DAMIEN ECHOLS ANGELS & ARCH-ANGELS A MAGICIAN'S GUIDE



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WHAT IS ANGEL MAGICK?

efore I get into the techniques for working with angels and archangels, as well as an extensive catalog of angels and archangels that you'll be working with, I want to discuss some basic information you'll need in order to understand these methods of using magick. My goal is to explain some essential concepts from the get-go so that you won't be distracted or confused later on when you're actually engaging in the practices.

HOW I INVOKED ANGELS TO CREATE MY PREVIOUS BOOK, *HIGH MAGICK*

Let's go back in time a couple of years. By now, you probably know that I was on death row for over eighteen years (the last eight in solitary confinement), the result of which left devastating effects on my psyche—most of it not obvious to me until I was released from prison. I lost a lot of basic abilities that most people take for granted—face and voice recognition, for example (you don't see a lot of faces or hear a lot of voices in solitary—not human ones, at least). So, you could say that going from that type of imprisonment to the streets of Manhattan overnight was a bit of an adjustment. There was no way to prepare for it, and it was psychologically and emotionally crippling. I couldn't function. I had to be taken care of like an invalid. I can barely remember anything about those first couple of years after I got out.

When I was on death row, I had worked my way up to doing magick as much as eight hours a day. When I was released, I couldn't even do it for eight minutes. I couldn't read or write, even though I had been doing both constantly inside. My nervous system had been overloaded and my brain just short-circuited in the process.

So, when Tami Simon, the founder of Sounds True, asked me to write a book on magick, I was ecstatic, but I had no idea how I'd do it. I believed my writing days were sadly behind me. But then she proposed to bring me into the studio and just talk about what I'd practiced and learned while I was on death row—they'd record everything, make transcripts, and we'd use those transcripts to write the book. So, that's what we did—I went to Colorado and spent a week in the studio.

Thing is, because I couldn't write, that meant I couldn't go in with any notes. I couldn't even put together a plan about what I was going to say. I was a blank. Even though I wanted to do the project more than anything, I was terrified—it was like watching an inevitable car crash happen in slow motion. So, I did what most people who are about to be in a collision do—I prayed.

Every morning before I went into the studio, I prayed with my entire being—something like the magickal equivalent of a prayer of desperation. I began invoking angels, one after the other, and put particular attention toward Archangel Raphael, as well as the angels of Mercury—the planetary energy associated with eloquence and successfully conveying ideas to others. It felt like the best choice—magick traditionally falls under Mercury's domain.

So, after invoking these intelligences, I walked into the studio with no plans and just opened my mouth and watched it all come out of me. Like a dam breaking wide open, nearly twenty years of study and practice burst forth. Before I knew it, the week had passed and we had recorded pretty much all of the material you'll find in my book *High Magick*. It's just one of the many miracles that magick

has brought about in my life. The book being spoken into being was a miracle, but so was the process, which was restorative and healing.

When I returned home, I could do magick again with the same enthusiasm and focus I'd had on death row. I started with a half hour a day, worked my way up to an hour, then two, three—however long I wanted. And I could write again. Working with angelic energies in my time of need had returned my passions to me and repaired something fundamental in me that made it feel as if I were reborn, at long last, into the world.

NOT JUST ANOTHER RELIGION

People who say they don't believe in magick are simply saying that they haven't practiced magick. Magick doesn't function on belief-it's not a religion; it's a system of practices that work whether you believe in them or not. Paraphrasing a friend of mine, this is exactly why we don't teach more advanced techniques to novices-they work no matter if you're a psychopath or a saint. When you start practicing magick, it's natural to wonder if it's working or if you're just playing mind games with yourself. I know I did. Everything I read just sounded too good to be true—I mean, if it were actually possible to send angels out into the world to fulfill your requests, wouldn't everybody be doing it? Before I passed through the initial stages of practice and began to awaken my energy centers, it just sort of felt as if I was going through the motions of invoking angels. But then I experienced something with me in my cell—an angel, in fact—and I finally knew that magick was real and that it worked. All it took to get to that point was sustained willpower and determination-not an ounce of belief was necessary to the process.

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HOW THIS BOOK RELATES TO HIGH MAGICK

In *High Magick*, I present the basics of magick as I learned and practiced it in prison. That book is an introduction to this one, and although I'll be repeating a lot of the material here, the advanced content you'll find in this book represents the next step, and it's a steep step that requires successfully climbing the first one. That isn't to say that you can't get a lot out of this book as a stand-alone guide; it's more to steer you in the direction of a more thorough outline on which these practices and rituals are based. So, if you're puzzled or confused about something, it's probably a good idea to use *High Magick* as a primer to this book.

Almost everything you'll find here is based on the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram (LBRP) as I presented it in *High Magick*. If you really want to get the most out of magick, you have to be thoroughly familiar with the LBRP. Then you can begin invoking angels and archangels, build upon that practice, and set the greater processes of magick in motion. So, again, it's like lifting weights—a metaphor I repeat all the time. You can't just walk into the gym and start benchpressing five hundred pounds—you've got to build up to it.

The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, an order of magicians in the 1800s who had a profound impact upon magickal traditions throughout the world, called the LBRP the *Philosopher's Stone*. That's what it is—the key to everything. Build on that practice and anything is possible.

WHY ANGEL MAGICK? MATERIAL MANIFESTATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

In the traditional literature pertaining to progression along the path of magick, you'll find that someone in the middle stages is said to have obtained "a general mastery of practical magick, though without comprehension."¹ It took me the longest time to understand what that meant.

We perform practical magick to help us in our day-to-day lives, manifesting what we want and need in the physical realm—more money, a better job, the ability to speak eloquently . . . you name it.

Being able to do this efficiently but "without comprehension" points to the deeper reason for doing magick in the first place. As I stress all the time, there's nothing wrong with practices aimed at material manifestation—my surviving death row is living proof of that. The problem comes when we think that this is what magick is all about in its entirety. In fact, material manifestation is more of a side effect than anything else. It's never the primary goal of magick.

The more you advance in the practice of magick, the more you see that it's actually all about transcending our enslavement to the ego and ultimately freeing ourselves from the endless cycles of incarnation. With that in mind, at some point, material manifestations become increasingly undesirable, mostly because they involve losing energy that could be better spent elsewhere.

So, to be clear, there are two reasons we invoke angels and archangels—material manifestation and spiritual sustenance. The difference between these two is fairly straightforward. When practicing manifestation, we invoke energy into our ritual space and then direct it toward something else—for example, a talisman. Doing so, we essentially release the energy and allow it to fulfill its function on the material plane. When we invoke for spiritual sustenance, we absorb all of that energy into our own energy body, and this is what empowers us to transcend our ego and become enlightened. An added benefit of gaining spiritual sustenance is that it also has profound effects on our experience of the physical realm: we feel lighter, happier, and more content; we also care a lot less about things that don't ultimately matter (social media, relational drama, etc.).

By invoking fresh energy into ourselves on a consistent basis, we eventually flush out the old, stagnant energy. When you hear magicians speaking about purification rituals, this is mostly what they're referring to. If we truly dedicate ourselves to this practice on a consistent, prolonged basis, we begin to cleanse the deepest part of our energetic anatomy—the part I'm calling the ego. By pouring enough energy in, the stagnant debris (ego) through which we have tried to see the world since the day we were born begins to disintegrate like a rock under the current of a clear river. The more the ego disintegrates, the more we realize that all we thought we were—that all of this is—was never more than just an illusion.

THE AURA AND ENERGY BODY

Most people picture the aura as an egg-shaped sphere surrounding the body. In reality, this is a rare thing to witness. Unless someone regularly engages in energy work (anything from chi-gung to ceremonial magick), their aura looks more like heat rising off the asphalt in the distance on a hot summer day. A vital part of ceremonial magick is about training and crystallizing the energy system so that it permanently retains the egg-shaped outer layer. If we do this consistently, our energy is held in, and it no longer escapes like vapor. The way we begin this crystallization process is by banishing and invoking, which both involve archangels and angels.

To that point, some magicians argue that we should never do magick for manifestation purposes, that doing so just stands in our way of the ultimate goal. Well, if you've ever been poor, you know that there's actually not much that's helpful or holy about living in a constant state of need, whether it be hunger, lack of protection from the elements, or physical danger of some sort. Furthermore, if you're in some kind of trouble in the physical realm, you probably need to take care of that first before you focus on transcending your egoic chains, if for no other reason than not doing so won't bring you any closer to enlightenment. So, to reiterate, there's absolutely nothing wrong with performing magick to meet your material, real-world needs, and I wouldn't be alive today if there were.

That being said, I recommend striving for a balance between the two approaches, focusing a bit more on spiritual sustenance. Personally, I use what I call the 90/10 rule—90 percent of my magick is for

spiritual sustenance, 10 percent is for manifestation. Other magicians take different approaches—for example, one of my friends focuses on practical magick one day out of the week and for all of the other days does magick for spiritual sustenance. As I stress several times in *High Magick*, the important thing is to find out what works best for you.

CONSCIOUS EVOLUTION

Magick is the art and practice of conscious evolution. If the source that spawned human consciousness (what some call God) is like an apple tree, we are the fruit of that tree. Most of the apples fall to the ground, decompose into the soil, and provide energy that further sustains the tree. But some apples take root and become trees themselves. This is the purpose of working with angels and archangels—to stimulate and foster this type of evolution. And this is what empowers us to help other people do the same.

The ultimate goal of working with angels, however, is to become one ourselves. A friend once told me that that's what people actually are—unconscious angels. As we work with the intelligences we call angels, we gradually align our will with the universal will, moving in greater harmony with the source of all creation and assisting in the spiritual evolution of all humanity.

Throughout history and across cultures, we read stories of people transforming into beings of light. In the book of Enoch, the prophet by the same name ascends to heaven to walk with God, and the prophet Elijah is said to have traveled to heaven in a chariot made of fire. Tibetan Buddhism is full of tales of practitioners attaining the rainbow body, or an indestructible energetic body that allows us to approach the highest levels of divinity; and the path to becoming a bodhisattva—essentially, an archangel—is clearly laid out in that tradition. Becoming enlightened is just another part of the journey the end goal has always been to help others.

THE WILL

In magick, we use the word *will* in much the same way that Hindus use the word *dharma*—it means, among other things, the specific path we're here to walk. Each person's will is unique to them—custom made by their higher self to maximize their potential for awakening. Situations that bring about enlightenment for one person will have no effect on others, simply due to the particular makeup of their will. Unfortunately, most people have no idea what their will is, which makes it easy to get tripped up by the ego (more on that in the following section) and become increasingly trapped in unnecessary drama and psychic impurities.

The most direct path to discovering your will is to connect with your higher self—something we in magick also call the Holy Guardian Angel (HGA), and I've included practices to help you do just that later on in part 2 of this book. In the meantime, I'll just say that you can get a hint of your will in whatever dreams and desires recur for you. I'm not saying that if you've always wanted to be an actor, that means it's what your HGA has in store for you. It might be, but it could simply mean that exploring the path of acting is what will bring you the experiences you'll need in order to wake up and fulfill your will. You might not become the next Marlon Brando or Meryl Streep, but the people and places you encounter will foster an even better outcome.

Interestingly enough, your will is sometimes the exact opposite of the situation you're born into. In order to truly awaken, those who know wealth must experience lack, just as those who are isolated and alone must learn true companionship and love. I grew up destitute and powerless (as evidenced by my false imprisonment), but those experiences were necessary for me to finally understand my will and sense of personal power. Despite what my ego tried to make of those hardships, magick helped me see that I am never truly powerless, no matter what happens all around me.

THE EGO

When we practice magick, what we're essentially doing is rising on the planes of existence toward a level already embodied by angels and archangels. That's not our experience on the lower end of the spectrum (represented by our existence on earth), where we're typically identified with an extremely limited, small self—the ego. The ego is our primary obstacle to discovering our will, fulfilling it, and awakening to our true nature.

Of course, people in the past didn't call it by that name. Even ancient magicians used different terminology for what we call the ego today, because they lived within a particular cultural frame and lacked the vocabulary of psychology and quantum physics. For the most part, the ego was viewed as an external detrimental force, which is why so much magick in the past was devoted to binding and banishing demons. In fact, the ego is somewhat demonic in that it operates like a symbiotic or parasitic entity that only exists on the lower planes. The ego is the very reason why most people are rarely able to settle their mental or emotional state—the ego feeds on the churning energy of constant drama.

The ego isn't a solid thing but an organism of multiple layers and levels—some incredibly dense, others more ethereal and difficult to detect. The densest levels are hardwired into our physical body and involve things such as hunger, lust, and desire to avoid discomfort and pain. This makes sense—the ego has to keep its host form intact, because it can't survive without it. People who are capable of unbelievable physical hardships haven't necessarily rid themselves of the ego; they've simply overcome their attachments to comfort. Take the monk Thich Quang Duc, who sat quietly in meditation while he burned himself to death in Saigon to protest the persecution of Buddhists by the South Vietnamese government in 1963 (made famous by the Pulitzer Prize–winning photograph by Malcolm Browne). It's not that Duc had necessarily destroyed or eradicated those hardwired layers of the ego, but it is quite clear that he had overcome attachment to them—an incredible feat in and of itself. Most of us will never be able to attain this type of mastery. The ego is simply too interwoven with our physical form, growing incredibly powerful within a short period of time when we're young. Eventually everything we perceive is filtered through the conditioned lens of the ego, while we—the ego's host—remain oblivious to its spreading influence. A primary goal of magickal practice, therefore, is to transcend the harmful states induced by the ego and eventually achieve a different vantage point from which to view the world. That vantage point is on a higher level than we typically find ourselves. Indeed, it is the vantage point of our higher self.

THE POSSESSED

When I was on death row, there was one particularly abusive prison guard who took great pleasure in inflicting pain on those who had no way of fighting back or defending themselves against torture. This is because he had been transformed so completely by the ego that magicians of older times would say he had become possessed. He lived in a hell of his own making, tortured unceasingly by his ego's need for more energy. When the guard's own misery and pain weren't enough for it, the ego caused him to reach out and generate the same suffering in others so that it could feed on that energy as well.

We can only experience life from one of two vantage points: that of the lower self/ego or that of the higher self/enlightened consciousness. The ego is the all-consuming lens through which nearly all of humanity experiences the world, which explains why most people struggle to experience unconditional, true love. Real love—the kind free of attachment—can only be experienced by the higher self. Since the ego never feels complete or satisfied, it's always searching outside itself to fill the void within, and it does so with material goods and