

RAVEN'S  
WAND  
ORACLE

By STEVEN HUTTON

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I began writing and illustrating the *Dark Raven Chronicles* some years ago, starting with the novel *Raven's Wand*—named for a venerable wand as black as raven feathers, hence the reference to the dark and charismatic bird. Set in 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian Britain, the story centers on this mysterious wand and Valonia, its keeper. Valonia is a sage old witch who governs her idyllic coven 'Wildwood' in the hills of northern England, hidden from their enemies, the Illuminata Knighthood. The series enabled me to paint witchcraft in its best light, as wise yet humble, and profound yet practical. It is now my privilege to share Valonia's wisdom with you in the form of this oracle deck. I believe that knowledge should be open and accessible, and so all are invited to find guidance here, whether they're familiar with the books or not. For those who seek more, the novel *Raven's Wand* is easy to find: [www.wildwoodwitches.co.uk/novels](http://www.wildwoodwitches.co.uk/novels)

— Steven Hutton



# INTRODUCTION TO RAVEN'S WAND ORACLE

Many witches call Wildwood-coven their home. As you explore this deck you'll meet a good number of them, including Valonia herself and some of the fabulous creatures that share this witch's world. Each character is lovingly brought to life in vivid artwork and has a message to impart. Sunday Flowers will teach you about forgiveness and atonement; Ada Crabbe speaks of giving and taking; Evelyn Ashe offers a perspective on acceptance; and Rilla Baldragon will persuade you to look deeper, to mention but a few. While perhaps unusual for an oracle deck, you will see that each card also has a reversed meaning, although this is not merely the opposite, or negative interpretation. The reversed meanings add an extra dimension and encourage the user's creativity to flow.

As you work with *Raven's Wand Oracle* you'll also hear speak of 'the dragon twins.' Hethra is the oak dragon of summer, while his sister, Halla, is the holly dragon of winter. They rest in endless sleep, dreaming



the millennia away. Here then, is the miracle that underpins Valonia's beliefs; *witches understand that mind creates matter*. The twins dream of life, and their dream emanates outwards to bring this magnificent earth into a state of animation. As you work with the cards, remember this profound teaching: your will has the power to create your reality.

Not only are the twins the fountain of life, they are the very purpose of witchcraft. Each day without fail, witches kneel in respect, touch the earth and sense those twin beating hearts far below. They send the dragon twins their love to keep their dreams peaceful, which in turn reassures the world. Life and love together keep this world turning, and it is with love and respect that I offer you the wisdom of *Raven's Wand Oracle*.





THE CARDS &  
THEIR MEANINGS

# A MOMENT

Sometimes all our creative energy can be like a whirlwind. Rhia Winsome snatches a moment to be still, and even the wind has joined her, letting the leaves drift gently to earth. She has put her tools down and you can feel her sense of calm, and the hare's too, dozing in her lap. Whatever tasks she was busy with can wait. The woods around her seem to soften into a haze like a blank canvas. What might appear on this canvas? Witches know that stillness can be the most powerful tool for inspiration. Rhia sits and waits, lost in her moment of nothingness.

## **Reversed**

Look carefully—there are berries decorating Rhia's clothes and fungi growing on the tree stump. Nature's hectic summer is waning and now its fruits have finally appeared. The payoff for hard work might not come as soon as we'd like, but without effort it wouldn't come at all.





## A RARE BLOOM

Flora Greyswan lost an eye as punishment for being a witch. Since childhood she has struggled to accept the hurt, anger, and even misplaced shame. She has good reason to feel these things, but she knows her eye patch will always be with her, so what good can dwelling on past pain do? She tells herself this whenever she sinks into self-pity, and instead focuses on nurturing the earth, for she is Wildwood's most gifted garden witch. Immersed in her gardens she feels secure and sometimes dares wonder if hardship has in fact made her stronger?

### **Reversed**

Via the grace of the serpent twins, Flora can make plants bear fruit in moments, which keeps her coven self-sufficient. Some might scoff that this isn't 'real magic,' but what purer magic can there be other than to live free and without harm? Often, the humblest skills are the most powerful.



# BLACKWAND'S REDEMPTION

Sunday Flowers reveled in her powers to seduce and manipulate, but her misguided attempt to serve witchcraft led to her making a terrible mistake. In her unending quest to atone, she abandoned her past and became 'Blackwand,' and faced many terrifying challenges. Blackwand reminds us that no matter what we've done wrong, we can try to make amends. It might be frightening to confront those we have wronged, but genuine liberation is worth the risk. Maybe you believe your transgressions are so grave they can never be washed away, or that those you appeal to might not forgive you. This might be true, but to flinch from the call to atone is an even greater error.

## **Reversed**

Forgiveness works both ways. Blackwand eventually learned to forgive herself because she knew her actions were sincere—not merely to soothe her guilt. Saying “I’m sorry” carries an obligation not to repeat the same behavior, otherwise people lose faith in us totally and the chance of redemption slips yet further away.

# CHANGING FACES

Painted faces brighten any coven festival, and we all wear different faces on occasion—although perhaps not as striking as Lavinia Silverdale's! Masking can help us by covering our vulnerabilities like a shield, such as wearing a brave face during a crisis, or being attentive when really we feel exhausted. A 'mask' can be new clothes or a hairstyle, and these simple things can give us a fresh perspective on ourselves. Would you benefit from stepping out of your everyday routine and being 'someone else' for a while?

## **Reversed**

Black and white are starkly apparent in Lavinia's ceremonial decoration, but 'white lies' ought to be called 'grey lies.' It's hard to say exactly if they're good or bad. They can certainly spiral out of control. Wanting to protect another's feelings is noble, but to what extent is it acceptable? Reversed, this card suggests the possibility of deception underlying a current situation, or that you are willfully deceiving yourself about something, even if the motives seem honorable.

# COMMEMORATION

We often commemorate events that nobody living now remembers, and while this might honor past sacrifice, sometimes it keeps other things alive too. Here, Kitty Watson prepares for a feast marking a struggle between witches and the Illuminata. There was a great deal of bravery that terrible day, but can our thanks be truly separated from old wounds? Old hates can easily pass down the generations disguised as righteous gratitude, so be mindful to remember the courage and not the aggressor. Be inspired by the rabbits—they happily nibble fungi toxic to humans, but the poisons seem to have no effect on them. Instead, they digest only the nutrients.

## **Reversed**

Notice how the sparrows perch beside Kitty's bird headdress the large and the small side by side. Make time to celebrate the small things as well as the major; they're like miniature milestones in your life.

# COMMITMENTS

Foreseeing the inevitable for Britain's wolves, a Caledonian coven took the last of them and hid them safely away in rock and wood. They can only become flesh and blood once more when their protectors come to awaken them. Wolves are hidden throughout the picture, and young Kelly Sweet is entrusted with their hiding places. Her responsibility is as great as the mountain looming over her. She has commitment in equal measure, for a witch knows that a promise is not made lightly, nor is it ever broken. Assess your commitments, and accept only that which you can manage.

## **Reversed**

If Kelly fails to awaken the wolves periodically, they will remain as inert as stone, just as life and love stagnate and become mere relics if we do not nurture them. Is there anyone or any promise in your life that needs to be reawakened?

# DAISY AND THE DANDY-LION

The dandy-lion is very happy to have his tummy tickled. He knows how to enjoy simple pleasures, and doesn't mind showing it! Let his appearance in your reading remind you to make room for fun in your life. He's encouraging you to plunge into that soft bed of dandelion seeds and scatter them just for the thrill of it—go on, nobody's looking!

## **Reversed**

Dandelions aren't popular with gardeners. They never seem to retreat, no matter how often they're dug up. The seeds scatter, and it's not long before the garden's full of those cheerful, yellow flowers again. As humble as the dandelion might be, its powerful message is telling you that there's something going on in your life that you need to try harder at. Maybe you need a rest first, then, when the next breeze comes along your efforts will be like those seeds: ready to start afresh.

# DESTROYING ANGEL

Separated from their fellows, a small band of witches finds themselves lost in a hostile land. Freya Albright has taken her leadership to heart, perhaps too much...she believes their hopes for getting home rely totally on her. She's a fighter as well as a healer, hence her nickname 'Destroying Angel,' but she believes she must stand alone. Like Freya, whose motivation is simply to do her best, sometimes we stand alone out of pride and vanity. Be aware that others might be hanging on your every decision, so be very clear with your words. Let others make their own decisions too, otherwise you stifle their growth.

## **Reversed**

Freya and her witches face some truly horrifying enemies, made all the more dangerous because they remain hidden. Some concealed pitfalls lie in your path. Now is no time to stand alone. Strength comes from cooperation.