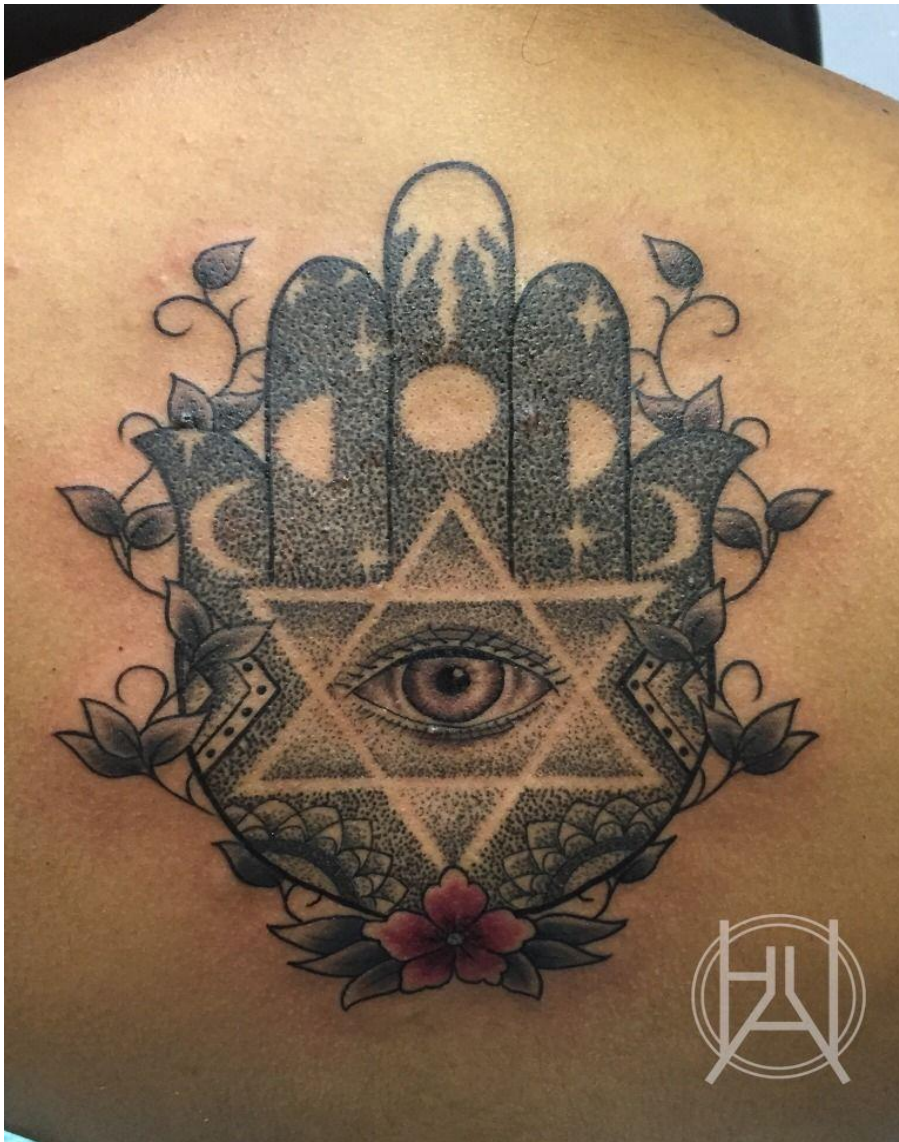


Mystic Tattoos



Written by David Ellinger M.B.A.

This book is dedicated to the Dreamers, the Outcasts, those who have the courage to walk a different path per the drum beat of their own sacred hearts. Be Brave, Be Blessed, and Be Kind to all those you encounter on this path called life. May God, keep you and bless you always, Amen, Namaste, Shalom.

They called her, Shadow. She didn't know where the nickname came from, and she really didn't care, nor did she mind it either. The name kind of fit, sort of. She was one of the best unknown tattoo artists in the world, and she knew it. The art of Ink was in her DNA. She has lived and worked in the shadows all of her life creating her art and using the living skin of others as her canvas, her tapestry of the soul. She knew that her work was a duality upon itself. A taboo to some and fine art to others. It is truly all in the eyes of the beholder.

She sat in one of the large red waiting room chairs, filing her long pinky finger nail that was painted in lavender. Her tight leather black pants were showing off her long sexy legs while her red bustier lifted her soft breasts as she took deep breaths in and out.

There was a HD TV hanging on the wall in silence while showing a recent football game from the local sports stadium. Jocks, she thought to herself. She was teased by them in high school, and all they want now was to get into her pants, and simply get off, and then discard her like a yesterday used magazine after their personal satisfaction was over. Beautiful Trash thrown into the emptiness of time itself. Her train of thought broke suddenly, when the bell rang, as a customer came in.

It was early on a Friday night, most folks were bone tired just coming off of work from a long work week, and they were still making plans for their weekends or what they were just going to make for dinner, and not what they were going to get on their skin as a life time tattoo in black ink.

In the door way, there stood a well-made up lady from up town dressed in a black business suit holding a fancy Versace purse by her side. She was more put together than a barbie doll dressed for a professional job interview. Her pumps were rattle snake skin, and she gave shadow, a smile that would have come straight out of Vanity Fair magazine itself.

Shadow got up out of the comfort fit of her chair and stretched before going behind the sterile counter. Her nervous habit of brushing her long black hair behind her pierce ear rings kicked in.

She couldn't remember where this habit first started as a young nervous youth with uncalibrated anxiety disorder. It always happens when she had to speak to rich folks.

Shadow asked how she could help her, and thought that the lady might just be lost, and stopped to ask for directions to the nearest mall or jewelry store.

Just as she asked, the lights flickered, on and off. They continued to flicker for at least a minute. This place always seems to have weird electrical issues. She made a note of it to tell her landlord, Rick, later, and have him investigate, she paid enough in rent.

The lady put her purse on the counter, and opened in. The lady wasn't much a talker or in any mood for small talk either. She reached in the purse, and took out a glossy picture. She then started to explain, that she had always wanted this tattoo, but never had the nerve to get one.

While looking at the picture, Shadow asked where she want the tattoo on her body, and lady without hesitation said on the back of her left shoulder. Shadow smiled to herself. You didn't need to be a psychic to know that she was going to say that location. The one place that would be the most covered up for a lady from up town to have.

Why even get a tattoo then? She thought to herself, I do all of this great fantastic art, and they just go and cover it up, night and day. But it's their body and their money at the end of the day and a girl needs to pay the bills.

The Lady then asked how much and how soon that she can come in and have it done. She definitely wanted to get straight down to business, Shadow thought to herself.

Shadow felt the powershift right away and made her smile to herself. The intoxication was almost physically too much and made her breast tingle. She thought for a second, and almost embarrassingly stared too long on the lady's large diamond rings and ruby bracelets on her hands.

How does \$250 Dollar sound? Complete silence followed.

She then took a breath, and continue to explain that unfortunately that she was booked completely for the weekend, how does next week sounds like.

The lady looks at Shadow and didn't skip a beat. That would be fine, and how does this Tuesday at 5:00 work for you.

Shadow said brightly, Tuesday it is then, and the lady then took out a hundred and twenty-five dollars out of her billfold, and said to her, half in advance, just so you know that I am serious about it.

Shadow simply nodded, while holding the crisp dollar bills in her hand, the bell simply rang again as the lady walked herself out to her shiny park silver Mercedes convertible parked next to the shop and simply drove away.

Shadow quickly folded up the bills, and place it in her red leather bustier. Well, that went well, she said, and she stared at the picture that the lady had left on the counter that is to be the tattoo on her left shoulder on Tuesday.

That is odd, she said to herself. The image had changed to symbols. I swear it was a different image just a minute ago.

The image was the Star of David, and inside the star was the Tibetan OM symbol. The Star of David had a circle of a sun burst around it and out of the circle were seven rays that were in the shape of tear drop unlike the seven eyes of heavenly glow. While looking at the image, the symbols seem to start rotating counter clockwise, and then the eyes themselves open up. They seem to be reaching into the inner depths of her soul.

There was an inner warmth that started through her body, as Strange Days from the Doors started playing over the radio next to the counter.

Shadow just smiled, Strange days, indeed, as she put the image carefully into her to do file for next week. She then said she really need to cut back on her Ambien, and went to the restroom and put cold water on her face. She took the aspirin bottle that was on the counter and took two tablets, and washed them down with water.

She then looked at herself in the mirror, but she didn't see her image but a reflection of an elderly nun holding a rosary of pink roses. The nun wasn't looking at her but had her head bowed and was saying a sacred prayer to herself. She couldn't understand what the nun was praying.

She then felt a firm touch on her shoulder and she screamed.

She quickly turned around and there was old Rick. the landlord, laughing to himself. Don't you ever do that to me? I really mean it.

Ok, OK, Rick said, while putting his hands up in the air as if surrendering to her. It's way past midnight, and I saw the lights still on in your shop, and just wanted to make sure everything was ok.

What do you mean past midnight, I was just talking to a lady customer a few seconds ago and it was just a little past five PM.

Shadow looked at her watch and Rick was right; the actual time was past two am in the morning. Rick now had the look of a concern parent on his face.

I am ok, Rick, just lost track of time, that's all.

Shadow went to the window and flipped the shop sign to Close, and asked Rick if he was coming or not. She then said by the way, Rick, there is some type of electrical issues going on for the lights keep on flashing on and off.

Rick said, well you know this place use to be an old brothel back in the days, it might just be haunted.

Don't be an Asshole, Rick.

Once outside, they parted their ways, and Rick trying to get in the last word, said, You, Know Shadow I was just trying to make sure you were just safe that is all.

I appreciate it.

By the way, Rent is due next week, don't be late again.

Thanks for the reminder Rick, you know you will always get your damn money.

Rick got in his old Chevy beat up truck, turn his lights on, while lighting up a cigarette.

That stuff is going to kill you, Shadow shouted to him.

How do you know that I am not dead already? Good night and drive carefully, the Police are out in force tonight as always.

She was now standing in the parking lot by herself. There was a warm breeze that felt good on her face and hair, and she could hear the leaves and the branches of the tree's rustling nearby.

Her beat up red and white Harley Davidson was parked nearby standing and waiting to take her home. A loyal steed always waiting for her and never disappointing.

She jumped on old dependable, and felt the vibration of the horse power going thru her thighs as she throttled the gas. Time for some Wind therapy she said silently to herself, as she rolled out of the parking lot and headed towards the open road.

The open road. Her town wasn't a large cosmopolitan one, but was divided in an old town historical area, and an up and coming business area with a fancy mall. Her family has lived there for generations, and she rarely spent any time uptown where the old and the new culture seem to collided.

She saw the open 24 hour 5 and dinner just up the road a bit and decided to get a bit to eat even though it was early in the morning.

There was a sheriff car parked in the parking lot with just a couple of other cars. She pulled her bike next to the flower beds in front of the café and turned the bike off. She hasn't been to the diner in a long time, as she normally just like eating at home in her comfy robe, then having to go out.

The dinner itself hasn't changed a bit, and looks like it hasn't change since the 50's when it was first built. The stain Elvis velvet frame picture was still hanging on the wall.

The café gray cat was sleeping in its bed at the end of the counter, no immediate threat to any mice, Shadow thought to herself.

There were just a couple of folks in a booth having an early morning breakfast and were not talking much, as old married folks often do. The police officer was sitting by himself at the counter, with his 45 at his side.

Shadow decided to keep her distance, and take a chair a couple of spaces from him. She and the law didn't always see eye to eye. Shadow could smell the scent of testosterone and authority coming from him and felt his eyes trying to undress her as she walked in.

Typical authoritarian male, she said to herself.

The waitress was new, and she didn't know her. Blonde, young and perky, she smiled at her and asked her what she wanted from the menu that she could get for her. Shadow asked for a couple of eggs Sunnyside up, and rye toast.

The waitress then poured Shadow a generous cup of coffee and went to put her order in. There was a small tv on the other side of the counter that was on, but not much was on at this time of hour.

The sheriff got up from the counter and paid his bill without looking further at Shadow nor at the waitress. The waitress waved and told him to have a nice day and went to pick up the dollar bills and change.

She then whispers to Shadow, he's always a bit grumpy in the morning, but is a good tipper. She then asked Shadow, if she was new in town while trying not to stare at all of her tattoos.

Shadow laughed to herself, just an old timer that haven't been in for a while.

An old timer indeed, I thought you were dead, as a large bald bearded man that smelled like he had just taken a bath in grease placed a warm plate of eggs and toast in front of her.

Sunny side up, Shadow, you have never been Sunny side up in all of your sad long pathetic life.

Now aren't you the sight for sore eyes, Jake, Shadow said.

The rebel that vowed you would never come back to this small forsaken town again.

Sorry to hear about your mom's passing, how are you holding up?

Jake smiled, still having the same old anger management issues I see, Shadow.

I' am just surviving, and doing the best that a man can under the stressful given circumstances, I guess.

You just have to play with the cards that you are given in life.

Well, Jake, hang in there, stop by the shop, and I will give you a deal on a new tattoo.

That is all that I need is another dam tattoo.

Watch your mouth Jake, you can never have too many tattoos.

Enjoy your eggs and toast before they get cold now. Jake walked back to the kitchen wiping his hands on his apron.

You know Jake? The waitress asked Shadow.

We go back a bit; he was good friends with one of my older brother's back in high school.

She nodded and then changed the subject to herself. I was thinking of getting a pair of rainbow butterflies on my wrist, is that something you can do for me.

Sure thing, just stop by the shop, and Shadow gave her one of her business cards.

My name is Jane by the way. Shadow, she replied.

Jane was definitely Jake's type, blond, perky, and all about rainbows and unicorns.

Shadow started eating her eggs and toast, and Jane refilled her mug of coffee.

While she was finishing eating, on the TV on the shelf across from her came up an ad for a national psychic hot line. There was an image of a red headed Celtic druid lady looking in to a crystal ball, call now, and get a 10-minute reading for half off. Call now, your future is just a call away.

Sometimes, the future just needs to play itself out. Shadow got out her leather vegan torn wallet and paid the bill. Jane was talking to Jake in the back, so shadow left without saying goodbye. She was just happy to be headed home.

She pulled her bike into her parking lot, and made her way to her apartment. There was a small package at the door and yesterday mail in her mail slot. Her hands were full as she placed her unopened items on the kitchen table. The phone in the corner was blinking like a one red eye demon in the corner. She was so tired, she didn't make it to the bed room but curled up on her sofa, and fell fast asleep.

Sleep was always something she looked forward to, the ability to escape from the daily and the routine. Her favorite dreams were the ones that transported her to Paris. There she would just be eating a morning pastry in a street café next to a flower shop. She always had a glow of anticipation, as if she was waiting for a lover or a friend to come and meet her, but just as someone was reaching out to greet her, she would always wake up.

What time is it, she thought to herself? The Morning light was coming through the curtains next to the window by her sofa reflecting off some hanging crystals making small rainbows throughout the room. Her apple watch starting beeping, it was 10 am. Got it, as she turned the alarm off.

Not a morning person, as she sat up, stretching like a cat, as she went to the bathroom to freshen up. She took off her yesterday cloths and looked at the reflections of herself in the mirror.

No dead Nun this time, just her naked sad truth and tattoos reflecting back.

She smiled, and went into the shower and felt the warm water washing her long black hair and yesterday's memories away. She loved her lavender mint shampoo and used a generous amount. She got out of the shower and put her robe on, and dried and brushed her hair.

She always was a low maintenance girl, and put on minimal makeup and eye liner. People have always admired her sea blue eyes. Who needs all that make up? When you have such nature beauty while laughing to herself.

She looked in her closet. Mostly black leather, few pink and red garments. So many choices, and she picked out a new black leather pants and a silk pink top. Just feeling a bit pinky today. It was Saturday and doesn't need to be back to the shop until 5 pm.

My business was a night business. No wonder I like goth and vampires so much. The night time was her life. She finished getting dressed and straighten up the living room a bit.

She decided to take a morning stroll down to the corner convenience store just down the street to get a cup of specialty coffee and her favorite brand muffin. She found her sketching pad that she like to take with her just in case she gets any inspirations of a tattoo design.

She locked the door to her apartment and it was a beautiful fall morning, and the trees were just starting to change color. She needed the exercise so she decided to walk and there was a slight wind blowing through the branches of the trees that line the road.

The bell rang as she entered the convenience store. Without thinking, she went right to the coffee station. She poured her hazel nut coffee into a cup, and took one of the brand muffins with poppy seeds from the pastry counter and place it in a small paper bag.

She took out a couple of dollars from her pocket and gave it to the clerk who was busy talking on the phone. They have great muffins and pastries but not so much on the customer service side.

She continued down the street where there was a small city park. She saw a dead racoon by the side of the road. Dry blood was on its side. She didn't want to look at it but she was always been told that one must always respect the dead to appreciate the living.

She said a small prayer and move past the lifeless carcass. Death has always fascinated her in a strange way.

There was a small rose garden area that she like to go and meditate in. There were still some blossoms on the bushes as there hasn't been a hard frost yet, and the gardener has not pruned their branches back yet for the next growing season.

She saw a black squirrel gathering nuts by the large oak tree in the middle of the park getting ready for winter. She stared at the animal and could feel the life force coming from the animal. Life, Death, the great cycle of creation, she thought to herself.

She sat down on the hard-wooden bench and took out her sketch pad and pen and place them on her lap. She put her coffee cup on the ground next to her and took her muffin out of the paper bag to take a bit.

That is where she heard the voices, they were coming from under the yellow and red rose bush next to her.

Hurry, Hurry, before she sees us. Don't worry my sweetness, she has her own muffin to eat.

Shadow couldn't see anything first, but couldn't believe what she was hearing. What she first thought was just a regular rose bush, there were actual two garden fairies that were coupling together on top of one of the larger blossoms.

They were so tiny and delicate looking with transparent wings that were rainbow in color.

Miss, Miss, Yes, I am talking at you, excuse me, stop looking, can't we have some privacy here. Shadow couldn't keep her eyes off them and was just so fascinated by these small tiny creatures. She had read about fairies and they were one of her most popular tattoos for female clients to get at her shop.

Shadow decided to be brave and engage them in a conversation.

I am so sorry for staring, but I have never seen such beautiful creatures as you both. The one fairy that was more feminine in nature started to blush a lavender blue. Would you mind if I sketch you both?

OMG, Lady, didn't you hear me the first time. The one fairy kicked the other in the ribs and made him roll over. She then gave shadow one of the sweetest smiles while talking to her companion.

Don't be so rude, as the other fairy was trying still trying to catch his breath after her kick to his ribs.

Dear, I would love to be sketched.

Would you mind flying to the other big red rose and pose on top for me?

Certainly. While the fairy flew to the rose blossom, the other one was still acting up a bit, and with one spin disappeared within a blink of an eye. The other fairy just took a deep sigh as his fairy dust settle by her side.

Don't worry about him, he just gets a bit irritated when he doesn't get what he wants right away.

Sounds like a typical male to me, Shadow reply. The fairy just sighed again, and then started to cry.

OMG, I am so sorry, I am so sorry, I didn't mean to upset you or to harm you in anyway.

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