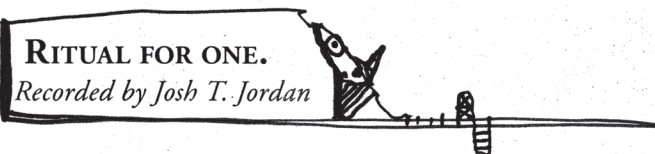




art by thomas novosel



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## Setting the Circle

Wait for a windy day. Go to a park or square, an open, lonely public area for pedestrians and not for cars. A place you might be seen, but won't be jostled. If the ground is soft enough, mark out a circle around yourself. If the ground is hard, you can picture the circle in your mind instead.

Bring a piece of paper and a pair of scissors. The paper should be at least as big as your face.

Walk to a place near the middle of the square. Close your eyes.

## Placing the Seal

Hold the paper in one hand and the scissors in the other. Raise them up in front of you. From this point until the end of the ritual, if anyone touches you, the ritual fails.

Let the paper dangle a bit so it flaps in the wind. Do not drop the paper. If you do, the ritual fails and you must try again on another windy day.

Can you hear the wind rustling the paper? Good. The seal is now in place.

## Clearing the Mind

From this point until the end of the ritual, you cannot open your eyes without ending the ritual. If you open them, the seal is broken and the ritual fails.

Begin to repeat a nonsense phrase out loud to yourself in your normal voice. I suggest "Appleslice." Repeat this phrase aloud until your mind begins to clear and the nonsense words begin to lose their meaning.

(You may now either keep saying the words or you may stop, stick out your tongue as far as you can, and keep it out until the end of the ritual. Both methods have their benefits.)

## Opening the Path

Holding scissors in one hand and paper in the other, poke a hole in your paper. Using this hole, cut out a circle in the paper larger than your fist.

Begin to prepare yourself mentally for the climax of the ritual. After this ritual, you will have access to and influence over your Third Madness. Use it wisely.

Put any extra scraps of paper in your pocket. It's best not to leave them around.

Now you have your scissors in one hand and your paper with a hole in it, fluttering in the wind.

You haven't opened your eyes yet, right? With your scissors hand, slowly reach around the back of your paper.

## Retrieving the Third Madness

Now, as slowly as you can, reach the scissors and the hand holding them back through the paper so they're pointing toward your face.

Slowly, ever so slowly, move the scissors toward your closed eyelid.

As soon as the tip of your scissors gently touches your eyelid, scream as loud and long you can.

When your scream ends, the ritual is complete. You have retrieved your third madness. You may open your eyes.

Be sure to clean up any pieces of paper you dropped before leaving the area.

