

Satanic Remembrance Ritual, 2019

Note: This ritual employs some material our regular Black Mass script. For the benefit of anyone already familiar with the “base ritual” who doesn’t want to have to review it, alterations and new material appear in red text.

Composed in 2018 and first performed in early 2019, the Satanic Remembrance Ritual is designed to provide comfort and reflection to people who are grieving, emotionally distressed, or struggling with adversity.

As atheistic Satanists we have no formal mourning rituals, no belief in an afterlife or higher power, and no recourse to psychological tools like prayer. As such, society sometimes does not provide us with helpful outlets for dealing with complex or fraught emotions.

The Remembrance Ritual is an attempt to provide catharsis and emotional support. Much of the language employed here directly relates to grief and mourning, but in theory this can be employed for any kind of personal difficulty. Indeed, one of the most important provisos of the ritual is that everyone’s pain be treated with the same solemnity regardless of the circumstances.

Required:

- Altar.
- At least one person to conduct the ceremony.
- One FIREPROOF vessel.
- Matches, alcohol.
- Blood and/or red wine (see notes about sourcing).
- Cup, bowl, or chalice.
- Tarot cards or playing cards.
- At least five candles. Black is traditional, but whatever works for you.
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Suggested:

- Between four and 12 additional candles for atmosphere. Bell or gong.
- Knife or sword.

- Incense.
- Black book.
- One or two additional people to help conduct.

Altar setup:

The altar should be a table high enough for you to comfortably reach everything on it but low enough for everything to be visible to the entire room.

Position the altar either in the center of the room or at one end. If you prefer to conduct without an altar, make sure all of your implements are nearby anyway.

We recommend a centerpiece for the altar, something big and eye-catching to set the mood. In the past we've used a goat's skull or a statue of Baphomet, but whatever seems appropriate for you can serve the same ends.

Cover the table with an altar cloth or just a simple tablecloth—black is generally the default color, but red, deep blue, purple, or even white can work, depending on your mood.

The altar should contain all of your implements. It can also hold additional elements for creating atmosphere—candles, incense, decorative additions, etc. If you're employing a book in your altar setup, make sure that it lies open.

Rather than the altar, the fireproof vessel should be placed on the floor. Around it, create the outline of a perimeter through whatever means you prefer: chalk, electrical tape, string, a painted dropcloth, etc. So long as the five points are distinct and the vessel sits in the center.

Sequence:

- Introduction.
- Dark Lord's Prayer
- Testimonials
- Invocation
- Cleansing Fire
- Mark of the Beast.
- Close.

Part 0: Introduction

Spend a minute or two welcoming your participants and walking them through what to expect. Explain why you're all here and lay out any rules. If you need volunteers, select them now.

Participation in something like this should be consent-based, so give everyone as clear an idea as possible of what the ritual will consist of so they can make a conscious decision to include themselves. (Which they should have done before showing up of course, but even so.)

Given the nature of this ritual, things are likely to get very emotional. Take care to let participants know that they're free to leave the room and compose themselves at any time, but by the same token if they prefer to remain that tears or similar expressions are not inappropriate, not a burden on the occasion, and indeed are the entire point.

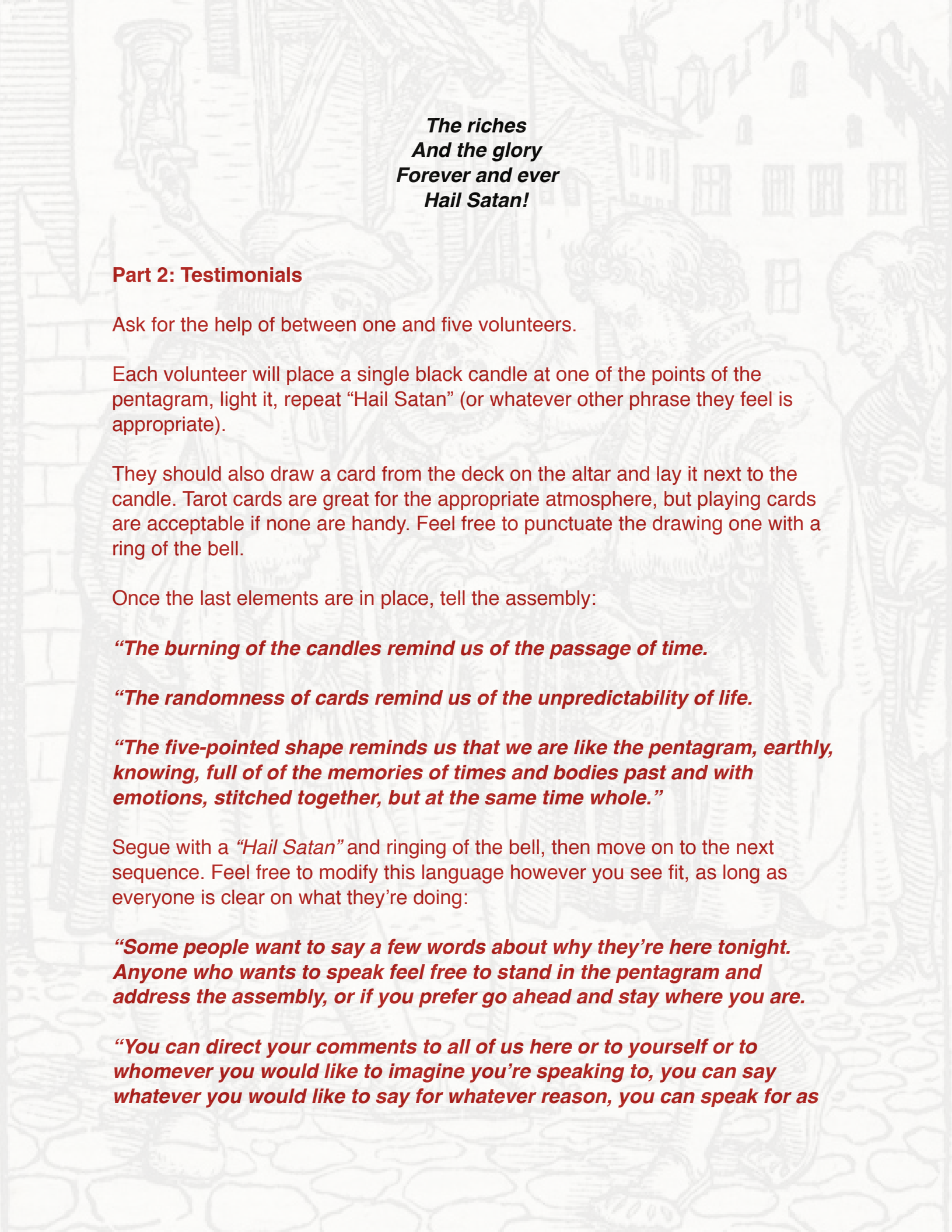
Normally rituals should be conducted uninterrupted, but in the case of a Remembrance Ritual if you judge that a break of five minutes or less would be helpful to clear the air after a particularly tough session then go for it.

Part 1: The Dark Lord's Prayer

You or a volunteer should stand in front of the altar or at the center of the circle to lead the "prayer." Since this is an easy task it's a good way to include someone else in.

Conduct the recitation call and response style, first delivering a line and then letting everyone repeat it back:

***Our Father, who art in Hell
Unhallowed be thy name
Thy kingdom is come, thy will is done
On earth as it is below
We take this night our rightful due
And trespass on faithless taboos
Lead us into temptation
And delivers us from false piety
For yours is the world***



***The riches
And the glory
Forever and ever
Hail Satan!***

Part 2: Testimonials

Ask for the help of between one and five volunteers.

Each volunteer will place a single black candle at one of the points of the pentagram, light it, repeat “Hail Satan” (or whatever other phrase they feel is appropriate).

They should also draw a card from the deck on the altar and lay it next to the candle. Tarot cards are great for the appropriate atmosphere, but playing cards are acceptable if none are handy. Feel free to punctuate the drawing one with a ring of the bell.

Once the last elements are in place, tell the assembly:

“The burning of the candles remind us of the passage of time.

“The randomness of cards remind us of the unpredictability of life.

“The five-pointed shape reminds us that we are like the pentagram, earthly, knowing, full of the memories of times and bodies past and with emotions, stitched together, but at the same time whole.”

Segue with a “Hail Satan” and ringing of the bell, then move on to the next sequence. Feel free to modify this language however you see fit, as long as everyone is clear on what they’re doing:

“Some people want to say a few words about why they’re here tonight. Anyone who wants to speak feel free to stand in the pentagram and address the assembly, or if you prefer go ahead and stay where you are.

“You can direct your comments to all of us here or to yourself or to whomever you would like to imagine you’re speaking to, you can say whatever you would like to say for whatever reason, you can speak for as

long as you'd like, and if you'd like any of us to do or say anything helpful--applaud, repeat after you, do a moment of silence, whatever--just ask.

“Everyone else please be accommodating and please respect everybody’s feelings, because that’s why we’re here. Speakers, if you think anything you’re going to say might be difficult for other people to hear please provide a little warning up front if need be.

“When you’re finished, please leave your notes and anything else you might like to be rid of in the vessel at your feet.”

At this point those leading the ritual should step aside and allow anyone who wants to address the assembly to speak for as long as they like.

This will probably comprise the majority of the ritual time and involve a lot of fraught emotion, so be prepared. Although there is presumably a finite amount of time set aside for this event, it’s best to let everyone talk for as long as they like—only interrupt if there’s absolutely no choice.

Part 3: Invocation

Once everyone has said their piece, take your place either at the altar or within the pentagram.

One or more of you can deliver the “sermon” (for lack of a better word), dividing up the text as you see fit. We’ve hopefully composed it so that it’s fairly easy to move, remove, or add additional statements.

Whenever the invocation uses the phrase “Hail Satan,” it’s traditional and appropriate for everyone participating to repeat back, “Hail Satan.” With a big enough crowd this can get quite forceful, which is awesome.

If you have a bell or a gong, punctuate the “Hail Satan” with that. It might be useful to have one volunteer who is just on bell duty.

We begin life happy, knowing that sin is sweet. We meet no gods, and worldly things are our entire minds.

We fear no rod and no law, use our pride, wrath, and lechery to make the world commendable, and gladly leave the company of angels.

Everyone lives after their own pleasure, because nothing in life is sure, and for what pleasure we make, we owe only ourselves.

We make a long journey, and account to ourselves for bad deeds and good, prove our friends if we can, and that we might escape from sorrow we ask gentle death to spare us a little longer.

For no one living or dead will we happily leave the world, but instead keep time passing until the last minutes.

We eat, drink, love life, and haunt lusty company, and when it's over we keep faith in the things that remain behind: friendship, family, our possessions, our good deeds, and our words.

And for those already gone we carry these things on after them:

We are Pride, daring to go anywhere, and at our feet we demand life pour out perfume and lay down silk.

We are Greed, asking to stock everything in the world in our homes and in ourselves.

We are Wrath, leaping out of a lion's mouth, born in Hell and walking up and down in the world ever since.

We are Envy, wanting all, knowing the goodness of life because we watch it other lives and see their worth.

We are Gluttony, hungry for 30 meals in a day and born from a royal family of banquets stretching back generations and beloved in every town and city.

We are Sloth, born lying in the sun and wishing we had stayed there ever since, knowing the world does us wrong to take us away from our comforts.

And we are Lust, loving a little just as much as a lot ,and apologizing for nothing.

For everything else we offer no confession and no penance, no abstinence and no redemption. Endings cancel all adversities and apologies.

This moral keep in mind: Embrace indulgence, for it will comfort you. Remember that beauty, strength, knowledge, and judgment will last as long as they can. And that after life there are no amends to make.

The stars will move, time will go on, the clock will strike, the devil will come.

Let us live in Hell a thousand years or a hundred thousand, where they say no there is no end for souls like ours.

Let our bodies turn to air so that Lucifer might bear us up, or change into drops of water and fall into the ocean, never to be found.

The ugliness of Hell gapes not for us. Because this is Hell now, and these are already the eternal joys of heaven.

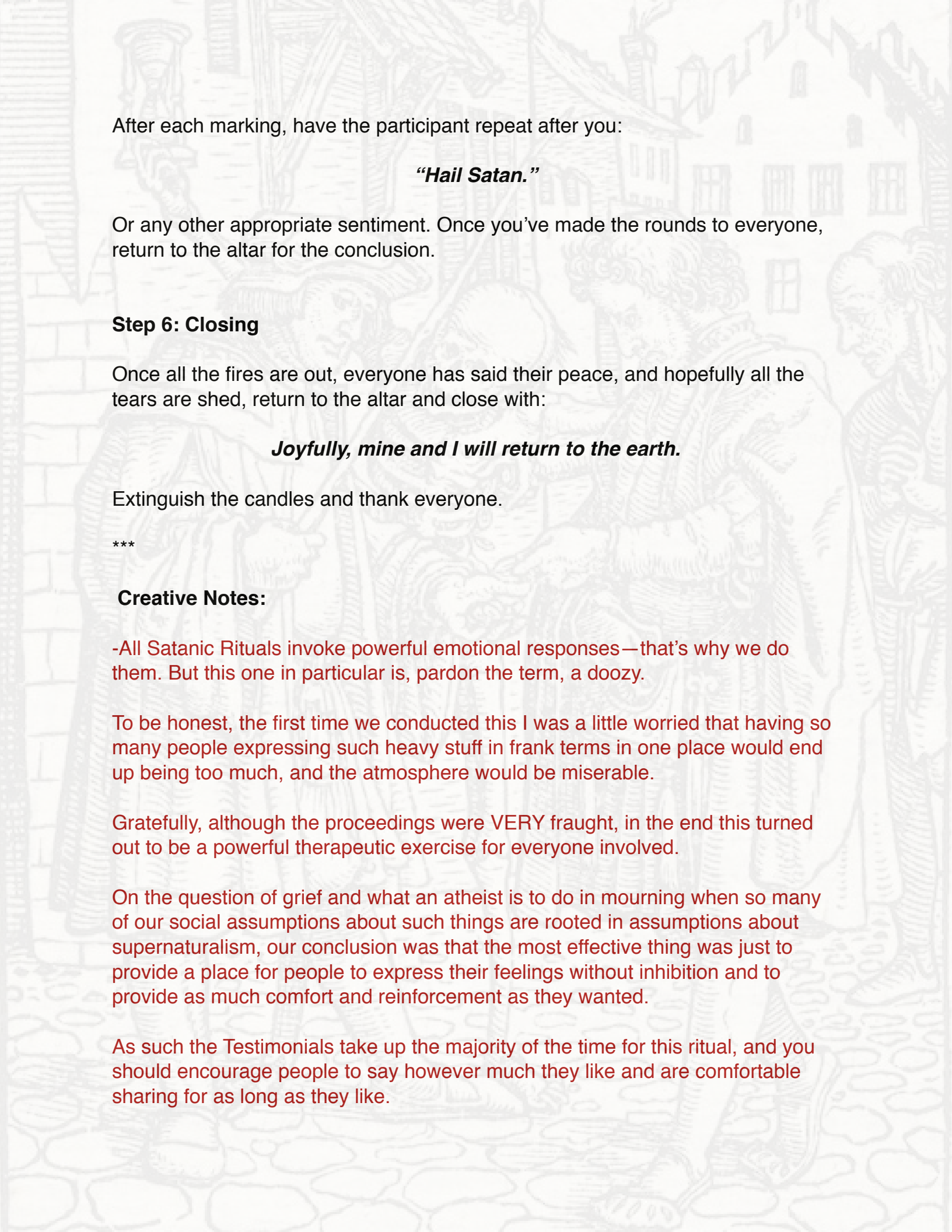
Part 4: Cleansing Fire

At the conclusion of the invocation, anything that participants left in the cauldron to be destroyed should be CAREFULLY set on fire. If there's a lot in there, start with just a few items and then feed more in as they burn, to maintain a steady blaze. Request a moment of silence while the fire burns out.

Part 5: Mark of the Beast

Blood or wine should be on hand, in an easily accessible vessel. Whereas in the previous step participants approached the altar, this time you should approach the circle or seated participants to administer the mark.

Ask each person whether they prefer to be marked with wine or blood. And where. A simple smudge or X on the forehead or the right hand is sufficient, although feel free to get more creative.



After each marking, have the participant repeat after you:

“Hail Satan.”

Or any other appropriate sentiment. Once you’ve made the rounds to everyone, return to the altar for the conclusion.

Step 6: Closing

Once all the fires are out, everyone has said their peace, and hopefully all the tears are shed, return to the altar and close with:

Joyfully, mine and I will return to the earth.

Extinguish the candles and thank everyone.

Creative Notes:

-All Satanic Rituals invoke powerful emotional responses—that’s why we do them. But this one in particular is, pardon the term, a doozy.

To be honest, the first time we conducted this I was a little worried that having so many people expressing such heavy stuff in frank terms in one place would end up being too much, and the atmosphere would be miserable.

Gratefully, although the proceedings were VERY fraught, in the end this turned out to be a powerful therapeutic exercise for everyone involved.

On the question of grief and what an atheist is to do in mourning when so many of our social assumptions about such things are rooted in assumptions about supernaturalism, our conclusion was that the most effective thing was just to provide a place for people to express their feelings without inhibition and to provide as much comfort and reinforcement as they wanted.

As such the Testimonials take up the majority of the time for this ritual, and you should encourage people to say however much they like and are comfortable sharing for as long as they like.

While many who assembled were there to grieve for the recently dead in a funerary context, this sort of ritual can accommodate other sources of grief too: some talked about loved ones who died a long time ago but for whom their feelings remained fresh, others were thinking about dead pets, some about challenges in their lives that proved particularly troublesome like mental health hurdles, breakups, work anxiety, disputes with family members, etc.

The abiding theme is that everyone's feelings count in this ritual, because the ritual consists chiefly of everyone's feelings.

-Most of these props are easy to obtain, but sourcing blood can be tricky. In major cities, butcher shops will often have animal blood on hand, as will markets catering to communities where it's sometimes used as an ingredient, like in Filipino blood stew.

Some people may prefer not to use blood out of concern for animal rights or just distaste. That's your call, but the longtime and consistent association of alleged devil worship and black magic with blood rites and the religious taboos associated with blood in religious ceremonies makes it an attractive option.

Various fake blood recipes may create the same effect for those who shy away from the real thing, although we usually just employ red wine as a substitute when needed. We don't recommend using actual human blood as a prop for reasons related to health and sanitation, but some other Satanic groups have employed it.

-The use of open flame in the ritual is a simple but surprisingly effective way to create both spectacle and visual catharsis. But it should go without saying that basic fire safety should be taken very seriously, and be wary of smoke detectors and other fire alarms that can spoil the mood.

Also note the importance of having a legitimately fireproof vessel at your disposal. Although the one time we had a bowl unexpectedly explode in the midst of the Mass it was admittedly a nice touch, we don't actually recommend this.

-The altar gives people something to focus on, sets the mood, and of course serves a practical purpose as just somewhere to keep everything you'll need.

I will admit that personally I find the model of a traditional religious service in which attention and thus importance is focused on one person or a small number of people who become de facto authority figures for its duration not quite satisfying and too much like the archaic practices of mainstream religions.

I think the ideal Satanic ritual would involve as many people as possible—up to and including everyone in the room—and avoid artificially (however briefly) elevating any one, as a formal rejection of traditional dogmas that try to invest imagined power and importance into “priests” and similar figures.

But I also admit that that’s really difficult to both plan and execute, and as with most other things in life it’s just plain easier if someone runs the show. You can’t win them all.

-While it might seem perfunctory, the introduction is one of the most important parts of the proceeding. Some people may not know what to expect from the proceedings, some may be anxious, or some may be unclear on what their role is (if any).

While it would be fair to say that anyone who consciously chooses to attend a Satanic ritual is pretty much setting themselves up for almost anything that happens, a theme of mutual respect and basic consideration goes a long way toward establishing the trust needed for authenticity.

Just as consent is the byword in intimate matters, it should be in religious ones too. In both cases, basic and straightforward communication is the most valuable tool.

-With a few exceptions, we’ve made a conscious decision not to include any Latin phrases or antiquated English language (no “thou art” or “thy will” stuff here), simply because in my experience we often end up employing these terms incorrectly. Even the ubiquitous “Ave Satanus” may not actually be correct Latin.

If you feel that these sorts of rhetorical flourishes create a certain gravity or theatrical touch that you value then feel free to add them. But for the time being the text is intentionally written in standard English.

-The Dark Lord’s Prayer is just another in a long variation of the theme of inverted or perverted “Our Father” invocations going back centuries. The call and response style is an easy way to involve everyone in the room, and leading the

prayer is a simple but rewarding task that almost any volunteer can conduct without practice.

-The Invocation draws chiefly on two sources, 16th century playwright Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and the Medieval morality play *The Summoning of Everyman*.

In *Everyman*, a dying man searches in vain for someone or something to help his soul make an accounting with god in the next world, finding that most of the trappings he relied on in life forsake him in the end.

In *Faustus*, the titular doctor becomes increasingly concerned about his mortality as the time comes for his deal with the devil to conclude. In both of these cases we've appropriated much of the language concerning the end of life but have taken EXTENSIVE liberties to express our own ideals in place of the (literally) medieval assumptions of the original texts.

We also borrowed from the parade of sins scene in *Faustus*, but again reframed the language to regard the sins as positive material experiences that make life worth living.

The theme of the invocation is to assert simply that life is worth living, and that while we must confront the inevitability of death, hardship, tragedy, and adversity, for now and today we're free and alive, and these things retain value even in the face of true grief.

-The Mark of the Beast is partly a parody of Ash Wednesday observations—the Roman Catholic Church's abuses in recent times and historically make them a ripe target for satire—but by and large is a way of poking fun at protestant evangelicals paranoid obsession with the "End Times."

No doubt about it, when fundies imagine the horrors of the Satanic society they're irrationally convinced will soon be persecuting them per their alleged prophecies, they're really imagining a world informed by the values we most prize: plurality, feminism, bodily autonomy, secular government, scientific reason, sex-positivity, and LGBTQ rights.

The initiatory nature of the marking carries psychological and emotional gratification fulfillment for the participants—a conspicuous indicator that they've

had an experience. While it's perfectly acceptable to wash the mark off once the ritual concludes, we've seen that many people prefer to keep it for a while.

-The ringing of the bell, closing of the book, and extinguishment of the candle are gestures traditionally associated with excommunication, but here employed as a celebratory gesture.

