



Science of the Magical: From the Holy Grail to Love Potions to Superpowers

Matt Kaplan

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“Filled with cool cocktail-party tidbits, Matt Kaplan considers how things that were once the stuff of legends could one day become reality” (*The Atlantic*) in this fun scientific inquiry into the mystical places and magical objects of ancient and contemporary lore—from the fountain of youth, to love potions, to Super Mario’s mushrooms.

Can migrations of birds foretell our future? Do phases of the moon hold sway over our lives? Are there sacred springs that cure the ill? What is the best way to brew a love potion? How do we create mutant humans who regenerate like Wolverine?

“In *Science of the Magical*, Matt Kaplan takes us on a journey spiced with the wonders of myth, history and art, leavened with impeccable research, endlessly fascinating. And the result is both a compelling read and a deeply thoughtful exploration of the world around us and the ways we seek to understand it” (Deborah Blum, author of *The Poisoner’s Handbook*). Like Ken Jennings and Mary Roach, Kaplan serves as a friendly armchair guide to the world of the supernatural. From the strengthening powers of Viking mead to the super soldiers in movies such as *Captain America*, Kaplan explores cultures and time periods to point out that there is often much more to these enduring magical narratives than mere fantasy. Informative and entertaining, *Science of the Magical* is “a sprightly survey” (*The Wall Street Journal*) and “a joy to read...highly recommended” (*Library Journal*, starred review).

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