



Pooka's Page for Grownups

Due to personal issues, this issue was a little rushed and a bit shorter than usual, but I hope you'll find fun stuff in it for you, as an adult, to enjoy along with little pagans!

The sexual and procreative theme of Beltane is a little advanced for most small children (although it can be addressed). However, Beltane is also the counter-part to Samhain and both holidays open doors to the Other World. In the case of Beltane, the door opened usually invites fairies and so this is our theme.

It seemed only appropriate, therefore, that **our story** this issue should feature Pooka's little friend Thistle and I tried to work in a basic Life Lesson for kids as well...That even if you intend to return something that belongs to someone else, you don't just Take it. You ASK first!

My daughter, Mandy, and I had a blast designing and creating a **simple Fairy House**, hopefully easy enough for kids yet esthetically pleasing enough for their grown-up helpers. I hope you have as much fun with it as we did and be sure to send in pictures of your creations! Everyone who sends Pooka a picture will get a FREE Double Set of Elsie & Pooka coloring books to print out!

I have to thank **Kris Bradley** of "**Confessions of a Pagan Soccer Mom**" for bringing **Oreo Moons** to my attention. The idea is all over the internet – but I hadn't seen it and perhaps you haven't yet either. Kudos to whoever first came up with it! I'm passing it on here in **Pooka's Lesson**.

A frequent contributor and dear friend, **Evelien Roos** in the Netherlands, submitted the "**Rainbow Bedtime Meditation**". Although it's written for kids, I'm going to try it myself the next time I have a hard time getting to sleep...perhaps even tonight! Thanks, Evelien!

Pooka and I hope everyone has a very Blessed Beltane!



Some Other Names: May Day, Roodemas, Walpurgis (Germany), Cetshamain (Ireland), Cyntefin (Wales), Cala Me' (Cornwall) and Kala-Hanv (Brittany)

This is when the Goddess and the God get married and all of Nature celebrates with them. The ancient Celts divided the year into two parts – Winter, the colder, dark part that began at Samhain, and Summer, the lighter, warmer part, which officially started at Beltane. It is celebrated with maypoles, picnics, courtship, flower gathering, bonfires, processions and games. We also use this time to bless our animals and gardens. Beltane is one of the times of the year that fairies, elves and pixies especially love to play and you're much more likely to see one!



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A Journey to the Rainbow contributed by Evelien Roos

The Pooka Pages Magazine (unless otherwise noted) is written & illustrated by Lora Craig-Gaddis

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The Storybook Chair



Lost and Found

It started out as a typical morning. Elsie and Pooka woke, then Elsie dressed as Pooka bathed and arranged his fur for the day.

But suddenly Elsie paused in mid-stroke while brushing her hair. Her eyes darted around the surface of the dressing table. “That’s odd,” she muttered.

Pooka glanced up from the bed, then gave his tail a final lick and asked, “What is?”

“My hair ribbons are gone,” she told him.

“All of them?”

The little witch shook her head. “No, the one I took off last night is here. But all the others are missing.”

“Well, at least you still have the one,” said Pooka who, being a cat, didn’t really see the need for ANY hair ribbons at all. He hopped down from the bed and changed the subject to more important issues. “What’s for breakfast?” he asked and trotted toward the stairs.

Elsie sighed and followed him.

After breakfast, she tidied the kitchen and put small pieces of chicken on the window sill for Edgar the crow. Moving on to her other chores, she dusted the parlor, then grabbed her little watering can and began tending the indoor plants.

Halfway through, she stopped and frowned at a pot of ivy on one of the end tables.

“You’re spilling water,” commented Pooka as he strolled into the parlor.

Elsie’s head jerked up and her hand tightened its grip on the watering can. “The doily’s gone!”

“What doily?” asked Pooka.

“The little crocheted doily I keep under this potted plant,” Elsie said. “The plant’s still here, but the doily it was sitting on is gone!”

The cat hopped up and straddled the arm of an adjacent chair to get a better look. “Are you sure? I never noticed a doily there. Maybe you just imagined one?”



The look Elsie gave him encouraged Pooka to quickly find Somewhere Else to be. “I think I’ll just go to the garden and check on my catnip now,” he called as he disappeared out the open parlor window.

A moment later, however, he was scratching on the front door.

Elsie put down the water can and opened it for him. “Pooks,” she sighed. “Why can’t you just come in the way you went out?” The little witch was not having a very good morning...and it was about to get worse.

“I wanted you to see this,” said Pooka. Next to him on the door step was a neat little pile of broken china.

Elsie bent down and examined the pile. “It’s what’s left of the teacup that broke a few days ago.”

“And you threw the pieces in the trash,” Pooka reminded her. “So why are they here?”

The witch and her cat stared at each other. Something Very Strange was going on!

“Maybe you should do a Reading,” said Pooka at the same time that Elsie said, “I think I’ll do a Reading.”

However, in this instance, the tarot cards had little to say beyond what they already knew. So Elsie got out her pendulum. That wasn’t much help either.

“I must not be asking the right questions,” Elsie sighed as she put away her pendulum. She decided to resume her chores and suggested Pooka spend time on his magical studies.

“I can’t,” he told her. “Half the crayons in my box are gone.”

“What?” Elsie looked and, sure enough.

“I put them back yesterday,” the cat assured her. “How can I make notes and draw pictures about Beltane without all my colors?”

“Well, you can just use the ones that are left for now and we’ll get some more crayons in the village on Market Day,” said Elsie.



“But that will be after Beltane,” Pooka objected.

Elsie rolled her eyes and pulled a little brush and pallet from her desk drawer. “Here,” she said. “Use my watercolors.”

“Okay,” grumbled Pooka.

The next day wasn’t much better.

As Elsie dished up the oatmeal for their breakfast, the sugar bowl was found to be stuffed with hair ribbons that certainly hadn’t been there the morning before!

The crocheted doily was found stuffed behind the cushion of the rocking chair in the kitchen.

When Pooka went to do his studies, he was astonished to find all the crayons in the box had been replaced, but were now only half the size they’d been previously.

However the bits of broken teacup had vanished from the porch.

And, in the evening when Elsie sat down by the hearth to do her sewing, a spool of pink thread and some bits of lace from her sewing box were all missing. At bedtime, a ring that Aunt Tilly had given her last Yule was sitting on her pillow!

By the 3rd day, the ribbons were missing again. So was the doily and so was the ring. But the spool of thread was discovered on the kitchen window sill next to the pot of basil.

Elsie scratched her head and retreated to the herb room to make May Baskets to deliver the next morning on Beltane. Pooka wandered into the garden and sat lost in thought beneath a large lavender bush.

Suddenly a dark movement by the open kitchen window caught his eye. Peering through the stalks of lavender, he saw Edgar, Elsie's crow, landing on the sill. Something white fluttered from his beak! The crow cocked his head as though listening and then disappeared into the cottage.

Pooka sprang to his paws, galloped to the window and bounded through it. The kitchen was empty so he dashed to the parlor. There was Edgar, stuffing Elsie's crocheted doily behind one of the chair cushions!

"What are you doing?" exclaimed Pooka as he skidded to a halt in the entry.

Startled, Edgar dropped the doily and flapped his wings. "Raaawk! Nothing!"

"Edgar," asked Pooka sternly. "Have **you** been taking Elsie's stuff? Did you take my crayons?"

The bird gave him a wounded look. "Cawr! No!" and with that, Edgar flew back out the window toward the forest.

Pooka gave chase.

It was hard keeping the big black bird in sight while dodging bushes, tree trunks and rocks, but the little cat was determined and, eventually Edgar landed in the branches of a tall oak.

As he caught up, Pooka noticed a flutter of gay ribbons attached to a small stick rising from the forest floor. It looked like a miniature version of Elsie's maypole in the meadow!

And then he saw the bits of broken teacup forming a colorful pathway to a tiny door in the tree. On the door, being used as a knocker, was the ring from Aunt Tilly!

"Thistle!" yelled Pooka.



The fairy peeked out from a little window decorated with bits of lace curtains. "I'm not home," she called out.

"Thistle, I see you," said Pooka.

The little face disappeared back into the shadows of the house. "No you don't," said Thistle.

"Fine," said the cat as he turned to leave. "I'll just go and get Elsie."

The door in the tree trunk flew open and the pixie came darting out. "No Pooka! Don't!" Then, just as suddenly, she stopped and, adopting a casual pose, asked nonchalantly: "I mean, why you would want go bothering Elsie?"

Pooka sat and wrapped his tail around his body. "Because," he told her, "you've been stealing her things. And My crayons!"

Thistle stuck her lower lip out and scowled at him. "I brought your Stupid Old crayons back! I only borrowed them. And just look at this Wonderful Beltane Banner I made!"

Pooka glared back. "When you borrow something, you ask first! Otherwise it's stealing. And you didn't ask."

The fairy looked down and stubbed a teensy toe in the dirt. "Well, no one was around...sort of."

"Otherwise, you would have asked?"

Thistle's toe dug a deeper furrow in the ground. "Maybe..." Then she looked up eagerly. "Oh Pooks," she said eagerly, waving her arms and fluttering her wings. "Tomorrow the Beltane Procession of the Royal Fairy Queen and King are going right past my house. MY House! I wanted it to look Extra Nice." Then she frowned. "I just didn't know it would be this much Work!"

Pooka glanced up at the big black bird in the branch above them and a chuckle rumbled in his chest. "You mean because Edgar kept returning the stuff to Elsie?"

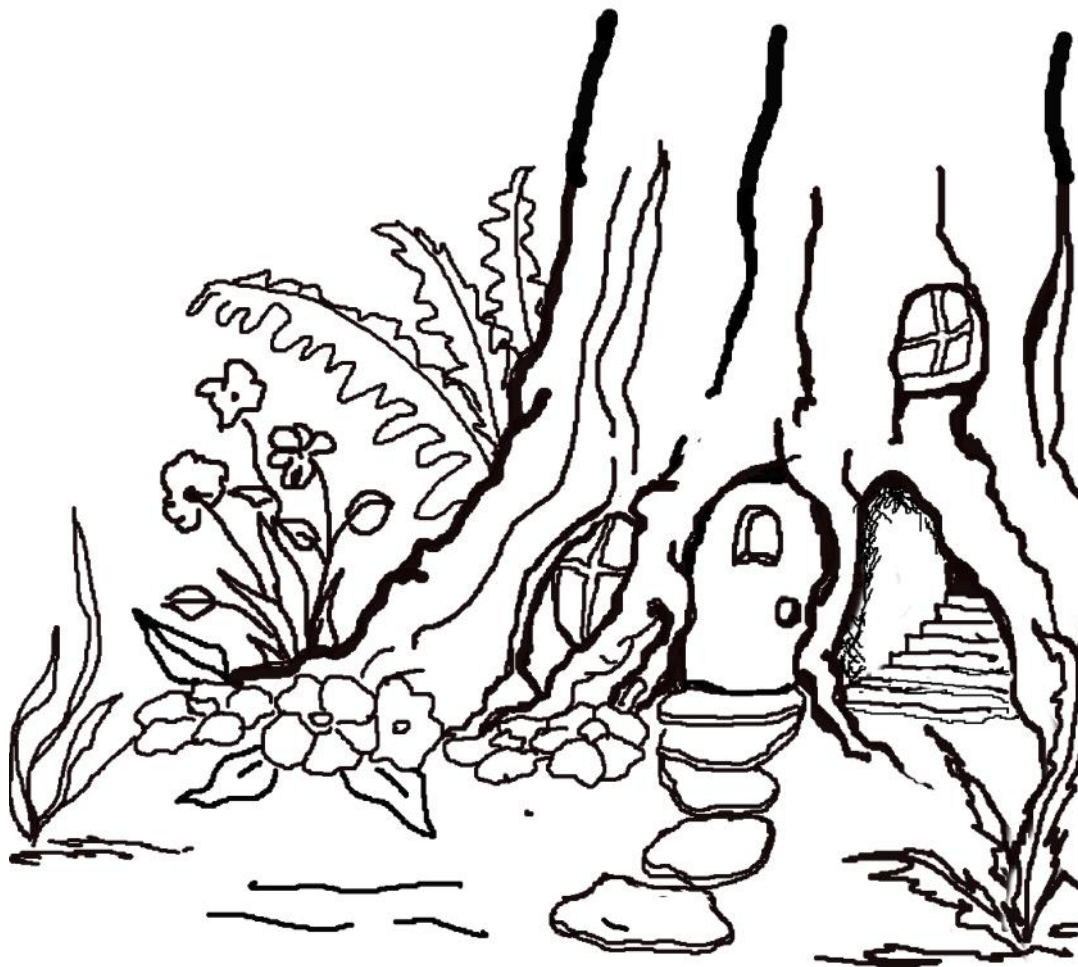
Thistle's wings drooped as she plopped down on the ground and gave a tired sigh. "Yes. It was hard enough borrowing them once... but then I had to keep flying back and forth and re-borrowing and you have No Idea how many times I almost got caught!"

"If you'd gotten permission," said Pooka wisely, "then Edgar wouldn't have cared because Elsie had said it was alright."

"But if Elsie would have said it was okay anyway, then I don't see what all the Fuss is about!" the fairy complained.

"The fuss is that you didn't ask first!" Pooka told her.

"Oh," said Thistle sullenly. She thought a moment, then grinned mischievously and peeked up at Pooka through her bangs. "So, if I ask Elsie, then she'll let me keep these things even After Beltane? I mean, can you Believe how Great my house looks? All the other fairies are SO Jealous!"



Witch Crafts



Make a Simple Fairy House

A birdhouse in a garden attracts birds... So what better way to attract fairies to your garden or patio than providing them with a cozy little house to live in?

When you're done, you can even make a little "For Rent" sign to put in front. If the sign mysteriously disappears, you'll know for sure that a fairy has moved in!

There

are lots of ways to make a house for the fairies, but here's one idea:

Start by gathering straight sticks that are thin enough to be broken or cut to the lengths you want. You'll also need an empty box and some green moss (available pretty much



where ever plants are sold).

Draw a door into one side of the box and cut out 3 sides of the door. (Leave the 4th side attached for your door to swing open and shut.)

Then, make a triangle template and use this to make an outline over the door. Make another triangle outline on the opposite side of the house, then draw a line connecting the bottom corners of the triangles from the back to the front of the house.





Use the lines to cut out the sides. This will form a place for your roof to sit.

Cut a rectangle of thin cardboard (like from a cereal box) and bend it in the middle to make your roof. Remember to allow for a bit of the roof to hang over the front and back of your house!)



Next, give the box and roof a thin coat of black spray paint and let this dry.

Take thicker pieces of sticks and glue them in place to make a little frame around the door. You can use tacky glue or wood glue (which is what we used).

While that's drying, start breaking some sticks to the same height as the sides of your house. Then smear on some glue and start putting on the sticks. (You'll want to work in stages, putting a few inches of sticks on at a time, then letting it dry so they don't fall off as you're handling the house.)

After that, glue some moss onto the roof and decorate your little house! We painted the door green and used a small bead for a door knob. We also glued a pressed flower and fern over the door and found a small pine cone to use as chimney – but these are just ideas. Maybe you can find a cheap ring to use for a doorknocker or, if you want to add windows, a bit of lace or ribbon for curtains. Thistle used Elsie's doily for a rug! Look around and see what you can find. Just be sure to *Ask First!*

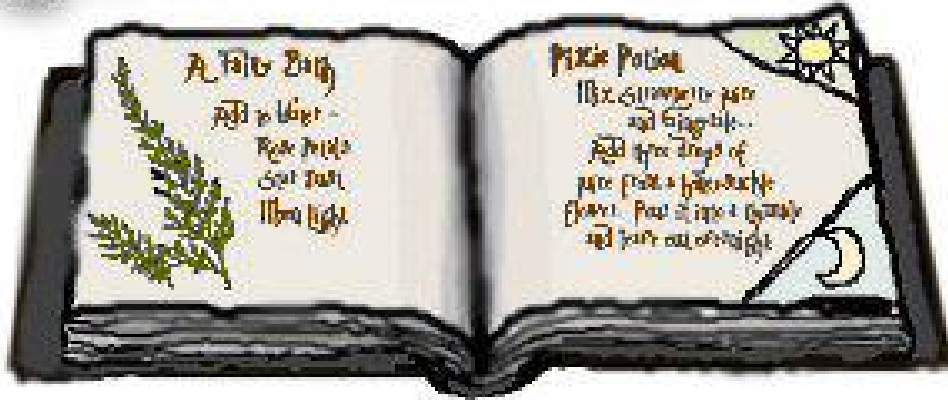


Kids – Pooka wants to see your Fairy Houses!

Send a picture of the Fairy House YOU made to pookachild@hotmail.com Every child who sends a photo before Litha/Midsummer will get a free Elsie & Pooka Coloring Book to print out!



A Little Book of Shadows

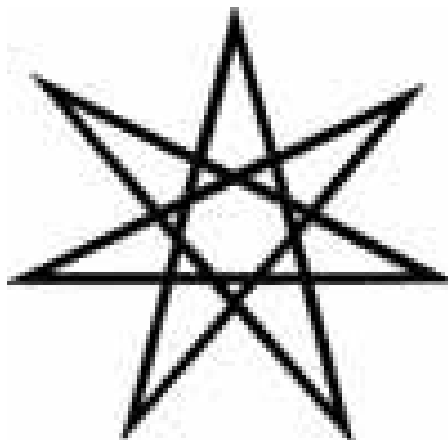


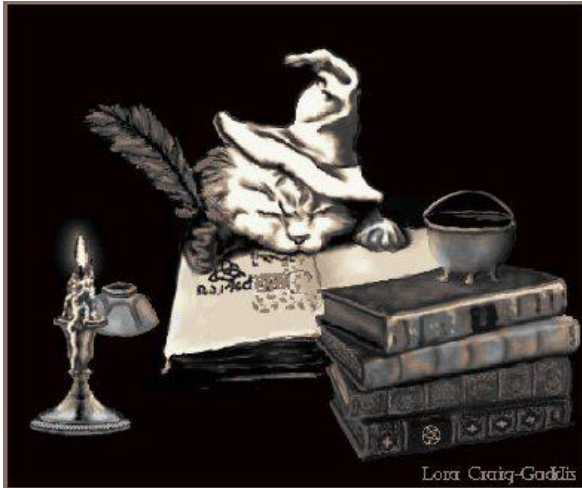
On Magical Beltane Eve, just before bed, take a pink or green candle into the bathroom. Carve a fairy star into your soap, then fill the tub with a bit of rose oil and bubbles! As you wash with the soap, say: *“Fairies, Fairies, Blessed Be. Fairies, Fairies, Come to Me!”*

After your bath, bundle up in clean jammies, take the candle into your bedroom and scatter a few rose petals on your sheets and pillow. Place a small bowl of milk next to your bed. (Fairies LOVE milk!)

Repeat the incantation: *“Fairies, Fairies, Blessed Be. Fairies, Fairies, Come to me!”* seven times. (Seven is the magic fairy number!) Then have your grownup turn out any electric lights in the room and, with only the candle burning, both of you watch for fairy shadows. Remember, fairies are shy folk! You may catch just a glimmer of movement or a fleeting shadow here and there. But do this spell and, if you’re watching close, you will see one – they may even appear in your dreams!

Fairy Star:





Pooka's Lesson:



You can do this Lesson along with Pooka!

Pooka threw down the black crayon. In a fit of temper, his claws shredded the paper he'd been working on.

"I just don't get it!" he wailed.

"Understanding the moon's phases is very

important in witchcraft," Elsie repeated patiently. "They tell you the mood she's in and how to work with her."

"But, how do I tell the phase of the moon just by what she looks like?" cried Pooka. "She always looks the same! A big white blob in the sky."

"But, have you noticed that the blob is sometimes bigger and rounder than at other times?" asked Elsie.

"Well, yes," Pooka admitted.

"And that about once a month there is no blob at all?" the witch continued.

"Okay, yes. And you say that's called the New Moon," said Pooka. "But how am I supposed to understand all these in between times?"

"I'll show you!" said Elsie and went to the kitchen cupboard. From a high shelf she pulled down a packet of dark, cream-filled cookies. Separating one of the cookies, she placed the dark half on a plate.

"Pretend that's the New Moon," she said and then handed Pooka the frosted half and told him, "I want you to lick off most of the white filling."

Pooka looked at her. The frosting was the best part! Any kitty knew that! So he did as he was told.

Elsie placed that cookie next to the first with the frosting to the right. "That's what the moon looks like when she starts growing," she said.

She handed him a 3rd cookie and told him: “Now lick half the frosting from this one.”

Pooka looked at her uncertainly. Was she serious? This was a Lesson in Dessert! Before she could change her mind, his little pink tongue had done its homework.

Elsie placed that cookie next to the other two. “This is the moon in its First Quarter.”

She handed him another. “Now lick just a little off.”

He did.



“There’s the moon just before she becomes full,” said Elsie. “See how she’s growing stronger and bigger in the sky?”

Pooka looked and saw how there was more frosting on each of the cookies. “I do!” he cried.

Elsie separated a cookie and put the round frosting side next to the others. “Here’s the full moon,” she said, then handed him another half of the cookie.

“Lick a little bit off.”

He did. She placed it next to the full moon cookie, this time with the frosting on the left.

“See?” she said. “Now the moon’s growing smaller.” Then she had Pooka lick half the frosting off a sixth cookie and then most of the frosting off a seventh.

“See?” she said. “Now the moon is almost empty again. It’s almost a New Moon.”

The little witch sat back and smiled. “So, what do you think?”

“I think I need a glass of milk!” said Pooka.

Elsie says: As the frosting on the moon gets bigger, she gets pours out more energy. As the frosting gets smaller, she pulls her energy back into herself. When the frosting’s on the Right Side, you know the moon is getting bigger. When it’s on the Left, the moon is getting smaller.

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A Journey to the Rainbow

This is a Kiddy Yoga (but for Pooka - Kitty Yoga) visualization that can be done at bedtime:

Close your eyes and calmly breathe in and out... Let your breath go all the way to your tummy.... you feel calm... Imagine a rainbow... can you see the colours? ... Look closely at the rainbow... you can even touch the rainbow! ... You can feel the colours slip through your fingers... You can even climb the rainbow... why don't you? ... Just climb a little bit higher every time... what colour are you climbing now? ... Now you're on the tippy top of the rainbow and you have a wonderful view! ... All the beautiful colours have made you feel happy and glad... And do you know what the best part is? ... When you are ready, you may slide down the rainbow, all the way... And as you slide all your thoughts just fall away... When you reach the bottom, you feel wonderfully light and you can just simply drift off to sleep! Good night!

