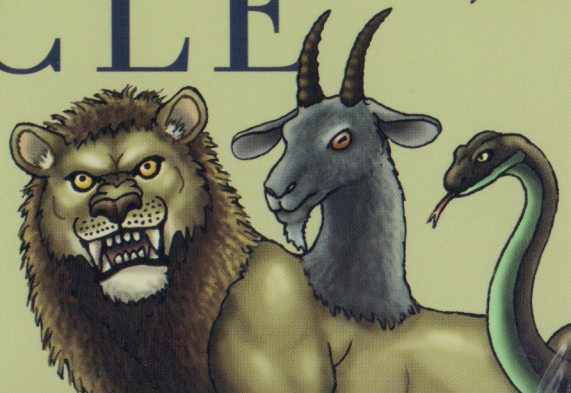
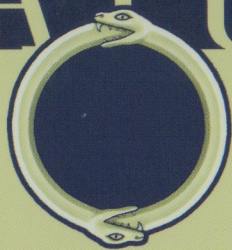


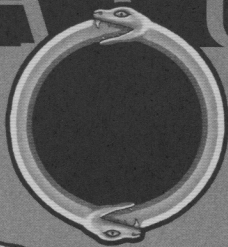
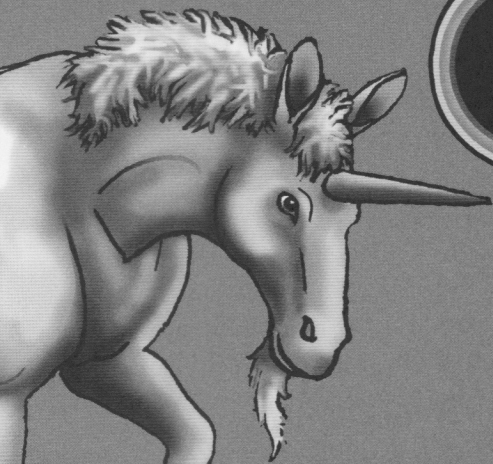
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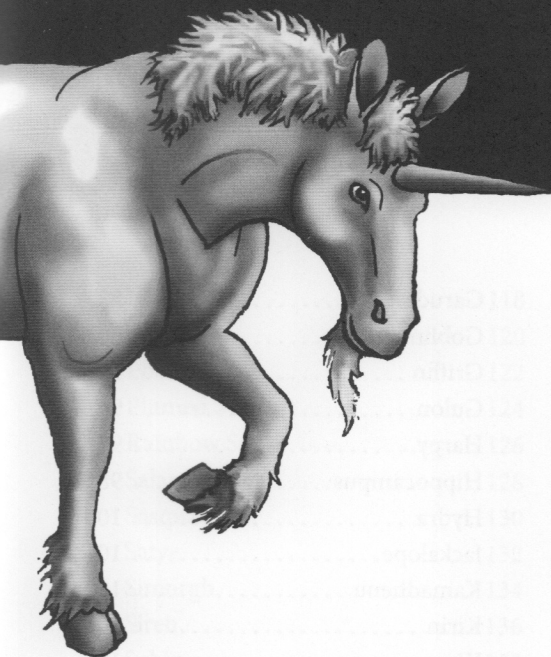
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Preface

FROM PAST TO PRESENT

6

Myth is a fundamental part of human existence. All around the world, since the beginning of time, people have used myth as an expression of the imagination. People use myth to interpret their surroundings, voice their dreams, convey their fears, teach their culture to the next generation, and keep their spirituality alive. Traditionally, myths were allegories and understood to be such, but still held as truth. People believed in myths because they viewed mythical symbolism and the mundane world as coexisting truths rather than as contradictions. A story does not have to be factual to be meaningful. Myths are “real” due to the great wealth of cultural and spiritual symbolism that they contain. They demonstrate and reinforce special values that define a culture’s beliefs.

Fanciful creatures appear in myths all around the world, past and present. In so doing, they embody the ideas expressed in the myths and represent the cultures that created them. Some of them are terrifying beasts; others are benign and wondrous. Frightful monsters can be nursery bogeys, used for scaring children into obeying important rules. Otherwise, they can be formidable adversaries fought by heroes whose epic adventures are enjoyed by adults and children alike. Mythical creatures can also be gentler, sometimes even friendly or helpful. They may represent a culture’s visualization of exotic faraway lands. They may be something sought after for their magical powers. They may appear in religious parables. They may be races

of beings that are somewhat like us, yet distinctly other.

Different cultures share stories with each other and adopt each other’s mythical beasts. Oftentimes, they change the ideas and symbolism associated with the creature into something more relevant to their own culture. Anthropologists know that this kind of borrowing and transformation is a universal phenomenon of human life. In today’s world of Hollywood film and fantasy gaming, people continue to be fascinated with fantasy and mythical creatures, including ones that we adopted from the past. We find great delight in the imaginations of the ancients, and equal delight in reworking their symbolic context to be relevant to our own lives.

The Mythical Creatures Oracle card set is a brief bestiary, consisting of just a few mythical creatures from just a few cultures of the world. Considering the tribes and civilizations that have existed worldwide, a truly comprehensive list of all the world's mythical creatures is impossible. Yet, despite the burgeoning wealth of diverse mythology available, most books that claim to be about "world" culture are quite disappointing in this regard. Most books written for Western audiences have an overbearing Western bias, creating the false impression that the majority of the world is tiny and insignificant compared to Europe. I do not wish to give that impression here, even if most of the creatures in this oracle do come from European myth.

I chose the fabulous animals in this collection on the basis of a number of factors. Unfortunately, global diversity played only a minor role in selecting them. Familiarity was a higher priority. I anticipate that readers will want to see all of their familiar favorites, which means drawing creatures predominantly from Western myth. In addition to pleasing the audience, this also serves a useful symbolic purpose. Familiar mythical creatures will already hold some symbolic significance to readers and will thus strengthen the meanings of the cards. In spite of this, I did include several mythical creatures from non-Western societies, among which are some that most readers may not have heard of.

The most important factor in deciding which mythical creatures to include was the usefulness of their symbolic meanings. Each creature in this set is an archetype that has its own sphere of meaning. These spheres overlap with one another, but minimally. Their meanings are ones that modern-day people will find applicable to their everyday lives. I tried to collect creatures that stand for meanings as diversely as I could find, while still being useful and relevant for divination. I tried to avoid meanings that were redundant. For that reason, I excluded some popular mythical beings, such as the Vampire, the Troll, and the Orc, whose meanings may be too similar to other creatures already in the set. (However, a future edition of this work

may include these and others not seen in the present edition.)

I decided the meanings for the creatures based on the content of the legends about them, the roles that they played in their belief systems, and the creatures' purported behavior. I also relied on my own intuition to clarify some of the symbolism. Readers may also have their own intuitive symbolism attached to these mythical creatures, which may be different from that described in this book. In such cases, readers can apply their own meanings when interpreting cards in a reading. Divination cards often work differently for different readers because of this. People usually pick cards based on their own intuition, rather than on that which has been written by somebody else. What the cards say to you is more important than what is written about them in this book.

The Mythical Creatures Oracle is a long-overdue collection of magical animals and monsters, both familiar and exotic, that have at last been compiled into a conveniently workable divination card set. These creatures symbolize people, experiences, problems, and solutions, all of which should be known to travelers on the road of life. The cards are designed to be symbolically and mystically functional, useful for spiritual self-help, and also provide fascinating information about world mythology. Brought together, they represent the culmination of thousands of years' of humankind's creative and spiritual development worldwide. I hope that readers deeply enjoy exploring the universal symbolism of these fantastical beings, and that their imagination is sparked in connecting ancient fantasy to their reality.

CARD LIST & KEYWORDS

Here are the meanings of the mythical creatures at a glance. Refer to the full card description for more information, and use your own intuition to help determine card meanings.

Ammut

Justice, Truth, Consequences

Barometz

Gentleness, Innocence, Vulnerability

Basilisk

Waste, Carelessness, Destruction

Brownie

Helpfulness, Hard Work, Prudence

Caladrius

Problem Solving, Humanitarianism, Peace

Centaur

Impulse, Self-Conflict, Dual Nature

Cerberus

Boundaries, Defensiveness, Warning

Chimera

Fierceness, Outward Strength,
Hidden Weakness

Chupacabras

Fear, Anxiety, Scapegoating

Cyclops

Stubbornness, Narrow-Mindedness,
The Old Way

Dragon, Eastern

Prosperity, Strength, Charisma

Dragon, Western

Conflict, Challenge, Obstacle

Fairy

Imagination, Magic, Bliss

Foo Dog

Protection, Loyalty, Balance

Garuda

Activism, Zealousness, Defender

Goblin

Troublemaker, Treachery, Pettiness

Griffin

Courage, Confidence, Dominance

Gulon

Greed, Arrogance, Corruption

Harpy

Hostility, Anger, Loathing

Hippocampus

Adventure, Eagerness, Impatience

Hydra

Chaos, Disaster, Despair

Jackalope

Irony, Humor, Mischief

Kamadhenu

Generosity, Comfort, Love

Kirin

Happiness, Good Luck, Hope

Kitsune

Disguise, Self-Transformation,
Attractiveness

Manticore

Skillfulness, Pragmatism, Perfectionism

Mermaid

Passion, Empathy, Romance

Mermecolion

Mistakes, Failure, Sadness

Minotaur

Confusion, Personal Struggle, Shadow Self

Naga

Wealth, Opportunity, Gifts

Pegasus

Triumph, Freedom, Ascension

Phoenix

New Beginnings, Transformation, Light

Plumed Serpent

Ideas, Reason, Order

Rainbow Snake

Creativity, Synthesis, Dreaming

Salamander

Survival, Resilience, Fearlessness

Sasquatch

Awareness, Introspection, Nature
Connection

Satyr

Indulgence, Hedonism, Lust

Simurgh

Wisdom, Guidance, Enlightenment

Siren

Deception, Manipulation, Danger

Sphinx

Silence, Mystery, Transcendence

Tengu

Learning, Focus, Self-Discipline

Thunderbird

Leadership, Power, Accomplishment

Unicorn

Goodness, Virtue, Chivalry

Werewolf

Instability, Mood Swings, Lack of Control

Introduction

WORKING WITH MYTHICAL CREATURES

Mythical creatures can easily play a role in people's daily lives, and that is what this oracle offers. Readers may wonder how mythical creatures can be capable of impacting their lives, being that they most likely do not believe in them. Yet from a metaphysical perspective, these creatures do exist. They exist as thoughtforms, and these thoughtforms can be relevant to us all.

The concept of a thoughtform has been described extensively in various mystical writings, both Eastern and Western. When people invest enough thought into an idea, the idea gains spiritual or metaphysical concreteness. When millions of people have invested similar thoughts into the same ideas over the course of many centuries,

these thoughtforms can become very powerful indeed. They become potent symbolic entities in human culture, thought, emotion, and experience. These ancient thoughtforms are similar to the archetypes in Jungian philosophy, and they may even be manifestations of preexisting archetypes inherent to the human mind.

A mythical creature is an excellent way for a conceptual archetype to manifest. Brought to life through generations of storytellers and creative minds, these free-floating thoughtforms are depicted as living beings and they can even behave as such. Through myth, these creatures travel around to different cultures, adapting their roles to different mythical situations, while retaining their basic

essence that distinguishes them from other thoughtforms. A mythical creature can be as complex as a living organism. It can carry with it as much wisdom from all the places it has been—just as a living person does—ready to dispense this wisdom to audiences who are willing to think deeply enough about it.

Indeed, you have been visited by mythical creatures before. You have been touched by the various ideas and experiences that these archetypes embody. You yourself have acted like various creatures at different times. You have seen them also manifesting in the actions of other people who you know. You have felt them as powerful emotions and epiphanies. They come to us in subtle ways, symbolic ways, and surprising ways. In every

case, if you treat complex bundles of abstract energy as specific creatures, they suddenly become easier to understand and work with. This book and card set is designed to provide you with the tools to manage these thoughtforms in your life.

Each card in this oracle set depicts one of these powerful entities. The illustrations on the cards, and even their very names, invoke the ancient thoughtforms and the timeless concepts that the creatures signify. This book translates them to you in a manner that is relevant to everyday life. The cards are miniature storehouses of the thoughtforms' power. In a sense they are physical manifestations of the mythical creatures themselves. In card form you can harness their energy by holding them in your hand.

Mythical creatures can symbolize many things, yet perhaps most intriguingly, they can be symbols of people. This oracle was designed as a tool for understanding people through the spiritual metaphor of mythical creatures. Many of the creatures included in this set translate directly to different occupational and personality types. Many of them have positive attributes that we may desire and admire, and

many of them have negative attributes that we may loathe but nonetheless express. This concept can be applied to self-discovery and self-transformation. In addition to the very real psychological and spiritual exercises that can be derived from this, it can also be fun to imagine yourself as a mythical creature.

Every person is some kind of creature. In fact, every person is complex enough to be several mythical creatures. These are transient archetypes. We can be different ones at different points in our lives, or even at different moments within the same day. Different creatures can describe our various relationships with different persons and how those individuals perceive us. Of course, knowing this leads to many questions.

- Which creature is the most like you most of the time?
- What does this mean for you, socially and spiritually?
- Can you change what type of creature you are, and how?
- What can you do if an unpleasant creature has affixed itself to your life?

The following chapters are devoted to answering these questions.

Chapter 1, "Mythical Creatures as Totems," goes into detail about mythical creatures as symbols of people. This paves the way for the more deeply mystical subjects addressed in the two following chapters. In Chapter 2, "Meditations for Self-Empowerment," readers can perform meditational exercises with mythical creatures to call positive archetypes into their lives. This is necessary knowledge to have before one moves on to Chapter 3, "Dealing With Monsters." The third chapter delves into the realm of shamanistic and occult magick, teaching readers how to detain negative archetypes that are holding them back. All three of these chapters present mythical creatures as tools that allow readers to discover more about themselves.

People often think of oracle card sets as divination tools, and *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* is no exception to the norm. These cards can be used much in the same manner as Tarot cards, although the deck has fewer cards and, therefore, it is better suited for smaller spreads. Oracle cards generally work very well with single-card readings. For instance, the drawing of one card in the

morning can prepare the reader for their day ahead, keeping an eye out for special lessons and encounters that are reminiscent of the creature that they chose. Chapter 4, "How to Use the Cards in Divination," provides numerous other suggestions for card readings.

Most of the remainder of the book is consumed by the section entitled "The Cards," which is intended primarily for divination interpretation. The entries in this section provide additional information about the archetypes used in totemism, self-empowerment, and monster banishing, as well as each creature's historical background for curiosity purposes. Always keep in mind that myths and thoughtforms are complex and subjective in nature and, therefore, there is no limit to the different ways to interpret them. The interpretations provided in this book are those intended to match the card designs, but they are a starting point only. You are encouraged to apply your own intuition when working with these thoughtforms.

Last but not least, have fun. Myths and mythical creatures make the world a more enchanting place. The imagination has power. It keeps us young and happy. The day one shuts off their life to the fantastical is the day they grow old and grim. Work with mythical creatures to keep your intuitive side active, your spirit healthy, and your mind open.

MYTHICAL CREATURES AS TOTEMS

14 A totem is a personal, metaphysical symbol that takes the form of an animal or other part of nature. Traditionally, this symbol's association with a person is permanent or at least long lasting, as it is tied to the person's spiritual being. Also importantly, people do not choose their totems. Our modern culture encourages us to think that we have full control and choose everything in our lives. However, there are in fact many things that we do not choose. These things include our parents, our heritage, our genetics, and the place where we were born. Traditionally, a totem would be categorized alongside these other predetermined characteristics. The concept of totems originated in premodern cultures that understood that human beings

do not actually control everything, and that individuals are at the mercy of forces that are greater than themselves.

Some modern-day spiritual movements have adopted the ancient wisdom of totemism. If you are deeply interested in totemism as a serious spiritual topic, then there are numerous books available that describe totem animals and how to discover them. Such books often go into great depth about meditational workings with animal spirits, which is well beyond the scope of this book. In this book, the word "totem" is used much more loosely to mean any metaphysical animal that represents a person. Any animal can have a metaphysical manifestation, including those that are mythical. Also in this book, a person does

not consciously choose their totem and a totem is not necessarily permanent.

If you read over the descriptions of the mythical creatures in this book, chances are you will be reminded of certain people you know. A few may fit them so appropriately that you may wonder if the creature was actually modeled from them. For our purposes here, we are referring to these instances as cases of totemism. As with traditional totemism, the person of whom you were reminded did not actually choose the particular creature to be their symbol. Rather, they grew into the characteristics that they possess, and these same characteristics may match the archetypal symbolism of a mythical creature. In a metaphorical sense, they are a manifestation of that creature.

It is important to note here that gender is not a limiting factor in identifying people as mythical creatures. Many mythical creatures, especially those that are humanoid or partially human, were traditionally regarded as being entirely feminine or entirely masculine, but not either-or. This is related to the fact that society has historically imposed strict limitations on the attitudes that human beings are allowed to express. It was often socially forbidden for men to show sensitivity or for women to show aggression. Yet in our post-industrial world, these constraints are eroding, and society is beginning to accept human beings as *full* human beings, not merely as limited halves. Therefore, traditionally gendered creatures

such as the Satyr or the Siren could be male or female in today's world.

There are many different contexts in which a mythical creature may be a symbol or metaphor for a person. This is because all people are complex and adopt different roles in different situations. Each of us has many different aspects to our personality, many different emotions, social roles, and relationships with other people. Additionally, we each go through different phases of our lives, and we may even experience life differently on a day-to-day basis. For all of these reasons, no person can be represented by just one creature. Instead, these creatures represent different aspects of ourselves and different situations that we

experience. Some of these symbols may be applicable for only a short time, while others may remain relevant to us for many years.

There are also other ways in which a mythical creature may be meaningful to you or representative of you. Mythical creatures may come to you in dreams or in the form of other signs, such as gifts that people give you, or objects that you unexpectedly find. They may even manifest in your life as normal animals that they resemble, such as horses, dogs, snakes, or eagles. In any regard, any given person will have a connection to several different mythical creatures. Yet there may be one creature in particular that you identify with personally, based on your personal interests and activities. There

may also be different creatures that your friends, acquaintances, and colleagues would associate with you. You may even behave like a cross between two or more mythical creatures, as sort of a compound totem.

Perhaps the most popular way to discover a totem or other spirit animal is through meditation. An archetype that is a part of your soul can be found by looking within. Books about spirit guides and animal magick often provide detailed examples of meditational exercises with which one can discover their totem or spirit animal. This book provides basic information on meditation in Chapter 2. The meditative techniques described in that chapter, which are provided as power animal workings, can also be applied to inner journeys in search of totems while in a dreamlike state. You can additionally discover your mythical creature totems by looking for signs around you, studying the cards for images that jump out at you, drawing a card for divination, and reviewing the important characteristics of each creature.

Once you have identified a candidate for a totem, you must figure out whether this creature actually is your personal symbol, or

merely a short-term messenger. Use the lists provided in this book to determine whether the creature sounds like a description of you. Your totem will be a creature with which you share many characteristics. Other people should also be able to recognize the similarities that you share with it. Ask your friends, family, roommates, etc. how they would describe you. Show them the lists of creatures and their characteristics, and ask them which creatures are most befitting of you. The following lists suggest creature totems based on two different criteria: occupation/social role and dominant personality traits.

Mythical Creature Totems Based on Occupation, Social Role, or Activity:

You are already aware of your own occupation and the main activities that characterize your life. Therefore, you do not need to resort to divination or meditation to discover which of these creatures is the most like you. This totem is one that can change when your occupation or social role changes. Read this list and decide if any of these descriptions apply

very strongly to you or to another person you know. If you feel that the connection is strong, then read the complete description of the creature in the section titled, "The Cards." If the description feels intuitively fitting or is uncannily similar to yourself, then this creature qualifies as a personal totem.

Ammut

Police officers, lawyers
or law students

Barometz

Infants and young children

Brownie

Custodians, housekeepers,
carpenters, farmers

Caladrius

Doctors, nurses, paramedics,
pharmacists, therapists

Cerberus

Security guards, bouncers,
police officers

Chimera

Members of a competitive team

Eastern Dragon

Executives, family heads, royalty, wealthy persons

Western Dragon

Combat soldiers, fighters

Fairy

Children, hippies, New-Age mystics

Foo Dog

Homemakers, mothers, fathers, security guards

Garuda

Soldiers, activists, evangelists

Goblin

Criminals, thieves, bullies, Internet trolls

Griffin

Competitive athletes, champions

Hippocampus

Sailors, explorers, athletes

Jackalope

Comedians, entertainers

Kamadhenu

Parents, caretakers, persons who work with children

Kirin

Philanthropists, social workers

Kitsune

Actors and actresses, dancers, models

Naga

Rich people, heirs, gamblers

Pegasus

Social workers, guidance counselors, benefactors

Phoenix

Persons recovering from addiction or trauma

Plumed Serpent

Innovators, scientists, engineers, mathematicians, programmers

Rainbow Snake

Artists, artisans, architects, builders, creative writers

Sasquatch

Outdoorsmen, naturalists, park rangers, hermits

Satyr

Club-goers, musicians, groupies, party animals

Simurgh

Teachers, professors, mentors, consultants

Siren

Con artists, sex workers

Sphinx

Scholars, intellectuals, occult practitioners

Tengu

Students, martial artists,
soldiers in training

Thunderbird

Leaders, war veterans,
seasoned professionals

Unicorn

Clergymen, good Samaritans,
philanthropists, volunteers

Mythical Creature Totems Based on Dominant Personality Traits:

Totems can also be connected to people based on their personalities, rather than their occupational roles. This applies to both positive and negative qualities. It is a good idea to have one or more people who know you decide which one of these sound the most like you. Of course your close friends may be biased, and they will be unlikely to pick any of the negative creatures on this list. Yet it is important to remember that all persons possess some imperfections, and most people go through times in their life when negative traits are much more

prevalent than they should be. You may use *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* cards for divination to provide an impartial insight on how you might appear to others. If you can, consult an unbiased person for his or her opinion of the result.

The following is a list of potential totems by personality traits, both positive and negative. Obviously, these traits are much more ingrained in the self than the items on the previous list and are, therefore, harder to change. As with the previous list, gain a full understanding of any mythical creature that has been identified as matching you. Read its complete description in the section of this book titled, "The Cards." If the creatures to which you are matched on this list happen to be the same as the ones that you chose from the previous list, then this indicates a very strong totemic connection indeed!

Ammut

Those who are intensely decisive,
emphatic, and rules-oriented

Barometz

The extremely innocent, gentle,
clingy, or dependent

Basilisk

The destructive, the wasteful,
the careless

Brownie

Diligent hard workers,
those with a concern for
etiquette or cleanliness

Caladrius

Humanitarians, altruists,
problem solvers

Centaur

Macho men (or women),
persons determined to proclaim
their toughness

Cerberus

The highly defensive, those who
do not let others come near

Chimera

Intimidating and aggressive
persons, especially if
compensating for insecurity

Chupacabras

Those who are fearful of the unfamiliar; potentially the prejudiced

Cyclops

Those who are especially stubborn, practical, and old-fashioned

Eastern Dragon

Those who are highly successful, popular, and have good luck

Western Dragons

Persons who start fights, have combative personalities

Fairy

Individuals who seem to live in a dream, bubbly personalities

Foo Dogs

Persons who are highly loyal to or protective of their family

Garuda

Activists; people who are remarkably zealous, headstrong, and passionate

Goblin

Troublemakers, liars, mean people, untrustworthy individuals, creeps

Griffin

Persons who like to show off, highly competitive people, braggarts

Gulon

Those who are greedy, arrogant, selfish, and smug

Harpy

Angry people, those who frequently yell and make others unhappy

Hippocampus

Persons who are highly adventurous and travel frequently

Hydra

Persons who thrive on chaos, who draw strength from the distress of others

Jackalope

Those with a strong sense of humor; jokers, pranksters, goofs

Kamadhenu

Those who are very loving, nurturing, giving, compassionate

Kirin

Helpful and caring persons, those around whom everyone else smiles

Kitsune

Social chameleons, persons with more than one identity or a dysphoric identity

Manticore

Those who are uncannily skillful and superbly multitalented

Mermaid

Highly sensitive or emotional persons, empaths

Mermecolion

Unlucky people, those who are chronically depressed

Minotaur

Persons who are dark and enigmatic, secretive, somewhat scary

Naga

Gamblers, lucky people, those with a strong affinity for shiny objects

Pegasus

Loyal friends, helpful teammates, optimists

Phoenix

Individuals who succeeded in turning their life around

Plumed Serpent

Intellectuals, rational thinkers, meticulous planners and record-keepers

Rainbow Snake

Those who are highly creative, artistic, or gifted at storytelling

Salamander

Persons comfortable in, unaffected by, remarkably hostile conditions

Sasquatch

Nature lovers, reclusive introverts, Luddites

Satyr

Extreme extroverts, party animals, hedonists, libertines, risk-takers

Simurgh

Those who are very wise and intelligent, and also nurturing

Siren

Individuals who are deceptive and manipulative, especially if in a sexy way

Sphinx

Persons who are very intellectual, quiet, and patient

Tengu

Persons dedicated to rigorous long-term training

Thunderbird

Individuals who have earned high respect from the community

Unicorn

Virtuous and righteous individuals, do-gooders, the devoutly religious

Werewolf

Persons who suffer from violent mood swings or manic depression

Once You Identify Your Totem or Totems

Congratulations; you have identified a part of yourself in symbolic form. Your creature totem or totems represent an aspect of who you are, part of that which makes you *you*. Nothing about you has changed once you have identified one of these totems. Instead, you have simply put an image to this aspect of yourself. You “are” this creature, at least some of the time. Study the image of the creature on the card and the description of it provided in this book. Is it a creature that you want to embrace as part of your identity? Or is it something that disappoints you?

You may be interested in changing what you are, especially if you think you are one of the bad creatures. A question asked in the introduction was, “Can you change what type of creature you are, and how?” In many traditional societies, a totem is not something that can be changed, as it is a symbol that you inherit from your ancestors. In other

traditions, a totem is an animal spirit that chooses you and you cannot simply tell it when to come or go. But the word “totem” is not always used in the same way. Here it is being used very loosely. Since these are symbols of persons based on their behavior, and not on their ancestry or zodiac sign, these totems can indeed be changed.

Since totemism is described here on the basis of your interaction with society, you can “become” a different creature by changing the way you interact. Of course, changing the way you conduct yourself is always easier said than done, and it is especially difficult in the case of long-term changes. This book is not meant to be a step-by-step instructional guide for personal life change, but it does offer a few small suggestions. The following chapter describes a meditational exercise that you can do to help you become more like a mythical creature that has certain positive qualities that you desire. The chapter following that, called “Dealing With Monsters,” offers suggestions on how to stop being like a creature that has undesirable qualities.

Chapter 2

MEDITATIONS FOR SELF-EMPOWERMENT

People who are interested in movements such as New Age, Neo-Paganism, and Neo-Shamanism, may be familiar with the concept of power animals. Unlike a totem, which is never intentionally chosen by a person, a power animal is purposely chosen for its favorable qualities. After choosing the animal, the person meditates on it, focusing on its desirable attributes and attempting to cultivate these qualities in him- or herself. The animal serves as a tool for honing one's intent for self-empowerment, hence the term, "power animal."

There are many sources available that provide detailed information about the symbolic and spiritual power of animals to use for this purpose. These books usually

focus on real species of animals. However, a mythical creature will serve this role equally well. This is because power animals are dealt with as thoughtforms, rather than as physical beings. In the realm of thoughtforms, mythical creatures have reality and can be used to harness spiritual energy in the form of desirable attributes. In fact, a mythical creature may sometimes symbolize a desired quality more appropriately than any real animal does.

You may want to adopt a mythical creature as a power animal if it embodies something that you want to bring into your life, or if it represents qualities that you wish to foster within yourself. Doing this is simple: it only requires focus and patience. Power animal

workings consist primarily of meditational exercises. The more energy you devote to your power animal, the more likely you will succeed in bringing its qualities into your life. Meditations should be repeated as often as you feel necessary, for as long as you feel necessary. Some spiritual practitioners may prefer to think of these workings as "rituals" and regard them as a type of white magick.

A power animal is an appropriate tool for correcting flaws and weaknesses of the self. All human beings have weaknesses and, for this reason, all human beings have a desire for self-improvement. A power animal will aid you in the lifelong process of overcoming your weaknesses and becoming a stronger person. This is the proper use

for a power animal. Power animals should never be used for corrupted purposes, such as seeking power over others. This is not a healing process; instead, it magnifies dangerous patterns that would ultimately cause your overall weakness to intensify.

As with any other ritual working, working with power animals warrants that you must take responsibility for your actions. Beware that many kinds of animals, mythical and otherwise, come with negative attributes as well as positive ones. The same creature archetypes do not make equally suitable

power animals for all persons. Do not adopt a power animal whose negative qualities are similar to your own, as this may cause your negative qualities to intensify. The cost of such a mistake outweighs the benefits. If this does happen, never blame your power animal for your bad behavior. You were the one who invoked the animal and you are still responsible for your actions. Always perform these workings with a reverent attitude toward the creature archetype and toward other beings. Use common sense and choose your power animal wisely.

How to Perform a Power Animal Working

A power animal working or ritual is meditation-based. There are many ways to meditate: seated, lying down, standing, or even moving; eyes shut or eyes open. If you frequently meditate using one of these means, then you should stick to that which makes you comfortable. If you are new to meditation, then the common forms suggested for beginners are generally seated or lying down. However, if you enjoy jogging and you find that this is what relaxes you and

takes your mind off of everything else, then a moving meditation may be ideal for you. The important thing is that you are able to be comfortable and relaxed without interruption long enough to clear your mind and perform a spiritual working.

Meditation involves the focusing of awareness and metaphysical energy fields. These two things are closely linked together, as awareness directs energy. Usually, our energy fields are extended outward and moving about in the space around us, due to our attention being spread out during our daily lives. Yet we need to focus our energy in order to apply it to any metaphysical intent, including a power animal working. This is done with techniques known as centering and grounding. Centering focuses your energy so that you can apply it to a meditation or ritual, while grounding allows you to perform a working without draining your energy.

In order to center your energy, mentally call in all of your awareness as though you are sucking it back in from the air around you. Visualize a center within your body—it is usually your navel or solar plexus, or any of the chakra centers. This is where your energy's "home base" is. Different cultures

have different ideas as to exactly where this center is located, and so the exact location is not the important part. The important part is that you *visualize* all of your energy being drawn in, and that you *feel* it being drawn in. Detach your thoughts from the outside world. Deep breaths will aid this process. This process can take several minutes, especially if you are new to it. Once you are centered, you will not be immediately concerned with outside matters.

Grounding involves connecting your energy to the natural world. It requires that you make yourself feel a oneness with nature. Once you have cleared your mind and centered, you should be able to easily envision the awesome energy of the Earth, the sky, the sun, and other parts of nature. Understand that, regardless of your immediate environment, you are a creature of the Earth awash in all of these different energies. The floor on which you sit or stand is connected to the Earth. The air that you breathe, even if indoors, is connected to the sky. If you are outdoors, the sunlight or moonlight may be shining upon you. All of these are natural energy sources that can be used for grounding.

To ground, you must concentrate on being in harmony with nature. This means respecting it as something greater than yourself. You are going to be joining this greater source, not conquering or subduing it. One of the most common grounding techniques involves visualizing roots connecting your body to the earth. Sometimes this visualization is also accompanied by a tree growing up from your body, branching out into the sky. Whatever you visualize, you should feel a continuous energy flow between yourself and the natural environment. This also takes several minutes. Some people prefer to ground before they center.

Beyond grounding and centering, many practitioners of magick and mysticism prefer to draw an energy circle around themselves in their ritual space. This provides protection from outside distractions and keeps the energies being worked with contained within the desired space. If you choose to draw a circle, then you must do so with an attitude of great respect for the forces that you are working with. You can use your finger to draw the circle, or you can use a tool such as a feather or a wand. It is important

to have everything with you inside of the designated space before you draw your circle, and it is also important to close, or dismantle, the circle before exiting the space. Do this by moving your finger or wand in the opposite direction from your initial drawing of the circle while reverently visualizing the energy going back down into the ground. Failure to put the energy back after your working is irresponsible and results in a chaotic environment.

Power animal meditations require focusing and concentrating on the animal of choice. The cards in this deck will be of aid for this. Although people often meditate with their eyes shut, you may find it easiest to focus on your power animal if you are staring at the card. If you prefer to visualize it with your eyes shut, you may still find it beneficial to hold the card in your hand as a physical manifestation of the animal. The following are the basic steps of a power animal meditation. Be sure to read through this entire section before beginning the working.

1. Choose a power animal from this chapter that is suitable for your own unique situation. Heed the cautionary messages

for each creature when making your decision, otherwise this exercise can invite disaster. When you decide upon a creature that is right for you, read more about it in "The Cards" before you attempt any spiritual working.

2. Designate a space that you identify as your own, where you are able to relax and ignore outside responsibilities. Have your card with you.
3. Remove distractions and turn off your phone. Some people like to listen to relaxation music while they meditate, as it blocks out external distractions and focuses the mind. Fully relax and clear your mind.
4. Take a long, slow, deep breath, hold it for a count of seven, and then exhale slowly. Visualize any stress and commitments to the outside world leaving you as you exhale. Do this three times.
5. Center and ground your energy at this point, using whatever technique you prefer. Draw a circle if you are so inclined.
6. Now that you have entered a meditative state of mind, begin focusing on your power animal. Either stare at the chosen card or other visual aid, or simply

hold the visual aid while picturing it with your eyes shut. Even if your eyes are closed, remain aware that you are physically holding a representation of that creature in your hands.

7. Picture the mythical creature there beside you. Honor and respect this creature; it is there to teach you and guide you. If you are already well-versed in these sorts of exercises, you may want to visualize yourself taking on the physical attributes of the power animal.
8. Recite to yourself the qualities of the creature that you wish to emulate. You may recite the suggested mantras provided in this chapter, or you may use ones that you have come up with on your own. State to yourself that these qualities are your own or that your life attracts these qualities. State that this creature is a part of you or a part of your life. Repeat this over and over, focusing specifically on the intent of the words.
9. Picture in your life, very specifically, what this transformation will bring. This means that you envision the results that you want to see, and you also think about the changes that you will need to

make in your own behavior to be more like your power animal. Intersperse these thoughts with your mantras.

10. The meditation should last until you feel satisfied or you feel that you accomplished something within your psyche. Once you feel satisfied with the exercise, thank your power animal.
11. Gradually ease back out of the meditation. Do this by slowly making yourself more aware of the room around you. If you are meditating with your eyes shut, make sure you have full awareness of your present location before you open your eyes again. As you come back, be mindful that you have drawn power from the mythical creature, and that the creature's spiritual essence is with you.
12. Once you have returned to a normal state of awareness, respectfully dismiss the active spiritual energy that has accumulated in the space around you. If you have drawn a circle, then "undraw" it and graciously send the energy back into the ground. You can achieve this by moving your hands and thinking intently about putting the energy away where it belongs.

Meditations may be supplemented by writing down the qualities that you are trying to cultivate on a piece of paper. If you do this, carry this piece of paper with you in your pocket, leave it under your pillow, or place it on your personal altar. You may also want to leave the card on your nightstand or carry a small figurine of the creature with you. Every time you see it or touch it, you are reminded of the strength and wisdom you are gaining from your power animal.

Remember that power animal meditations are most effective if they are performed multiple times. You are doing this in order to change yourself, and change takes time. Perform your power animal meditation several times within a period of two-to-three weeks to strengthen your connection to your power animal and increase the likelihood of its permanence. You may customize and modify this ritual as you go along. Do it in whatever way suits you best, as long as you remain mindful of personal responsibility and the intent to heal.

Suggested Mythical Creatures as Power Animals

The following is a list of creatures from this deck that would make suitable power animals. These are the more potentially beneficent creatures in the deck, accompanied by suggested uses and mantras. These mantras are only suggestions; you may write your own mantras as you see fit. You may modify and apply power animal workings to your own needs at your own discretion. Always check to see if there is a cautionary message that goes along with the creature you choose and, if there is, then take it seriously. Always maintain an attitude of admiration and respect for the entities you work with. If you do not respect the archetypes and spirits, then you should not call upon them for help.

AMMUT

Recommended use: For people who have difficulty making decisions, being assertive, or who lack the courage to be straightforward; for people who need to take charge, but are having difficulty staying in control. May also be used to destroy something that is bothersome. Can combat general wishy-washiness and the soft-spined Barometz.

Caution: Do NOT invoke Ammut for frivolous things, as her decisions are not meant to be reversed. Do not invoke Ammut if you are inclined toward negativity or if people are already intimidated by you.

Desired qualities: Firmness, decisiveness, getting rid of nonsense

Mantras: "I trust in the judgment of Ma'at the wise."

"Great beast of the gods, put an end to this rubbish."

"May I receive the strength and wisdom of the Great Devourer."

Extra suggestion: Imagine your problematic issue to have a concrete form that you can hold in your hand. Cast this form into the mouth of Ammut, who then snaps her crocodile jaws shut. In this vice-like hold, you have the issue under your control. You may want to clap your hands together to simulate the closing crocodile mouth.

BAROMETZ

Recommended use: For people who are too aggressive in their demeanor, who are harsh and insensitive, who have a bad habit of lashing out, hurting others, and driving people away. Combats the hostile Cerberus, the overbearing Chimera, the uncouth Goblin, and the cold-hearted Manticore.

Caution: Do NOT invoke the Barometz if you have low self-esteem, are highly sensitive, have difficulty standing up for yourself, or have been described as obsequious or clingy.

Desired qualities: Gentleness, softness, approachability.

Mantras: "I am the sweet little lamb, whose softness we all adore."

"I am soft and gentle, I would never harm a soul."

"I am one with the Barometz; I am attached to my friends [family, girlfriend, boyfriend]."

Extra suggestion: Visualize yourself and others as connected to the same tree or plant, as one; they are part of yourself. Love them, love yourself, love all, treat all kindly.

BROWNIE

Recommended use: For people who have difficulty staying motivated to do work, especially if they are working on a major long-term project. Can combat the lazy Gulon, the panic-inducing Chupacabras, and the chaotic Hydra.

Caution: Do not invoke the Brownie if you are already a workaholic. The Brownie itself is a workaholic, and doubling this can result in unhealthy obsessive behavior.

Desired qualities: Strong work ethic, diligence, conscientiousness, love of duty

Mantras: "I am as orderly and productive as the Brownie."
"Hard-working Brownie, help me work for the greater good."
"I despise laziness, I sweep it away."

Extra suggestion: Focus on the constant motion of the Brownie's sweeping broom. Embody that motion. Do not let yourself stand still until you reach a reasonable stopping point.

CALADRIUS

Recommended use: For people who have found their interpersonal relationships to be soured, as when a relationship with another person has been damaged by a fight or grudge. The Caladrius can also be invoked in meditations to benefit your health. Combats the toxic Basilisk.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Healing, helping others, identifying problems and fixing them

Mantras: "Wise Caladrius, show me the cause of the problem."
"I can understand the problem and then I will fix it."
"I will work to remove whatever poison I have brought."
"Let healing prevail."

Extra suggestion: Interpersonal problems require direct communication with the other person. Always try to understand the other person's point of view. Always remember that conflicts between two people usually involve fault being perceived by both parties. If the other person is not wise enough to understand this, forgive them anyway. Admit your own mistakes. Be proactive in changing your own behavior; simply talking to the other person and expecting them to change is not enough. If they are not ready to speak to you yet, or to do their part, then wait. Sometimes time is the best medicine.

CERBERUS

Recommended use: For people who frequently find their personal boundaries being violated, who are frequently walked over or abused by others, who have difficulty putting their foot down or standing up for themselves. Can combat the timid Barometz.

Caution: Do not invoke Cerberus if you have a bad temper, or have been described by others as aggressive or unwelcoming.

Desired qualities: Defense of boundaries, blocker of unwanted guests

Mantras: "I bare my fangs at intruders, for they shall not pass!"
"Quintessential guard dog, teach me to bark and bite!"
"Trespassers run from me in terror, for I am Cerberus!"
"Like the guardian of Hades, I hold the boundaries."

Extra suggestion: Visualize yourself being protected by vicious dogs. Picture those who bother you approaching, and you sending the loud, barking dogs after them to drive them away. Every time you encounter a bothersome person in real life, think about releasing one of these dogs.

EASTERN DRAGON

Recommended use: For people who want to improve their leadership skills and social status for constructive purposes, or who are applying to jobs or hoping for a promotion. Can combat the unlucky Mermecolion or the oppositional Western Dragon.

Caution: Do NOT invoke the Eastern Dragon if you have an egotistical agenda to put yourself above others, or an agenda to control and manipulate. This power animal is NOT intended to benefit those who are mad with power-lust. Monetary success is not guaranteed.

Desired qualities: Charisma, prosperity, strength of character, leadership

Mantras: "Heavenly Dragon, grace me with your blessing of lasting success."
"All-powerful Dragon, help me rise to new heights."
"My strengths and capabilities shine like a great fireball."

Extra suggestion: To become a Dragon, visualize a magical flaming pearl that you hold in your hands. Let the flaming pearl float above your head, and picture other people around you staring up in awe. Carry it with you at all times.

FOO DOGS

Recommended use: To invite stability into one's life, whether in the form of loyalty, safety, tranquility, or balance. May be used to ensure fidelity in marriage or to ward away evil influences. Can combat the chaotic Hydra or the destructive Basilisk.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Protection, stability, safety, loyalty, cooperation, balance

Mantras: "The mighty Foo Dogs guard us/me with unwavering diligence."
"I invoke the protection of the Lions of Buddha."
"May all evil dissolve at the gates."
"We are two pillars of our marriage/relationship; strong and immovable."

Extra suggestion: Go to the craft store and buy a pair of beads shaped like dogs or lions. String them onto a bracelet or necklace and wear them when you need extra protection or peace of mind.

GARUDA

Recommended use: Provides additional strength and incentive when undertaking a daunting task. Good for combating the antagonism of the Western Dragon, or beating down moral villains such as the Goblin or Gulon, or for overcoming personal obstacles posed by the Chupacabras, Mermecolion, or Minotaur.

Caution: Do NOT invoke Garuda if you are already considered by others to be combative or argumentative, especially if you have a habit of pointing fingers too soon. Always consider different possibilities before jumping into a fight.

Desired qualities: Passion, courage, fighting for justice

Mantras: "Mighty Garuda, grace me with strength and fervor!"
"No challenge can stop me, for I am strong like Garuda!"
"I will walk away victorious!"

Extra suggestion: Picture yourself as Garuda was when he first hatched from his egg: enormous and brighter than the Sun. See all enemies and obstacles tremble before you.

GRIFFIN

Recommended use: For those who have low self-esteem or high levels of self-doubt. Can combat the helpless Barometz, the self-loathing Mermecolion, or the anxiety-laden Chupacabras.

Caution: Do NOT invoke the Griffin if you look down your nose at others or if you believe that you are nearly flawless. There will be disastrous consequences for an already arrogant individual who invokes the Griffin.

Desired qualities: Courage, self-esteem, personal triumph, faith in one's own abilities

Mantras: "I can accomplish anything, for I am the mighty Griffin!"
"Rays of sun shine forth from my wondrous visage."
"I am the Griffin; my true nature is King/Queen."
"May all who look upon me recognize my great strength!"

Extra suggestion: Imagine that you are looking into a mirror. What you see in the mirror is the regal and majestic Griffin radiating light, as seen on the card. Recite the mantra, "May all who look upon me recognize my great strength," and recognize your own strength in yourself.

KAMADHENU

Recommended use: For those who must channel their most loving, nurturing, or generous aspect to care for others or for their self. For those who feel unloved or who are emotionally hurt, or who are having difficulty feeling compassion. Can combat any mean-spirited or uncaring monster.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Kindness, compassion, generosity, hospitality, unconditional love

Mantras: "Kamadhenu's blessing heals all wounds."
"Love flows forth from my heart like a waterfall."
"Love is wealth and I am wealthy."
"I love my children [family, self] with all the warm light of the sun."

Extra suggestion: Drink a small cup of milk (or warm water) while performing your working. This beverage is the elixir of Kamadhenu, the great nurturer and provider. Picture the radiant image of the Sacred Cow with her warm, motherly smile. With each sip, feel your heart becoming stronger, happier, and more compassionate as you accept Kamadhenu's gift into your being.

KIRIN

Recommended use: For those suffering from feelings of depression, despair, hopelessness, or confusion. For those in need of positive insight when feeling lost. Can combat the melancholy Mermecolion, the hateful Harpy, the overwhelming Hydra, or the imprisoning Minotaur.

Caution: Do not overlook the Kirin's blessing, which often appears subtly, in favor of a dramatic overhaul that is unlikely to happen. If you ask for guidance, be prepared to listen and follow.

Desired qualities: Optimism, hope, good luck, finding the right path

Mantras: "Wise Kirin, I pray for guidance on my path."

"My eyes and heart are open for signs of the Kirin."

"Happiness is upon me; may I have the strength to see it."

"I trust and accept the path of the Kirin."

Extra suggestion: As you meditate, ask the Kirin for a sign to look out for. This can be any object or a phrase or keyword. In the next few days, if you see this object or hear the keyword, pay more attention to what is going on at that moment. Take any advice that accompanies this discussion or travel in the direction that the object leads you.

KITSUNE

Recommended use: For those who desire to transform their image in a constructive manner, who need to heal personal wounds by rebuilding their self-identity, to play a different character socially, and to integrate this new persona into their true being. May also help people feel more attractive. Can combat the Minotaur and any monster representing undesired habits.

Caution: Consider all potential consequences of any self-change. Invoke the Kitsune to add qualities to your persona, but do NOT use it to forge a false identity that is contrary to your true self. Do NOT destroy your previous identity; nurture it so that it may grow in a new direction with these changes.

Desired qualities: Self-transformation, sociability, cleverness, attractiveness

Mantras: "May the Kitsune grant me creativity and wit."

"Clever as the fox, I can devise a way to change."

"I become the Kitsune; I become what I want to be."

"I am foxy and beautiful for all to see."

Extra suggestion: Be VERY specific about the image you wish to become. Meditate on this image religiously. Meditate on the actions that accompany this image, which you must adopt in order to become. Collect actual pictures that resemble your self-goal. Go to the places where this imagined person would go; dress how they would dress, eat what they would eat, etc.

NAGA

Recommended use: For people who are looking for a job or hoping for a promotion, or for use in any situation that leaves one at the mercy of chance. Can combat the unlucky Mermecolon.

Caution: Sometimes there is a cost when the Naga does give aid. Invocation of the Naga does not guarantee success or promotion.

Desired qualities: Prosperity, transformation, beauty, gambler's luck

Mantras: "Lucky Naga, let the odds fall in my favor."
"May the Naga grace me with lasting wealth (or beauty)."
"I graciously accept the treasures of the Naga."
"Let my reality become a paradise."

Extra suggestion: Visualize a friendly, beautiful Naga showering you with flower petals and placing gold necklaces over your head. Every time you repeat the mantra, she puts another necklace on you.

PEGASUS

Recommended use: For those who are preparing to face a daunting test. For those who feel overwhelmed by present challenges, who are fearful, or who believe that the odds are stacked against them. Combats the Western Dragon, the Chupacabras, and the Minotaur.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Courage, cooperation, liberation, good luck, success

Mantras: "Pegasus, let me soar above this challenge."
"Mighty Athena, I pray for your blessing."
"With the aid of Pegasus, I am ready for battle."
"We are a team; together we are unstoppable."

Extra Suggestions: If your religion permits it, invoke Athena, the goddess of war and wisdom, who tamed Pegasus. Picture yourself on Pegasus' back, flying high above the mountain that symbolizes the difficult situation. Also, remember the importance of loyalty and friendship between a warrior and his steed. Seek assistance from your friends, family, or coworkers. Be grateful for their help.

PHOENIX

Recommended use: For those who are struggling to break a bad habit or overcome an addiction, or who wish for a fresh start after a period of negativity or unproductivity. Combats the toxic Basilisk, the crippling Chupacabras, agonizing Mermecolion, the uncouth Goblin, or virtually any other monster.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Positivity, transformation, rebirth, revitalization, fresh start

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Mantras: "I have become the Phoenix, rising up anew."
"My old vices have burned to ash."
"Let the ashes fall from my being as I am reborn."
"Like the morning sun I rise up and shine."

Extra suggestion: Visualize your bad habits or unwanted past burning up into ash. Then recite your mantras while you are in the shower. Imagine that the water is cleansing the dirty ash from your being. When you emerge clean, you will have been renewed like the Phoenix.

PLUMED SERPENT

Recommended use: For those facing a major intellectual challenge, such as students, researchers, or team coordinators. For those who must conceive of new ideas or make sense of a difficult puzzle. Combats the stagnant Cyclops, the confused Centaur, the immobilizing Chupacabras, or the befuddling Hydra.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Intellect, reason, planning, ideas, order, and organization

Mantras: "Plumed Serpent, creator of worlds, I ask you to open my mind."
"Like the Plumed Serpent I shall transform chaos into order."
"With the grace of the Plumed Serpent I shall gain insight."
"May the answer shine brightly in the sun."

Extra suggestion: Meditate for a length of time on clearing your mind. Once your mind feels clear, visualize a point of light appearing within your mind. Visualize it slowly growing into a great sun, sending out rays through your being. As it continues to grow and shine, it pushes all confusion and disorganization out of your head, leaving only clarity and openness in its place. Exposure to actual sunlight may aid this meditation.

RAINBOW SNAKE

Recommended use: For those who are required to build, produce, or create something, or to change their surroundings in a constructive manner. For those in need of creative or artistic inspiration. Combats the destructive Basilisk, or any negative, counterproductive monster.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Creativity, productivity, the ability to make changes happen

Mantras: "I become the Rainbow Snake so that I can create."
"I slither over the landscape and bring it to life."
"In the coils of my mind I support an entire world."
"A rainbow from Heaven brings me inspiration."

Extra suggestion: Visualize an undulating rainbow extending down from the cosmos and entering your mind. Feel the wondrous creative energy that flows through it. Feel yourself being moved by this energy. You may want to then write down or draw what immediately comes to your mind afterward.

SALAMANDER

Recommended use: For people who are forced to endure a difficult and painful situation for an extended period of time. For those who are forced to be around unpleasant people, who find the negativity of others often getting to them. Also for people who suffer from a medical condition that causes them to feel frequent pain or depression.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Imperviousness to fire, resilience, survival

Mantras: "Fire never burns the Salamander, for the volcano is his home."
"Like the Salamander, I burn bright without pain."
"Adversity does not faze me, for I am the Salamander."
"My skin is cool against the fire."

Extra suggestion: Visualize fire as healing rather than damaging. Picture yourself surrounded in flames, the fire feeling soothing and refreshing, rather than painful. If it helps, visualize the flames transforming from orange in color to a cool blue. They feel like a cool breeze on your skin.

SASQUATCH

Recommended use: For persons who feel out of touch with the natural world or their roots; those who are unsure of who they are, who wish to become more self-aware, or more aware in general. Combats the materialistic Gulon, the confusion-inducing Hydra, or the easily distracted Fairy.

Caution: If you are already withdrawn socially, be certain that you are only invoking Sasquatch to look at yourself and not to critique society. Sasquatch can potentially breed further anti-social thoughts.

Desired qualities: Self-awareness, self-reliance, watching, listening, closeness to nature

Mantras: "Elusive cryptid, let me escape from distractions."

"Distant ancestor, help me find out who I am."

"Silent one, teach me how to see and understand."

"I remember my roots; I am one with nature."

Extra suggestion: Sit outdoors while performing this meditation, preferably near trees and away from people.

SIMURGH

Recommended use: For persons who must exhibit both compassion and wisdom, such as those who are serving as a teacher or mentor to someone else. Can combat the narrow-minded Cyclops, the self-conflicted Centaur, the closed-off Cerberus, or the uncaring Gulon.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Wisdom, reason, compassion, open-mindedness, benevolence

Mantras: "Wisest Simurgh, please light my way."

"As I spread my loving wings, seeds of knowledge fall all around."

"Wisdom is power and love is strength."

"My heart and my mind are as open as the sky."

Extra suggestion: Be patient with yourself and others. If you are asked a question to which you do not know the answer, be honest about it. Love yourself for your honesty. Accept this as an opportunity to learn something new and share what you later discover.

TENGU

Recommended use: For people who need to work hard over the long term to achieve a particular goal. For those who desire to transform themselves into something stronger, wiser, or better. For persons who are undergoing some kind of rigorous training. Combats the Minotaur or Western Dragon.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Focus, self-discipline, dedication to training

Mantras: "Wise master Tengu, I am here to learn and become."

"Self-mastery is the goal, self-discipline is the way."

"I follow the way of the warrior: focus, patience, and persistence."

Extra suggestion: Visualize yourself as a martial arts student, the goal you are working towards is the mastery of Kung Fu. Train, drill, breathe deep, feel the skill you are trying to learn in the form of energy flowing through you. Train, drill again. Be as the tireless monks. Unrelated matters are of no importance to you right now.

THUNDERBIRD

Recommended use: For people who are expected to lead others or are responsible for someone else, but are not sure how to handle it or are feeling uncertain about their qualifications. Especially for people who just came into this position recently.

Caution: This power animal is NOT intended to make the already powerful even more powerful. The Thunderbird will not grant control over others to the egotistical and power-hungry.

Desired qualities: Leadership, charisma, courage, capability, mastery of skills

Mantras: "I am the Thunderbird; strong, brave, and committed."

"I am ready to face the problems that come with the leader's responsibility."

"I wield my lightning for a just cause."

"My confidence is as powerful as thunder."

Extra suggestion: Prepare yourself for battle. Visualize yourself as a strong warrior. You wear eagle feathers and you wield the power of thunder and lightning. Your mission as a warrior is to protect the people who have been placed under your care. Your enemies are your insecurities and upcoming challenges. Strike your enemies down! People look up to you for this. Vow that you will never use your power against the innocent.

UNICORN

Recommended use: For persons who casually engage in immoral behavior, such as lying, stealing, or cheating on their partner. For those who lack scruples or are riddled with greed. Combats sordid monsters such as the Goblin and the Gulon.

Caution: N/A

Desired qualities: Goodness, morality, knowing Right from Wrong

Mantras: "Wise Unicorn, teach me purity and goodness."

"Righteous Unicorn, please slay the wickedness from my life."

"May I become the Unicorn, moral and just."

Extra suggestion: Visualize your bad habits in concrete form, and visualize the Unicorn slaying it, or purging it from your being. Alternatively, or additionally, visualize a white light growing within your chest and filling your being, pushing your bad habits out of you.

Chapter 3

DEALING WITH MONSTERS

The previous chapter deeply explored the positive qualities of mythical creatures, yet this is not to suggest that mythical creatures are normally regarded as cute and cuddly. In mythology all around the world, imaginary creatures are often dangerous, terrifying, and evil. Favorable characters usually look like attractive people, whereas evil characters can be misshapen humanoids, loathsome dragons, composite animals, or many-headed beasts. These are monsters.

The word “monster” can be a synonym for “mythical creature,” yet it also carries connotations of something malicious and terrifying. This is no accident. The evil monsters of myth serve to symbolize all of the negative emotions and bad events that

can happen in life. No matter who you are or where you live, you have seen that life has an ugly side. Some people experience this more severely than others, yet nobody has a perfect life all the time. Whether it comes in the form of bad habits, depression, accidents, poverty, or other obstacles, bad things happen to everyone at some point or another. This was as true in ancient times as it is today. For this reason, there are monsters in myths.

Since all persons experience misfortune and unhappiness, unpleasant mythical creatures are still relevant in modern times. Imagine now that all of the problems you experience have a shape of their own. What would they look like? Chances are they would be monsters. The mythical creatures

described in this chapter are intended to capture some of the negativities commonly experienced in the modern world. These monsters are described in terms of being part of the self—a reflection of our own feelings and our personal flaws. They are aspects of ourselves that we want to get rid of. This is the focus here because problems from within ourselves are ones that we can control. Fortunately, much of the negativity that we experience in life has some internal basis and therefore can be controlled.

The first list consists of “pure” monsters, meaning ones that lack any positive qualities. They serve to symbolize problems and nothing else. The second list consists of more complex monsters, which carry positive qualities in

addition to negative ones. These creatures are frequently desired in life for their good qualities, but they often bring their bad qualities along as well. The majority of the creatures in *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* can probably fall into this category, even ones not mentioned in this chapter.

Familiarize yourself with all of the creatures in this book and decide if any of these monsters embody a personal problem of yours that you wish to overcome. You may wish to consult the keyword index in the back for guidance. Remember also that all of the creature meanings are flexible. Creatures in this deck can be used to stand for things that are relevant to you, even for things that are not mentioned in this book. Later in this chapter you will find information about what to do with these troublesome archetypes if you have identified any of them as holding you back.

Creatures That are Purely Negative

Basilisk

Wastefulness, destructiveness, carelessness, loss. These characteristics may describe either a person's ongoing habits or a specific situation. The Basilisk may represent a devastating loss of property, or a relationship that was allowed to fall into ruin, or even health problems. It can potentially signify an addiction or other pressure that forces a person to engage in destructive activities.

Chupacabras

States of anxiety, panic attacks, extreme stress, or worrying. The Chupacabras stems from fear, often one that the subject does not want to acknowledge. It can also signify habits of accusation, a default desire to blame the other. It can represent the projection of one's own faults onto a different person. It appears when one has difficulty admitting or owning his mistakes. The Chupacabras causes procrastination or paralysis due to anxiety.

Goblin

Rudeness, dishonesty, treachery, offensive behavior, meanness, perversion, and any habits that characteristically makes others uncomfortable. The Goblin does not abide by what is right and does not respect common decency. Any person who has been called a "creep" could be a Goblin. The Goblin serves as a catch-all for most bad thoughts and behaviors.

Gulon

Greed, selfishness, overconsumption; an addiction to acquisition or power. The Gulon is lazy, expecting to overindulge in pleasure with minimal output to earn it. It is heartless, not caring about others who have less, or about the consequences that its own actions (or inaction) may have on others. The Gulon is riddled with hubris, being arrogant and smug. It is nauseatingly self-satisfied in spite of having glaring flaws. It may be a narcissist.

Harpy

Brimming anger, seething hatred, cold-hearted spite; whether kept inside or unleashed upon others. When unleashed, the Harpy causes social disasters in addition

to poisoning the self. Its negativity is contagious. The Harpy can represent a person who does this with or without awareness, with or without regret. The wrathful attitude always causes damage either way.

Hydra

Situations of chaos that appear insurmountable, causing feelings of hopelessness and despair. It may be the result of an addiction or other terrible situation that leaves one feeling powerless. Perhaps one has tried to solve a problem but has seen no improvement, and perhaps the problem has actually worsened. Despair ensues before any effective solution can be reached.

Mermecolion

Depression, sadness, pessimism, melancholy, low self-esteem. It can represent the occurrence of failed efforts, mistakes, or broken dreams. It can also signify general unluckiness. Everyone experiences these feelings on occasion, but the Mermecolion becomes a serious problem when it persistently lingers.

Minotaur

Confusion, indecision, feelings of being lost or divided. It can also be a gripping bad habit, negative thought, dark secret, or severe regret that consumes a person internally. The Minotaur represents one's own inner demons that stand in the way of progress. This generally refers to a psychological state, an internal rather than external cause of self-conflict.

Siren

Immoral behavior, deceit, selfishness, using others. The Siren is a manipulator and a liar, presenting something that looks appealing but carries severe risks. Whether male or female, the Siren usually symbolizes a predator who takes advantage of people in this manner. However, it can also indicate a person whose weakness is to be easily lured in by such dangers.

Werewolf

Violent mood swings and an explosive temper as habits or personality traits. It may be prone to bouts of physical violence or abusive behavior. The Werewolf can also be a volatile situation that one cannot control. It leaves individuals feeling helpless, at the mercy of someone or something that frightens them, in fear of the next moment, perhaps in fear of their own self.

Western Dragon

An obstacle or conflict with others that poses a challenge. As a personality trait, the Western Dragon signifies combativeness, antagonism, possible cruelty, and habits of dragging others down. The Western Dragon's presence halts productivity and generates frustration. It may also inspire fear in those who know they have a major challenge ahead.

Creatures That Bring Negative Qualities in Addition to Positive Ones

Ammut

Harshness, over-interest in punishing others, vigilante complex, "know-it-all" syndrome; in addition to having strong principles of right vs. wrong

Barometz

Naivety, clinginess, codependency, spinelessness, timidity, general weakness; in addition to having the lovable qualities of gentleness and amiability

Centaur

Quick temper, machismo, chauvinism, lack of sensitivity, over-reactiveness; in addition to being seen as strong and steadfast

Cerberus

Hostility toward others, extreme defensiveness, unwillingness to trust or love; in addition to having a strong backbone and standing one's ground

Chimera

Aggression, conflicts with self and others, possible violence or cruelty; in addition to possessing great strength and courage known to others

Cyclops

Narrow-mindedness, hostility toward people with differing viewpoints, bigotry; in addition to stoicism, decisiveness, and a strong foundation in long-standing values

Fairy

Being out of touch with or inattentive to reality, daydreaming instead of working, being delusional; in addition to possessing a beautiful imagination and childlike joy

Garuda

Overzealousness, headstrong ego, preachiness, argumentativeness; in addition to being passionately proactive for a well-intended cause

Griffin

Arrogance, big ego, hubris, bossiness, brazenness, undue self-promotion, superiority complex; in addition to having courage, high self-esteem, being admired by others

Manticore

Coldness, ruthlessness, tendency to use people, a lack of empathy; in addition to being remarkably skilled, efficient, self-reliant, and clever

Mermaid

Hypersensitivity, not thinking rationally, obsessiveness, lacking emotional control; in addition to being passionate, romantic, loving, possibly beautiful

Sasquatch

Reclusiveness, anti-social tendencies, contempt for modern life; in addition to self-reliance, keen observation skills, and environmental concern

Satyr

Irresponsible behavior, drunkenness, rowdiness, lewdness, sexual corruption; in addition to experiencing pleasure and promoting joy in social situations

What to Do with Monsters

These ugly creatures serve a purpose. Oftentimes, we know that a problem is present, yet we do not always know how to put a finger on it, let alone banish it from our lives. Monsters put a face on our problems. They embody personal weaknesses in the form of bad habits and negative emotions. We can deal with these problems more easily if we visualize them as tangible entities. Chances are that an icky thoughtform is already lurking above our heads in a dark cloud, but is too amorphous for us to get a handle on. Yet, if we turn that amorphous cloud into a monster, with a name for it and some understanding of its behavior, then we can contain it and, perhaps, even destroy it.

Let us first take a moment to understand what it means to have a monster looming above us. The presence of a monster injects negativity into our lives—mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and socially. It affects our feelings, our thought patterns, and our behavior. It brings us down, making us less healthy mentally and spiritually,

possibly impacting our physical health, and making us less appealing to others. If the presence of a monster is left unchecked, it can grow stronger and increase its hold on our lives. Negative thought patterns feed the monster and become destructive to the self. The monster grows and sets off a downward spiral of repeating habits. That is when it grips us in its claws.

If the monster's presence is knowingly tolerated or even invited, it can transform the self into something truly ugly and wretched. This may happen when an individual adamantly denies that they have a problem. It may even happen when individuals become overly egotistical, trying to cultivate something to make themselves stronger, and they end up cultivating something evil. In a sense, the person becomes a monster. There is a reason why to be called a "monster" is an insult. Nobody likes having monsters around. An arrogant fool may think himself to be powerful, but he is poisoning others around him, making enemies, and weakening his own sense of judgment. Many people also believe that breeding such negativity causes bad karma, which will ultimately harm the self.

The key to eliminating a monster from your life is to replace it with something positive. If one simply looks within themselves, kills a monster, and then returns to their daily business without doing anything else about it, the monster will come back. This is because the monster is not a foreign invader that can simply be blocked. Instead, it is part of the self, the removal of which leaves an empty hole that needs to be filled with something. Left unchecked, it will only fill up with more negativity. The smart course of action is to fill the void with something that makes you a better person. The previous chapter about power animals provides excellent examples of positive thoughtforms to fill in this void.

It is also necessary to note that there is no such thing as a quick fix. Killing the monster in name will not automatically remove its influence from your being. You need to fight a battle in order to overcome the monster. You need to nurture your power animal or positive qualities, so that they will grow and push the monster out of your spirit. You need to make an effort to keep these creatures in check, feeding the good one and staying on guard against the bad

one. This takes time and requires effort, but this is the only way it can happen.

The following information describes how to detain or eliminate the monsters from your psyche so that they can be replaced with something positive. These are psychological and spiritual workings, described here as “rituals,” as in the tradition of magick. Some people may not feel comfortable performing these rituals. Some people are extremely sensitive to negative energy and may be leery of working with unpleasant thoughtforms. Yet these very individuals will probably see a great benefit from ridding themselves of their monsters. These rituals are exercises designed to allow readers to take their lives back from the negative astral creatures that bring them down. These workings are described here in simple terms. If you are a more experienced practitioner, then you may add other elements to the ritual, or incorporate this into a more complex ritual that suits your particular tradition.

Understand that these workings are designed to capture the negativity already present in your life and immobilize it. You are not summoning any evil spirit from the dark side. These monsters are simply a tool

for correcting your own personal vices. They are a fault of the self, not an external threat over which we have no responsibility. The following rituals are to be used for their intended purposes only: to heal the self or another by removing weakness and replacing it with strength. Performing magickal workings with these thoughtforms in any other manner is dangerous, unethical, and downright stupid.

Indeed, negative energy is messy. This is the reason why these rituals are helpful in the first place, and also why you should take precautions first before doing them. Understand that when a negative thoughtform is let loose, it can interfere with the positivity in your life or with another person who is sensitive to that kind of energy. For this reason, perform these workings in a designated ritual space and do not mix them with lighthearted events. Be sure to mentally prepare yourself for battle. Clear your mind and don your spiritual armor. It is also a good idea to cleanse the room before and after, using prayer, incense, or smudged sage. Do something pleasant afterward.

Ritual 1: *Bottling a monster*

If the monster that you’ve identified is from the second list in this chapter, then it carries both positive and negative qualities. At this point, you must use your best judgment as to how well its positive qualities are affecting you. Depending on what type of monster it is, its positive qualities may be excessive in your life, and this may be the cause of the problem. Too much of a good thing is not a good thing. Excessive pride leads to arrogance, excessive defense leads to hostility, excessive gentleness leads to vulnerability, excessive humility leads to self-denigration, etc. In such a case, you would want to restrain the monster so that its presence becomes softened, and you can gain benefits from it without the harmful excess.

Alternatively, you may view the problem as one of duplicity rather than excess. The monster has good qualities and bad ones simultaneously. Its positive qualities may be essential to your character and, instead of softening these, you may wish to separate the good from the bad. If this is the case, then you will want to attack the monster in a more aggressive manner, effectively killing a part of it while keeping the other part alive. Then you must grow the positive aspect

of the creature to fill the void left behind. This requires re-envisioning the creature in your mind's eye as a new thoughtform that has only the positive qualities and not the negative ones. This transforms the monster into an altogether different, more consistently positive power animal, for which you may want to select an entirely different creature to replace it.

Read through all of these directions before beginning the ritual. You will also need the following components for this working:

- A designated ritual space, free of distraction, complete with a table or altar
- The monster's card from this deck, or other representation of it
- A mason jar, small box, or other container large enough to drop the card into, or to fit over the card or representation
- A clear mental idea of the positive thoughtform or power animal that you want to transform your monster into (see previous chapter)
- A designated number of days to hold the creature. If the problem is relatively small, then pick seven

days. If the problem is large, then pick a complete moon phase, or one month. Or, if you have a favorite lucky number, then pick that number, but it should not be lower than seven.

To begin this ritual, get into a meditative state of mind. Ground and center your energy and go through whatever ritual preparation you normally do. If you are new to these sorts of spiritual workings, then read over the meditation steps described in the previous chapter for an introduction to the basic techniques. Have your monster representation and container with you.

First, meditate and visualize your problem as the particular type of monster that you selected. Think thoroughly about what your problem is—how it manifests in your actions and in emotions. Know exactly what this negativity is and visualize it as the monster's destructive habits. Also think about the creature's positive qualities and the aspects of it that are beneficial to you. Keep these in mind, and separate the good traits from the bad, the excess from the beneficial amount of energy. Imagine all of the negativity or excess being sucked

out of the air around you, out of your body, and going into the representation (the card).

Allow for as long as necessary for this transfer to take place. Think about how much better you feel already, as all that is left within you is the positive element of the creature. But you are not finished. The excess or negativity is still active inside of the monster's representation on the card. Stare intently at the card, concentrating on how small the card is, shrinking the monster further with your mind. Continue this until you become confident that the monster is now tiny and held captive in your hands. Promise to yourself that you will not let its negative aspects control you again. Once you feel that you are holding *it*, instead of it holding *you*, it is time to bottle the beast.

Quickly bottle it. Either drop the card down into the container and seal the lid, or slap the card down onto the table and cover it with the upside-down open container. Hold the container down with your hand and tell the monster that you have trapped it and it cannot do any more harm. It may be beneficial to say this out loud. Repeat this statement several times.

Next, tell the monster very intently what you want it to do. If the problem is one of excess, tell it that you have made it smaller and weaker. It will still be present in your life so that you can benefit from its positive qualities, but its power will no longer be excessive enough to cause negative effects. For example, if it is the Satyr, you will still have a good time with your friends on the weekends, but you will no longer drink excessively.

If, instead, you are sharply separating the good from the bad, then tell the monster that it has been divided, and order it to stay that way. For example, if it is the Cerberus, you will still be able to hold your own against abusive individuals, but the cut-off happens there, as the beast will stop causing you to be hostile toward random people and loved ones. In either scenario, demand that the monster continues its positive practices that give you strength, and demand that it ceases its negative practices that are causing you problems. Be specific about what these practices are. Make this distinction very clear in your mind, and state it very clearly when you order the monster to stop causing trouble. Again, you may find it more effective if you speak out loud.

Finally, state that the monster's negative power will diminish over the next several days. This is the number of days that you have chosen before the ritual. Confidently state that the monster's unwanted influence will fade down to nothing by the time this period is over. During this time, its positive effects will grow to fill the void. Keep the card inside of or under the container until the time period has passed. Every day during this period, you must think about the monster inside the trap and think about what this means for your life. Think about how it is being transformed from something dangerous into something helpful. By the time you lift or open the container and remove the card, the monster will be tamed. After that, hold the card, declare that the spiritual energy that you've worked with to be dismissed from the card, and put the card back into the deck.

Promise that you will not let the creature's negative aspects control you again. You must realize the change in your being while this is happening. In order to successfully defeat the monster, your emotional or mental state must change along with the monster. Your behavior must change in accordance with the positive

energy you have cultivated during the ritual. Even after the designated number of days has passed, it is good to frequently remind yourself of how you have changed. If you do not keep your promise, the monster will return to its troublesome ways. If you follow through with the ritual correctly, you will feel personally enhanced and transformed after the designated number of days has ended.

Ritual 2: Destroying or banishing a monster

Perhaps you identified the monster in your life as coming from the first list rather than the second. In this case it is a "pure" monster, meaning that it is purely no-good. The measures that need to be taken with this creature are more severe than if you wanted to still keep some of its influence active in your life. For this reason, the act of destroying or banishing it warrants more effort on your part. This ritual requires a great deal of preparation, but there is more to it than simply going through the motions. The psychic investment and personal effort needed are intense. The last thing you want is to send the monster a mixed message suggesting that you are not completely serious about getting rid of it.

Before you can perform this ritual, you must have a power animal already named. This power animal will replace the monster. This element is absolutely necessary to prevent the monster from returning to your life. The power animal can be a creature from this card set, or it can be a different archetype, even a real species of animal. Choosing the proper power animal requires time and intent in itself. Directions for this process are provided in the previous chapter. Once you have made an informed decision, have a representation of this power animal with you, such as a card from this deck, before you conduct this banishing ritual. Be prepared to perform power animal meditations numerous times in the near future.

The entire ritual may take an hour or longer to complete. Be sure to read through this whole section before beginning the ritual. You will need the following items when you perform the working:

- A designated ritual space, free of distraction, complete with a table or altar
- A pen and piece of paper on which you will write or draw, or have printed, your monster

- A means of destroying the monster once it is on paper, such as matches and a fire-proof container
- A clear mental idea of the power animal that you want to use to replace your monster (see previous chapter), as well as the card from this deck representing the creature, or other visual representation of it
- Sage or cleansing incense (optional)
- A designated number of days to allow yourself to heal. If the problem is relatively small, then pick seven days. If the problem is large, then pick a complete moon phase, or one month. Or, if you have a favorite lucky number, pick that number, but it should not be lower than seven.

This ritual consists of defeating your monster and replacing it with your power animal. First, you must have your power animal handy before you deal with the monster. Have the card from this deck, or another representation of the power animal with you from the start. Read the previous chapter, "Meditations for Personal

Empowerment." To begin this ritual, enter a meditative state as described in that chapter. Focus on your power animal in order to invoke its positive influence, but do not complete the meditation yet. Remain in this state for the duration of the banishing ritual. Be prepared to work with your power animal again immediately after you separate the monster from your being.

The second step is to draw the monster out of your being by creating an external representation of it. Since you are going to be destroying it, you do not want to use a card from this deck. The monster's representation should be put onto a sheet of paper. One way to do this is by drawing a picture. Otherwise you can write the monster's identification out in words. You can also print a picture of it from the Internet, but in such a case you should add something to the picture in order to make it your monster. Whatever method you choose, creating this representation is the first part of the ritual.

Create the representation while you are in your meditative state. Meditate on your personal problem that is symbolized by a particular monster. Think very specifically about how the creature has a hold on your

life. Think about what kinds of unwanted things it is making you do, and what kinds of effects this has on you and others around you. Be mindful of the fact that the monster is already inside of you to begin with, and you are now making it come out onto the paper. Imagine all of your negative feelings about this problem condensing into one clump and flowing through your hand as you draw, write, or doodle your representation.

Drawing a picture of the monster is an extremely powerful way to channel your intentions into the representation. It does not matter if you are not good at drawing; nobody else is going to see it and you will not be keeping it. Your intention is what makes it effective. You can look at the monster's card from this deck, or a picture of the monster online or in a book, and draw a sketch based on the picture that you see. If you are still uncomfortable drawing a picture, then draw a squiggle or shape or doodle of how the monster feels to you. If it is the Cyclops, draw a big eye. If it is the Hydra, draw a mass of writhing squiggles. Draw anything, and also write words about it. You may use colors if you want, but this is not required. Write down the name of the creature. Write what kinds of

negative things it brings to you. Write these things down on the paper in any case, even if you printed the picture off the Internet.

Once this step is complete, you will have a representation of the monster on paper. It will be charged with all of the negative energy that the creature has brought to you with its presence. It is now inside the paper instead of inside you. It is not time to destroy it just yet, however. Now you must look back toward your power animal and meditate on it again. Work up enough positive energy for the power animal to fully counteract the negative energy of the monster. This means you should spend the same amount of time working on both. Hold the card depicting the power animal and recite mantras. Once this step is complete, hold the power animal and the monster side by side.

Finally, it is time to destroy the monster. Many people will probably be inclined to use fire as a means of destroying their monster. This is perhaps the most certain way of destroying it, although other methods can also be used. If you are planning to use fire, it is a good idea to also burn dried sage along with the monster. Sage and certain other herbs are known for their spiritually

purifying properties. If you burn sage, the smoke will instantly cleanse and purge the monster's negativity. Kitchen sage can work for this, if you do not have access to smudging sage. You may also want to perform the burning outdoors where there is better ventilation, both physically and spiritually. As always, be mindful of your basic fire safety! Keep the fire contained in a dish made of ceramic or cast iron.

Burning or destroying the monster is the most intense moment of this ritual. It will happen quickly, but there is a great deal of intent that you need to be focusing on during that brief time. That is why you must have all of it with you before you light the fire. You must have both the monster, in its evil role, and your power animal, with its positive qualities, present at this time. Have your power animal poised and ready to take over the instant that the monster is gone. Concentrate on your awareness that the power animal will quickly move in and replace the monster. Picture it doing this as you destroy the monster.

Be assertive about banishing the monster from your life. As you prepare to destroy the monster, tell it that it is defeated.

Talk to it before you destroy it so that you work up your focused energy. Tell it that it cannot harm you anymore, that you are stronger than it, and it cannot return. Invoke your power animal then; state what this creature brings to you. Tell the monster that it is being permanently replaced by this good creature. Speak about the power animal's strength and goodness and how this will change you. After the monster is disposed of, continue to speak reverently to your new power animal. Maintain your self-healing intent throughout the entire process.

Focus on the monster's negativity leaving your being, and that you are becoming stronger as a result. Picture your life without its evil presence; picture the power animal in its place. Let this picture grow larger and larger in your mind, and let this growing picture push out any last remains of the monster so that it leaves you completely. Then meditate on the power animal's positive qualities and how you will behave differently as a result of its presence. Once the monster is destroyed and you feel that the power animal has been fully invited, you must cleanse your ritual space. You can do this by burning sage or by brushing

your hands through the air and pushing any remaining negative energy into the ground.

As with the bottling ritual described previously, the destroying/banishing ritual will require a certain number of days to set in—this is the number of days that you determined prior to starting the ritual. It will also only remain effective if you keep your promise. You must actively stand your ground against the monster during this time to ensure that it does not come back. Meditate on your power animal on a daily basis during this time. These subsequent meditations do not need to be as intensive as the initial ritual, but they must involve reaffirmation of your new power animal and the change that it is inspiring within you. Every time you reaffirm the change, you are making yourself stronger and making it more difficult for the banished monster to return.

After the designated number of days has ended you should feel transformed. But even then, it is good to frequently remind yourself of what you have become. If you feel the monster coming back at any point, during or after the set number of days, think about your power animal. Say to yourself, "I

am stronger than the [name of monster]." Then take action by adopting the manner of your power animal, doing something that it would do. This is something contrary to, or the opposite of, what the monster would do. Remember that you have control of yourself now, and you no longer have to act or feel the way the monster wants you to. You will be amazed at the results you can achieve this way.

HOW TO USE THE CARDS IN DIVINATION

50 The previous chapters have described mythical creatures in terms of their existence as thoughtforms and how these thoughtforms can be used personally. Of course, *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* is also a functional divination card set. These oracle cards can be used for readings in a similar manner to other oracles and Tarot cards. This chapter explains the most effective ways to use the oracle for this purpose.

One of the most important things to understand when interpreting these cards, is that each of the creatures have multiple meanings. Each creature embodies an abstract concept—an amorphous set of characteristics that, when lumped together, lack any unifying title other than the name of

the creature itself. The different creatures are not mutually exclusive to one another. Their exact significance can change depending on the context, depending on the other cards in the reading, and depending on the reader. A reader will benefit from knowing as much about the situation as possible, and from using their own intuition when interpreting the cards' meanings. When drawing multiple cards to represent a situation or a person, the reader needs to look for commonalities shared by the different creatures picked. Even creatures that sound the least compatible usually share at least a point of common abstract ground. This point is usually where the “correct” interpretation lies.

In this chapter, the word “subject” appears again and again in the various examples. The subject of the card reading is the person for whom the reading is about. The subject may or may not be the same as the reader (the person interpreting the cards). A reader may use the cards alone while seeking answers for his or her own questions, or the reader may be giving a reading to a different subject. Any of the mythical creatures has the potential to symbolize the subject of the reading. Any person can “be” any mythical creature. This is true regardless of any gender, age, or ethnicity attributed to the mythical creature, even if the subject is described differently. If you are the reader and are performing the

reading for a different subject, encourage the subject to suggest their own interpretations in addition to what is written in this book.

Asking the Right Questions

Some topics of revelation will be more appropriate than others for use with *The Mythical Creatures Oracle*. Likewise, this oracle may be more favorable than some other oracles for answering certain types of questions. This is due to the design of this particular deck. Most of the mythical

creatures included in this set symbolize human personality types and behavior patterns. They can also represent particular situations and can potentially bear warnings. Based on these possibilities, *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* is ideally suited for the following divination questions:

What creature am I?

What creature is this other person?

What is at the root of a particular situation?

What creature can help right now?

These questions can be asked individually in brief readings, or they may all be combined in one reading. Single-question readings can be quick and effective. The subject draws one card after focusing on the question, and then applies the meaning of the creature they have selected to the question asked. If the meaning is not clear after drawing a single card, then the subject should draw a second card for clarification. Drawing two cards is usually best for simple readings, due to the complexity of real-life situations and the abstract broadness of the mythical creatures.

“What Creature am I?”

No one person embodies any singular mythical creature as their permanent state, yet everyone exhibits qualities of different creatures at different times. Usually, a mythical creature stands for a particular role a person plays in a specific situation. Therefore, the question “What creature am I?” is meant to apply to a particular context or perspective. It should be tailored more specifically to the subject’s relevant concerns by rephrasing it. For instance, the subject may ask “What creature best represents my role in my team project?” “What creature represents my qualifications for finding a job?” “How does this other person perceive me?” “What creature was I in relation to the event that just happened?”

In a hypothetical example, Joseph is a high school senior who is starting to go out with his classmate Kristyn. He went over to her house once and met her parents. He was welcomed by Kristyn’s mother, but her father’s reaction was difficult to read and he was a bit intimidated by him. He wants to know how he appears to Kristyn’s father.

In answer to this question, Joseph draws Garuda. He learns that the archetype of Garuda is headstrong and zealous and always fighting against something. This surprises Joseph because that is not how he sees himself at all. But knowing that there is more than one way that any given mythical creature can manifest, he asks for clarity and draws a second card. The one he picks second is the Jackalope. The Jackalope is a comically absurd joker. This makes more sense to Joseph because he sees himself as being funny and entertaining. Yet Kristyn’s father did not laugh when Joseph tried to joke with him. Moreover, he is confused as to why he picked Garuda first before the Jackalope. What do these two mythical creatures have in common and how do they form a single answer to his question?

After reading Garuda’s complete description, Joseph sees that this creature is characterized as preachy and abrasive. Joseph does not see himself that way, although he concedes that he is very talkative and confident. Could he come across as preachy and abrasive to someone else? Additionally, the Jackalope is a joker and a trickster, but its mirth is not always funny

to others. Sometimes it could be categorized as more annoying and obnoxious. Putting these two things together, and based on the events that took place, Joseph gains a sense of how Kristyn’s father sees him. Joseph’s talkative nature and his attempt at telling a joke may have rubbed Kristyn’s father the wrong way.

Joseph is disappointed by this conclusion, but he knows that the outcome could have been worse. Kristyn’s father may think he is annoying, but the cards do not indicate that he perceives any inherent maliciousness. Garuda is abrasive, but well-intentioned. The Jackalope is mischievous, but lacks the sordid character of the Goblin, for instance. Joseph learns from this that he should be more mindful of his behavior while at Kristyn’s house. By presenting himself with more politeness and humility, there is still a chance that he can win her father over.

“What Creature is This Other Person?”

This question works much in the same manner as the previous one. It will not explain a person's entire nature, but it can describe an aspect of them that is relevant to the situation at hand. It will best apply to that person's relationship to the subject or to another close person at that given point in time. If the subject has interacted with the other person for an extended period of time, and their relationship has changed, then the subject should specify whether they are asking about their relationship at present or their relationship as it had been in the past. They may also want to ask both of these questions separately.

In a hypothetical example, Margie has seen her daughter Ashleigh hanging out with a new friend named Madison. Margie is unsure what to make of Madison, but seeing that Ashleigh is suddenly spending a great deal of time around her, she wants to be reassured that Madison is not a bad

influence on her daughter. She consults *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* and asks what creature Madison is in relation to Ashleigh.

Margie draws the Manticore. At first she is alarmed, as the Manticore is a frightening beast. Then as she reads about it, she learns that the Manticore is someone who is highly skilled at everything they do and may have many talents. The description states that the Manticore is a valuable ally to have, although it does not specify whether it is a good or a bad person. In fact, the Manticore may be someone who uses people and discards them later. Margie thinks that Madison might be a highly talented young lady, or at least is perceived as such by her daughter. Still, she is leery and wants more information. Is Madison a cruel person beneath her charismatic exterior?

Upon asking for further clarification, Margie draws the Phoenix. This is an immediate relief because the Phoenix is an entirely positive card. The description suggests that Madison may have at one time been a less-favorable individual, but now she has turned around and become a better person. Perhaps additionally, the regeneration of the Phoenix may signify

that Madison will transform Ashleigh's life in a positive way. Margie takes this to mean that the two girls' friendship may be very significant for both of them. Perhaps Ashleigh and Madison can mutually transform each other's lives. She plans to maintain open communication with her daughter and try to establish a dialogue with Madison as well. She wants to be sure that the two teenagers' life journey stays on a positive path. She will keep an eye out for questionable behavior, but will do this from a comfortable distance, rather than trying to keep them apart.

“What is at the Root of a Particular Situation?”

This question treats mythical creatures as heralds of circumstances, rather than as symbols of people. The mythical creature archetype behaves like a living agent

that brings a certain situation upon the subject, or otherwise embodies the nature of the situation. Situations are often more complicated than they appear, and it may be difficult for a person to discern what exactly is at the root of the present state. Usually, this question will be asked when the subject is wondering about the cause of their concern and what may become of it. This question can help to shed light on something that is otherwise complicated, so that the subject can reorient themselves in a constructive manner and take the wisest step forward.

In a hypothetical example, Allie's best friend Cecilia has started dating someone named Zach. Allie had met Zach a long time ago and had been in a few classes with him, but she had never gotten to know him very well. Yet, for some reason she feels uncomfortable about Cecilia dating him. Is it that she actually wants Zach for herself? Or does she think he is a bad person and might hurt Cecilia? Allie had never been consciously aware of either of these feelings. She does not know why she is uncomfortable, and she does not want to cause any trouble with her friend and the new relationship. She asks herself questions about the situation, but finds no answers,

only frustration. She hopes that *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* can help.

Allie draws the Pegasus. She sees that this creature is associated with friendship and interpersonal alliances. This could easily describe her relationship with Cecilia, although it does not explain why she is feeling the way she is feeling. The initial description of the Pegasus suggests a celebration of a personal victory, not uneasiness. Allie is confused, so she draws a second card. The second card is the Chupacabras, which is the virtual embodiment of uneasiness. Now she has a card for her feelings prior to Cecilia's new relationship, and one for her feelings after, but she still does not know how she got from one to the other.

Allie needs to read the card descriptions thoroughly. At the end of the Pegasus' description she finds a cautionary message. It gives a warning that one can lose their friends, if they take them for granted. This is a terrifying thought to her! She then reads about the Chupacabras, discovering that it signifies fear of change and a distrust of others. It also suggests that this fear is either unfounded or taken way out of proportion. When Allie puts these things together, she

realizes that she is worried about losing her friend. She does not want her relationship with her best friend to change or to be interrupted by someone else. In a sense, she fears that Cecilia will stop hanging out with her, because she will be spending all of her time with Zach instead. Allie had not thought about the situation this way before, but it made sense. At that point, it occurred to her how selfish her feelings were. Now she must decide how to approach the situation, but at least she understands her own feelings a bit better.

“What Creature can Help Right Now?”

Each mythical creature can teach us a lesson. Benevolent creatures can suggest to us what to pursue or emulate, while malevolent creatures can warn us of what to avoid. Many of the creatures can also reveal ways to understand the dynamics of the problem at hand and, in this way, offer guidance.

Particular myths can teach lessons explicitly, and archetypes, in general, can offer useful new perspectives when juxtaposed onto perplexing situations. This question can be especially helpful when tailored to the current problem. The subject may specify who needs help, whether it is themselves or someone else, and what they need help with.

In a hypothetical example, Don is grieving because his grandmother has passed away. He had always been very close to her, but did not have a chance to say goodbye. He was away on vacation when she succumbed to an age-related illness. Now, he feels guilty and is having regrets about having been on vacation when she was sick. Rationally, he knows that it was not his fault, but no matter how many times he tells this to himself, his emotions do not change. He is angry at himself for feeling like an irrational weakling, as well as a vacationing slacker. He seeks *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* for advice on how to deal with these uncomfortable feelings.

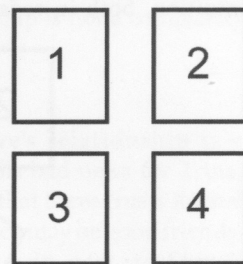
Don is shocked when he draws the Hydra card. How can such a horrible creature be of help to him in a time like this? Yet, when he reads about the Hydra, he learns that the chaotic negativity of this

monster describes his present emotional state very accurately. Moreover, it points to a particular way to approach such a situation. The description warns readers not to merely “swing a sword” at the Hydra, as Don had been doing by telling himself that it is not his fault. This does not fix the problem. It states that a more creative solution is needed. However, it provides no specific advice as to what he should do. He draws another card for clarification, asking, “How can I defeat the Hydra?”

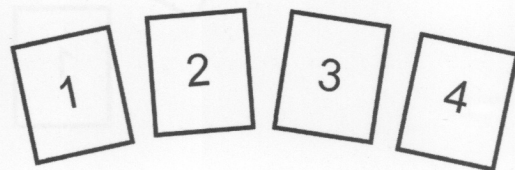
For the second card, Don draws the Jackalope. The Jackalope is the absurd trickster, the comical joker. Don thinks, “Of course!” Laughter is the best medicine. He should not merely slice off the Hydra’s heads by telling himself that it is not his fault; he needs to cauterize the stumps by bringing lightheartedness into his life. The description of the Hydra reveals that Hercules needed the assistance of another in order to defeat the beast. Don realizes that he needs to spend time around friends who can cheer him up and make him laugh. While he is laughing with them, he will keep in mind that humor is part of the transformation process that will allow him to forgive himself and move on.

Complex Card Readings

People often use divination cards for more complex readings than those described prior. The most basic example of such a use is simply to combine the four noted questions into one reading. Ask all four questions: “What creature am I?” “What creature is this other person?” “What is at the root of the situation?” and “What creature can help right now?” and draw a card for each question. Lay the four cards down in a spread before turning them over to see which ones were picked. Arrange the spread in any shape you see fit; there is no one right way. Here are two possible spreads:



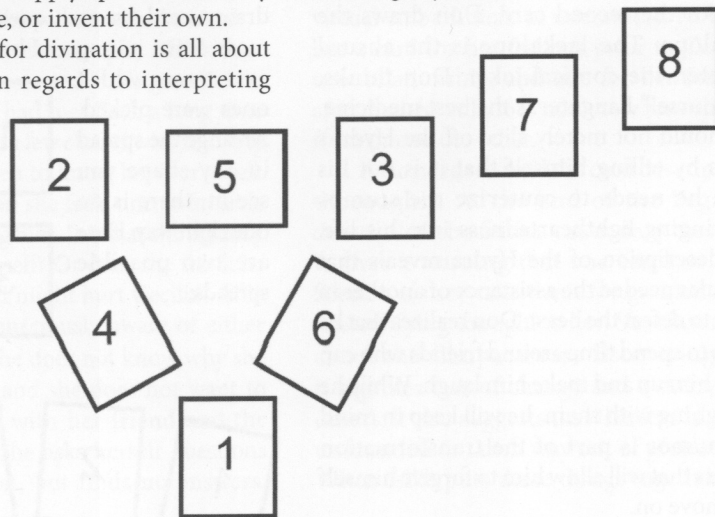
OR



Of course, a desired reading may be different from or more complex than these four questions. Ultimately, *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* can be used in the same way as other divination cards. One can use virtually any spread, so long as they are mindful of the fact that *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* has only forty-four cards and may not be well-suited for spreads that use a larger number of cards. Ideally, spreads with this deck should use fewer than ten cards. Readers can apply spreads that they learned elsewhere, or invent their own.

Using cards for divination is all about intuition, both in regards to interpreting

the cards and to arranging them in spreads. Readers may want to devote some time to researching or designing their own spreads. Creating your own spread can be very useful in trying to make sense of a complicated situation. The most important factor in determining a spread is to designate a meaning for each card position before asking the question, and to remember these meanings when interpreting the cards. It is wise to write the corresponding meanings down before drawing any cards.



The shape of the spread is less important. Some readers find it useful to arrange their cards in shapes that are symbolically meaningful to them when they ask a question. Cards that touch each other may have related meanings or be more closely related than cards that are placed farther away. Cards arranged in a “branching” spread may indicate chains of events or related subjects, as distinguished by the different branches. Alternatively, cards may simply be laid down side by side or in a fan shape. *The Mythical Creatures Oracle* can prove thought-provoking and fun regardless of how simple or complex one wishes to make their readings.

In a hypothetical example, Trina is having difficulty getting along with her coworker Rachel. Trina would like to be on good terms with everybody, but Rachel was never nice to her from the start. Trina is finding it increasingly strenuous to maintain her professional composure around someone so unpleasant. To make matters worse, Rachel has a very good relationship with their manager Steve. Trina is afraid to report her problems to Steve because he might take Rachel’s side. Trina wants to know what she should do to deal with this unnerving situation.

Trina knows that this is a complicated situation because it involves more than one other person. These other people have a relationship with each other that is different from her relationship with either one of them. Before drawing any cards, she plans a spread that will account for the complexity of the situation. She will need cards to stand for herself, Rachel, and Steve (cards 1, 2, and 3), and cards to stand for each person's relationship with each other (cards 4, 5, and 6). Finally, she plans to add a card representing the best way to talk to Steve about the problem (card 7) and what might happen if she does this (card 8). She writes down the plan for this spread before shuffling or drawing any cards. Trina draws the following cards for this spread:

1. Chimera

Trina is a Chimera. This means she is characteristically a strong-willed person, not someone who accepts punishment from others. She is more vulnerable on the inside than what she likes to let on. It is possible that her own pride could get her into trouble if she is not careful; in fact, this may be part of the problem in the first place.

2. Goblin

Rachel is a Goblin. This means that the problem is not merely caused by Trina's willful personality; Rachel is actually behaving discourteously toward her. She may even be able to spot Trina's hidden weakness and may be purposely exploiting it.

3. Fairy

Steve is a Fairy. This means that he has a playful spirit and is perhaps less than responsible as a supervisor. He may be oblivious to certain goings-on, such as Rachel's harassment of Trina.

4. Centaur

Trina and Rachel's relationship is a Centaur. Obviously they are poorly partnered and disagree with each other. They are prone to getting into fights, when they are expected to work together. Their incompatibility probably stems from mutual shortcomings.

5. Garuda

Trina and Steve's relationship is Garuda. Trina perceives Steve as preachy and abrasive, and he may see her in the same way. They get along for the sake of work, but their relationship is not a completely peaceful one.

6. Pegasus

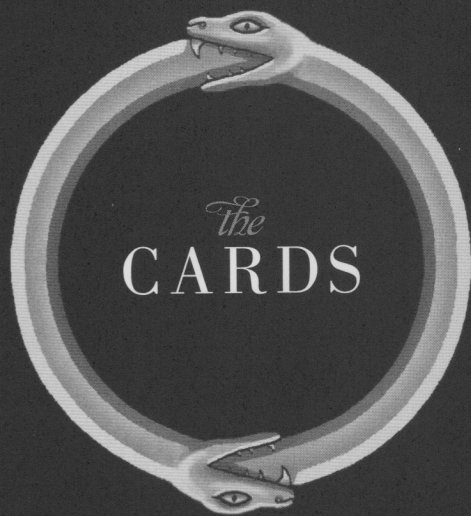
Rachel and Steve's relationship is a Pegasus. This spells bad news for Trina, because it means that Steve trusts Rachel immensely and they may be good friends. This may be due, in part, to Steve's Fairylike detachment from reality.

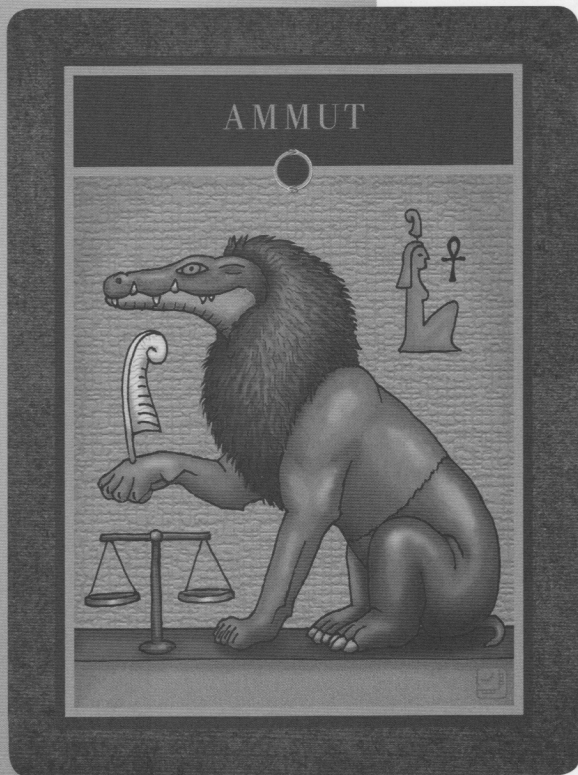
7. Foo Dogs

How to approach the problem. Trina should be able to see from cards 1, 4, and 5 that she is at risk of starting a big fight. Rachel has the upper hand in their relationship with Steve. Therefore, Trina must refrain from spilling her wrath upon her as she would like to do. The Foo Dogs teach a lesson of balance. She must keep herself balanced, rather than lose her cool, and try to establish a balanced relationship between herself and her coworkers. It is essential that Trina emulates the Foo Dogs' stoic and professional demeanor. She should go out of her way to show Steve that she is a diligent, dedicated worker in order to improve her relationship with him. Perhaps she should also show a lighter side of her personality in order to appeal to his playful outlook. Aligning herself more closely to Steve can eventually lead to more balanced workplace interactions in general. Eventually, Steve will be receptive to clues that Rachel is not nice to Trina.

8. Sphinx

What will happen if Trina takes this course of action. The balance of the Foo Dogs can lead to the calmness of the Sphinx. There may be silence between her and Rachel in the end, as they may never actually become friends. Yet a peaceful silence is more favorable than frequent confrontation and conflict.





Keywords

Justice, Judgment, Law, Rules, Right vs. Wrong, Truth, Honesty, Shattering Illusions, Decisiveness, Order, Balance, Consequences, Punishment, Executioner

Mythological Background

Coming from ancient Egypt, Ammut (or Ammit, or Amemait) is a female monster of divine origin. She was deeply feared by the ancient Egyptians, who called her the Devourer of the Dead, or the Eater of Souls. She is a combination of a crocodile, lion, and hippopotamus. These three animals were regarded as the most dangerous of man-eaters. If a dead person's soul is eaten by Ammut, then they cease to exist, instead of being allowed to enjoy the afterlife. To the Egyptians, this was the equivalent of going to Hell. Yet Ammut was not actually evil; she simply served to enforce the divine law that was put into place by the gods.

The Egyptians believed that when a person died, their soul entered a place called the Hall of Two Truths. There they meet Ma'at, the goddess of justice. Her symbol is a large white ostrich feather called the Feather of Truth. The deceased must swear before her that they had been virtuous in life by reciting a list of moralistic declarations. Thoth, the god of wisdom, then judges the dead person's soul by weighing their heart against the Feather of Truth. The Egyptians believed that the heart was the organ that contained the soul. If the person's heart was laden with sin, it would be heavier than the feather. In such a case, the heart would be tossed over to Ammut, who would immediately devour it.

Card Meaning

Ammut resides in the divine court of law. In the court of the gods, there is no deception. All illusions will be shattered and all truths will be uncovered. All past will be revealed and all wicked deeds will be punished. All verdicts are rightful. All punishments are swift. The falsely accused will be acquitted and the wrongs will be righted. Ammut is impartial to all persons, being eternally committed to only one principle: Justice. In Egyptian mythology, it was the gods who made the actual verdicts; yet, in practical symbolism Ammut herself is the creature of judgment. She is highly decisive and does not second guess herself. Modern people can invoke Ammut if they are having difficulty making a decision. She can grant them the clarity of mind to be impartial and the courage to follow through with enforcing consequences upon others. When this card is drawn, it signifies that justice will prevail.

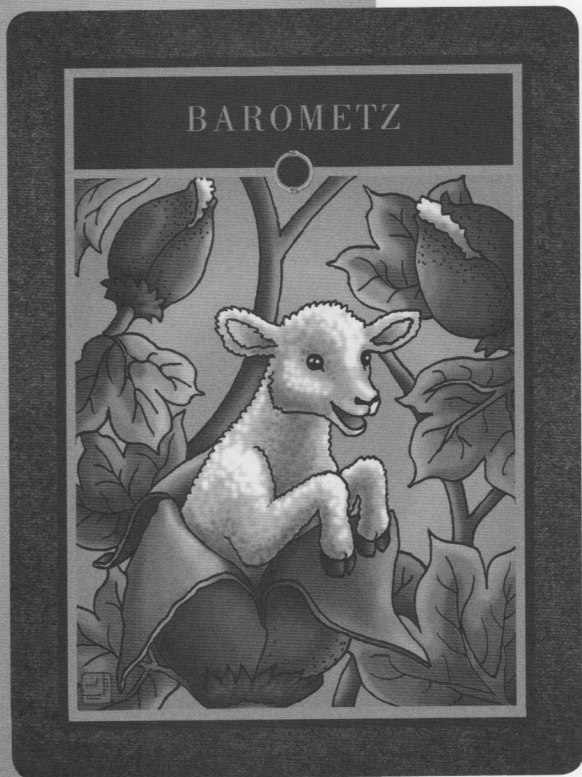
Ammut's role within the divine court of law is the executioner. When someone is found guilty of wrongdoing, she is the one to exact a punishment. She is a follower of orders and a proponent of order in general. Without consequences, the law has no meaning. A person who behaves like Ammut is committed to upholding the order of society. She cares profoundly about what is right and wrong and, as a result, she tends to see things in black and white. She is one to wag a finger and call people out when she thinks they are misbehaving. She will report people if she finds them breaking the rules, even if they are her friends. She cares more that a person follows the rules than whether or not they are personally kind to her. She is cold, but highly principled.

Ammut is an extension of Ma'at, the goddess of truth. As she sees it, the only valuable answer is the unobstructed facts. A person who embodies Ammut is honest and trustworthy, but also blunt. She does not sugarcoat anything. She does not care to be polite when the truth is ugly; she does not care to spare the feelings of those who are guilty of any misstep. She sees her harsh honesty as an essential virtue, and the softening small-talk preferred by others as merely beating around the bush. In a conversation, she wants people to get straight to the point. Ammut will always say what she means and mean what she says. If you do not want to know her honest opinion, then you should not ask her. Yet, if you seek the truth, then she is there for you.

Inverted

Real life in the mortal world is not the court of the gods. Injustice occurs, and this is what is signified by the inverted card. Who has caused such a disorderly situation? This card indicates a need to right the wrongs and put an end to this chaos. It could mean that an innocent person has been wrongly accused. It also means that the actual cause of wrongdoing has not been brought to light. The truth must be exposed, and if a specific person is at fault, then they must be brought to justice.

BAROMETZ



Keywords

Gentleness, Innocence, Naivety, Sweet-Heartedness, Kindness, Softness, Vulnerability, Timidity, Obsequiousness, Dependency, Attachment, Helplessness, Children

Mythological Background

Also known as the Vegetable Lamb or Tartary Lamb, the Barometz is a lamb that grows on a tree or bush. This is what medieval Europeans imagined when they were first introduced to cotton, understanding it to be wool that came from a plant. Contrary to popular belief, the cotton shrub *Gossypium* is not exclusive to the New World. It is also indigenous to parts of Africa and India and, therefore, was known to Europeans before Columbus. Other "wool"-bearing plants also exist that may have inspired the Barometz. From the Middle East there is the woolly fern, scientifically known as *Cibotium barometz*. Additionally, there is an Asian fern called *Polypodium barometz*, whose above-ground roots are covered with wool-like hair and ooze a red fluid when cut.

Believing such a plant-animal to actually exist, Europeans speculated about the way the Barometz might live. It was supposed that the little lambs began as gourds growing on the ends of stalks. They remained attached to the plant via an umbilical cord throughout their life. Limited by the length of the cord, the lambs were only able to eat grass that grew within immediate reach. Once they ran out of accessible food they starved and died. The Barometz lacked defense from predators and its meat was reputed to be a delicacy. It was also said that the bones of the Barometz were ideal for divination.

Card Meaning

The Barometz is by far the gentlest creature in the bestiary. It takes the form of a lamb—a baby sheep (not an adult). Therefore, it may represent an infant or young child. It is the archetype of innocence, something to be protected. It is attached to its parents and dependent on their care. The outside world is mysterious and frightful to it. The Barometz-child is completely comfortable in its parent's arms, not yet having developed an independent self-identity. Children embody these characteristics the most until the age when they need to be potty-trained. After this they gradually move toward independence. However, excessive sheltering and coddling by parents can prolong the child's Barometz-like qualities. This is not healthy for the child's development. The appearance of the Barometz card may indicate an adult's perception of a child, rather than the child's actual stage in maturation.

An adult can also embody the Barometz. Such a person is remarkably sweet-natured, sensitive, harmless, and non-confrontational. They may have gained a reputation based on these qualities, and other people surely enjoy their company. They are soothing to be around—good at comforting others and noteworthy in hospitality. Their good will is likely to soften hearts and inspire sensitivity in others. If someone is not kind to them, bystanders will probably rush to their aid. Drawing the Barometz card can also be a message that a more hard-hearted individual will benefit from softening up.

Of course, lamb-like qualities in an adult are generally not regarded as strengths. The predominant negative aspect of the Barometz is that

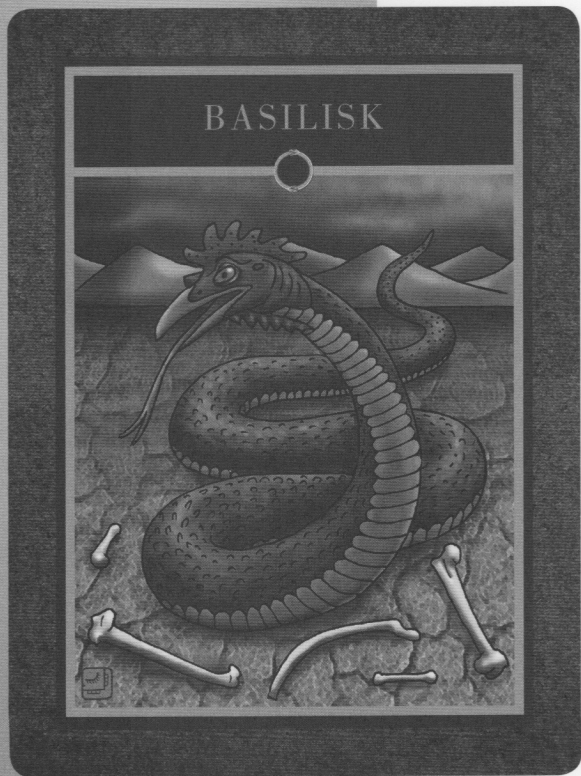
it is easily exploited. Its gentleness can be seen as weakness, which may trigger impatience or contempt from certain individuals. Fearful of confrontation and lacking in any real means of self-defense, the Barometz becomes a target for the unscrupulous. Its air of innocence signifies easy prey, which will attract predators and protectors alike. A Barometz sees the good in people; thus, it is trusting by nature, naïve, and gullible. It depends on others to take care of it by warning it of dangers and actively fending off threats on its behalf.

At its worst, the Barometz is excessively attached and clingy. It may be that it never learned how to be fully independent in the first place. Over the course of its life, it may have become overly used to receiving care from others and having everything handed to it. Or it could have been emotionally scarred and desperately craving comfort from others. This state is hopefully temporary, but it can become habit if other people continually reinforce the Barometz's dependency.

Inverted

The poor Barometz hangs upside-down from its stalk. It is utterly helpless and dangling, unable to right itself, and nobody is there to protect it. The positive qualities of the creature are now overshadowed by the danger that it faces in this vulnerable position. This card inverted may not necessarily signify an actual danger, but perhaps a feeling of crippling helplessness.

BASILISK



Keywords

Destructive Behaviors, Wastefulness, Carelessness, Recklessness, Loss, Ruin, Bad Habits, Poisoning, Pollution, Counterproductive Lifestyle, Harming the Environment

Mythological Background

The Basilisk is a small serpent distinguished by a crown on its head like that of a rooster. This crown is the basis of the creature's name, coming from the Latin *basilius*, for "king." It is said to slither in a distinctive coiled fashion not unlike a sidewinder. Sometimes it is portrayed as having the head of a rooster, even legs or wings. In later medieval bestiaries, the Basilisk evolved into the Cockatrice, which looked like a rooster with a serpent's tail. The Basilisk was originally said to have been born from the blood of Medusa's severed head. Medieval Christians reinterpreted it as coming from a cock's egg that was hatched by a toad. In both versions it is similarly dangerous.

The Basilisk is the most vile, toxic creature to ever crawl the earth. It is not aggressive per se, but its breath is so poisonous that it can kill something every time it breathes. It is also said to be able to kill with its gaze, a fate that purportedly befell a number of Alexander's troops. Only its natural predator, the mongoose, is immune to its venom. Roosters can also protect people from the Basilisk, as the sound of their crowing call is fatal to the toxic creature. But everything else withers and dies in its presence. Basilisks inhabit the Arabian Desert, which used to be a lush forest before these noxious serpents laid everything to waste!

Card Meaning

The Basilisk represents a lifestyle or habits that are unnecessarily destructive. This destructiveness affects the external surroundings, and the Basilisk is comfortable living in its own wake. It lacks the desire to conserve and preserve, instead acting as though everything exists to be used once and then discarded. It will create an entire wasteland, if left unchecked, without even recognizing the damage. This card is a warning of these reprehensible habits. Whether the human Basilisk is purposely destructive or just foolishly oblivious, their ways bring unnecessary loss.

A Basilisk may be a person who produces excessive amounts of waste, filling up trash cans faster than any responsible person should. It may be someone who litters, or who throws perfectly usable items in the garbage. A Basilisk may be a person who thinks it is fun to break things on purpose, or else they may be so clumsy that they break things frequently without a care. A Basilisk may be overly materialistic and consume too many things, but at the same time they live without appreciating the full benefit of what they acquire. A Basilisk may casually allow their home, their property, or even their own body go to ruin, and not bother to fix it. A Basilisk may alternatively, or additionally, have these effects on their interpersonal relationships. They may treat people as things to use, letting friendships go to waste.

The Basilisk is not necessarily malicious or violent. It is simply careless and irresponsible, and perhaps ignorant of the harm it is causing. It does not appreciate where everything comes from and is generally apathetic to other people's perceptions of its lifestyle. It may lack self-awareness entirely, or it may know but not care. Some people may be under the influence of the Basilisk against their own will. It may grip on to them

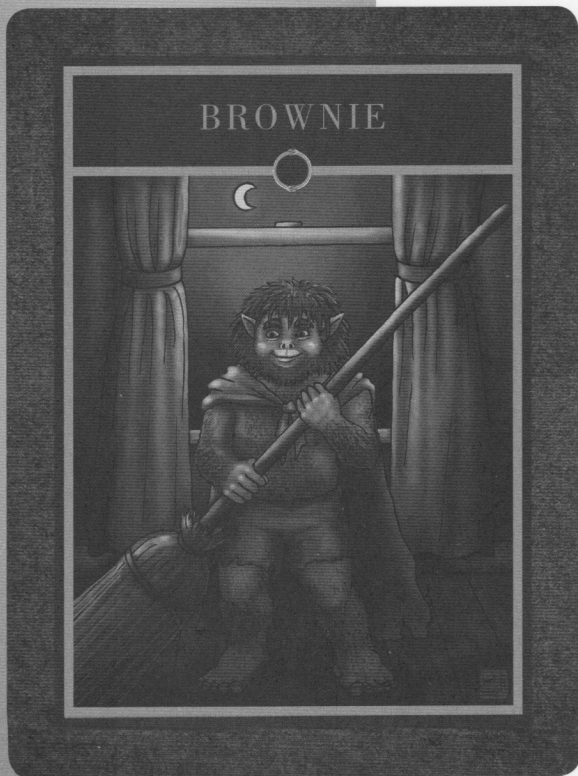
in the form of an addiction or neurosis, forcing them into self-ruin. The Basilisk, or the person controlled by it, is likely to make up excuses to justify their own behavior. They are likely to dismiss complaints by others, seeing those critics as just being snooty.

Tragically, most modern people are Basilisks to some degree. The industrial world consumes too much, pollutes too much, and does not use everything that it produces. As a result of this "throw-away" culture, the planet suffers from poisoning and environmental destruction. In our society, these habits are considered normal, and most people are unaware of the damage they are causing. The Basilisk card may then be a generic warning to look more closely at the way your life affects the environment.

Inverted

The barren wasteland becomes the focus of the image, rather than the perpetrator. The issue is not the Basilisk itself, but the surrounding condition of emptiness and desolation. It may signify unproductivity, loneliness, or an incident of loss. Who caused this situation is not important and, in fact, these situations often arise without being the fault of any person in particular. Instead, your focus should be on healing and moving on to something better, before you are consumed by the wasteland.

BROWNIE



Keywords

Hard Work, Duty, Diligence, Housekeeping, Responsibility, Commitment, Respect, Etiquette, Cleanliness, Obedience, Service, Helpfulness, Prudence

Mythological Background

The Brownie is a race of Fae, meaning that it is a relative of the Fairy. It belongs to the Seelie Court, consisting of the Fae that are honorable and organized. Brownies are shaggy, ugly little dwarves. Their name is properly pronounced "broonie" and not "brownie"; however, they are traditionally imagined as being brown in color or wearing brown clothing. Otherwise their clothing is green or white, and very simple, as Brownies care little for appearances and are not materialistic. According to Scottish folklore, the Brownies' native habitat is in or near woodland streams and, for this reason, they are occasionally described as having webbed feet.

Beyond anything else, Brownies are known for the work that they perform. The males of the species work full-time, taking care of people's houses and barns at night. They do this without being summoned or given orders. They will only show themselves once and after that will return to work each night without being seen. Brownies are also easily offended. They ask only for simple food in return for their services and are insulted by monetary payments. Offering clothing will cause a Brownie to leave—some say because they finally got what they wanted; others say because the gift insults them. They are also disgusted by people who abuse their animals or property. If offended, a Brownie will take his food, but will wreak havoc on the house or barn before leaving and never coming back.

Card Meaning

The quintessential Brownie is someone who works hard, and does so because that is the right thing to do, not because of a selfish agenda. He cares for the greater good so that there is order in the world around him. He does not have to be told to do anything; he already has the initiative to make it happen. He does not complain when he works. If anything, he complains when he is not being given a chance to work. He believes that his efforts make the world a better place and that this is more important than anything else.

Brownies are regarded as being obedient, even though in traditional folklore they do not take orders from anyone directly. They are obedient to social expectations and standards of order. They are obedient to their own personal code of honor, the code that emphasizes conscientiousness and duty. In this regard, they are servants, albeit by choice. They are humble beings, sacrificing self-indulgence and submitting to the greater good. In the real world this can translate to willing service to an actual authority. Brownies are most comfortable having rules to follow, as the presence of structure is paramount to their peace of mind.

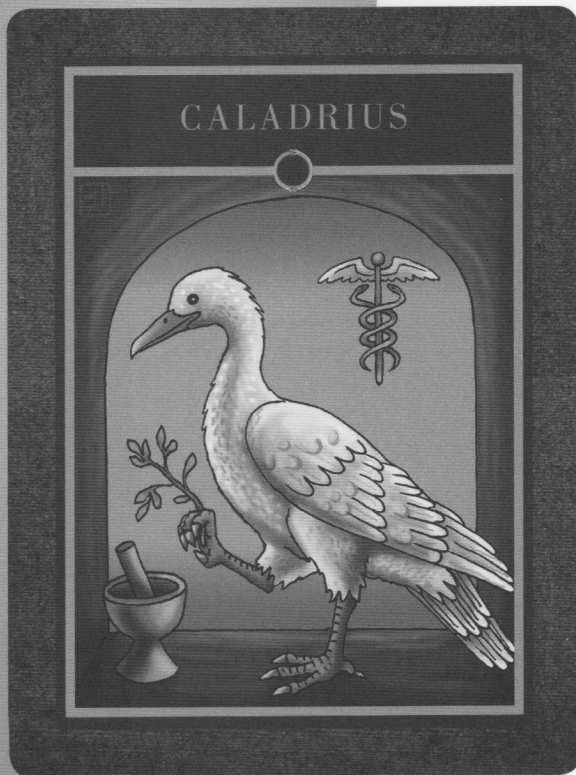
Brownies are so righteous that they tend to believe everyone else should be the same way. They are infuriated by disorganization, laziness, messiness, and moral deviance. They do not understand why other people do not have the same sense of personal and social responsibility that they have. The Brownie is meticulous, nit-picky, even obsessive. He can easily be a goody-goody and a prude, and he is quick to offend. The Brownie may wag his finger and scold others who are not as orderly or respectful as he thinks they should be. Alternatively, the offended Brownie might simply stop what he is doing and leave, if he feels that correcting others is too rude.

The Brownie may appear as a reminder to stay on task or to prioritize work over play. This does not mean that you need to embody the Brownie to the point of being obsessive and prudish. Rather, it is a reminder that we all have responsibilities to which we must attend. These responsibilities may be occupational, academic, financial, domestic, or social. Perhaps there is a paper that needs to be written, a bill that needs to be paid, a wall that needs to be repaired, or a friend who needs assistance. The Brownie's message is that hard work pays off, output requires input, and a lack of diligence can quickly lead to failure.

Inverted

The Brownie is overworked and exhausted as tasks pile up. Even workaholics have their limits. How did this happen? Perhaps you have volunteered to take on too many projects, or maybe someone else is not doing their fair share. In some cases, it is also possible that the workplace is an unhealthy environment and you may be better suited with a different job.

CALADRIUS



Keywords

Healing, Curing, Problem-Solving, Good Deeds, Charity, Altruism, Health, Medicine, Diagnosis, Forgiveness, Peace, Reparation, Restoration

Mythological Background

The Roman Caladrius is a radiant, pure-white bird, resembling a cross between a duck and an egret. It is said to have been brought to Europe by Alexander the Great, who discovered it in Persia. Although it looks relatively mundane for a mythical creature, the Caladrius possesses a most extraordinary power. It automatically knows when a person is ailing and what they suffer from. It also communicates its diagnoses through head gestures. If it refuses to look at a person, then the person is so ill that they are going to die. Most of the time it heals people by drawing their sicknesses out of them and into its own body. A Caladrius that has taken a person's sickness turns gray instead of white. It then flies out into the sunlight, where its health and white color become restored.

This bird is frequently depicted perching on the bedpost of an ailing king, although it will just as willingly treat any common person. Its diagnoses and treatments were more effective than most doctors' at the time, causing many doctors to resent the altruistic bird. Similarly, bird dealers learned to keep their Caladrius hidden, as it had no concern for their monetary profit and, left to its own devices, it would treat any person who simply walked into the store. After Rome became Christianized, the magnanimous healing powers of the Caladrius became seen as an allegory for salvation.

Card Meaning

The Caladrius is the miracle bird that has the power to cure a problem. Therefore, its arrival indicates that there is a problem in the first place. This bird is drawn to the sick. Sickness may be literal or metaphorical, but is more often the latter. A person may be sick physically, or else they may be sick emotionally or spiritually. Sickness can come in the form of stress or negative emotions that linger and poison the spirit. The sickness can even represent the condition of a relationship between individuals. It could be that two or more people cannot get along with each other, or they pretend to get along, but are trying to ignore a very pressing problem. They may be family members, friends, coworkers, spouses, or of any other relationship.

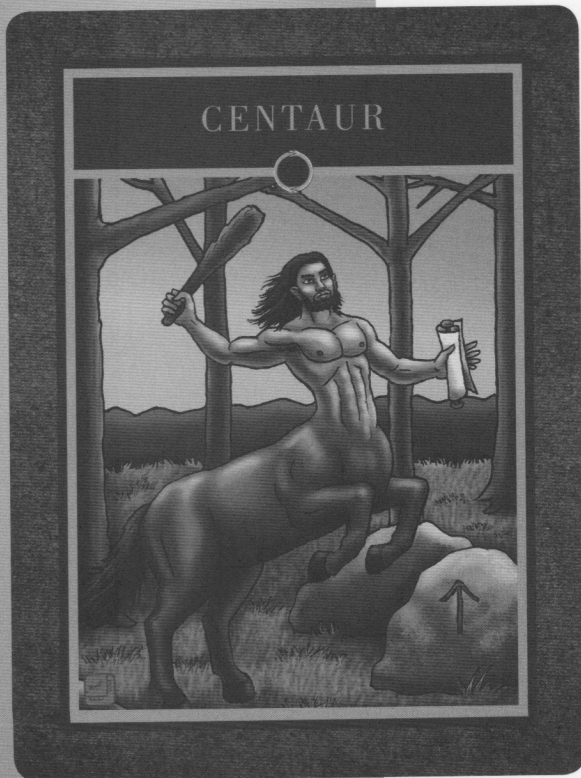
The Caladrius does not merely signify that a sickness is present. Its specialty is to eliminate sickness and restore health. As a generalized symbol, the Caladrius can resolve problems of virtually any kind. It teaches lessons such as altruism, forgiveness, and peace. Its mission is to help others, to “fix” people who are broken. Many kind-hearted individuals embody the Caladrius. Many of them work in the medical profession, as doctors, nurses, paramedics, therapists, and pharmacists. They may hold other jobs that help people, including social workers, firefighters, and philanthropists. Otherwise, they may hold a job like any other, but they personally care so sincerely about the well-being of others that they will express this through their daily interactions. They are charitable persons—perhaps community service volunteers. They may even be veterinarians or rescuers of animals. If the subject of a reading does not behave like the Caladrius, then the appearance of this card in a reading is probably a sign that they should adopt a more humanitarian course.

The Caladrius is a highly intelligent bird. To treat a problem depends on an accurate diagnosis. This requires critical thinking and excellent problem-solving skills. Keen intuition is a good way to start, but that by itself is not a substitute for rational questions, informed decisions, and above all, two-way communication. You can benefit from the wisdom of the Caladrius by first identifying the cause or source of a problem before offering a solution. Make sure that you engage in open dialogue and hear all sides. Once a diagnosis is made, you can determine the best course of action. An effective healer treats the cause, not the symptoms. The Caladrius encourages people to care for others emotionally, but emphasizes that you must act rationally to get to the root of the problem.

Inverted

The spirit of the Caladrius may leave a person who once had a passion for good deeds. Some healers lose their humanitarian spark after being in their line of work for a long period of time. The stress of their work can drain their spirit. When this happens, they can become impatient and uncaring. In the worst cases, they end up caring only about earning money from their work. The inverted Caladrius represents a case where the healer has become ill from the sickness that he deals with, and he himself needs to be healed.

CENTAUR



Keywords

Instinct, Impulse, Baser Nature, Machismo, Competition, Adventurousness, Dual Nature, Conflicting Halves, Brutishness vs. Reason, Finding Inner Balance

Mythological Background

The Centaur originated in ancient Greece, but has endured throughout Western thought. These wild beast-men hold a rich society deep within the forest, yet the advancement of their culture is limited by their impulsiveness and baser natures. In early Greek mythology, all Centaurs were male. Female Centaurs only appeared in later tales. In general, Centaurs are stereotyped as being highly brutal and have an extremely low tolerance for alcohol. They are also notorious for abducting human females. When King Pirithous of Lapith was getting married, a group of drunken Centaurs tried to abduct the bride and the female guests. The women were rescued only after a bloody battle.

The most famous Centaur in mythology was an exceptionally civilized and compassionate individual named Chiron. He was highly educated and skilled in medicine. The gods selected him to be the mentor of several Greek heroes, including Achilles, Jason, Theseus, and even Asclepius, who later became the god of medicine. Hercules had befriended Chiron, as well as another civilized Centaur named Pholus. While having dinner with the two of them, Hercules opened a bottle of wine, which immediately attracted a horde of wild Centaurs already intoxicated by the scent. Hercules fought them off with poisoned arrows, but the two civilized Centaurs were both accidentally killed. Unwittingly, Hercules exterminated the entire Centaur race. However, Chiron became immortalized as a constellation in the night sky.

Card Meaning

The Centaur embodies qualities that are traditionally regarded as being masculine, although women can also possess these traits. Namely, these qualities are twofold: that of rationality and that of aggression and competition. Historically, men have been regarded as the rational sex. Ironically, manly men are also stereotyped as being macho, supposedly resorting to raucous confrontations and physical violence when crossed or intoxicated. Also related to the concept of machismo is unrestrained virility and the chauvinistic treatment of women. These qualities contradict the ideal of rationality, which emphasizes self-control and reason. Hence, the two notions associated with the social expectation of masculinity are very much like the Centaur itself: an awkward merging of civilized and brutish halves.

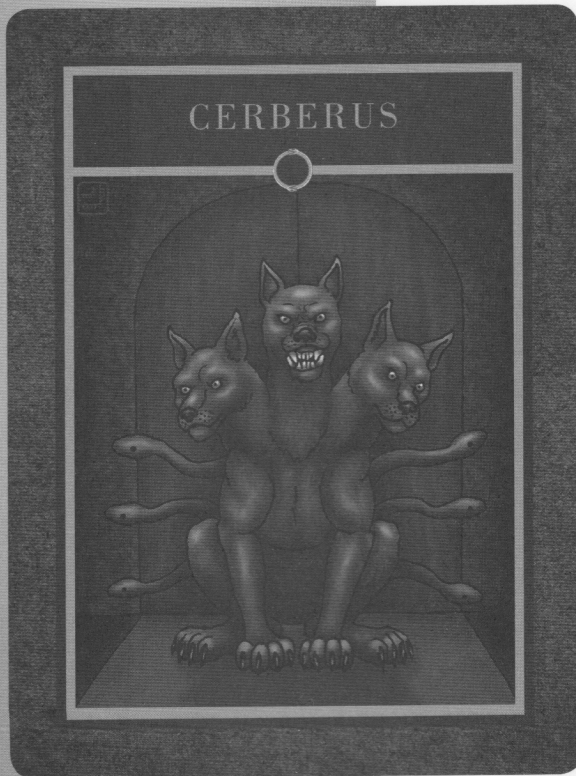
A Centaur is a person who faces such a self-conflict as described above. The Centaur depicted on the card holds both a scroll and a club; metaphorically a pen and a sword. But which is mightier? He does not know. Many persons experience this type of indecisiveness, especially those who were taught that both types of behavior are admirable. To be a real man, one must be rational; to be a real man, one must be macho. Most Centaurs desire to be reasonable, but their attempts can be disrupted by aggressive impulse and competitive urges that they have come to equate with strength. Yet there is one point of overlap between these otherwise conflicting ideals: a lack of sentimentalism. Therefore, emotionality for most Centaurs consists of aggressive and egoistic feelings only. This can become a serious problem.

Although he is half beast, the Centaur is in fact capable of controlling his violent and destructive inclinations. Drawing this card can point to a need for such a revision. It requires the understanding that you can be strong and brave without being destructive, arrogant, or cruel. Your animal side need not be a rampaging predator, but neither does it have to be killed for the sake of civility. Rationality must prevail and with it the understanding that persons are far more complex than having only two extremes of behavior. A Centaur must sacrifice the belief that pride comes only from intimidating others, and realize that the animal side also offers instincts that are more constructive, more adaptable to surrounding conditions. You can be true to your natural desires, but reserve them in a way that is socially acceptable. Thus, the Centaur is peaceful when his two sides are in balance and not at each other's throats. This is how Chiron and Pholus came to be civilized. With this temperance can come compassion as well, without fears of being weakened by sensitivity.

Inverted

With his human half relegated to the bottom of the picture, the Centaur has lost touch with his civilized side. He is now turned into a brute, without respect for others. He mistakes temperance for weakness and might for right. Aggression and intimidation become a matter of pride, while other people become seen either as obstacles to fight or tools to satisfy his ego. The rune *Tiwaz* now signifies war without the aspect of justice that it normally carries.

CERBERUS



Keywords

Boundaries, Personal Space, Gateways, Transitions, Warning, Rules Enforcement, Defensiveness, Hostility, Non-Negotiability, One-Way Road, Access Denied, Saying "No"

Mythological Background

Cerberus is the ultimate guard dog and the quintessential hound of Hell. He is usually depicted as having three heads, although Hesiod wrote that he has fifty heads. Perhaps Hesiod was also counting the heads of the snakes that form Cerberus' mane. Cerberus' purpose is to ensure that no living person can enter the Underworld and that no dead person can leave. Originally, it was believed that he would only attack those who violated this divine rule. However, Greeks eventually took up the practice of burying their dead with a honey cake to give to Cerberus, just in case he showed them aggression as they entered the land of the dead.

Cerberus has only been subdued on a few unusual occasions. The hero Aeneas, a descendant of Zeus, drugged him with opium-laced honey cakes. On another occasion, Orpheus lulled him to sleep by playing his lyre, a mystical gift that only he possessed. Finally, there was Hercules, the strongest person to ever live, and the only person to ever overpower Cerberus with physical force. After strangling the monstrous dog and binding him with iron chains, Hercules dragged Cerberus up to the surface world. This was an order made of him by King Eurystheus as one of his Twelve Labors. When brought to the king's castle, Cerberus snarled and shook so viciously that the king hid behind a pillar in fear. After that, Cerberus ran back home to the Underworld.

Card Meaning

This three-headed dog is ferocious and terrifying, but not evil. He serves to protect one of the most important and sacred boundaries in existence. Just as the boundary between the living and the dead must be honored and defended, so too is the boundary between your public and private space. Every person, couple, or family is entitled to their own space, their own distance from others when they need it. Their personal space is the seat of their selfhood from which they build themselves spiritually. If someone else does not respect your privacy, then they are threatening your selfhood by trying to tread where they do not belong. This is when you should put your foot down and invoke Cerberus.

Sometimes we need to be more aggressive in defending these most sacred of boundaries. This can be hard for a lot of people to do, because many people are raised to be obliging. When we become preoccupied with politeness, the act of telling someone off can feel unconscionably rude. The downside to such an upbringing is that it breeds people who do not know when or how to stand up for themselves. Simply saying nothing and walking away is not always good enough to keep pernicious individuals off your back. Cerberus may appear as a warning of such a case, telling you that you need to show some teeth. It is time to issue a cease and desist, and be firm about it!

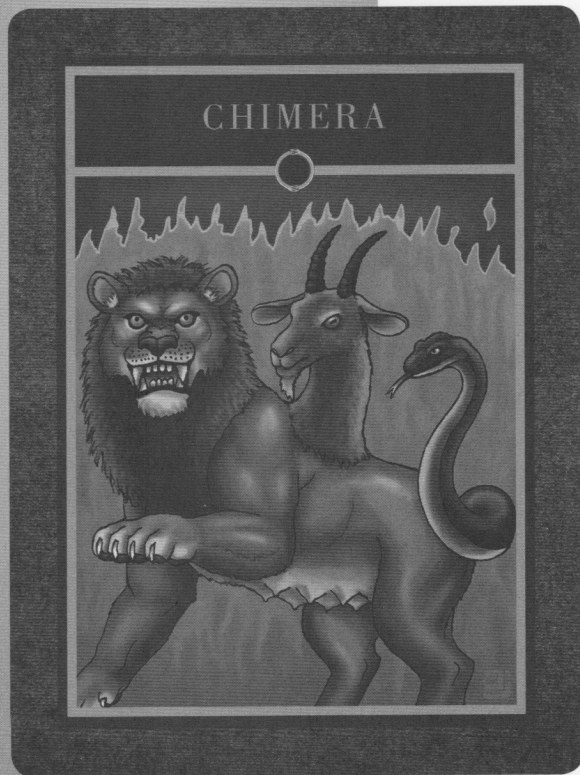
The person who embodies Cerberus has no problem telling others to stop. In fact, at times, he may be overly aggressive. Cerberus may snap at others preemptively and may do so in defense of his family and friends. He may be known to bite hard when a mere growl would be enough. Other people are rightly intimidated by him. Yet, rather than being an evil person, Cerberus is a very protective individual. He has noble reasons, even if his methods are crude.

Drawing the Cerberus card may signify that you need to be decisive about who to let in and who to keep out, or what to keep and what to get rid of. It may mean that you need to reevaluate your social values and personal boundaries. Are harmful people getting to you? Drawing this card may also indicate an issue that is non-negotiable. If drawn in reference to a different person, it could mean that they want you to back off, and you should best respect their wishes. Even in close relationships, it is healthy to draw lines and respect the boundaries of the other person.

Inverted

Cerberus has failed to do his job, having been overcome either through deception, brute force, or simply his own inattentiveness. Now the sacred boundary has been breached. This may be a breach of trust or a breach of personal space. You may feel that your spirit has been violated, or else you might not yet be aware of the violation that has taken place. Be on guard and look out for unwelcome guests or unwelcome actions from others.

CHIMERA



Keywords

Fierceness, Outward Strength, Hidden Weaknesses, Aggression, Intimidation, Excessive Power, Fiery Personality, Personal Complexity, Group Issues, Internal Conflict, Defeat from Within

Mythological Background

Any mythical creature that is a composite of different animals may be described as “chimeric.” Yet the proper Chimera is a specific monster from ancient Greece. This beast is known to be a female, although she is always depicted as having a mane like a male lion. She makes her first known appearance in Homer’s *Iliad*. Homer describes the Chimera as having the front half of a lion, the hindquarters of a she-goat, and the tail of a snake. However, later artists and writers give the Chimera three heads. The most famous image of this monster is captured in a fifth century bronze statue by Arezzo. Modern-day artists sometimes give the Chimera three heads side by side, and sometimes wings as well.

In addition to being a combination of different vicious animals, the Chimera was also a fire-breather. She was the offspring of two monstrous demigods, Echidna and Typhon, and so formidable that she was considered virtually invincible. According to the *Iliad*, King Proteus attempted to dispose of a young man named Bellerophon by assigning him to slay the Chimera. Yet Bellerophon was too smart to try to confront the beast like an ordinary foe. Instead, he consulted the Oracle and was granted the aid of the legendary Pegasus. With the help of the lucky steed, Bellerophon cleverly shoved a lead spear down the Chimera’s throat, which melted in the fire and killed her.

Card Meaning

The Chimera is formidable, but flawed. Both of these aspects are characteristic of the Chimera archetype, although only the former is widely known. She is complex, being three beasts rolled into one, having multiple strengths, like a jack of all trades. This makes her stronger than any of these animals would be on their own. Furthermore, she breathes fire, lives on a volcano, and is reputed to be invincible. In other words, she is powerful in many ways, striking awe and intimidation into the hearts of even the bravest warriors. This is what most people think about when they think of the Chimera.

A person can be a Chimera if they are known in a similar manner. Such an individual is both assertive and aggressive, and awe-inspiring. If this person is female, then she spits on gender stereotypes about weakness and subordination. She has no problem being forward, no problem calling other people out, and no problem sending people running the other way when they test her. She might have a bad temper or even be downright mean. In the worst cases, the Chimera can be a bully. Others know that they better stay on her good side. This reputation has surely earned her some enemies, but this does not sway her. More than likely, she also has a respectable circle of friends who admire her personal strength.

Beneath her very real strength, however, the Chimera has equally real weaknesses. The beast feared by the Greeks was seen by medieval Europeans as being merely absurd. She is a complicated creature—a walking contradiction. The same qualities that make the Chimera so formidable also make her self-conflicted. She is her own worst enemy. Her weak spot is on the inside. In Greek myth, it was her own fiery breath that did her in. In a real person, her damning flaws could be

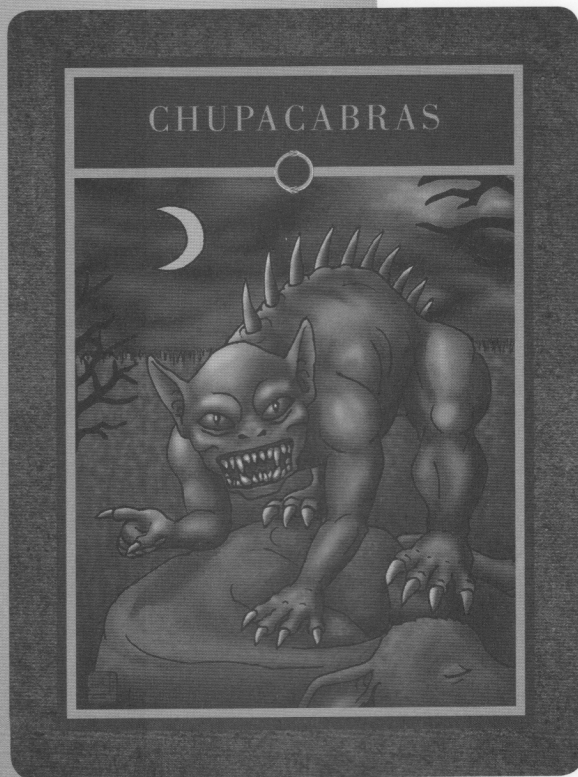
her stubbornness, her anger, her pride, or any other characteristic with which she arms herself in battle. She may have personal demons, quarreling beasts inside her that make her emotionally unstable or secretly afraid. Usually, only those who are closest to the Chimera will know this—if they know it.

As a multi-headed composite beast, the Chimera can also represent a group of individuals. They may be close friends, coworkers or colleagues, or perhaps family members. Each one brings something very different to the team, and together they are a force to be reckoned with. Yet, as is characteristic of the Chimera, there is a potential weakness from within. Drawing this card may be a warning of conflict or incompatibility between close associates in your group.

Inverted

When upside-down, the Chimera is not so tough anymore. She roars and brandishes her claws, but now it is all just talk. Her fearsome exterior is thin and she is losing her grip on power. The person who this represents is not strong at all, at least not at the moment. Although she tries to hide it, her weaknesses are overpowering her strengths. Trying to be tough has become a joke.

CHUPACABRAS



Keywords

Worry, Distrust, Uncertainty, Anxiety, Panic, Hesitation, Perceived Threat, Scapegoating, Paranoia, Prejudice, Xenophobia, Fear of Change, Future-Shyness

Mythological Background

The Chupacabras is a contemporary monster from Latin America, originating in Puerto Rico. There is no single standard description of its appearance. When sightings broke out in the 1990s, it was most famously depicted as an alien creature with sharp teeth, large hind legs, big eyes, and a row of spines down its back. Yet there were a myriad of other descriptions as well. Sometimes it was said to be lizard-like, sometimes humanoid, and sometimes winged. In the U.S., it is frequently identified with wild dogs suffering from severe mange. Yet there is one consistent characteristic of all Chupacabras: it stalks the countryside at night to suck the blood of livestock. *El Chupacabras* is Spanish for “the goat-sucker.”

Today, the Chupacabras continues to be blamed for the unexplained deaths of farm animals. Sightings of the dreadful beast often occur during periods of social distress. In particular, it seems to be a manifestation of distrustful relations between Latin America and the United States. In Latin America some people suspect that the Chupacabras was created by Americans as a secret experiment. Americans supposedly released the creature in Latin America without regard for the people’s safety. Yet in the U.S., the creature is often perceived as a monstrous coyote that arrived by crossing the Mexican border. Back in the 1990s, however, Americans popularly regarded the Chupacabras as a different kind of alien, the kind from outer space.

Card Meaning

The Chupacabras is a reflection of anxieties in the modern world and uncertainties about the future. It embodies panic in the face of change. It is spawned from extreme stress. In such cases, an individual may create a monster in their mind and project it onto the world around them. Although imaginary, this monster acts like a vampire, slowly draining the person's spirit. It may take the place of another person or a group of people; it may stand for an upcoming event that one does not want to face, or it may come in the form of pessimistic scenarios that haunt the person's mind. The actual source of fear is usually not as dangerous as the monster appears. Nonetheless, the negative emotions that result from the Chupacabras stand in the way of constructive action.

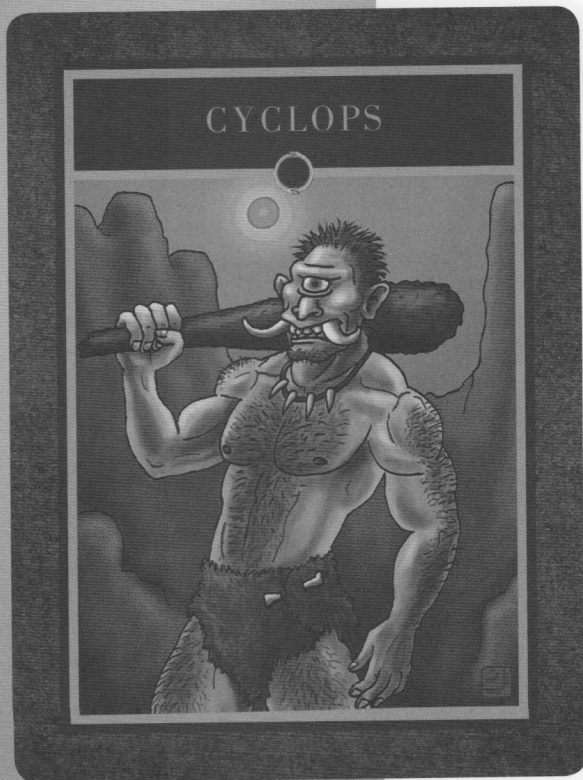
The Chupacabras is present during cases of scapegoating. It arrives when someone is distrustful of somebody else who is unknown, foreign, or different. This distrust may be a projection of a different anxiety, but it results in the other person being made into an enemy. One's choice of a scapegoat may be based on a previous encounter or years of hearing nothing but negative stereotypes, but it usually is not a conscious decision. It can happen when one makes a mistake and fears looking inward and taking accountability for it. Often, the accused is actually innocent of wrongdoing, or more innocent than what the subject thinks. The one who fears the Chupacabras has become paranoid and close-minded. They are pointing their finger at someone else who may not actually be at fault. In many cases, it is the accuser who is guilty, usually for being blind to their own actions, and for being wrongly judgmental.

If ever you start worrying uncontrollably, then the Chupacabras has gotten a hold of you. Being a bloodsucker, it will drain you until your fear has paralyzed you so that you will not move forward. Worse yet, other people nearby might not necessarily see the Chupacabras. It may look completely different to them, or be invisible altogether, causing them to wonder why you are so uneasy in the first place. The Chupacabras is a fear that is difficult to reason through. This is because it is no longer just the original source of anxiety, but a fearsome thoughtform that has taken on an existence of its own in your mind. The monster is a fear blown out of proportion; the real problem is not as daunting. You must realize this before you can even begin to confront the source of your anxiety.

Inverted

At the top of the inverted image is the dead calf, the innocent victim of wrongdoing. The threat is real and is external, not merely a product of one's own personal fears. The person recovering from the loss is not crippled with anxiety, but instead is on their feet and ready to look for answers. The Chupacabras in the image points its finger in the direction that the culprit fled. This card inverted points to an actual source of danger or a guilty person one needs to be leery of.

CYCLOPS



Keywords

Traditionalism, Stubbornness, Stoicism, Concrete Sensibilities, Cultural Conservatism, Slowness, Narrow-Mindedness, Tunnel Vision, Resistance to Change, The Old Way

Mythological Background

Long before there were humans, Earth was populated by the monstrous giants called the Cyclopes. When this race flourished, they built massive "Cyclopean walls" out of stone and erected megaliths that are too large for humans to move without machinery. They are regarded as primitive beings, but according to Hesiod, they were also skilled at blacksmithing and forging weapons for the gods. Gigantic fossil bones are attributed to the Cyclopes, especially the tusked skulls of prehistoric elephants. Ancient Greeks found these massive bones and, noticing the large trunk socket in the animal's forehead, concluded that they belonged to one-eyed giants.

Eventually, humans arrived and practiced a different way of life. The Cyclopes, slowly dying out, were not thrilled about the small newcomers. Refusing to adapt to change, the giants instead kept to themselves in the forests and volcanic lands. Their race held a mutual disdain for humans. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus and his crew were required to make a landing on the island of the Cyclopes. There, they stole some of the Cyclops' food, only to fall prey themselves to the Cyclops Polyphemus. While being held prisoner for a later meal, Odysseus offered Polyphemus all of the wine that he was carrying on his ship. Polyphemus drank it all and then passed out. Odysseus and his remaining crew then gouged out the giant's eye with a burning beam and escaped.

Card Meaning

The Cyclops is stoic and has a strong sense of personal values; these are his positive aspects. These noble giants know what they like and are comfortable doing things their own way, without complaining about hard work or routines. Unlike many people nowadays, the Cyclops will never forget the important wisdom of the past. Aggressive in preserving old traditions, he is distrustful of new ways that deviate from the way that he first learned. Yet this is where the giant's negative aspects lie. The Cyclops is basically a caveman. Others will perceive him as old-fashioned at best, perhaps slow and unable to keep up with modern ways. Modern society often regards such individuals as primitive, backwards, or even embarrassing. In spite of these perceptions, the Cyclops has no intention of changing. He "knows" that he is right; everyone else is just crazy.

In addition to being old-fashioned, a person with characteristics of the Cyclops could potentially be prejudiced, sexist, bigoted, or hostile toward those who are different from them. Even if he does not express these beliefs, he is likely to see the introduction of new ideas as a personal threat. His old way of doing things is not merely a comfort zone; it is ingrained in his personal identity. He does not see himself as an independent traveler in a changing world; he sees himself as a monolith embedded within the ground of his traditions. He sees his proud stubbornness as defending his values against invaders.

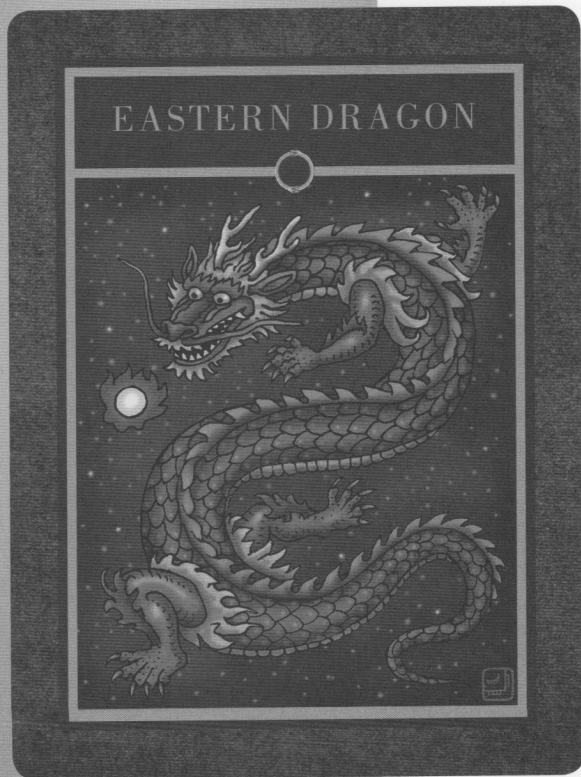
The Cyclops has common sense, but it is a specific flavor of common sense. It is the kind that sounds right according to how he was raised, but might cease to make sense in the ever-changing face of a progressing society. It is a type of logic that is simple, practical, and straightforward. For example, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Yet

the Cyclops' strategy might be "broke" and he would not realize it. The Cyclops sees the world through a single eye, which results in narrow vision.

The Cyclops is essentially a living fossil. Doing things in the old way will work sometimes but, at other times, it can cause serious problems. As much as some people glorify the past, this card is a reminder that not everything about the past was better. One reason why societies change is that people decide to correct their mistakes and end practices that were harmful. The Cyclops may signify a longstanding tradition, a social obstacle, or a family member's expectation that conflicts with your present goals. He can also stand for a general standstill or a situation that moves very slowly.

Inverted

An important piece of wisdom from the past has been overlooked. Now something is not quite right due to a neglectful error of someone's forward-moving ambition. Sometimes the "nagging old foagie" is right. Do not always dismiss the ways of the past or the advice of your elders. Newer is not always better and the young are not automatically smarter than the old.



Keywords

Wealth, Power, Prestige, Strength, Prosperity, Success, Achievement, Legendary Status, Charisma, Ambition, Perfectionism, Leadership, Longevity, Gain

Mythological Background

Often known generically as the Chinese Dragon, the Eastern Dragon originated in China, but exists in many East Asian countries. Unlike its Western cousin, the Dragon from Asian lore is a divine and heavenly being. In early ancient times, it was a god of rain, wind, and thunder. It controlled the flow of water and was thus responsible for the fertility of the land, the bounty of crops, and the prosperity of the harvest. It is often shown guarding a flaming pearl or spiral, representing the powerful and creative forces of nature. Chinese Emperors claimed the Dragon as their royal symbol or even as their ancestor. It has become a more general symbol of Chinese cultural pride.

There are many different kinds of Eastern Dragons.

In China, these different kinds can be distinguished by their color, number of toes, and the roles they serve in maintaining the order of nature. By far the most famous and powerful of these is called *Lung*, which is gold and has five toes on each foot. This is the great Imperial Dragon, and only the emperor is allowed to wear its image. There are also other varieties of Eastern Dragons in different countries. Most Eastern Dragons are benevolent, but in Japan, they can be either good or evil. The Korean Dragon, *Yong*, speaks and shows empathy toward humans. In Vietnam, the Dragon is called *Rông* and is considered to be an ancestor of the Vietnamese people.

Card Meaning

The Eastern Dragon is the archetypal embodiment of prosperity and power. As such, it is one of the most fortuitous cards in the deck to draw. This godly creature, a symbol of the great emperors, is truly momentous to behold. Far from any trivial amount of luck, it can bring great life changes to the blessed. The Eastern Dragon is not subtle. If it comes as a surprise visitor, then it can miraculously turn your life around. If it represents a more long-term condition, then it suggests a period of great success, prosperity, growth, and happiness. It is usually associated with money, promotions, and prestige. Its tidings will generate awe from others.

Some individuals are touched by the Eastern Dragon. These include, but are not limited to, those who were born in the year of the Dragon in the Chinese zodiac. These fiery personalities are highly charismatic, extroverted, proud, free-spirited, and strong-willed. On the negative side they can also be opinionated, condescending, pompous, demanding, and ruthless. They tend to be highly popular. Possessing great natural charm and the talent to lead, they have many followers and can sway large groups. They are noticed the moment they walk into a room. They are well-intentioned insofar as they see their own actions as being for the best.

Dragon people are also fearless. They are bold and brazen, adventurous and daring. They will attempt feats that most others find intimidating, and they have an above-average chance at succeeding. When communicating, they are assertive and straightforward. When disagreeing with someone, they are outspoken and harsh. In the workplace, they take risks and are impatient with those who are slow and cautious. They enter a scene with ambitious goals from the

get-go. If they play their cards well, which they usually do, then they will scale the ladder at a staggering pace, due to their social aptitude and inborn good luck.

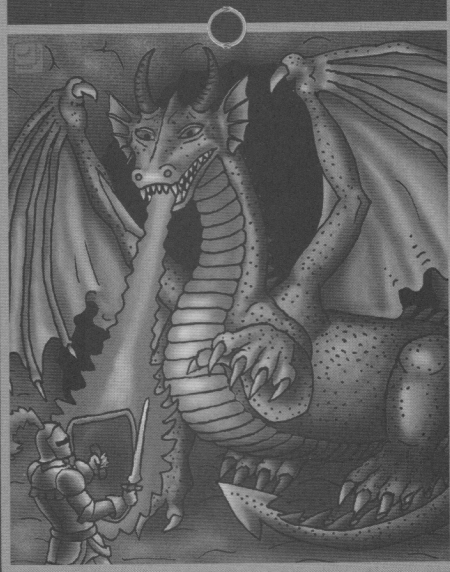
People generally desire the blessings of the Eastern Dragon, although this creature does not serve people like a wish-granting genie. It is a powerful agent of change, part of a greater cosmic order, connected to things that are above human control. When this archetype appears to us, as in a card reading, it tells us to seize the day. It reminds us to be proactive in taking advantage of an opportunity. It signifies that the moment to act is now. The door may not have been open for us before, but this cosmic herald has the power to open it for us. When the Eastern Dragon comes to help you, it would be most foolish to pass up the chance.

Inverted

The Eastern Dragon hurtles itself downward after its fiery orb, falling upside-down in the process. Will it lose its wealth and power? Whether it does or not, the Dragon compromises its own dignity in desperation. This inverted card symbolizes uncertainty, insecurity, or fear regarding one's financial state or social status.

WESTERN DRAGON

WESTERN DRAGON



Keywords

Conflict, Obstacle, Struggle, Challenge, Battle, Aggression, Confrontation, Disagreement, Disruption, Fighting, Enemy, Setbacks, Rite of Passage, Overcoming

Mythological Background

The Dragon is perhaps the most enduring of all mythical creatures. In the Western world, it originated as a sea monster in the Near East, beginning as the Babylonian Tiamat, then becoming the Hebrew Leviathan, and then moving into ancient Greece as the sea serpent Python. In one Norse saga, it became Fafnir, a giant venomous serpent slain by Sigurd. In general Germanic folklore, the Dragon was called the Lindworm or Wurm. It continued to evolve into many variations, from the winged biped Wyvern, to the multi-headed Zmei of Eastern Europe. In popular media today, it is usually depicted with leathery wings and four legs.

In modern media, Western Dragons are often portrayed as friendly or lovable. Yet this is a recent interpretation only. Throughout history, the Western Dragon was an antagonist. It was a vicious beast known to attack villages unprovoked, capturing fair damsels and destroying grain fields with its fiery breath. Christians associated the Dragon with the Devil. The presence of a Dragon would quickly warrant the summoning of a brave hero to stop it. Thus, in spite of its villainous nature, it also became a symbol of heroism, courage, and martial might. The labor of the Dragon-slayer was the epic battle of good versus evil. To slay a Dragon was the ultimate triumph. Those who succeeded in such a deed would uncover the treasure that it was hoarding and gain legendary status.

Card Meaning

The Western Dragon is a classic symbol of conflict and combat. Traditionally, this creature is hostile to humans. It is a hurdle that must be surmounted. When the Dragon appears in your path, you cannot make any more progress until it is defeated. The knight in the corner of the card symbolizes the subject—you—small in the face of the adversary, but nonetheless determined. This knight may be either confident or frightened, novice or experienced, the first in line or the last. The circumstances will be different in every case, but the occurrence of fighting a Dragon happens to everyone. To many people, this challenge represents a dreaded ordeal. Others tackle it with optimism, thinking about the reward they could gain after a victorious battle.

The Western Dragon can manifest as any kind of major external obstacle. It can be another person, a difficult task or project, an unfortunate incident, or a period of hardship. You may have passively stumbled upon the Dragon, or were thrown up against it by circumstances that were not of your choosing. Alternatively, for whatever reason, you may have gone to seek the Dragon out. You may be on a great quest, and the Dragon is one of the challenges on the way to your goal.

Whatever way the Western Dragon manifests, its presence brings about a battle. If the battle has not begun yet, then this card may be a warning for you to prepare yourself. Depending on the situation, you may have the option of backing down. However, the traditional role of the Western Dragon suggests that it is very important that you go through with this battle. Conflict is inevitable in life and ultimately makes us stronger. Every person has the strength to overcome certain

Dragons. That said, doing so is not pleasant. Being forced into conflict can be frustrating, frightening, and infuriating. No matter how tough you are, fighting a Dragon consumes considerable time and energy.

The Western Dragon itself is unwanted, and the battle against it can be difficult and even traumatic. Nonetheless, the battle is traditionally understood to be a necessary precursor to something that is more positive. This positive thing can be almost anything. There may be a concrete treasure on the other side of the Dragon, or a symbolic one. Removing the Dragon can open up a road taking you forward to a more desirable future. The battle against the Dragon may also be a rite of passage, possibly a test to prove yourself worthy. Whatever the case, victory against the Western Dragon will prove worthwhile. Have patience and believe in yourself.

Inverted

In reverse, the knight has the upper hand. He is throwing fire down at the Western Dragon, thus defeating it. This scenario highlights not the challenge posed by the Dragon, nor the struggle to overcome it, but the decisive blow that leads to triumph. This Dragon will no longer pose a threat to you. Persistence and determination have paid off. A release from the struggle and a possible reward are now at hand.

FAIRY



Keywords

Imagination, Magic, Enchantment, Wonder, Childlike Outlook, Joy, Beauty, Bliss, Ecstasy, Different Reality, Distraction, Dreaming, Fantasy, Escapism

Mythological Background

Fairies, also known as Fair Folk or Fae, are a class of magical beings with an extraordinarily extensive mythical history. Even the definition of a Fairy is difficult to pin down. Often, the term refers generally to a broad category of humanoids that come from an enchanted otherworld. Similar beings exist in folklore all around the world. Although highly variable, Fairies typically possess the ability to shapeshift; they are usually invisible to humans and they do not age. Sometimes they look like children or are androgynous. They are generally mischievous and difficult to understand, often behaving in ways that make little sense to humans. They are thus unpredictable and, being capable of magic, have traditionally been regarded with extreme caution.

The Fairy, as it is known in English, is especially associated with the folklore of the British Isles. In Celtic mythology, Fairies are thought to be the descendants of the Tuatha de Danaan, who in turn are descended from the Earth goddess Danu. The idea of Fairies as diminutive creatures, often insect-sized and possessing wings, is a more recent interpretation. The whimsical modern-day Fairy is strongly influenced by J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* stories from the early twentieth century. Barrie's "Neverland" is populated by various eternally youthful beings. The Fairy proper, represented by Tinkerbell and her kin, is a tiny, luminescent creature that can be killed by humans not believing in them.

Card Meaning

Only children and some gifted adults are able to see Fairies. Drawing this card may signify a person with such a gift. One who can see Fairies is Fairylike herself, as she lives in a world of magic and enchantment. Her world may be mystical and spiritual, being that the Fairy Realm has traditionally been regarded as the realm of the spirits. She believes in magic. Things that most people find mundane, she sees as magical, and no argument from skeptics will persuade her to see otherwise. This is because magic is something that exists in the eye of the beholder. The magic that the Fairy sees is real, as the life that she lives and the world that she perceives is just as legitimate as anyone else's.

With the gift of "Fairy sense," as described above, an individual possesses an extraordinarily vivid imagination. This will qualify her as an intuitively creative person, perhaps a talented storyteller or artist. She may even be psychic or clairvoyant. She may have a fascination with topics such as astrology, divination, or dream interpretation, and may be particularly skilled in working with these areas of interest. The Fairy of folklore is forever young, the human Fairy young at heart. She will appear to others as joyful and light-hearted. She is curious, playful, perky, and unique. For everything she experiences, she is like a child full of wonder.

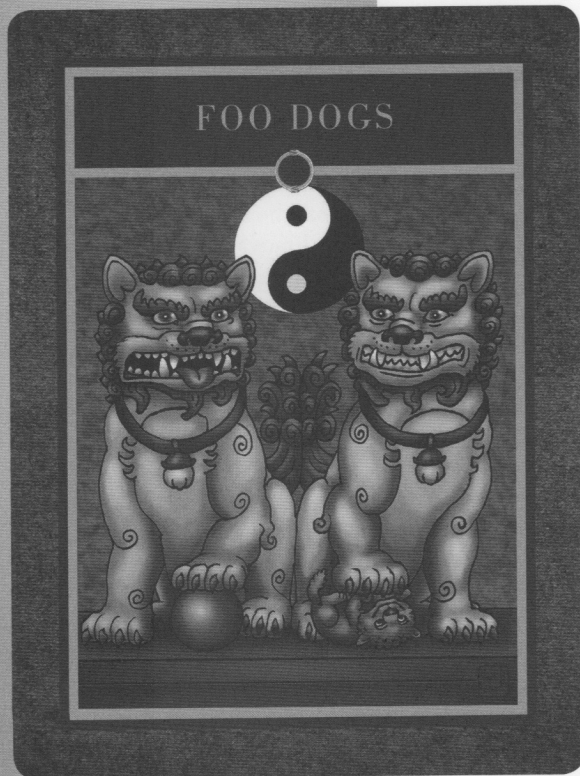
This wonder may be contagious and inspirational to those around her. Yet some people may find it annoying. Not everybody understands or appreciates the Fairy. To many, the Fairy comes across as being loopy or spacey. To them, her world of magic is just a "la-la land" far removed from reality. Indeed, living in a different world can have some serious disadvantages. The Fairy's moods

will often be different from those around her, often playful when others are serious, and she does not always succeed in brightening the moods of others. The Fairy may be mischievous, which, at the wrong times, can be dangerous—even if she means well. Since she sees things differently from other people, she could potentially miss certain cues from more somber individuals, failing to understand why their seriousness could be so necessary.

This disconnect can be disadvantageous for the Fairy socially and professionally. For this reason, drawing the Fairy card can possibly be a warning sign that you need to act more like an adult, at least for a period of time. It may be time to come back down to Earth in order to be taken seriously professionally or simply to respect the feelings of others.

Inverted

Fairies need to be believed in order to live. This card inverted indicates the loss of that belief or a loss of the "Fairy sense." Now the Fairy plummets from the sky, losing her magical pixie dust, soon to be a goner. Without magic and wonder, the world is a much grimmer place. This card inverted may represent an event that causes the loss of innocence, or an individual who lacks the perception of magic and enchantment.



Keywords

Protection, Loyalty, Security, Guardianship, Home, Family, Contentment, Stable Relationships, Marriage, Fidelity, Partnership, Cooperation, Balance, Equilibrium

Mythological Background

This mystical pair of creatures is known by many different names: Buddha Dogs, Lion Dogs, Shishi and Komainu (Japan), Shiisa (Okinawa), Snow Lions (Tibet). They are a cross between lion and dog, possessing the sheer power of the one and the loyalty and guardianship of the other. The legendary protectors of Buddha, they are often seen as a pair of statues outside the entrance of a building or compound. One of the pair is male and the other is female, representing the cooperative balance of Yin and Yang. Each one guards something under one paw: the male, a globe, and the female, her cub. The male Foo Dog swallows evil spirits with his open mouth while the female immobilizes them. Working together, the two magical beasts prevent evil from entering a home or building.

Foo Dogs originated in China around 200 BC shortly after the introduction of Buddhism. With this religion came the parable that the Buddha managed to tame the savage lion and it became his companion and guardian. The ancient Chinese were intrigued by this story, but most of them had never seen a lion. Through art and folklore, the lion evolved into a mythical creature. Eventually, the Chinese bred dogs that resembled their imaginative idea of this fantastic animal. The result of these breeding projects was the Pekingese, which was originally kept as a royal pet of the Chinese nobility long before commoners were allowed to own it.

Card Meaning

The Foo Dogs are one of the more auspicious cards to draw. You are always safe when guarded by a pair of these creatures. They are eternally loyal and powerful, and committed to upholding the sanctity of order and balance by preventing disruptive forces from passing through. If you feel that their presence is missing from your home or your life, you may want to invoke them by placing their image somewhere in your home or yard. They are the most effective when stationed right outside of a doorway. You can also place them on your altar or nightstand if you feel that negative forces have been getting into your head.

The Foo Dogs can bear significance with regards to one's love life. The mystical creatures are a pair mated for eternity, forever content and committed to balance. They stand for marriage or long-term fidelity and commitment. Regardless of the traditionalism of the pairing, their relationship is stable and safe, strengthened by mutual trust and respect and shared responsibilities. The two people complement each other. There may be ups and downs, but there is equilibrium overall. One individual does not hold power above the other's head. Disputes are short-lived and there is no abuse. This relationship has good promise to last a long time.

As the guardians of the home, the Foo Dogs also signify household concerns. They are a reminder that the home is the most fundamental base of stability in one's life. Both the house itself and the people in it—and everything needed to take care of them—are matters that require attention and care. Drawing the Foo Dogs card may be a reminder to invest in home improvement, security, even tax or mortgage obligations. It may also indicate that you need to spend

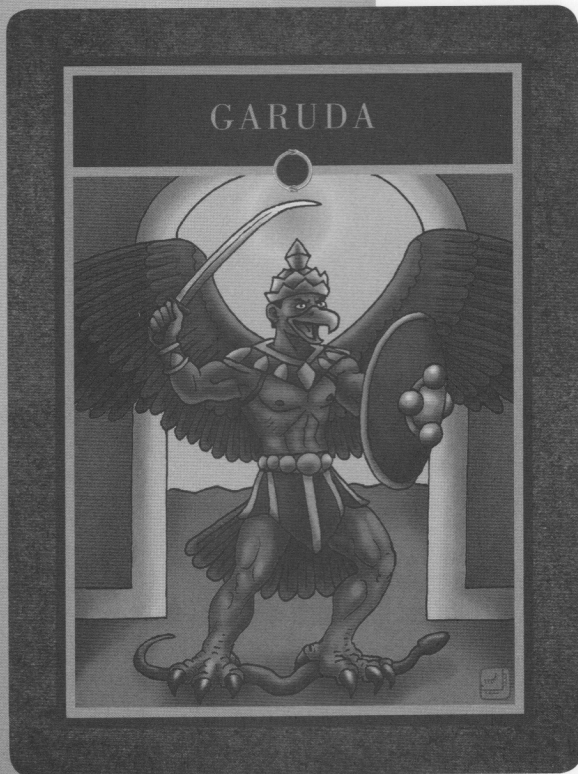
more time with the family or to mind a family member's concern. The family itself is an extremely important security base. The Foo Dogs card may represent the nuclear family. In interpreting the meaning, consider the possibility that it may signify your relationship with your natal family and not just with your spouse and children.

If this card represents a person, it is someone who is loyal, dutiful, and safety-conscious. This person is strongly dedicated to their home and loved ones. Although highly protective, they generally come across as Zen-like and composed rather than aggressive. They are practical and discriminating and not easily lured by distraction. The Foo Dogs may also represent a couple or pair of individuals, possibly a romantic pair. They are a two-person team who work cooperatively and effectively together.

Inverted

The Yin and Yang symbol has been moved to the bottom of the card as the balance has been upset. Something may have intruded upon the home or the relationship, or upon your peace of mind. The result is a feeling of being "off." The upset may have taken place a while ago, but the inverted Foo Dogs have still not righted themselves. If you have been feeling off-balance, it is time for you to take spiritual action and other measures to turn your life right-side up.

GARUDA



Keywords

Hero, Zealousness, Defender, Crusader, Defiance, Fighter, Activism, Enthusiasm, Courage, Do-Gooder, Headstrong, Righteousness, Rebel, Good vs. Evil

Mythological Background

Garuda is a divine eagle-man from India. When he was first hatched from his egg, he was so large and burning with fiery energy that all of the gods were terrified. They begged him for mercy and, hearing them, he finally shrank down to a more reasonable size. His first quest was aimed at freeing his mother from her evil sister and the 1,000 snakes that attended her. He accomplished this and became known as the sworn enemy and devourer of serpents. In the process, he also became immortal. He became the *vahana*, or mount, of the god Vishnu, who is perhaps the mightiest god in the Hindu religion, his role being the protector and preserver of the universe. Garuda also served as a mount for the god Krishna to perform acts of heroism.

Garuda had six sons, who all turned out to be snake-eating eagles. All birds are descended from these sons, and Garuda is their lord. The myth of Garuda spread to other parts of South Asia and his image became the national emblem of Thailand and Indonesia. Buddhist myth interprets the Garuda as a race of gigantic warrior bird-beings. These beings have their own civilization and four kings. Like the Hindu Garuda, they can change their size. They often appear in the shape of regular eagles, and sometimes they shapeshift into humans. They too are the enemies of serpents.

Card Meaning

Garuda is an activist. He is a hero at heart, passionate about a cause to fight for. He always has a point to make, a foe to face, and a righteous mission to fulfill. He might or might not care about receiving awards and praise—what defines Garuda instead is how he acts. He sees himself as a crusader of justice, and doing good in the world is more important than anything else. He is always fighting a battle, whether or not others understand the reason why. To him, there is always a reason. He feels this reason deeply and intuitively, if not viscerally. Everything to Garuda is a big deal, or else he ignores it altogether—it is all or none. To him, passivity is not an option; it is defeat. If a person is truly like Garuda, then this attitude of theirs is their source of personal strength and self-identity.

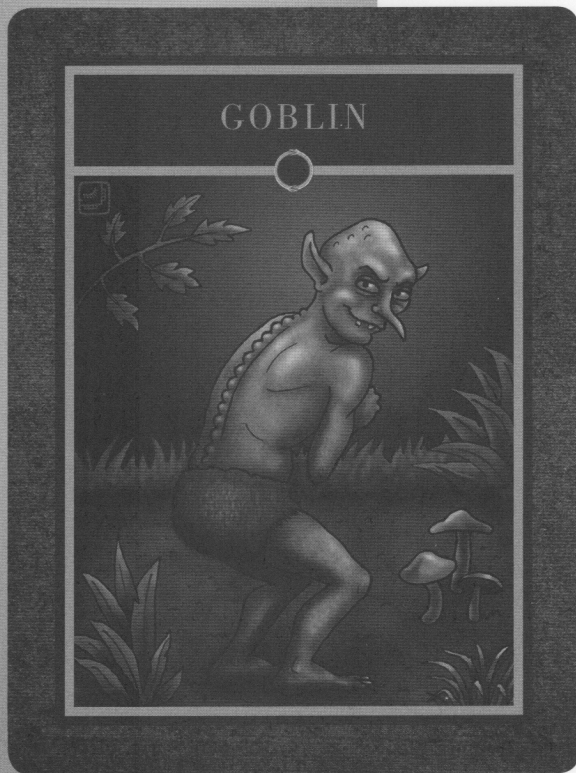
In the best cases, people are inspired by Garuda's passion and will rally together to defend the same cause. In worse cases, they find him aggressive, preachy, and obnoxious. Garuda's fighting spirit is so habitual that he is known to butt heads without thinking first. If other people do not share his passion, then they see him as zealous, headstrong, and over-reacting. Indeed, he is confrontational and often corrects people. His defensiveness and self-righteous attitude are sure to rub some people the wrong way. This is because he expects conflict. He is likely to take a combative stance during everyday conversation, although he may not be consciously aware that he does this. He may perceive enemies all around him or even create enemies where there were none. In these severe cases, he lacks a perception of his own fault. He sees this relationship with the world as normal. He has a hero complex and always thinks himself to be right.

Garuda is an extremist, but there is some wisdom in his ways. There are indeed real causes to defend and real changes to make for the world to become a better place. Many individuals are overwhelmed by the imposing challenges in making a difference. This results in their feelings of apathy or despair. Yet this is not so for Garuda. Drawing this card may indicate a surge of enthusiasm or a boost of aid towards your noble goal. Garuda may arrive in the form of a push or a shove to get something accomplished. You may or may not welcome this message at first, because the road before you leads to challenge. Garuda may be telling you to get over your fears and go save the day.

Inverted

When viewed upside-down, the snake beneath Garuda's feet now has the upper hand. This signifies a lost cause. One may have picked the wrong fight, either entering battle without necessity or else finding themselves defeated. It may even be that the snake was innocent in the first place. Although he means well, Garuda's perceived cause is not always actually right.

GOBLIN



Keywords

Treachery, Pettiness, Annoyance, Rudeness, Insults, Dishonesty, Disrespect, Troublemaker, Selfishness, Lack of Morals, Mean-Spiritedness, Bad Reputation, Negative Interactions

Mythological Background

The Goblin is a type of Fae, meaning that it is a relative of the Fairy. These creatures represent what the Scotts call the “Unseelie Court,” or races of Fae that are dark and chaotic. Goblins are mean-spirited and mischievous, and can be vicious when provoked. They are often to blame when one feels an unexpected pinch or if something goes missing or is broken mysteriously. Ugly in appearance, Goblins are generally presumed to be green and tiny in stature. However, there is no single standard for their appearance, and there are in fact many different kinds of Goblins.

The Goblin is thought to be of French origin before spreading to other countries. It originated as a French counterpart to the German Kobold or the English Boggart. It is a household spirit known for causing mischief. Yet, as the myths evolved, the Goblin became an outdoor being that harassed travelers with its uncouth behavior. It became the Hobgoblin, which is often invisible or can shapeshift in order to sneak up on unsuspecting passersby. Often it leads travelers astray, causing them to become lost. World War I brought a new species called the Gremlin, which lurks on airplanes and damages machinery. The most evil type of Goblin is the Redcap—this one will actually kill people and soak its hat in their blood. Fortunately, most Goblins are not violent, only very annoying.

Card Meaning

Goblins are by no means the most dangerous of monsters, but they are highly unpleasant and all too commonly encountered. They are rude people, dirty creeps, petty thieves, compulsive liars, mean-old grouches, selfish jerks, worthless hooligans, and Internet trolls. Indeed, the world is full of Goblins. You probably see people like this on a frequent basis, or even work with them, or possibly even live with one. The existence of these obnoxious Goblin-folk is an inescapable fact of life.

Goblins tend to be transient beings, and this is a good thing for the sake of society. Most people who we see acting like Goblins are not that way all the time. A person may turn into a Goblin if he is having a bad day, and might only express it at a certain time or toward a certain individual. The same individual could be back to normal the very next day or could behave differently toward a different person. Of course everybody is at risk of being a Goblin sometimes. If we do not watch our tempers, if we say something nasty, or if we neglect our manners, then we could easily be seen as a Goblin by someone else. The Goblin card may therefore signify a bad relationship between two people.

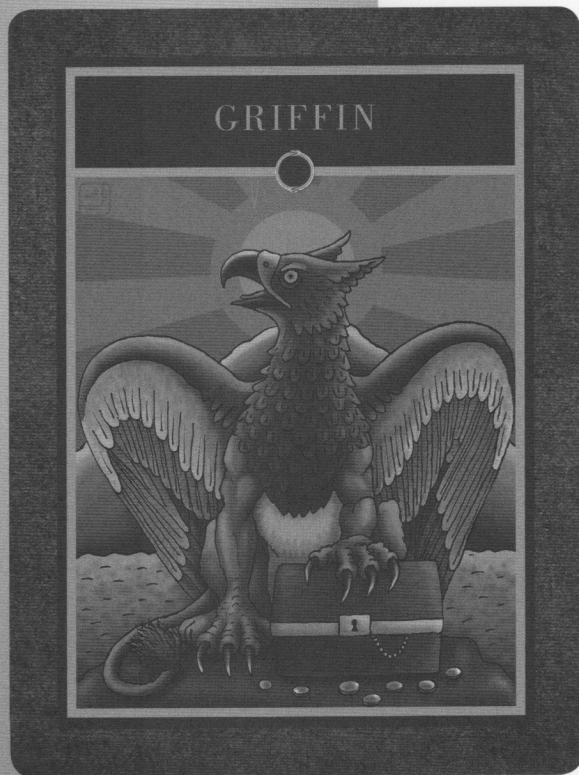
Although most Goblins are merely annoying, some of them are truly terrible people. These individuals are not simply moody; they are uncaring to the core. They will treat others badly on a frequent basis, either out of recklessness or because they actually derive pleasure from being abusive. They lack respect for others and are toxic to be around. They may be dangerous, as they have a broken moral compass. They may obey the law out of fear of being caught, but, in the worst cases, they may be bold and commit crimes without reservation. Everyone makes mistakes during their life, but, for this type of Goblin, it is not a mistake; it is who they are.

Drawing this card can indicate that you are being messed with by another person. With so many Goblins around us in the world, it would be of little surprise that you could be dragged down by one at some point. This is especially likely if you are forced to be around a Goblin for an extended period of time. Nobody is truly one-sided, so if you must be around a Goblin, try to find their non-Goblin side. Unfortunately, this is not always doable, and you may need to pursue more drastic measures, such as reporting the problem to a higher-up, or leaving.

Inverted

When in reverse the Goblin's unpleasantness is greatly magnified. He is not simply mischievous, but blatantly malicious and cruel. His bad behavior is intentional, possibly personal, and he has no excuse for this. This is a very serious situation and it warrants action to be taken on your part. If you do not act, then you are at great risk of being victimized.

GRIFFIN



Keywords

Dominance, Courage, Confidence, Pride, Willpower, Triumph, Self-Esteem, Self-Grandeur, Possessiveness, Arrogance, Brazenness, Boastfulness, Entitlement

Mythological Background

The Griffin is perhaps the oldest mythical creature in Western civilization, first appearing in Mesopotamia and Egypt over 5,000 years ago. Later, the Griffin was mentioned by Greek travelers and, finally, it became adopted by Christian Europe in medieval times. Although interpretations varied over time and space, it ultimately became a symbol of heroes, an emblem of strength and courage. Griffins became popular heraldic icons seen on coats of arms. They were even depicted on churches, as their dual eagle-lion components were seen as symbolizing the heavenly and corporeal aspects of the divine.

Rather than being associated with any one prominent legend, the Griffin was known from bestiaries. It was reputed to exist in various faraway places, such as Scythia, Ethiopia, and especially India. In the fourteenth century, Sir John Mandeville wrote that Griffins inhabit a land called Bacharia. He claimed that a Griffin is as strong as 8 lions and 100 eagles. Its talons are said to be so large that people use them as drinking horns, and the quills of its wing feathers are used to make bows. Much earlier, Philostratus wrote of the Griffins in India, which he said are worshipped as being sacred to the Sun. He characterized them as being more land-bound than adept at flight, but that they dig up gold and jewels and use these materials to build their nests. It became widely understood that Griffins are guardians of treasure.

Card Meaning

The Griffin is a person who sees himself as “hot stuff.” In fact, he may have a reason to think so, as others know him for his courage and skill. This is the vibe that he radiates outwardly, often aggressively so. He is extremely proud of himself, symbolized by the treasure chest seen on the card, and he loves to impress people. The Griffin embodies confidence, dominance, and grandeur. His high self-esteem can be a beneficial model for those who have a poor self-image. Unfortunately, the Griffin also carries negative aspects, being that wisdom and temperance are not particularly associated with this creature. Despite whatever real competence the archetypal Griffin actually possesses, he tends to give himself too much credit. At times, he may tout his credentials even when they are not relevant.

The treasure guarded by the Griffin symbolizes the spoils of victory in battle and the riches of kingship. This majestic creature has seen many battles and has a reputation for being a winner. Regardless of the actual number of victories attained, the Griffin outwardly projects a sense of triumph and capability, reflecting his inner perception of himself. The treasure also indicates that the Griffin is possessive and territorial, although he may or may not be greedy for more. A person with the characteristics of the Griffin may or may not be actually wealthy, but he is likely to have a collection of awards and trophies, or at least, a long list of accomplishments to brag about. The Griffin is all about attitude. Action is implied and generally assumed, but a person can also be a legitimate Griffin if he or she only “talks the talk” rather than “walks the walk.”

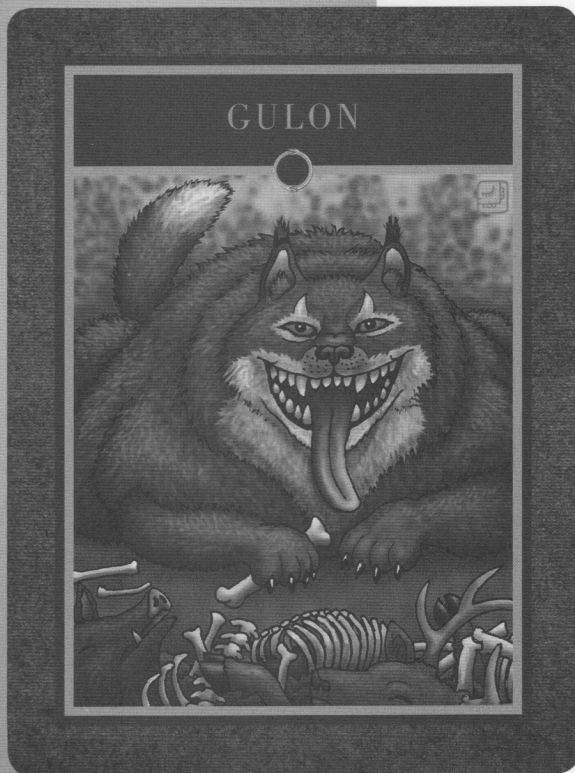
The Griffin desires strongly to be a leader. A person with characteristics of the Griffin is a strong Alpha in the social dominance

hierarchy. However, this does not guarantee that he would make a wise or qualified leader. If he is a leader, then he may be one of the best leaders there are. If not, then he will nonetheless feel a sense of entitlement. The Griffin takes his own personal victories and strong character as justification that he should be in charge, which when combined with his unwavering self-confidence, may result in conflicts with others. He cares more that people listen to him than about whether or not he is actually right. The weakness of the Griffin is that he does not question himself or his own decisions. In spite of this flaw, the Griffin is usually well-intentioned. His bossiness is due to the fact that he thinks his ideas are right for everyone.

Inverted

The treasure is now at the top of the image and the glorious sun is at the bottom. The Griffin places his personal glory above that which holds true power in nature. Thus, the inverted Griffin card is a warning of a dangerously overblown ego. This suggests that he is becoming increasingly selfish in his intentions and may transform into something more sinister. Beware; following this leader too closely might result in abuse down the road.

GULON



Keywords

Greed, Gluttony, Excess, Hubris, Overblown Ego, Arrogance, Selfishness, Smugness, Corruption, Shallowness, Living for the Moment, Lack of Self-Restraint, Laziness

Mythological Background

The Gulon, also known as the Jerff, comes from Scandinavia and Germany. It is often described as a composite of different fur-bearing animals, such as a cat, dog, fox, and bear. In other sources, it is simply regarded as an oversized wolverine. The name Gulon is etymologically related to the word "glutton," which describes its character. It is a solitary beast that roams the forests feasting on carrion. Its appetite is legendary, for it will gorge itself so excessively that its body becomes bloated with meat and gas. Once it has become so overstuffed that it can hardly move, it drags itself over to two closely-growing trees, wedges itself between the trees, and forces as much of its meal out of its body as it can. The Gulon is never sated, and once it has emptied itself, it will quickly resume its ravenous feasting.

The Gulon is normally a formidable beast, but it is extremely vulnerable while wedged between trees. There it is at risk of being killed by hunters, who often go searching for this creature. The Gulon's fur is thick and luxuriant and fetches a high price. Its meat is not eaten, but nearly all of its other parts are valuable for making various medicines, tools, and magic charms. It is also said, however, that those who use the products of the Gulon, especially those who wear its fur, will take on the creature's sordid qualities.

Card Meaning

The Gulon is a negative and undesirable creature, although he may not know it. If he is aware of his own negative qualities, then he does not care one iota. All he cares about is the pleasure in life that he takes for himself. Each gain that he makes reinforces his own self-satisfaction. He is so smug that feels entitled to everything he wants. His demeanor may be smarmy and fake. He does not see any reason to work for what he wants if he can just take it. Other people are just a means to an end or else they stand in the way. If the Gulon has any friends, then he only keeps them because they help to feed his ego.

Above anything else, the Gulon is greedy. This greed does not necessarily refer to money, although it certainly can. It can also apply to possessions, publicity, power, food, drugs, lovers, or anything else. Nowadays, the Gulon can even be a social media user obsessed with gaining more followers. His ego is insatiable. He will always want more than he deserves. Each gain provides only momentary relief. His pleasure comes from the act of acquisition, not from appreciating the wealth itself.

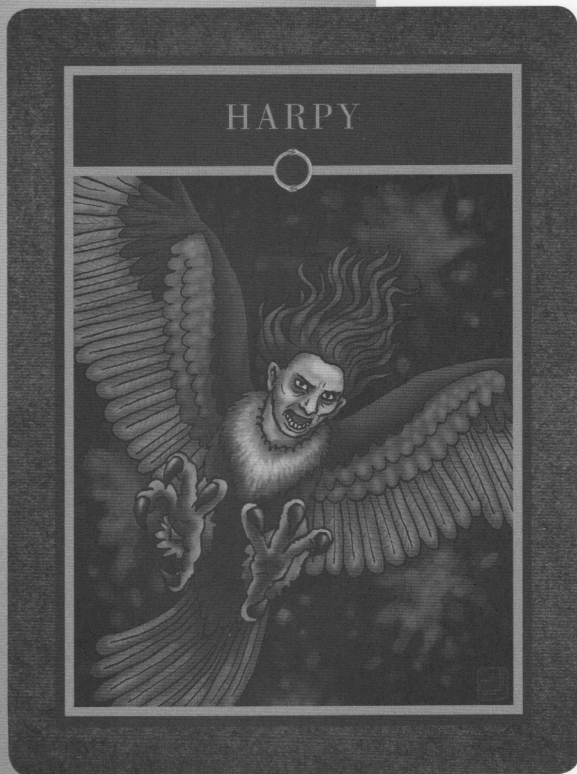
The Gulon's greed has shaped his entire approach to life and this has made him extraordinarily corrupt. If he has become successful in his gains, then he probably holds a fair amount of power. He will only use this power to further his self-interested aims, as he has no moral compass. His lack of appreciation for people will become evident once he can afford to throw them away after using them. At times he can be downright cruel. He will be in his happiest element if he can distance himself as far as possible from the people he is using. Of course, having more also begets the need for more. A person can transform into a Gulon over time, or their qualities of being a Gulon can become more pronounced as they make more gains, and their ego grows simultaneously.

To draw the Gulon card obviously serves as a warning. Be on the lookout for this beast and do not let him eat you! A Gulon is not your friend, even if he tries to curry your favor. Many people dislike him, even if many others admire his power. Do not be dazzled—the important part is what lies beneath the luxuriant fur. Moreover, do not let yourself become a Gulon! The Gulon has forgotten how to find happiness in anything other than acquisition. This is not true happiness at all.

Inverted

The Gulon is also known for making himself so fat that he cannot move. Once he is wedged between two trees, he is trapped in a vulnerable position. This was his own doing. The inverted card signifies a situation of downfall by hubris. It can apply to any person whose ego has gotten out of hand, if even for just a moment, and has unwittingly gotten stuck in a bad situation.

HARPY



Keywords

Hostility, Anger, Vengeance, Spite, Loathing, Hatred, Disruption, Bad Temper, Defilement, Ruining, Enemy, Personal Attacks, Bullying, Social Disaster

Mythological Background

One of the earlier classical Greek scholars, Hesiod, described the Harpies as divine sky nymphs. He wrote that they were wind spirits, daughters of the sea god Thaumas. Obviously, their portrayal changed greatly over time. Before long the Harpies devolved into the monstrous creatures that are more familiar: hideous, ravenous, screeching, filthy, and foul-smelling. Later, they were presumed to be the offspring of Typhon and Echidna, who were the parents of many of the Greek monsters. Different depictions give them differing degrees of humanity, sometimes with the torso of a woman, other times only the head. Their human face is usually ugly and their body is that of a vulture. They have dangerous talons that are said to be made of metal.

The word Harpy comes from the Greek word for “snatcher,” or “thief.” Harpies are infamous for stealing people’s food and dumping their excrement on the dining table. These vile creatures can kill humans, but do so rarely. Instead, they usually prefer to terrify, rob, and vomit all over their victims. King Phineas of Thrace was subjected to their torment as a punishment for misusing his power of prophecy. He was rescued by Jason and the Argonauts, who drove the Harpies away. The Argonauts did not kill the Harpies as per the request of their sister, Iris, the goddess of rainbows. The Harpies thus survived to reappear in subsequent myths, including Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Dante’s *Inferno*.

Card Meaning

All is well until the Harpy arrives, as she is that one who flies in and ruins good occasions. The Harpy is a witch with a capital “B.” She is possibly the last creature that anyone should want to be perceived as by others. Although Harpies are always female in traditional myth, real-life Harpies can be of any gender. They are extremely negative people. They start fights when people are otherwise getting along, cause trouble when everything should be okay, and throw extra fire on situations that are already bad. They are backstabbing and vengeful, and fond of playing hardball. Some Harpies do this because they derive satisfaction from doing so; others are simply self-absorbed and oblivious to the feelings of others. The result is ultimately the same.

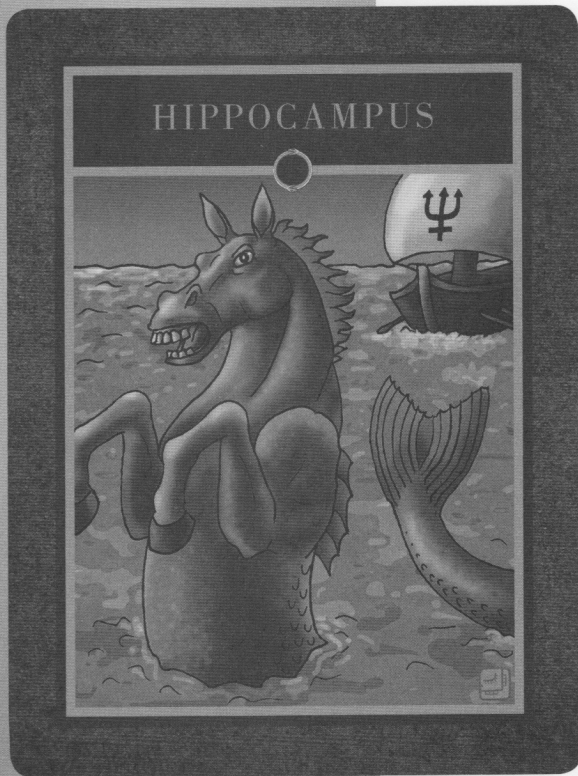
The Harpy’s actions might or might not be motivated by personal animosity. Yet, even when they are not, she is still the one who actively makes a situation worse. To be a Harpy is to be in the wrong. If someone else has done something they should not have, the Harpy will overreact and make the situation even worse. A problematic situation can only get better if the Harpy is removed from it, meaning that the person causing trouble needs to stop acting like a Harpy. In order to do this, that person must acknowledge what they did wrong and work to make amends. Drawing the Harpy card could potentially indicate that the person is you! If it is someone else, then it will help to try to understand why that person is behaving so poorly. Simply driving the Harpy away may be useful in some cases, but attempting to do so also runs the risk of further inflaming her wrath.

Fortunately, most Harpies do not linger for very long. More often the Harpy comes in the form of someone being in an unusually nasty mood, rather than someone who acts that way all the time. Anger itself can be dealt with in a healthy manner, but the Harpy arrives when one handles their anger inappropriately and takes it out on others. Usually, the perpetrator gets over it after they cool down and come to their senses. In some cases, they may even realize what they did and feel bad about it afterwards. More often, however, the Harpy’s attacks are provoked by misunderstandings, and she may never actually know that she was in the wrong. In order to rectify the problem, you must speak to her about it only after the Harpy has left her being. For as long as the person remains angry or hateful, the Harpy hovers nearby.

Inverted

In reverse, this card shows a Harpy falling upside-down. This Harpy is the wrongly accused, the vilified scapegoat, not even a real Harpy at all. Her attacks may be counter to something else that was done to her first—if she even attacked anyone at all. She may be the victim of unfortunate circumstances or even of another person who is the real troublemaker. Reserve judgment. It is easy to point fingers when someone looks like a Harpy, but there is actually more to the story than meets the eye.

HIPPOCAMPUS



Keywords

Forward Motion, Adventure, Journeys, Travel, Motivation, Action, Movement, Energy, Eagerness, Impatience, Frustration, Change, Risk-Taker, Determination, Gut Instinct

Mythological Background

Half-horse and half-fish, the Hippocampi are the untamed wild broncos of the sea. Only the god Poseidon has harnessed their raw physical power. Poseidon is the lord of the sea, and he is also known as the "Earth Shaker," as he causes earthquakes when angry. He is the god of travel and transportation. In ancient Greece there were two common modes of long-distance travel—by boat and by horse—and Poseidon presides over both of these. The Hippocampi are his horses and they pull his chariot through the sea. His daughters, the sea nymphs called Nereids, ride on their backs.

Not thwarted by the same boundaries as other sea creatures, a Hippocampus can travel in both salt water and fresh water, and beyond. In the legend of Jason and the Argonauts, the moment Poseidon released one of the beasts from his chariot, it took the shape of a normal horse and went galloping across the land. Sometimes the Hippocampi are even depicted with wings. They were adopted by Phoenician, Etruscan, and even Christian civilization. They have been depicted on bathhouses and as statues in the form of fountains. In medieval Europe, it was one of the many mythical animals that could appear on a coat of arms. *Hippocampus* is also the scientific name of the real-life sea horse, as well as a part of the brain that is shaped like this creature.

Card Meaning

The Hippocampus symbolizes the desire to move. Motion is inherent to the essence of this creature, as it embodies the essence of the sea itself—churning, flowing, and endless. It is brimming with energy, so much that it cannot be contained. The Hippocampus thrives on motion and despises periods of slowness or stagnation. It wants to keep moving and, when its environment changes, it will simply change its own shape, sprouting legs or even wings, and will keep going. This creature has fortitude to the extreme. It is a risk-taker. Whether it is traveling over a physical distance or just working on a project, the Hippocampus has the drive to make some serious waves.

The mythical sea horse is directly linked to Poseidon, who is known as Neptune in Roman mythology. The Neptune symbol shown on the card has a cross at the bottom, representing the ground or the material plane, and three arrows atop the trident, signifying a powerful upward or forward motion. Neptune is regarded as a chaotic symbol, represented in the nature of the sea and the Hippocampus' uncontrollable vigor. He is also associated with the zodiac sign Pisces—two fish connected to each other, but swimming in opposite directions. This, along with the cross on the Neptune symbol, suggests a feeling of being restrained by or anchored to outside forces from which the Hippocampus is trying to move away. Once cut loose, it will zoom off into the horizon.

Another important quality of Neptune and Pisces, and of the Hippocampus itself, is gut instinct. Pisces is associated with strong emotions, whether positive or negative, while Neptune is associated with dreams and desires. Water signs are reminders of the power of

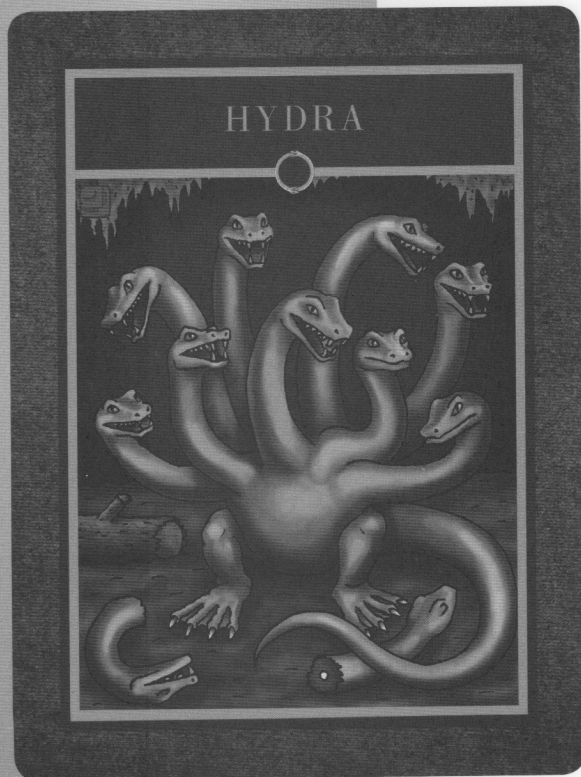
one's feelings with regards to their potential to make things happen. The Hippocampus symbolizes an intuitive yearning, as well as a physical urge to move. Such feelings are seated more deeply than the intentions of the conscious mind. All creatures of the deep embody this, but the Hippocampus specifically represents the desire to go. It could be telling you, "Go with your gut." Whatever the Hippocampus wants, it wants right now.

In a reading, the Hippocampus could suggest eagerness, impatience, or a desire for change. It generally indicates a strong desire to get moving, perhaps to move away from something or someone. It may or may not have a particular endpoint in sight. The Hippocampus could also stand for a journey. Whether a specific quest or simply a state of wandering, this card can signify that the subject is currently in transit, or is about to embark on an adventure.

Inverted

The chaotic nature of Neptune has become too strong. The inverted Hippocampus suggests that something is moving too quickly, going out of control. The subject may have trouble keeping up with the intense, swift current. Alternatively, one's gut desire to move may be overpowering his senses, leading him to act too soon. Try to seize the reins and think before you run.

HYDRA



Keywords

Chaos, Confusion, Helter-Skelter, A Pressing Problem, Being Overwhelmed, Exacerbation, Despair, Disaster, Dire Situation, Difficult Solution, Antagonism

Mythological Background

The Hydra from Greek mythology inhabited the swamps of a region called Lerna. It was one of the monstrous offspring of Echidna and Typhon. In traditional Greek art, it was depicted as a snake with many heads. Later, in medieval art, it appeared to be more like a multi-headed dragon, often with wings. The many heads were its most important characteristic, and these increased in number whenever someone would attempt to slay it. If a brave warrior survived the creature's toxic breath long enough to slice off one of its heads, two more heads would instantly grow back in its place!

Finally, the legendary hero Hercules was summoned to defeat the beast. He did so with the aid of his nephew Iolaus, the two of them wrapping cloths around their noses and mouths so as not to breathe in the toxic fumes. Hercules lured the Hydra out of its cave, while Iolaus provided him with burning tree branches. Whenever Hercules would slice off one of its heads, he would use the fire to cauterize the stump and prevent any new heads from growing. After defeating the Hydra, he dipped his arrows into its poisonous blood. He later used these poisoned arrows to slay an army of Centaurs. Yet, in the end, Hercules would die from coming into contact with the blood of one of the Centaurs that had been tainted with the poison of the Hydra.

Card Meaning

The Hydra is the embodiment of chaos and disaster. It may represent one of the most daunting problems that one has ever faced. It is a frenzied situation with its many serpentine heads writhing about, exhaling noxious fumes and drooling corrosive venom. To even look at this mess causes many people to cringe. If they go near it, they risk falling prey to the problem and making it grow larger. Attempting to kill this beast only makes it more powerful. According to one legend, the creature eventually gained up to a hundred heads this way. By that point its power was tremendous. The Hydra will not go away on its own. Left alone, it will continue to claim victims or it may sleep in its cave only to return stronger than ever later on.

If the Hydra card is drawn to represent a person, then it is a person who thrives on chaos. Perhaps they enjoy causing trouble and actively disrupting others. The Hydra may even be a group of individuals, as suggested by the multiple heads. Clearing the situation of their induced havoc can be just as challenging as defeating any other manifestation of the Hydra. It must be outsmarted in order to be defeated. Depending on what the Hydra wants, it may be thwarted through ostracism, although this will not work in every case.

There is no choice; the Hydra must be defeated in order to make it permanently disappear. Yet this is a challenge that may look insurmountable. Do not simply swing a sword at the problem—a more clever solution is needed. When Hercules defeated the Hydra, he did not use his legendary strength as his primary weapon. Instead, he used ingenuity with careful planning and the aid of a companion. He was hesitant about this at first. Hercules was the mightiest of heroes, and he did not believe that his nephew could be of any help.

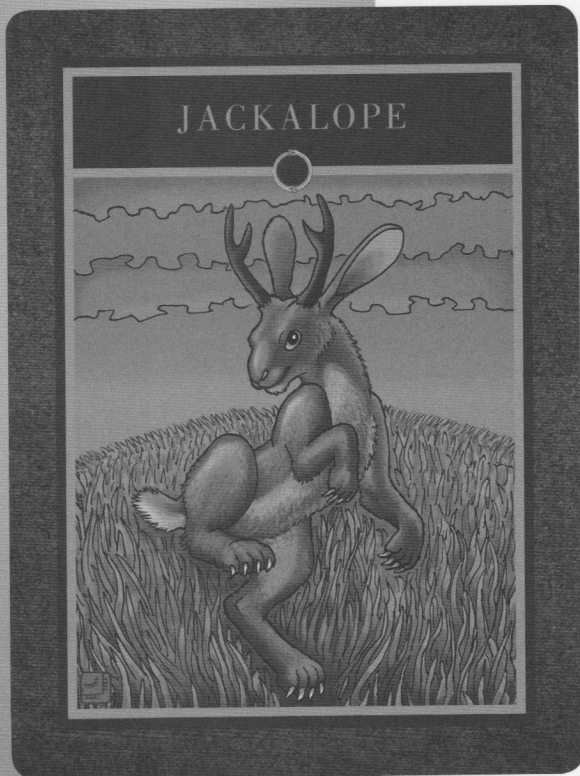
Though, once he swallowed his pride, he found that his nephew's assistance was crucial to slaying the monster.

It takes cleverness to defeat the Hydra, not pride, rage, brute strength, or macho attitudes. The monster is a puzzle to be solved, something that requires you to think differently and approach the situation from a different angle. It may require that you cooperate with another person with whom you could not previously get along. Enemies must turn their swords away from each other and turn them, instead, toward a common problem. In so doing, they become allies and, hopefully, this relationship will persist, even after they defeat the Hydra.

Inverted

The dead, chopped-off heads are at the top of the picture, while the Hydra hangs upside-down below. Has the monster finally met its match? Perhaps there is an end in sight if the warrior has discovered the Hydra's weakness and dealt an effective blow. Just use caution and ensure that all stumps are cauterized; then victory can be yours!

JACKALOPE



Keywords

Joker, Absurdity, Irony, Humor, Comic Relief, Playfulness, Mischief, Mockery, Trickster, Exaggeration, Tall Tales, False Rumors, Implausibility

Mythological Background

The Jackalope comes from tall tales of the American West. Pioneers and woodsmen entertained each other with stories of this and other absurd creatures, known collectively as “fearsome critters.” The Jackalope is indeed fearsome, infamous as a mischievous trickster, known to imitate the sound of a human voice to deceive hunters. Not surprisingly, it is virtually impossible to catch. Jackalopes are the hybrid offspring of a jackrabbit and a pronghorn antelope. They can also reproduce on their own, but only during storms that have lightning and hail. Taverns and hunting lodges sometimes display taxidermic Jackalope mounts as a joke. The Jackalope may be related to other trickster rabbits of folklore, such as Brer Rabbit, Manabozo, and even Bugs Bunny.

The Jackalope is not the only horned rabbit in world folklore. In Germany, the Bavarian forests are said to be haunted by a fierce little beast called the Wolpertinger. This monster looks like a rabbit with antlers, fangs, and wings. In Arabian myth, there is the Al Miraj, which is a yellow rabbit sporting a single black horn like a unicorn's. The Jackalope is no cuddly bunny, but its cousins are decidedly worse: both the Wolpertinger and the Al Miraj are man-eaters. These bizarre myths actually have a basis in reality. There is a type of Shope papilloma virus that, in extreme cases, can cause rabbits to develop hornlike growths! Of course, these little monsters are harmless to humans.

Card Meaning

The Jackalope is a lively and comical figure. He is a joker, whether he provides entertainment as a stand-up comic, interjects with improvised puns, or executes pranks and practical jokes. His sense of humor distinguishes him. He is playful and mischievous and able to make others laugh along with him. He is guaranteed to add a spirited presence to any gathering. If one is looking to have a good time with friends, the Jackalope can turn any small group into a party.

Morally speaking, the archetype of the Jackalope is ambiguous. The symbolism provides no specification of whether his jokes are harmless or mean-spirited, tasteful or offensive. He may be a well-intentioned person or an obnoxious jerk—or anything in between. The mythical creature is purported to have a troublesome side, if not a mean streak. In the Old West, it was rumored to sneak up and poke people in the rear end with its horns. Thus people in the Jackalope's presence may find themselves to be the butt of the joke. This creature serves first and foremost to amuse himself. Other people provide incentive, but the jokes may be at their expense. If well-intentioned, the person who embodies the Jackalope is probably seen as immature. He may have many friends, but not everyone will be a fan all the time.

In general, the Jackalope signifies a lack of seriousness. It can be a person, an attitude, or the way one spends his day. It may reflect an opinion that one holds about something, seeing something as laughable and dismissible. The Jackalope is the embodiment of silliness and whimsy, which often manifests through absurdity and irony. As an example of this irony, the Jackalope's laughter may be no laughing matter. There is a time and a place for fun and games, but such things are not always constructive. The Jackalope may be a person who is goofing off instead of applying the appropriate

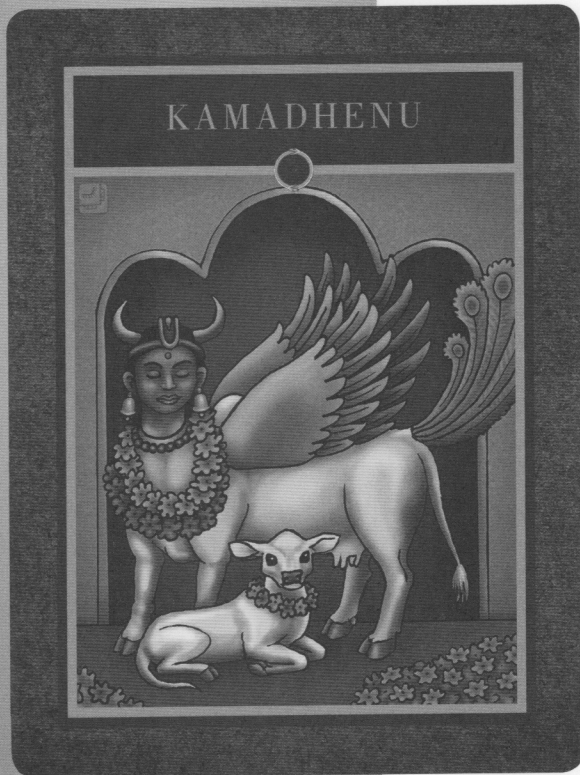
amount of effort or professionalism. His lack of seriousness can be most unwelcome in some situations, and the archetype's presence can cause real problems.

The Jackalope also signifies something unlikely or implausible—an idea that is in itself not to be taken seriously. It is a ridiculous creature, the stuff of tall tales and drunkards' delusions. Beware of the message brought by the Jackalope: it may be a lie. Otherwise, it may be a twisted or exaggerated version of the truth. It may stand for one big misunderstanding, something that has sent people running off foolishly in the wrong direction. Whenever this happens, the Jackalope is laughing.

Inverted

The Jackalope falls upside-down in his playful dance. That which was intended as fun and games has abruptly been cut short. He has failed to achieve entertainment as his lack of seriousness has gotten him into trouble... perhaps again. This was the wrong time to goof around. This may also signify a joke that missed the mark, possibly coming across as offensive rather than funny.

KAMADHENU



Keywords

Love, Generosity, Nurturing, Nourishment, Mother, Caretaker, Hospitality, Self-Sacrifice, Kindness, Serenity, Comfort, Contentment, Fertility

Mythological Background

Kamadhenu is the divine mother of all cows from Hindu mythology. In earlier renderings, she was shaped like an ordinary cow, but after Persian influence, she became depicted with a human head, colorful wings, and a peacock's tail. In artwork she is often presided over by the god Shiva and the goddess Parvati. Her body is a metaphor for the universe, housing all of the gods: her eyes are the sun and moon, and her legs are the Himalayan Mountains. Images show milk flowing from her udder and dripping onto a sacred *lingham* and *yonis* symbol. Kamadhenu is the protector of the Brahmins, or priestly class. They believe that she provided them with everything they have. She is sometimes marked with a swastika, which, in spite of recent misuse, is actually an ancient holy symbol of good luck.

Kamadhenu originated by rising forth from the cosmic ocean when the gods churned it to obtain the elixir of life. She is known as the "cow of plenty" or "she from whom that which is desired is drawn." Hindus worship cows because they believe that each one is a manifestation of Kamadhenu. Indian people name their cows and consider them to be part of the family. Religious law condemns the killing of them or the eating of their meat. Milk and dairy products are often used as religious offerings. It is said that any farmer who owns Kamadhenu will see prosperity and plenty.

Card Meaning

Kamadhenu is the eternally loving mother. All are her children, and her love for them is unconditional. She protects, provides, nourishes, and forgives. Fathers can also have this kind of nurturing love for their children, as can any caretaker. Any relationship characterized by this type of love, whether there is a biological tie between the two or not, is symbolized in this card. It may even signify the desire to have a child or other person or creature to care for, even if such a dependent is not yet present in the subject's life.

When representing a real person, Kamadhenu can potentially stand for one's actual mother or other guardian. In some readings the card may point to one's relationship with his or her parents. The person embodying this archetypal caretaker is a selfless giver. She is like the self-sacrificing cow, the sacred animal worshipped by millions. The sacred cow is a noble archetype providing milk for all her people to be nourished. She will let her loved ones have anything they want if she is able to provide it. Her priorities are in caring for others, not in personal gain. Allowing others to grow and to be happy and safe is its own reward. This is what she feels is her purpose in the world.

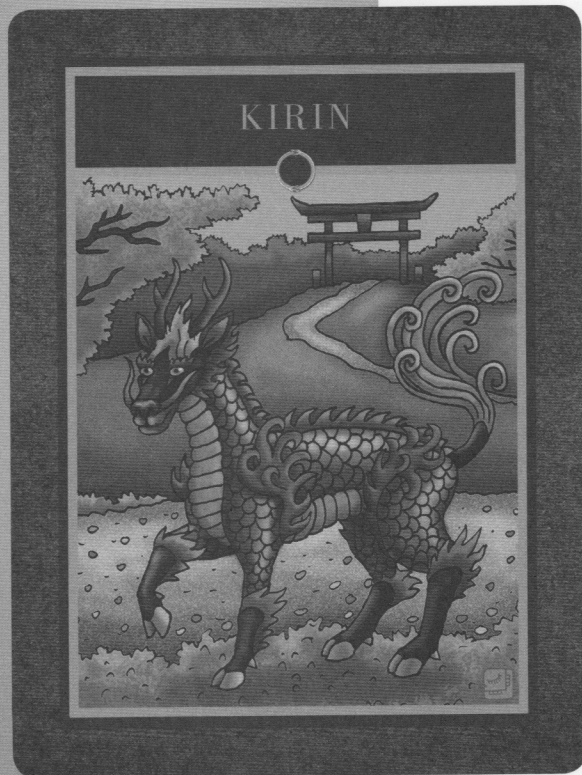
There are a few potential negative aspects of Kamadhenu's endless nurturing. One is the risk that the child may become spoiled. The child may grow up with a sense of being entitled to whatever he wants, never having learned the need to share, compromise, or simply make do with having less. Another potential problem is that the child may be too sheltered. Held too closely and smothered, he may not grow enough emotionally and develop the knowledge needed to deal with a tough world. Additionally, the mother may neglect her own well-being, or even put herself in direct danger, by focusing her attention

all on the child's needs and wants and ignoring her own. For these reasons, you must maintain a broad perspective on the current and potential future situations when aspecting the love of Kamadhenu.

As the "cow of plenty," Kamadhenu makes her children wealthy through her love. This may or may not refer to material gifts that the mother provides. More directly to the meaning of the archetype, the wealth is the tender care itself. A person who is loved by Kamadhenu, and is aware of it and appreciates it, derives a sense of contentment from being loved. They, like her, become placid and satisfied, like the happy Buddha, having all they ever need.

Inverted

The little calf is at the top of the inverted card, but is upside down. Her mother is in the picture, but she does not feel her presence. Instead the calf feels abandoned and lost. A person may be feeling a lack of love from others, or a lack of support from those expected to provide it. It could possibly signify issues that one has with her own parents, or with her own children.



Keywords

Good Luck, Happiness, Miracles, Good News, Positive Change, Blessings, Benevolence, Charity, Optimism, Divine Intervention, Premonition, Good Omen

Mythological Background

This creature is known as the Kirin in Japan, the Qilin or Ch'i-Lin in China, and the Ghilen in Thailand. Westerners often identify it as the "Chinese Unicorn," although many Asian depictions portray it as having two horns rather than one. There are in fact many varieties of Kirin in different East Asian countries, some of them having a single horn and some having two, and some having none at all. More important than the number of horns are its other characteristics: a dragon-like head, a scaly body, and hooved feet. In China, where the myth originated, it is one of the four Heavenly creatures—the others being the Dragon, the Phoenix, and the Tortoise.

The Kirin is said to walk silently, stepping so lightly that it does not harm a single blade of grass. It can live for thousands of years and can materialize suddenly in places as a lucky omen. For instance, it may appear before the birth of a great philosopher or before the accession of a benevolent emperor. Kirins have been known to materialize in court to free the wrongly convicted. According to Japanese folklore, the Kirin brings extremely good luck to the virtuous and will slay the wicked with its horn. Women sometimes surround themselves with images of the Kirin in hopes that this sacred beast will grace them with a child destined for greatness.

Card Meaning

The miraculous Kirin is the bringer of happiness. His visit is a prayer answered, a wish granted. He may arrive at last after years of yearning or he may appear unexpectedly, but in every case, his tidings result in great joy and relief. He signifies a momentous change that comes as a most appreciated gift. When drawn to represent a person, the Kirin is someone whose smiles are genuine and contagious. He is the sunlight that penetrates the darkness. He is hope fulfilled. He embodies the emotion of joy, rather than the materialistic aspect of receiving a gift.

The Kirin is the quintessential creature of good luck. Most of the time blessed fortune is gained after an extensive period of difficult labor and poverty. Yet sometimes it is easily within reach and we might not even realize it. The Kirin arrives to tell us when such an opportunity is at hand. He represents that split-second decision, that unplanned trip or chance encounter, that divine intervention that changes a person's life for the better.

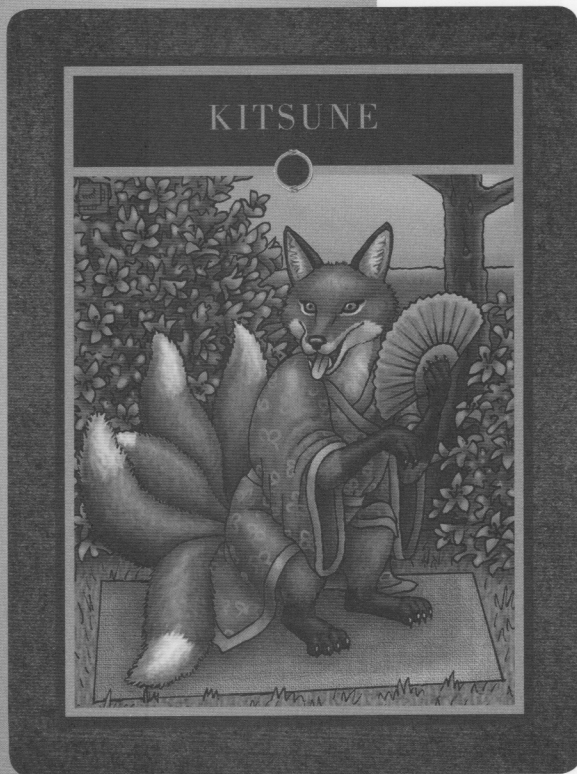
Unlike certain other auspicious mythical archetypes, the Kirin himself is not an agent of change. Rather, he is a messenger who comes to report that a positive change is right around the corner, like a light from Heaven. He does not transform people's lives directly; he simply shows them the way to go. If one is wise, he will heed the Kirin's message and follow in the direction that the creature suggests, as this direction will change his life. Yet the person still ultimately makes the decision. The Kirin merely has the advantage of seeing what lies ahead on the various roads, where humans are unable to know the future. He has the ability to connect people to a brighter destiny.

A person with characteristics of the Kirin is kind and caring and acts charitably toward others, whether he knows the far-reaching effects of his actions or not. He is well-liked by many, and this is because he is truly a good person, not because he is wealthy, hip, or socially powerful. He is characterized by his noble intentions. He represents someone who reaches out to others and makes a positive difference in their lives. This is something that he will do for many people—even strangers, and not just his friends and family. The Kirin is also mysterious, however, and will probably avoid fame and publicity if given a choice. Instead, he comes and goes, bringing good fortune when he appears and the rest of the time leaving people wishing that he visited them more often.

Inverted

The Kirin stands on a path toward happiness, but the subject has passed him by. Perhaps you have been searching so hard for the Kirin that your sight has become too focused and myopic. Perhaps you have been too depressed to notice such a positive thing or, alternatively, too conceited and expecting something more grandiose. The Kirin does not always take the form that one expects, but this does not mean that he is not there. To draw this card inverted suggests that the Kirin has in fact presented itself to you, but you need to retrace your steps and look again.

KITSUNE



Keywords

Intelligence, Wile and Guile, Cleverness, Disguise, Trickster, Shapeshifting, Self-Transformation, Self-Empowerment, Fulfillment of Desires, Attractiveness, Sensuality

Mythological Background

Kitsune is the Japanese name of a shapeshifting fox spirit. In China the same creature is called Hu Hsien or Huli Jing; in Korea it is the Gumiho. The Korean version is considered evil, but this was not always the case in earlier folklore. Like regular foxes, these beings are neither all good, nor all bad. In Japan, the more malicious ones are referred to as Nogitsunes, while other Kitsunes are considered benevolent. Benevolent Kitsunes serve Inari, a gender-changing deity of rice and prosperity. These guardians usually appear as oversized white foxes, sometimes carrying Inari on their back. Elsewhere, the Kitsune is depicted as a red fox with many tails.

Good or bad, these supernatural creatures are known for their intelligence and long life spans. They begin their lives as ordinary foxes, but start to grow extra tails after living for 100 years. A Kitsune is considered to be an elder once it has reached 1,000 years of age and has nine tails. Perhaps Kitsunes are best known for their ability to shapeshift into humans. There are numerous stories of a man falling in love with a beautiful woman, who is later discovered to be a fox spirit in disguise. The Kitsune's true form becomes revealed if her tail is seen sticking out of her dress. Yet other times her secret is never found. If she holds her disguise well, she may become her lover's favorite mistress or even his faithful wife.

Card Meaning

The Kitsune symbolizes the ability to utilize one's own cleverness for self-empowerment. Some people may be hesitant to do this, fearing that they will become self-absorbed. Yet we all must attend to matters of the self. Personal empowerment is an important thing, as it can be used to correct existing problems and instill happiness in one's life. Are you dissatisfied with the current state of your personal life? Do you wish you could feel better about yourself? Do people exclude and ignore you? The Kitsune shows you that you have the ability to take control of your life and change these things.

The Kitsune teaches self-empowerment through transformation. You cannot change the world around you, but you can change yourself, and the world will respond to you differently. Like a Kitsune, you can transform by tapping into your own cleverness. Simply wishing for a change is not clever enough, but you can bring your wish to life by thinking thoroughly about what you want and working hard to behave accordingly. Also, like a Kitsune, you are intelligent and able to wear many guises. This does not mean that the transition will be easy or quick, or that it will even feel natural at first. You will have to put an end to certain things, and setbacks are inevitable. Yet, if your true, empowered identity has been long suppressed within you, the Kitsune can allow you to take control and realize the self who you always wanted to be.

When the Kitsune symbolizes a particular person, she is probably a social chameleon who can blend in with any crowd. She is probably seen as self-assured and highly likable. She may have been through a successful personal transformation in the past and serves as an example to others who seek to make similar changes. She may be a

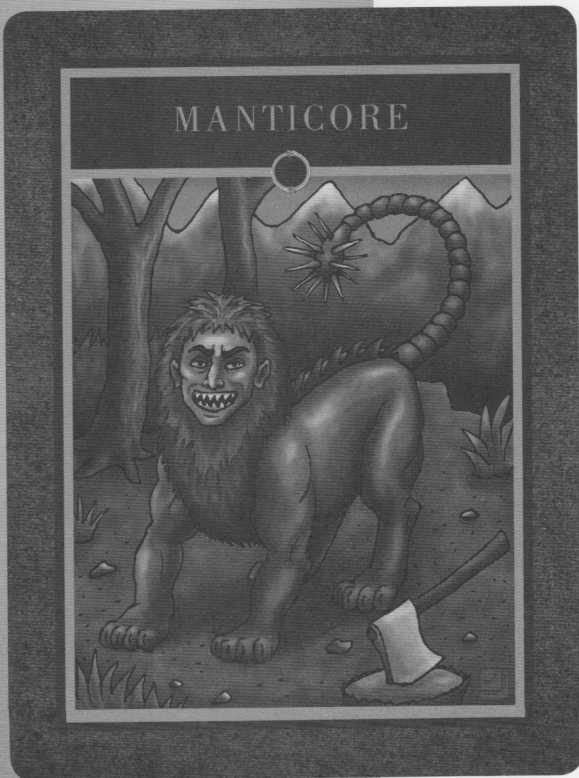
catalyst for your own self-transformation. The most skilled Kitsunes may have multiple guises, between which they can switch back and forth with ease, all of them being equally genuine. Though in more negative cases, the Kitsune may use her disguises for harmful purposes, being superficial, deceptive, and treacherous.

The Kitsune of mythology is also known for her sexual allure. In general, foxes are regarded as attractive creatures. Thus the Kitsune can stand for a "foxy" person—one who is attractive and sensual. In a broader sense, she can stand for matters related generally to sexual desire. Individuals, usually women, who feel sexually powerless, can discover their inner vixen by meditating on the Kitsune. Persons struggling with their sexual orientation or gender identity can also seek answers from this shapeshifter.

Inverted

When drawn in reverse, the Kitsune has made a poor choice in executing her disguise. She has failed to blend in and play the role convincingly. The transformation never took hold the way it was intended to. Her tails stick out of her robe and people can see them. The Kitsune card inverted indicates that a person is trying to be something that they are not. They are not a shapeshifter, but a fake.

MANTICORE



Keywords

Skillfulness, Thoroughness, Precision, Efficiency, Swiftly, Subtlety, Perfectionism, Careful Calculation, Pragmatism, Executioner, Reaping, Culling, Cutting a Tie

Mythological Background

The Manticore was first known in Western culture from the writings of a Greek physician named Ctesias of Cnidus. Ctesias served the royal court of Persia, where he recorded the Persians' folk history in numerous books. There he discovered accounts of the fearsome Manticore. Although there were no specific legends about it, the Persians believed that this predator stalked the jungles of India. The creature has since appeared in many Greek and medieval European bestiaries. Eventually, it would appear on churches to signify the prophecy of Doomsday. Modern-day fantasy artists sometimes give it horns or wings, although these features were absent from the original description.

The name of the Manticore, or Martikhora, means "man-eater." It can swallow its victims whole without spilling a drop of blood. Its head looks like a human's, but it also has multiple rows of sharp teeth, like a shark's. Its voice is very loud and sounds like a trumpet, yet it can move without a sound. It is known as the fastest animal on land and can even slay its victims from afar, shooting its tail barbs with perfect aim. These barbs can travel for distances of a hundred feet and, when one is discharged, a new one immediately grows back in its place. Without a doubt, the Manticore is the perfect killing machine. People believed that this beast was to blame when someone disappeared without a trace.

Card Meaning

No creature gets the job done as effectively as the Manticore does. He is fast, precise, and efficient. A person with the qualities of the Manticore is indeed terrifying to compete against, but they are exactly who you want to have on your side. They are the cream of the crop. They are likely an expert or prodigy at whatever it is that they do and will probably do it very quickly in addition to doing it well. They also make a smart delegator. The Manticore is the person most likely to gain a promotion or win an award as a result of his killer performance. He can achieve this by virtue of his genuine skills and not simply by chance or because of his social connections. Perfection is the name of his game. The Manticore stops at nothing to achieve his goal and to do it as flawlessly as possible.

Everything pictured in the card is sharp and pointy. The Manticore is sharp indeed, and sometimes prickly toward others. As a super-efficient hunter, he will not waste his time with anything superfluous. He will not preoccupy himself with anything that could hold him back or waste time with people who will weigh him down. He is not cuddly, soft, or sentimental. He knows that he needs to stay lean for the hunt. Every friend he has, he has for a reason. Everything he does, every choice he makes, is calculated. Onlookers might not always understand the reasoning for the choices he makes and does not make, but their puzzlement is of no concern to him when he is focused on a particular prize.

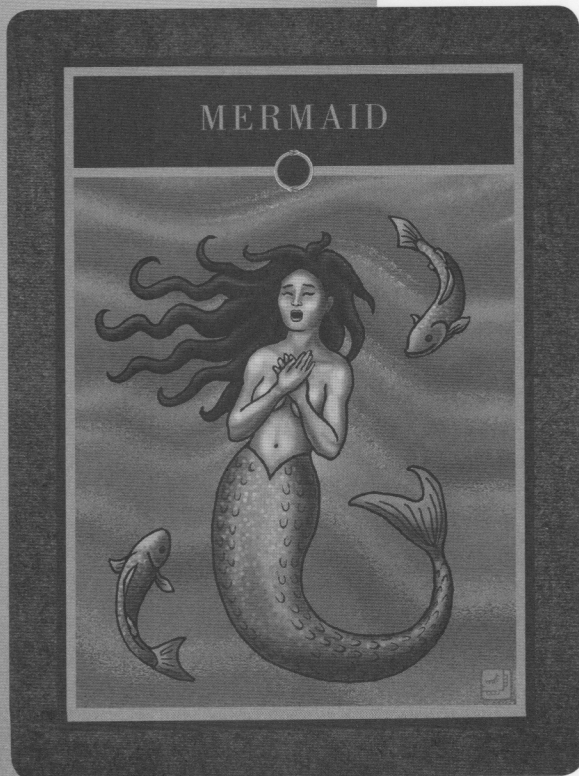
This card shows an axe embedded in a tree stump signifying the Manticore's role as executioner. As the perfect killer, the Manticore is the optimal creature to symbolize getting rid of that which is unwanted. Drawing this card may indicate that it is time to remove

something from your life, sever a tie, oust a troublemaker, kick a habit, destroy an obstacle, or just dispose of some old junk. Do this as the Manticore would. The Manticore is no haphazard berserker; he is cunning and deliberating. Use your smartest judgment and cut off whatever is holding you back and making your life less efficient. Save that which has utility to you. Meditate on the Manticore; understand the best move to make before you strike. If you channel the Manticore effectively, then you will not miss your target. But beware: if your foresight is not as sharp as your claws, you could end up destroying something that you will wish you still had later.

Inverted

The axe in the tree stump is now brought into focus, as the Manticore has gotten too carried away with his cutting and culling. It symbolizes someone who has jumped the gun and acted too soon. This may occur in the form of passing a judgment prematurely or being too judgmental in general. This is quite embarrassing; he is not the suave hunter that he thinks himself to be.

MERMAID



Keywords

Emotion, Passion, Desire, Sensuality, Love, Romance, Longing, Infatuation, Obsession, Beauty, Femininity, Sensitivity, Empathy, Intuition

Mythological Background

Belonging to an entire race of Merfolk, Mermaids have always been far more prevalent in folklore than their male counterparts, the Mermen. Historically, Mermaids would be sighted by lonely sailors who were easily seduced by the mysterious sea maidens. Yet sailors were often warned against falling for their legendary beauty, as lovelorn Mermaids were reputed to drag men underwater and drown them. The modern-day conception of the Mermaid is widely influenced by the nineteenth century Danish author Hans Christian Andersen. He wrote about a young Mermaid who fell hopelessly in love with a human prince. This story became the basis of Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, although Andersen's original had a much more tragic ending.

Mermaids may be best known from Western folklore, but similar-looking beings come from all around the world. For example, the Japanese Mermaid is called the Ningyo and lives in a world of undersea luxury, concealing its fishlike body with a long, silk gown. The Australian Aboriginal Mermaid is called the Yawkyawk and dwells in fresh water, having the magical ability to make women more fertile. The Mami Wata are Mermaids from West Africa and are materialistic, manipulative, and deceptive. Another African Mermaid, the Jengu from Cameroon, is more benevolent. Certain ocean goddesses of the world are also portrayed as Mermaids, such as Sedna of the Inuit, and Yemaya from West Africa and the Caribbean.

Card Meaning

Representing some of the deeper and more fundamental aspects of the human psyche, Mermaids are torrents of pure emotion. Their feelings are as strong as hurricanes and as volatile as the ocean itself. They experience the world as a sea in which they are suspended, rather than a solid ground beneath their feet. They are a symbol of femininity; however, their relevance is not exclusive to women. The Mermaid embodies a function that is present in both women and men: the intuition and emotionality of the right hemisphere of the brain.

Drawing the Mermaid card can be a sign that one needs to take down barriers, to tap more deeply into their emotions and be more sensitive. A person who has been neglecting his or her feelings, or who lacks empathy, can benefit from the spiritual energy and perceptive powers of the Mermaid. For a Mermaid, emotion and intuition are invaluable strengths. She relies on these skills in order to understand the world. She is highly sensitive to others, and this guides her social interactions on a level that less-sensitive individuals would not be able to experience. Everything in her life is an intensely emotional and sensuous experience. The Mermaid shown on the card does not even need to look at the fish that surround her; she can *feel* that they are there.

The mysterious sea maidens are creatures of sensuality, alluring beauty, and intense desire. The Mermaid can indicate romantic love, but, in particular, represents the perspective of a smitten individual. She stands for the passion that the person feels, regardless of the actual status of the relationship. In extreme cases, the Mermaid can signify obsession or emotions going out of control. One person may be deeply infatuated with another, to the extent that they do not notice

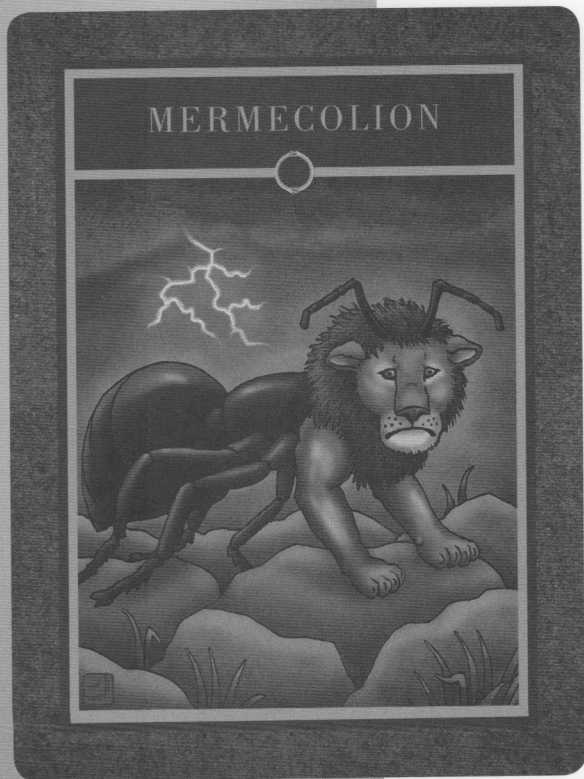
or care if the other is less interested. Alternatively, the Mermaid can represent a deep desire that is not romantic in nature. Everything that the Mermaid feels, she feels very strongly.

If the potentiality for obsession is any indicator, the Mermaid has negative aspects as well as positive ones. Since she relies entirely on intuition, she may have difficulty thinking rationally. Her intuition is not always correct, yet she will not necessarily realize this, because it always feels right to her. Although she can sense the feelings of others, she will sometimes also project her own feelings onto them and mistake this for real empathy. The Mermaid may not know where her own emotions end and where others' begin. In these extreme cases, she cannot view the situation objectively.

Inverted

Suspended upsidedown in a sea of emotion, the highly sensitive Mermaid is lost and overwhelmed. The subject has found circumstances too intense to bear and, out of self-defense, she has shut off her awareness of others, becoming self-absorbed. She may not know that she has done this or know much of anything beyond her own immediate feelings. This person needs to be helped.

MERMECOLION



Keywords

Mismatch, Mistake, Failure, Accident, Flaws, Sadness, Depression, Disappointment, Contradiction, Incompatibility, Incompetence, Weakness, Unsustainability

Mythological Background

The Mermecolion is sometimes also known as the Ant-Lion, although it is of absolutely no relation to the real-life insect of the same name. The real-life insect is a vicious predator of the bug world, preying on ants by ambushing them in small funnel-shaped pits. The mythical creature, in contrast, is a pitiful wretch that is most unsuccessful when it comes to the simple task of eating. The creature's lion head seeks meat for sustenance, yet its ant stomach can only digest grains. Furthermore, the lion head devours large portions at a time, yet the ant stomach is too small to handle such gorging. The Mermecolion is thus fated to die a very early death.

Little has been written about the Mermecolion, as it does not feature in any prominent tales. Instead, it is only known from early Medieval bestiaries in which it is said to be the product of the unlikely mating of a lion and an ant. Such a pairing would be quite a mistake and, in fact, the literary origin of the Mermecolion is also believed to be an error. In the Book of Job there is a reference to a lion, using an uncommon word for the animal, *lajisch*. In the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, the word *lajisch* is mistakenly translated as "mermecolion," or ant-lion. Early Medieval scholars took the Bible to be literal truth and, therefore, they thought the Mermecolion to be a real animal.

Card Meaning

The Mermecolion symbolizes a mistake, an accident, or a limitation. It is a creature of internal contradiction: two parts of the same being are in conflict with one another. If this creature appears in reference to a brand new relationship, then it is a suggestion that the two people are not well-matched. If in reference to a plan that you have envisioned, then perhaps you should reconsider this plan and its possible repercussions before carrying it out. By far the most pitiful creature in the bestiary, drawing the Mermecolion card may also signify sadness or depression.

The Mermecolion visits every person from time to time, coming in the form of minor mistakes and everyday instances of forgetfulness. These occurrences can be frustrating or embarrassing, sometimes even destructive. However inconvenient it is, ups and downs are simply a fact of life, and we must deal with it and forgive ourselves. It is only when the Mermecolion lingers that it causes a serious problem. When the beast lingers, it can bring lasting depression, a series of preventable mistakes, or even a disastrous downward spiral. One must remember that, even though minor bumps are unavoidable in life, we have enough control over ourselves to not let the Mermecolion consume us.

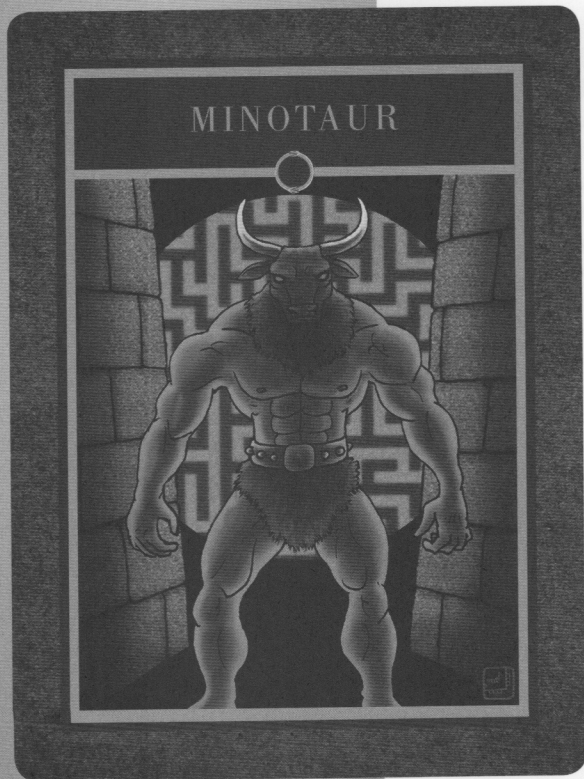
The Mermecolion is invoked whenever one's desires conflict with one's actual needs. Misery results, either because they cannot obtain the unrealistic thing that they desire, or because they obtained it and the outcome was not as they had hoped. For instance, a pursued endeavor may result in failure, a new interest may put a strain on a relationship, or an impulse purchase may prove to be a mistake. To keep the Mermecolion at bay, you must use foresight and make a choice between the good things that you already have and something else that you want. You cannot always have both.

The worst thing is to actually be a Mermecolion. The human Mermecolion is depressed and depressing to be around. He sets himself up for failure with his negative attitude and low self-expectations. Without being conscious that he does this, he traps himself in a vicious cycle, being aware only of his repeated failures and disapproval from others. If you draw the Mermecolion card to signify yourself, take this as a blessing in disguise. You are now reminded of a dangerous pattern that you may be falling into. Now you can stop what you are doing and change it. Look closely at your attitude and your social interactions. You may be able to spot places where the Mermecolion lurks and you can drive it away.

Inverted

Normally, the frail Mermecolion dooms itself when its lionlike appetite consumes too much for its antlike body. In reverse, however, a potentially strong person dooms himself through fearfulness, perceiving himself as antlike. Thus, he deprives himself of pleasure and happiness, thinking that something bad will happen if he does something that benefits himself. Be advised—you are not half ant and half lion! It is okay to do something that benefits you!

MINOTAUR



Keywords

Inner Struggle, Darkness, Being Lost, Denial, Indecision, Confusion, Personal Demons, the Mind, Shadow Self, Repressed Fears, the Unknown, the Subconscious

Mythological Background

Thousands of years ago, King Minos of Crete received a fabulous white bull from the Greek god Poseidon. The gods gave this bull to Minos with the expectation that he would one day sacrifice it back to them. Instead, however, the king greedily kept the great bull for himself and sacrificed an ordinary bull in its place. The gods were enraged by his disrespect. As a punishment to King Minos, they put a curse on his wife, Pasiphae. Under the spell, Queen Pasiphae fell in love with the great white bull. She seduced the bull and ended up pregnant from it. Finally, she gave birth to the Minotaur, a monstrous hybrid of human and beast.

In denial over their abominable offspring, the royal family hid the creature inside an elaborate dungeon in the form of a labyrinth. Every year, King Minos threw seven young men and seven young women into the labyrinth, where they would become lost and then be devoured by the Minotaur. Yet one day, the family made the mistake of throwing in a young man by the name of Theseus. Theseus volunteered to enter the labyrinth, secretly bringing with him a ball of twine with which he could trace his footsteps. That way, he did not get lost. Then he slew the Minotaur and successfully made his way out of the labyrinth. He went on to become one of Greece's great heroes, later founding the city-state of Athens.

Card Meaning

Unlike many of the creatures in this deck, the Minotaur is not intended to represent a specific personality type. Rather, the dark confines of the labyrinth symbolize one's own subconscious mind within which the fearsome Minotaur dwells. This monster is the pent-up opposition that comes from the self, rather than from an external threat. It is that which people keep bottled up inside, either in denial of its existence, or else simply at a loss to deal with it.

People encounter the Minotaur when they go on a personal journey and are stopped by an internal roadblock. When you become stuck within your own labyrinth, the Minotaur personifies this roadblock. The beast embodies a personal weakness whose existence you have kept locked away and may not have even been aware of. It may be a character flaw, a bad habit, a traumatic memory, or a shameful secret, whose confinement is now posing a problem. It may be your Shadow self: those aspects of the self that are present in a person, but which the person does not wish to identify with. People are not consciously aware that their Shadow exists and, when it is suddenly revealed to them, they are likely to perceive it as negative.

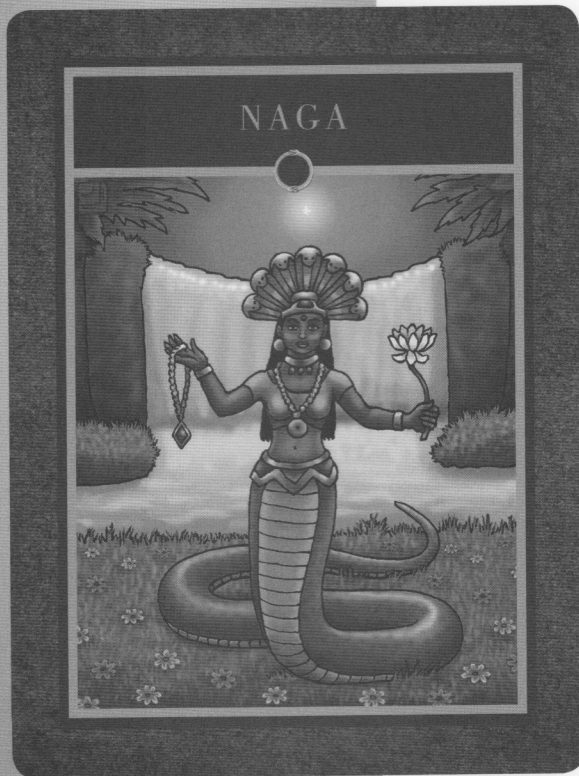
Drawing the Minotaur card can signify that you are currently dealing with a monster in the labyrinth of your psyche. It can mean that you are being forced to confront something from which you wanted to hide. All of us experience being lost in the labyrinth at times, during periods of confusion and uncertainty. Sometimes the Minotaur presents itself most aggressively, as a merciless emotional demon and must be battled head-on. In fact, every person has a Minotaur; the question is simply a matter of when they will encounter it. If this card was specifically

drawn to represent a person, it indicates someone who is currently going through this struggle. Otherwise it could represent an external trigger that causes the inner demons to stir.

It may seem daunting, but it is indeed possible to overcome the Minotaur. Let us learn from Theseus how to defeat the beast. We must use our cleverness, our ability to learn from the past and learn new lessons as well, to build a new niche in our mind where the conspicuous monster fits in more comfortably. If we do not defeat the Minotaur, then we run away from the problem and abandon our quest. Yet when we succeed, we reach a new level of self-understanding. We become stronger—in a sense, a hero.

Inverted

You have spent some time in the labyrinth already. This card inverted suggests that the Minotaur already presented a threat to you and you have worked to fight it. Now you have knocked the monster off of its feet, but a big lump of scar tissue remains. Now you may come home from the labyrinth anytime you want, but do you feel comfortable doing so? Or do you fear that the Minotaur will get back up and strike again?



Keywords

Wealth, Money, Opportunity, Hidden Treasure, Lucky Chance, Serendipity, Growth, Abundance, Paradise, Luxury, Beauty, Gifts, Opulence, Privilege

Mythological Background

Nagas are a semi-divine race of shapeshifting snake people from Hindu and Buddhist lore. They may assume the form of a snake, a human, or something in between. In snake form they can have many heads; in human form they wear a crown of snakes. They populate various magical kingdoms underwater, underground, and in the sky. These kingdoms are worlds of paradise and riches. It is said that there are Nagas that can make it rain. They also possess the elixir of immortality. Some traditions hold that the Naga is a symbol of sacred sexuality.

As with humans, some Nagas are good and some are evil. Nagas feature as villains in certain Hindu epics, but the majority of their race tends toward benevolence. In general, they keep to themselves, serving their own society independent of human interaction. Sometimes they are known to extend acts of kindness to humans and gods. For instance, a Naga king named Mucalinda visited Buddha as he meditated in the pouring rain. As a great multi-headed cobra, Mucalinda spread out his seven hoods and sheltered Buddha from the rain. The great god Vishnu is attended by Sesha, the king of all Nagas, who appears as a gigantic serpent with many heads. There are also heavenly Nagas who guard the temples of the gods. When humans are kind to them, Nagas may grace them with gifts of jewels.

Card Meaning

The Nagas reside in a paradise of plenty, to which most humans are not privy. Yet, if you have drawn this card, then you may have stumbled into their realm by chance. Nagas do not normally seek contact with humans, but they sometimes assist humans who fortuitously encounter them. The Naga possess remedies for all manner of unfulfilled wishes. If she appears to you, it could signify a gift, a lucky find, a job opportunity, or otherwise a chance for growth. Consider this card an open door. Do beware, however: sometimes the Naga expect something in return.

The Naga is a goddess of glamour, pampered and comfortable with her extreme riches, and she has a great surplus of treasure to throw around. She signifies personal gain, especially of the material kind. There is nothing that she loves more than shiny objects. As a human she is a wealthy person. Her life is opulent, and sometimes she will be generous and bestow the opportunity for self-indulgence upon others. Still, her race is not inherently humanitarian. She does not normally seek out people who are in need. She may see less affluent individuals as "little people," perhaps as alien. This does not necessarily entail contempt *per se*, but it does reflect her ignorance of life outside of paradise.

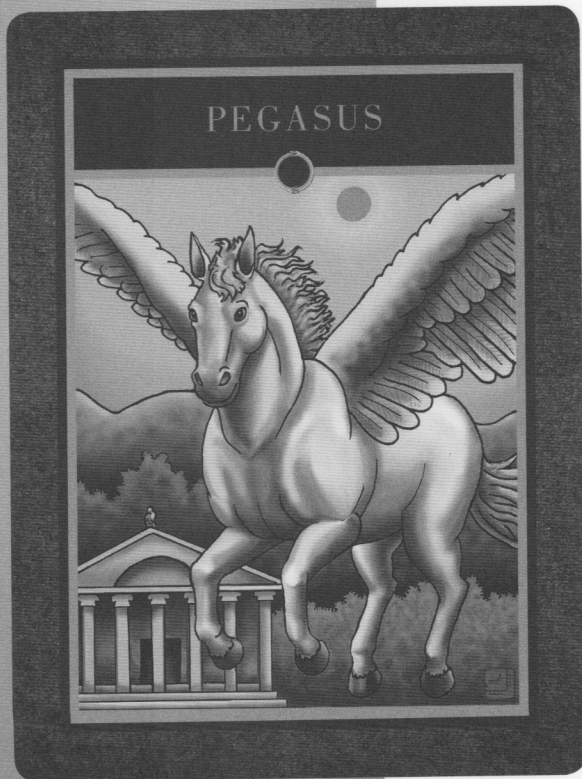
The Naga's grace upon another is a lucky thing, but it is never under anyone's control other than the Naga's. It is fleeting, impersonal, possibly random. After one encounter, the recipient might never see her again. The luck of the recipient is like the luck of the gambler. If you receive a free offer from a Naga, do not turn it down; you might never be presented with the same opportunity again. Even if she wants something in return, it might be worth your while. Realize that you were lucky indeed, for you were never entitled to her generosity.

The Naga is not always a mysterious stranger who descends unexpectedly from the ivory tower. The Naga can also symbolize the personal wealth within each person, specifically that derived from spiritual peace. In Buddhism one learns that satisfaction comes from spiritual well-being and harmony, not from material things. The Naga's shiny jewels can be a symbol of the inner wealth that we can find through letting go of that which holds us down. There is a certain luxury in having everything that one needs, and these basic needs are relatively few. The Naga may be telling you that paradise is already upon you. If you are able to realize this paradise, then enjoy it. You are blessed.

Inverted

Inverted, the Naga's serpent half takes precedence over her human half. She is sneaky and slippery and speaks with a forked tongue. This Naga definitely wants something in return for the gift that she offers and she is not telling you the whole story. Although it may sound like a great offer, the exchange will benefit her much more than it will benefit you. She is a con artist. This card inverted may also signify greed or extortion.

PEGASUS



Keywords

Triumph, Ascension, Freedom, Liberation, Friends, Allies, Sidekick, Assistance, Worthy Cause, Heroism, Virtuous Battle, Earned Reward, Attainment of Goals

Mythological Background

The marvelous flying stallion was sired by Poseidon, Greek god of the sea and travel. Pegasus' mother was Medusa, but he was not born in the natural way. He came into the world by springing forth from her blood after she was slain by the hero, Perseus. Pegasus was born fully grown and sporting a pair of magnificent wings. He flew to the mystical Mount Helicon, home of the divine nymphs known as the Muses. On this mountain he stamped his hoof on the ground, magically producing a flowing spring. This spring became known as Hippocrene and is the source of poetic inspiration.

Later, Pegasus was tamed by Athena, the goddess of war and wisdom. Eventually, the young hero Bellerophon prayed to Athena for assistance in defeating the dreaded Chimera. The goddess bestowed him with a mystical golden bridle with which he was able to harness the flying horse. After obtaining Pegasus, Bellerophon went on to slay the Chimera and pursue other acts of heroism. Unfortunately, Bellerophon's success went to his head and his ego got the better of him. He attempted to fly Pegasus all the way to the top of Mount Olympus, the home of the gods. Zeus, the king of the gods, was angered and sent a fly to bite the horse, which caused the horse to throw Bellerophon off his back. Zeus then took Pegasus in and used him to pull his chariot through the sky.

Card Meaning

This fantastical horse is the steed of the gods and the helpful companion to heroes. He will aid the most deserving individuals on the most important of quests. Indeed, it is time to celebrate if Pegasus has come into your life. It indicates that you have made a significant accomplishment and the gods have noticed! Someone has decided that your mission is a worthy cause and your success warrants praise. With the aid of Pegasus, you may complete your most daunting of tasks and soon take on an even bigger battle. Keep up the great work and Pegasus can take you higher!

To fly on the back of Pegasus is to experience a new level of freedom. Your hard work has given you perspectives and knowledge that allow you to see and do what had not been accessible to you before. Pegasus is a gift. He has come as the result of your genuine effort; he is the new strength that you have gained. You are a triumphant warrior and you are now better equipped for your next battle. Use this newfound freedom to push the boundaries even further.

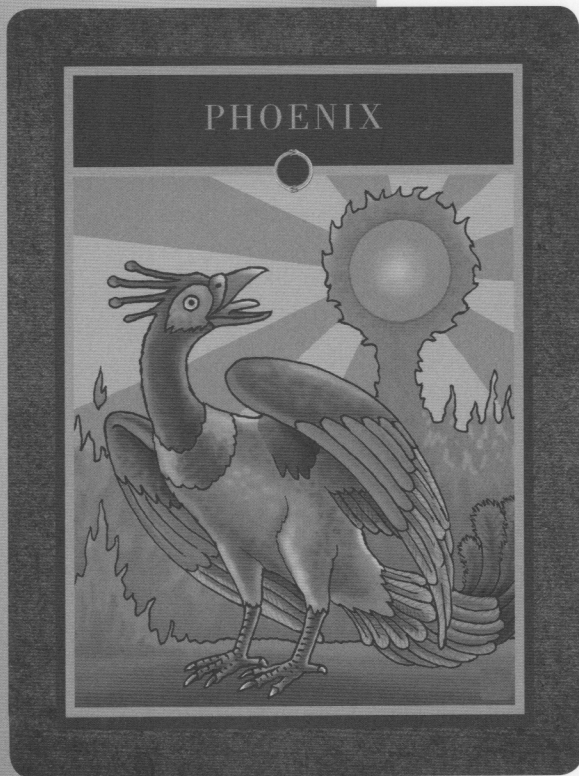
The arrival of Pegasus into your life signifies that you have true friends and allies. They will answer your calls and come to your aid when you need it. These friends can help you in a number of ways. You may have known them for a long time and they may be cheering you on. Alternatively, they may be helpers from behind the scenes, preferring to remain anonymous. They could be forces from beyond the mortal realm, altering your fate in auspicious ways. Your friend could be a coworker, teammate, or family member; they could be a most inseparable partner, or someone who you rarely see but who is there to help. Friends like these are a godsend. Somebody else may be serving this role for you, or depending on the question you asked, you may be fulfilling this role for them.

Always remember what you did to earn Pegasus' aid. It was not mere coincidence or dumb luck. Pegasus came to you specifically because of something you did and because of a worthy cause you were fighting for. Never take for granted the privilege that you earned. If you forsake the cause, then Pegasus will leave you, perhaps catastrophically. Your friends adore you for the sincere person they know you to be, and not the ego-driven narcissist that you could hypothetically become. Hold them dear and let them know that you cherish them. Remain genuine, and they will stay by your side.

Inverted

Falling from the sky, Pegasus has been bitten by a gadfly. The traveler's entitlement to ride the marvelous steed has expired. This can happen when noble intentions become muddled with arrogance. It can happen when the ego inflates from too much praise and self-satisfaction. The blessings of the Pegasus, and of the gods, become taken for granted. Remember that what the gods give, they can take away. If the traveler tries to fly to where he should not go, then soon he will not be able to fly at all.

PHOENIX



Keywords

Transformation, Vitality, New Beginnings, Second Chance, Restoration, Rejuvenation, Reincarnation, Immortality, Surviving, Healing, Longevity, Optimism, Light

Mythological Background

The colorful Phoenix is a beautiful, benevolent, and long-lived bird known for its perpetual rebirth. Once every 500–1,000 years it builds a nest of frankincense and myrrh, ignites it, and burns itself to ash. Then, from the cinders hatches a new Phoenix, and thus it lives on forever. Medieval Christians considered it to symbolize the resurrection of Christ and eternal salvation. The Phoenix also existed in Hebrew folklore. There it was said to be the only creature that did not eat the forbidden apple after Eve shared it with the animals. God rewarded it with immortality by allowing it to be perpetually reborn after it dies. He also sheltered it from the rest of the world by building a large stone wall around it.

The Phoenix in fact appears in many cultures. Christians borrowed it from the Greeks and the Hebrews, but the Greeks and the Hebrews borrowed it from the Egyptians. The original Egyptian version was a great heron-like bird called the Bennu. The Bennu does not consume itself in flames, but symbolizes the rising sun and the immortality of souls in the afterlife. The Persians also adopted the Phoenix and conflated it with the Simurgh. Independently, the Chinese envisioned a very similar bird called the Feng Huang. The Feng Huang does not consume itself in flames, but it is immortal. All variants of the Phoenix are associated with the Sun and are said to dwell in a realm of paradise.

Card Meaning

The wondrous Phoenix bird is the archetype of everlasting life. We often hear that life is temporary, but when you draw the Phoenix card, you are being told that from a symbolic standpoint, death is also temporary. Everything happens in cycles. Something that seemed to have died has now reincarnated. A period of stagnation has come to an end as vitality is reintroduced. A flame has been rekindled, interest has been renewed, or good health has been restored. Alternatively, the Phoenix could indicate that something needs to be burned in order for progress to be made. Once something problematic is consumed in flames, a rebirth can take place.

The Phoenix is directly associated with the Sun. The bird's perpetual rebirth parallels the Sun's return every morning after a period of darkness. Thus, the spiritual essence of the Phoenix is infused with solar symbolism. The Sun is one of the most powerful natural influences for humankind. Although it can be oppressive, it is necessary for life. Not only does it warm and nourish living beings, it is also the parent star to the Earth. The Sun is universally regarded as glorious and beneficent. It is associated with strength, power, prosperity, and happiness. Light has also become synonymous with clarity and wisdom. Humans naturally embrace the light, as we are diurnal rather than nocturnal creatures. The rising Sun is a new beginning, and for these symbolic reasons it can be assumed that this new beginning is a positive one.

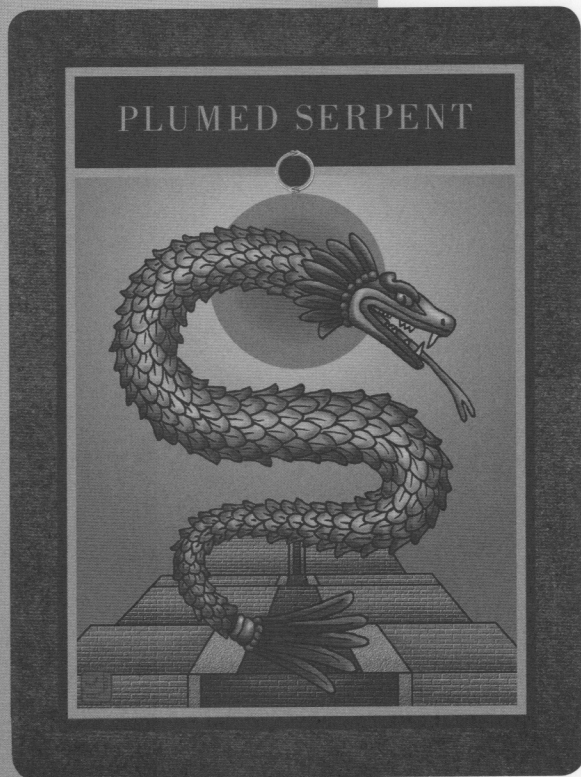
The Phoenix can represent a return of the light in your life, or the beginning of your movement toward the light. Either way, there is an implication that you have been in a period of darkness in the recent past. Just as the light is universally regarded as positive,

darkness is regarded as a place of fear, danger, and lack of sight. In many religions darkness is overtly connected to evil. The Phoenix thus signifies that a person who had been through a negative period in life is now experiencing a positive change of course. When the Phoenix is reborn, negativity is laid to rest.

The rebirth of the Phoenix is an exhilarating surge of energy. To experience this is to be revitalized, rejuvenated, ignited in a positive way. The energy carries the Phoenix upward, effortlessly into the sky, when in its ashen state it had been unable to fly. It is the removal of shackles, a sudden and ecstatic release into the warm sunlight. Above all else, the outlook on the situation has shifted to become brightly positive. You can be newly transformed and beam with joy.

Inverted

All that goes up must come down. For every time the sun rises, it will eventually set. For every time the Phoenix is reborn, it will eventually return to ash. All states are temporary; all good things come to an end. This card inverted symbolizes the anticlimax of something that has risen, the inevitable return to a lower point. Do not despair—even death is temporary.



Keywords

Intelligence, Innovation, Science, Civilization, Worldliness, Ideas, Fertility of the Mind, Order, Planning, Logic, Reason, Rational Thinking, Smart Leadership

Mythological Background

The Plumed Serpent is a recurring motif from the various high civilizations of ancient Mexico. It is an enormous aerial serpent adorned with the shimmering green feathers of the quetzal bird. Images of the Plumed Serpent first appeared 3,000 years ago among the Olmecs, whose influence sparked all of the later civilizations in Mexico. The creature continued to appear on sacred temples for millennia. On the Temple of the Sun in Chichén Itzá, the shadow of the serpent's undulating body lines up with its stone head during the solstices. The Mayan name of the Plumed Serpent is *Kukulkan*; its Aztec name is *Quetzalcoatl*. Among both the Mayas and the Aztecs, this serpent is associated with the creation of civilization.

The Plumed Serpent is directly linked to the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, who is named after the creature. Originally a borrowed Toltec wind god called Ehecatl, Quetzalcoatl is regarded in modern day as the most famous of Aztec gods. He is the father of civilization and the inventor of the calendar, and is the only major Aztec god who did not demand human sacrifice. According to legend, Quetzalcoatl and his rival, Tezcatlipoca, worked together to create the world. In the original myth, these two deities cooperated to repeatedly create and destroy the world in accordance with a grand cosmic cycle. After the Spanish conquest, Quetzalcoatl became identified with reason and goodness, while the darker Tezcatlipoca became equated with the devil.

Card Meaning

As the founder of civilization and the inventor of one of the most sophisticated calendars in the world, Quetzalcoatl is a true genius. His namesake animal symbol, the Plumed Serpent, is the creaturely embodiment of his brilliance. It is associated with Pre-Columbian America's greatest intellectual feats, from their astronomy to their mathematics to their architecture. It is the totem of scientists, engineers, and other great planners. The flight of the Plumed Serpent is the flight of the mind. All others look up to the intellect of this sacred mythical beast.

The person who is represented by the Plumed Serpent archetype is intelligent, logical, and organized. Granted, his workspace may not appear organized to onlookers. Yet this person is sure to know where everything is. He is meticulous about everything he does. He is the kind of person who must know how everything works and why. He will catch every detail and analyze it thoroughly. When he appears to be sitting and doing nothing, he is actually running through obstacle courses and marathons in his mind. Nothing is simple to him because he breaks everything apart and expounds upon it on levels that most people do not. This person is fully content with his own hyper-logicity. He may even assume incorrectly that other people think things out to a similar extent. He is a perfectionist and has a tendency to micromanage. He may also come across as emotionally detached due to being highly cerebral.

During times of crisis, a person who embodies the Plumed Serpent is capable of soaring to the highest levels to save the day. This does not necessarily mean that he wants to, as he might be introverted and shy. Yet, if others are aware of the Plumed Serpent's intellect, they will

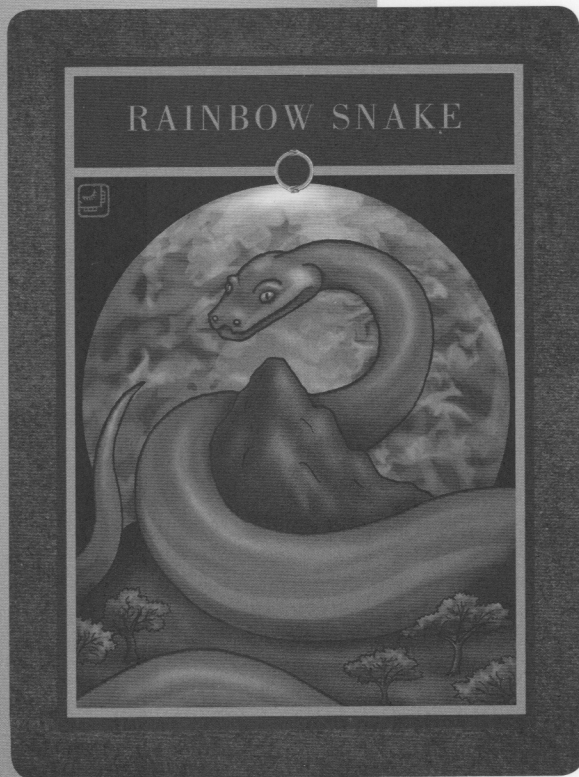
call upon him for help. This could be a great opportunity for him to open up and show his true colors. When in a position of leadership, the Plumed Serpent will demonstrate superior delegation skills and can transform the problem into something more manageable.

Anyone can invoke the power of the Plumed Serpent simply by using their brains. This creature stands for reason and rationality, two faculties that every human being possesses. Reason and rationality can be lifesavers, offering a means of working through confusion and difficult feelings. Many problems in life are caused by people acting irrationally. Overcoming irrational thoughts can be difficult, but the first step is in realizing that this is the cause of the predicament. Think earnestly about the reasons behind your feelings, and then ask yourself why this makes you feel that way.

Inverted

Where the sun is normally shown at the top of the card behind the Plumed Serpent's head, the inverted position places the creature's bright mind at the bottom. This suggests an instance in which one has failed to use his intellect effectively. It is an embarrassing mental slip-up, a "duh" moment. Even smart people experience these faux pas at times, and an overworked engine will burn out if not given rest.

RAINBOW SNAKE



Keywords

Creation, Creativity, Dreaming, Inspiration, Conception, Art, Bringing Into Being, Synthesis, Changing the Environment, Sculpting, Magic(k), Storytelling, Collective Unconscious

Mythological Background

The Rainbow Snake is perhaps the oldest mythical creature in the world. Rock art depicting this creature in Australia dates back 6,000 years. Its age should not be surprising, for it is said that the Rainbow Snake created the world. In the beginning, the gigantic serpent came down from the Heavens and slithered across the land. It shaped all the hills and topography, and its body carved out the channels that later filled with water. It gave culture to the first humans before they chased it into the sea, where it currently resides. The Rainbow Snake is directly connected to the Dreamtime—the magical time and place of the origin of the world, which is accessed while dreaming.

If a rainbow is imagined as a gigantic serpent encircling the Earth, then it comes as little surprise that the same creature appears independently in a completely different part of the world. In addition to Australia, the Rainbow Snake also comes from West African myth. There its name is Da or Danh. This sacred being connects Heaven and Earth; it feeds on iron and supports the Earth on its coils. It is often represented as a pair of serpents—male and female—called Aida Wedo and Oshumare. The Rainbow Snake is also revered in religions of the African diaspora in the Caribbean, Brazil, and elsewhere. In this regard, it is truly a being that encircles the world.

Card Meaning

The Rainbow Snake channels the creative forces of the Universe. These forces would otherwise be too far away for humans to reach, yet the Rainbow Snake acts as a conduit between Heaven and Earth. The snake itself embodies these forces—colorful, dynamic, writhing, and powerful. To come in contact with the Rainbow Snake is to touch creativity. It is to gain inspiration, to channel it through your being so that something beautiful can be produced. This creation can be any imaginative idea or artistic self-expression. Drawing this card may signify the opening of your creative potential or any similarly transformative spiritual experience.

The influences of the Rainbow Snake are far-reaching. It inspires within people the power to change their surroundings. Change can be made through physical action or through language. The creative forces of the Universe flow through all things, all persons, and all words. Spoken words travel through space like the Rainbow Snake itself, connecting the imagination of the speaker to the listener. Speech gives ideas a life outside of one's mind and brings about the power to transform. Thus communication is a sacred act. As some tribal societies believe, the creation of the world is ongoing. The Rainbow Snake reminds us that every person takes part in this divine process every day.

The Rainbow Snake encircles the world, connecting people from all parts of the globe. It is the continuous collective unconscious, abundant with ancient wisdom that crops up through culture and folklore. It surfaces through universal acts of creativity, including imagination, procreation, childbirth, and dreaming. The Rainbow Snake is the circle of life; it is life itself. One slides along the Rainbow

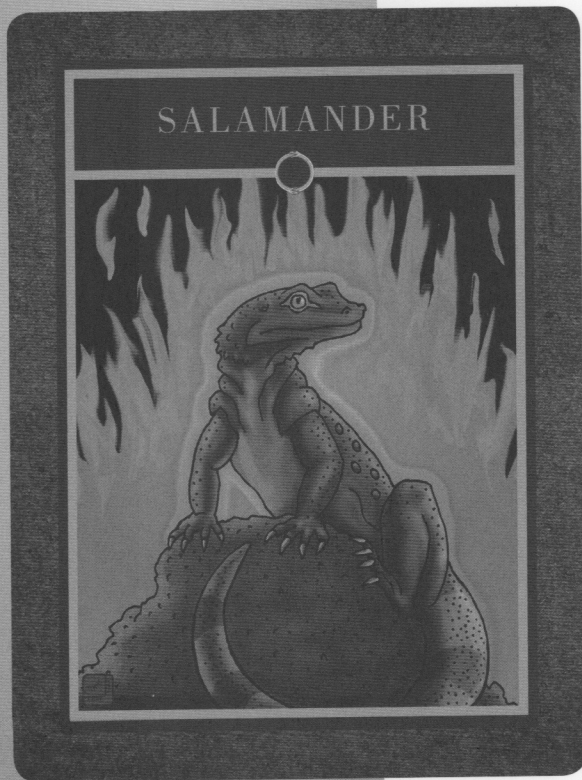
Snake's undulating body when he explores the colorful nature of all the world's peoples and places. To do this and to be aware of it is to become inspired. Creation is the synthesis of worldly magic.

Some creative people believe that they do not forge their creations from nothingness, but rather, their creations are entities that already exist in the aether and choose the artist to bring them into being. If the Rainbow Snake appears to you, it may be bringing creativity with it, suggesting to you that you exercise your creative power. If you do not believe in your own ability to create, the Rainbow Snake may be prompting you to change this. Create something—it does not matter how small the outcome is or if nobody sees it. The act of creation is healthy for the mind and the spirit. It is a type of healing. It is an awesome power that is greater than destruction.

Inverted

The inverse of creativity is destruction, yet these two things are not mutually exclusive. Creation and destruction are continuous, sometimes cyclical. This dark side of creativity is indicated when the Rainbow Snake is drawn in reverse. One thing will have to be destroyed in order to create something else from it.

SALAMANDER



Keywords

Survival, Resolve, Fortitude, Fearlessness, Coolness, Calmness, Self-Control, Durability, Thick Skin, Potent Abilities, Withstanding the Odds, Unexpected Strength, Tiny but Tough

Mythological Background

A Salamander resembles an ordinary lizard and shares its name with a real-life animal. Yet the mythical version, small and innocuous-looking as it may be, is extremely powerful. The mythical creature first appeared in Greek and Roman literature as well as in Jewish scriptures. Pliny wrote that the Salamander seeks fire, but is so cold that when it enters fire it extinguishes the flames. In the Talmud it is claimed that Salamanders are generated by fire, and that a person can become impervious to being burned if they smear themselves with the blood of a Salamander. Yet this tactic would be ill-advised in the lore of Christian Europe, where the Salamander is said to be extremely poisonous. They believed that anything a Salamander touches will in turn become lethally toxic.

These magical creatures are perfectly comfortable sitting in fire or lava and will remain cool to the touch. They dwell on or inside of active volcanoes, particularly one in the kingdom of Prester John. Medieval alchemists believed that Salamanders are the source of fire. Leonardo da Vinci wrote that these creatures eat fire as their sole source of sustenance. The sixteenth century physician Paracelsus declared the Salamander to be the fire elemental in alchemy and described it as a changeable and impulsive personality type in humans. Others said that Salamanders produce a type of silk that is fireproof and can be cleansed with flames. Marco Polo identified asbestos as this legendary silk.

Card Meaning

The hallmark of the Salamander is its uncanny ability to remain cool, calm, and collected. It will sit in fire or molten lava and never feel any discomfort. No matter what the circumstances, a person with the characteristics of this creature always has sound composure. Nothing can burn them. Theirs is the power to withstand and overcome adversity. Others will look on with wonder as this person withstands the fire, never raising his voice or shedding a tear. This is no illusion—the Salamander is genuinely not perturbed. The fires may rage, but the Salamander will not.

The Salamander in fact was born of fire. The reason for his high tolerance is that he has already been through the infernal flames. His skin was hardened and transformed, like ceramic fired in a kiln. Once a person has survived experiences like this, they can handle anything. Some of these individuals were damaged in the process and have learned to hide it by shutting off their emotions, hence their stoicism. Other survivors are stronger than this, being able to own themselves and their feelings and move on. They become wise in handling their emotions, never confusing other people's problems with their own. They believe that nothing is worth the waste of the energy that it takes to lose their cool. They find their own inner strength and become a powerhouse.

The Salamander is a tiny creature with a strong presence. In the flames it can blend in, and in the calm it can melt ice with its powerful resolve. The person who possesses this kind of strength may surprise others with his skill. Others are used to his calmness, which they may mistake for meekness or submissiveness. People usually expect the toughest one to be the most audacious, the loudest, the largest, or

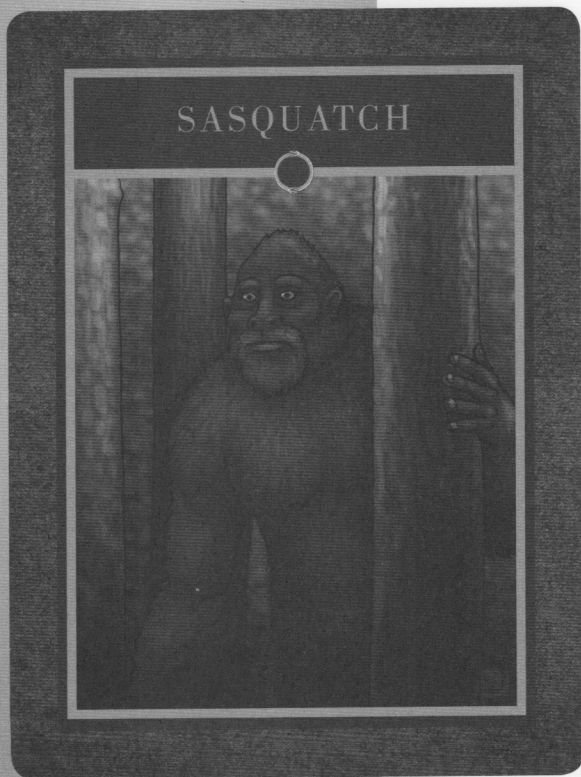
the roughest-looking, while the Salamander is none of these. Yet they will notice him when he remains as the last one standing. Once they realize his presence, they will show him great respect.

In extreme cases, the Salamander may have to use force. He will never get angry over other people's bad attitudes or get into a fight over piddly things. Yet, when action must be taken, the Salamander will be swift and merciless. He is a venomous creature, unstoppable and fearless. Whomever the Salamander card is drawn to represent, he must not be underestimated. He may be small; he may be soft-spoken. Yet he is strong—very strong. The Salamander teaches a lesson to everyone. Do not waste your life being angry. Survive. Look out for yourself. Strength comes from within.

Inverted

The Salamander clings to the rock as though afraid of falling. He is actually not as unshakable as he might appear to others—or as he thought himself to be. On the surface he is cool, but in actuality he is afraid. Perhaps the present situation will bring him added strength, but first he must let go. It may sound cliché, but one does not become fearless until he faces his fears.

SASQUATCH



Keywords

Awareness, Introspection, Introversion, Listening, Watching, Hiding, Blending In, Nature Connection, Primitivism, Self-Reliance, Simple Life, Future-Shyness, Aloofness

Mythological Background

Sasquatch is a contemporary part of North American folklore, believed by many to be a real being. There are thousands of sightings by hikers and campers, as well as footprints, reports of the creature's chilling cry, and even a few photographs and purported hair samples. The most famous sighting was by Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin in 1967. They caught the creature on film, a still from which has become the most famous Sasquatch photograph ever taken. Many people believe the video to be a hoax, although the footage has never been replicated with satisfaction. Some believe that the video shows a female Sasquatch, who they have dubbed "Patty," after Roger Patterson.

Sasquatch is also known as Bigfoot and by many other names and is nearly identical to the Himalayan Yeti. It is thought to represent a race of giant apelike humanoids, possibly a missing link or an offshoot of human evolution. Sasquatches are believed to be highly intelligent creatures. Acting as the eyes of the forest, they are said to watch people without themselves being seen. Campers and hikers occasionally report fleeting glimpses of the creature and find trails of its footprints that lead for miles into nowhere. Some say that Sasquatches can turn invisible, or even that they are not solid, like ghosts. Some accounts have caught the attention of scientists, yet the Sasquatch always ultimately eludes the scrutinizing snare of science and civilization.

Card Meaning

Something in between human and ape, Sasquatch links people to their primordial origins. He is a part of the subconscious, a part of us that desires a simpler life. Sasquatch is the yearning to escape to the great outdoors, to return to the time of cleaner skies and greener vegetation. He does not care for electronic devices or other modern technology, as these are distractions that separate us from nature. He feels at home in the wilderness, away from city areas. He is the reason why modern people enjoy visiting parks and looking at trees and mountains, and even why many people become attached to animals. Sasquatch knows what most people have forgotten: we came from nature and our roots have not disappeared.

Living alone in the wilderness, Sasquatch has all the time in the world to meditate and reflect. He does not speak but he observes. He may have disdain for the destructive effects of the industrial world, but he is fully aware of what it is, for the silent one sees the most. Sasquatch brings with him the lesson of watching and listening. There is something to be said for not saying anything at all. When people are always busy talking to each other, on their phones, within their social bubbles, dependent on the Internet, they tend to overlook the bigger picture that surrounds them.

Sasquatch is not only aware of his surroundings, he is also highly self-aware. In retreating from society he is able to look within. This is introspection. Drawing the Sasquatch card can potentially be an indicator that you need to stop and look within yourself. Are you truly aware of what you are doing? Of how your behavior affects others? Of what you are not doing and what you might be missing?

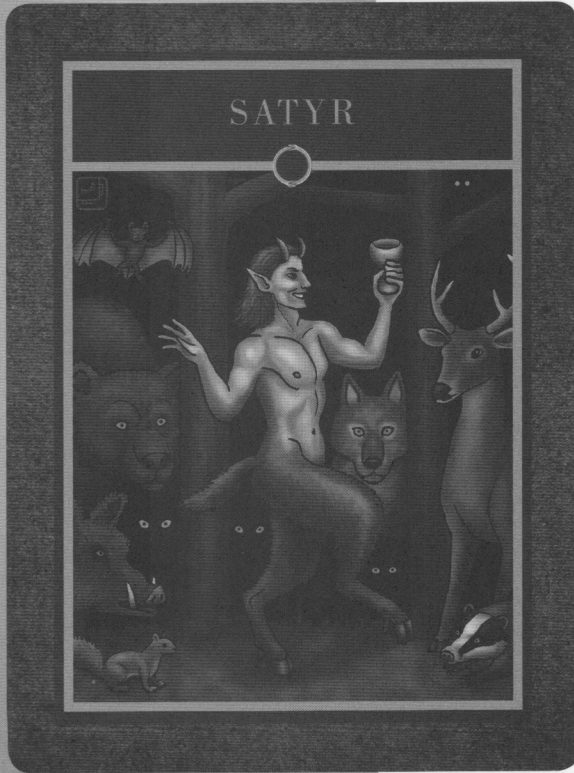
If the staring Sasquatch knows more about you than you do—and he probably does—then there could be a problem that needs your attention. Take some time out to figure out what it is.

A person who embodies the Sasquatch is introspective and introverted, but perhaps misunderstood. He enjoys peace and quiet and plenty of time to hear his own thoughts. He takes pride in being self-reliant and not enslaved by material technology. The Sasquatch person is also a nature-lover, perhaps an environmentalist. He does not understand the mindset that the natural world is only as important as its monetary value. He is appalled by modern industrial practices that harm the planet. He is critical of the culture that breeds these norms and he fears for the future of the Earth and humankind.

Inverted

The watchful, yet awkwardly upside-down Sasquatch creates an uneasy presence, appearing voyeuristic and out of place. The antisocial creature brings to light an uncomfortable relation between individuals. Two differing lifestyles have been forced to come into contact with one another and have generated a great deal of tension. This card may signify an unwelcome presence.

SATYR



Keywords

Licentiousness, Indulgence, Lust, Pleasure, Hedonism, Debauchery, Drunkenness, Rowdiness, Rebelliousness, Uninhibited Behavior, Irresponsible Behavior

Mythological Background

Satyrs, also known as Fauns, are an all-male race of nature spirits that come from Greek and Roman folklore. They are known for their insatiable lust, as well as other hedonistic behaviors such as drinking and dancing. Medieval Christians came to equate Satyrs with sin, and they depicted the Devil as having the horns and hooves of a Satyr. Today, men who are obsessed with having sex with many different partners are said to have a disorder called *satyriasis*. However, ancient peoples were more reverent of the horny creatures. Satyrs were considered protectors of animals and icons of fertility. They were also the companions of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine. Male chorus singers would dress up like Satyrs to perform at the festivals of Dionysus.

The most famous tale about a Satyr comes from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. A Satyr named Pan spied a beautiful nymph named Syrinx and desired her instantly. Syrinx was devoted to Artemis and had taken a vow of chastity, so she quickly fled from Pan's advances. As Pan chased her through the woods, she prayed desperately for help to escape him. Finally, a group of water nymphs transformed Syrinx into a hollow reed plant. Pan found her in her plant form and fashioned the reed into a new musical instrument now known as the panpipes. Syrinx thus remained chaste and simultaneously became immortalized in the form of folk music.

Card Meaning

The Satyr is the quintessential party animal. He is the archetype of hedonism and debauchery, as well as the god of animals. His parties are the wildest of all. Being half-man and half-beast, he connects every human being to the baser creature that lies within themselves. Once you have cast off the pretentious skins of civilization, you discover your primal instincts of lust and freedom. To join the Satyr is to partake in the very pleasures that society tries to keep caged up, yet which the animal-self wishes to indulge to their fullest.

The Satyr is fun-loving and mischievous, albeit raucous and apathetic to the concept of propriety. He is the essence of risk-taking and thrill-seeking. He is the drunken fraternity boy, screaming and hollering in the wee hours of the night—and the similarly inebriated sorority girl disregarding the societal expectations of female chastity. Most people only experience their Satyr selves with the assistance of alcohol, the elixir of Dionysus. The Satyr symbolizes a lack of inhibition, surrendering to one's inner urges and desires. He thumbs his nose at prudes and authority figures who tell him how he should behave. He encourages people to once again be self-interested and rowdy, as they had been born into, before having been groomed into proper members of society.

This horny creature is an archetype of sexuality. He does not care much for reproduction; his number one interest is pleasure. Pan is not picky; he will select anyone who piques his interest at any given moment. His lust is spontaneous. To him sex is all for fun and not relevant to any lifelong commitments. A person acting like a Satyr will have a one-night stand, a friend with benefits, or many casual encounters. The Satyr may also be sought by married couples who

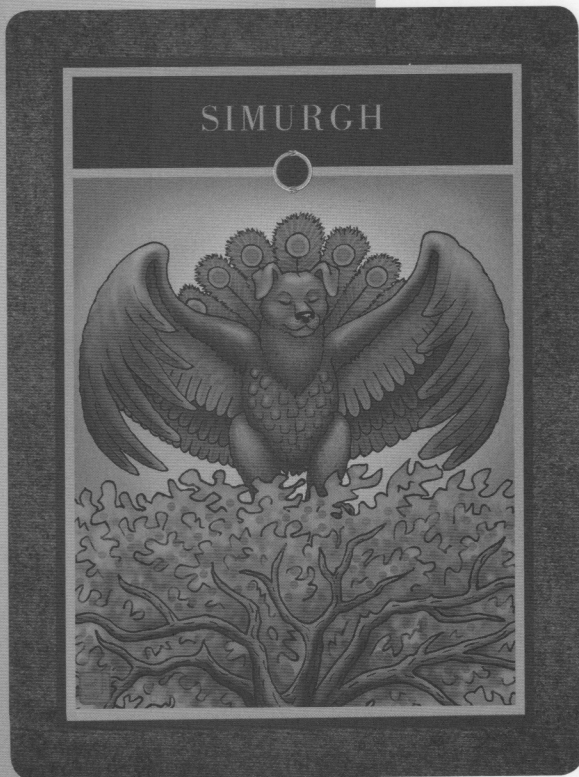
wish to spice up their sex lives. This archetype can easily reinvigorate a couple's physical interest in one another. But buyer beware—if one is not specific in what they want, invoking the Satyr can result in loveless obsessions and dangerous affairs.

The liberties of the Satyr are desired by many people, male and female. It is healthy to let loose once in a while and, indeed, some especially restricted individuals are in particular need of wild indulgence. Nonetheless, you must always remember that we do live in a society that has rules, and most of these rules are in place for legitimate reasons. The Satyr not only symbolizes fun, but also belligerence and irresponsible behavior. Never forget that no matter how inebriated you are, your actions will always have consequences.

Inverted

Too much partying has resulted in a hangover. It can be a headache or nausea, or it can be damaged property, or an unexpected visit from the police. In more severe cases it can be an unwanted pregnancy or a venereal disease. Even worse consequences are conceivable, as there is no limit to the tragedy that can result from irresponsible play. More likely, however, one's rowdy behavior has earned him some angry neighbors and a tarnished reputation.

SIMURGH



Keywords

Wisdom, Guidance, Teaching, Intelligence, Knowledge, Education, Understanding, Peace, Compassion, Nurturing, Growth, Enlightenment, Benevolence

Mythological Background

The Simurgh is an enormous birdlike beast from ancient Persia. It has been through many incarnations over time. Generally identified with the earlier Senmurv, which has a dog's head and a peacock's tail, in later depictions, the Simurgh appeared fully avian, as it became conflated with the Phoenix. In Sufi mysticism, this bird is a symbol of enlightenment. The Simurgh proper is just one individual: a female who lives atop the Tree of Life. This tree produces the seeds of all other trees in the world and is the source of all medicine. When the Simurgh flies forth from the tree or descends upon it, the tree shakes and scatters the seeds across the land.

The Simurgh is a benevolent and nurturing bird that nourishes her young like a mammal. She is said to be the oldest and wisest creature on Earth, and that she has already seen the world end three times over. In a Sufi epic poem, a group of birds go on a long journey in search of the Simurgh, ultimately discovering that the Simurgh exists within themselves. There is also a Medieval Persian epic in which the Simurgh rescued an abandoned child named Zal. She nurtured him and educated him in language, philosophy, and medicine. When Zal returned to civilization, the Simurgh promised to continue to protect him by offering him a feather with which he could summon her to return.

Card Meaning

This fabulous bird-beast is formidable but compassionate—caring and also logical. The Simurgh has artfully mastered the balance of sensitivity and rationality, not forsaking one in favor of the other. A person represented by the Simurgh is truly remarkable. She is altruistic and forgiving because she values the greater good. She is kind and compassionate because this is the manner of the enlightened. She does not overreact or let her emotions overpower her, and yet she still loves. She wants what is best for others, and she is able to make this happen because she understands what is best and why. All of her actions are directed by well thought-out reason and experience. She possesses an incredible understanding about people and the world, and is able to offer precious insight that may not be so obvious to others.

As a parent, the Simurgh is very loving, but she loves through her head as well as her heart. She remains level-headed in cases of crisis. She always remains near enough to provide help when the child needs it, but she is never smothering. Her rational parenting encourages children to grow, learn, and speak their minds. She respects their personhood and never talks down to them. She grooms them to be thoughtful, intellectual, and caring.

Regardless of her actual age, the Simurgh has the qualities of a wise elder. Other people admire her intellect. She is well-educated, but this may not necessarily be the result of formal schooling. She has become worldly through her own experiences and through observation of others. She may have made many mistakes in the past, or witnessed the mistakes of others and learned from them. She has seen it all and understands it. Her voice is humble, but her

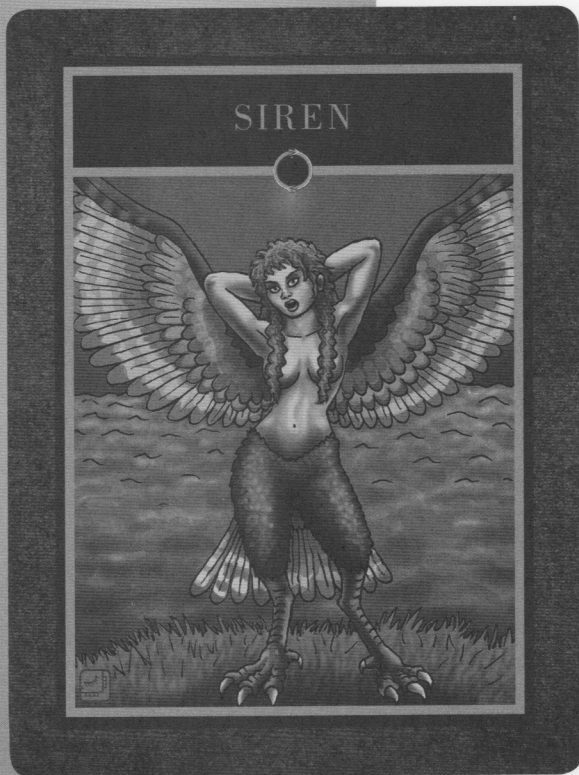
words are powerful. There is no egotistical agenda in her desire to help. This person deserves to be listened to and, those who do, will be glad that they did.

The Simurgh is always a teacher, regardless of her official profession. As an archetype of enlightenment, she believes that knowledge is a universal human right. She will teach a man to fish instead of merely giving him a fish. She will take the time to make sure her students learn the lesson well, demonstrating great patience and personal concern. Through the means of teaching, she nurtures everyone she possibly can. In addition to an actual mentor, the Simurgh card can also stand for a situation that involves your own learning experience and personal growth. To be touched by the Simurgh is to become more like her: wiser and more empowered through knowledge.

Inverted

The Simurgh's logical nature has overshadowed her sensitivity. Although she feels concern for others in her heart, she has failed to make it outwardly evident. As a teacher she appears harsh, as a caretaker she appears emotionally distant, as a friend she appears cold. To prevent this situation, the rational person must never underestimate the importance of saying "I love you" and showing it.

SIREN



Keywords

Deception, Seduction, Manipulation, Jealousy, Vanity, Narcissism, Sexual Desire, Selfishness, Dishonesty, Deceit, Con Artist, Danger, Warning, Predator

Mythological Background

In modern times, people often think of Sirens as ocean-dwellers, often confusing them with their cousins, the Mermaids. In Greek mythology, however, Sirens were originally said to be half woman and half bird of prey, rather than fishlike. These monsters dwell on three small islands in the middle of the sea called the *sirenum scopuli*. The Sirens are known for their powers of seduction and have especially beautiful singing voices. They notoriously lure sailors with their bewitching song. The hypnotized sailors sail toward the island until they wreck their ship on the rocks. Those who survive the crash remain under the spell and walk right into the Sirens' clutches. The Sirens then rip the men to shreds with their talons and devour them.

Men are supposedly incapable of turning away when they hear the Sirens' singing. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus' men were only able to sail past safely by stuffing their ears with beeswax, preventing them from hearing the song. Jason and the Argonauts circumvented their doom by bringing along Orpheus and his mystical lyre. Orpheus played his lyre, which drowned out the sound of the singing. Both heroes had been warned of the danger ahead of time. Thus the only way to pass safely is to not hear the Sirens' song at all, which means taking precautions beforehand. Once one hears it, they become captivated and fated to die.

Card Meaning

Sirens are seductive beings who use their endowments to manipulate others, purely for self-interested purposes. The Siren will make an offer that looks extremely enticing but is ultimately sinister. Do not be fooled, as she has had a great deal of practice in making herself appear innocent when she is anything but that. Sirens are relentless predators and are often also sadistic. Many of them collect victims like trophies. They expect to be treated like goddesses and will not settle for anything less. If their mark rejects them or puts them down, the Siren may become vindictive. Some of them are just motivated by sadistic thrills from the start.

Persons with characteristics of the Siren are egotistical and selfish, often vain and narcissistic. They could be female or male. Their attractiveness could be literal physical beauty, or it could manifest as a different kind of outward appeal. Whatever type of beauty they possess, the Siren is fully aware of this asset, and she flaunts it to make other people bend to her wishes. She may be the person who pretends to be a friend, but will turn on you when she is finished using you. Or she may pretend to fall in love, but is only interested in sex or money. Other times, Sirens are so confident regarding their attractiveness that they make little attempt at disguising their intentions. But in all cases, they promote themselves highly—ultimately at the expense of others.

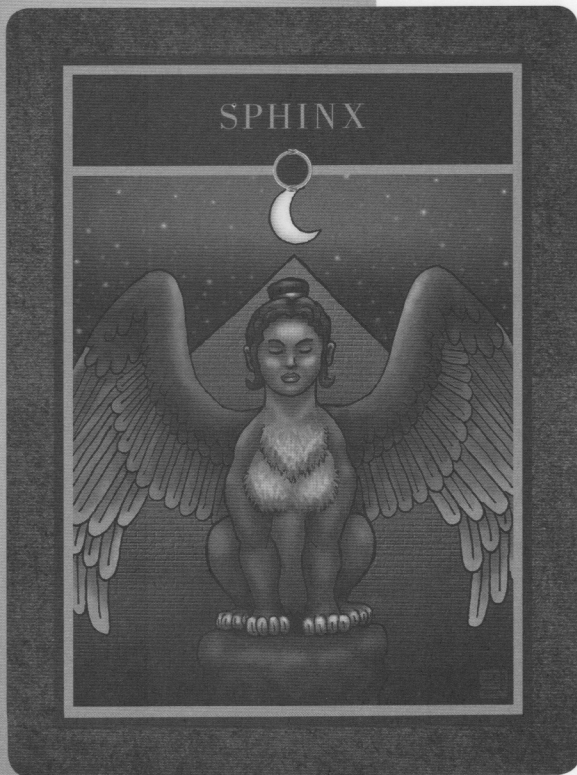
Drawing the Siren card can also indicate an enticing offer or an addictive activity, rather than a person. For example, the Siren may stand for a tempting risk that involves you parting with your money. This can be anything from spending too large an amount, purchasing something of poor quality, falling for a scam, or even just wasting time with indulgence. Above all, the Siren is a warning of hidden danger. In any case, beware: not all that glitters is gold.

The Siren does not actively hunt for her victims, but instead lures them in, either one by one or in droves. A person who meets his doom at her claws has brought himself to his own demise. Somewhere along the line, the victim made a choice to pursue the temptation. In fact, this could happen to anybody, and sometimes there is no way to know beforehand the actual pernicious nature of that which appears to be pleasant. Yet all too often people are snared when they should have known better. Wisdom comes with experience. Always look for warning signs—drawing this card may be one of them.

Inverted

With the Siren's cruel talons at the top of the image and her pretty face at the bottom, her true predatory intentions are exposed. The façade has been torn down and other people can now see that she is actually a monster. This imagery can also be a metaphor for any individual's newly enlightened understanding of how to spot something bad when it pretends to be good.

SPHINX



Keywords

Silence, Secrets, Mysteries, Wisdom, Knowledge, the Occult, Elitism, Meditation, Intuition, Receptivity, Patience, Introspection, Self-Elevation, Transcendence

Mythological Background

The Sphinx is best known as a mythical creature from Egypt. The famous Great Sphinx is a colossal Egyptian statue that guards the pyramids of Giza. The construction of this monument is often credited to the pharaoh Khafra around 2,500 BC. Based on the weathering of the statue, however, some people have speculated that it may be much older. The Egyptians also built other statues of Sphinxes, usually bearing the heads of different pharaohs or deities. Statues of similar creatures are also found on ancient Babylonian temples. The Babylonian Sphinx is called the Lamassu. It has wings, a man's head, and a female lion's body. These are normally depicted standing up and act as guardians. They are keepers of secret knowledge.

The ancient Greeks adopted the Sphinx into their mythology after coming into contact with the Egyptians. Their version of the creature was female and had wings and was far less benign than the silent temple guardians. Yet what the Greek version retained was the Sphinx's penchant for mystification. She was a cruel monster who would tell a riddle and then kill those who could not answer it correctly. The riddle was as follows: "What has four legs in the morning, two legs in the afternoon, and three legs in the evening?" A wandering prince named Oedipus finally gave the correct answer: a person. The Sphinx then threw herself off a cliff in defeat and Oedipus was made king.

Card Meaning

The Sphinx is a timeless icon of mystery. She is mystical and spiritual, a guardian of arcane knowledge. Her wisdom is ancient, but inaccessible to most. She meditates for eons, looking inward and contemplating everything she has experienced. The silence of the Sphinx not only stands for the mysterious nature of her knowledge, but also patience and receptivity. Often neglected in modern society, these qualities open the self to higher learning and transcendence. Through the darkness of silence she finds illumination. If the Sphinx appears in a reading, she may be telling you to close your mouth and open your mind. Additionally, she may indicate that you are doing so already and are on the right path.

The term "mystery" has another meaning besides something that is simply unknown. A mystery is something that cannot be explained in words. Ancient mystery religions consisted of secret ceremonies that would awaken spiritual knowledge within practitioners. This knowledge could only be gained from experience rather than explanation. All people experience mysteries. Transitions from one phase in life to another, and any life-changing events, are mysteries. The subject is transformed by the experience, gaining new insights and perspectives that could not have been given to them in words. The Sphinx is silent because knowledge of this nature cannot be verbalized.

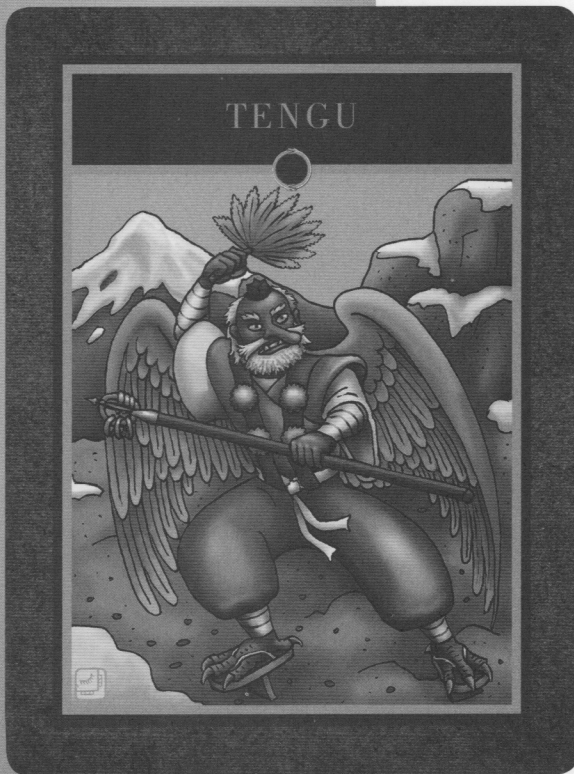
There is a possible alternative reason as to why the Sphinx is silent. The Sphinx is a symbol of restricted knowledge, and with this comes an undercurrent of social inequality. Few are granted access to that which she guards. Whether she is protecting a pharaoh's tomb or nastily mocking other people for their ignorance, there is a sense of elitism associated with the Sphinx. If a person being represented

happens to be this kind of Sphinx, then she is all too aware of her privileged status and the advantages that this confers. If she is silent, this may be due to the fact that she does not care to speak to those who she sees as beneath her.

In either interpretation, the Sphinx is associated with self-elevation. This kind of elevation does not come from money or political games; instead, it comes from within. Only you can make yourself a better person; nobody else can transform you. A teacher can show you the open door, but you must enter it by yourself. One can discover self-transformation through meditation and spirituality, and also through experience and maturation. Of course, these gains take time. This is where patience and receptivity become essential, as aggression and zeal can cause one to overlook the unspoken, subtle lessons of the Universe.

Inverted

The Sphinx compromises her lofty position, yet maintains her composure, as the angled sides of the pyramid point downward from her head, toward the Moon at the bottom of the card. This downward pointing symbolizes that the wise Sphinx has taken a pupil, one who is very young or has a long way to go. As the reader, you may either be the mentor or the pupil. Either way, important guidance is taking place. The Moon is a waxing crescent and will grow with time.



Keywords

Focus, Training, Learning, Rigorous Practice, Self-Discipline, Self-Control, Self-Improvement, Temperance, Asceticism, Sacrifice, Testing, Perseverance, Spiritual Strength

Mythological Background

The Tengu are a race of mountain-dwelling supernatural beings from Japanese folklore. There have been many different versions of the Tengu myth over time. Earlier in history they were imagined as birdlike and evil. Over the centuries they became more humanoid and less malicious. They are believed to be the reincarnated spirits of individuals who were too prideful and ambitious to go to the Buddhist Heaven. Once they become Tengu they despise arrogance and vanity, and they are known to attack or play pranks on priests who use their authority for corrupted purposes. There are two kinds of Tengu. The *kotengu* are the lesser form, who were not as enlightened in life. As Tengu they have birdlike faces and are malevolent tricksters. The *daitengu* are the higher and more powerful form, having been more spiritually advanced when they were humans. They are protectors of Buddhist monasteries.

Today, the faces of the *daitengu* are often seen on masks, red with a characteristically long nose. These beings are closely associated with the mystical practice known as *Shugendo*, a term that means “a person of training and testing.” These Tengu are depicted with the traditional costumes and accessories of the Shugendo monks, who are called *Yamabushi*. The Yamabushi live as hermits in the mountains where they meditate and practice martial arts. Embodying the ideals of the Yamabushi, the Tengu are formidable warriors and spell-casters.

Card Meaning

The Tengu shares symbolic aspects of the Hermit and the Hanged Man from the Tarot. The Hermit stands for patience and meditation in solitude. The Hanged Man symbolizes personal sacrifice and transformation. These characteristics are practiced by ascetic monks to the extreme, but can also be channeled into the everyday lives of regular people. Through rigorous focus, personal sacrifice, and long term dedication, an individual can become an enlightened spiritual warrior and a stronger person overall.

If you draw this card, there are many possible disciplines that the Tengu's training may symbolize to you. One of the more distinguishing themes among them is the metaphorical transformation from evil to good. Earlier in history the Tengus were once regarded as evil, and their modern interpretation is related to the ongoing elevation of their being. Most people go through similar processes within their lifetime. Individuals learn to correct bad habits over time and strive to make themselves better people. Yet doing so requires effort and perseverance. To some extent this applies to all learning processes. Knowledge is power, which can be used for good or evil. It requires self-control to resist the temptation of spite, and it takes a type of personal training to become productive and conscientious.

As a warrior-monk, the Tengu symbolizes rigorous personal training. Regardless of what that training is, it is something that will take a very long time. Westerners often think of training as having an end point, preferably sooner than later, and then it is "completed." Yet in Eastern thought, training is ongoing and can last forever. Results do not happen overnight. One may train for decades before they can

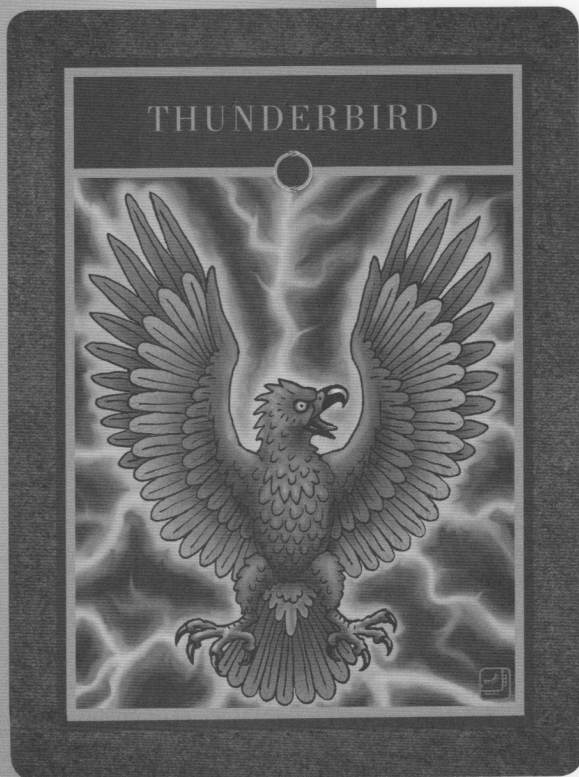
be called a master of anything, and even once they earn that title, they continue training. The Tengu reminds us that learning and self-improvement continue for as long as we live.

Not only is the training long-lasting; it is also difficult. It can even be painful. It is every strike that carves the stone, every battle that seasons the warrior. To maintain prolonged focus with such dedication requires discipline and stamina indeed. The Tengu does not take anything lightly. He and all persons who he visits are being tested. Tengus are often depicted wearing *geta* sandals that are raised above the ground by a single wooden blade, which require balance in order to wear. A person who embodies the Tengu demonstrates remarkable discipline and skill as a result of the rigorous training to which they have committed themselves. They may be a student, an athlete, a soldier, a martial artist, or any similarly dedicated individual.

Inverted

In reverse, the Tengu symbolizes the student who is not training properly. This student is in training, but is either not gaining from it what he should or not applying his skills to a good purpose. He might be lazy and not dedicated. He may be an arrogant and headstrong fool. He may even have poor moral character. He is not responsible enough to be a good Tengu.

THUNDERBIRD



Keywords

Accomplishment, Earned Status, Leadership, Prestige, Proven Strength, Seniority, Experience, Integrity, Authority, Charisma, Worthiness, Influence Over Surroundings, Skillfulness

Mythological Background

There are many different versions of the Thunderbird in different Native American cultures. Thunderbirds vary in appearance, demeanor, and lifestyle. But all agree that these majestic beings are generally eagle-like in appearance and are much, much larger than ordinary eagles. They are all known for their awe-inspiring power, being able to wield command over the elements of nature. They are said to produce thunder by flapping their wings and produce lightning by blinking their eyes. Some say that Thunderbirds throw lightning bolts from their claws. In some tribes, the emblem of the Thunderbird is worn by chiefs and great warriors who have earned top honor.

The most famous Thunderbirds come from the Lakota tribe of the Great Plains. Four great Thunderbirds, called the *Wakinyan Tanka*, guard the four directions of the world. The one in the west is black, the one in the north is red, the one in the east is yellow, and the one in the south is white. Usually, only holy men can see them, and even when this happens, they can only see part of the Wakinyan at a time because the birds are so great. The Wakinyans' job is to protect all that is sacred. One time they fought a great battle against a horned earth monster called Unktehi. In this battle, the ground shook, the waters raged, the forests burned, and the clouds stormed. Defeated, Unktehi's bones became the great jagged rocks of the Badlands.

Card Meaning

The mighty Thunderbird is a creature that many people wish to be, yet most who claim to be Thunderbirds actually are not. This is because one cannot gain such status simply by “talking the talk.” In fact, arrogance and egoism are sure signs of an impostor. The Thunderbird rose to his status through extensive hard work, which most wannabes are either unaware of or unwilling to undertake. He is not a Thunderbird because he wanted to be, but because he earned the title. He is one who has endured much struggling in his life and has soared above it. This experience leaves the Thunderbird with a sense of self-fulfillment and broad perspective that replaces selfish ambitions. They are not hungry for recognition, nor do they seek to dominate or control others. True Thunderbirds often go unseen.

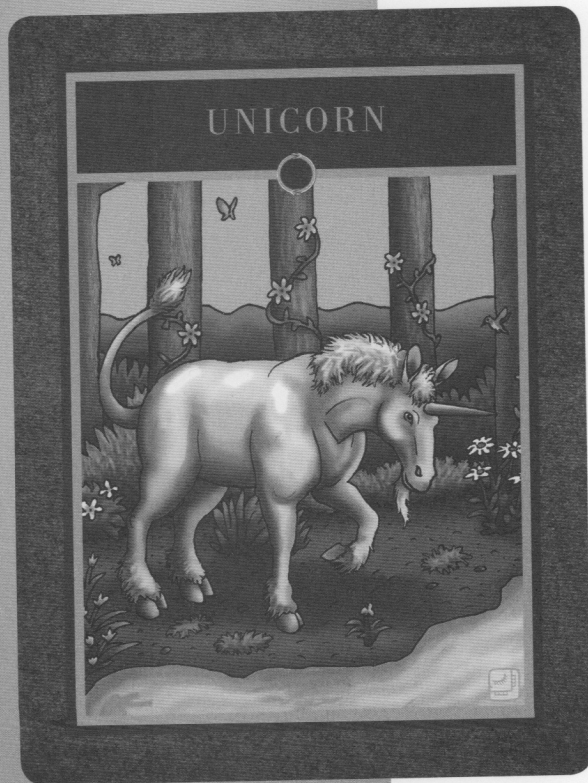
When a crisis arises, the Thunderbird soars, at which point there is no overlooking his majestic power. The Thunderbird has the ability to control and transform his environment. To do this he uses his great wisdom and understanding, as well as refined skill that comes only with years of experience. Capable of moving mountains, he is renowned for his ability to manipulate chaos into order. Rather than simply trying to intimidate his foes, he creates order among his allies and represents a source of strength among them. The Thunderbird is highly charismatic—a confidant, not a bully. He uses force only when necessary. People regard him with true respect, not fear. His deeds are known and his word is trusted. He is a leader from among the people, not over the people. He had to be a proven warrior first before he was able to become a leader. Through his known capability and integrity, he commands respect.

Indeed the Thunderbird is a high bar to reach, and you may doubt that you are worthy if you have drawn this card. Yet to question yourself in this manner is a sign pointing in the right direction. We are all birds flying over our past experiences, and we all carry wisdom of some form or another. One does not have to command all the elements in order to be a Thunderbird of their own element. To draw the Thunderbird card might indicate that someone perceives you in this light, or that you are otherwise soaring to new heights. It may signify a promotion at work or some other kind of merit. It may be that someone looks up to you or sees you as worthy of praise. Your accomplishments are being noticed and this places you in the high esteem of others.

Inverted

Somebody thought he could be a Thunderbird before he truly earned the title. He has placed himself in a position of authority that requires more wisdom, more experience and temperance than he actually possesses. Now he is overwhelmed. He may possibly deal with this stress by abusing his power or belittling others. If he does not fall from his position, his esteemed image will.

UNICORN



Keywords

Purity, Peace, Goodness, Morality, Virtue, Chivalry, Self-Control, Protection of Innocence, Justice, Tactfulness, Healing, Spirituality, Faith, Piety

Mythological Background

The first descriptions of the Unicorn came from ancient Greece and Rome. Early historians Ctesias and Pliny described the creature somewhat differently from the later European image that would become the convention. Likely inspired by legends from farther east, the Unicorn of their writings was colored red, white, and black, and its horn was black and very long. This proto-Unicorn was reputed to be fiercely territorial, and was among the many beasts that Alexander the Great had to fight while in Persia. Later, after the meaning of the creature became completely revised in Europe, Alexander's own faithful horse was sometimes said to have been a Unicorn.

Once Europe became Christianized, the Unicorn became a symbol of purity and was depicted as solid white in color. The elusive creature could be lured into capture with a female virgin in the woods. It would be drawn to her purity and would come to lay its head in her lap. While protective of the innocent, it was also said to be the enemy of the lion. Numerous historical renderings depict a Unicorn slaying a lion with its horn. This horn became a prize most coveted by hunters and kings, as it was known to possess magical properties. Even as early as Ctesias, it was said that using a Unicorn's horn as a drinking vessel could cure poison. Since the horn was set to fetch a high price, people sometimes passed off narwhal tusks as Unicorn horns.

Card Meaning

The Unicorn is typically regarded as a kind and gentle creature. This is how most people know him, as this is the side that he normally shows. There is no denying, however, that he is actually a powerful wild beast with a long, sharp horn, and he is capable of killing lions. To confront and kill a lion requires not only adequate weaponry, but also a tremendous amount of courage and a warrior's spirit. Thus it is remarkable that such a strong and formidable beast as the Unicorn also interacts so gently with the most delicate of people. The Unicorn is a highly principled being with excellent self-control. He has a pronounced sense of right versus wrong. All of his actions are intentional rather than haphazard. He acts with purpose, and this purpose is chivalry.

The Unicorn stands for moral goodness, his battle against the lion symbolizing good versus evil. This duality is central to the Christian worldview that permeated Medieval Europe. The female virgin was regarded as the icon of innocence and purity, which the Unicorn adores and protects. The Unicorn's white color symbolizes moral cleanliness, a lack of any black marks. He is an archetype of innocence—innocence in this sense meaning a lack of guilt, not a lack of knowledge. The Unicorn is in fact very wise. His legendary healing powers suggest that he can lead people toward goodness.

In keeping with the concept of goodness and purity, the Unicorn is known as a symbol of virtue. According to Christian tradition, the seven heavenly virtues are chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, patience, kindness, and humility. An alternative list of virtues, associated with Catholicism, is prudence, justice, temperance, courage, faith, hope, and charity. These are opposed to the seven

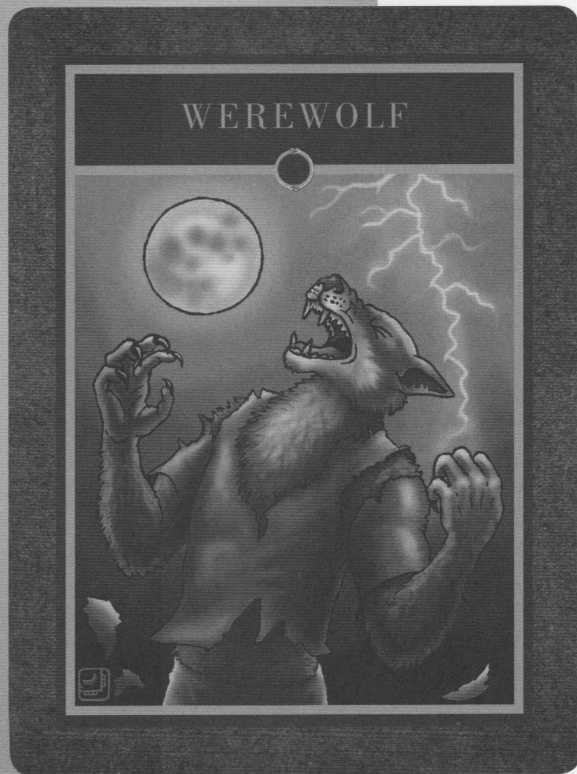
deadly sins, which are lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride. The Unicorn acts to protect those who are virtuous and to attack those who are sinful. He is honest and honorable. He is the epitome upstanding citizen, the Good Samaritan, the role model. His gentleness is not due to weakness, but strength.

The Unicorn archetype can stand for a good person and also a religious person. This creature can indicate piety and one's relationship with God. With regards to other religions, he can signify spiritual awareness in general. Any person represented by the Unicorn is highly moralistic, humanistic, spiritual, truthful yet tactful, and devoted to a good cause. This person may appear meek, but he is wise and will swiftly take arms if someone mistreats him or his loved ones. His greatest desire is for peace in the world.

Inverted

The Unicorn is a quarry sought after by those who covet his legendary horn. When hunted and tormented, the Unicorn's ugly side is revealed. The normally kind and gentle creature is forced to show aggression and use his horn as a weapon. He is not proud to be seen this way. When the card is inverted, he feels attacked—and also ashamed, being robbed of his usual dignity as a result of the way he was forced to behave.

WEREWOLF



Keywords

Sudden Change, Instability, Lack of Control, Mood Swings, Bad Temper, Impulse, Outburst, Upheaval, Unpredictability, Split Personalities, Interpersonal Conflict, Intrapersonal Conflict

Mythological Background

Human-animal shapeshifters occur in mythology all around the world. The Werewolf is the Western Hemisphere's most famous example, as the wolf is historically the most feared predator in Europe. Werewolves are human by default, but they assume a wolflike shape for brief periods of time. Modern media sometimes depicts Werewolves as "wolf men," or half-wolf humanoid monsters. Yet traditionally, it was believed that Werewolves looked like ordinary wolves, if somewhat larger. Simply turning into a wolf is not the sole characteristic of this mythical being. Lycanthropy (werewolfism) is a curse or an illness, transmittable to humans by being bitten by a Werewolf. Transformation is usually said to be involuntary and highly painful. It is determined by the cycle of the moon, the full moon eliciting the violent transformation. When in wolf form, the afflicted person has no control over their behavior and is driven by madness to rip people to shreds, even their friends and loved ones.

Before the recent trend of glorifying the Werewolf in popular fiction, lycanthropy was feared in earnest for centuries. Numerous people were executed because they were believed to be Werewolves. Perhaps the most notorious true Werewolf case came from France in the 1700s. A huge, wolflike beast purportedly killed over 100 people and injured many others in a region called Gévaudan. Its reign of terror lasted for six years before it was killed with a silver bullet. To many this was proof that it was a Werewolf.

Card Meaning

Werewolves are not inherently evil. They are human by default, but every so often, they transform into ferocious beasts. They may normally be kind and reasonable individuals, but everything recognizable about them disappears when they explode into a snarling rampage of fury. They have no control over any of this, nor does anyone else. The transformation may be painful for them as well as their victims. People who embody the Werewolf experience sudden mood swings and may benefit from psychological help. For everyone else around them, the best hope is to learn what triggers their outbursts and otherwise be patient. Learn the cycle and predict the next change. Of course, many people find the Werewolf so unpleasant that they elect to stop associating with them altogether.

Symbolically, the most important characteristic of the Werewolf is its lack of control. This is most literally interpreted as a lack of self-control, but it could also indicate a general lack of control over one's own life. The Werewolf can be a situation rather than a person. It may be a situation that appeared stable at one moment and then quickly turned to chaos. It symbolizes any change that occurred violently and was not foreseen. If such an event happens to you, it is normal to feel angry and powerless.

The spiritual meaning of the Werewolf card is in some ways similar to the Tower card in the Tarot. However, unlike the Tower, which is something being permanently destroyed, the situation of the Werewolf may change back to the way it was before. The change back might be just as sudden as the first change. This could be good news, as the initial change is probably unfavorable. Yet the bad news

is that the Werewolf is volatile and subject to change back and forth on a frequent basis. The chaos may be ongoing, leaving people in limbo as they anticipate the change to happen again.

Whether the Werewolf stands for a person or a situation, the result is that people get hurt. This could potentially take the form of physical hurt, but more likely it occurs as hurt feelings, frustration, fear, or other negative emotions. In any case, the Werewolf is an unwanted presence that causes disruption, and may do so repeatedly. To take control of a Werewolf situation, you must halt the cycle with a permanent change. For instance, this may mean removing yourself from a group or location that is associated with the problem and not going back to it. A vicious cycle can only be stopped if interrupted by something completely different, ideally something constructive.

Inverted

The Werewolf drawn in reverse points to profound internal suffering. This suffering may or may not be marked by outward signs of violent change; in fact, it might not even be obvious to others at all. But on the inside, the subject is feeling wrecked beyond words. Do not be angry at this person's behavior, for they are a victim in need of help.

MORE MYTHICAL CREATURES

For the Seeker of Fabulous Beasts in all Corners of the Globe

Ahuizotl—The Ahuizotl (“a-whee-sote”) is a vicious lake monster feared by Aztec fishermen in ancient Mexico. Although deadly, this monster was considered sacred to the rain god Tlaloc. Unlike the reptilian lake monsters common in Old World myth, the Ahuizotl looks much like a hairless dog. It also has a long tail with a hand at the end, which it uses to grab people and strangle them. It is said to make fish jump out of the water in order to lure fishermen over to it. When it fails to catch its prey, it makes a sound like a crying infant. Whenever fishermen disappeared, people always knew that the Ahuizotl had killed them. It is said

that the men’s bodies would be found days later, but without their eyeballs, teeth, and fingernails, as those were the favorite parts of its victims.

Baku—Many of the more benevolent or auspicious mythical creatures come from East Asia, and the Baku is one example of these. This mystical beast is Japanese, although it first originated in China. Traditionally, it was a composite animal, having an elephant’s trunk and tusks, a lion’s mane, a tiger’s legs, and an ox’s tail. It is known for devouring evil spirits, particularly those that cause nightmares. The image of

the Baku, or the kanji representing its name, was used to repel evil and promote peaceful dreaming. The Baku will eat bad dreams at night, as well as the lingering negative energy that will affect a person’s day. Historical depictions of the Baku show a creature that is truly fabulous; however, in more recent times, the Japanese have come to identify it with the real-life Malayan tapir.

Bunyip—The Australian Bunyip was originally a generic monster, its name meaning “bogey” or “demon” in one of the Aboriginal languages. The creature had no one specific description, although

it was known as an aquatic beast and presumed to be dangerous. Hundreds of people reported Bunyip sightings throughout the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Allegedly, it had black fur and tusks like a walrus, but it could also be described as resembling a dog, hippo, or manatee. It is said to have a loud, bellowing roar. A particular rash of sightings in 1890 prompted the Melbourne Zoo to attempt to capture the beast, obviously without success. Today, the Bunyip is regarded as a cryptid and a cultural icon of Australia. Some people believe it to be a surviving prehistoric giant marsupial.

Catoblepas—The earliest known description of the Catoblepas was provided by the Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder, who believed that the creature lives in Egypt and Ethiopia. Its name is Greek, meaning “that which looks downward.” The Catoblepas’ body is shaped like that of a large bovine and it has the head of a boar. Its head is very large and heavy, always hanging low. If by chance it looks up, its gaze can kill anyone who makes eye contact with it. In later centuries, the creature’s description became more embellished. Its body was said to be covered with large scales. Edward Topsell, in the seventeenth century, gave it shaggy fur concealing its face and eyes that stands

straight up when the beast is startled. He also wrote that it feeds on poison berries that give it toxic breath.

Cuero—The name Cuero is Spanish for cow hide. This mythical creature originated from the native Mapuche peoples of Chile and Argentina, who called it Trelquehuecuve. It is said to inhabit different lakes, but most notably Lago Lacar. This unusual monster resembles a large animal hide that has been stretched out. It has eyes either around the perimeter of its body or on the ends of stalks. It also has clawed tentacles and teeth on its underside. The creature’s appearance may have been inspired by the freshwater

stingrays of the Amazon. The Cuero floats on the water and suns itself on rocks. At rest it resembles a harmless animal skin. When a person or animal comes near, the Cuero wraps itself around them, sucking their blood or suffocating them, and finally eating them.

Kappa—Kappas are small, dangerous beings from Japanese folklore. They stand at about three feet tall, are humanoid or monkey-like in shape, and are reptilian. Often they are depicted as having a shell like a turtle's. They dwell in bodies of fresh water. Their most unusual characteristic is the hollow depression at the top of the head, like an open container that is filled with water. They are able to leave the river and come onto dry land as long as it carries this water in its head. Kappas prey on humans, especially children. Children are taught that if they bow in front of a Kappa, the Kappa will bow in return. This will cause the water to spill out of its head, after which the Kappa must immediately return to the river or die. Kappas can also be appeased by being offered cucumbers, their other favorite food.

Kraken—The Kraken originated from the Norse, but tales about the creature later spread throughout Western civilization. It is a vast, octopus-like monster, as large as an island. The legend was most likely inspired by the giant squid. Yet whereas giant squid are not known to attack humans, the Kraken is the most dangerous creature in the sea. It will grapple with ships, plucking off sailors with its long, suckered tentacles, or destroying the ship completely. It is also blamed for creating enormous whirlpools in order to suck ships underwater. For centuries, sailors believed the Kraken to be a real animal, and they sometimes blamed it for the disappearance of ships at sea. Unusual currents and bubbling steam from undersea volcanoes were attributed to this beast.

Lamia—Originating in ancient Greece, Lamia is a demoness known for seducing men and devouring children. Originally, it is said that she was a beautiful Libyan queen who was the lover of Zeus. When Zeus' wife, Hera, discovered their affair, she retaliated by transforming Lamia into a horrible monster. Lamia still looks like a beautiful woman from the waist up, but below the

waist she is covered with scales. In earlier accounts she was said to have the lower body of a serpent. Later, Medieval bestiaries gave her cloven hooves and a horse's tail along with reptilian scales, and regarded the Lamia as a race of female demons. Whether there is only one Lamia or many, this creature was believed to visit men at night, much like a succubus, and also to cause sudden death in infants.

Leucrotta—The Leucrotta was first described by the Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder, and is related to another unusual creature called the Crocotta. The Crocotta, a deadly beast from India, is said to be a cross between a wolf and a dog. It has a human voice and can change its color. When the Crocotta mates with a lion it produces the Leucrotta. This creature also can imitate a human voice and is deadly. The Leucrotta's chest and neck are like a lion's, but it has the cloven hooves of a deer and the head of a badger. From a distance it resembles a donkey. In place of teeth it has solid ridges of bone with which it can crush its victims. Its mouth extends as far back as its ears, allowing for an extraordinary gape. The Leucrotta later reappears in Medieval bestiaries.

Makara—The Makara is the generic water monster of India and South Asia. It is half fish and half land animal; beyond this, it can be depicted in an unlimited number of ways. Oftentimes, it has an elephant trunk, or an otherwise elongated snout, with sharp teeth like a crocodile or shark, a crocodile's legs, and a fish's scales and tail. Occasionally, it will have other features such as hooved feet. Ganga, the goddess of the Ganges River, and Varuna, the god of the sea, both ride on a Makara's back. It is also the symbol of Kamadeva, the god of love. The Makara is a symbol of water and fertility and, for this reason, it is sometimes depicted in bridal and wedding decorations. South Asians interpret the Western zodiac sign Capricorn as being the same creature as the Makarra.

Mokele-Mbembe—This gigantic reptilian animal is reported to inhabit lakes and rivers in the Central African rain forest. Indigenous peoples originally described it as having a long neck and a frill of skin on its head. After several new species of animals were discovered in the Central African rainforest, a few Westerners suspected that the Mokele-Mbembe might be a real creature, perhaps a

living dinosaur. In 1980, the cryptozoologist Roy Mackal visited a group of Congolese natives to learn more about this legendary creature. He showed them a drawing of a sauropod dinosaur, and the natives identified it as the Mokele-Mbembe. Mackal also "identified" other legendary Congolese creatures as species of dinosaurs, although no evidence of their existence has been found.

Peryton—What is known about the Peryton comes from a sixteenth century Rabbi from Morocco, but the tales about this creature are believed to be centuries older. The Peryton was a massive, winged predator with the head of a stag. The earliest known writing described it as having the body of a bird with green feathers, but later artists often depicted it as a deer with wings. It was said to have lived in Atlantis, which was located outside the Strait of Gibraltar. Each Peryton desires to kill and eat a human being, but it only commits this act once. While on the hunt, it casts the shadow of a person and, after being sated, its shadow transforms into the appropriate shape of its body. It is alleged that a flock of Perytons descended upon the army of the Roman general Scipio, killing many of his troops.

Roc—The Roc is a colossal bird from Arabian folklore. Its appearance is usually said to be similar to an eagle or vulture, and in some accounts it has horns. It is so enormous that it preys on elephants, or even larger beasts. An encounter with the Roc was famously detailed in the legend of Sindbad the sailor. Sindbad clung to the bird's ankle in order to get to a valley filled with diamonds. Gigantic feathers allegedly coming from the Roc, such as that described by Marco Polo, were probably branches from palm trees. Similar birds exist in myths from other regions of the Middle East, including the Simurgh in Persia. The ancient Hebrews described a similar bird called the Ziz, which is said to be so large that its wings span the horizon, and the deepest part of the ocean only comes up to its ankles.

Sasabonsam—The Sasabonsam, or Asanbonsam, is a terrible humanoid coming from southern Ghana, the Ivory Coast, and Togo in West Africa. This hairy ogre is sometimes portrayed as a bat-like humanoid, sometimes with wings and sometimes without, red in color, or with red eyes. Its most consistent characteristics are its sharp

fangs and hooked feet, both of which are sometimes described as being made of metal. The Sasabonsam waits in tree branches for victims to walk underneath, when it suddenly snatches them up and drinks their blood. It either hangs upside-down by its feet and grabs people with its hands, or else it dangles its long legs down and hooks its victims with its feet. It is said that people can spot where the Sasabonsam waits by finding spattered blood on the ground.

Seth's Animal—This creature is so named because it is directly associated with the Egyptian god, Seth (pronounced "Set"). Many of the Egyptian deities had animal heads, Seth being one of them. Unlike the others, Seth's Animal is unlike any known species. It has a long snout shaped like a camel's, and long ears with square-cornered tips. Different scholars have suggested that it is a donkey, a hyena, a camel, an aardvark, or a number of other creatures. Only after finding images of the animal shown in full-body did it become apparent that Seth's Animal is mythical. Its body is shaped like a dog's and its tail is long and straight like the shaft of an arrow. Seth is the god of chaos.

He is associated with the desert and with storms, and his unique animal is presumed to have had a loud and thunderous voice.

Sleipnir—The Scandinavian equivalent of Pegasus, Sleipnir is the great steed of the god Odin. Instead of having wings, this horse has eight legs, which enable it to run faster and bound farther than any other horse. Sleipnir was conceived after a dispute between the gods and a stone giant who disguised himself as a mason. If the mason completed a construction project for the gods within six months, the gods would be required to pay him an unreasonable commission. Loki, the trickster god, attempted to slow the mason down by depriving him of his horse that he was using to haul the stones. Loki shapeshifted into a female horse and lured the mason's stallion away. The plot was successful and the gods received their wall for free. Loki later gave birth to Sleipnir as a result of the encounter.

Tikbalang—This Philippine monster has a humanoid body, a horse's head and feet, and very long limbs. A protector of the forest, it is often malicious toward human trespassers,

but is not evil per se. The Tikbalang is most commonly known for causing travelers to get lost in the woods, making them walk in circles, or occasionally making them go mad. In rare instances, it may attack people physically. It is said that you can pass through the forest safely by wearing your shirt inside-out, as this reverses the Tikbalang's magic. A Tikbalang can be tamed by riding it, plucking one of the three thickest strands from its mane and making a talisman out of it. Sometimes Tikbalangs are believed to impregnate women. Aborted fetuses are said to be reborn as Tikbalangs.

Tikoloshe—Coming from the folklore of South Africa, the Tikoloshe can be seen as a relative of Goblins and Gremlins. This tiny, hairy humanoid has a somewhat bestial appearance, looking like a little monkey-man. The Tikoloshe is often summoned by evil sorcerers. Its agenda is to cause random harm to people, either through physical assault or the use of sorcery to cause disease. It also has the ability to become invisible, a state which it prefers to assume most of the time. Most people who see the Tikoloshe are children. This monster has traditionally

been used to scare children, like a nursery bogey, but it is also feared by adults. It is said that placing bricks beneath the legs of one's bed will deter the Tikoloshe from attacking them at night, but only a shaman can banish it for good.

Underwater Panther—The Algonquian-speaking Native Americans describe a fearsome beast that dwells at the bottom of lakes and rivers. The Ojibway call it Mishipeshu. It is identified as a large cat, sometimes called a "Great Lynx"; however, in the Northeast it is described as being serpentine. Some artistic representations depict a creature that has a row of spines down its back and other dragon-like attributes. The Underwater Panther is extremely dangerous, being a large predator that controls the water, although it is not inherently evil. It is highly protective of the copper ore deposits that can be found near Lake Superior. When angered, it will grab people with its long tail and pull them underwater. It can also create whirlpools and causes other misfortunes.

Yale—The Yale first appears in the writings of Pliny the Elder. It was said to live either in India or Ethiopia, and was perhaps inspired by mountain goats of the Near East. This hooved mammal was first described as being large, dark in color, and having the jaws of a boar. Its most distinctive feature is its two horns. These horns are each longer than a cubit or eighteen inches, and are movable. The Yale swivels its horns forward when fighting and keeps them sloped backward when at rest. Other variations of the Yale appeared in Medieval and Renaissance writings, which gave it a spotted coat. It was said that the Yale fights using only one horn at a time, keeping the other horn backwards or curled up when not in use. The Yale was used in Medieval heraldry as a symbol of proud defense.

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