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First and foremost, I am grateful to Lisa Hunt who not only shared my vision but was somehow able to take my descriptions and stick drawings and manifest my concepts as magnificent works of art. She truly is the Magician of the Pastoral Tarot. This creative odyssey would not have been possible without the generous assistance of her husband, Kort Kramer, who scanned and organized all the art files and modeled for many of the drawings. Their daughter Kyra also played a key role, modeling for us and offering valuable feedback.

I also want to thank my crew at U.S. Games Systems who supported this project from the very beginning and helped to bring it to the finish line. Thank you for your editorial and design skills Nora, Jennifer, Fern and Paula. I am so lucky to have you in my corner and in my life! And thank you Stuart, for always believing in me.

Lastly, I want to dedicate Pastoral Tarot to my mother Helene Araujo who used to lovingly tease me about my favorite word being bucolic.



# Introduction to Pastoral Tarot

Pastoral Tarot, as the name suggests, takes its inspiration from the rich pastoral tradition of the arts that honor and celebrate the sweeping majesty of the countryside. Like the poetry, literature and music that creatively capture the peaceful idyllic life, Pastoral Tarot takes us to glorious places where we can appreciate the beauty and bounty of nature. Join us as we stroll through apple orchards, lavender farms, pumpkin patches, golden cornfields, lush vineyards, woodlands, pastures and meadows. As we make our way through the visual landscape of Pastoral Tarot, we are beckoned to pause by warm seaside vistas, colorful gardens, and verdant hills and valleys.

Many of these scenes have deep personal meaning for us, and several are actual places I hold dear. Some of my fondest childhood memories were visiting friends' farms, riding horses at dawn and spending lazy afternoons playing hide and seek with kittens in the hayloft. Another very special place to me is the shoreline near our family cottage in coastal Massachusetts. Our Queen of Cups is portrayed sitting upon a natural throne of stones beside the azure sea. These are the very stones I climbed and played on as a child, and meditate by as an adult. Every year I make this pilgrimage, past the fragrant sea roses back to this same spot on the ancient boulders where the eternal waves crash and spray.

I now live in Connecticut and some of the barns and farm scenes shown in this deck were inspired by places in this area, which was also where Lisa Hunt grew up and studied art.

We all have a "Six of Cups" place for which we feel great nostalgia. For both Lisa and me, the bucolic countryside stirs our sense of going home.

Pastoral Tarot explores how a sense of place reveals who we are and where we belong.

This tarot deck also explores the deeper sense of the word pastoral that refers to matters of spiritual guidance. It is the aim of this deck not just to inspire readers but to offer spiritual signposts for the seeker who wanders many paths in pursuit of of self-actualization. We are all wayfarers searching for illumination on our place in the world. Hopefully, some of the countryside scenes in Pastoral Tarot will also resonate for readers and bring them insightful new perspectives.

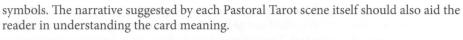
The wisdom of tarot is presented in this deck through panoramic views of fields and meadows, farms and orchards, ponds and streams, where man and nature co-exist. In Pastoral Tarot we encounter a menagerie of animals, both wild and domestic, many that are helpful to farm life, others that are potentially harmful. For rural life is not without its challenges and threats. Some of the wisdom shared in this deck comes from the animals themselves, while other gentle lessons are told through time-honored country proverbs, parables and folk wisdom.

Birds are especially prominent in Pastoral Tarot's Major Arcana. Each bird shown was chosen for its symbolic significance as well as its natural characteristics and behavior patterns that reflect truths about human nature. There are also many visual references to the Language of Flowers in this deck; specific flowers and trees were researched and selected for their symbolism within the context of the card meaning.

Light and water also play significant visual parts of the imagery in Pastoral Tarot. As the shepherd rests in the hayloft in the Four of Swords card, the sunlight streams in as if through the windows of a cathedral. The Judgment card allows us to witness a sunrise scene of spiritual renewal by the banks of a river. Several other cards include ponds, rivers, lakes, streams and waterfalls.

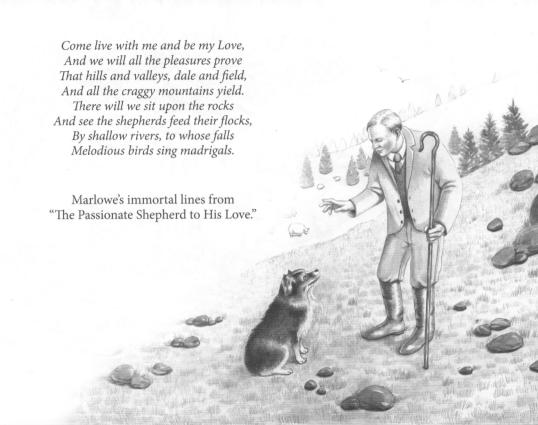
The lovely watercolor scenes painted by Lisa present a nostalgic view of life. However, Pastoral Tarot is not asking us to see the world through rose-colored glasses. The time period suggested by Pastoral Tarot encompasses the Great Depression, during the 1930s and 40s. The people here face hardship, loss, disappointments and struggles of all kinds—financial, physical and emotional. One of the many lessons tarot teaches us is that finding our way out of the doom and darkness requires reckoning with reality, and only through this process do we find growth and enlightenment. Lisa and I did considerable research on Depression era history, and made every attempt to accurately portray the clothing, hair-styles, tools, professions, etc. as well as attitudes and events of that time period. (Kudos to Lisa for masterfully capturing all these amazing details in her artwork.)

Pastoral Tarot closely follows the traditional structure and symbolism of Rider-Waite-Smith Tarot. To make the scenes realistic, instead of showing actual swords, wands, cups and pentacles, we have included visual elements in each scene that reference the minor suits and their meanings, such as baskets and buckets for cups, golden flowers for pentacles, trees for wands and tools for swords. It was our creative intention to make these elements appear to be natural features integral to the scene, rather than being superimposed esoteric



This creative approach occurred to me as I studied the many layers of symbolism embedded in the RWS cards and noticed that the cards revealed aspects of moods and meaning via the surrounding natural scenery. In some cards the sky is bright blue, in others it is grey and cloudy, or even ominous. In some cards, the land appears rich and fertile while elsewhere it appears barren and dry. Other natural elements like hills, trees, and bodies of water provide important clues as to the cards' meaning. In many cases, the pastoral scenes are very much inspired by the corresponding card in the RWS deck. After all, Pamela Colman Smith's greatest contribution to tarot was to present for the first time full pictorial scenes with rich imagery that added important context to modern tarot cards. We have chosen to highlight and further develop some of these scenic components in order to provide additional clues that enable any tarot reader to easily comprehend the meaning of each card, without having to refer to and interpret esoteric symbols.

We hope that your sojourn through Pastoral Tarot is as inspiring and enlightening as an evening stroll beneath a starlit summer sky.







The Major Arcana

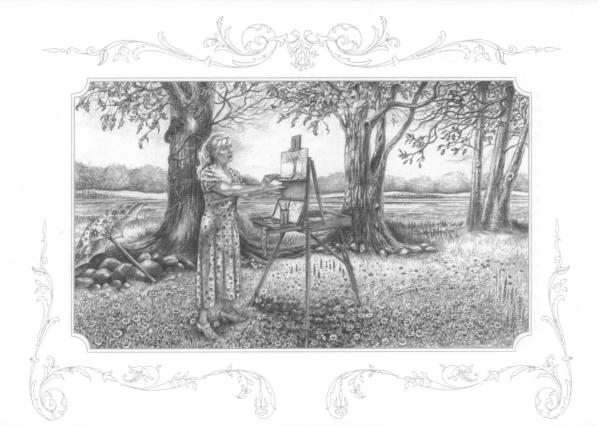
Just as in classical tarot, in Pastoral Tarot the 22 cards of the Major Arcana represent universal archetypes and stages of the journey toward spiritual enlightenment. Though many of the details of the characters and scenes diverge from the traditional Rider-Waite images, the meanings, as well as the titles, remain the same. It is hoped that the natural down-to-earth imagery will allow even the beginner tarot reader to relate to the stories being told and immediately grasp the meanings and the messages the cards hold for their own lives. For advanced readers, these new perspectives on the Major Arcana will hopefully activate their intuition and imagination, and enhance the connection one feels when viewing and responding to the tarot artwork.



### O. THE FOOL

With an air of confidence, this young man has impulsively chosen to cross the flowing stream over a freshly fallen log. He has no particular destination in mind, he just puts one foot in front of the other, letting his curiosity draw him forward through the woods. He looks not ahead, but glances back to check on his canine companion, who faithfully follows him on his carefree springtime adventure. All around them the woods pulse with possibilities. Wild daisies and coreopsis reflect the Fool's joyful innocence. The Fool shares a spirit of adventure with the creatures nearby. Like the grasshopper who rarely stays in one place for long, he is always ready to take a leap of faith toward whatever life brings next. The cheerful chipmunks and chickadees also embody the boldness of the Fool. Though they are tiny, they are intrepid. Nothing seems to deter them as they too venture into the unknown.

IN A READING The Fool, his pup and all the creatures of the forest encourage you to let go of inhibitions and expectations and simply embrace the grand adventure that life is. You may have no idea what lies ahead, but have faith that entering unknown terrain can bring more of what your heart desires than you ever even imagined. This card urges you to open yourself to a fresh start by allowing life to surprise you. Live in the moment. You don't need a road map to explore new horizons; spontaneity and curiosity will lead you to where you need to be.



#### 1. THE MAGICIAN

The artist has come to the banks of the Connecticut River for creative inspiration. This bucolic scene provides an abundance of ideas for her to tap into. She works en plein air before her field easel, focusing her full attention and her talent on the landscape painting she has begun. She has all her implements at hand: her watercolors and water cup, her palette knife (sword) for precision, her assortment of paintbrushes (wands), and pentacleadorned parasol nearby to filter the bright summer sunlight. Beside her in the field is a single magpie. Its striking black and white plumage is often associated with duality and creative expression. For the artist, the intelligent and creative little bird is a reminder to give special attention to her treatment of light and shade in her work (a technique known as chiaroscuro). She holds her paintbrush aloft as she concentrates and channels her creative energy. She gives herself completely to her vision, filtering out any distracting thoughts, as she works with a singleness of purpose. She begins with inchoate ideas and through the artistic process is able to visually articulate the undefined energy coursing through her. Through her painting she manifests miracles, transforming divine whispers of creative insight into magnificent works of art to inspire others.

IN A READING The Magician card informs you that you too can produce magical results with your work when you direct your talents and your potential, and work with conscious intention. Envisioning the results, focus on each step of the creative process and feel the energy of the workflow. When you are totally and confidently committed to your project, know that what you create will be uniquely yours to share with the world.



# 2. THE HIGH PRIESTESS

The High Priestess, or the Corn Maiden, sits at the entrance to the corn maze, one side darkened by shade, one side illuminated by autumnal sunlight. She holds a book containing worldly knowledge. The way through the maze is a mystery and there is no map, but she knows that she can rely on her instincts and intuition to guide her through the twists and turns, through shadow and light. She also knows there is no need to be afraid of the unknown. Her hand-sewn pomegranate dress evokes the myth of Persephone (or Kore) who came to accept the unknown landscape of the underworld. The coreopsis flowers (named for Kore) she holds are sacred to the Cherokee and Apache tribes. For now, she is not taking action; she is calm and serene as she patiently considers the vast possibilities. Her companion is the prairie grouse, the Native American animal spirit guide associated with the Sacred Spiral because of its spinning dance. This grounding bird also provides the male animus that balances the feminine archetype of the High Priestess.

IN A READING The appearance of the High Priestess card assures you that there is no reason to fear the unknown and the hidden. You can't always see the path in front of you or the potential that lies within you. You simply have to learn to trust your own intuition as you take the first steps over the threshold. She reminds you that you are not alone, there are signs all around to guide you on this path. When this card appears, it is urging you to let your dreams and imagination reveal new ways of discovering unlimited possibilities.



#### 3. THE EMPRESS

The gracious Empress relaxes in her lush cottage garden, seated resplendently on her willow bench. Surrounded by luxurious pillows and floral quilts, she embodies pleasure and comfort. Yet our barefoot beauty with her feet on the ground is very much connected to the earth and the rhythms of nature. The Empress nourishes herself by nurturing all living things. She tenderly holds stalks of hollyhocks, laden with pink blooms. In ancient times hollyhocks were harvested for medicinal uses in fertility and childbirth. Still a symbol of abundance, the prolific hollyhock sends out hundreds of seeds that self-sow and replenish the garden each year. Attracted to the sweet life-giving nectar, the bees and butterflies help proliferate the Empress' garden. Curled up near the Empress' feet is her companion from the animal realm, a tiny hedgehog. With its little belly close to the earth, and its ability to instinctively protect itself, the hedgehog is a symbol of fertility and intuition. Beyond the cottage garden the vibrant sun catches the golden stalks of the wheat fields the Empress has cultivated.

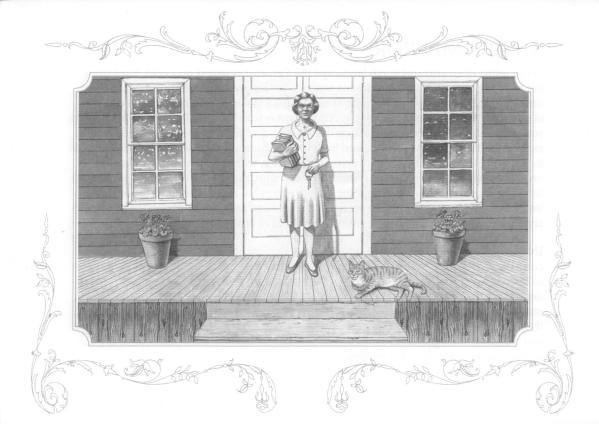
IN A READING You take delight in sharing your maternal instincts with others. The Empress card encourages you to also nurture yourself by finding a place to surround yourself with comfort and beauty. Allow yourself some time to luxuriate in the bounty of nature, through the pleasures of all the senses. Enjoy the rewards of your physical efforts. If you have creative ideas that you have not yet explored, now is the ideal time to focus your natural talents. As you enter this period, draw grounding strength from your deep connections with the pastoral world.



# 4. THE EMPEROR

In the midst of an arid and harsh landscape the Emperor is seated on a cold, hard stone, but he is not resting or relaxing like his consort, the Empress; he is all business, all the time. Surrounded by a pair of grazing sheep, he is a vigilant shepherd who takes his role of guardian very seriously. His long, greying beard reveals that the Emperor is no longer a young man. His weathered face reflects the wisdom accrued from his years of challenging experiences. Long ago he planned and built this sheep ranch and over the decades guided its growth. Now, he continues to oversee its operation with regimented discipline and order. Without structure and his systematic leadership, the whole enterprise would be subject to chaos. At times the Emperor appears stern, but as a father and a foreman, he is intent on providing protection to his flock and his family. He does not indulge in his own creature comforts, but instead focuses on the needs of others.

IN A READING This card points out the practical reality that some situations require constant monitoring, thorough regulation, and proactive organization. Leaving things to chance is not an option when you wear the mantle of leadership and so many others depend on you. But being in charge does not mean commanding without compassion, including for yourself. That deep sense of commitment arises when you care more about the welfare of others in your charge than about your own personal gains. This card shows you that long-term goals will be met when the daily details are managed with structure and a strict regimen, but also passion.



#### 5. THE HIEROPHANT

As the sun rises, a teacher stands in front of the schoolhouse, ready for her students to arrive to begin another day of learning. The books in her arms are filled with the formal knowledge she will share with young minds ready to bloom like the pots of flowers on the porch. The keys she holds will unlock the world of wisdom and unlimited information and make it available to the next generation. The steps leading to the door indicate that the process of learning takes us to higher places. Inside the classroom, the teacher must rely on rules and rituals to maintain order with her students, but she also provides inspiration and experiences that will shape their values and enrich their lives. The school is an integral component of the community, a place for meetings of teams, clubs, social programs, activities, and cultural organizations.

IN A READING Just as the school day begins with the bell ringing, this card harkens us to recognize the roles that traditions, institutions and rituals play in our lives. The heritage of accrued knowledge and experience is key to shaping our values and belief systems. The Hierophant represents official leaders of educational and religious institutions as well as heads of political and social organizations. We can also find mentors in the people we surround ourselves with, those who may be a few steps further along the path in learning life's many lessons. This card encourages you to be receptive to all kinds of wisdom, help and guidance.



### 6. THE LOVERS

The lovers in this card exude passion and intimacy. Their mutual attraction is more than merely sexual; it is a soul connection, evident in their gaze and in their tender touch. Their partnership is based on shared beliefs and core values. The bonds of their love run deep, and the strength of their union will carry them along their life path, empowering them to surmount any challenges or obstacles. Their journey is one of enlightenment. In opening their hearts to each other, they have allowed their energy to merge and carry them to a higher plane. In this moment they are seen as physically removed from the mundane world, and yet their love flows outward as well as inward, encompassing everything around them. Their contentment is mirrored on their little dog's face. The pair of ducks reflect the couple's commitment to one another, as mallards are thought to mate for life.

IN A READING When the Lovers card appears it is asking you to focus on who and what is most important to you. Direct your passion toward relationships that support your best self, and commit to endeavors that reflect your true nature. Be discerning in seeking a soul partner to share your life journey. In our most important relationships, our true friends (and our pets) show us loyalty and unconditional love. Receive and reciprocate. This card reminds you to be true to others but also to yourself and your values.



#### 7. THE CHARIOT

Haying is one of the most important yet challenging jobs on the farm. Timing the haying correctly requires real mastery. The grass must be harvested when it is mature enough to provide nutrition for all the farm animals. But if the farmer waits too long, the rains could ruin the crops. In this card we see the farmer driving his wagon with his team of two powerful horses, one black and one white. In order to accomplish the formidable task of haying the fields before the rains come, he must sustain his efforts by remaining disciplined and focused on the job. He must direct not only his own energy but also assert control over the two horses by channeling their considerable power and strength, and keeping them aligned with the goal.

**IN A READING** When the Chariot card appears, a challenging task requires determination and self-discipline. There may be opposing forces to contend with, but if you summon your confidence and reign in any distractions, you will master the situation. The crucial lesson from this card is the importance of focus and restraint in tests of endurance. Success is not always measured by how quickly you accomplish the goals but *how* you get there.





### 8. STRENGTH

Beneath the mighty oak tree rests the mother mountain lion and her cub. The adult cat has tremendous physical strength as well as speed and agility. But her qualities of compassion and composure are the first lessons she will lovingly pass along to her cub. Boldness and physical prowess will come naturally to the young mountain lion, but his warrior instincts will not serve him until he learns to manage his power with patience, courage and self-control. The mother lion knows her young will face many challenges in the wild so she needs to prepare him. She has chosen an apt setting to teach her cub these important lessons that will protect him later in life. The oak tree is not only an emblem of physical strength but also of endurance and steadfastness. Though the colossal branches of the oak tree might make it vulnerable to lightning, its intricate roots run deep and offer grounding and long-term protection.

IN A READING When the Strength card appears in a reading, it means that you need to summon your powers of self-control and restraint even when your impulse is to immediately react. Remember to take the long view. Sometimes not taking an action is the most difficult thing to do, but it may be exactly the right move at this time. This is particularly true in situations of conflict with others. You don't need to attend every argument you're invited to. You can't control other people's behavior. You can only train yourself to act with discernment, discipline and reserve, just as the lioness teaches her cub.



# 9. THE HERMIT

In this wintry sunrise scene, an elderly figure stands in the northern woods. A soft blanket of snow covers all the evergreen trees and bare birch branches, suggesting a hushed atmosphere. There is no one else for miles around. A solitary buck has sensed the presence of the Hermit but remains at a distance. The lone wayfarer has come to this isolated glade at dawn seeking solitude and introspection. He knows the answers to his questions are to be found within himself so he has withdrawn to a place of serenity and quiet contemplation. The traveler's only companion is the tiny Hermit Thrush, perched on a low branch, singing his melancholy song. According to Iroquois legend, the shy Hermit Thrush keeps to himself because he knows he earned his beautiful spirit song in a way that would only make the other birds envious. He does not share his hauntingly melodic song with the other creatures of the forest. When others migrate south, he remains in the snowy north. The Hermit desires stillness but welcomes the solitary bird, who alone understands the Hermit's quest for self-knowledge.

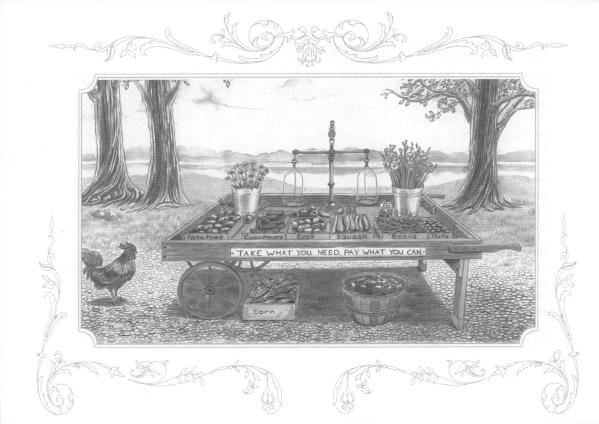
IN A READING The Hermit card suggests that it is time for you to withdraw to a quiet place. Perhaps spend some time in nature. As you walk among the trees, listen to the sound of your footsteps. Focus on the rhythm of your own breath. Solitude and introspection are what you need to find the answers you seek. If you cannot physically get away, find a way to tune out all the noise and distraction. You will greatly benefit from simply unplugging for a while. Close your eyes and imagine yourself in a serene bucolic place. Allow yourself to release all the thoughts and demands that have been occupying your mind. In this way, you are inviting clarity.



### 10. WHEEL of FORTUNE

Every person has their own path to follow, yet the Wheel of Fortune card shows no people because it projects the higher realms of destiny, the universal cycles and patterns that affect all of life. Sometimes these cycles speed up and sometimes they slow down, but like the weather and the changing seasons, they are beyond our control. This autumn scene of an abandoned mill shows movement and activity. The moss growing on the water wheel indicates that though the mill was more active in the past, life continues to move forward in miraculous ways. In order to find the serenity conveyed by this Wheel of Fortune card, we must all learn to distinguish between the things we can change and the things we must simply accept. To do this, we must take a higher view of things, symbolized by the eagle. The snake represents life forces at work. This scene also shows the five elements: earth, water, air, metal and fire, represented by the flame-colored foliage.

IN A READING When the Wheel of Fortune appears, a turn of events could shift your fortune. External factors affect your life, but if you remain passive, opportunities will pass you by. Adversity and challenges are natural and inevitable facets of life. When you feel you are at your lowest, that's when you might start to experience the most dramatic changes. You need to accept life's ups and downs but be proactive about making the most of situations when they arise. You have reached a turning point and things will soon be looking up. Conversely, if all is well, be alert to potential downturns.



## 11. JUSTICE

In this Justice card we see a roadside farm stand that operates on the honor system. On offer are the fruits of someone's labors and flowers grown and gathered lovingly by hand. The black-eyed susans symbolize justice in the Language of Flowers. Justice is not always about judging others, it is about judging one's self and making decisions based on moral fairness. It is not enough just to *understand* ethical principles. This card is about *acting* on principles—doing the right thing even when no one will witness your actions. It may be tempting to grab an apple and bite into it without paying, but it is understood that simply would not be right. Justice represents taking responsibility, especially in the matters of settling debts—whether in financial matters or in terms of making amends for some past wrongs. The scales are a reminder to weigh all sides of a situation before deciding what to do. All factors must be considered in a balanced manner. There are causes and effects to all actions. The food before you would not be available if not for the farmer's arduous work in the fields. If you steal even one apple, your action will adversely affect other people.

IN A READING The Justice card is a reminder that you are always accountable for your actions, and every action has consequences that must be carefully considered. A current situation may be testing your integrity. It's not always easy to hold yourself to the highest ethical standards, but this card urges you to act with complete honesty and fairness. This card is also about karma. If someone has shown you some kindness in the past, it is time for you to repay with an act of generosity.





## 12. THE HANGED MAN

A pensive young woman reclines in a weeping willow tree, its tender branches surrendering to the afternoon breezes. Some of the reeds gently wrap themselves around her crossed legs, but they do not entangle or tether her. She has withdrawn to this secluded glade to find serenity by letting go of the things she cannot control. In her inverted position she has embraced a Zen state of mind by surrendering her will and accepting uncertainty. Only then can she experience true transformation. She is beginning to understand the paradox that change cannot be forced; it can only occur with surrender. In the pond is a little frog, which signifies metamorphosis. The water lilies where he rests symbolize peace and spiritual rebirth. There is also a heron, symbol of patience, which always seems to remain calm no matter what is going on around him. When he does act, his movements are fluid and effortless. The lesson he has shared with the girl is to refrain from reacting to circumstances and to learn the wisdom of suspending the cycle of action and reaction. Her reward is inner peace and a life of grace.

IN A READING The message of this card is simply to *let go*. You may be overthinking the situation or trying to force solutions. Paradoxically, you need to surrender your will and release your struggle to control outcomes in order to arrive at a resolution. Suspend all action and decisions—take time just to "hang out" and be still. Sometimes simply taking a break can give you a whole new perspective on things. This card teaches you that you cannot actually *pursue* grace, you can only allow it into your life by clearing space within and around yourself.



## 13. DEATH

Multiple generations have buried their dead in this simple country graveyard. The black raven, a universal symbol of death and lost souls, stands sentinel from atop the ancient gravestone, observing any movement. This quiet pastoral scene illustrates the profound sorrow, loss and finality of the Death card, but also the sense of completion and renewal. When death occurs, literally or figuratively, one phase of the life cycle has ended and another has begun. In this scene, we see that new life has sprung up with moss and vines growing on the headstones. This burial ground has transformed over time into a fertile meadow bursting with colorful wildflowers. Cherry trees drop their delicate pink petals, marking transience and renewal. There is also a sense of peace here, with poppies suggesting eternal sleep. The lesson of this card is that serenity can be found in the acceptance of inevitable endings.

IN A READING When this card appears, it urges you to consider a broader, more sanguine view of death and endings. Rather than seeing death as a terrifying prospect, loss and sorrow should be accepted as natural and necessary aspects of life. Only when you are ready and willing to release old finished business and put the painful past behind you, can you fully embrace what comes next. Applying this attitude might mean letting go of people and situations that no longer support you. Doing so can clear a space in your life for new chapters of personal growth to be written, and new relationships to flourish.



#### 14. TEMPERANCE

Temperance shows us a woman of splendid health who has taken a central path down to the stream's edge to collect fresh water. Her serene face and her physical poise reflect her inner equanimity. She stands perfectly balanced with one foot on the stones, one dipping into the cool water as she fills her two vessels slowly and measuredly. There is plenty of water available but she only takes what she needs. The stones on the ground give the heavy water pump stability and equilibrium, so the water can flow for all. Iris, hydrangea (Greek for water pitcher) and azalea grow in perfect symmetry along the flowing stream. In the Language of Flowers, azaleas are traditionally associated with temperance while iris signify valor and moderation. Above in the sky, 14 geese fly in unison and perfect formation. Though their migratory route will be challenging, by banding together they instinctively know the dangers will be mitigated. As the winds and temperatures shift, the birds make the necessary adjustments to modify their formation for optimal protection.

IN A READING This Temperance card presents a scene of harmony and alignment: of earth and sky; water and stone; effort and equilibrium. In identifying objectives and setting goals, it is vital to find the optimal middle ground. It is not a case of winner take all. The rewards are realized when you work in cooperation and collaboration with others. The lesson here is also one of learning to modify your plans and expectations as elements change. Overreacting will throw you off balance. Being able to make micro adjustments along the way is key to overall well-being and remaining centered.



#### 15. THE DEVIL

The Devil card shows a sheep that has wandered off from the herd and has encountered a calculating wolf. The other sheep watch helplessly as the shepherd, whose responsibility it is to guard the flock, has fallen asleep on the job and is neglecting his duties. The stray sheep is no longer under the shepherd's control, but seems to be under the wolf's powerful influence. It appears as if the sheep is approaching the wolf, not the other way around. Perhaps the young sheep is ignorant of the danger before her, or possibly she is somehow attracted to the wolf's ferocious independence. This scene illustrates the traps of temptation and the irresistible lure of danger. The Devil card also reveals the ramifications of bad choices and being driven to distraction.

IN A READING The Devil exposes the many vulnerabilities even the best-intentioned people might face in ordinary daily events. When this card appears, we need to come to terms with the fact that we are ultimately responsible for our own decisions, and the choices we make have serious consequences. When things go wrong, blaming others or playing "the victim card" simply perpetuates the cycle of self-deception. We have to reckon with our own self-destructive behavior by recognizing it for what it is. This card urges us to identify the triggers that keep us trapped in negative behavior patterns. Only by honestly facing these weaknesses or compulsions can we hope to move toward a more evolved version of ourselves.



#### 16. THE TOWER

This dramatic scene shows the sudden, unexpected disaster of a silo explosion. When dust mixes with dry straw in the confined space of the silo where summer temperatures are soaring, the smallest spark can ignite an uncontrollable inferno. An exploding tower brings danger and destruction to the farm, threatening the people and the animals. The resulting losses can also mean financial devastation as well. With a crisis of this magnitude, everything changes in a flash. This card may symbolize the unbearable pressure you feel when there is no release or no reckoning with problems at hand. Sometimes things need to get worse before they can begin to get better. Change is inevitable. Resistance and denial only worsen the pain.

IN A READING When the Tower card appears, it is a foreboding sign of crisis and chaos. The disaster may not be something you can predict or prevent. But you should stay vigilant and ready to put out the fire. The explosion may be a shakeup at work or in a personal relationship. The Tower card can be seen as a wake-up call forcing you to face shocking facts about a situation that cannot be redeemed without emotional upheaval and drastic change. The calamity depicted here may indicate an unavoidable financial crash. You might need a reality check concerning your sense of financial security or your overall outlook. The Tower may shake your beliefs to the core. This card brings unavoidable turmoil but may ultimately result in a cathartic breakthrough bringing ultimate relief and valuable insights.



#### 17. THE STAR

On this serene summer evening, a woman kneels next to her young son, showing him the sublime spectacle of the star-filled evening sky. She takes delight in sharing her knowledge of the constellations and heavenly bodies, pointing out familiar configurations and relaying the magic and the mythos to her child. But mostly she shares her sheer awe as she takes in the infinite wonders of the universe. She is hoping to ignite a spark of curiosity and inspiration in his young heart. For young and old alike, the starry sky is a source of hope and harmony that lifts us up out of our ordinary lives and makes us believe we are part of something magnificent and extraordinary.

IN A READING The Star card is a source of hope, inspiration and clarity. It prompts you to think expansively, beyond your everyday issues, helping them seem so insignificant when we view ourselves as part of the tapestry of the sparkling cosmos. The Star card offers a sense of peace and tranquility. You begin to believe that the stars really are in alignment. Whatever has happened up to today, on this night, in this moment, everything is perfect just as it is. The illuminated sky is the light at the end of the tunnel. It provides the magic stardust that empowers you to believe you will succeed in whatever you dare to attempt tomorrow.



### 18. THE MOON

The full harvest moon glows amber in the twilight sky, with the hint of a rabbit working his lunar magic. A pair of weeping willow trees frames the scene, one still and calm, the other blowing in the evening breeze. The willow is linked to growth, inspiration and regeneration. The path between the two trees, representing the subconscious, is visible in some places and hidden in darkness elsewhere. At the edge of the pond are a dog and a wolf. The wolf, with his shadow, represents our wild, untamed, shadow side. The dog represents our evolved, rational, tame self. If you look carefully you will also notice a small frog on a stone at the pond's edge. The frog is a lunar totem of change, transition and transformation. It represents the cycles of life just as the moon has its cycles. This is a card about illusions and hidden mysteries, psychic energy and intuition.

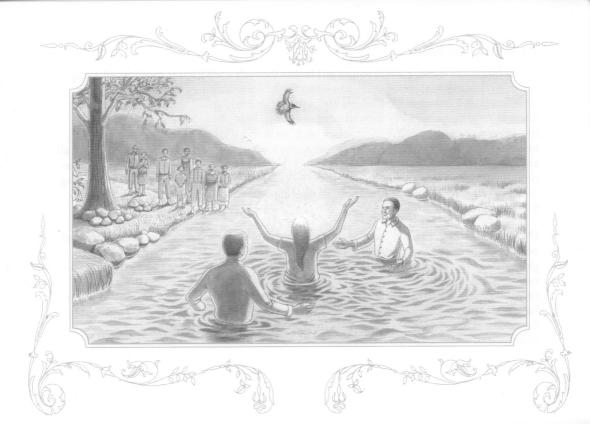
IN A READING At times you need to rely on your intuition and inner wisdom to find your way. In order to make sense of all the signs around, you also have to engage your imagination, for things are not always what they seem to be. Don't be fooled into believing that all the answers will be revealed in the bright light of comfortable familiarity. For real change and transformation to take place, you will also have to venture to the dark side of the moon and face your own shadow self. But you will not get lost if you put your faith in the truth and your own inner light.



## 19. THE SUN

In this luminous scene, a sweet young girl frolics through a wildflower meadow allowing her youthful vitality and exuberance to shine forth. Surrounded by a field of daisies, her white dress and crown of wildflowers highlight her purity, naturalness and innocence. There is an undeniable air of contentment about her. Butterflies are drawn to her positive energy, and the bluebird harmonizes with her joyful song. She pauses between four towering sunflowers to soak up the warm radiance of the sun and take in the abundance all around her. The magnificent sunflowers, which began as humble seeds, symbolize completion, stability, fulfillment, and successful achievement. The young girl revels in this shining moment of glory. In spite of her youth, she has complete confidence in her own ability to fulfill her greatest destiny.

IN A READING The Sun card, beaming with energy and exuberance, is one of the most positive cards in the entire tarot deck. Everything you have done has brought you to this glorious present moment. This is the time to recognize and celebrate all your accomplishments. All the times when you could have doubted yourself, you instead listened to the promise of greatness from within. This card puts the spotlight on you and everything you have going for you: health and vigor, confidence, insight and enthusiasm. Now it's time to dance to a joyful new song and soak up the abundance that has been rightfully bestowed upon you.



### 20. JUDGMENT

The good souls in this scene have come together on this glorious morning to bask in the river, to rejoice and renew themselves. All are welcome here, old and young alike. After many struggles and hardships, they take comfort as the cool, clean waters wash away their pain and sorrow. Those who have heeded the calling have committed themselves to be freed from the heavy burdens of guilt. They have judged themselves worthy of absolution and forgiveness for all past mistakes. The radiant dawn sun is shining down upon these blessed souls as they see the world and their fellow man in a new light. A kingfisher wings across the radiant dawn sky, bringing a promise of halcyon days to come.

IN A READING When the Judgment card appears, open your eyes to the dawning of a new day. Heed the call to cast away old guilt and shame. It is time to let go of past regrets and resentments, lighten your load, and make a fresh start. This card is not about judging others, or being judged by other people. It is about striving to be a better person by coming to terms with your own mistakes and shortcomings. The best way to find redemption is by simply being willing to change. This card is urging you to release old habits and patterns that no longer serve you on your path to spiritual rebirth. Honor yourself with unconditional self-love and embrace the promise of a bright new future full of hope.



## 21. THE WORLD

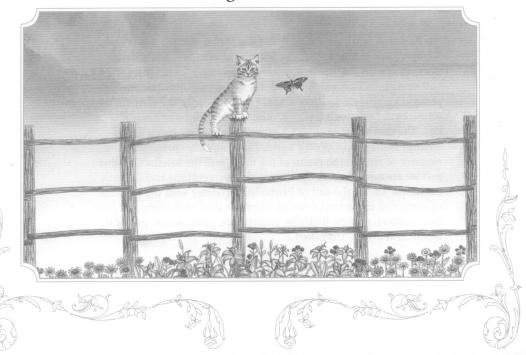
In this pleasant scene, our free-spirited woman rises high above the earth in her beautiful tree swing. There is an effusive, playful spirit about her, yet a maturity as well. She is someone who has always followed her passions and utilized her many gifts to reach her lofty goals and fulfill her heart's desire. She has learned a great deal from life's many ups and downs. At this point she has earned the freedom to enjoy her prosperity and leisure. She is experiencing the satisfaction and contentment of a life well-lived. On this blissful afternoon she brings together delicious goodies to savor and perhaps share with someone special. Even her simple picnic lunch is presented with delightful flourishes that reflect her creative talents and her capacity for giving of herself. There is a wholeness to this scene: years of robust growth and integration of natural elements have created a verdant meadow and a glade of towering trees laden with life. Overhead flies a falcon, a creature who embodies victory, success, determination and clarity.

IN A READING When the World card appears in your reading, allow yourself to look around and take in all the glorious signs of having truly arrived. Your efforts and achievements have brought you a life of abundant blessings. Savor the well-deserved rewards. You've not only fulfilled so many of your aspirations, but you've managed to do so while living a dynamic, fully engaged life. You use your talents and creative energy in ways that benefit many others, in your family and your community and beyond. The World is a better place because of your contributions. You've learned the secret to true happiness. Enjoy every moment of it.

The Minor Arcana

In Pastoral Tarot, the four suits of the Minor Arcana are Wands, Cups, Swords and Pentacles. The suit of Wands is traditionally associated with the element of fire and relates to creativity, action and energy. In Pastoral Tarot we see scenes of commitment, passion and determination. Cups, associated with the element of water, have to do with feelings, moods, emotions and sensibilities. The characters in this suit experience the full spectrum of feelings from joy to sorrow. Swords traditionally correlate to the element of air and the realm of the mind and the intellect. In this suit we encounter challenges, struggles, perceptions and difficult decisions. Lastly, the suit of Pentacles correlates with the element of earth and the material realm. Here, we deal with work and practical matters, money, finances, enterprises, possessions, physical health and the environment.

# Suit of Wands



## ACE of WANDS

This orange tabby kitten perches high upon the fence post, surveying the scene that ignites his imagination. Inspired by the free-spirited butterfly that keeps him company, the courageous kitten dreams of the days to come when he too will set off on his own adventures. He is eager to explore the world around him and confident that he will discover great possibilities for himself. The waving tiger lilies below encourage the little cat to think big. The butterfly weed represents the beginning of life for the monarch butterfly, who has just emerged from the cocoon and launched himself to new heights.

IN A READING When you draw the Ace of Wands card, let yourself take in all the energy and excitement it depicts. Know that the seeds of enthusiasm have been planted and you can confidently reap the rewards, especially in the areas of creativity. Like the kitten, you have inside you unlimited potential. You have only to release your power through bold acts of self-expression. Channel your confidence, direct your enthusiasm and seize opportunities to expand your life experiences. Believe in yourself and you will bloom brightly.

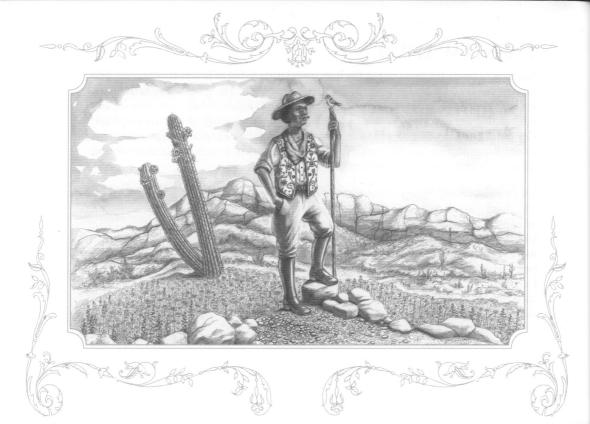




## TWO of WANDS

The lady of lavender gazes out at the lush undulating fields of fragrant blossoms. She surveys the land that is her domain, her dream manifest. The purple wands she holds are the symbols of the power she wields here. She has followed her own unique path, establishing her expansive enterprise, which began with a spark of creative inspiration. Her potent dream was brought to life by a decision, followed by a plan, an initiative and a deep commitment. She has created something beautiful to behold but also valuable, sustainable and eminently fulfilling.

IN A READING When this card appears in your reading, know that you are at a vital crossroads. You have imagined something spectacular for yourself but you know that in order to achieve your goals you must take great risks and bold action. As St. Exupery has said, "A goal without a plan is just a wish." The Two of Wands is not a card about mere wishing and hoping; it is a call to commitment and decisive action. You may have been inspired by others, like this lady of the lavender fields, but now the time has come for you to act creatively and courageously and do things in your own unique way. You may want to enlist others to participate in making your plan a reality. They will be drawn to your magnetic energy and your powerful vision.



## THREE of WANDS

This adventuress embodies the passionate spirit of the Three of Wands as she explores wild unknown areas of the desert. Everything about her, from her unconventional attire to her determined attitude, is bold and visionary as she confidently climbs higher and higher into rough terrain to get a broader, more expansive view. No matter how challenging the journey, she yearns to see what others have not seen. On this solo expedition, her companion is the striking western tanager, a tiny but intrepid bird who ignites her spirit and creates a fiery connection between the ardent explorer and the sublime landscape.

IN A READING When the Three of Wands appears, let it ignite your passion for adventure. It's no longer enough to be a follower. It is time for you to take the lead as you venture onward and upward to explore new horizons. Endless possibilities await you if you are willing to leave behind the safe and familiar landscape of your life. Look for signs all around you that will help bring confidence and clarity to your vision. You might find feathers, or notice unusual arrangements of stones. Or there may simply be a stirring in your own heart that emboldens you to strike out on a new path.





## FOUR of WANDS

The Four of Wands shows two young women joyfully dancing beneath a canopy adorned with a colorful garland of flowers. They are completely in the moment, celebrating a very special occasion, perhaps a milestone event. Their lovely faces radiate their jubilant excitement and their clasped hands signal that the exhilaration they express is compounded because it is shared. Their accomplishments have brought them their well-deserved congratulatory festivities. There's a wonderful sense of harmony between them and their triumphant energy spills out to everyone around them.

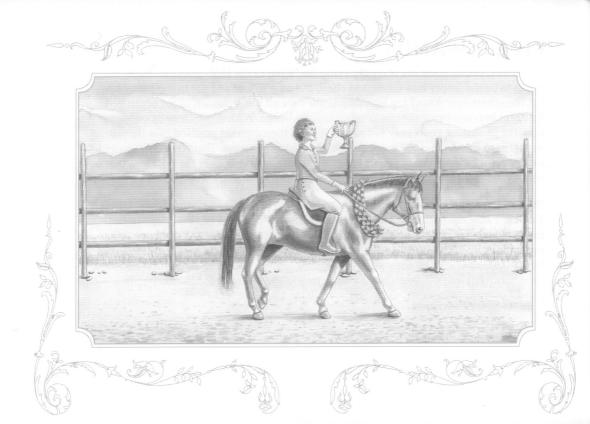
IN A READING This card signals that major accomplishments and success are being recognized. The celebrants here are shown relishing the party in their honor. Like them, you are bursting with a sense of joie de vivre. But this is a not just a fleeting moment of victorious celebration. The Four of Wands is a card of stability and promises of new possibilities. What has been created has lasting effects and will lead to even greater experiences. Allow the joyful energy of this card to propel you toward future ambitious endeavors.



# FIVE of WANDS

Five frisky, young goats are playfully vying for "King of the Hill" position. Each wants to be the leader and the first to climb over the stones and get to the pasture, but the others keep knocking him down. They are all too stubborn to get organized. Youthful bravado brings chaos, conflict and challenge. With no strategy or cooperation, the immature goats may not progress from their current position. But they do not seem to mind. They are enjoying the competitive process. Their friendly, spirited rivalry brings a great deal of energetic enthusiasm. As they jockey for position, that energy may not be focused toward a goal at this time but it could serve them later.

IN A READING Now is not the time to insist on your ideas or approaches. Listen and learn as you let others all have their say. The work will get done eventually, but for now, just allow the brainstorming process to play out. It's not always about being right or wrong. In the workplace and in creative pursuits, rivalry can be a productive force. There's no need to always shy away from conflict; healthy competition and even confrontation can often bring clarity to a relationship, and shift the dynamic.



# SIX of WANDS

This is a triumphant moment for the proud champion, who takes her place in the winner's circle with her victorious horse holding his head high. All her months of disciplined practice and training have finally paid off. Her lifelong dream of winning the first place prize has come true. But as much as the blue ribbon and the silver trophy mean, the sound of cheering and applause is just as gratifying. She knows she has earned the respect and admiration of others so she savors the sweet taste of success and well-deserved recognition. Still, she is a gracious winner; she will thank those who helped her prepare for this glorious day and she will congratulate all the participants.

IN A READING When this victory card emerges, you have risen to the very top. You have put in all the effort, you've paid your dues, and now you have prevailed. This is your day in the sun, so enjoy every moment of it, knowing that you have earned the accolades of success. Take in the cheers, the applause, the compliments for work well done. There's no need for false modesty, your healthy self-esteem is an important accomplishment in itself. You need not feel selfish about confidently claiming your prize; there's plenty of success to go around. You may even serve as an inspiration to others.





#### SEVEN of WANDS

The defiant protestor is fighting valiantly for the rights of the hard-working farmers everywhere, demanding fair prices for crops and better treatment for workers. He is taking a stand against oppressive policies that have kept farm conditions status quo for too long. He knows the time has come to set change into motion, forcibly if necessary. The leader of the rebellion will not back down no matter how much opposition or resistance he faces from others. Several fellow protestors join him and fight by his side, galvanized by his courage and convictions. Together, they wage a righteous battle they know is worth fighting for.

IN A READING When the Seven of Wands card appears it is urging you to become more proactive in standing up for what you believe is right for you. It's time for you to wake the rebel inside and give her a voice. An unfair or unacceptable situation you have tolerated for too long has become intolerable. Let this card embolden you to assert yourself, take a stance, and defend your position if necessary. It may be a matter of speaking up, setting clearer boundaries, or negotiating for what you require. What happens next is your decision to make and your action to take!

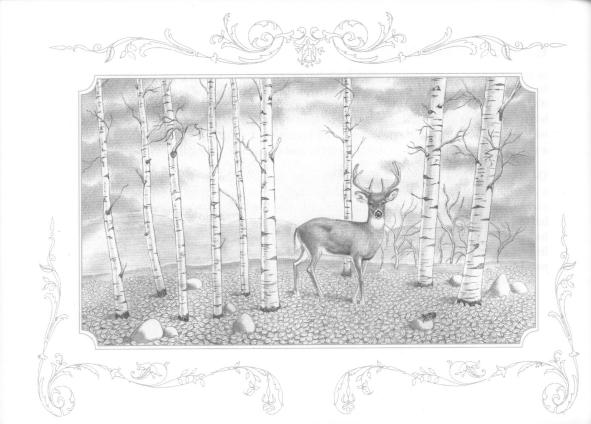




#### **EIGHT of WANDS**

In this energetic scene, mother duck leads her seven baby ducklings from the shore to the water's edge. She has nurtured and prepared them since their birth and now it's time to launch them. They are fired up about exploring this new setting and learning more about the big wide world around them. The eight branches of the willow tree indicate that previous events are coming to a natural conclusion. This is a significant period of eager learning, activity and movement forward.

IN A READING This card indicates a dynamic period of important change and a profound shift toward putting plans into motion. There's been much learning and preparation leading to this significant moment. The Eight of Wands represents having "all your ducks in a row." Many ideas have been cultivated and now it's time to bring that creative energy down to earth and put it into real action. Like the ducklings, you are ready to leave the security of the familiar and move into an exciting new phase of activity.



# NINE of WANDS

This tense scene reveals a solitary buck staring out from a grove of nine birch trees. He is fully aware that he is exposed and vulnerable, so he is wary, yet vigilant. His guarded stance shows that he is poised and ready to take action to defend himself, as he has done so many times before. His experiences with his foes have taught him what to expect and have served to sharpen his instincts and his defensive reactions. Yet no matter how battle weary this creature may be, he will never retreat or give up. He is fortified by the birch trees all around him, which can survive in the wild for hundreds of years. They represent perseverance and endurance.

IN A READING If you see your own fear reflected in the eyes of this young buck, step back and allow yourself to also observe his courage and resilience. He is not running away and hiding—he is boldly taking a stand. Let his persistence in the face of threats remind you that even when you are feeling depleted and worn down, you still have inner reserves of strength to draw upon. The Nine of Wands card acknowledges your struggle and all that you have given to the fight. It offers you the encouragement you need to keep going even when you feel like giving up.



#### TEN of WANDS

The kind old farmer delivering firewood to neighbors is accustomed to hard work and enjoys most of it. But at times he is so caught up in carrying out his duties that he doesn't consider alternative approaches that could make his tasks easier. He could easily strap at least some of the wood onto the donkey's back instead of shouldering the entire burden himself. They could choose to take the nearby path of least resistance to their destination instead of struggling in the weeds on the hill. But the man is stubborn and resistant to accepting help or change.

IN A READING This card reminds you that while it is important to take responsibility for tasks that need to get done, there are always choices you can make on how to approach the project. There is nothing noble about struggling unnecessarily. If there are better tools and techniques available, it's foolish to not avail yourself of them. If you step back you might realize that everything need not be such an uphill struggle. There is no shame in asking for help, looking for shortcuts, or simply pacing yourself instead of constantly pushing forward. Also, if someone asks for help, you need not always be the one providing it.

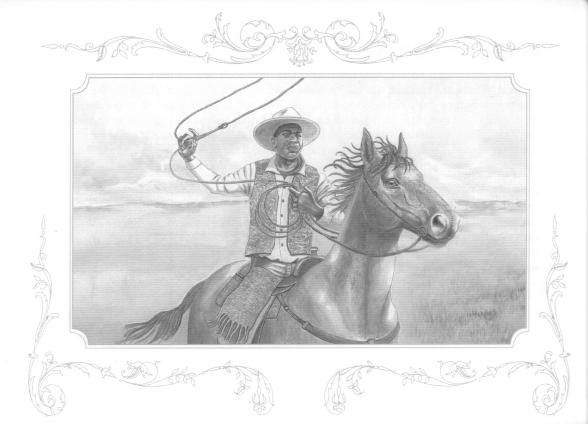




#### PAGE of WANDS

The Page of Wands is taking some time to explore the woods beyond the fields. He has decided to leave the familiar, marked trail and head in a new direction, hiking up the mountainside for a more challenging adventure. The bold lad is determined to see the expansive view beyond the peak. In his excitement, he has summoned the will to find his own way. With his walking stick, carved by his own hand, he will confidently deal with whatever obstacles may come along. On the ground, not far from his feet, is a single red salamander, which symbolizes the fire of the Page's passion and independence.

IN A READING The Page of Wands brings a message of courage, confidence and creative expression. He encourages you to move beyond your comfort zone, take some chances, and blaze your own trail. This card suggests that the journey is more important than the destination. You have the most to gain when you throw yourself whole-heartedly into a challenge. Discover what excites you and act on it—give it your all and dare yourself to be great!



#### KNIGHT of WANDS

The dashing Knight of Wands is a courageous cowboy with a can-do attitude. He and his chestnut horse exude confidence and fiery energy. The cowboy's job herding the cattle takes him great distances over rough, unfamiliar terrain and puts him in formidable danger at times. But this rugged daredevil thrives on excitement and adventure. In fact, he can be reckless and foolhardy, especially when he is showing off his considerable skills for an audience. He may be cocky, but it's hard not to be charmed by his unbridled passion.

IN A READING The Knight of Wands represents someone whose dazzling charisma and fearless confidence can be quite irresistible. Everyone loves a hero and cheers for the brave cowboy (or cowgirl) riding off into the sunset. Perhaps he inspires all of us to imagine ourselves living a more adventuresome life. Just don't expect the Knight of Wands to come to your rescue. He goes his own way and answers only to himself. The message of this card is to boldly charge ahead, take more risks and be the hero of your own story.

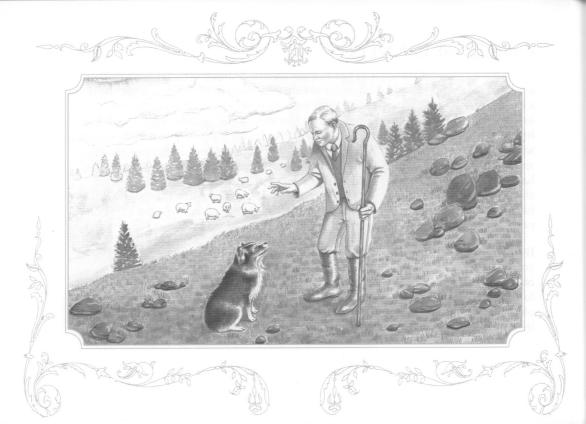


# **OUEEN of WANDS**

The radiant Queen of Wands is in her element cheerfully tending to her garden. There are plenty of people she could call upon to help with these outdoor chores, but she is a hands-on, take-charge person. She loves nothing more than feeling the sun on her lovely face as she works with her cat nearby. Her energy and enthusiasm are evident in her every move. She certainly isn't afraid to get her hands dirty. In fact, she is happiest when she is active and busy. The garden affords her an outlet for her creative passion and channels her natural abilities to find clever solutions to potential challenges. She has planted marigolds amongst the tomatoes not just because she loves the radiant, cheerful colors but she knows they will keep away garden pests. The marigolds signify her passion and hard work. Her zinnias are emblems of endurance. The red cardinal perched on her staff embodies her fiery spirit.

IN A READING There will always be more work to be done, but when you approach your tasks with optimism and commitment, you'll find the energy flowing. The Queen of Wands card assures you that creative solutions to challenges will present themselves to you when you stay actively involved with projects. Follow the Queen's example; take pleasure in your creative endeavors. Have faith in your own abilities and you may just inspire and energize others as well.





#### KING of WANDS

With his commanding presence, the King of Wands works with his shepherd dog, training him to control and protect the sheep grazing in the upper pasture. The shepherd must be aware of and be capable of dominating every aspect of the environment. The dog has been selected according to the highest standards. He will learn when to be assertive and when to ease back. There are a great many moving parts involved in herding the sheep; it plays out almost like magnificent choreography. Though there is an air of excitement, action and energy, at this stage it's important for the man to maintain the dog's focus and attention. The training is intense and the stakes are high. Communication is key—first between the man and the dog—then later between the dog and the sheep. The King teaches the attentive dog through eye contact, whistles, strategic gestures and hand signals. It is also vital for him to instill confidence and impart a sense of forceful authority in the herding dog, to ensure that the sheep come to trust and obey him.

IN A READING When the King of Wands card appears, there is a complex situation you must figure out how to mastermind. You have a powerful role to play, part of it is enlisting help from other people and coaching them toward success. You have the charisma and passion that attracts others to your visionary plan. They put their faith in you and your ability to put bold ideas into real action. Sometimes this means taking risks and being inventive. You are not one to follow the herd. You are a leader who dares to do things differently.

# Suit of Cups &



# ACE of CUPS

A single white dove beckons you to this peaceful setting where watery and woodland elements flow effortlessly together. Waterfalls are special places of bonding for lovers as well as havens for personal reflection. As your eyes gaze on the gentle cascade of water reaching the pool, core emotions and deep intuitive knowing are awakened. The dappled sunlight sparkling on the cool water lightens your spirits. This transcendent encounter with nature brings a rush of positive energy and you may find yourself falling in love...with life.

IN A READING The Ace of Cups is a card that opens up deep, positive feelings. It may suggest that a romantic relationship is developing. Or, perhaps the sudden stirring in your heart signals an awakening of the senses and a profound shift in your outlook. You start seeing the world with new eyes. As symbolized by the lotus flowers, the peace you are experiencing has its source in heightened spiritual awareness. This card encourages you to open yourself up to this deepening connection with Spirit.





#### TWO of CUPS

The radiant bride and groom gaze into each other's eyes in front of the country church where they have just exchanged vows of sacred matrimony. They lift their glasses and receive the many joyful blessings of their union. Love has brought them together and deep devotion will keep them united. The couple has chosen to surround themselves with flowers that emblemize their commitment. The baby's breath and wax flower in the bride's hair symbolize everlasting love. The white and red roses woven into the wedding arbor signify love and unity. Beside the arbor is purple garden heliotrope, which in the Language of Flowers means eternal devotion and dreams fulfilled. The phlox represent souls united in harmony. The pink cosmos symbolize joy in love.

IN A READING When the Two of Cups card appears it means that you have chosen a path of a committed relationship. While the Lovers card shows the passionate aspects and physical attraction of love, the Two of Cups recognizes the potential of deep lifelong bonds between two close friends or helpmates as well. This card encourages you to seek out and develop those special connections with people who share and support your vision. Cherish that rare friendship that grows stronger through challenges and blossoms over a lifetime.





#### THREE of CUPS

There are several tarot cards that signify working together; the Three of Cups is about *playing* together. Here three free-spirited young girls, of differing ages and backgrounds, have come together on the beach for the sheer pleasure of enjoying the day in each other's company. They share an exuberant energy, playing on the sunny beach, their bare feet feeling the warm sand and the cool surf. They celebrate the bonds of friendship and sense of community.

**IN A READING** The Three of Cups is one of the most positive cards in the deck. It isn't about *doing*, it's about *feeling*. It suggests that your focus be not on outcomes and results but simply experiencing the joyful esprit de corps of coming together with special people. Put aside any agendas and simply be in the moment. Let yourself surrender to the simple joy of camaraderie with friends. The Three of Cups is about nurturing each other as well as ourselves.





# FOUR of CUPS

This young girl has created three lovely floral arrangements with flowers she has gathered from her garden and the surrounding meadows. Though she still has plenty of flowers left for another bouquet, they no longer inspire her. She seems to have completely lost interest in finishing the job she started. She sits apathetically beneath the tree, disengaged from her surroundings, her mind elsewhere. Perhaps she has focused too much on work and chores, and now needs some time to sit back and self-reflect. After a break, she will once again feel inspired.

IN A READING The Four of Cups indicates that your focus has shifted from what is happening around you to what is happening inside of you. In this moment you are so self-absorbed that you may not be noticing or appreciating the gifts of beauty right in front of you. You've become withdrawn and indifferent. Perhaps life has become too stressful or overwhelming and you no longer feel motivated to go on with your work. Pausing to take a brief respite may help you reconnect with the inspiration you need to complete the project.





# FIVE of CUPS

This milkmaid has worked long and hard to collect enough milk for the family's needs. But now, much of the milk has been spilled and wasted. The barn cats are happy but the young girl is upset with herself for not being more vigilant with her resources. She is also afraid her family will be disappointed and angry about her carelessness. She doesn't seem to notice that she still has two full pails of milk. If she doesn't pay attention, those too could be wasted as the cat greedily approaches. The girl is young and has yet to realize that focusing on setbacks instead of solutions only worsens the situation. Perhaps she will learn from this mistake and find new ways to work that minimize risk and loss.

IN A READING This card urges you to keep a balanced perspective about your losses and disappointments. Sometimes the most critical voice is the one inside your own head. Accept that mistakes were made and things don't always work out as you'd planned or hoped. The message of this card is "Don't cry over spilled milk." Acknowledge your own feelings in the matter but do not dwell on regret. For you may miss an opportunity for change. Instead, look for a new way forward.



# SIX of CUPS

Here in the sunny strawberry field, a young man and a small girl are filling their baskets, their buckets and their bellies with juicy, ripe fruit. For them, it is not a chore but a joyful and carefree activity. There is an innocence and sweetness in this scene; the girl shares the biggest, reddest strawberry with the boy. It is a spontaneous gesture of pure kindness and generosity. The fluttering butterflies and playful puppy add their happy energy to the blissful afternoon.

**IN A READING** This nostalgic scene evokes the innocence and simple joys of childhood. It illustrates the pleasures of sharing the best of what you have with others. The Six of Cups shows you that extending simple acts of kindness with those you love is its own reward. This card also gently reminds you to nurture and take care of your own inner child. Today, immerse yourself with goodness and indulge in joyful acts.



#### SEVEN of CUPS

A young girl gets lost in her own magical dream world as she plays on the beach, making simple sandcastles. She is surrounded by an array of little creatures that catch her attention and spark her imagination. Sandpipers scurry in and out of the gentle surf. Tiny crabs play hide and seek in the sand. In her imagination, strands of seaweed appear like precious beads. All around her, stones and shells catch the glistening sunlight and sparkle like shiny treasures.

IN A READING The Seven of Cups card suggests wishful thinking and getting caught up in dreams. Like this little girl on the beach, so many options may be available to you that you have difficulty honing in on one idea. Having too much to choose from can lead to sheer distraction rather than fulfillment. This card is also a reminder that things are not always what they appear to be. It's fine, at times, to indulge in fantasy and whim. Just be aware that illusions come and go just like castles built of sand.

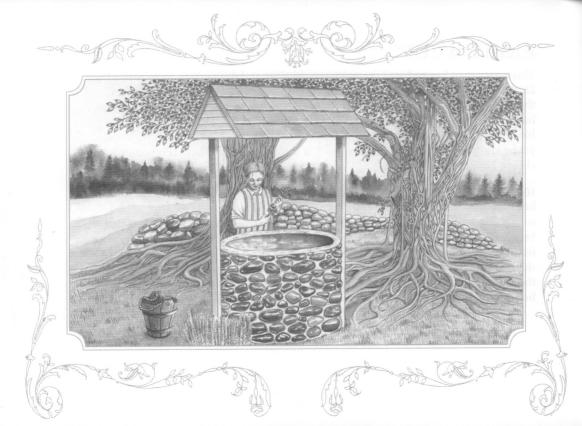




# **EIGHT of CUPS**

This weary man has endured the unimaginable loss and destruction wrought by the Dust Bowl. Years of severe drought, cruel winds, and choking dust have desolated the entire region. His home is now uninhabitable, the fields are barren, and his well has completely run dry. There is nothing left to salvage so he is forced to abandon his dreams and move on. His struggles have left him with no energy and no hope, yet he knows he must go and seek a new life somewhere else. There is no other choice, but change.

IN A READING Some decisions are difficult to make, when the pros and cons both stack up. But the Eight of Cups signals that the situation has deteriorated to such a degree that the end is inevitable. The one positive aspect to this card is that it brings clarity. Fate has decided for you; it's time to move on and start again. It may feel impossible at this moment to believe that optimism will ever return, but know that the worst is now behind you. You may not know where you are headed, but the only thing to do is put one foot in front of the other. The more distance you put between yourself and the past, the brighter the future will begin to look.

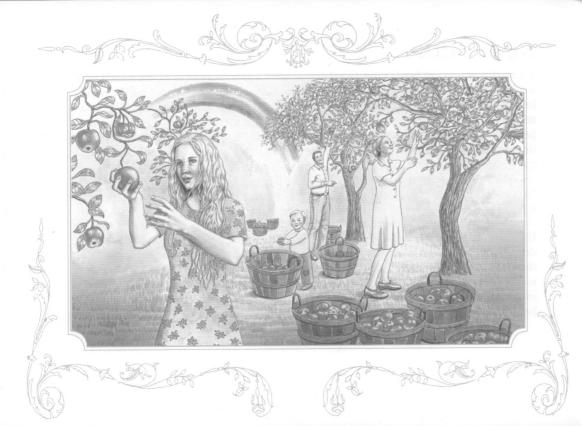


# NINE of CUPS

A cheerful young girl holds nine, sweet cup-shaped Canterbury bells as she stands over a stone wishing well. In contrast to the barren well in the Eight of Cups, here the well is brimming with good fortune. The girl smiles contentedly not only because she appreciates all the beauty in this scene but because all the signs surrounding her indicate that her wishes have come true. This "wish card" presents several auspicious symbols from diverse cultures and beliefs. The flowers she holds symbolize faith and gratitude. Near the wishing well is heather, which symbolizes dreams fulfilled. On either side of the well are sprawling Banyan trees. In Hindu myth, the Banyan tree, called *kalpavriksha*, means "wish-fulfilling tree." In Celtic tradition, a Wishing Tree brings good fortune, especially if it is located near a well.

IN A READING The Nine of Cups card means you have achieved everything you've desired and your wishes have all been fulfilled. Pause and take a moment to appreciate the glorious results in evidence all around you, as you take in the miraculous beauty of nature. This is one of those rare moments in life when everything has come into alignment. Allow yourself to feel delighted with the abundance you have received, for it is all because of your positive attitude and the power of intention.





### TEN of CUPS

A loving family is enjoying a wonderful day picking apples together. The sun is shining, the air is crisp, and the sweet ripe fruit grows in abundance. The parents and the children are taking as much delight in each other's company as they are in the activity. Whatever tensions may have been felt yesterday have dissipated and been forgotten. The rain has passed and a rainbow brightens the sky with joyful blessings. Here in the orchard there is a happy energy that brings a sense of harmony and contentment.

IN A READING The Ten of Cups is a card of abundant blessings and emotional fulfillment. It reminds you to take pleasure in the small things; treasure the moments shared with loved ones. If you are seeking joy, you don't have to look far. The people closest to you, those who hold you dear to their hearts, are the source of your bliss, the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. When you are struggling in life, those bonds of family love provide comfort. When there is harmony and happiness in the home, you'll see your cup overfloweth.



# PAGE of CUPS

Intuition and her sunny optimism have led the Page of Cups down a winding stone pathway to this cheerful coastal pond. She sits for a moment taking in the beauty of the place. The clear water reflects her emotional depth and reveals an intimate connection with nature. The fish and the playful frog both seem to welcome her to this magical place and they delight in her childlike sense of wonder. She has brought her favorite book of poetry along, which reveals her romantic, dreamy nature. She has the mind of a wise seeker and the heart of a curious child.

IN A READING The Page of Cups represents an energetic person, perhaps you, with a real joie de vivre. She is very much in the moment, making the most of each day, doing what feels right. She isn't caught up with practical matters or outcomes because she has the confidence and optimism to believe that, even without a plan, things usually work out the way they should. The Page card suggests someone who is sensitive and compassionate and who acts from the heart. This card may be a reminder to not take things too seriously. Have faith and follow your daydreams.



# KNIGHT of CUPS

The Knight of Cups is a complex man who manages to be both a sensitive, poetic soul and a rugged horseman, at home in the wild. After a long day of riding he is ready to settle in for the night with a glowing fire before him and an amber sunset above to inspire his musical soul. He is a man who appreciates beauty in everything he sees. He will sit for hours gazing into the flames as the sky darkens and the stars appear one by one, sparking his imagination. Yet, there is another side to this complex man. When things don't go his way, he can also be broody and sullen. The Knight of Cups experiences all of life on a deeply emotional level.

IN A READING There's no denying that the Knight of Cups is a charming, romantic man. It's easy to fall for someone with this much passion and emotional depth. Just be prepared for when the wind blows the other way, and his moods become dark and defensive. This card might also be showing you something about your own emotional energy and how it is being directed at your current situation. Leading with your heart is what drives your creative spirit. Be mindful, however, of seeing the facts with clear eyes, and looking beyond the surface.





# QUEEN of CUPS

The Queen of Cups has a deeply spiritual connection with this serene spot by the sea. The wild sea roses dot the fields with color and fill the air with their sweet perfume. The rocks she once climbed and played on as a youth now offer her a sacred space for meditation. She has returned here, as if on a pilgrimage, year after year since her childhood. The emotional bonds pull her like the gentle tides. She feels a reverence for all living things and honors her deeply felt communion with nature. She is always charmed by the activity of small creatures and emotionally moved by the sense of perfection in this land-scape. She understands that moods and feelings shift like the clouds. She never judges or resists what is. She listens to the whispers on the breeze that tell her all is as it should be.

IN A READING The tenderhearted Queen of Cups is urging you to unconditionally trust and honor your own feelings and experiences, whatever they might be. Find a sacred place that beckons you and makes you feel connected with the expansiveness of the universe. Allow yourself to ride whatever emotional currents present themselves. Breathe in the beauty, and let go of any judgment or resistance. Just quietly observe what is happening around you and within your own heart. Your spiritual truths will surface from the depths of your unconscious just as tiny stones and shells emerge with the shifting of the tides.



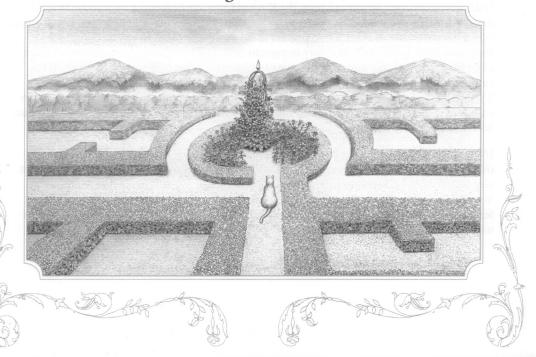


#### KING of CUPS

With waves crashing all around him, the King of Cups sits before the lighthouse that is his domain and his responsibility. When there are ships floundering in rough seas, fog, storms, and unseen dangers, it is his job to protect them and guide them to safety. He must be a beacon of hope to others. His ability to remain calm and clearheaded, no matter what the crisis, make him ideally suited to his role of lighthouse keeper. There are times when he can sense a ship is about to struggle, well before the captain himself signals distress. Though he is often isolated for long periods, the King of Cups deeply understands human nature as well as he fathoms the rocks and tides, and the volatile sea air that surrounds him and keeps him company.

IN A READING The King of Cups card demonstrates that in order to gain control of the current situation, you must first understand and manage your own emotions. The first step is to fearlessly shine the light of truth into all the deep, dark places that frighten you. You have to know where the rocks are in order to navigate around them. When turbulent feelings emerge, greet them with compassion. Don't struggle to swim against the tide, but use its power to help you find balance and buoyancy.

# Suit of Swords ?



# ACE of SWORDS

A curious young cat invites you to follow her into a rambling maze of lush greenery and alluring garden features. As the maze draws you in, it invites you to find your way past the many obstacles that inevitably occur. Using your mind, your senses and your analytical skills will lead you beyond any confusion and doubt you may feel. The gentle pathways lead to the beautiful centerpiece obelisk, which points upward to the clear blue sky. The ancient pillar is covered with climbing purple clematis, a flower that symbolizes intelligence and lofty beauty. Filling the central garden are white roses, which represent self-knowledge and wisdom. On the other side of the obelisk are towering Oriental lilies that betoken majesty and virtue.

IN A READING The Ace of Swords card beckons you to face the challenges before you with your powers of insight and logic. As you progress through life's many twists and turns, you develop confidence in your ability to think your way through complex situations. In fact, you may begin to welcome the opportunity to use your problem-solving skills once you realize that taking the right steps forward will bring clarity and fulfillment. You've learned to discern the difference between minor setbacks and major mistakes. You now possess the knowledge and insight to navigate through life's difficulties and move past adversity, toward an inner place of harmonious beauty.



# TWO of SWORDS

The young woman in this scene has found herself in a terrible quandary. She simply cannot decide which direction to go; she feels threatened by what lies both to her right and her left. The sharp thistles on either side of her represent her alert emotional state that is making her feel blocked and is keeping her from taking the next step. As a result, she cannot move at all; she feels immobilized. There is no physical barrier, but she is mentally trapped in resistance and distress. The two rabbits running in opposite directions illustrate the proverbial scenario "When you chase two rabbits, both will escape." This card shows how indecision and inability to commit to a choice leads to inevitable deadlock. Fear of making the wrong choice is keeping her stuck in place.

IN A READING You have found yourself in a situation that requires making a crucial decision. But the more you agonize over the choices facing you, the more confusion you feel. In your attempts to carefully weigh both sides, you are perhaps overthinking things, and as a result you have become mentally paralyzed. You know you can't have it both ways. Ironically, your inability to commit to either choice could lead to lost opportunities on both sides. Perhaps the real barrier is some emotional truth you have been afraid to face. In order to find clarity, you might need to pause and take a step back to examine your fears and feelings.



# THREE of SWORDS

In this scene, a sad young woman sits near an isolated wooded area under dark, menacing skies. She has wandered off by herself to read a letter. It appears that she has just received devastating news. Perhaps the letter is from someone who has betrayed her and has broken her tender heart. The rose thorns and bleeding hearts indicate that she is in a great deal of emotional pain as she sits alone weeping in this harsh setting. The little bird beside her brings no solace for he, too, seems injured or lost. The snake represents treachery.

IN A READING The Three of Swords acknowledges and validates your feelings of deep disappointment, abandonment or sorrow. It's hard to see any silver lining when the pain is this immediate and severe. At this moment it may feel like you will never get over this heartache. The bleeding heart flower's message is that sorrow can bring beauty if you are willing to confront your pain. Don't run from the feelings or try to deny the betrayal. Instead, find comfort in knowing that you will grow from this painful experience. You will learn to see the signs and save your affections and trust for someone who appreciates and returns these feelings.



# FOUR of SWORDS

A young farmhand is lying down inside the barn on a bed of hay. Hanging on the barn wall, appearing above him is a three-pronged pitchfork. He has set down his hoe, which now lies horizontally below him. The man is resting after an arduous day. His physical labors have taken their toll on him, so he is taking the time to heal and recover. The sunlight is streaming in through holes and cracks in the barn walls, giving the hayloft an air of enlightenment, an almost cathedral-like in atmosphere. This is a card of quiet contemplation. Like the praying mantis who has found shelter here in the barn, the farmer has found refuge in mindful stillness. The mantis is known for not making a move until he has focused his intention and aligned his energy. The worker has a lot on his mind, but he knows he will not find clarity and cannot proceed with any more activities until he has restored his own strength from within.

IN A READING Four is a number of balance and harmony. The Four of Swords is instructing you to be patient as you strive to find a necessary balance between work and rest. Overexerting yourself is ultimately counterproductive. It is time to put down your tools, let go of your thoughts, and shift your focus from the external to the internal. When you still your mind, you will find tranquility through spiritual enlightenment and your strength shall be restored.





# FIVE of SWORDS

Two blue jays are aggressively fighting over a few sticks and berries. They are high up in the treetops but there is nothing lofty about their actions. Blue jays are known for being conniving bullies, thieves and extremely territorial creatures. Here, each bird is only thinking of its own self-interests. Yet the brutal skirmish is more about establishing dominance than procuring resources. There is plenty of food and nesting materials available elsewhere. But neither will concede his position in this battle of wills. One jay will win this confrontation, the other will be chased away humiliated. Neither has acted valiantly.

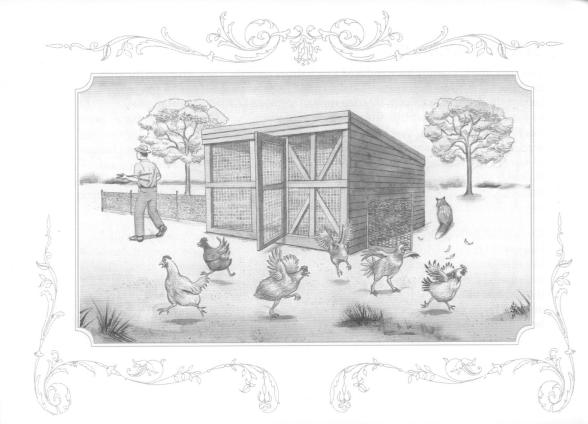
IN A READING If the Five of Swords appears in your reading, it is advising you to examine your behavior and your motivations in a hostile situation. Confrontation is sometimes inevitable but are you fighting for a righteous cause or only for your own dubious self-interests? You need to think ahead to how you will feel at the end of the day. Even if you emerge the winner and get what you've fought for, there will be no glory if you've resorted to lies, manipulation, trickery, bullying or other dishonorable means. This card asks if it is really worth giving up your integrity for the sake of a hollow victory.



#### SIX of SWORDS

This man and his family have endured tough times recently. They struggled through financial hardship as well as emotional turmoil. Even when it felt like he was barely keeping his head above water, this determined husband and father kept moving forward to give his family a better life. Through it all, he never let go of hope and his family never lost faith in him. At last, they are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, as they voyage across the clear waters toward a promising new place and a brighter future. The change of scenery and the journey itself are healing and restorative. They are headed toward the other side of the water where the banks of the river are lined with bluebells, flowers that reflect gratitude. When they reach the other side they will be met by the welcoming woods full of trillium, the flower of recovery.

IN A READING This is a card that brings hope and healing after a long difficult journey. At times it felt like you could not endure much more disappointment, but like this family, you managed to cope by looking ahead rather than looking back. You summoned the willingness to venture in bold new directions, rather than clinging to the familiar past. You've tapped into strength you didn't even know you had by focusing on what really matters. The rewards of your sacrifice are now unfolding before you; a beautiful new life awaits.



#### SEVEN of SWORDS

The young farmhand in this scene was in charge of building a secure area to keep the chickens safe from harm. But he procrastinated and failed to finish the job in a timely manner, leaving the fence incomplete and the chickens vulnerable. As a result, a fox has taken one of the seven chickens and is running away with it. But the man does not notice because he has turned his back and shirked his responsibilities. To make matters worse, he is now sneaking off carrying the last two metal stakes to avoid taking the blame. He can't face what he's done. He is trying to take the easy way out and leaving the mess for someone else to deal with.

IN A READING In any undertaking, mistakes are inevitable. The respectable thing to do is to own up to them and make reparations. To run away from problems means leaving someone else to pick up the pieces. But you cannot hide from the truth. When you fail to take responsibility, "the chickens will come home to roost." When this card shows up, watch out for devious and dishonest people. If your own actions have been less than honorable, be prepared to face the music.



# **EIGHT of SWORDS**

While wandering far from home, this young woman lost her way and became confused. She tried to go around the stream when in fact she could have easily crossed over the shallow water. When she saw a bird trapped in the barbed wire fence, she was so caught up in trying to free it that she too became entangled. The bird probably could have freed itself, but the woman has made the situation worse because she panicked at the first sign of trouble. Now, she is stuck and cannot see the way out of her predicament. The more she struggles, the more helpless she feels. If she were to take a step back instead of trying to force her way forward, she could free herself and find her way.

IN A READING At times like this, confusion and panic can make you feel overwhelmed and powerless. When you feel trapped by a situation, forcing solutions before you have clarity only makes things seem more hopeless. Instead of struggling against circumstances, take a moment to step back and get a clearer perspective. Sometimes inaction is the next right step. Once you accept that, you will find your way home.



# NINE of SWORDS

After an arduous day of work, this woman is finding it impossible to get to sleep. As the clock strikes midnight, the house is calm and quiet but she is plagued by her own dark thoughts. Even in this cozy spot she cannot find peace and comfort. It appears that the source of her anguish is internal rather than external as she sits alone with her shawl wrapped tightly around herself. Though the moonlit scene outside her window holds a stark beauty, she sees only her own grief reflected in the windows and her despair magnified in the shadows. In the bare branches a nightingale sings a melodious song, but to this forlorn lady, the sound seems like a melancholy tune of lament since she is hearing it through her own misery.

IN A READING From time to time we all experience those moments of inexplicable misery and overwhelming anxiety. The small problems that seemed manageable during the daylight hours loom large creating a "dark night of the soul." Though you may not be able to vanquish worry and oppressive thinking, this card urges you to try to keep things in perspective. Accept that you cannot solve all the problems of the world right now, so just take comfort in familiar things. Remember that the darkness will pass and the light of dawn will emerge, bringing with it clarity and insight.





# TEN of SWORDS

This man kneels in his barren field of failed crops, hanging his weary head in utter despair. There is nothing left for him to claim from the unforgiving earth. As the dry dirt sifts through his fingers, all hope he may have had slips away. He put everything he had into this potato farm, but mother nature did not cooperate. Now he is convinced that life simply has not been fair to him. He needs to consider that perhaps it was his poor choices and careless decisions that led him to this place. But instead he feels like he is the hapless victim of bad luck. As long as he feels that way, his self-pity will keep him down.

IN A READING The Ten of Swords illustrates that things have been rough for quite a while and now you have hit rock bottom. This card reminds you that at times like this you cannot control the situation; the only thing you can control is your own reaction. You may have become so fixated on all the things that have gone wrong, that you have assumed a victim mentality and are operating from a place of scarcity. Perhaps, like this disheartened man, you can no longer "see the forest for the trees." To get through this challenging time, try shifting your focus to what you've done in the past, what you have in the present, and what you can do in the future to improve your situation.



#### PAGE of SWORDS

With her chin up and her head held high, the Page of Swords holds her bow and arrow steady as she focuses on her distant target. The young archer has a clear, calm mind; it is as if there is nothing else around to distract her from her aim. When she releases the arrow, she has the utmost confidence that its flight will be straight and true. Though the vernal winds blow her hair, the archer has taken all external factors carefully into account. Because of her honed skills, she is able to mentally adjust to any such challenge. For the Page of Swords, the more difficult the task, the greater resolve she brings to it. She knows she may not hit the mark every time, but each attempt is a new opportunity to try.

IN A READING The Page of Swords card brings new challenges, but also the opportunities to put your analytical skills and mental acuity to the test. Know that from where you stand right now, you are perfectly positioned to confront the difficult situation ahead of you. This card reminds you to rely on thoughtful, careful analysis rather than immediate action. Gather the information needed to make a decision. The archer also encourages you to always try to *respond*, rather than *react* to a situation, and to do so with honesty and directness. Truth flies as straight as an arrow.



# KNIGHT of SWORDS

A man of swift action, the Knight of Swords gallops through the field on his ivory stallion. The rider is brusque yet clear as he conveys his sense of purpose to his spirited steed. They move as one, sharing a forceful energy and steely determination. If any obstacles get in the way of his mission, the Knight is prepared to slash them away. His domineering presence and high-handed attitude leave no doubt who is in charge. He has little tolerance for anyone questioning his authority or his ideas. Yet he wields great influence because of his sharp, decisive mind and his powers of analytical thinking.

IN A READING When the Knight of Swords card appears, it suggests that you need to start focusing on facts, not feelings. Mulling over your problems, doubts and challenges will not get you anywhere. Like the Knight, you need to focus on solutions and be ready to take decisive action. Others may not agree with your forthright approach, but this is not the time for negotiating or people-pleasing. This card urges you to speak your mind and own your power.



# QUEEN of SWORDS

The astute Queen of Swords sits before her chessboard. Though she is surrounded by the beauty of her garden, her razor-sharp mind is completely focused on the game she is about to commence. The sword-shaped gladiolas she has planted signal her strength and commitment to victory. Her intense gaze and her beguiling smile reveal her confidence in equipoise with her sporting sense of playfulness. She observes her worthy opponent as she contemplates her opening strategy. Throughout the game she will manage to stay several steps ahead of him, almost as if she can read his thoughts. With each move, she calculates her risks and reevaluates her approach. The analytical Queen of Swords brings this mental acuity to most everything she undertakes.

IN A READING As experienced as she is, the Queen of Swords demonstrates the importance of sizing up a situation before making a move. She teaches you that an analytical and straightforward approach is crucial, especially for resolving any conflicts. The Queen will know if mental games are being played. She can see right through any attempts at deception or trickery. In the presence of someone like her, it's best to play by the rules and abide by complete honesty. Open, direct communication and clear boundaries are also vital in the current dynamic. There's a lot you can learn from the Queen's playbook.



# KING of SWORDS

The handsome King of Swords pauses to enjoy this warm autumn afternoon as he chops wood for the winter ahead. Even with his rugged work attire, there is a regalness in his bearing. He has been completely absorbed in the work; chopping wood has become a kind of active meditation for him. He is someone who thrives on structure and routine. He tackles everything he does, even the most mundane tasks like this one, with adeptness and methodical precision. When problems arise on his property, he carefully analyzes the situation to understand every angle, then quickly directs his attention toward creative, practical solutions. In whatever chores and projects he takes on, he demands of himself the same self-discipline and mindful exactitude he would expect from any of his workers. His standards are high, but so are his ethical principles. He clearly communicates his expectations and inspires others with his mind-overmatter attitude that is echoed by the woodpecker in the distance.

IN A READING This card is a reminder to engage in everything you do, even the humblest chores, with complete mindfulness. The King of Swords shows us that no matter how far we have progressed on our journeys, no matter how successful we have become, it's still important to approach the simple everyday acts with integrity and focus rather than getting caught up in reactions, results and rewards. There is a Zen saying, "Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment, chop wood, carry water." This suggests that the way a person does one thing is an indicator of how they do everything. And how we do something is not just about the outcome but it is also about staying mindful in the process. Perfection is not the end goal, it is a quality we should strive for in everything we do.

# Suit of Pentacles



#### ACE of PENTACLES

This confident young cat embodies the vitality and stamina that make him feel secure and grounded. He sits upon the solid wooden wheel surrounded and anchored by lush vegetation. He has taken advantage of this found object to lift himself up to a higher vantage point, and he urges you to make the most of the resources available to you to advance your goals. Just as the cat uses a firm, stable base, you are also encouraged to focus on practical, down-to-earth approaches as you strive to achieve material success. Follow that cat's inspiration to explore your greatest potential and the infinite possibilities that lie ahead.

IN A READING As you survey the situation, and take stock of your resources, know that you can achieve measurable results. This is not the time for lofty schemes and daydreams; it's time to roll up your sleeves and do the preliminary work, planting the seeds today for productivity and prosperity tomorrow. Gather the tools and materials you need; rely on the trusted and true methods that will ensure a tangible impact. And lastly, draw upon your own knowledge and experience. Have the confident enthusiasm of a kitten that your projects and enterprises will succeed.



#### TWO of PENTACLES

The agile, young farm girl carefully carries her two baskets full of fresh eggs through the hilly meadow and across the small creek to the marketplace. She has finished her other chores and now she gives this task her full attention. Though she is eager to arrive at her destination, she does not hurry. The path she must follow has its challenges, but she exudes infinite grace and confidence as she holds both baskets in perfect balance. Although the girl has considerable responsibilities, she has also earned certain privileges and freedoms. She smiles to herself knowing that once she has delivered the eggs safely to the market, she can enjoy mingling with her friends and neighbors, and perhaps bring home a few treats for her family.

IN A READING The Two of Pentacles represents the balanced life: between work and leisure activities, and between resilience and acceptance. To find harmony, you must give even the most mundane tasks the same focus and energy you would give your creative pursuits. When inevitable challenges come, take them in stride by remaining flexible. Keep going simply by placing one foot ahead of the other! In this way, you will find your rhythm through life's ups and downs.

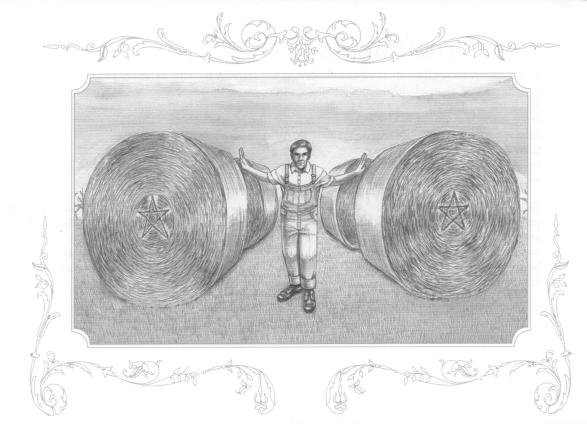




#### THREE of PENTACLES

In this scene, we see the side of a barn displaying hex signs. A friendly neighbor or a handyman stands on a ladder helping to hang a third hex sign, one that means welcome. The three colorful signs, forming a triangular configuration, have been painted by a skilled artisan. The man on the ladder works with the couple to create a balanced and attractive display on their barn for all to see. The man on the ground holds the ladder steady while the woman helps the handyman position the sign. The chore is efficiently accomplished because there has been careful planning and coordination of efforts. These three people are working as a team to get the job done right.

IN A READING This encouraging card indicates that good progress is being made on a project or creative venture. To complete the work, you'll need to draw upon the right skills and resources. To get the best results, do not hesitate to enlist the help of others who have experience or talents that may complement yours. Your sense of accomplishment will only be enhanced if you work cooperatively as a team, rather than trying to do everything yourself. Sometimes another person's perspective is just what is needed.



#### FOUR of PENTACLES

The farmer stands between four colossal bales of hay. He has planted and harvested the crops but now he appears to be overwhelmed by the sheer volume he has accumulated. Instead of rejoicing in the harvest and being grateful for the bounty, he is just fixated on stockpiling as much as he can, to the point where he has more than he needs and far more than he can manage. It's as if he has backed himself into a corner and can't get out. No one is around to help him because he has isolated himself in his dogged pursuit of acquiring more and more. Instead of bringing him a sense of security, excess has only brought him further woes.

IN A READING This card urges you to consider your relationship to money and the accumulation of material goods. It is one thing to gather resources, possessions or wealth and another thing to be able to manage or maintain what you have or even to appreciate it. If what you have isn't bringing you peace of mind, compulsively pursuing more will never bring gratification. The feeling that more is never quite enough isn't necessarily driven by greed, but more likely by a scarcity mindset. Try to honestly examine your financial insecurities and find other ways to seek fulfillment. Sharing what you have and helping others who have less than you do may show you that you already have a life of plentitude.





#### FIVE of PENTACLES

In this dreary winter scene, a young girl sits in her wheelchair out in the cold. Because of her poor health, she is dependent upon her companion to get her from one place to another. The elderly woman who helps her is clearly destitute but although she has little to share, she gives the girl kindness and assistance. Although they are both struggling—one physically, one financially—their suffering is lessened somewhat because they are not alone as they face their misfortunes. Being together brings a bright spot to both of them. As they pass a house, they can see glowing lights in the window, shining a glimmer of hope into their difficult lives.

IN A READING When Pentacle cards appear in your reading, they usually carry a message about financial or physical resources: what you have, what you need, or what you have generated. The Four of Pentacles card asked you to reflect on what you truly need, rather than what you think you want. The Five of Pentacles urges you to look beyond yourself, to consider what other less fortunate people have to make do with. This card is also redirecting your attention toward your physical health, which you may be taking for granted. It is a reminder to take care of your own health first, so that you will be able to help others.



#### SIX of PENTACLES

An elderly woman has come out of her humble cottage to proffer a loaf of warm bread to a passerby who is less fortunate. The woman doesn't have a lot, but what she has she is willing to share with others. Bread is the supreme gift that shows true generosity from the heart. The cottage door is painted red to signal to travelers that they are welcome here; they know they will be treated to gracious hospitality. Her garden is also full of signs of her charitable kindness. Allium symbolizes good fortune balanced with humility. Bee balm flowers offer protection and prosperity. The creamy magnolia blossoms signify benevolence and dignity. The stately birch tree is a symbol of nourishment, both physical and spiritual, and it also suggests hope. Even the flowers in the window boxes convey a meaning; in folklore it is believed that petunias only thrive where there is positive energy and goodwill.

IN A READING This touching scene suggests that true generosity comes from the heart, not only from the purse. Sharing what is precious and life-giving is the greatest gift of all. The Six of Pentacles card suggests that you consider more ways, beyond the monetary, that you can help other people and contribute to their well-being. Giving of your time and creativity, even giving encouragement and inspiration can give someone hope when they most need it. There may be times when you need to ask for help. Do so with humility and grace. There are always two sides to acts of charity and the fostering of goodwill.



#### SEVEN of PENTACLES

The young gardener pauses in his work to behold the bounty of his carefully-tended squash plants. He looks very pleased with the progress of his zucchini crop, and he has every reason to be satisfied as he stands basking in the sunlight. He has been methodical at every stage, from preparing the soil, to building a strong structure to support the vines. He has invested in the best equipment and utilizes the right tools for the job. He vigilantly monitors the crops for any pests, spotting the beetle before it has a chance to destroy the fruit and the blossoms. He takes a quiet moment to reflect on the process that has brought him to this point and he acknowledges all the hard work that has produced an abundant crop. His faithful dog embodies the idea of devotion and dedication. The wren is a symbol of alertness, activity and efficiency.

IN A READING It's time for a status report. This is a milestone moment, a chance for you to stop and assess your methods as well as the results of your work. Give yourself credit for the good progress you've achieved and the appropriate choices you've made along the way. More work is to come and more decisions will have to be made as to whether to continue in the same manner or try different approaches. But for now, take some time to enjoy the sweet rewards. Reap what you have sown.



#### EIGHT of PENTACLES

Sitting near a sunny window, the quilter works quietly and confidently on her project. She has diligently organized all her tools and materials so everything she needs is at her fingertips. She has already carefully selected her fabric, the colors and patterns, and has started expertly sewing the patches together. She methodically works out every detail and every step of the process; two more pentacle pieces are ready to be stitched into the quilt. The quilter is completely absorbed in her project; even her calico cat seems to be lulled by her serene focus on her work. Just beyond the window, a bird with single-minded determination crafts her nest with the materials she has gathered for her own important project.

IN A READING This card encourages you to hone your craft. To optimize the gratification you get out of a creative project, you need to put in the time and devote yourself to mastering the skills required. Anything that is worth doing is worth doing diligently, with meticulous attention to details. After you have put into practice everything you have learned, you will see the difference in your results. You will know when the time has come for you to take pride in a job well done.





#### NINE of PENTACLES

This elegant woman stands in front of the lush vineyard with her trained falcon. She is an independent woman of refined tastes. Through her own disciplined efforts she lives a gracious life surrounded by things of beauty. Her gardens have been carefully planned and cultivated so that she may enjoy them at her leisure. On either side of her are hibiscus topiaries with golden flowers and braided trunks, displaying her talent in shaping nature to suit her vision. She has also mastered the art of falconry. The bird's natural inclination is to venture out and hunt, but she has taught this magnificent bird to always return to its place beside her, where it enjoys a good life.

IN A READING You may have yearned for a life of luxury, but it will be meaningless if you have not worked for it. Only when you have achieved results through your own discipline and creativity will you feel gratified. In the Language of Flowers, the hibiscus signifies beauty and the ideal woman. You may look at what others have and think they have the perfect life, but such a thing does not exist. So don't wait for someone to hand you what you think you want. Your challenge is to channel your desires, interests and passion into your own accomplishments. This process may entail some sacrifice, but only then will you truly be able to enjoy the finer things in life.



#### TEN of PENTACLES

This happy scene of a multi-generational family enjoying an autumn day at a pumpkin patch is a picture of material abundance. Like his father seated nearby, this gentleman has acquired financial security through conventional means and now he is in a position to share and enjoy his affluence with his family. Prosperity affords all of them the luxury of choices and leisure time. Just as they built their fortune by following established patterns, they also spend their money in ways that carry out traditions. Each year, the children delight in coming to the farm to pick out pumpkins from the bountiful harvest. They even bring their beloved dogs for this day of pleasure. This is a card of health as well as wealth. Through good living, the grandfather still enjoys life to the fullest and continues to be a model of vitality. He derives tremendous satisfaction in seeing his family thrive.

IN A READING The Ten of Pentacles card is a sure sign that you are successfully creating financial security and stability in your life. Abundance is your reward for all your prudent planning and hard work. While you now have a multitude of spending options available to you, your long-term interests will be best served by continuing to make conservative choices for the future. For now, enjoy the blessings of family, good health and the bounty of life.





#### PAGE of PENTACLES

The Page of Pentacles is shown standing contentedly in a meadow full of colorful wild-flowers. Just beyond the Page is a lush grove of apple trees in bloom and a field ripe for harvest. The Page of Pentacles holds her dreamcatcher pentacle aloft as she concentrates on the abundance of earthly possibilities all around her, yet her feet are planted firmly on the ground. The Page of Pentacles is a card of dreams and inspirations but also relates to the practical approaches required to make opportunities come to fruition.

IN A READING Draw upon all the tools and resources available to you to set a project or endeavor into motion. Lofty goals are an excellent starting point but mere dreaming will not put you on the path toward prosperity and fulfillment. You'll need to channel all the creativity and energy from within to achieve the material rewards you aspire to. This card is also a reminder to watch for and take advantage of opportunities that present themselves. The Page inspires us to venture beyond the familiar. Let your sense of wonder and spirit of adventure take you to the next level where you will meet with success. At the same time, let yourself enjoy the process!





#### KNIGHT of PENTACLES

The Knight of Pentacles rides through his fields on a sturdy mule. He is the most serious and industrious of all the knights. He rides not for excitement or adventure; he is single-mindedly focused on his work. Even his equine choice of a mule, rather than a more handsome or speedy horse, is about getting the laborious tasks done. The man and the mule are well matched in their obstinacy and their unwavering determination. They leave nothing to chance. The Knight will always follow the path of perfection and he will never quit until every single detail of each and every project is accomplished to his meticulous standards.

IN A READING The Knight of Pentacles card appears to present you with a role model of perfectionism. Like him, you can accomplish your goals by diligently focusing on safe, tried and true methods and by not allowing any distractions or compromises. But in doing so, by being inflexibly tied to routine, you may be missing opportunities to approach things more creatively and to derive more pleasure from the process. This card could be a warning about working excessively and taking life too seriously. We may be telling ourselves that we should be productive every waking hour of every day. But there is more to life than the daily grind. It's also important to reserve time and energy for pleasurable pursuits that can restore you.





#### **QUEEN of PENTACLES**

The Queen of Pentacles pauses in her garden, taking in all the natural wonder surrounding her. She sits upon a simple reed chair her husband has crafted from twigs and vines. Small animals are drawn to the Queen's gentle, earthy nature. Above her are the fragrant red roses she has faithfully tended for years. Before her is her handwoven bee skep, from which she will collect sweet, golden honey. She fully engages all her senses and skills in her every endeavor. As a result, she has a real knack for coaxing the best results from herself as well as from others.

IN A READING If you have someone in your life as generous and down-to-earth as the Queen of Pentacles, you are very fortunate indeed. She will always be welcoming and helpful, whatever comes up, though you will rarely find her alone. Her home is always buzzing with activity and she is usually surrounded by a menagerie of sweet animals, for hers is a nurturing spirit. As a loyal friend, she will listen supportively to your dreams and schemes; but as a doer, she will encourage you to take real, practical steps toward your goals. The Queen of Pentacles also prompts you to make the most of the assets you already have and to develop partnerships to optimize results from your projects.



#### KING of PENTACLES

The King of Pentacles is enjoying a moment of utter contentment as he sits in his expansive vineyard. Surrounded by lush vines laden with plump grapes ripe for harvest, this is a picture of a rich life achieved through discipline and devotion. This adept man has never shied away from manual work and the physical demands of his ambitious venture. He has strategically managed not only his resources, but also his crew with natural, benevolent leadership, as the vineyard requires many hands and diverse skills. The King's entrepreneurial spirit and attentiveness have also served him well in his enterprise. He faces whatever challenges arise with practical, innovative solutions. The result is sustainable wealth and abundance that can be enjoyed by many.

IN A READING This card illustrates the plentiful rewards of hard work and diligent planning. Having a clear vision is the first step toward creating a sustainable enterprise, but accomplishing an ambitious goal requires long-term commitment to hard work. Like the King, you started with practical ideas and move confidently toward your goals, step-by-step. You learned your skills from others who served as role models along the way. Now, you have earned the right to take pride and pleasure in the bounty you have created. Perhaps you will consider mentoring others and sharing the gifts of success.



## Reading with Pastoral Tarot

For each of the following spreads, use the entire deck. Shuffle the cards, while focusing on your intentions or a specific question you wish to explore. Lay cards out face up, according to the diagrams and instructions below.

### HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS



Card 1: Where I currently reside.

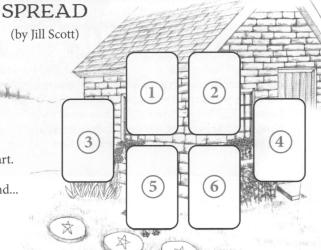
Card 2: This is keeping me here.

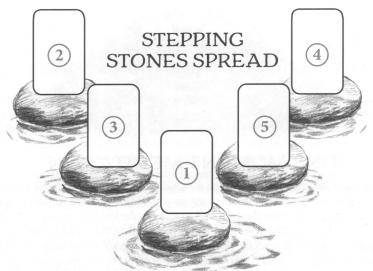
Card 3: This will always be in my heart.

Card 4: This is on the horizon.

Card 5: When I follow my heart, I find...

Card 6: Yet this still calls to me.





Card 1: Where you are now.

Card 2: Identify a pivotal situation in your past, positive or negative, that influenced where you are today.

Card 3: Identify what steps you took or changes you went through to get here.

Card 4: Where do you want to be in the future?

Card 5: What steps do you need to take to get there?



#### ONE MOMENT MEDITATION

You may also use Pastoral Tarot cards for meditation sessions. Fan out the cards and select one that evokes a sense of peace or joy to you. Hold that card in the palm of your hand facing up. Examine the card and notice the details that prompted you to choose this card. Gently close your eyes and bring to mind the scene in the card. Now, visualize yourself within this scene, relaxing and letting go of everything else from your day. Let your mind gaze across the landscape of the card. As you imagine yourself in this bucolic setting, engage your other senses. What fragrances from nature do you smell? What sounds do you hear? What textures do you feel around you? As you allow yourself to fully experience this pastoral place, notice what physical and emotional feelings come up. Take a moment to just feel these sensations. Now open your eyes and look again at the card. As you go through your day, let yourself return to your "happy place" whenever you need to.

## Creating Art for Pastoral Tarot

When Lynn Araujo approached me about working on Pastoral Tarot, I was intrigued by the subject matter. It seemed like a wonderful way for me to express myself in a new way instead of the spiritual and fantasy art I've become known for. Unlike decks I've done in the past, the card orientation is horizontal rather than vertical. This interesting format is conducive for landscape painting; just the thing for a deck that focuses on the countryside. The paintings created for Pastoral Tarot are larger than other decks I have painted. I liked the freedom a larger dimension afforded and was able to include lots of detail, especially when painting people, flowers, and farm animals.

As you may know, I'm a bit of a traditionalist. The process for creating Pastoral Tarot started with a sketchbook. Lynn provided a description and I would conceptualize with colored pencil to get a feel of the palette. She would offer suggestions before I moved on to the final drawing on tracing paper. Once the drawing was complete, I rubbed graphite pencil on the flip side and then taped it down on Arches 140 lb. Hot Press watercolor paper. This is how I transfer art onto the final paper. Once finished, I remove the tracing and redraw the composition to make it as perfect as possible. Redrawing a piece is one of my favorite creative activities during this process. Using a mechanical pencil, I enjoy elaborating on the original drawing with additional and often spontaneous details such as vines,



pebbles, and foliage until the drawing meets my standards for completion. Using Winsor & Newton watercolor paints, I begin with larger washes of color—faces and hands being among my favorite things to paint. I use less and less water as I progress and utilize dry brushing (paint with little moisture) for fine details such as eyes and ears. The painting process goes fairly quickly depending on the complexity of the image. Paintings that had a lot of flowers took longer due to all the time it takes to paint each plant. Some of the paintings in Pastoral Tarot are quite elaborate, while others are more streamlined and focus more on the intended meaning of the card.

The entire project took me approximately five years to complete. Hardly a day went by when I wasn't working on Pastoral Tarot. It was part of my daily life and brought me much joy along the way. Some paintings flowed from my brush more easily than others. Several were downright challenging, but interesting all the same. Each piece of art has its own story to tell and with some paintings, I can remember what I was otherwise doing during the time I was working on them. When I started the project, my daughter was just 11 years old. When I completed it, she had recently turned 16. In some ways, it seemed like a lifetime. In other ways, it was a project that kept me in the moment, breathing in the wonderful inspiration that Lynn's delightful descriptions provided along the way. References came from various sources including vintage photos from the Depression Era (the 1930s). Copious research went into the visuals as Lynn and I wanted the deck to look as authentic as possible. I also painted flowers and other natural elements from life and took the reference photos of various people and animals who appear in the deck.



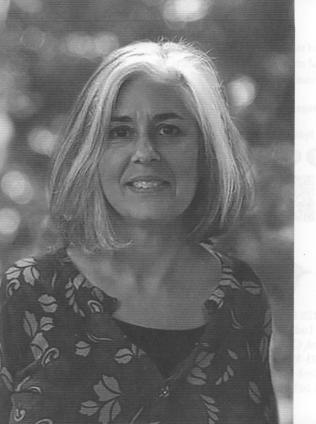
### About the Artist

Lisa Hunt has created and illustrated many decks, including *The Winged Enchantment Oracle, Ghosts & Spirits Tarot, Fairy Tale Lenormand* and *Fantastical Creatures Tarot*, all published by U.S. Games Systems, Inc. She is best known for her traditional watercolor art. Lisa earned a Master's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with an emphasis on Jungian Psychology, Art, and Drawing. Lisa lives with her family in Boca Raton, Florida.

Follow her on: Instagram: @lisahuntart Facebook: Lisa Hunt Art

Photo credit: Kort Kramer





### About the Author

Lynn Araujo grew up in Corning, NY, a small town surrounded by hills, lakes and lush farmland. She now lives in coastal Connecticut where she enjoys gardening, kayaking and hiking with her two dogs and her partner Mike. Lynn has worked as Editor and Communications Director at U.S. Games Systems, Inc. since 2004. She is also the author of Botanical Inspirations Deck & Book Set, Backyard Blessings Inspiration Cards, Dreaming Way Lenormand and co-author with Stuart R. Kaplan of The Artwork & Times of Pamela Colman Smith.

Follow her on: Instagram: @colorfulynn Facebook: Lynn Sparrow For our complete line of tarot decks, books, meditation cards, oracle sets, and other inspirational products please visit our website:

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