

4 Quick Qs: Book Talk With Enfys Transcript

Diana Rajchel: Recorded February 26, 2023

Diana Rajchel: So I was like forig myself through it by like sleeping with my laptop under my bed so I could just grab it and get like the minimum requirement out and get up.

Enfys J. Book: Hey friends, this is Enfys J Book.

Before we dive into this interview with Diana Rajchel, I wanted to let you know this episode is going to sound a bit different because it was recorded at convocation with a new audio/video setup.

I've done the best I can to make it as clean as possible but I'm still learning so apologies for any imperfections.

With that said, the good news is that you can see this episode in video form on YouTube.

And now, back to the show.

Opening jingle: Take a playful look with Enfys Book as they roll for crit hits with Pagan Wordsmiths.

Enfys J. Book: Hi and welcome to 4 Quick Q's Book Talk with Enfys.

I'm Enfys J Book, your host, and this is the program where I ask Pagan authors four quick questions determined by a roll of the dice.

So I'm super excited to have as my guest today Diana Rajchel, who is the author of Urban Magick and Hex Twisting, and I'm just going to go ahead and read your bio on the back of this so folks can can learn more about you.

Diana Rajchel is an itinerant city priestess who often tethers in Kalamazoo, Michigan and San Francisco, California.

She brings 25 years of magical experience to her writing, including spirit work, exorcism, spell casting, troubleshooting, and more.

She's the co-owner of Golden Apple Metaphysical in California, and she runs a metaphysical problem-solving agency in Michigan.

Her book credits include Urban Magick, Mabon, and Samhain.

Check out more of her at www.dianarajchel.com.

Any updates to that since it's been published?

Diana Rajchel: I think that's pretty accurate.

Enfys J. Book: Okay, great.

Awesome.

So we are recording this at Convocation in Detroit, and this is the last day of the convention, so we're both feeling a little bit haggard.

Diana Rajchel: Yeah.

Enfys J. Book: But we'll see how we do with the questions here today.

So as is our tradition, would you kindly... you chose this dice, which is kind of a neat little red and black marble thing.

What would you like to name the dice for the purposes of this interview?

Diana Rajchel: May I speak to the dice?

Enfys J. Book: You may speak to the dice.

Diana Rajchel: Hi, would you like to give me a name?

I think it's Agatha, which I think it did the last time.

Enfys J. Book: All right.

Diana Rajchel: Apparently dice think they're Agatha.

Enfys J. Book: Apparently.

Well, Agatha, roll well for us.

We're going to ask the first of our four questions, and that is a number six.

So from our first set of questions, how does your spirituality inform how you write?

Diana Rajchel: Given that this is the main part of my writing, it doesn't not.

Actually, one of the classes that I taught at this convention was the Artist's Way for Witches, because the Artist's Way series was the reason that I was able to get things written, and part of that was letting the divine in so that writing was more an act of listening than it was an act of trying to force yourself to create, and it is such a different mental channel that it did become very much how I started to independently evolve my spirituality from, okay, here is the tradition which sort of worked but didn't quite feel right.

I swear sometimes finding the right tradition or the right group is sort of like, you know, dealing with subtle gender dysphoria a little bit, and yes, I do have some qualifications to comment on that. It is in my experience. And I was kind of struggling with the, there's

just a, this works, this is good, but it's not quite, and by working through the Artist's Way and opening up to the, just let the energy go where it needs to go, it kind of got me to, oh, I'm a panentheistic animist, okay, I do not fit with these structures. However, I'm not the only one out there, and also it was because, of course, you go on artist dates, you go for walks, you explore your city, you explore your town, and it gave me more of an opportunity to connect to these city spirits that I already knew were there, and so that became a deeper and deeper conversation and interaction.

So, and yeah, so then I just go back and write because I'm listening to what these entities are saying, or I'm listening to what I am being guided to do to solve whatever situation, and it comes out on the page.

Enfys J. Book: Amazing.

It's so hard to make that connection, but once you do, it's just, it does make it so much easier.

Diana Rajchel: Yeah, then the way to get there is do your shadow work and introspection.

Enfys J. Book: And spend a lot of time listening.

Diana Rajchel: Yes.

Enfys J. Book: Fantastic.

Well, let's move on to question two, Agatha.

What are you gonna give us today?

Number 11, this is the writing specific question.

How has the pandemic influenced your writing?

Diana Rajchel: Well, since Hex Twisting I was working on, so the way things worked out with Urban Magick, and this goes into Hex Twisting, is 2019 was a hell year for me, and this was after a hell-half decade.

And so on March, so in February, I went to ConVocation.

I had not planned to.

I was going through a divorce, so I was having some money pulled.

So, and my business partner, Nikki, went, oh no, you need to go.

She, like, I've never seen her get so adamant, and she kind of hates the Midwest and keeps thinking it would steal me.

So it was really strange when she got like that.

So I came out here to convocation, and this is where I met my fiancé.

And so I was, walked into the room.

Sarenth Odinson and my fiancé were kibitzing, and I didn't know either of them at the time.

And Sarenth still had his stuff everywhere, because he likes to do a big pile.

And I was very jet-lagged, and I still have a lot of Chicago in me.

And I came over the first time, because I was like, "be nice, be nice." Nikki's been talking to me about this. I scare people.

And I walked over and said, "Okay, you know, guys, I'm gonna need the room in a couple of minutes."

And they're like, "Oh yeah, yeah, we're just wrapping this up."

And I just had that feeling, and so I set a timer for 20 minutes, because like, they're not, they're not done.

And my timer went off, and I stood up thinking, be nice, be nice.

And what came out of my mouth was, "Gentlemen, kindly get the fuck out of my room."

Which, anywhere else, especially with guy types, tends to make you enemies.

Both of them came back and apologized.

And well, and Synty and I connected the next day and more.

And Sarenth is a friend of ours.

So it worked out.

But that was, that was at the end of February.

March 8th, Urban Magick came out.

March 13th, I went to downtown San Francisco.

My ex-wife and I signed our divorce papers.

That night we did a small soft launch party at Purusha Yoga, a place I was working out of and teaching out of occasionally.

And then I got on the plane, because Paganacon had been canceled.

Because I was gonna meet Synty at Paganacon.

And Synty's a shaman.

There was some work that they needed to do with me anyway.

So I'm like, it's a good opportunity.

And they're pretty damn cute.

Yeah, so they picked me up in Chicago.

And within two days, shelter-in-place had hit San Francisco.

And within two days more, shelter-in-place had hit Michigan.

And I couldn't go anywhere.

So it was sort of like, hi kids.

Synty and I are like going to have to try to work this out.

So the panelist, so I was working on Hex Twisting at that time.

And I'm not a book churner.

I have so much respect for book churners.

My brain does not do that.

I have to feel and like super deep dive and really intensely go into stuff.

So I'm someone who produces a book maybe every three to five years.

Which drives people crazy.

But this is why I do other things.

And Hex Twisting was finished on lockdown.

It had been mostly written.

I was also going through, of course, because divorce and the whole disaster with everything going on, one of the worst depressions in my life.

So I was like forcing myself through it by like sleeping with my laptop under my bed. So I could just grab it and get, like, the minimum requirement out and get up.

And so actually ending up with Synty's family.

Because I was going through a huge introversion thing anyway.

I would say that the biggest way it influenced it is it actually gave me an opportunity to sit still in a unbelievably supported environment.

So, like, and I was watching the stuff going on with pandemic feeling bad because I do these empath trainings that started developing this understanding of how serious these sensitivities are.

And it was the...I was so depleted I couldn't do anything except finish my work.

But Synty take care of me.

Which worked out quite well.

So and it was also watching all of these people struggling, going, "Okay, now y'all fuckers know how I've been feeling for the past five years. I am so sorry but now you know."

And for me it was also the — it sucked for everyone else but it was kind of what I needed especially during the shutdowns.

And now it is kind of, in a really messed up way ,and I hate that it got to this.

I think a lot more people are understanding my work because of their exposure to the COVID, the work that I was doing before COVID.

Enfys J. Book: Yeah.

Diana Rajchel: It definitely did for some writers foster an environment where they could actually focus and write because we're all in so many different directions.

And it also can have like a real drag down effect on the writing just because we're so by ourselves in our unit.

And if you're a person who needs to like get regular other stimuli.

And most writers do.

Like you need to fill the well.

You have to go for a walk.

Go get some input.

See a weird movie.

You know, watch the squirrel's head pop off when you're on a nature walk. (A common story from Synty.)

But you need that input.

Enfys J. Book: Yeah.

Diana Rajchel: And really you can't write without that.

Enfys J. Book: You have to nourish yourself too.

Diana Rajchel: Yeah.

And a lot of people were just locking down and I really feel like we handled the lockdowns wrong because people could have gone outside and it would have helped.

And they were saying "stay inside, stay inside."

Well unless somebody's running around going "I'm gonna cough on you." Like, it was outside.

Enfys J. Book: There was so much we didn't know then.

Diana Rajchel: Yeah.

It was part of the scary part.

Enfys J. Book: Yeah very much so.

Well thankfully we're back to having in-person events like Convocation.

Diana Rajchel: And I am so happy to be back to this.

I am an introvert so I shore it up for these events.

Enfys J. Book: Yeah this is my first time being at one and I'm really impressed with this conference.

Diana Rajchel: I love Convocation.

I was so delighted and surprised at the one I went to in 2020.

And I have the honor of being a featured presenter at this one.

And they have been fantastic.

And the best brains are here.

I get the best questions in my classes.

And yeah, people that have either like read the books and processed or want to.

And like have these really good experiential based questions.

My "Artist's Way" ...it was a room full of neurodivergent people coming up with resources for each other.

It was the best thing ever.

Enfys J. Book: I love that when a class learns from each other.

Diana Rajchel: And it's not just like the one-way. "I pour knowledge into you."

Yeah and I keep telling my classes that Synty and I because we teach together a lot now is you know you are not here for us.

We are here for you.

So you know we are here to facilitate.

Yes we will pour some knowledge.

But we're here to facilitate how you can use it.

And give you support so that you can contribute back in whatever way moves you.

Enfys J. Book: Love that.

All right let's get to Agatha for question three.

I keep rolling sixes.

Diana Rajchel: I think Aphrodite wants to talk to me.

It is very hard for us to have conversations.

Enfys J. Book: All right now I just have to find where is the rest of—here's what the rest of question three.

All right.

Ah, this is sort of tags on to what you're just talking about.

Do you have a cheerleader in your life who keeps you motivated to write, teach, etc.?

Diana Rajchel: Absolutely Synty.

Synty has ADHD so I don't think they have ever finished a single thing I have written.

But they are very enthusiastic about me writing.

My business partner Nikki gets really excited to read any of the drafts and see what I've come up with.

And I have a small collection of people that are like, yeah, you're writing, because my truest self is my writer self.

Like I was a writer before I was a witch.

I was a writer before I was anything.

And I am very fortunate to be surrounded by people going, "oh yeah definitely write that."

And not be, "oh no no no someone might get upset."

"Oh no no no that might be too challenging."

No, they're like "oh yeah challenge them."

"Challenge them."

"Break their brains."

"Let's keep going."

"This is great."

And I am extremely fortunate to have that.

Enfys J. Book: Right on.

It's always good to have that.

Diana Rajchel: Yeah.

Enfys J. Book: In your life because there will be a lot of people saying you shouldn't have written that or why did you write it this way and not do it the way I had in my head.

Diana Rajchel: I actually had one woman flat out order me not to write urban magic.

Enfys J. Book: Wow.

Diana Rajchel: She's lucky she didn't wind up in the Mississippi.

Enfys J. Book: Wow.

Diana Rajchel: She actually said oh no people might start vandalizing things and I'm just looking at her going, they already are, you bint.

Enfys J. Book: Yes clearly pagans invented vandalism.

Diana Rajchel: Yeah.

Enfys J. Book: All right so our last question is the random encounter.

Jingle: Random encounter question!

Enfys J. Book: So normally I would roll a four-sided die and then the 20-sided but I forgot to bring the four-sided.

Diana Rajchel: Okay.

Enfys J. Book: Pick a number between one and four.

Diana Rajchel: Three.

Enfys J. Book: Three. All right then, I'll roll the dice.

Three and three.

All right.

So, who is your favorite Muppet?

Diana Rajchel: Animal.

Enfys J. Book: Yeah.

Diana Rajchel: Animal is my favorite.

I often joke that I'm the love child of Miss Piggy and Animal.

Because I like the fancy but I have that energy when I want to.

Like I even wash the dishes and eat like Animal at times where it's like everywhere we cannot figure out how it happens and like I will wash the dishes and there's no reason and I'm like soaking wet even with an apron.

I just have that energy.

Wild chaos energy.

Enfys J. Book: I love that.

I'm a big Muppet fan from way back and I was really hoping that question would come up sometime and I'm so happy it did so early on in this because I think that is one of more revelatory questions about people especially Gen Xers and later who have a lot of experience with the Muppets.

Diana Rajchel: I'm trying to explain it to my kids and they don't quite get it.

Enfys J. Book: Yeah.

My 22 year old niece finds them creepy which breaks my brother's heart because he loves them so much.

Diana Rajchel: Oh I mean the aliens in Sesame Street do freak me out.

Enfys J. Book: It's true.

Diana Rajchel: Yeah that freaked me out.

Of course now I've seen Stoners so I understand a little better.

Yes Muppets are everywhere if we look closely.

Enfys J. Book: Absolutely.

Well, Diana, tell me now, what is something you're really excited about that you want to tell the audience about?

Diana Rajchel: So one of the things I'm on right now because yes I am writing a book but I don't talk about that until it's at a certain phase.

My partner and I, part of the reason, one of the reasons that we are together professionally as well as romantically, is my partner is an extremely skeptical person and so when I was starting to teach the empath training in 2020, like I was originally asked to teach it as a kids class.

I'm not sure what happened.

I walked into a room full of 60 people in energy crisis.

Enfys J. Book: Oh boy.

Diana Rajchel: And there's so many people using the empath-as-the-empowerment schtick in the MLM multi-level marketing, and so Synty came to see if I was a fraud, to be blunt, and Synty has a background in psychology and is about to finish their degree in substance abuse counseling so they actually do know what to look for, and so I got up and I started teaching the class and it was this interesting—and then what they ended up teaching the class with me because their shamanism, their shamanic approach had exactly the part that I knew was missing from my class.

We'd known each other less than 48 hours.

Enfys J. Book: Wow.

Diana Rajchel: We were moving through the room like we've been doing it for 20 years already and like two minutes after the class ended a friend of ours walked, now friend of both of ours, walked up and said, "so how long have you two been together?"

And it was like literally like no we just met.

Enfys J. Book: Wow.

Diana Rajchel: And so it was like, okay, clearly we need to keep working on this.

So what this has evolved into because I was already teaching it out of Wicked Grounds in San Francisco and I was being asked to come back and teach these empath trainings over and over, is Wicked Grounds has been working with me because they do have this fantastic online school and they are expanding into a magick and witchcraft school in addition to the kink education.

Enfys J. Book: Nice.

Diana Rajchel: And some of it's online, some of it's in person, it's one of the reasons that I'm wishing I could just hop a flight every month and this is a long-term goal.

Enfys J. Book: Yeah.

Diana Rajchel: And we have they're letting me experiment on some fairly advanced practitioners who are all with consent.

Consent is sacred.

This is like one of the cornerstones of my work and Synty's work.

We have at this point, it has evolved to a six session empath training.

So it gets you from energy crisis to being as stable as you can get and then the next phase is going to be going into once you get your shit together here's the cool stuff empaths can do once you've got your boundaries managed.

So we are looking at eventually turning into long-term retreats.

Right now it is mostly online courses.

I am also—those are not allowed to be recorded because of course it is a kink education school.

Privacy is paramount.

So we are also working on me having like my surface empath training that we do here and a variation online and offering that once a month through Elements Kalamazoo and in cooperation with Golden Apple.

And so for people that can't reach me otherwise we're going to just have a monthly training online and so it's just you know getting the empath ducks in a row so that we're not all just sort of laid out everywhere from just draining ourselves and everything.

Enfys J. Book: Yeah so people interested in that should check out Wicked Grounds.

Diana Rajchel: Check out Wicked Grounds and check out Golden Apple Metaphysical.

We are doing a lot we are doing a ticketing system through Eventbrite.

So but most of this will be via Zoom for the time being and I actually think for a lot of beginning empaths it is better to do it remotely so you don't get entangled in someone else in the room which happens a lot when we don't intervene.

So this is we are working towards making it a full-on retreat series in a couple of years where there will be like going to a camp out and doing an urban version because it takes a different energy adjustment.

So that's the thing I'm excited about and working on with my partner at the moment.

Enfys J. Book: Amazing that sounds great.

Well thank you so much for being here today.

It's always a delight to chat with you and so cool to get to hang out IRL.

Thank you listeners and watchers for enjoying this show.

If you love 4 Quick Q's: Book Talk with Enfys, you can find more madness of mine at majorarqueerna.com, which is m-a-j-o-r-a-r-q-u-e-e-r-n-a dot com.

You can also be sure to like, share, and subscribe if you enjoyed this show, and whatever time it is where you are have a fantastic day and may the dice of fate roll well for you.

Jingle: Thanks for listening...to 4 Quick Q's!

Enfys J. Book: This is Enfys J. Book again. Tune in next time when you'll hear author Devin Hunter say:

Devin Hunter: Hmm. Well, I had some guy start a cult off one of my books.