



The Visions Guide

KATHERINE TOMBS · JAMES R. EADS





THE
VISIONS
GUIDE

INSTRUCTIONAL BOOKLET

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Introduction by JAMES R. EADS

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ABOUT THE

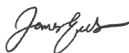
LIGHT VISIONS
TAROT

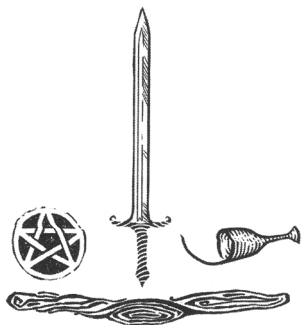
A NOTE FROM THE CREATOR

There are two main reasons why I make art. The first reason is for myself: It helps me grapple with the extestential questions that can fill my mind. When I make something that I really connect with, that's a little bit of my soul understanding it's place. The second reason is for you: art is healing, especially now. The Light Visions Tarot was the very first tarot deck I created. Originally, I hadn't planned to re-release the deck, but if the world can be made a better place through sharing art then this deck is something I want to continue to share with the world. The Light Visions Tarot is very near to my heart and is one of my favorite things I have created. This second edition is to celebrate the 5 year anniversary of the first Light Visions Tarot.

Within this guide you will find everything you need to familiarize yourself with the Light Visions Tarot. There is a strong magic connected with this deck so be sure to treat it with care and align yourself with the universe. Enjoy the wonders within the box.

With Warm Regards,





GETTING TO KNOW THE DECK

Before you begin using the Light Visions Tarot in readings, it's important to familiarize yourself with the deck. Spend some time getting to know the cards individually. Each card in the Major Arcana is brimming with symbolism, some of it a little hidden. These 22 cards are powerful and when they show up in a reading they hold great importance. You will notice that these cards are signified by a border. You will also find an extra card that is not part of the traditional tarot. Some people will choose to remove it from readings, or keep it in for a twist of fate.

Much like the Major Arcana, the Light Visions Minor Arcana holds a special kind of magic. The four suits have each been created as continuous panoramas that tell a story or depict a journey. Spend some time laying out each of the suits in their full form. Try to read the story yourself, there is no wrong way to read the panorama - read it backwards, read it in parts, isolate certain cards - you will find there is more than one tale within each suit.

Being able to understand how the Minor Arcana cards interact with their adjacent neighbors will give you a greater understanding of how the Light Visions tarot works as a whole.

Above all, remember that there is no right or wrong way to interpret the Light Visions Tarot. These are merely suggestions to get you going and familiar with all of the magic contained in this box.



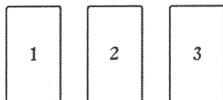


CONDUCTING A READING

Once you have familiarized yourself with the Light Visions Tarot it may be time to put your knowledge to use and begin using the deck in readings. If you are new to tarot this guide will only give you a few basic spreads to start off with. These are well known and are considered as beginner spreads. It is advised that you seek other sources to widen your understanding of the variety of spreads and ways to conduct a reading. When conducting a reading take note of the importance of the Major Arcana cards as well as the relation the cards have with each other and the frequency that a particular suit shows up. Following these basic spreads you will find an extensive guide written by Katherine Tombs that explores the meanings and imagery behind each card in the Light Visions Tarot.

THE VISION

The Vision (or the three card spread) is one of the oldest and most simple tarot spreads. It's a great place to start for a beginner. The three cards can be used in a variety of different readings. Below you will find three such possibilities for what the cards can represent.



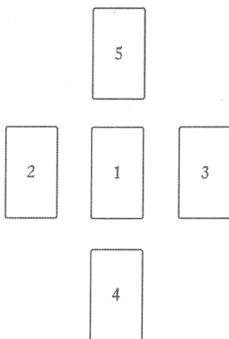
1. THE PAST
2. THE PRESENT
3. THE FUTURE

1. THE SITUATION
2. THE ACTION
3. THE OUTCOME

1. CURRENT POSITION
2. ASPIRATION
3. THE PATH TO TAKE

THE FIVE CARD SPREAD

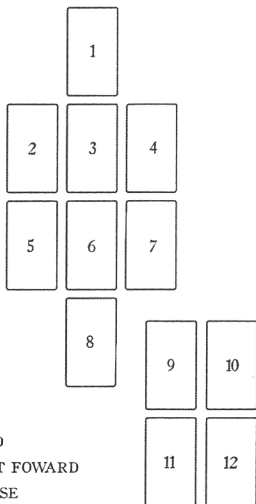
The five card spread is a great layout to use for a quick reading to help shed some light on how to resolve a present issue. The first card symbolizes the problem, the second and fourth cards relate to the past and why the problem has presented itself. The third and fifth cards offer insight into the future and perhaps an action that can be taken to remedy the issue.



1. THE PRESENT/GENERAL THEME
2. PAST INFLUENCES
3. THE FUTURE
4. THE MAIN REASON
5. POSSIBLE RESULT FROM ACTION

THE PAST LIFE SPREAD

Sometimes in order to understand that you are greater than yourself you need to look backwards. The past life spread connects you to one of your past lives. Your basic life map is laid out in the first eight cards. The final four cards are representative of how this past life can influence your current life.



1. GENDER IDENTITY
2. CHILDHOOD
3. FAMILY LIFE
4. RELATIONSHIPS
5. OBSTACLES
6. ACHIEVEMENTS
7. SPIRITUALITY
8. DEATH
9. LESSONS LEARNED
10. KARMA BROUGHT FOWARD
11. PAST LIFE PURPOSE
12. CURRENT LIFE TAKEAWAY



THE

LIGHT VISIONS
MAJOR ARCANA



O. THE FOOL

A pelican is perched upon an ocean post, illuminated by a waning crescent moon. He piercingly regards a sodden lone wolf, cast among the waves, paddling through unfamiliar territory. Hoping for an easy dinner, he has foolishly swum out beyond the cautious trappings of his solid world. Gazing up at the stoic pelican, the wolf realizes he has departed on a journey that could easily result in his own demise.

The Fool represents a new beginning, striking out naively on a bold new adventure. You may be filled with unlimited optimism, a feeling in your heart that you cannot fail. This may prove misguided, and in due time you might find your idealism tempered by painful experience. So approach with caution: decide whether taking this risk is worth making yourself vulnerable in an unfamiliar setting. If the answer is yes, show no fear: only those who choose to journey will ever discover new horizons.



I. THE MAGICIAN

A giant of a man stands and manipulates a figure between his fingers. His translucent silhouette and enormous moon ruling the background suggest the realm of the inner landscape, but his uncompromising presence dispels the mystery and replaces it with sheer force of will. He has mastered his subconscious, and as a result, the material world around him.

The Magician is bold with his decisive power. He is self-determined and self-confident, and possesses a vision he truly believes should be realized. He is passionate, creative, and above all deeply connected to his surroundings, to his vision, to his life. When you receive this card, expect to receive a bolt of energy: what you are doing is worthwhile, and you have the means within you to accomplish it. This is not a time for doubt, but for action.



II. THE HIGH PRIESTESS

The High Priestess is the ruler of the subconscious, where ideas are first conceived. Much like Persephone, she treads the surface of the underworld, brimming with insight but biding her time. When the moment is right, she will burst into the sunshine with all she has learned below. But for now, her footsteps ripple the water in the light of the waning moon, which calls for a quiet retreat of imagination and inner reflection.

Counterbalancing the raw power of the Magician, the High Priestess is the internal, introspective side of creation. She is the fertile subconscious where ideas are first brought to life. Also consider that action is not always the best possible step: sometimes it's best to reflect, amass strength, and consider your options before beginning anew. This is not an indication of cowardice, but of wisdom.



III. THE EMPRESS

A woman rises above a field, arms flung wide, receiving and reflecting the raw energy of the natural world. Her senses overtake her, and she is nothing but the buffeting wind and rustling whisper of the wheat. She is Gaia, Mother Earth, Queen of fertility and womanhood. Crowned by stars she pervades the abundance of life and creation.

The Empress is a subtle ruler. Caught so often in the grey trivialities of our existence, we forget their inherent inauthenticity. The minutiae we build up around ourselves- our jobs, our status, our wealth: none of it is truly vital to our existence. All we need to survive is the bounty already provided to us by Mother Nature. Connect back to it. Revel in it. Take joy in the most basic pleasure: that of being alive.



IV. THE EMPEROR

While the Empress accepts you for who you are, the Emperor challenges you to become a greater version of yourself. By imposing rigidity and structure on yourself (or allowing others to do it for you), you are encouraged to grow in meaningful ways, maximizing your time and potential. By exerting control over your surroundings, you become master of your own destiny.

When you exude the Emperor's energy, you might naturally fall into a position of power. Take care to use your increased influence for good. Try not to become superior to those around you but rather foster them in a way that allows for growth. By building others up, you improve the quality of life for your community as a whole.



V. THE HIEROPHANT

The Hierophant stands among the stars, clutching scrolls and holding his hand in a sign of benediction. He stands for enduring tradition: the cultures and beliefs that have hewn history into shape. He invites us to conform. To immerse ourselves in a long-standing, man-made system, be it through education, employment, or religion. To play a part in his machine, we must sacrifice some modicum of personal freedom on his altar. Is it worth it? Only you can decide.

The Hierophant is like a constellation- imaginary lines drawn around the chaos of the cosmos that imbue the night sky with meaning. We take comfort knowing that our ancestors gazed up at the same stars, the same stories. But clinging too tightly to tradition can stave off the immutable law of nature's changeability. When you receive this card, examine whether the energy of the Hierophant is guiding or merely thwarting you.



VI. THE LOVERS

After the structure and procedure of the Emperor and Hierophant, The Lovers depict a joyful dance exalting in self-expression. No belief system is perfect, and after becoming the dutiful student, it is now your right and privilege to question the truth of your beliefs. Discard what doesn't hold up to close scrutiny.

The Lovers suggest a potent time to begin a new relationship. Break down barriers. Let people get to know you, the real you, and welcome their energy into your life. Revel in sexuality and connection. Let yourself be influenced by one person. This is a card that celebrates individualism. Delight in integration without dimming your own beautiful gleam.



VII. THE CHARIOT

The Chariot roars down the road, headlights blazing. Even in the midst of a heavy midnight downpour, a bird leaps into flight off its hood, jubilant in its path to victory. The two make an impressive pair, power and swiftness whooshing unabashedly into the future.

Being completely self-assured is a rare and glorious moment. If through careful preparation, self-discipline and steady determination you find yourself a victor, you have every right to be proud of your accomplishments. Direct this energy into further efforts; have total confidence in your abilities. You've clearly demonstrated to yourself and to the World what you can achieve. Forge on, refusing to let any obstacle stand in your way.



VIII. STRENGTH

A pride of lions lopes before a massive figure, their maws distended in fearsome roars. Though the savannah is treacherous, this individual has nothing to fear- her retinue scatters anything that could possibly oppose her.

It's easy to slink away from a tough situation, but it takes real strength to surmount one's obstacles and press on. It is possible to be indomitable. By being resolute through difficult times and sustaining a strong, impenetrable core you can forge on indefinitely, constantly renewing your horizons. Do not be afraid. Fear is the mind-killer. You need only to believe yourself unconquerable for it to be so.



IX. THE HERMIT

The Hermit stands on a bridge overlooking a stream, no company save the wild will-o'-the-wisps that dance along the banks. The dense canopy of trees deadens all sound but the languid trickling of the river. The moon, ruler of the subconscious, rises full behind him. With a lucidity born of silence, he looks within.

Relationships with others are essential, but before we can communicate with others, we must be able to communicate with ourselves. When your thoughts are consistently muddled or diluted, take some time to uncloud your vision by gently removing yourself from society. Search within yourself for answers, and you may be surprised by what you find. Don't worry about the sudden silence; it is merely expectant, waiting for you to speak.



X. WHEEL OF FORTUNE

A peacock and a serpent are locked in vicious combat. A second serpent is entangled beneath, looking victorious but consuming its own tail in confusion. A second peacock streaks in from above, determined to take part in the eternal, desperate struggle for dominance. Fortune favors the bold.

Constantly vying for power may seem like a futile pursuit, but it is in fact a simple, blessed characteristic of life that it is never at a standstill. The Wheel of Fortune shows the perpetual shifting in the balance of powers, manifested infinitely within every aspect of your life. At any given time, you will be the champion, be the contender, believe you are the champion, or have no reign at all, quickly hurtling yourself into the fray. This card suggests a change is coming. The old king is dead. Someone, or something, will rise up in its stead.



XI. JUSTICE

Encircling its victim, a serpent strikes into soft flesh, and blood trickles down from the puncture. But the moment the snake sinks its fangs into fingers, the hand has released the dagger, and the asp is split swiftly in twain. He pays dearly for his moment of violent triumph. Cause and effect are securely in place here, and his treacherous victory is soon cut short. The sharper the bite, the sharper the sword.

This card is a reminder that Justice is coming. You can only get away with unscrupulous behavior for so long. Eventually your motives will be found out, and there will be swift retribution to follow. But do not fear- being held accountable for your actions is how balance will be restored to the universe. It's time to give back.



XII. THE HANGED MAN

A man hangs suspended in the ocean, mad-eyed piranhas descending on his flesh. Unperturbed or unaware of the danger, the man gazes motionless above the water to the stars. He exudes the serenity of a martyr in his final moments. The bones of the man and the fish are clearly visible, suggesting a transparency of the surface, allowing us to see the inner mechanisms beneath.

Society would have you believe the idea that active mastery of your environment leads to greater fulfillment. No doubt in many ways this is true. But when life has transgressed beyond your control, through your own doing or the random unhappiness of fate, sometimes the best thing you can do is to surrender. Choose not to react. Rather, focus on the lucidity gained of suffering. Forsake action for insight so you may live to fight another day.



XIII. DEATH

Skeletal fingers reach out, closing around an evanescent rose. The border between the flower and its surroundings seems to blur, and delicate petals disintegrate into the breeze. The Grim has come to take his own.

This can be a frightening card to receive at first. Loss and change are inevitable and often quite painful. Brace yourself to shed something that seems integral to your life. But inevitably, out of its remains will grow something more beautiful and more adapted to your needs than you could have anticipated. Pulling the card of Death is just a sign of forthcoming renewal. Though it loses its familiar form, that which passes away only breaks down into simpler components and dissipates out into the universe.



XIV. TEMPERANCE

A gush of water surges up from of the ocean, propelling a figure high above the waves. Rushing over his body, twin streams diverge and splash into his upheld cups, and in the midst of the deluge, he is balanced, at peace, and unencumbered.

Learning to maintain a balance is essential to survival. Though temptations will perpetually beckon, most sensual delights will prove sweeter in moderation. An excess can be toxic- don't numb or harm yourself through overindulgence. If you find yourself with more than you need, a neighbor may benefit from your surplus. By sharing with others, life retains its distinct and magnificent flavors.



XV. THE DEVIL

A serpent crouches on the forest floor, gleaming eyes beckoning you onwards. Against your better judgment, you follow through the dense thicket, so enamored with the snake you fail to notice that the path he leads you down is a dead end. You are being taken in, and soon you will be lost irrecoverably to the bleak and silent forest.

There are many reasons to dwell in false realities. More often than not, it is out of sheer convenience: life is not amazing, but it's comfortable. Maintaining the status quo is easier than confronting any deep-seated issues that are quietly eroding your sanity. The Devil is in fact a counterpoint to Temperance- something is out of balance, but you lack the courage or acuity to address it. To break the serpent's gaze means acknowledging where you truly are, and that can be discomfiting. Ask yourself if avoiding a harsh truth is worth living in a distorted dream world.



XVI. THE TOWER

There's a house that sits on the cliff of the bay, in a hundred years it hasn't aged a day. Undoubtedly built on solid ground, the relentless wind and sea have slowly eroded the bluff beneath. Now, a single misplaced breath of wind could send the tree toppling into the water and the grand old house along with it. Blissfully unaware, the occupants revel in one final, illumined hurrah, mere moments before the ultimate tumble.

The Tower suggests a sudden and unwelcome change after mindless self-absorption. Eventually equilibrium will restore itself, like tectonic plates slamming into place. Be ready for it, reap what blessings you can from this swift ruination. Amidst the rubble there is a truth long rejected, and in a way, it will set you free. You have a chance to start anew on firmer ground.



XVII. THE STAR

After the cataclysmic fall of the Tower, a woman is cast into the air. At the apex of her ascent, she sees the whole world around her, stars singing their high, clear aria. The sleigh bell descant fills her with hope, and in the midst of stark calamity, she is at peace. Lily tendrils entwine around her, linking her to a brilliant light.

The Star is a beacon of hope. Though the night is dark and arduous, across the sky are smattered reminders that suns blaze perpetually, even if our own is hidden from sight. Believe the sun will rise, not as an empty sentiment but an immutable law of nature. For now, let the subtle radiance light your way, splayed galaxies working in concert to guide you home.



XVIII. THE MOON

The Moon rises full over the river, dazzling the shallows in its brilliant, silver light. A pale reflection of the Sun, it pervades a ghostly realm where the subtle characteristics of objects are thrown into sharp relief. On either side of the river, wolves howl their keening song, crying to the illusionary nature of their goddess. An empty boat rocks in the supple current, sole witness to the dreamlike, emotive scene.

When the moon rises, it's as if your familiar surroundings become an eerie shadow world. The fears and sadnesses so repressed in your daily life become starkly apparent, and you are forced to confront your often neglected subconsciousness. This world, though fraught with wild imaginings, is somehow truer than reality, and there is much to learn from your journey through it. The shimmering stillness of your inner being is always present, but rarely traversed.



XIX. THE SUN

The Sun positively oozes with life. Bedecking the universe in its fluid effervescence, it ripples out into the cosmos, vitalizing and energizing everything it touches. The great creator, the Sun is the impetus for all things to grow upwards and exult in the sheer bliss of living. Open your heart and absorb its hale, hearty power.

When the Sun turns up in a reading, use it as a reminder that life is wonderful and precious. Its radiant beams will light up even the darkest aspects of your existence, and you do not need to be afraid or doubtful for your future. Its warmth will wrap around your being and enliven it. If it is not readily apparent, be calm and search deeper, it is sure to reveal itself in due time. If you are lucky enough to bask in the greatness of the sun, share it with those you love; it will bring them joy and reassurance as they themselves tread through shadow.



XX. JUDGEMENT

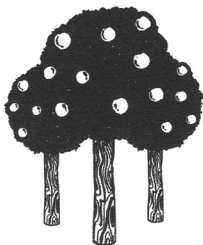
A door swings opens to reveal the spiraling, multicolored vortex that lies beyond it. Your present surroundings are a calm, deep blue: serene, but silent and wistful as a midnight mist. The overabundant rainbow vortex seeping in from the otherworld offers a welcome change of pace. The swirling mist beckons you in. Of course, crossing the threshold into the unknown will be daunting. The end of a journey can always be sad. But it is time to make matter-of-fact decisions, and decide if where you are now is worth stagnating in the face of resplendent rejuvenation.



XXI. THE WORLD

In the culmination of the Major Arcana, the World depicts the Moon, the Sun, the Hanged Man, the Hierophant, the Emperor, Justice, Strength, and the Chariot all rotating around the calm, focused center of the eye. Shown as a whole, these many opposing forces reveal their true pattern, unified at last into one vision.

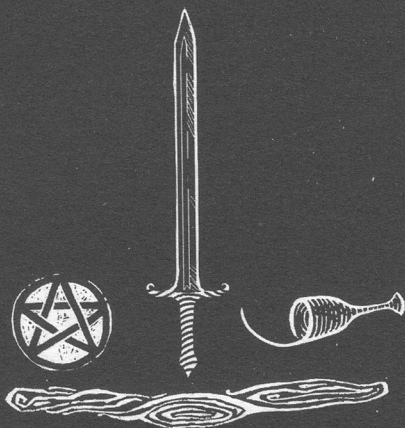
After a long, harrowing, learning curve, you have finally integrated the many competing aspects for your life. Master of your destiny, you observe life from afar, watching how it blends and merges within itself. Conflicts eased and doubts vanquished, take this well-deserved moment of tranquility to serve others. You are a pinnacle of competency and intelligence. And in the end, when you close your eyes you'll see the world clearly – made up of everything you've ever known and all the places you call home.



?. THE ORCHARD

You come across an orchard of apple trees, each tree is ripe with plump fruit ready for the picking. But this may not be your orchard, the apples that glisten in the sun are the fruit of another's labor. The orchard has been cared for and has grown together as one, with a family of roots connecting it below the soft earth.

When this card comes up in a reading, take note of what relationships you might be benefiting from without offering much in return. Know that energy does not just manifest itself, but it is created from some other form of energy. So if you choose to pick the apple from the tree, remember you may later find yourself in debt to another.



THE

LIGHT VISIONS

MINOR ARCANA



THE MAGIC OF WANDS

IMAGINATION - CREATION - PASSION - DEDICATION

*"With imagination hard at work,
a fire rises from the earth"*

ELEMENT: FIRE

SEASON: SPRING

SIGNS: ARIES, LEO, SAGITTARIUS

The Wands are the suit of creation. They follow the journey of an idea, from inception to manifestation. If you intend to safeguard a vision into self-sustaining vitality, you must show ambition, determination, and an ability to harmonize with others. But above all, have faith in yourself. Use your burning passion to forge something wonderful within. Whatever you make will be wrought with traces of you, spreading your influence out into the universe. This is your chance to change the world for the good.

ACE OF WANDS



Molten energy strikes out of the ground and thrusts upward. Untempered, it takes no definite shape- it is infinitely malleable depending on what conduit attracts it. Flowers cluster at its base, eager to scale its shimmering trunk. A phosphorescent tendril of an idea leaps out toward humanity, seeking a tangible target.

When you receive this card, you have struck upon a vein of potent energy. If you choose to manifest it, you will be propelled into some grand adventure, wrought with passion and despair. Much will be required of you: creativity, compassion, and steady discipline; but if you truly believe in your dream, fight for it until the end. Capitalize on this heady excitement. Pursue without fear or hesitation any idea that seems promising. Above all, believe in yourself and your potential.

TWO OF WANDS



A man stands on the opposite side of the river from the molting Ace, culling its vitality and channeling it toward his staffs. One in his hand and one in his satchel, the wands resemble an open gate, drawing the potent energy inward toward his heart. The outstretched tendril has found a flesh and blood benefactor, and will lend its searing power to his identity. He is the worldly manifestation of the ethereal Ace.

Divine inspiration without tangible manifestation is a beautiful dream. Careful planning is the stoic, immutable foundation of any newfound enterprise. Be levelheaded and down to earth: practice self-discipline and good sense. But never forget how anointed you felt when you drew the first bolt toward you. Your unique creativity and passion are about to serve a great purpose. Be you- by daring to show your truest self, you will attract the people you need toward you.

THREE OF WANDS



A man kneels on the banks of the river, stoking a small fire. He feeds wildflowers into the smoldering embers, their evocative fragrance floating into the atmosphere and melding with the still, expectant twilight. A contented smile spreads across his face. His simple ritual transmutes the worldly beauty back into the air.

After the initial whoosh of intensity, thoughtful maintenance is required to keep a fire burning. Painstaking placement of the kindling will nurture the flames into longevity. So too must an incipient vision be fed and sustained. Your idea is starting to catch. Don't rage into a blaze or douse yourself unnecessarily with doubt or dismay. Small victories and careful progress suggest you are succeeding.

FOUR OF WANDS



Four wands stand together on the edge of the river, linked by a strand of wildflowers. Supporting each other equally, they simply revel in the scintillating joy of existence. The tendrils of incipient energy dance within the secure structure, finding a happy home in the balance and stability.

This card is the first milestone in the journey of the Wands. Everything is coming together nicely, and while things are supporting themselves, take this time to enjoy the success of what you have wrought so far. This is a time of great peace and contentment. It may include family, or a landmark in your life celebrated by ceremony. At the very core it is happiness—one of those rare times when life is going your way, and you're aware enough to appreciate it.

FIVE OF WANDS



Five men tussle on the edge of the river, wands crisscrossing at odd angles, strands of opposing energy entangling and constraining them. Each man stubbornly promotes his own agenda, unwilling to compromise, mired into place. The message is clear: yield and work together or face a bitter impasse in which nothing is achieved and nothing gained.

As your idea grows and develops, you are bound to run up against some conflicting ideas and personalities. Rather than clinging to your vision of the future, humbly take heed of these numerous possibilities. Without ceding complete control, find ways to incorporate others' visions in your own. Be flexible. Be accommodating. Be free.

SIX OF WANDS



The bitter struggle of the Fives unsnarled, the radiant victor floats toward the sun. As his skiff drifts downstream, he closes his eyes, soaking up the warm, golden rays. The twisted strands of energy twine around the six of wands, holding them upright and finally unifying them into a single purpose. At long last they are balanced, at rest.

Fighting for your vision can be a worthy but exhausting endeavor. If you don't take the time to appreciate how far you've come, you may very well burn out before you reach the final culmination your vision. As you inexorably float toward the next set of difficulties, pause in the present moment and take in all the beauty around you. You have accomplished much, and you have been granted a brief view of the Elysium that awaits you at the end of your journey.

SEVEN OF WANDS



Seven wands are spread out across the shallows, and you deftly pick your way from fencepost to upturned fencepost. Your path is clear but the way is treacherous: one misstep will plunge you into the river. But you remain poised, unshakable, as your previous experiences have made you keen and adroit. You have been preparing you for this moment. Your light-footed confidence will carry you through to the end.

The spotlight is on you. You must be resolute in the face of adversity. Your vision is really worth something, and it is up to you to navigate the treacherous terrain that will bring it to fruition. You are nimble, skillful, and the iridescent tendrils of your idea will guide you down the correct path. Stick to the plan- if you can navigate through this challenging time, there will be no stopping you.

EIGHT OF WANDS



After the helter-skelter scamper of the Seven of Wands, you have landed on solid ground. The translucent tendrils that have guided you through the early stages of your journey have finally taken root. Thickening into a flowering vine, it echoes the wildflowers that fed the first fire of your vision. It shoots up a tree, racing to break through the canopy and reach the life-giving sun. After a perilous journey, it just needs one final push to burst into fruition. Your dream is coming true at last.

You may be tired but there's no stopping now- nearing the finish line is no time to slow down. Your situation demands one final burst of energy to propel you into victory. Show hustle. Don't hesitate. You're nearly there.

NINE OF WANDS



Since your idea has taken root, it has enjoyed rapid, voracious growth. It has bred in huge numbers, coiling up trees and threatening to overtake you. The swath of energy that you've cultivated from birth snakes out from its stronghold, attempting to bind you irreparably to the trunk. You dig your wand grimly into the ground and try to push forward, out of its overwhelming sway.

The good news is that your idea is finally starting to take off- it no longer needs your constant care and attention to survive on. In fact, it's so successful, it's quickly growing beyond your control. As daunting as it may seem, you must throw yourself into maintaining it, as there will be many unforeseen challenges to monitor and train. Your final test is overcoming the vision itself.

TEN OF WANDS



At long last! The vines of your idea have spread and multiplied, growing rapidly over the forest. That which has needed your constant care and attention for so long is now beginning to thrive on its own. Finally it is time to reap your reward. Though the harvest is abundant, the burden is great, and you shoulder your heavy responsibility with dignity borne of diligence.

After a harrowing journey fraught with danger and conflict, you've accomplished what you set out for. But take caution from the furrowed brow of our hero. His hard work has not brought him more happiness- merely more labor. This is the downside of leadership. When you have proven your mettle, you are given freer rein and greater responsibilities. You may be overburdened, eager to shed the weight. Will you carry on in your endeavor, or yield control of it to others? Which is best for you?

PAGE OF WANDS



A vent bursts open on the riverbank and a pillar of flame rushes out. One fiery tendril loops crazily around the blazing column, finally unfurling to capture the Page of Wands. Cast up into the air, he is drawn inward toward the ethereal fire. A nubile conduit, he courses with the energy of the inferno. A power kindles in his spirit and he feels the call to begin something magical.

When you see the Page of Wands in a reading, you are about to set out on a journey of the mind. You have been struck with some novel or wonderful idea, and you have the naive, unfettered enthusiasm of a child to catalyze it. Take risks like you've never been hurt. Believe wholeheartedly in something. Your divine vibrancy will bring your vision to life. Your courage and passion will see it to completion.

KNIGHT OF WANDS



The Knight of Wands depicts a man at odds with himself. He is caught between two surging vents, each attracted to his potential, each desirous of his energy. Imbued with power, he is eager to pursue his goals with reckless abandon. But in his haste, he fails to balance or plan his approach, depending on his vigor to see him through. This is shortsighted. He will be torn apart by the willful ardor of his spirit.

The Knight of Wands may portend of a surge in confidence and energy, the fire catching from the spark of the Page. But do not depend on the initial fervent swell to see you through to the end; ultimately, a disciplined strategy will pay greater dividends than a short-lived burst of enthusiasm. Focus on the vision at hand, and ask yourself if you are being passionate or merely brash.

QUEEN OF WANDS



Unlike her impetuous children, the Page and the Knight, who are helplessly caught in the geyser of fire, the Queen directs its energy so that she dances gracefully atop it. She manifests a shimmering flower in her wholesome joy, and the flame wraps around her alluringly, rejoicing in her rapturous existence.

The Queen of Wands is the vibrant expression of a brimming mind. Sunlit, exuberant, she takes all the positive energy of fire and warms the world with it, radiating confidence and charisma. Her joyful display is infectious, inspiring positivity in others. As a result, she is a respected, productive leader. When you see her come up in a reading, consider how you can incorporate her enlivening energy into your life.

KING OF WANDS



The King of Wands cuts a resplendent figure, wreathed in the tireless, luminescent energy of his suit. Tongues of fire lap his body as a brilliant sunset billows behind him. A Wand as his scepter, he rules the domain of the mind.

Patron deity of the pursuit of passion, you need only to embody the King's indomitable spirit to give yourself direction and purpose. Creative, bold, and outgoing, he commands attention through his radiant presence, a man who is truly alive. When you see him in a reading, consider how you might take charge by inspiring others. Unremittingly follow your passions.

THE



BALLAD OF CHALICES

LOVE - EMOTION - INTUITION - INUNDATION

*"A love letter left in your head
is better written down instead"*

ELEMENT: WATER

SEASON: FALL

SIGNS: PISCES, CANCER, & SCORPIO

The Suit of Chalices contains all the affairs of the heart. Love, friendship, loss, exuberance - these are but some of the many emotional journeys depicted in this changeable suit. They play themselves out on the banks of a river, its meandering path mirroring the fluidity of feelings. When you draw many Chalices in a reading, listen carefully to your heart and intuition. Lucid, amorphous, they may have divined more than you may realize.



ACE OF CHALICES

A glimmering fountain draws water from the deep and thrusts it upward. As it courses down each echelon, incandescent dew gently mists around it, falling softly back into the river. Autumn leaves fall as the moon, goddess of emotion and intuition, rises full in the background.

When the Ace of Chalices presents itself, some deep wellspring of emotional force is bubbling up inside you or around you. It promises the beginnings of an intimate connection, guided by the heart. Open yourself to love and compassion. Draw deep feelings to the surface and let them shine.



TWO OF CHALICES

The two lovers bathe in the ripples of the burbling Ace. They have revealed all: letting down their barriers and simply rejoicing in unguarded, human connection. They clink glasses and smile; he with a grateful delight and she with a quiet, receptive contentment. Acknowledging the life within each other, they revel in beauty of their love.

By mixing freely with each other, sharing of ourselves without reservation, we allow people to see our true nature. Let your inner beauty course out, inspiring others to do the same. Be welcoming, receptive, and genuinely grateful for others' presence in your life. They will meld and merge with your aura to create something vivacious and free.



THREE OF CHALICES

Three women pirouette on the banks in perfect unison, the sound of their delicate, swishing chiffons blending with the gentle rustle of the river. Water splashes from their chalices, but they don't seem to mind; their eyes are closed, totally entranced by the familiar, elegant dance.

It is a rare and wonderful thing to work together in unison; so much can be achieved when contrasting personalities coalesce to form a common purpose. Establish empathy; communicate your needs and desires with trusting candor. Seek in turn to meet the needs of others. Do not dwell in differences: all people crave love and acceptance, even if it is expressed in a million different ways. Tune yourself into these quiet voices and see if you can address some of these common, crying needs.



FOUR OF CHALICES

A boy sits glowering in the cool shade of a tree. Two of his glasses have been knocked over and their contents glug dispiritedly into the dirt. He regards the dancers of the Three of Chalices with lukewarm detachment, unwilling or unable to take part in their delights. He hunches on the embankment, as behind him fallen leaves swirl in an burst of color, symbolic of his ignored imagination.

Life, for all its splendor, will sometimes lose its taste. This is most often a sign of overindulgence—inundating yourself with some fascination will deaden your senses to its unique charms and flavors. If you find yourself growing apathetic to a steady routine, stir things up within yourself. Resist the urge to settle. Though it may seem like a mighty effort, force yourself to be creative and original. Imbibe of the stream of life.



FIVE OF CHALICES

A boy leans over a sharp precipice, deliberately dropping three Chalices into the river. The two that remain on the cliff bubble merrily, happy to avoid the fate of their brothers' dissolution. For the three that vexed him, it wasn't enough for him to simply pour out their contents: he had shed himself of the entire vessel before he could be rid of their cloying influence. By discarding their toxic energies, he is free to start again.

Letting go of familiar trappings can be a wrenching experience, but sometimes decisive divestment is the only way to move forward. Rather than swirling in an endless whirlpool of uncertainty, it's better to shed what you know and make room for fresher, more positive energy to enter your life. Pain is an ephemeral indicator of growth. Have the courage to dictate new chapters of your life.



SIX OF CHALICES

A bare-skinned woman bathes in the river, cloaked in reeds and water lilies. Her hair loose, her eyes fixed, she is caressed by the sunlit inlet. It washes away all the accreted dust of her day, and she is soothed, reduced to her most natural, contented form. Baptized by the river, she is free.

The world can be harsh and unforgiving, and it's easy to let the sorrow and grime of daily living dull the vibrant shine of your existence. But the river that flows through the Six of Chalices offers a chance to buff it clean. Renew yourself. Break the cycles of suffering by pursuing the simple, innocent values of childhood: share, work together, be kind to others. Immerse yourself. Forget your cares and rejuvenate.



SEVEN OF CHALICES

Seven Chalices lie on the banks, each offering up some enticing temptation. A thick fog stalks between the branches and billows out over the ground. Deceptively clear against this lurid mist, a spectral snake weaves out of the centermost Chalice, softly offering anything the heart might desire. But his transparency belies the inherent falseness of his appeal. Without substance, he is merely a tempting illusion aimed at disarming a discriminating mind.

The Seven warns of overindulgence: abusing sensual pleasures not for their own sake but to distract us from a more pressing matter. By allowing ourselves to be deceived, we deaden ourselves to our problems. It is a way to seclude ourselves from a harsh, embattled world. But dwelling too long in fantasy will leave us vulnerable to very real issues that will not go away if we ignore them.



EIGHT OF CHALICES

The figure in the Eight of Chalices is leaving it all behind. He stares into the mist, not knowing where his path will lead him, but knowing it's better than where he is now. He leans on the Chalices for support, depending on his emotions and intuition to guide him safely through. Heaving a sigh, he walks ponderously into the unknown.

As executed in the Tower, sometimes life can hand you a swift, unpleasant surprise. You may have realized that something very important to you, a central hub of your existence, is essentially meaningless. The walls come tumbling down, and a miasma of confusion comes swirling in, replacing structure and verisimilitude with chaos and uncertainty. The only answer is to leave it all behind. In time, the mist will part, and reveal a midnight sky alight with stars.



NINE OF CHALICES

As the mist rolls away, a man's heart opens to the Sun. His juggled Chalice is suspended in a single burnished arc over his head. He has reached perfect equilibrium, and he knows it too, reveling in the beauty all around him. Blissful, serene, his purposes fulfilled, he settles back into his seat to watch the sunset.

The Nine of Chalice is all about satisfaction. Some ongoing cycle is nearing its completion, and you are about to be fulfilled and at peace. Like a sunset, this will not last forever, but its evanescent beauty makes it all the more precious. Treasure this moment, for its memory will bring you warmth on grey, rainy days.



TEN OF CHALICES

Ten Chalices dangle from the branches of a tree, each looped with its twin in perfect, staggered balance. Two children sit in the crook of the tree, gazing at each other with gratitude and love. The river flows calmly, its soft, rustling presence lilting gently beneath.

The Ten of Chalices reminds us that life can be a simple, unadulterated pleasure. Supported by family, our beliefs, our traditions, and our values, we can live in calm unity with each other. Our emotions link us to the supple lifeblood of the universe. Love connects us all. Life connects us all. We are one.



PAGE OF CHALICES

The Page of Chalices offers up his humble gift: a bowl of water. It attracts the rippling river spirit, incandescent fluidity imbibing the essence of emotion. Slaking his thirst at the Page's bowl, it becomes his unwitting companion. They regard each other with newfound candor and complicity, ready to share in an adventure.

Something as simple and pure as a bowl of water can initiate a journey of the heart. Don't hoard your emotions, for fear of exhausting them. Take what little you have and give freely. You will find that whatever you expend will be returned to you in some grander, more compelling form. Surround yourself with love and light. Embark.



KNIGHT OF CHALICES

Helmet flung open, the Knight rides the bucking river spirit. Its convulsive path tosses him this way and that, but he is determined to remain atop it, digging his knees into its scintillating scales. At the apex of the snapping tail, he looks below and sees beauty all around him. Choked with emotion, he raises his glass to love and passion.

Unfettered emotion is a powerful thing. Knowing no barriers, no painful ends, it marauds on endlessly, deaf to diminishing voices. Cavalier devotion to matters of the heart can often lead to a swift dethroning, but at the apogee of your quixotic journey, have no fear of the imminent plunge. Mount your furiously swirling emotions and ride them to the end.



QUEEN OF CHALICES

The Queen of Chalices sits atop the river spirit, holding her Chalice betwixt an active and passive hand. Autumn leaves swirl all around her as her fluid form deliquesces into water, gushing like a cataract down into the stream. Two fish flop down her aqueous tail. Goddess of love, she perches in the emotive centers of the brain, guiding us with her supple intuition.

Feelings are often discounted as too amorphous and changeable. Yet it is their endless malleability that gives them their fluid power. They can take out any form, still charged with the power of the mighty subconscious, they are the surging forces within our beings that make us strong. When you draw the Queen of Chalices, it is time to tune in with the feelings at bay. Trust your intuitions. Reach out to others; find what makes them thrive and delight.



KING OF CHALICES

Waste deep in the estuary, the King of Chalices raises his hands. The river spirit launches out of his goblet, gushing and glittering as it shoots into the sky. Arcing across the evening, it becomes cloaked in autumn leaves, rustling and fluttering their moribund voices. Sheer force of will launches the water into a flowing serpent.

The King is all about reigning in the emotions. Recognizing to their true power, he carves out channels for them to flow in advantageous, intentional ways. Shepherd of the roiling river, he is master of its destiny, and it lends its churning strength to his designs. By harnessing your emotions, you become lord of your own experience, directing the formless energy into hale, corporeal creation.



THE SONG OF SWORDS

PERCEPTION - AFFLICTION - SUFFERING - SORROW

*"In the cold of the night
the beast of truth is in sight"*

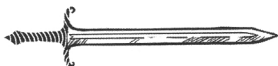
ELEMENT: AIR

SEASON: WINTER

SIGNS: LIBRA, GEMINI, AQUARIUS

The Swords cleave through illusion and fantasy. They reveal the true nature of the world beneath, cruel and unforgiving though it may be. The Swords therefore stand for intelligence, and the sorrow and bitterness that accompany understanding. Many Swords in a draw warn of a spiritual sickness; an icy cold winter of the heart. But do not despair. In your time of sorrow, much will be revealed to you. You will be lent a clarity honed by grief, and in time you will conquer the beast that slays you.

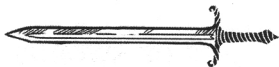
ACE OF SWORDS



A winged sword is driven into the snow, as if fallen from the hand of God. Like all the Aces, it radiates power and energy. The bird on its hilt scowls with incisive intensity. The centermost eye, glaring panopticon, sees all.

The Ace of Swords cleaves through indecision and deceit. It is the mental clarity that comes with keen intelligence. It may indicate an epiphany. When you pull this card, you may be driven with a determination borne of ruthlessness. Examine your motivations and ensure you're not being too tyrannical. Master the sword, and wield its mighty power for good.

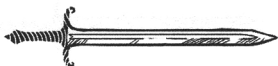
TWO OF SWORDS



A blindfolded woman sits on a stump crossing her daggers before her. She unwittingly guards against a harmless butterfly, failing to divine the meaninglessness of her defenses. Her tunic is similarly unsuited, doing little to protect its wearer from the icy atmosphere. The moon, goddess of illusion and fear, waxes behind her shedding little light.

Departing greatly from the cold clarity of the Ace, the Two of Swords is a warning against delusion and false reality. No matter how guarded you are, if you are blind to the situation at hand, you will miscalculate and blunder. Don't flinch from the truth, as it is often less dire than the many insidious realities your mind conjures up in the darkness. Do not let needless fears disturb you. Find balance.

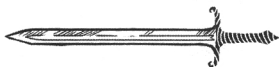
THREE OF SWORDS



The noble stag lies where he was slain, stabbed in the back by the ruthless Three of Swords. A high, cold wind blows as the butterfly, alit upon its antlers, gazes sorrowfully at the grim scene.

This card is a stark warning that even the swiftest animal can be brought down by treachery. It may be possible that you plan to wield the sword yourself. If this is true, know your actions irreparably shape the world you live in.

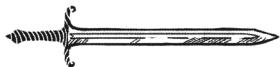
FOUR OF SWORDS



A boy kneels in snow, shielded from the elements by two snow-laden pines. Their presence muffles all sound, and as a mist billows up before him, he is shrouded in the cold, heavy silence of winter. He rests his hand on the winged Sword, a tangible conduit of the axis mundi. Three silhouetted rapiers lie discarded at his side, erstwhile reminders of industry and power.

The stillness of winter is the perfect environment for quiet, contemplative repose. Take this time to restore and reflect. Amass your strength and gain perspective and clarity. Lay your struggles aside for now, in this moment of peace.

FIVE OF SWORDS



Two fighters cross swords on the edge of a precipice, glaring malevolently at each other. One attacks while the other defends, but their skillful maneuvers fail to hold the attention of their companion. He drops his sword and looks away, drawn instead to the loping flight of the butterfly. The mist overhead begins to disperse, and a handful of stars gleam, brilliant and serene.

Confrontation is inevitable, and can even be an honorable, an upfront way to achieve one's ends. The two locked in combat are practiced warriors of this art, and their baleful dance pays tribute to the intricacies of strife and competition. The Five of Swords, however, encourages you to lay down your weapons. When you pacify your anger, you may be surprised to notice a different path, that of equanimity and transcendence. Let yourself be soothed. Follow the butterfly.

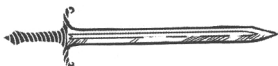
SIX OF SWORDS



Two butterflies flit over a steep chasm, long swords forming the bridge that governs their way. Their movement is purposeful, deliberate, intent on moving forward. Even the pine trees beckon them onward, trunks bowing toward a fresher, newer horizon.

The Six of Swords has a simple message: move on. If you have exhausted the potential of some place or circumstance, it is time to flit away. Don't hold onto something out of maudlin nostalgia, or worse, fear of change and the unknown. Recognize the simplicity of your venture and float on, towards freedom, towards change, towards adventure.

SEVEN OF SWORDS



Barefoot and cowled, a man tiptoes into the night, clutching two swords. The rest defend him from whatever he flees- his furtive glance behind suggests an unwelcome and ignoble exit from some unhappy circumstance. Self-preservation has eclipsed all matters of honor and duty. Nobody's hero, he is at least still alive to fight another day.

Sometimes it's best to cut your losses. Words may remain unspoken, but the feelings that drive them will not be dispelled. Eventually your true thoughts will become clear, and you don't necessarily need to be around when this takes place. This will isolate you, and you may spend many icy evenings in the wilderness, enduring a bleak existence. Ask yourself if cutting ties is worth this lonely lifestyle. You have a right to speak your mind. When you are forthcoming and strong you will never need to cloak your true feelings.

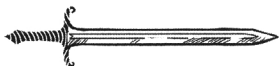
EIGHT OF SWORDS



A woman sits curled around herself in the snow, hemmed in by the imposing wall of swords. Whether their intention is to imprison or protect her, it is clear they have little real purpose. Butterflies drift indifferently around them, resting on the woman's fingers and floating on without a thought. Fraught with despair, she is ill-prepared to lift her head and see her salvation is close at hand.

Grief and anguish can hone the mind until nothing is left but the fine knife's edge. In this state of keen despair, you may actually be blind to the wide landscape that promises a release from a self-imposed imprisonment. The swords are driven into the ground. You are not. Pick yourself up and survey the full context of your situation.

NINE OF SWORDS



Totally awestruck by the massive beast bearing down on him, a boy gazes up at his oncoming doom. Mouth agape, he makes no move to defend himself, and the fey swan opens its jaws in preparation for a bloody coup de grace.

A cruel card, the Nine of Swords depicts sorrow so great, it leaves the martyr numb to the onslaught of forthcoming pain. Fear cripples any riposte, leaving him vulnerable to a swift destruction. But take heed from his paralysis. Though the situation is grave, it is his passivity that ensures his ruin. If you find yourself overwhelmed by hopelessness and despair, don't respond like this hapless figure. Face your fears with valor and dignity, trusting that your enemy will be overcome.

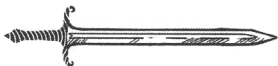
TEN OF SWORDS



Victor at last, the fearsome beast cinches the man in his talons, lifting him into the air. Pierced by ten blades, he hangs limp and lifeless over the precipice. No longer fighting, a look of peaceful acceptance stretches over his face. He knows that, with the departure of hope, what has long been feared has now been manifested, and he need only yield himself to his fate to endure the bitter end.

In a byzantine way, the Ten of Swords can be quite encouraging. After the dread and anguish leading up to this moment, the worst has finally fallen. Your misfortunes have defeated you. Find peace at last in the quiet repose of death.

PAGE OF SWORDS



After the despair and defeat of the Nine and Ten, the Page finally takes a stand against the rampaging beast. She swings her sword through its tail feathers, and to her grim bemusement, they disintegrate into a swarm of monarch butterflies. Her incisive action has revealed the harmless nature of her aggressor. She stands on the cliff, clutching her sword, considering the implications of this sudden turn of events.

The eager youth of the Page, combined with the penetrating intelligence of her suit, makes her formidable defender against false realities. Be vigilant, wary, and free from emotional pall so that you may discern the best course of action. You have within you the power and means to chop through duplicity. Frankness, honesty, and justice will serve you well.

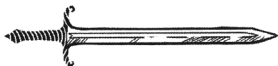
KNIGHT OF SWORDS



The Knight is about to impale his blade into the leering beak of the fell swan. The bird bears down but the Knight is unflinching, ready to vanquish the brood that has beleaguered his family. Plunging hotly into battle, sans counsel, sans strategy, he has not stopped to consider whether his actions are just. His brash courage will serve him well, but only so long as passion and vigor are called for in excess.

For all his ardor, the Knight can be cold and unfeeling. Focused only on achieving victory, he neglects empathy, compassion and restraint. If you find him in a draw, look deeply into your methods and means. If you find your approaches lukewarm or weak-willed, imbue yourself with his cavalier determination. But if you are overly imperious, or fixated only on achieving your goals, it may be time to take a step back, consider the feelings of others and allow new energy to flow into your life.

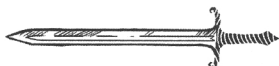
QUEEN OF SWORDS



The imperative of the Suit of Swords is to master malevolence, and here we see it finally accomplished. The Queen has bound the beast's beak, concealing its cruel, gnashing teeth. Her crown is made of feathers and her skirt is lined by swords, indicating the supple power of the blade when it is used astutely. She looks on in sad recognition of the bird's plight, but pity will not stay her from doing what is just. She restrains evil, her judicious mind glittering like cold diamond.

When you see the Queen in a reading, it is time to reign in your demons. You no longer have the excuse of inexperience, ignorance, or even fear. Use your immense intelligence and love of truth to conquer what plagues you. When you do, you'll be able to access matters of the heart with cool mental clarity and grace.

KING OF SWORDS



The King of Swords, blade held aloft, stumbles across the nest of fey birds, full of raucous fledglings, and his sharp mind quickly grasps the value of his discovery. Raising his arms like a conductor, he conjures a swarm of butterflies down into the nest to feed the screaming chicks. Rather than clash with their raging parents, he has chosen to parlay with their malleable offspring, trusting his unerring mental lucidity to subvert their feral instincts for good. For the first time in the song of Swords, a smile is warranted, and stretches gently across his face.

It takes a great man not just to fight evil, but to subsume it, divert it, and use it for good. Such an immense task calls for impeccable character and keen clarity of purpose. Realism and ingenuity are your greatest weapons when faced with a mighty foe; do not let good sense to become clouded with emotions. Face the facts with cold stoicism and find the best way to proceed. The answer may be simpler than you think.



THE RISE OF PENTACLES

WEALTH - POSSESSION - THE MATERIAL - SUCCESS

*“Better to have half
than to live without.”*

ELEMENT: EARTH

SEASON: SUMMER

SIGNS: TAURUS, VIRGO, CAPRICORN

A twofold symbol, Pentacles function as both coins and seeds. By planting what little you have in the earth, you insure a profitable existence in the future. There are many rewards for investing yourself in the world, not the least of which is monetary. But there also might be a richness of family, or the satisfaction of giving your excess to a person who has none. Whatever the treasure, it is clear that it is firmly rooted in the physical, tangible world. Delight in the earth and its abundance. It is your home.



ACE OF PENTACLES

Ensconced in a sturdy brick wall, a wooden door swings open, bearing the sign of the Pentacle. Beyond it lie many mysteries, but a few gnarled trees suggest an orchard, laden with fruit, smelling richly of loam. Light and bubbles stream out, beckoning the reader in. Dare to cross the threshold. Immerse yourself in wonder.

When you see a tantalizing opportunity, take it. This card promises great material reward for projects undertaken, particularly if they're something novel or unexplored. Though you may not be able to see over the wall and divine what you are truly choosing, dare to take the road less traveled. You may find that it pays off in the long run. Rise up to the challenge and begin your new adventure.



TWO OF PENTACLES

A young man sits atop the brick wall, above it all, tossing his two Pentacles with practiced ease. He keeps those opposing forces in balance, cocking an eyebrow as one falls back into his open palm. His cap at a jaunty angle, a playful smile on his lips, he exudes the effortless confidence of a man who has everything under control.

Life's imbalance is its greatest strength. To the man that masters the back and forth motion, the perpetual movement propels him into a steady, productive rhythm. Keep it all together by not paying too much attention to one thing. Accept that everything has its time and its place, and it is up to you to decide when it's time to move onwards.



THREE OF PENTACLES

A mason lays his bricks expertly, eyes closed in concentration, developing a simple rhythm. He has already built up a considerable portion of the wall and he has a long way to go before it's done. But he doesn't balk from the involved, repetitive labor before him, trusting his skill to see him through to the end. Contented, undaunted, he happily continues his task.

After the early stages of a project, there is a surge of pleasure in realizing you've achieved some tangible level of competency. Take pride in your work: be meticulous and patient, giving credit to the noble endeavor you've chosen to undertake. Likewise, as each brick supports its brother, this is a good time to interlock your plan with other visions. Let other people's input influence your own. This is a great time to build stability and trust.



FOUR OF PENTACLES

A man hunches on a low wall, clutching a pentacle to his chest. Another crowns his head while two more are planted under his feet. He looks about warily, daring anyone to seize his prized possessions. There is an air of meanness about him, a tendency to be petulant or stingy, but he doesn't care. He has long ago forsaken the company of other men in favor of material trappings.

These are some of the few Pentacles in the suit that do not glimmer. By hoarding his abundance, refusing to share or invest, the miser's wealth has become stagnant, self-diminished. Blind to his spiritual penury, he believes he has succeeded in his ventures. Take a lesson from this unhappy man. A dependence on the status quo will only leave you unprepared when change inevitably shakes you. Relinquish your grip. Let yourself go.



FIVE OF PENTACLES

A desolate man lies slumped in the dirt, lifeless or just too weary to stand. He has lost everything: his wealth, his home, and his friends. Now, the half-built wall does little to protect him from the elements, though little motes of light drift down into his upturned palm from the stained glass window. His cloak, the last of his earthly possessions, is wrapped tightly around him, and he waits, without supplication, for the end.

A troubling card, the Five of Pentacles warns of utter vanquishment. This may be a result of your own mishandling of a situation, or the sheer, unhappy randomness of fate. Either way, you have reached rock bottom, and you simply must accept your unmitigated defeat. As you learn the bitter lessons of humility, your true needs become starkly apparent. This is an opportunity for you. Everything that had power over you has been razed to the ground. Rally, and amass what little you need to start again.



SIX OF PENTACLES

At the end of the wall, a boy with five Pentacles willingly parts with one of his shiny coins. He hands it to a girl who has nothing, whose face lights up with this sudden turn of events. He bows his head respectfully, saving her the embarrassing scrutiny of receiving alms. His small sacrifice has breathed fresh life into her finances, and she sees before her new opportunities and a richer enjoyment of life. She is elated.

After many struggles and painful learning experiences, life has granted you the luxury of excess. When this happens, don't be greedy and keep the wealth to yourself. Give freely, never forgetting your own hard times that have brought you to this day. Alternatively, if you are in need of charity, don't be too proud to receive it. Often life will restore its equilibrium without your consent, when you are least prepared. Therefore, if you find someone willing to tip the scale back in your favor, don't hesitate. You will pay back the debt in full when you're better off.



SEVEN OF PENTACLES

A woman painstakingly buries her Pentacles in the dirt, a clear allegory for material investment. A practical dreamer, she envisions a garden full of flowers where now there is only earth. The newly planted Pentacles peak out of the soil, shedding the radiant light of their suit. A single golden orange hangs above, lighting her way with its succulent zest for life.

Innocuous and unassuming, within every seed rests a sleeping empire. Whether or not it rises from dormancy depends on many factors, not the least of which is simple chance. Nevertheless, whatever you cultivate has a good chance of surviving into maturity, so take care that what you are planting is wholesome and fully accounted for. Don't be fooled by the smallness of their being. Potent, fertile, they wait to sire nations.



EIGHT OF PENTACLES

The modest seeds of the Seven of Pentacles have blossomed into gilded vitality, and a girl happily waters her plants. She is seeing the first fruits of her labors, and they are beautiful. Now, all she must do is control it, with careful pruning in productive ways. Undaunted by the burgeoning task before her, she diligently sets to work.

After the first few harrowing weeks, when a project is still touch and go, it is a real pleasure to see measurable success blooming before your eyes. Take delight in what you have achieved. Steadily cultivate what you have already established so it continues to grow in meaningful ways. Pay attention to detail. Fortune has little influence at this point; rather, your dedication and finesse will guarantee the success of your undertaking.



NINE OF PENTACLES

At first glance, this skylad woman appears quite isolated. Exposed and far from home, she stands amidst the foliage with just a red-tailed hawk for company. But this predator stands for keen intelligence and a fierceness of spirit. They commune together in the sparkling greenery, masters of their realm.

The Nine of Pentacles is its own reward. After sacrificing and devoting yourself to a single purpose, your dedication has paid off. You're now well established in whatever it is that you set out to do, and you can afford the luxuries that come with a life of success. Enjoy it. There will come a time when you are tested and tried. Retain your sense of propriety and discipline, and you will be well prepared when this time befalls you.



TEN OF PENTACLES

In the center of a resplendent circle of fauna, a man and a woman swing their child up into the air. As flowers bloom and glittering grapes hang heavy on the vine, all of nature rejoices in its single purpose. To create, thrive, and pass away, in an everlasting cycle as immutable as life. There is great love in this picture, a domestic empire built and nourished over the course of many years.

Your hard work and dedication have reached their full potential—you have seen your endeavors blossom in full. Now, you need only to harvest the fruits of your labors; they will be abundant for many years to come. Enjoy earthly comforts, as they are richly deserved. This is not the time to begin earthmoving enterprises. Instead, focus on maintaining what you have already achieved. You have devoted yourself to the cultivation of the earth. Let her reward you in kind.



PAGE OF PENTACLES

The Page holds up his radiant Pentacle, appraising it. It sends out waves of pulsating light into the atmosphere. Responding to this active energy, flora thrives in abundance. Massive strawberries are scattered at his feet, and one coral pink vine twines around his body, desperate to draw closer to the Pentacle. The Page smiles contentedly, delighted at his good fortune. This is the start of something big.

When you draw this card, you have been handed a gift from the universe. This could be anything: a new job, a loan or inheritance, even a budding relationship. It could be some untapped talent within yourself you are just beginning to realize. Whatever it is, it will further your reach in the material world. Use the jaunty confidence of the Page to break ground on your new endeavor. There is the promise of greater wealth, security, and influence. It's a good time to be alive- so enjoy it.



KNIGHT OF PENTACLES

A blood red Knight sits immured in his armor, glittering Pentacle propped up as a shield. He peers out from his helmet, eyes narrowed, looking for danger. But for all his awareness, he seems totally oblivious to the fact that his steed is the legendary unicorn, nuzzling dispiritedly among the strawberries. The Knight's bare feet also belie his lackluster attention to detail. When a true calamity does befall him, he will be woefully underprepared.

The Knight is a conflicted creature. Having attained no small degree of success, he grows dependent on the tokens that have carried him safely thus far. He no longer sees their interconnected beauty; merely their utility. He is fixated on furthering his causes. If you pull this Knight in a reading, know that you may need to back off a little. Take a broader view. Appreciate the magic that makes your lifestyle possible. Otherwise, you will face a Pyrrhic victory devoid of meaning or gratification.



QUEEN OF PENTACLES

The Queen, Mother Nature, holds her Pentacle to her heart. All around her the cosmic energy shoots from strawberry to strawberry, enveloping her in an otherworldly light. At her feet, two brindled rabbits lope amongst the greenery. Warm-blooded, intelligent, they make fitting companions for this terrestrial queen. She nurtures life and its fecundity; creation renews itself in her presence. Presiding over fertile ground, she is the sanguine goddess of abundance and prosperity.

The Queen of Pentacles is a wonderful sign: she is the embodiment of natural goodness. She is the earthbound answer to the Empress, hale and warm and ready to provide a safe haven. If you see her crop up in a reading, you are a powerful force for creation. You are grounded in reality, exuding a subtle, masterful strength that can be channeled into any endeavor. Be prepared for everything you touch to blossom under your hand.



KING OF PENTACLES

The King of Pentacles swings on the horns of a bull. He exudes a calm confidence, knowing his execution is perfect. His tawny bull, flesh and blood manifestation of the Emperor, gazes impassively on, privy to the mighty King's most potent thoughts and desires. The bull recognizes his power and serves him without hesitation. Strawberries burst all around them.

If you crave mastery of your environment, there is no better card to draw than the King of Pentacles. He is the pinnacle of experience, hard work, and blunt intelligence, and as a result, he is relied upon in his community for his competence. Embody his power and ability to get things done. You do not need to wait for inspiration. You can stoke the fire within yourself. Muster all your strength and hurtle over anything that stands in your way.

AND NOW YOU KNOW.

NOTES

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

James R. Eads is a Los Angeles based artist who spends his time making the obvious less ordinary and the mundane more magical. He creates a universe that calls for exploration and a deeper understanding of the harmony of everything.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katherine Tombs is an English teacher in Pflugerville, Texas, where she spends her days shaping young minds and her evenings pruning her sage plants. She has been working with the tarot for over ten years, entrenched in their nuanced mythology. Her favorite card is The Sun.

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