

What they need, beyond all else, is the gift of memory; tell their stories, speak their names, affirm their truths.

Sometimes the dead require blood to speak.

Scream your sorrow, scream your rage, scream your joy. The excessive quality of emotion will resonate with them most clearly.

Share your food and your wine, share your space, share the sun. The dead lack sensual capacity but delight in ours.

Practice reciprocity in all things. A gift requires a gift.

Seek out ordeals that might draw you closer.

Stargaze, moon gaze, void gaze.

Contemplate nothingness, contemplate the void.

Contemplate their lives and deaths, contemplate your own.

Spend time in silence.

Spend time doing nothing.

Spend time in kitchens, gardens, libraries.

Attend to the complexities of Eros and Thanatos.

Call on the psychopomps.

Necromancer realism, fortune teller realism, spirit medium realism.

Oscillate between formality and informality, give each its due, and derive the distinct pleasures of each.

The dead will cast shade and spill tea, pay attention to truths that are most brutal.

Recite their poems, sing their songs, read their texts. Let their words live on in your work and on your tongue.

What is remembered lives.

These are ancestors of sundered lines. Many were cut off in life, few have biological descendents. If you are their true descendents, your wellbeing is in their interest.

Ask for assistance in your projects and endeavors, turn to them for inspiration and insight.

In everything you do, honor them and recognize that assistance.

These spirits, in life, feared dying alone. Assure against their isolation in death.

They died in prisons and camps and psych wards, at the hands of inquisitors and gaybashers and cops.

Vengeance is sweet even to them.

The greatest vengeance is to live joyously on their behalf.

Be ready for old debts to come due.

The dead are rarely constrained by human morality, they make fearsome conspirators and defenders.

War extends to all levels, there are hostile forces as well. Keep your friends close.

Let your daily practice congeal into ritual, let them build power.

Learn to take the armor off.

Jouissance, that little death where pain and pleasure become indistinct, is also a doorway.

Spirit is intrinsic to material, refuse false dichotomies.

Your mind is a fleshy organ of your body. Nourish and care for your sensual capacities.

Indulge in feasts of the senses.

Stay flexible, adapt. Protocols, like all else, change.

These spirits are always the exception.

Don't fixate on borders and categories. Piety and veneration may look differently to these spirits.

Death is not the end.

Death is an initiation.

If the dead love you, they may want you among them someday regardless.

The distinction between life and death may seem arbitrary to the dead. Keep yourself and your friends alive. The spirits will not.

And yet play with indistinctions.

Practice discernment in all things.

These spirits blur boundaries, between genders, between self and other, between living and dead. Learn to submit to that undoing and still come out the other end.

Decompose your identity. Open holes through which the other might enter.

Always with music, always with style.

Beauty, intention and grace in all things.

Practice creating masks for different situations.

Wear costumes, wear drag, wear masks. Let them fill the void behind all these.

Allow yourself to wander, in cities and in the wild. Let the dead drift alongside.

Stay in and have them over.

Go out, and bring them with.

Show up on time regardless.

Don't expect the dead to keep their appointments. Some are awkwardly early, others fashionably late.

Bring them flowers. Wear them in your hair to remind yourself of your future underground.

Dress up to meet them as you would for a date.

Make excessive offerings, wine and mixed drinks, cigarettes, drugs, water, candy, coffee, light. What the dead loved in life they'll welcome beyond.

These dead are hungry. Fuck, dance, run, kiss, steal, eat decadently, sing, destroy, create. The energy of life, ecstatic life, draws them close, nourishes.

Let your kissing, dancing, fucking, creating, destroying move you into trance.

Give them space and adorn it lavishly. Speak to them there, where they are comfortable and at home.

The dead, and especially the queer dead, are unorganized, chaotic. Don't expect organization. Instead find nodes, affines, contacts among them. They'll coordinate amongst themselves.

Learn their names, all their names, the secret ones too. All the better to call them by.

Research obsessively, research frantically, research ecstatically.

Study their codes, commit yourself to the argot, the signs, open yourself up to veiled messages.

Pay attention to subtle omens – on the radio, in thrift stores, bookstores, passing conversations – they work through synchronicity.

There is no such thing as a coincidence.

Pay especial attention to outcasts, ranters, mad-ones, drunks.

Experiment with divinatory modes: practice bibliomancy, pay attention to birds, scry in wine, quiet your mind.

Alter your state of consciousness with drugs, with fasting, with dance, with chant.

Hold vigils, visit memorials, pour libations, light candles.

Write everything down, especially if it seems unrelated at first.

Monitor your dreams, record them when you wake.

Write love letters to the dead. Look out for their response.

Build longterm relationships, make oaths, set boundaries.

Experiment working in groups, amplifying energy and clarity. Another might pick up on something you miss.

Everything dances.

The freaks come out at night.

Take breaks, take space, take time, take liberties.

Journey to the underworld and find your way out.

Practice automatic writing, possessory trance and other methods of channelling.

Cultivate certain qualities – ecstatic, cathartic, flamboyant, chthonic – in all things.

Sing, especially if you never do, sing for them and them alone.

Learn to open and close doors, build and burn bridges.

Cleanse the doors of perception.

Cleanse with flowers, baths, perfumes.

Cleanse yourself. The dead are intrinsically miasmatic.

Celebrate birthdays, deathdays, celebrate accomplishments, celebrate festivals.

Sketch a map of sacred places, an enchanted geography.

Walk the old haunts; bars and parks and cruising spots. Therein pick up their trace.

Some will travel in packs and as houses, others are solitary. Learn how to engage with them together and alone.

Among them there will be spirits more or less elevated, more or less wise, more or less chained by their traumas.

Seek the advice of the wise ones, and do not be drowned in the pain and fear of the others.

You may feel yourself to be dying, you may find yourself rapt in panic and anxiety. This is a cost of the work. Learn to separate what is yours and what isn't.

Part of the work will be to assist those who need healing. To show them how to heal themselves.

Healing may be ecstatic too.

Cultivate empathy, learn to regulate it.

Empathy may register as desire, sickness, terror, joy.

Lean into your anxieties and manias, into your highs and lows. Often you'll find the spirits on the other end.

Balance is necessary. As you surround yourself with the dead, invite in life in equal parts.

¹. *QUEER*: “strange, peculiar, eccentric”. From the German *quer* meaning “oblique, perverse, odd” which in turn comes from the Old High German word for “oblique,” *tuærh*, which is derived from the root *terkw-*, “to turn, twist, wind,” as in “the labyrinth turns, twists, winds.”

². *GOETIA*: “the invocation of daemons or spirits” from the ancient Greek *goeteia*, “sorcery,” from *goes*, “sorcerer, wizard”, ultimately derived from *goao*, “to wail, to cry” as in mourning or in a funeral rite.