to the various beings you might encounter. The ultimate test is, of course, a critical appraisal of the quality, consistency, and value of the results you get from your work; but that test can only be applied after the work is done. Other methods allow you to get some sense of whether there is something wrong at an early point in the session. You can then take appropriate efforts to correct the problem, or if necessary end the session and save your energy for another time.

The most reliable testing method makes use of the symbols in the Golden Dawn's Greater Pentagram and Greater Hexagram rituals. But the effectiveness of the method requires that you have some experience in performing those rituals, and in getting a good response from them. If you are not already experienced in their use, you should practice using them in your magickal space for a while before implementing this testing procedure.

A limitation of this method is that it only works where the powers being scryed are among the traditional, conventional powers used in magick. That is, the powers are elemental, planetary, or zodiacal in nature. Where the nature of a power is unknown, or it is of an inherently mixed nature, other methods must be applied.

After attaining a steady image of some magickal region in your mirror, you draw the invoking pentagram or hexagram appropriate to the power you invoked, using white lines in the air in front of you. Vibrate the god-names of the power a couple of times, then cast the symbol into the mirror. If the mirror is correctly "tuned" to the power, the pentagram or hexagram will be absorbed and will either have no effect, or will cause the image to become sharper and brighter. If the image becomes darker, becomes distorted, or breaks up entirely, then you know that something is wrong; you should banish and start over.

Similarly, if you have used the mirror as a gate and entered into some region, you should cast the appropriate symbol against any object that appears prominent in the area, and always against any being who appears to serve as your guide. In either of these cases, the being or object should show no effect, or should grow brighter, larger, or more solid as a result of the contact. A false or deceptive being will shrink, or its appearance will become distorted, or it will disappear.

No magickal being worth speaking to will ever object to being tested in this way. There is no reason that it should, since by doing the test you are, effectively, blessing it. If a being attempts to convince you to not do the tests, that in itself is a sign that something is wrong.

Note that you should always use the *invoking* pentagram or hexagram for tests, never the banishing versions. Using a banishing figure is the same as commanding the forces you invoked to disperse again, nullifying your efforts.

Two secondary types of testing seem to depend in some way on the magician having an *intent* that they will work correctly; there is no obvious reason why they should work, but they usually do, just the same. The first of these is the use of the G.D. grade signs; the second is the use of the Hebrew letters of the planets.

The idea behind the use of the Grade Signs in scrying is the same as their use in Masonic rituals and greetings. By displaying a sign to a spirit you encounter, you claim a right to the "secrets" of that grade and its corresponding element. The spirit should answer back by repeating the sign, thus showing that it is also qualified to deal with the secrets of that grade. (Illustrations of the Grade Signs can be found in Crowley's *Liber O*, and in Regardie's *The Golden Dawn*.)

If a spirit can perform the appropriate sign for the invoked element, this indicates that your vision is on-track. If the spirit cannot perform it, performs it improperly, or its form becomes distorted, this is an indication that something is wrong. However, it is not necessarily proof that you are dealing with a deceiving spirit, particularly if the same spirit has already passed the pentagram/hexagram test. Rather, it is more likely that there is insufficient magickal power present for your communication to be clear. The best course is to vibrate the divine names for the power you are invoking several times, and then repeat the signs again. Only if the spirit is still unable to perform the signs correctly should you end the session.

The exchanging of signs also contains an implicit agreement between you and the spirit being tested. That is, by doing this you are agreeing to deal with the spirit on a basis of equality and brotherhood, neither dominating that spirit nor being subject to it. You are also acknowledging that both of you are "members of the same fraternity", operating within the general community of workers seeking to align themselves with "god" (or with divinity in whatever form you conceive of it). You should never try to exchange signs with a being you know is not within that community, or with which you must maintain a position of dominance -- e.g., a demon or a true "elemental". Conversely, you should never try to dominate a spirit with whom you have exchanged signs; assume instead that it will assist you willingly and without coercion, and treat it with the same respect that you would wish it to give you.

It sometimes happens that in answering your sign, the spirit will add other signs after repeating the one you used. This is an indication that the spirit is of a mixed elemental nature, or is intrinsically of a higher "grade" than that at which you are working. As an example of the first case, if you were invoking an angel from one of the Lesser Angles of the Enochian Tablet of Earth, you would perform the sign of Set. The angel would be expected to respond with the same sign, but if it were an angel of the Lesser Angle of Fire, it might add the sign of Fire (the goddess Thoum-

TESTING YOUR VISIONS

aesch-Neith) as well. As an example of the latter case, a Senior from the Earth Tablet might add the LVX signs after the sign of Set.

The LVX signs are a special case. Their use indicates that the spirit is aligned with the divinity, is of a "good" character; but does not test for any particular elemental or planetary nature. They should be used in conjunction with the appropriate hexagrams for testing spirits related to the planets or zodiac, or in any case where the benevolence of the spirit is in doubt. All of the Enochian angels will be able to perform these signs, as will any Hebrew-system archangel.

There are no Grade Signs specifically associated with the planets in the Golden Dawn system; one must make do with the LVX signs, and these are usually sufficient. However, those who wish to assemble a set of elegant and effective planetary gestures for testing spirits should consult *Planetary Magick* by Melitta Denning and Osborn Phillips.

The final form of testing is, in my opinion, the least reliable. I do not use it myself, preferring to trust my own judgment. But I note it for those who might wish to experiment with it.

The Golden Dawn adepts acknowledged that in this sort of work there is always a danger that the visions one sees will not be a true reflection of the forces invoked, but may rather be constructions or projections of the seer's own mind and emotions. They classified these projections according to an association with the planets:

Type	Planet	Hebrew letter	Tarot Trump
Memory	Saturn (as Time)	𐤛 Tav	The World
Construction	Jupiter	𐤌 Kaph	Wheel of Fortune
Anger	Mars	𐤑 Peh	Tower
Vanity or ego	Sun	𐤒 Resh	The Sun
Pleasure	Venus	𐤅 Daleth	The Empress
Imagination	Mercury	𐤁 Beth	The Magician
Wandering thoughts	Luna	𐤂 Gimel	The Priestess

The theory is that if you suspect that one of these factors may be influencing your vision, you can project an image of the corresponding Hebrew letter or Tarot Trump into the scene. It will cause the scene to darken, diminish, or disappear if the scene is in fact the sort of projection you suspect it to be.

My personal feeling is that introducing extraneous powers into a vision in this way will cause more problems than they will solve. As well, it seems to me that invocation of a force related to a type of projection would tend to enhance the projection rather than eliminating it. However, this may not be the case for you; try it if you wish and see if it works.

Chapter 5.

Scrying with the Enochian Magick

There are several considerations for Enochian magick work that do not apply to scrying using other systems. The first of these is the unquestionable power of the Calls and the divine and angelic names. As Crowley once said, other systems require effort; Enochian magick requires caution. While the power built up in any one session is almost never of an unmanageable level, some effects of the magick tend to accumulate across sessions; it is easy for an overeager beginner to get in deeper than he expects. Added to this, the powers invoked through the Calls seem to enter into the magician's field of awareness along some spiritual dimension that is outside those that we consider "normal". It seems to operate through some sort of meta-space with qualities different from those that compose the magickal worlds to which we are accustomed.

The consequence of these factors is that any work with the magick places a certain amount of stress on the magician's mind and body, and over-use can lead to various stress-related forms of illness. Anyone working regularly with the magick should keep an eye out for signs of this stress in himself. The typical symptoms are similar to those that come from abusing methedrine or "speed": nervous exhaustion, severely lowered immune response, inability to concentrate, hypersensitivity, hyper-reactivity, reduced judgment, flights of ideas, and paranoia.

One time in my own career, the stress of overusing this magick combined with an equally stressful mundane occupation to give me the worst of both the physical and mental consequences. On the physical side, I contracted mononucleosis, effectively stopping all my magickal work for six months or so. On the mental side, the changed viewpoint and loss of judgment caused me to make seditious remarks to a class of Federal employees I was training, resulting in the loss of my livelihood.

So caution is well justified. But with a few easy, obvious precautions, these problems can be avoided.

- Avoid using the magick at times when other parts of your life are unusually stressful. Try to arrange your affairs so as to reduce the social and economic pressures to the minimum level compatible with your needs.
- Get regular exercise; a healthy body handles stress better.
- Don't use recreational drugs while working with the magick. Aside from being illegal (jail is a poor place for magickal work), all of them add to the stress on your body. Most stimulants and sedatives also reduce your magickal sensitivity and ability to focus in your magickal space. Hallucinogens make you too sensitive, and reduce your level of control.
- Learn to pace yourself. When first starting out, allow a day or two between Enochian invocations to absorb the results and "cool off". Later, when you

get to the point where you need to accumulate power over several day's worth of invocations, allow at least as many days off after the series as you spent in working. Take longer vacations from the work every few months to keep yourself grounded.

The importance of pacing yourself cannot be overemphasized. When you begin getting significant results from your Enochian work, it is very tempting to keep going; the anticipation of even more amazing results drives you on. But the extra-dimensional or meta-dimensional character of these forces allows them to influence all levels of your being simultaneously, including many levels of which you are not consciously aware. The cumulative effects of this influence can cascade into a dangerous level of stress before you become aware of it. Regular intervals of rest and relaxation, and of immersion in the everyday world, are the only sure way to avoid the problems.

Another difficulty, which bears more directly on scrying, is that the Calls allow you to invoke a force without having any knowledge of its nature. In normal methods of invocation, one begins with a symbol or set of symbols, and seeks by their use to bring about the manifestation of the corresponding powers. The symbols you use define the power to be invoked. In contrast, the Calls produce a manifestation of power regardless of whether you comprehend their symbolic content.

Adding to the confusion is the fact that, from a perspective accustomed to the traditional magical powers (i.e., the elements, planets, and zodiac) the nature of the invoked powers seems to change depending on the depth of one's penetration into their realms. Or from another angle, the Calls and Names open up different realms, depending on the level of initiation at which you are operating. On the most superficial level, they appear more or less "elemental" in nature, with an overlay related to the functions of the angels' specific offices. But at "deeper" or "higher" levels, this elemental aspect fades, to be replaced by a succession of increasingly complex and inclusive expressions that may bear little or no relation to the most superficial appearance.

Unless the magician supplies an explicit set of symbols to which the invoked powers can be anchored, the powers will tend to remain in an indeterminate state; a sort of "fuzzy cloud" of energy which contains all the power's potential expressions, but which manifests none of them explicitly. A visual symbol used as an anchor causes this indeterminacy to "collapse" into that aspect of the power which is most nearly similar to the symbol's innate associations. The congruency between the symbol and the invoked power does not have to be very great. It is sufficient that some small aspect of the symbol's associations be similar to the power's; the major associations of the symbol can be entirely inappropriate, and this collapse will still occur.

So the symbol the scryer uses will determine, in part, the initial manifestation of an invoked Enochian power; the scryer's expectations or preconceptions of the

power's nature will also be partially determining. This accounts for the documented fact that different magicians have produced widely varying -- sometimes even contradictory -- results using the system. However, it is my observation that with repeated invocations and scryings, the true nature of the invoked power will break through these initial, superficial expressions. The longer you work with a particular Enochian power, the more closely your results will accord with that nature, and the deeper you will penetrate into the realms to which the power connects.

Since penetration past the sometimes-deceiving surface manifestations takes time, orderly, methodical work habits are necessary to get the most value of your Enochian work. The fact that invocations have a cumulative effect can be used to advantage if you plan out your course ahead of time, and stick to it. The following suggestions will all enhance the effectiveness of your Enochian scryings:

- For every angel or other power that you invoke, do several scrying sessions. Allow time for a connection to be built up between you and the angel, and for your mind to become accustomed to its power.
- Work for an extended period solely with powers from a single Tablet. Or if you are working with the Aethyrs or the 91 Parts of the Earth, pick a set of contiguous Aethyrs or Parts and do them sequentially.
- If you are invoking single squares of some angelic or divine name, plan to do all the squares of that name in sequence.
- Plan out a series of invocations to investigate all the angels of a given rank within one of the Tablets, in some logical sequence. Complete the series before working with any other rank or Tablet. Alternately, plan out a series to investigate all the powers within a given Lesser Angle, in order of rank.

A Magickal Space for Enochian Scrying

Since the Enochian powers are so sensitive to the visual symbols in a magickal space, the general-purpose magickal space developed in the preceding sections of this paper is likely to be inappropriate for Enochian work. The profusion of objects with which you have populated the landscape would all tend to anchor the forces in unexpected or undesired forms. A space with a more neutral visual appearance needs to be used.

A woman I once met made a habit of surveying people about the appearance of their magickal spaces. Amusingly, nearly all the Enochian magicians she knew (most of whom did not know the others) had chosen to build essentially identical spaces for their work. This space might thus be considered an archetypal Enochian workplace. It consists of a broad, gray plain, surrounded at the horizon by low hills; both plain and hills are illuminated in a flat, sourceless light of relatively low intensity. Overhead, there is a night-sky filled with stars. The plain is large enough that the magician always has an unused area available in which to perform a new series of invocations.

The remaining few magicians in her survey had chosen to go even further in the direction of minimalism than this Michael Moorcock landscape. Their workspaces consisted solely of a clear space within a gray mist, with a featureless gray floor underneath, created *ab initio* for every invocation.

My feeling is that the plain has a slight advantage as a workspace. It allows for the establishment of long-term or permanent structures, useful for advanced works in which the invocations must be done in section, or for building a temple appropriate to a range of Enochian works.

Scrying Techniques for Enochian Magick

Both the "magick mirror" technique and its extension as a "gate" work as well with Enochian powers as they will with other, more conventional magickal powers. I would recommend that you create a new mirror in your Enochian workplace for every series of invocations that you do, and destroy it after completing the series. Since the Enochian powers tend to accumulate over time, this prevents residual forces from previous works from interfering with a new work.

However, as mentioned above, it is often necessary to provide a firm visual anchor for Enochian powers; you may find that the mirror technique is insufficiently exact, and only gives you confused or contradictory results. If that is the case, one of the following methods will be more effective.

The Golden Dawn devised a technique for using visualizations of truncated pyramids as the starting point for explorations of individual squares from the Tablets. This practical method has been proven by use to be very effective, precisely because it provides a well-defined symbolic "anchor" for the Enochian powers. I recommend this technique for beginners, both for this reason and because it tends to focus the powers into their most "earthly", most readily comprehensible form.

The basic technique is to build a truncated pyramid in your magickal space. The flat top has an area one-ninth the area of its base. The relative sizes of the top and bottom means the sides are tilted inwards at an angle of forty-five degrees. The letter of the square is visualized on the flat top. The sides of the pyramid are colored and labeled with symbols and images according to a complex system of attributes.

(The G.D. system of attributes is described in detail in Book Four of Regardie's *The Golden Dawn*; my own alternate system (which I believe to be a substantial improvement over the G.D. system) is described in the papers titled "Godzilla Meets E.T.". The pyramid method works very well with either system.)

The pyramid is visualized as being large enough to stand on the top. Having vibrated the appropriate Calls for the name in which the square lies, the magician then stands on top of the pyramid in his astral body, and vibrates the hierarchy of names. As he vibrates each name, the magician imagines the power of that name gathering around the pyramid.

When the last name is vibrated, the magician imagines that each side of the pyramid is gathering in the attracted energy, each taking the type appropriate to its attributes and symbols. This energy is seen moving upwards, being focused as it goes by the narrowing of the sides. The flows of energy from the sides reach the top simultaneously, run into each other, and form a beam of light shining up and outwards into the astral worlds, forming a path to a region of magickal space governed by the square. The magician then follows this beam in his astral body until a landscape or other scene forms around him. This scene should symbolize various aspects of the square invoked. From that point, the techniques describe earlier can be used to explore the region.

I prefer a variation of this method, in which the magician stands inside the pyramid. When the energies traveling up the sides reach the top, they come together on the letter and then shine *downwards* into the pyramid, illuminating the interior. The angel governing the square is invoked to visible appearance within the pyramid and is tested there. After testing, the angel conducts the magician to various scenes that illustrate the square's nature.

Since a session using this technique only explores the power of one letter of an angel's name, you only get a partial view of the angel's nature. To fully understand an angel, all the letters of its name should be explored in sequence.

When you wish to invoke all of an angel's powers at once rather than a single letter, it is more convenient to make your anchoring image something like a magickal circle, or a talisman sufficiently large that you can stand on it. A example design for such a circle would have the divine names superior to the given angel written around the rim of the circle. The name of the angel being invoked would be written within the circle, oriented so that it appears upright when you are facing in the direction in which you want the angel to appear. If the angel is associated with a particular magickal formula (e.g., Kerubic angels and the INRI formula) symbols appropriate to that formula might also be drawn within the circle.

Note that the intent of this figure is much closer in function to a talisman than to the traditional idea of a magickal circle. It is not intended to block off its interior from the exterior areas; you should feel free to move in and out of it at will. Nor is it intended to "contain" the invoked force. Rather, the idea is that the charged figure will serve to attract the attention of the appropriate being -- like putting a big illuminated sign saying "Land Here!" next to a runway. It also serves to condition the surrounding magickal space so that it reflects the nature of the invoked powers.

Vibrate the appropriate Calls several times; then enter the magickal space and create the circle. Vibrate the divine and angelic names, and as you feel the invoked power arrive, direct it into the lines and letters in the circle so that they glow and re-radiate the power to the surrounding environment. Keep vibrating the names until the intensity of invoked power seems to level off, then vibrate only the name of the being you wish to contact, asking it to appear before you. Vibrate the angel's name until it does appear; then apply the tests, and ask the angel what you will.

A SHORT COURSE IN SCRYING

Calling the angel to the circle is my personal preference; I would rather have the guide take me to the place I want to go than go there first and find a guide afterwards. The reverse may be more comfortable for you. If that is the case, you can vary the above method by concentrating the invoked force in the circle instead of allowing it to radiate. Then imagine that the force is creating a "gate" to the power's magickal space; imagine the center of the circle opening up as the magick mirror did in the earlier exercises, so that you can step directly through it into that space. Or you can imagine that the powers form a beam of light shooting up from the circle, which you can ride to the powers' space.