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## QUAREIA—THE ADEPT

Module VI—Advanced Visionary Magic

Lesson 1: Serpents I

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# WELCOME

*Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.*

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

*For more information and all course modules please visit*

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

*Yours,*

*Josephine McCarthy*



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## QUAREIA—THE ADEPT

### Module VI—Advanced Visionary Magic

#### Lesson 1: Serpents I

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At various points in the course you have come across the magical aspects of serpents. As an adept you need a much deeper understanding of the various types of serpent powers and beings, what they do, and how they do it. Working as an adept with serpents requires wide-ranging skills, and those skills can serve you in various ways in the situations you will need to deal with.

Unless you are a skilled snake handler who can work with still-venomous snakes—which is highly unlikely—the best way to work with such beings is in vision. Visionary work with serpents is a cornerstone of very old magic. Some serpent powers work for humanity in certain circumstances; others work actively against us. You need to be able to work with, and handle, both types.

Remember that as a justified adept, one of the constant, powerful companions that works with you is the serpent who is the staff. This is a major key to many different forms of magical patterns, and we have not yet even scratched the surface of what that power can do. It takes a lifetime's work to learn about just that one power, and because of that, the more you work with serpent power, the more you will begin to understand the sheer depth of power patterns around you.

Work with serpents and the serpent staff stretches back deep into our history. When you work on these visions, you are reaching far back into

the cradle of magic to learn. Here is an image of Asclepius, a mere child in the history of magic.



Figure 1: Asclepius

In the legend of his birth and training, Asclepius healed a snake. In return, the snake licked his ears clean and taught him secret knowledge. Remember the dynamic of a spirit entering the left ear to teach you or warn you? Remember the Philosopher's Hand, whose little finger is 'key,' because that finger tends the ear, the ear where teachings come in? Now you start to see the trail of breadcrumbs passed down through time, in plain sight, leaving hints and showing you what is important.

The serpent in the staff of the magician priest/priestess is very ancient, and when you learn to work in different ways with that power, you tap very ancient magic. One of your next steps, as an adept, is to understand the many different layers of the snake staff and to work with it in diverse ways. The next step for you as an adept is to understand that the serpent staff actually houses *two* snakes. Some of you may already have found this out for yourselves in vision; for everyone else, the work in this lesson will trigger this dynamic.

The first snake in the staff, whom you met in vision when you gained the staff, 'opens the way.' The second snake sees ahead and tells you things: it is the snake of prophecy and of 'seeing.' One sees what needs to be done; the other opens the way for it to happen.

But in adept magic nothing is ever simple, and everything of power has many layers to it. Both snakes are protectors, and while only one snake lives in the staff, it also performs the second snake's role until it is time for the second to appear. They can both open the way, they can both

protect and warn, but when both are present, their individual powers become stronger.

In Egyptian magic, these two snakes are Wadjet and Nehebkau. Wadjet is a fierce protector, an oracular snake who tells you what lies ahead—prophecy. She is the root power expressed in the Wadjet eye amulet, and a cobra that spits at those who attack the holder of the staff.

Nehebkau is ‘the one who brings together,’ who holds spirit to body, and as such can keep the magician alive in times of danger. He heals venomous bites, has medicinal power, and opens the way ahead when he is cast on the ground—probably the source of the story in Exodus where the priests cast their staff to the ground and it turns in a serpent. No one stands their ground when an angry venomous serpent is suddenly before them!

Nehebkau is said to have the power of seven cobras, the magical number, and is limited by Atum. Think about Atum’s role here: it will tell you a great deal more about the powers that flow from Atum, and how they relate to magic. This serpent is also one of the gods who sits in the hall Ma’at, the Hall of Judgement, and is one of the powers that challenges the newly dead or the initiate.

Both snakes are powerful holders and teachers of magic, and are impervious to magic, meaning that magic cannot be used to bind them or stop them working. Now you begin to realise how powerful they can be to work with.

Sometimes these two powers, which are endemic in ancient magic regardless of the culture, are depicted as two snakes on one staff, or two staffs each with a snake, or as a non-divided power holding two snakes. One of the hieroglyphs for Nehebkau is a ka hieroglyph whose ends have two snake heads instead of the usual hands, and the ka symbol often rests on a staff, or a snake staff:  $\overline{\text{𓏏}}$  *nbb-k3w*.

Now look at this image of Djehuty on the wall of the tomb of Seti I at Abydos. You have seen it before, but now you will understand it a little better. Note who is holding the two staffs, and look at the two serpent powers of the staffs: Wadjet and Nehebkau. Think about this deity’s magical role in history, and how he morphed from Djehuty to Thoth to Hermes in Greek legend, and incorporated Imhotep as the first adept in the Greek and subsequent magical patterns. This starts to give you an idea of how the ‘lineages’ of magic developed.

If you research double serpent staffs and the deities holding them,

you will find many different versions.

So let us move on and get to work. In this round of inner work, you will first meet and interact with various forms of the serpent powers that work with magicians in various ways. Once you have absorbed the inner resonance from such visionary interactions, in the next lesson you will work in active service with them. This will not only deepen your understanding of how these beings work, but also give you a context in which such work can be applied.



Figure 2: Djehuty in the tomb of Seti I

The contacts and powers you will meet are still active and powerful, and they all spring from a clear source. Once you have absorbed the

method of connecting with and contacting these powers, you can then use the same method to spread your reach further, should you wish to, to connect with other serpent powers that express through different cultures, and that run along parallel sources.

Just bear in mind that many of the serpent powers are strong, and can at times be dangerous. If you expand to connect with other serpent powers, just make sure you are clear what they are, and that the power is the same, and so should be treated in the same way. Not all serpent powers are amenable to human contact, and some are outright hostile, so know what you are reaching out to before you make any magical steps.

And a last bit of advice: whenever you connect with these powers, always have your staff with you, held in your left hand.

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### *Vision I: The Cobra Meretseger—She who loves the Silence*

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You have crossed paths with Meretseger before, but now it is time to connect with her as an adept. This serpent power is very specific to a fixed place, as are many serpent powers of the same quality; but she is open to ‘outside’ contact, and is a valuable ally to have on your side as an adept, particularly if you work in adept construction, art, or the work of a scribe in the context of funerary texts. I worked with her first in the Valley of the Kings when I visited that place, then later in vision, and in my home. She is a very powerful presence.

She is not a power that you can just draw to your threshold; you have to go to her either physically or in vision to make the contact. But if she connects well with you then it is possible to work with her from your work space through a ‘window’ or vessel.

She guards the deep threshold between the silence of the garden of the dead and the land of the living; and she is a guide to those who mediate that threshold through script, image, and sculpture. She is also a powerful and profound teacher who will guide an adept and oversee the serpents that the adept works with through their staff.

To start the work, open the gates in your work space, do a tuning visionary ritual that uses the adept power pattern, then sit before the central altar with your staff in your left hand. Having the staff not only

protects you, but it also acts as a mediator and advocate for you: the serpent power within the staff will speak to Meretseger on your behalf.

Once you are still, go to the Inner Library. Whenever you visit a contact in a fixed place, particularly one connected to any temple culture, they can be accessed through the Inner Library. Once in the Library, ask to be guided to the threshold of Meretseger. You will be guided down a long and narrow tunnel that opens out into an outer Desert landscape, but the contact that guides you there will not step over the threshold from the Library complex: they will simply point the way ahead.

As you step out into the Desert, the first thing to strike you is the silence. It is an inner silence as well as an outer one: no contacts can be found here, no spirits, nothing. Stand on the land and look around. You will spot a pyramid-shaped mountain among the rugged bare hills and the dry rocky earth. Start walking towards the mountain, and watch where you put your feet: vipers rest in the shade of the rocks. When you spot one, be well-mannered and greet them respectfully: they are the guardians of the Garden of Silence.

You will see a well-worn path that climbs up and winds around the sides of the pyramid mountain. Step onto the path and climb to the top. See yourself holding your staff as you walk, and when you have climbed higher, nearly to the top, cast the staff to the ground. It will turn in a snake. The snake goes ahead of you, and you follow.

Near the top of the peak, the snake suddenly vanishes from the path. As you look to see where it went, you hear it hissing. Follow the sound of the hiss. You will find a crack in the rock face, just big enough for a person to slide through.

You find yourself in a narrow crack in the rock that goes deep in the peak. Climb and walk into the cave. Hold up your lantern in your right hand, not only to see, but also so the guardians of this place can 'get your measure.' You will see your serpent on the ground waiting for you: follow the serpent, who will take you deep into the Peak of Silence.

The narrow pathway you are following suddenly opens out into a small, round cave. At the far end is a small opening, over which is carved a cobra with gems for eyes. They glitter in your lamplight, and you feel as if you are being watched. Your serpent waits before the small opening: watch what it does. The moment the serpent slithers off to one side, go down on your knees, as She is approaching.

Drop your head and look at the ground before you. A huge cobra



emerges out of the small opening and rears up to look at you. Do not move. Wait, however long it takes, until you see feet appear where the cobra was, and you realise a human person has appeared. Look up.

You see the body of a woman with the head of a cobra. She sniffs the air to see who you are: she remembers you, and will therefore not destroy you for intruding on her silence.

Slowly put your left arm to the ground so that your serpent can wind up your arm and rest its head near your left ear. It will translate for you. Meretseger looks at your serpent, and you realise they are speaking to each other. The serpent whispers in your left ear, asking you questions Meretseger wishes you to answer.

“Who are you?”

Tell her who you are now, as an adept.

“What do you want?”

You wish to serve.

“What do you need in order to serve?”

Learning and guidance.

Commune with her, be completely honest in your answers, and remember you are there to learn what she has to teach. She is not there to answer stupid and thoughtless questions. If you do not speak wisely to her, she will strike you without warning.

If she approaches you to touch your body in any way, stand completely still and hold the vision in a focused way. Do not react to anything. When she is satisfied with what she sees and hears, she will gesture with her arm for you to follow her. She takes you down a steep, narrow, natural passage into the heart of the mountain, through a narrow crack in the rock which opens out in a hand-hewn cave. You realise that you are at the back of a tomb. You may have been here before.

Follow her as she walks into the tomb, which is being decorated. It is a vast tomb with a series of chambers, and a group of artists are working on its walls. Some are plastering the walls in one part of the tomb, some are preparing the surface of a plastered wall, and three others are working in different areas, placing images and hieroglyphs on the wall.

In the corner sits an older man on a small foldout stool. To his left a staff is propped against the wall. He has scrolls on his lap, and he is

intoning the words from the scroll being painted on the wall: he is filling the space with the sounds of the words.

Meretseger taps you on the shoulder. As you turn to face her, she spits in your eyes. For a moment you are blinded, and the pain is real and physical. But if you wait, your pain and blurred vision fades, and as you look back at the scene you can now see various spirits and contacts standing beside the workers, guiding their hands and whispering to them in their left ear.

She pushes you towards a worker painting a wall. He is painting serpents that guard the ruler whose tomb this is, and he is also painting the deities to be present in the Hall of Judgement when the ruler's soul will be weighed. Place your right hand on the worker's left shoulder. As you touch the worker, you can feel his power and focus, and you can also feel the inner powers and deities that work through this man. Listen. You will hear sounds, vibrations—the tones of the celestial spirits being gathered together for their power to be impressed in the stone of this place.

Listen, then mediate that sound. Open your mouth, remember your power to mediate the breath in the Inner Temple, and see yourself before the air gap of the east. Once you are tuned to that power, let the sounds flow through you and into the worker's ear.

Watch how the workers face changes. Something has inspired him and 'switched him on' at a deep level. He had been struggling with the painting, as he felt he was losing his focus. Now his eyes and his hands light up, and as he paints, the light, sound, and power flows through him into the painting.

Watch also as the voice of the elder scribe sitting in the corner produces words that turn into shapes that settle in the walls. The whole tomb becomes a living musical drum that vibrates with a quiet power. Observe this carefully, as you are watching magical construction in action. Your job, your service in this vision, was simply to retrigger the Divine inspiration in the artist: you mediated the utterance of the serpent to the artist.

Spend some time in this place. If you are nudged towards any more artists and scribes then do the same for them: mediate the power of the serpent to them through sound in their left ear.

Before you leave this place, there is an image you should stand before. It has just been completed and empowered, and it will mediate power

into you that you can absorb.

Look for an image of a ram-headed god with outstretched wings: the god Khnum. When you find it, stand before it and bathe in the power that radiates from it. If it is appropriate, your serpent will act as a translator between the power in the image and yourself. Answer any questions asked, and listen carefully to anything the deity power tells you.

When you are ready to leave, bow to the image, turn and bow to Meretseger standing in the background watching you, and leave through the back of the tomb, through the narrow passageway in the rock. Lean down and pick up your serpent, who will turn back in the staff.

As you finally emerge from the mountain, you find yourself in the Inner Desert, standing before the Small Temple of the deities. Go into the temple and bow at its threshold. Step into the temple and stand in the centre, with the deities sitting in rows on either side. Stand in silence. The deities too are silent. Simply stand in their presence and feel the stillness and silence within you. Bathe in that power, remember that silent power, as it is what you will step into upon your death.

When you are ready, bow once more and leave with the intention of going to the Inner Temple. Once there, circle a few times and sit, the staff still in your left hand. Sit in the silence of the temple. You will recognise the feeling of the power of Meretseger in the Inner Temple. She overlooked the construction of this place from a distance—she held the silence that let the temple form. Without the silence, there was no vessel for the tones and vibrations of the angelic powers to fill.

When you are ready, do not leave the temple, simply open your eyes. Write down everything you can remember and type up a summary. Here is a photograph of that painting of Khnum from tomb KV14.

**Note:** Meretseger is a very particular serpent power, and not only in terms of guarding and overseeing. She is also a power that holds the silence which exists in opposition to the ‘noise’ of the physical world. She guards and mediates that power potential before it manifests, and she is one who can trigger the inspiration within humans to create from the Divine utterance that manifests out of the silence. She is the deep serpent power from within the stone, that bridges the silence of stone and the Divine utterance that is then manifested by humanity. She can release the utterance of knowledge and memory from the stone, and she can encase



Figure 3: Khnum in tomb KV14

the utterance and knowledge in her silence. Hence her importance in magical construction.

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*Vision II : Wadjet, The Green one: Spitter of fire, Lady of the house of flames*

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You can work on this vision yourself. Work as you did in the last vision for your preparations, and go to the Inner Library. Ask to go to the oracle temple of Wadjet, the outer version of which is in Per Wadjet, on the Nile Delta in Lower Egypt. When you get to the temple you will be challenged by a priest guardian. Let your heart spirit speak on your behalf, show your staff, and answer any questions.

When you are allowed into the inner sanctum where Wadjet resides, she will appear as a cobra. Commune with her. She may tell you things of the future that you need to know, and she may show you things. When she tells you to, cast your staff to the ground and watch as another snake joins yours and they wind together. Once they together take the form of

the staff again, pick it up. Bow to her and back out of the shrine, and ask the priest about the two snakes and how they work together.

Once you leave the temple, take some time to meditate in the Inner Temple with the duel snake staff. Observe any interactions or changes that occur from taking the double snake staff into the Inner Temple. You can also spend time either in the egregore lake or in the Library, to absorb as much learning as you can.

When you finish your work, write up your notes and type a summary. Ensure you put your staff to the left of your bed for at least a few nights, to allow you to commune with the two serpent spirits in your dreams.

Together the two snakes make far more than a double power: together they are a whole power, and they greatly amplify each other. One of the powers of the Wadjet serpent is the 'spitter of fire,' that heads off attacks on you, but that power will turn against you if you misuse your magic: the fire becomes aimed at you. It is the fire element's version of the sword poised to defend you, but also to strike you down should you work in a way counter to Ma'at.

The Sword of Damocles is the air version of that power, Wadjet is the fire version, and in time the earth and water versions of that power will also come into your orbit. These four elemental guardians are always two-way streets: they will defend and teach you in a very powerful way, but if you become heavily corrupted then one by one they will strike you until you learn...or are destroyed.

As you work more and more with the staff, you will learn a great deal more about its power and about the two snakes and what they can do. You will also learn how to work in unison with the staff in your magical work.

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### *Vision III: Facing Djehuty*

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Once you have both snakes settled in your staff, there is another vision to do that is a key moment in an adept's development. A junction point, it triggers a deep shift in power that can then be brought into outer manifestation in your ritual work once it is embedded and settled within you.

As you will have now gathered, becoming an adept is not a single ritual or act. It is a constantly evolving development of power, layer on layer of which is built within you, which informs your work as well as

moving you up the ladder of development. It is also wise to remember, particularly as we are using a lot of old Egyptian interfaces, that adept magicians today are like babies compared to the skill levels attained in the past.

But it is also wise not to glorify the past as a golden era of magic. Each successful wave of magical development brings something new, and loses something of the past. The trick is to recover the best of the past and reform it with the best of the future.

This vision introduces you to a place and contact that can act as a teacher, guide, and refuge for the adept in times of great need, or in preparation for long-term or dangerous service work. It can also be worked with when you are in serious need of retuning, Divine connection, and learning. Do not overuse this vision, though it is a deep and powerful place of contact, and you will need to return to it periodically.

Prepare as you have for the other visions in this lesson, then go to the Inner Temple. Ensure you have your staff with you in your left hand. Circle a few times, then sit before the central altar in stillness and silence. Feel the wind coming through the air gap, listen to the water as it flows around the temple, focus on the flame on the central altar, and tune into the Mysteries of the altar itself, the Divine substance.

When you feel you are ready, get up and circle once more. End at the corner of the temple between the north and east walls. Slip into the gap there, and cast the staff to the ground. It will turn into the two snakes. Lift your right hand to light your way with your lantern, and follow the snakes. They will take you down a very narrow passageway cut out of the rock, something you have never realised before existed in the temple. It is as though you are walking inside the temple's walls, but straight, as if the temple wall were vast in length.

Eventually you will come to a round cave. Hold up your light. The floor of the cave is heavily decorated with painted tiles with different designs, and on the cave's other side is a false stone door, also heavily carved and decorated. The serpents come to a stop, rear up, and spread their hoods wide, as if waiting for something. Watch them. They fix their gaze on the false door. If you try to move from where you are standing, they spin round to warn you to stand still.

A sound builds up inside you. Open your mouth and let it out. It may come out as words, a wordless tune, or simply sounds. The cobras sway with the sound, and as you watch the false door as you sing, it starts to

light up. The light gets brighter and brighter until you can no longer see the door itself, only a wall of brilliant light.

Through the door/light steps a figure, but because the light is so bright you cannot see who or what it is. The figure comes forward into the cave and stands opposite you. You are standing on one side of the centre of the cave with the cobras blocking your way forward, and the figure is standing on the other side of the centre. The centre itself stays empty.

Hold up your lantern. Your heart spirit speaks to the figure, your lantern grows brighter, and the two cobras seem to be conversing silently with the figure. Once the figure is satisfied with what they have heard about your development, it reveals itself. Before you stands Djehuty, and he holds two staffs in his left hand, each of which has a snake coiled around it.

Bow deeply to him. Your two cobras move to the two staffs of Djehuty and they talk to the serpents in the two staffs. Wait until they have finished and have returned to you. They coil around each other and turn back into your staff. Pick it up in your left hand.

A voice tells you to cast your eyes to the floor. In the centre of the cave's floor, between you and Djehuty, is a mosaic. Look at it and recognise it. The mosaic is square, and depicts the four living creatures. You are asked if you are ready to step forward. Answer that you are, and step into the square. Look down at the mosaic. By your right foot is the bull, and by your left foot is the lion. Place your right foot on the bull and your left foot on the lion. Behind you is the falcon, and before you is the man.

Djehuty steps forward and rests his two staffs on your forehead. You can feel the two cobras licking the air around your face and the power of the staffs flowing through you. The bull image under your right foot seems to come alive, and you can feel his hair and the strength of his horns: he is moving and has come alive out of the mosaic.

The same happens under your left foot: you can feel the lion's fur and the heat of his breath on your foot. He is also moving and has come alive. The two animals stand up out of the mosaic and support you through your feet. You feel a fluttering behind you and a weight descends on your shoulders: the falcon has risen and landed on your neck, and spreads its wings around your shoulders.

Before you, Djehuty shines. His voice says: "I give you life." He

gets brighter and brighter until it is hard to make out his features. In the brightness, as you look deeper, you see many wonderful things, and you begin to realise just what power this deity is. You stop looking and start feeling. The images around you in the vision fall away until you are standing in a feeling, an experience. You can feel the serpents of your staff weave their way around your arm as they join with you in the experience.

You are everywhere, you are nowhere, you are everything, and you are nothing. Stay in the vision for as long as you need to. When the experience starts to fade, be aware that somehow you are back in the Inner Temple before the altar, with the wind blowing in your left ear, and the water running all around you. The two snakes come down off your arm and turn back into the staff.

Stand before the altar in silence, and simply be with the memory of the experience. When you are ready, withdraw from the Inner Temple: either walk through the Library, or simply open your eyes. Write down your thoughts on that vision and the experience, and type up your notes.

The experience, and the level of intensity it triggers, largely depend on timing and necessity. By doing the vision in a lesson you learn it, but you might not experience it to its full extent until the time is right. But you will know when it is time to return to this vision, which opens up the Mysteries for you in a deep, internal way.

It is one of those experiences that cannot be explained or taught: you are led to it, but the actual switching on of the experience is very individual. You will find this more and more with adept development: you are given the outline, but the actual experience in its full power comes to you when it is time to do so.

When you experience this encounter in its fullest power it changes you deeply, and opens doors for you in ways that, again, cannot be explained. It is something that awakens you, enlivens you, stills you, and reconnects you with the deepest aspect of the Mysteries. As it subsequently resurfaces in your conscious mind and outer life, it brings with it learning and knowledge that filters through into your mind as and when necessary.

The type of serpents that you have met in the previous visions all fall within one cultural pattern. This layer of serpent power is very willing to work with magicians, and they can be found in cultures all over the world. However, the adept must also work with deeper serpent powers, less culturally defined ones, to establish a rapport with a layer of Underworld serpents that acts as a buffer between surface presentations and the very deep, powerful, and very dangerous chaotic serpent dragon powers



that occasionally surface in our world.

Working with this ‘buffer’ layer is not as easy as the surface presentations, and is less predictable. However, through establishing connections with them, a mutually beneficial working relationship can be forged to enable the adept to work on keeping the more destructive powers at bay. This next vision connects you with these deeper but beneficial powers. Just remember to tread cautiously.

This vision also helps you reground and reanchor after the last vision. Did you notice that the last vision is a layer of the powers that work through the ‘ascent’ process? It is approaching that work from a different angle, and working in this way helps you draw together, from an inner energy perspective, the various inner strands that come together for the adept to step into the deep Mysteries.

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### *Vision IV: The spirit of the land*

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The last two visions worked very much within a ‘temple’ pattern in terms of the energy and contact. This vision is more feral, more natural in its connection, and as such it is hard to predict what level of power you will connect with. You all live in different lands, and this power expresses at different levels of power depending on where it is and what has gone before on that land.

Some cultures learned to suppress this layer of serpent power; others learned to work with it. For example, in the stories of the conversion of Ireland to Christianity, St. Patrick ‘expelled’ the serpents. This is not literally about casting snakes off the island: they were never there to start with. The legend states: “Standing atop a hill St. Patrick used his staff to herd the slithering creatures in the sea, banishing them for eternity.”

What we are looking at here is something most adepts would understand. by the power of his staff he banished the serpent power from the surface of the land, driving it deeper into the land or into the sea. Heavy magic indeed. Historians have the impression that the ‘serpents’ meant Paganism, and I too thought that for a while, until I tried to contact the deeper serpent powers in the land in Ireland, and I hit a wall of silence. I had to dig very deep to find them, and I also had to turn to the sea. This is not a natural suppression. I hit a magical wall when trying to connect with them on the land, though I did find small islands of serpent power still within the land that had not been suppressed.

So if you do hit a magical wall when trying to connect in this vision, do not try to hack through it. Simply look to the waterways instead. These powers can also be found in the sea, and in deep underground rivers and lakes.

Work in your work space in vision. Open the gates, have your staff with you, silence yourself, then go down into the Underworld in vision. Go to the Underworld Forest with the intention of meeting the serpent powers in the Underworld of the land where you live. As you walk in the waters and among the trees, let your staff guide you. It will take you to an area where the trees are overgrown and have formed into a cave-type shape; or you may be taken to a small stone cave.

Before you enter that enclosure, cast your staff to the ground so that the two snakes release. They will escort you into the space, and they will act as interpreters. They will also convey to the serpent/s who you are, what you do, and what your intentions are: to constantly work from necessity and balance.

As you go into the enclosure, start to hum: serpents like music and sound. At some point the serpent power will make itself known. It will appear large, as large as you or bigger. Bow to the snake and give it a gift. Reach into your pocket and whatever appears in your hand, give it to the serpent. Remember, if it is something you own in the physical world, you must physically drop it into the sea or a river for the snake. Often it is something gold, silver, or a precious stone, the favourite substances of the serpents.

Ask the snake if it would be willing to be an ally should that be needed in the future, to maintain the balance of creation. That help would mean giving you safe passage in the Underworld, protecting you against the destructive deep serpent/dragon powers, helping you make connections with the less dangerous dragon powers, helping you with prophecy, and with healing venom. Ask the serpent if it is willing to help with these things and more, and what they would require from you in return. Listen carefully as your snakes interpret and whisper the response in your left ear and into your mind.

Think carefully before you agree to the terms: ensure you are willing to do what is being asked of you. It may include things like giving all the gold you own to the river and never wearing it, or removing barriers for them in the Underworld, and bridging the powers of the storms down into the Underworld to keep the deeper chaotic serpents under control. These deeper serpent powers can destroy everything in their path, including the snake powers of the shallow Underworld. Remember,

the relationship between you and this large serpent must be mutual and respectful: you must truly be willing to help them as they help you.

If you cannot come to an agreement, say so to the snake, very respectfully, then bow, thank them for their time, then leave. If you do come to agreements, bow, and the serpent will lick part of your head or body with its tongue, leaving a mark there. That mark stays on you and warns any serpent power that you are an ally to this powerful snake. The mark will also act as a form of communication between you: it will come strongly into your awareness, or the area of your body where the mark is will start to hurt or itch: this is the serpent calling you down to it.

Similarly if you really need the power of this serpent around you for whatever reason—make sure it is a good one—then touching the mark and seeing it in your mind while calling for help will bring its power to you.

When you are ready to leave, bow and go back to the Underworld Forest. Spend some time wading and swimming its waters with your two snakes: this will help you forge closer bonds with them. They can teach you to swim like a snake, and you can teach them how to talk like a human.

As you get out to leave, reach out your left hand and call the snakes to you. They will twist around each other to form the staff. Pick it up and go back to your work space.

Write up your notes, and in particular write out, carefully, the deal that you struck with the serpent, so that you never forget it. Type up a summary.

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## *Summary*

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Now you have made contact with the 'friendly' layer of serpent power, you are much better placed magically to observe the deep chaotic dragon and serpent powers that can surface in a very destructive way.

Also, just as inner contacts and angelic contacts are valuable, so are these Underworld serpent powers. The more you work with them in various ways, the more you will learn, and the more you will spot hints of this branch of magic in ancient images and texts.

When you look back at late antiquity and early Christianity, you will see the move away from mutually respectful work with these powers towards suppressing, destroying, shunning, and reviling them. And yet they are a valuable part of the magical pattern, and of the health and vitality of the planet and nature.

Just remember, they can be extremely dangerous just by nature of their being, and they should always be treated with respect and caution. Never fall into the fluffy 'pet snake' syndrome with these beings. Not only are they powerful and dangerous, but they can also be unpredictable.

Like many things in the adept aspect of your training, you are introduced to contacts, concepts, and patterns. How and if you decide to continue and expand that work is up to you: I will not keep spoon feeding you the 'next step.' I open the doors, but it is up to you to decide which ones you want to walk through.

QUAREIA

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Figure 4: Ishtar, from the Louvre Museum, Paris