

1

Po, children create the rituals that adults must follow.

Reversal

What would happen in this world?

- Adults would have to learn the rules from children.
- Children might create rules that adults find silly, inconvenient, embarrassing, or meaningless.
- Children could change the rules whenever they want.
- Different generations of children might create completely different versions of the same ritual.
- Adults might argue about whether they are following the ritual correctly.
- Some adults might try to secretly change the rules.
- Children might punish adults who do not follow the ritual properly.
- Adults might ask children for permission before performing certain rituals.
- Governments might need "children's councils" to approve national ceremonies or public commemorations.
- Companies might hire children as ritual designers for weddings, funerals, product launches, graduation ceremonies etc.
- Adults might compete for access to prestigious child-designed rituals.
- The meaning of "tradition" could completely change. Tradition would no longer mean something inherited from the past, but something repeatedly authorized by the youngest generation.
- Power might shift from age and seniority toward youth and imagination.

2

Po, people have to pay tax every time they perform a ritual.

Outrageous

What would happen in this world?

- Some people might deliberately stop certain rituals in order to save money.
- If expensive rituals show that someone can afford the ritual tax, rituals might become status symbols. Wealthy families might be able to perform many more rituals each year.
- Tax evasion might appear. People might argue, "This isn't a ritual. We just happen to do the same thing on the same day every year," or "This year is different from last year, so it doesn't count as a repeated ritual."
- People might secretly hold weddings, memorials, or religious ceremonies without reporting them to the government.
- New professions might appear, including people who help others secretly carry out rituals. For example, ritual accountants could help families calculate how many rituals they performed that year and how much tax they owe. Ritual lawyers might argue their client's behavior is not a ritual. It is only a habit. Ritual audits might involve the government checking a family's photos, calendars, and videos from the past five years to see whether they failed to report any rituals.
- The government might decide that rituals older than 100 years are tax-exempt. To avoid paying tax, people might begin fabricating ritual histories.
- Someone might inherit many rituals but be unable to afford maintaining them, creating a kind of ritual debt.
- There might be a World Ritual Registry where rituals are officially recorded and tracked.

3	
Po, rituals must never be seen.	
Escape	
What would happen in this world? - Public rituals might disappear entirely. People might no longer have large collective festivals or even public holidays. - People might need hidden rooms, underground spaces, or enclosed buildings designed specifically for rituals. - Recording a ritual could become illegal. - Museums might not be allowed to display rituals directly, and many things could become forbidden objects that cannot be exhibited. - Some people might be willing to pay a lot of money to see a ritual that is normally forbidden from being seen. - The meaning of "participation" might also change: rituals might no longer need audiences or participants. - Society might pay more attention to the traces left behind by rituals.	

4

Po, the world is controlled by rituals, and humans are raised by them.

Reversal

What would happen in this world?

- Humans might be raised, managed, and categorized by rituals like domesticated animals.
- The purpose of human birth might simply be to keep rituals going.
- Different rituals might “raise” different kinds of humans.
- The main purpose of education might be to train people to maintain rituals.
- Families might exist mainly as systems for rituals to reproduce the next generation of performers.
- Marriage might no longer be about love, but about producing new participants for rituals.
- Different rituals might compete for “human resources.”
- Rituals might control people through guilt, fear, reward, or a sense of belonging.
- People might want to move to places with fewer rituals, where there are fewer “masters,” fewer obligations, and more freedom.
- “Freedom” might become a class privilege. Wealthier people could afford a lower ritual burden.

5

Po, rituals are jealous of one another.

Outrageous

What would happen in this world?

- Some rituals might deliberately schedule themselves on the same day, forcing people to choose between them.
- Rituals might compete for people's memories. Some rituals might try to create more unforgettable experiences so that people will remember them the next time.
- Some rituals might form alliances. Two originally separate rituals could merge into a larger one and compete together for people's attention.
- Some rituals might look down on others, claiming that they are not formal enough or not old enough.
- Some rituals might deliberately become more elaborate and expensive in order to emphasize their uniqueness.
- People might realize that they are not really choosing rituals, but instead mediating conflicts between rituals.
- The calendar might become a kind of battlefield, with different rituals competing for the best dates.
- Cities might also experience ritual competition: which event receives funding, and which ritual is allowed to occupy public space.
- Some rituals might take revenge on people who abandon them by making them feel ashamed or regretful.

6

Po, rituals have their own hierarchy — some are noble, some are lowly, and some rank above others.

Outrageous

What would happen in this world?

- When two rituals of different ranks merge, they might have to decide which one marries into the other, which one keeps its name, and which one is downgraded.
- Higher-ranking rituals might command lower-ranking rituals to serve them. Some lower-ranking rituals might only be allowed to exist as supporting parts of higher-ranking ones.
- People might care deeply about a ritual's background or lineage, rather than just how it is currently performed.
- Some lower-ranking rituals might be banned from formal institutions, schools or important public spaces.
- Museums might collect only high-ranking rituals, leaving lower-ranking ones out of official history.
- If a high-ranking ritual adopts elements from a lower-ranking one, people might criticize it for "lowering its status."

7

Po, ritual is chewing gum.
Outrageous

What would happen in this world?

- Rituals might stick to people. Once you take part in one, it may be hard to completely get rid of it.
- Some rituals might be pleasant to chew at first, making people feel curious and excited, but after being repeated many times, they may lose their flavor.
- People might accidentally step on rituals left behind by others and carry them back into their own lives. A ritual that one person gets rid of might end up sticking to someone else.
- Some people might refuse to take a ritual that has already been chewed by someone else because they feel it does not belong to them. Others might treasure it instead, especially if it is something like a ritual once chewed by their grandmother.
- The more a ritual is repeated, the more its shape might change, until eventually it no longer looks anything like its original form.
- Some rituals might stick to public spaces like old chewing gum under tables or on the ground. Most of the time no one notices them, but they are still there, and it can feel unpleasant when you accidentally come into contact with them.
- **Cities might have special cleaning workers whose job is to remove rituals that no one wants anymore but that still refuse to come off.**
- Some rituals might be impossible to remove completely, so people can only cover them up and layer something new over them.
- Some people might deliberately stick rituals onto public spaces so that others have no choice but to encounter them.
- People might classify rituals by flavor: sweet, bitter, spicy, sour, or flavorless. Everyone might have their own preferred ritual flavor.

8

Po, I am the Emperor of Rituals, and I rule over all the rituals in the world.

Wishful Thinking

What would happen in this world?

- I can freely change the rules of any ritual. For example, birthday rituals can no longer include blowing out candles, and at funerals people must wear colorful clothes, are not allowed to cry, and must smile. The happier they look, the better.
- I can revive rituals that have disappeared and force society to practice them again.
- Every ritual must regularly pay tribute to me. Birthday rituals offer me youth, wedding rituals offer me devotion, and funeral rituals offer me grief. The higher the ritual's status, the more valuable the tribute must be.
- If a ritual has no value to me, I can abolish it. Only rituals that are useful to me are allowed to remain.
- I can rename rituals, or even name them after myself.
- Every ritual must include a moment dedicated to praising me.
- Every year, all rituals must send representatives to meet me and report how they were performed during the year.
- Every family must perform one special ritual for me each year.
- I can create new rituals at any time. Every morning, the first thing people do after waking up is check whether I have announced any rituals for that day.

- MONTH OF - IMPERIAL RITUALS

Daily ritual announced for the Engineer.
Citizens must check and comply each morning.

OFFICIAL MONTHLY BULLETIN

RITUAL CATEGORIES		CLOTHING		FOOD		SPECIES		MOVEMENT	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT			
		01	02	03	04	05			
		06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13
		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
		22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
		30	31						

01 Dress one emergency uniform.

02 Wash the long hair before.

03 Wash the neck.

04 Eat the food.

05 Drink the water.

06 Eat the food.

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How I moved

I started by imagining myself as the Emperor of Rituals with the power to create and change rituals at any time. I became especially interested in the idea that people would wake up every morning and check which rituals I had announced for that day. This led me to create a monthly ritual calendar.

What it revealed

Creating arbitrary rituals made me question what actually makes something a ritual rather than simply a command. If people are told to repeat the same behavior, at what point does it begin to become a ritual?

What I might pursue next

I want to explore the boundary between ritual and rule, and what conditions are needed for an imposed behavior to begin functioning as a ritual.

The screenshot shows a Twitter post from @RitualNews with a video thumbnail titled "Inherited Ritual Debt". The video features a woman speaking, with a background showing a cluttered room filled with various objects, likely related to rituals. Below the video, there are several tweets from users discussing the news.

Ritual News (@RitualNews) · May 20, 2026
A 22-year-old is facing bankruptcy after inheriting \$5 annual family rituals from his grandparents. He has been selling ritual objects and instruction guides to help pay off his ritual debt.

Inherited Ritual Debt
A 22-Year-Old Forced To Sell Family Rituals

RELEASING Ritual debt crisis grows as young adults struggle to maintain inherited annual family rituals.

1:55 PM · Sep 30, 2026 · 1.2M Views

428 · 1260 · 6700 · 151

Relevant ▾ View quotes >

Post your reply

I need money @moneycomomoneycome · Sep 30
My grandfather left me 11 rituals, and I'm already overwhelmed. They take up almost half my year, and I didn't choose any of them.

4 · 13.3 · 27 · 167

Selling Tradition Cheap @cheaptaditions · Sep 30
Honestly, I'd sell too. Some of those inherited rituals cost more to maintain than they're worth.

0 · 1.9 · 11 · 218

Buy my rituals @the_sense_5555 · Sep 30
If anyone wants a complete anniversary ritual set, DM me. Barely used.

0 · 1.1 · 2 · 15

Your Problem @yourproblemotmoline · Sep 30
\$5 rituals and he's acting like he inherited a terminal illness. His grandparents maintained them. Why can't he?

0 · 12.9 · 1 · 4999

Margaret Hill @hill · Sep 30
Selling your grandparents' rituals feels wrong. Some things are meant to be carried forward, not liquidated.

0 · 1.2 · 12 · 567

WorldLover @theiverrdup · Sep 30
Inherited rituals should require consent. No one should automatically inherit obligations they never agreed to!

7 · 1.8 · 133 · 133

Susan Parker susanparkr · Oct 1
You don't have to love every ritual. Keeping them is part of what it means to belong to a family.

19 · 21 · 27 · 8974

justcausingtrouble @thisatime · Oct 2
\$5 isn't even that bad. My cousin inherited \$3 and had to move back home.

15 · 12 · 12 · 7923

How I moved

I started with the idea of ritual tax and began thinking about the cost of maintaining rituals. This led me to think about inherited obligations, ritual debt, and eventually the possibility of bankruptcy caused by inherited rituals.

What it revealed

This made me realize that rituals can be inherited not only as traditions or memories, but also as burdens and responsibilities.

What I might pursue next

I want to continue exploring how people decide which inherited rituals are worth keeping or selling.