

Robert M Place
THE
HERMES
PLAYING CARD



The Hermes Playing Card Oracle

The Hermes Playing Card Oracle is the latest oracle deck designed by Robert M. Placc. It is a standard game deck of 52 cards plus two jokers, but with the addition of symbolic images on each card, each providing a divinatory meaning. It can be used for card games, or laid out in the traditional pattern, known as the Grand Tableau, and used for divination.

Although the Tarot is the deck that most people today would associate with divination, historically, regular four-suit decks of playing cards were more likely to have been used for this purpose. In the late 18th century, oracle decks were first published in which each card was illustrated with a symbol designed primarily for divination, but a small image of the playing card associated with each symbol was also included on each card. The most popular oracle deck was the *Petit Lenormand*, first published in Germany in

1847. This deck was based on the common 36-card German deck (a deck without the 2 through 5 pip cards in each suit), and a miniature playing card was included at the top of each card. There were, however, many variations of oracle decks produced in the 19th century, including some based on the standard 52-card French deck.

The Hermes Playing Card Oracle is like a traditional oracle deck, but instead of each card being dominated by a symbolic image, with only a miniature of the associated playing card inserted somewhere on the card, each card is a standard playing card with the symbolic image inserted somewhere on the card. The symbolic images on each card are ones found in traditional oracle decks, and each has a specific meaning. The ones on the ace, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and the three royal cards in each suit are the same as in the Lenormand oracle. If the number 2, 3, 4, and 5 pips of each suit are removed,

the deck can function as a standard Lenormand oracle deck.

The deck can be used for any card game, but when it is used for divination, all of the cards are to be shuffled and laid out in the Grand Tableau pattern. When the deck is being used as a standard Lenormand, the Grand Tableau will consist of four rows of eight cards, laid out left to right from the top to the bottom row. Then the remaining four cards are to be laid out in a fifth row, centered on the bottom. When all 54 of the cards in the deck are used, which includes the two Jokers, the Grand Tableau will consist of six rows of nine cards, laid out left to right top row to bottom.

The most important cards in the reading are the signifiers. These are the Ace of Spades, representing the subject of the reading if she is a woman, and the Ace of Hearts, representing the subject if he is a man. If the subject is a woman, then the

Ace of Hearts may represent her love interest, and likewise the Ace of Spades may serve this function for a man. This relationship is strongest when the male and female cards seem to be facing each other. If the subject is a lesbian woman, the Female Joker may serve as the love interest. Likewise, the Male Joker may serve this function for a gay man. Although traditionally romantic relationships are a major focus for oracle readings, the cards may be used to divine on any subject, and the second significator and the Jokers may be used to represent others, such as friends or relatives.

When reading the spread, first locate the significator and determine which way she or he is facing. The cards in a horizontal or diagonal line extending from the front of the significator (that she or he is facing) represent the future. The cards extending horizontally or diagonally behind the significator represent the past. The cards in a

vertical line directly above and below the significator represent the present. Cards below the significator represent issues that have been mastered by the significator and ones above still present a challenge. The cards closest to the significator are the strongest in their influence and the ones further away are the weakest or most distant in time.

Also pay attention to images that are facing the significator and therefore moving toward her or him, also ones that are facing away and moving away. Direction is especially important when considering the King of Clubs, with the Cloud on his card. Pay attention to the cloud that appears at the top of the card. It has a dark negative side and a light positive side.

The cards can also be used in any layout recommended for Lenormand cards. To learn more, any good book on Lenormand cards will be helpful, such as *The Burning Serpent Oracle* by Rachel Pollack.

The Meanings of the Cards

Ace of Spades – The Woman: the significator if the subject is a woman, or the love interest if the subject is a man.

Two of Spades – The Crossed Swords: attack, debate, a difference of opinion.

Three of Spades – The Bee: work, industry, productivity.

Four of Spades – Hermes: speed, protection, insight, guidance, commerce, healing.

Five of Spades – The Lion: courage, strength, discipline.

Six of Spades – The Tower: authority, leadership, solitude.

Seven of Spades – The letter: a message, news, documents.

Eight of Spades – The Garden: community, a gathering, acceptance.

Nine of Spades – The Anchor: stability, hope, virtue.

Ten of Spades – The Ship: a journey, travel, an adventure.

Jack of Spades – The Child: innocence, youth, playfulness.

Queen of Spades – The Bouquet: a gift, appreciation, beauty.

King of Spades – The Lily: sexuality, maturity, purity.

Ace of Hearts – The Man: the significator if the subject is a man, or the love interest if the subject is a woman.

Two of Hearts – The Clasped Hands: friendship, agreement, introduction.

Three of Hearts – The Wine Bottle: cheerfulness, drunkenness, a party.

Four of Hearts – Cupid: love struck, infatuation, desire.

Five of Hearts – The Cat: flattery, companionship, protection from theft (especially if near the Mouse).

Six of Hearts – The Star: clarity, guidance, spirituality.

Seven of Hearts – The Tree: good health, longevity, ancestry.

Eight of Hearts – The Moon: honor, intuition, dreams.

Nine of Hearts – The Rider: a messenger, a visitor, news.

Ten of Hearts – The Dog: fidelity, dedication, companionship.

Jack of Hearts – The Heart: love, heartfelt emotions, romance.

Queen of Hearts – The Stork: moving house, delivery, something new.

King of Hearts – The House: a happy home, security, possessions.

Ace of Clubs – The Ring: commitment, proposal, contract, marriage.

Two of Clubs – The Eye: interest, suspicion, insight.

Three of Clubs – Lightning: disruption, a sudden change, a fright.

Four of Clubs – Justice: truth, fairness, legal matters.

Five of Clubs – The Lamb: peace, trust, gullibility.

Six of Clubs – The Cross: sorrow, struggle, burdens.

Seven of Clubs – The Mouse: theft, intrusion, gnawing, persistence.

Eight of Clubs – The Mountain: obstruction, an impasse calling for a detour, a large problem.

Nine of Clubs – The Fox: cunning, cleverness, deceit, trickery.

Ten of Clubs – The Bear: a person in power, headstrong, authoritative, mothering, protection.

Jack of Clubs – The Rod: discipline, punishment, anger, sex.

Queen of Clubs – The Snake: an enemy, evil, treachery, temptation.

King of Clubs – The Cloud: obscurity,

confusion, problems. (Consider the cloud at the top of the card—the dark side will have a negative influence on the adjacent card; the effect is less on the light side.)

Ace of Diamonds – The Sun: success, warmth, happiness.

Two of Diamonds – The Candle: peace, solitude, meditation.

Three of Diamonds – The Horseshoe: sustained luck, confidence, a token.

Four of Diamonds – Fortuna: good fortune if an opportunity is seized, a gamble, chance, a change in circumstances, destiny.

Five of Diamonds – The Pig: abundance, savings, excess fat.

Six of Diamonds – The Clover: a lucky break, a windfall, luck in the present.

Seven of Diamonds – The Birds: communication, conversation, talk, gossip.

Eight of Diamonds – The Key: secrets revealed, to lock or unlock, security.

Nine of Diamonds – The Coffin: illness, depression, the end.

Ten of Diamonds – The Book: knowledge, secrets, education.

Jack of Diamonds – The Scythe: to cut away, to end, harvest, out of time.

Queen of Diamonds – The Path: choices, decisions, contemplation. (Ideally the path should lead to The Garden.)

King of Diamonds – The Fish: money, success in business, netting a good catch.

The Female Joker: an unexpected event, a surprise. (This card may function as the love interest for a lesbian subject, as another woman in a love triangle, or any other woman of interest.)

The Male Joker: an unexpected event, a surprise. (This card may function as the

love interest for a gay subject, as another man in a love triangle, or any other man of interest.)



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