

# *The Road of Aconite*

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**Do the spell and seek help! You deserve all the support you can get!**

*National Domestic Violence Hotline*

*Text Begin to 88788*

*Call 800-799-7233*

*Suicide and Crisis Lifeline*

*Call or text 988*

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## *Connecting with the Spiritual Beings*

### Befriending the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road

The Pombagira Gypsy of the Road is the tutelar spirit of this class and an Ancestor of Debora's family.

She currently has the title (and work as) of Pombagira, a spirit who deals with the darkest aspects of human existence, our relationships, paths and spiritual dealings. While alive, she was a poisoner and supported women and femmes with her knowledge in many different ways.

Sofia, as she is also known among friends and family, is still very passionate about protecting marginalized individuals and communities, and to do so in this class, she is once again working with her favorite poison, the aconite.

Please refer to the list below for tips on how to meet and connect with Sofia and remember that she is an individual spirit: it's not because you have met one Pombagira Gypsy of the Road that you know all Spiritual Beings who use this title.

*Offerings:* Sofia enjoys gin, liquor made of herbs and fruits, red wine, absinthe, wildflowers, yellow roses, jewelry made of natural elements, tarot cards, scarfs, blackberries and other berries, fruit or meat pies, salted fish, cured meats, cheeses, bread, chants, candles or other sources of fire lighted in her name, natural incenses.

*Activities:* you can share a meal with her, go on walks around cities and nature hikes, helping elderly people, supporting the Roma community, women and queer rights, planting a garden for yourself or working on a community garden, making herbal preparations, braiding and taking care of your hair with natural products, community gatherings full of laughter, conversations and good feelings.

### Making Allies with the Spirit of Aconite

Aconite is the genus of a number of species in the Ranunculaceae (buttercup family). Commonly referred to as monkshood (*Aconitum napellus*) or wolfsbane (*Aconitum lycoctonum*) in European folklore. All varieties of aconite (while they do have medicinal uses) are all *extremely* poisonous and should *never* be ingested unless under the instruction of a qualified herbalist. In TCM, aconite (*Aconitum carmichaelii*) is one of the most powerful herbs for restoring depleted yang energy because of its fiery energetics, however in magical practice we often experience the spirit of aconite to be cold, direct and emotionally detached. A solitary and independent spirit, aconite teaches us to figure things out for ourselves and draw power in solitude through forging a strong inner resolve.

To begin forging a bond with aconite you must prove yourself willing to connect with this powerful spirit.

**Some safe ways to begin connecting with aconite are:**

Growing and spending time with the plant.

Working with the flower essence or a topical/ritual formula made with the plant material.

Meditating on an image of the plant in bloom or creating/working with its plant spirit glyph.



## *Spells and Practices*

### **Connecting with Pombagira Gypsy of the Road**

One of my favorite methods of connecting with the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road is by going on a walk around my neighborhood while listening to music that celebrates her.

You may call upon her once you leave your home, letting her know you are going on this walk to meet and connect with her. Make sure you tell her your intention behind this request, if you are looking to befriend her, curious because you have taken the Road of Aconite class or are in need of advice.

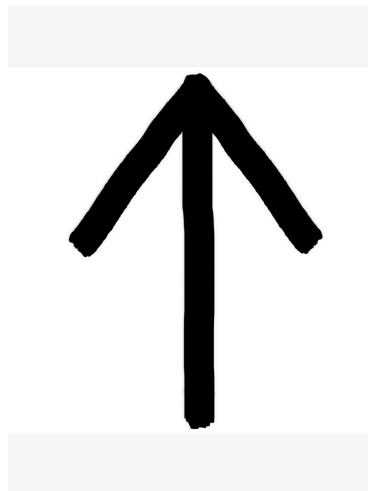
Bring home something you will find or buy during your walk to gift her with. You may leave this item on your altar or plant pot. Just make sure you say it's for the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road, also known as Sofia.

I made the following playlist to support your connection, but you are welcome to come up with your own.

You can click on the link bellow or search Pombagira Cigana da Estrada on Spotify by Morgana Moon

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/516OvE7LH915sYvu1dmX61?si=8y3miqmjTWS6Jq5p2z3x2w&pi=GthIgZAyQQaPY>

### **Empowering a Ritual Blade with the Power of Aconite**



## Tiwaz

In modern magical lore one of the uses of aconite is in the empowering of ritual blades to create a charged object that can effect the spiritual and energetic realms. These can be used for rituals of protection both in defense and offense, for the removal of spirits, and cutting of cords. Historically, aconite was used to poison spears, arrows and other weapons to make them more deadly. In this case we are calling upon the spiritual power of aconite in combination with the Germanic/Norse rune Tiwaz, which represents justice. Tiwaz is connected to the Proto-Germanic deity Tyr, and one of the common names of aconite is Tyr's helmet, so there is a sympathetic connection here. You can use the finished blade in the rituals included in this document.

- A double edged knife or ritual blade of your choosing
- A small paint brush
- A glass of water tall enough to submerge the blade in
- A cloth large enough to wrap the blade in when finished
- Ink, paint or other pigment for applying the symbol to the surface of the blade (this can be something permanent or temporary)
- (optional) aconite flower essence, tincture or plant material to be added to the ink
- Use the plant spirit glyph shown above or make your own using the basic sigil making technique

Perform this ritual at night when you are able to locate and visibly see the north star. If you are not able to physically see the north star in the sky, use a compass to find magnetic North.

1. Assemble all of your ingredients at your ritual space, facing North.
2. Submerge the knife in the water while speaking an intention of cleansing it of all previous influences. Remove it from the water and hold it up to the night sky before drying it with the scarf.
3. Prepare your ink/paint/pigment, adding the optional aconite formula of desired.

4. On one side of the blade paint the plant spirit glyph of aconite. On the other side of the blade paint the rune tiwaz (shown above). While doing so visualize and feel the energy of the spirit of the plant and the rune combine and enter the blade.
5. When complete hold the blade up to the Night sky pointing it at the North star visualizing the power coming down and entering the blade.
6. Wrap the blade in the cloth for storage.

### **Connecting with the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road and Aconite**

This ritual is meant to support you in connecting with the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road and the Spirit of the Aconite. We recommend that you do this if you want to feel what their spiritual presences feel like in your body, befriend these spirits and invite them into your life and practice. You may include some of your personal practice into this rite to make it unique to your personality.

- Aconite flower essence
- The Hermit card
- Photo of aconite flower
- Double edge knife
- Candle or another source of fire
- Wild flowers of yellow roses
- Incense

First, anoint yourself with the aconite flower essence by placing a couple of drops on your wrists, forehead and lower belly. Turn all lights and devices off and relax into your body and put your to do list on hold.

Light the fire and say “may the light show me what only the soul can see!”

Organize your ritual space in a way that the hermit card, aconite representation, knife and flowers and in between you and the candle. Stare at the candle until you feel your eyes getting heavy or a little sleepy. Then, look at the aconite representation and officially call upon its presence. Explain to this green ally why you would like to connect with it. Take a deep breath and look at the Hermit next.

As you observe the Hermit card, allow it to shape shift and move, taking you deeper into yourself. Exhale as much as you can and proceed to hold the knife with the blade upwards.

Call upon the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road and explain why you would like to meet her.

Stay in the ritual space for a moment, allow the Spiritual Beings to talk to you, be present and calm.

Once you feel that it is time to go, make an offering of incense to the spirit of the aconite and give the flowers to the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road.

Care for the flowers naturally until they wilt. You may give them back to nature then.

Remember that building relationships takes time and the most important thing is respect.

### **Finding Inner Strength**

This spell is for when you are facing a situation that is extremely difficult such as leaving a toxic relationship, not being able to properly grieve the loss of a loved one because you must keep going working and caring for others, finding a job and becoming a single parent after a divorce, etc.

You may repeat this work multiple times throughout your life, but not more than once per lunar cycle. If you are easily shaken by life, do it once per lunar cycle, for 7 cycles in a row.

- Clear non plastic bowl with water
- Double edge knife
- Head scarf
- Aconite flower essence

Wash the head scarf with water mixed with aconite flower essence and allow it to dry naturally.

Once the moon is out, sit by a window or outside, wearing the headscarf. All electrical sources of light should be off, if you feel that it's too dark, light a candle. Sit comfortably in front of the bowl with water and hold the knife in front of your chest, blade up, with both hands.

Say it out loud or sign "Pombagira Gypsy of the Road, I call you, I ask for you, I need you!"

Take a couple of deep breaths and close your eyes. Start singing a song that makes you connect with your inner strength - it can be a pop song, spiritual chant, or your own creation.

Open your eyes and look at the bowl of water, searching for your reflection. Place the knife in the water, blade pointing away from you, and look at the bowl a little longer, summoning thoughts of yourself filled with courage, doing the brave thing, feeling confident about your decisions and life.

Once you are done visualizing, take the knife out of the water and place it under your pillow. Pour the water from the bowl over your head, massaging your scalp as you do it. Make sure you also wet your hands, feet, lower back and front of your torso with it.

Sleep right away, or simply lay in bed in silence. No more social media and keep communication to a minimum tight after this spell. You may go back to your normal life in the morning, but preferably only after the moon has left the sky.

After this spell, the knife can go back to its usual function.

### **Stopping an Abuser**

Use this spell when you want to stop an abuser. This work is ideal for verbally abusive people, work related situations and other circumstances where the use of the spoken and written word has been the abuser's weapon of choice.

- Paper
- Pen
- Aconite flower essence or tincture
- Red ribbon or thread



Start by calling upon the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road. Say or sign her name and explain the situation in detail. Then ask her to empower this spell, stopping the abuser from committing any verbal or emotional violence against you.

Write the full name of the abuser three times on the piece of paper. Place the paper on the floor and stamp on it seven times with your dominant foot as you make statements such as “I am protected from your slander” “I am safe from you” “You can’t harm me anymore” etc.

Next, place seven drops of aconite flower essence or tincture over each name, making it a total of twenty one drops. Use gloves if necessary because you have to now slap the paper seven times as you repeat your statements with even more resolve.

Last, roll up the paper and secure it with the red ribbon or thread as you talk to Sofia once again, telling her that you don’t want this person to be able to injure you or your reputation ever again.

Bury the paper.

### **Stopping a Violent Abuser**

This spell is for when the abuser has already been physically or sexually violent towards you and you fear for yourself, your children and other people in your life. Great to be done if you are going to court or asking for a restraining order.

You may perform this for a loved one.

- 1 apple
- 7 nails
- Red ribbon
- Aconite flower essence or tincture
- Gin or water from a natural source
- Candle or other source of fire

- Pen or another object you can use to carve inside of the apple
- 1 leaf of dumb cane (Dieffenbachia)

Start by calling upon the Pombagira Gypsy of the Road. Tell her that you are calling her for her expertise as a retaliator, a poisoner and a protector. Explain the situation in detail.

Light the candle as you say “may the fire empower this ritual of protection and safety”

Hold the apple with both hands, heart level and say “you are the prison that locks, closes and restrains!”

Cut the apple in half and take the seeds off (keep the seeds).

Write the abuser’s name in one of the halves and piece the apple back together with the help of the ribbon.

Wrap the dieffenbachia leaf around the apple and use the nails to secure it as you repeat your protection affirmations.

Next you will have to bury the apple: make a hole in a houseplant pot or outside, place the apple, pour as much aconite tincture or flower essence over as you can, cover with dirt and pour the gin or water from a natural source over it, as if you were watering a new plant.

Stamp over the pretend burial site 7 times as you say “The Pombagira Gypsy of the Road has spoken and it shall be, I am from now on free of the violence - say the name of the abuser - has afflicted on me!”

Place an offering of a flower to Sofia over the ‘grave’ and walk away.

Note: I recommend a cup of chamomile tea (or lemon balm, or rose) and a sugar bath or shower after this spell to restore your energy from all it has been through.

### **Additional Info on Aconite**



*Aconitum lycoctonum*- wolfsbane

**Folk names:** thüing (an Anglo-Saxon term for any poisonous plant), blue rocket, venus wagon, trollcap, odin's hut, monkshood, wolfsbane, goats bane, aconite, teufelwurz , Queen of Poisons (arsenic is King)

*Aconitum ferox*, *Aconitum carmichaeli*, *A. unicum*, *A. hemslayanum* are some of the other varieties. Typically, Indo-European folklore is referring to *Aconitum napellus*, *A. lycoctonum*, and *A. ferox*.

Common names are often used interchangeably for various varieties of aconite. Monkshood and wolfsbane are two terms that are commonly used. Monkshood technically refers to the blue variety *Aconitum napellus*, while wolfsbane refers to the yellow variety *Aconitum lycoctonum*. From a pharmacological and folkloric standpoint, this distinction is interesting but not necessary. All varieties of aconite contain very similar chemicals. When referring to monkshood, aconite, or wolfsbane I am referring to the entire genus.

Aconite is a perennial herbaceous plant growing in the mountainous areas of central Europe, with varieties growing across the Northern hemisphere. The plant can reach between 4-5 feet tall. With dark-blue, helmet-shaped flowers forming at the end of the stalk. Flowers can also be yellow, white or a combination of white-violet-blue. There are also some varieties of vining aconitum. The leaves are dark-green, palmate and deeply lobed. The sepals of the flowers resemble a bumble-bee, the plant's main pollinator. This perennial herb develops a new taproot every season, the old one dying.

**Correspondences:** Saturn, mercury, elemental air

**Medicinal application:**

- Aconite has been feared as a poison since antiquity, because of this it does not have a major role in traditional (western) herbal medicine.
- Theophrastus (370-287 CE) provided a detailed description of the plant and its effects.
- The radix is used in TCM after being prepared in a special way.
- Used in homeopathic medicine to treat nervous and psychic ailments.
- Tinctures have been used topically to ease pain from gout, sciatica, and neuralgia. It was also used at the onset of fever.
- Not typically used internally because of its toxic qualities

**Medicinal Action:** anodyne, diuretic, diaphoretic, pain relief related to neurological issues. Symptoms of poisoning can cause numbness and tingling, slow or fast heart rate, and gastrointestinal manifestations such as nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. Respiratory paralysis and heart rhythm abnormalities can lead to death.



**Chemical constituents:** All parts of the plant contain toxic alkaloids.

- The entire plant contains aconitine (acetylbenzoylaconitine) and aconitic acid with the highest concentrations in the root.
- The root contains .3-2.0% diterpenoid alkaloids of the aconitine type.
- Aconitine is the primary alkaloid with subsequent alkaloids being mesoaconitine, hypoaconitine, napelline, N-diethyaconitine.
- Aconitine is present in all parts of the plant, however the concentration is much lower in the aerial parts. Aconitine has even been detected in the nectaries of the flowers. (Ratsch, 2005, p. 35)

### **Ethnobotanical Uses:**

- Although aconite does have ethnobotanical uses, it should never be ingested.
- Used as a ritual poison in ancient times
- References to ceremonial use by the Scythians, including rituals of shapeshifting
- Many of its common names refer to its magical and psychoactive properties
- It may have already been used in flying ointments in antiquity
- It was a popular ingredient in medieval flying ointment recipes
- Aghoris are a sect of tantric Shiva devotees who ingest poisonous substances including Aconitum ferox, opium, datura metel, cannabis, mercury and arsenic to become closer to Shiva, god of poisons and inebriants. Aghori practice a “left-hand Path” working with poisonous plants, the dead and “dark” deities.

### **Magical associations:**

- Wolfsbane is associated with Tyr, Odin and Hel in Norse mythology
- It is connected to Shiva the god of poisons and inebriants
- Wolfsbane is sacred to the goddess Hekate, as Queen of the Underworld and goddess of magical herbs
- Cerberus, the three-headed dog guarding the Underworld is also associated with Hekate
  - o Wolfsbane was said to have grown from where his poisonous saliva fell
- This plant can be used for all types of Underworld travel and chthonic sorcery
- It can be used in offering or to call upon Hecate and other deities of the underworld
- It is also known for being used in formulas to consecrate ritual blades, much like wolfsbane has been used to tip arrows
- It is powerfully protective and has the added benefit of stealth and illusion

- Used in rituals of shapeshifting or skin-turning which is a technique used by witches for a variety of magical effects
- Wolfsbane is associated with the Hermit archetype in the tarot, it is a plant of solitude, withdrawal from the world, and introspection
- It can be used in counter magic to redirect enemy spells and negativity
- One of the stones I associate with wolfsbane and monkshood is labradorite

**Other info:**

**Wolfsbane/monkshood Flower Essence**

- Shadow work
- Finding wisdom in introspection
- Inner strength
- Helping ease nervousness
- Helping with loneliness
- Drawing power from being alone
- Transitioning through dark periods