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At dinner last night I was stuck next to a woman who described herself as,
"An astrologer and crystal healer"

The conversation was heavy going.

Surprisingly fully vaccinated. This was because of the advice she received in a dream from her late husband who it seems is now floating next to her as an,
"Astral protector"

I tried to be polite but regretfully I produced a snort of derision which upset her. She looked behind and said,
"My husband says you should apologise"

"To him or you?" I replied.

Her attention span had a certain ephemerality and consequently she was now talking about how her crystals also protected her through a process of "zionic alignment" She showed me three of them in a small bag chained to her belt.

Foolishly I asked how they worked, she reverently removed one, placed it against her forehead and said,

"Here the protocol of the universe is at its most refined and powerful" I glanced over to see my brother biting his hand to stop himself laughing.

She went on,

"Zionic alignment is of course vital for maximum efficiency"

"O yes", I nodded eagerly. "I can see how that would be important however I favour the healing power of candles and bicarbonate of soda"

Remarkably she wasn't surprised by this (or aware I was mocking her) instead she said,

"Yes, I have heard about that, how does it work?"

Improvising wildly I said,

"Sprinkle the soda on an area of pain and then bring the flame close to draw its healing. Works best near a pond I think I began to lose her at this point because she looked confused and said

"A pond, as in where ducks are?"

"O no, not ducks" I said. "Never trust ducks, they have a lot of negative energy"

My brother was now snorting through his nose and choking.

By now she was becoming very intense and leaning toward me causing a mass rattling of the various beads, charms and assorted mystical symbols hanging around her neck

"Are you suggesting being near a pond can help with healing?"

"O undeniably" I said, eating a snail "undeniably"

"But how, how can it work" I took a moment to look over my left and right shoulders and lowered my voice, I gestured she come closer and I said into her ear.

"Ancient aquatic ley lines" She looked, nodded at me and said,

"Of course..."

My brother had to leave the room.

At the point the hostess asked us to 'turn the table' "

and so I spoke to the lady on my other side but as I did so I promised I would provide further details later over the cheese. She was visibly agitated and began quietly chanting while holding her bag of crystals.

As promised later in the evening when the table was again turned we resumed our conversation, she had made notes on a piece of paper. She began with a blizzard of questions but I raised a hand and said,

"I have already said too much. The boys in Big Pharma are very powerful"

She gasped, put her hand to her mouth and said,

"You mean there is a conspiracy to keep this from the public?"

I closed my eyes and nodded sagely, "a global conspiracy"

It's fair to say this electrified her, she said some mumbo jumbo about Jupiter moving into Thursday and how her dead husband / spirit guide has always talked about this.