

Beware

THE

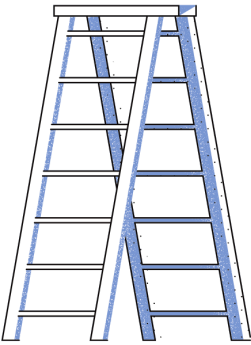
Ides

OF

March

A ZINE ABOUT SUPERSTITIONS





## THE ORIGIN OF THE LADDER SUPERSTITION

There are a few different origins to this superstition. One doesn't come from a specific place or religion, but revolves around the fact that the triangle of the ladder looks like a gallows. In Egypt, the superstition originated because you might see a god climb up or down the ladder. The third origin comes from Christianity. The ladder created a triangle, which was often used to represent the holy trinity. Walking through the triangle created by the ladder was considered breaking the holy trinity.

## WHISTLING AT NIGHT

In Thailand, it is believed that whistling at night is bad, especially when indoors, because it is an invitation for a ghost or a snake to enter the house. In Countries in East Asia such as China, Japan, and Korea also believe in similar superstitions. In Islamic countries such as Indonesia, whistling at night is believed to summon the jinn. In many Native American cultures, whistling is believed to attract creatures like skinwalkers or other trickster spirits. Hawaii has some similar lore involving warrior spirits. In Russia and Latvia, it is believed that whistling indoors at night brings back and maybe even light the house on fire.

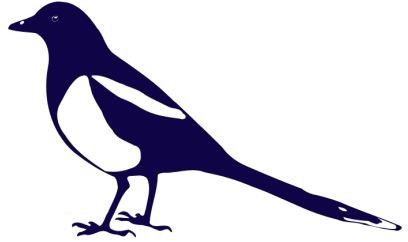


# OWLS AND MAGPIES

Magpies have multiple superstitions, most of them revolving around a poem from Lancashire. The poem goes:

One for sorrow,  
Two for joy,  
Three for a girl,  
Four for a boy,  
Five for silver,  
Six for gold,  
Seven for a secret never to be told.  
Eight for a wish,  
Nine for a kiss,  
Ten a surprise you should be careful not to miss,  
Eleven for health,  
Twelve for wealth,  
Thirteen, beware, it's the devil himself.

In Rome, Magpies were believed to be extremely clever. In Christianity, Magpies are said to be the only birds that did not mourn Jesus's death. Therefore, they were believed to be bad luck or evil.



Greeks and Romans believed witches could turn themselves into owls, and in this form would come to suck the blood of babies. In other cultures, owls were simply the messengers of witches, or hooted to warn of the approach of a witch. In England, it was believed that if you walked around a tree on which an owl was perched, it would follow you with its eyes, around and around until it wrung its own neck. In some places, it was thought that you could gain better eyesight by ingesting parts of them. In England, the method was to cook owl eggs until they were ash, then incorporate them into a potion. Folklore from India had a more direct method: eat owl eyes. Owls were seen as a symbol of death in some Native American Cultures.



# Into the Dark

I imagine the hallway. I walk myself through its sights and sounds. It will be dark. The only light will come from the laundry room light that Mom always leaves on. It's just enough to illuminate the top few steps of the staircase. But no more than that. The bottom landing will still be full of shadows. And the octagon window.

I breathed. I won't look at the octagon window. I promise myself. No matter what I'm afraid might be watching me...

I won't look at the window.

A few steady breaths. I start the countdown 3...2...1 One last deep breath.

I throw off my blanket and jump towards the door. My cold hands fumble for the doorknob, fighting through the oppressive panic.

Finally, I wrench the door open. As I claw for the bathroom light switch the bulbs flicker on. I release my breath, trying to calm myself in the safe haven of warm light. I curl my toes into the hallway's long carpet, and repeat my promise I won't look at the window. No matter what happens, I won't look at the window.

Working up my courage, I tiptoe to the edge of the hallway's protective wall, not daring to step into the full light of the laundry room at the top of the stairs. I fix my eyes straight ahead, into my parents' pitch-black bedroom. I won't look at the window. I curl my toes into the carpet again. It's 3 steps in daylight, but only one desperate leap under nighttime's inscrutable threat. I put my hand on my chest, feeling my pounding heart. I close my eyes, and take flight. I hear my surroundings expand as the hallway wall ends, giving way to the cavernous expanse of the stairwell. With a lurch in my heart, I feel the window's gaze.



Finally, I hear the walls get close again, and my feet make contact with the threshold. As I open my eyes in the safety of my parents bedroom, my heartbeat starts to relax. Mom says I'm afraid of the dark. And she's right, it does frighten me. But if the octagon window is watching, I would rather jump into the dark.

# Black Angel Statue

- † *Every year on Halloween the angel turns a darker shade to signify those that it has killed in the past year.*
- † *Defacing the angel brings death.*
- † *Anyone who kisses the angel will end up dead.*
- † *If the angel is touched at midnight on Halloween then that person will be dead within seven years.*
- † *If a girl is kissed near the angel then she will die within the next six months.*



**THE ANGEL IS LOCATED AT OAKLAND CEMETERY IN IOWA CITY, IOWA.**



Teresa Dolezal Feldevert moved from Bohemia to Iowa City, Iowa with her son, Eddie. She was a physician in Bohemia and became a midwife when they moved to Iowa. Her son died of meningitis at the age of 18. Teresa had a tree stump erected as a grave marker. The tree stump represents a life cut too short. After her son's death, she moved to Oregon and remarried.

Eventually she returned to Iowa City to bury her husband's body in Oakland Cemetery. She commissioned an angel for his grave. Teresa had Eddie's grave and marker moved next to her late husband. Teresa later died and had her ashes buried with her husband's remains.

Interest sparked over the Angel Statue due to its change in color from a gold to a black. Some stories blame odd behavior, lightning, unfaithfulness and murder. The real reason for the blackness is caused by the bronze being exposed to the elements.



# COUNTING CROWS

**ONE** for sorrow

**TWO** for mirth

**THREE** for a wedding

**FOUR** for a birth

**FIVE** for silver

**SIX** for gold

**SEVEN** a secret never to be told

**EIGHT** for a wish

**NINE** for a kiss

**TEN** a bird you must not miss

**ELEVEN** for hope

**TWELVE** for health

**THIRTEEN** beware of the devil himself



I II III IV V VI VII VIII IX X XI XII XIII

The superstition involves counting crows (or magpies) in order to predict good or bad luck. The rhyme evolved from a tradition in which the number of birds and their behavior were considered omens. Crows were considered symbols of sin who live in the dark but can only be redeemed by divine intervention. Crows were also depicted in illustrations of judgment (death), connecting them to mortality. The superstition and the rhyme have different variations depending on the time period and the region.

# Credits

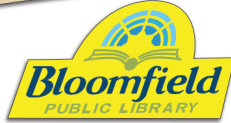
Cassie - Front + pages 1-2



Sarah - pages 3-4



Britt - Back + pages 5-6



March 2026

= Meetings



◆ Mar 5, 2026 @ 3:30 p.m.

◆ Mar 12, 2026 @ 3:30 p.m.

◆ Mar 19, 2026 @ 3:30 p.m.



◆ Mar 26, 2026 @ 3:30 p.m.

