

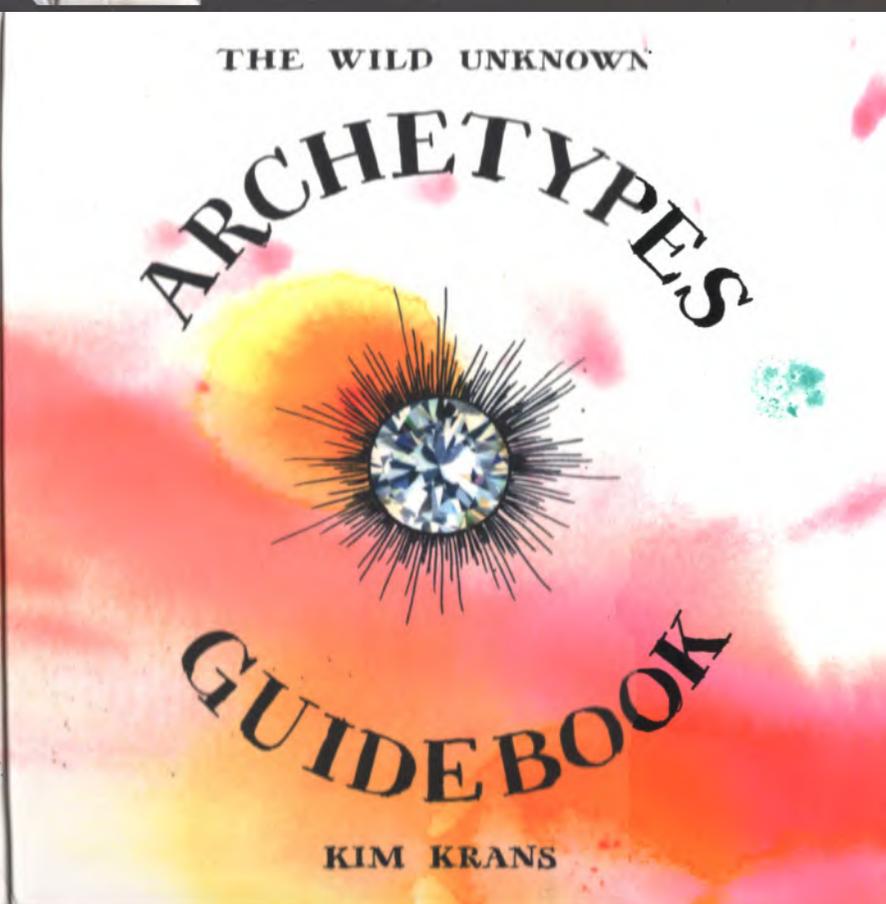


KIM KRANS

ARCHETYPES GUIDEBOOK



HarperOne



THE WILD UNKNOWN

ARCHETYPES

GUIDEBOOK

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THE OCEAN WITHIN THE MOUNTAIN

It is possible that archetypes have their own agendas, their own work to do on us. With that in mind, I offer you my story:

It had been about four years since I drew The Wild Unknown Tarot Deck. I wasn't sure what was next for me. My days were full, yet lacked enchantment. I kept up with my usual practices of meditation, yoga, drawing, and creating. I worked hard, as I had a successful business to maintain and material investments to accumulate. From afar my life looked figured out, whatever that means...imagine what you will.

Somewhere along this dull line of the life I thought I should live, I met a new friend. She told me about a master's program with a depth psychological (Jungian) approach to creativity. As she spoke, the words *archetype*, *dreams*, *image*, *theatre*, *alchemy*, and *myth* rattled and sparkled. Two weeks later I found myself in southern California milling around the school's campus as a prospective student. That evening I attended a workshop on the role of the individual in a troubled world, led by mythologist Michael Meade. I sang new songs and heard new stories. After the workshop I drove the hilly coastal highway to a friend's house by the ocean, knowing something

was shifting inside me. I arrived at her house as the moon began to rise. I fell asleep hard.

That night I had a dream. A "big dream" as they are sometimes called. The ones that stick with you—the image, phrase, or scene you can't shake, understand, or resolve. Mine was simple:

THERE IS A MOUNTAIN.

IT SAYS:

I AM THE MOUNTAIN AND I AM CALLING YOU.

I WAKE UP.

I was mesmerized and terrified. Little did I know I had entered the infinitely perplexing and generative world of archetypes, with The Mountain as my guiding image. But was the image pointing me to the literal or to the imaginal? Was it inside me or out in the world? Should I go to Mount Kailash and seek wisdom in the sacred caves where the yogis dwell? Take a rock-climbing class? Buy hiking boots? I decided enrolling in grad school was courageous enough. The Mountain would take care of itself. I let the image go.

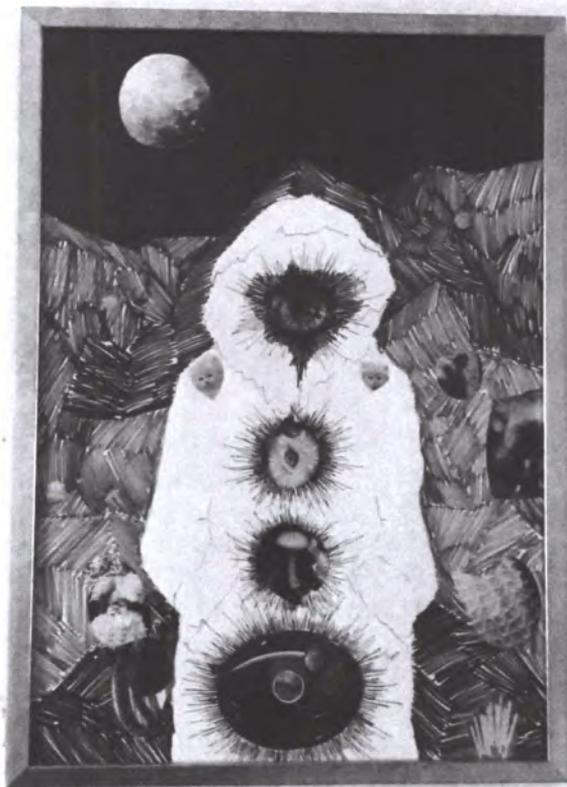
As I continued my graduate studies, the disenchantment with my personal life increased. I was waking up to how much I had fallen asleep. As if half of myself were trying to summon the other half to life. *Get up, Kim, it's time. Come on, girl, you can do it.* I couldn't though. I felt weak, ghostlike. One day I had a vision of myself walking out the door without telling anyone.

WHERE WOULD YOU GO? MY THERAPIST ASKED.
I DON'T KNOW, I SAID. I JUST SEE MYSELF WALKING.
I END UP IN THE MOUNTAINS.
WHICH MOUNTAINS? SHE ASKED.
I DON'T KNOW.

This ghostlike vision lingered with me for a while. Change takes time. The Mountain waits. It is patient beyond patient.

Oddly enough, though, that winter I was approached to create a series of drawings for a line of pro snowboards. I didn't usually take freelance illustration jobs anymore, and I hadn't ridden a snowboard in about fifteen years...but I made an exception. I had a feeling.

As any diligent artist does, I began my field research. That meant watching snowboard videos and documentaries, and following feeds of renegade riders out there in the wild. There stood the image of The Mountain again: its savage expansive beauty, its stoic peaks, glimmering flutes and spines, gouging rivulets aimed simultaneously toward heaven and earth. I watched the tiny silhouettes of snowboarders gracing her epic crests, and eventually my chest broke open. I sat on the couch and cried for The Mountain. I cried for adventure. The tears wouldn't stop. I had been studying, working, drawing, and emailing so bloody hard for so many years that I had abandoned the part of me that loved to be in the world, with red cheeks, chilly toes, crisp air in my lungs.



About a week later my life began to freefall. Avalanche, in fact. I lost my fourth pregnancy. I left my marriage of twelve years. I shut down my company as I knew it. I closed our bustling new age storefront in Portland. Out of necessity, I quickly moved to the Oregon Coast and set up my art studio. I made a drawing of myself in the mountains and hung it on my otherwise empty wall. It was the only art I had up for many months. *My talisman. My map.* I had fallen from one summit in search of another.

THE DEEPER MOUNTAIN.
THE INNER MOUNTAIN.
WITHIN IT THERE IS A CAVE
THAT HOLDS A FIRE
THAT CONTAINS THE OCEAN.

If this doesn't quite make sense, it's because we've already entered the realm of archetypal story, where things are both up and down, where The Mountain is both inside and out. Where a falling is the beginning of a rising; where the poetics reign over the logistics. If you don't mind, just keep descending with me. I promise it will lead us to higher ground, where we have a better view. The archetypes are already doing their work, in their meandering, dreamlike way.

Out on the coast, there was no snowy powder for me to ride, so I headed toward *The Mountain's sister image: The Ocean.* I went to her every day, rain or shine. I put my hand in the water and brought it to my lips with the prayer *SHOW ME THE WAY.* It

was snow after all...in liquid form. At some point each drop had graced a mountain peak, so I trusted the practice. I thought of it as *Drinking the Mountain*. And being a diligent student, I didn't miss a day.

Once spring arrived, I began to surf. The learning curve was steep. I was pummeled by her strength. I was turned over and over underneath the water, until I gave up thinking I could compete with or control her. Somewhere along the way, I began to stand on her waves and eventually, occasionally...ride the momentum down the line. My muscles strengthened, my skin weathered. Every part of me became thicker and more embodied. What was ghostlike became warrior-like. What was dormant became enlivened. *The role of the artist, after all, is to awaken that which has fallen asleep.*

It was during this period of effervescent change that I drew the archetypes deck you now hold in your hands. It was the year I faced the archetypal abyss and the archetypal ocean of dissolution. The Mountain had led me all the way down to the bottom, to the shores of The Ocean within The Mountain. After sunrise surfs I'd drive home and draw, collage, and write. Most of the images you see here were formed as much by The Ocean as they were by me. In many ways I do not feel like I made this deck. It made me. It put me back together, one salty droplet at a time. Driving along 101, I would hear the descriptions of the cards come forward, and I would pull off the road to scribble notes or text

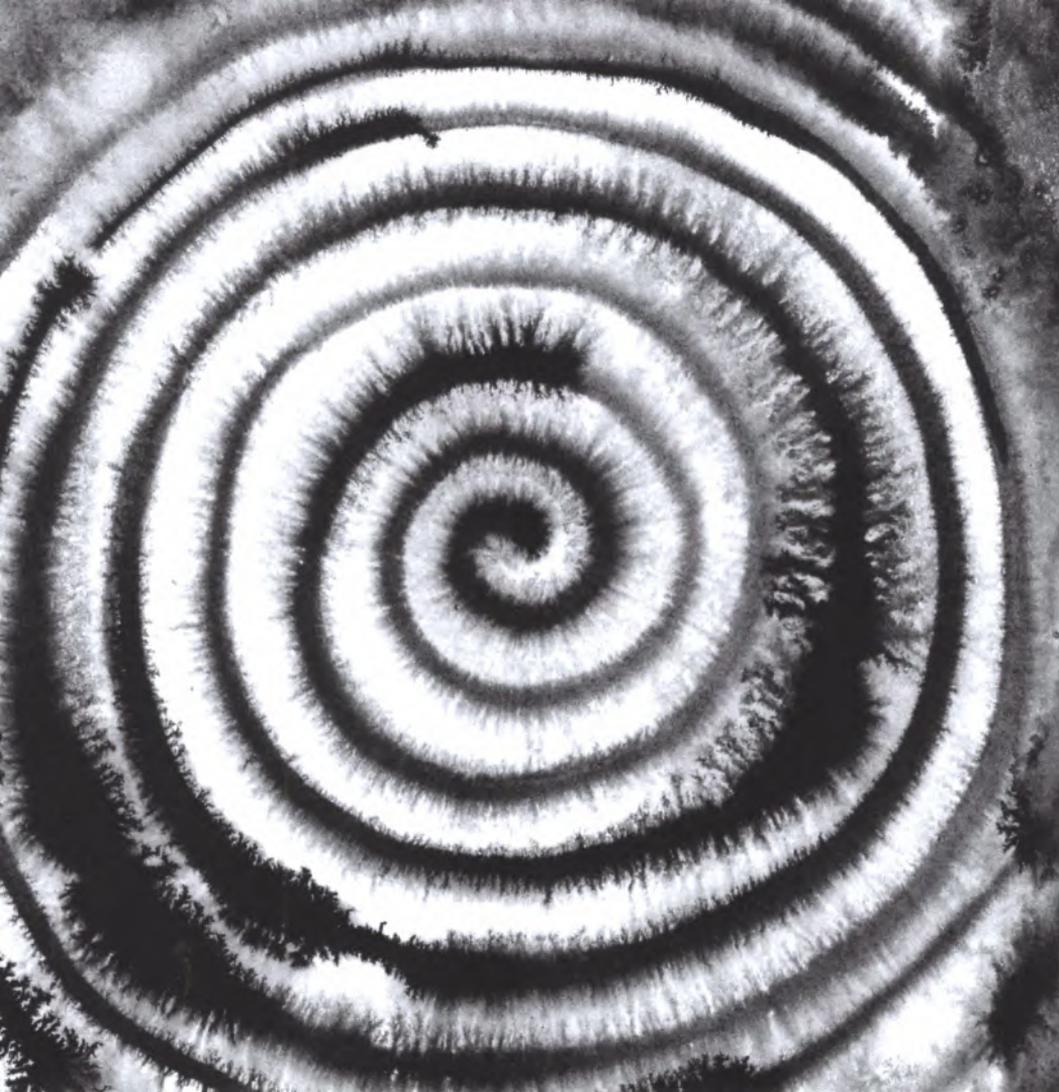
myself mythic tidbits. While lying in savasana, I watched the cards appear, then did my best to recreate them in the studio. A pendulum chose the cards' names for me. This deck wanted to become itself, and I did my very best to get out of the way, to let it pour forward toward you.

It is possible that archetypes have their own agendas, their own work to do on us. With that in mind, I offer you my prayer:

When an image calls to you, may you trust it. Within it, eventually, circuitously, wondrously, may you discover another, deeper image.... Call it The Ocean within The Mountain. If you find yourself within its waters, look for me. No doubt I will be there.

with love,


☺



THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

To say I am the author of this deck is contrary to the nature of archetypes. They arise from the chaos of the collective. Since I am the personal filter through which this particular deck came to be, however, it's of utmost importance that I acknowledge those who have paved the archetypal path before me. The following is a short list of the teachers, artists, mystics, and mentors who have affected the structure, nature, and essence of this deck. Without them it would be less complete, less itself.

FROM THE ALCHEMICAL SPHERE OF DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY

Here I bow first and most deeply to the work of C. G. Jung, who coined the term *archetype* and through both scholarly and creative practices spent a lifetime investigating their power. The audio recordings and books by Robert Bly, James Hillman, and Michael Meade became go-to sources of psychoactive material during the making of this deck, along with the poems in their collected anthology, *The Rag & Bone Shop of the Heart*. Thank you to the generative thinkers, teachers, and scholars at Pacifica Graduate Institute, including Susan Rowland, Jennifer Selig, Nancy Golindo, and Mary Wood. And thank you, Robert Johnson, for making these big ideas accessible for all.

FROM THE COSMIC SPHERE OF THE ARTS

Here I bow to the teachers who influenced my drawings and creative practice. To my first drawing teacher, Jean Parsons, I owe the entire universe. No joke. And to those who influence my work to degrees that cannot be measured, I thank you: Blake, Endor, Goya, Birchfield, Kusama, Bacon, Bourgeois, Pettibon, af Klint, and Guston—to name but a few gems in the infinite sea.

FROM THE ETHEREAL SPHERE OF THE SPIRITUAL

Here I bow to the lineage of yogis, meditators, and seekers I am blessed to call my teachers and my sangha. Thank you, Bengali Baba, Swami Rama, Panditji Rajmani Tigunait, Krishnamacharya, Ram Dass, Amma, Shari Friedrichsen, Sally Kempton, Rod Stryker, Tracee Stanley, and Chanti Perez. Your light and grace are threaded through this deck.

In closing I thank the colleagues, friends, and family who reside in the inner layer of The Sphere of Influence. Thank you, Meg Thompson, Libby Edelson, SU Barber, Amelia Bauer, Amy Swift, and Jocelyn Rahm. For your ever-discerning eyes I thank you, Cheri Steinkellner, Tracy Conti, Travis Rice, Daniel Arnold, and Christina Lonsdale. Love to the crew of wahines I met on the Oregon coast, who held me up on party waves during the most challenging and mesmerizing year of my life—you know who you are. And to my family, always. Love.



AWAKENING THE ARCHETYPES

ARCHE + TYPE =

THE ORIGINAL OF ITS KIND

THE FIRST IMAGE

THE INHERITED EMERGING PATTERN

THE INITIAL AND ETERNAL ENERGY

THEIR ORIGIN

Where do archetypes come from? You can't spend much time with this question before stumbling across the work of psychologist Carl Gustav Jung. Though Jung was the first to develop and integrate the concept of archetypes into the world of psychology and healing, he would also be the first to acknowledge he had nothing to do with their origin. Even he was perplexed by the notion of their source. When did they begin? From what source do they originate? What are their intentions?

Enchanted by these unanswerable questions, Jung devoted his life's work to studying archetypes within his patients, himself, and the world. First he called them PRIMORDIAL IMAGES, a term that suggests they come from the beginning beyond the beginning. It also implies they are related to images and the imagination (an important aspect we'll delve into in a moment). Soon, though, Jung landed on the word ARCHETYPE, and it stuck. Though both terms offer a unique peek into these mysterious dynamics, ARCHETYPE is an especially wonderful choice, as ARCHE means "first" and TYPE means "model" or "kind."

The name itself implies that these energies have been swirling since the beginning of time and are inherent in our very existence. They cannot be suppressed, denied, hidden, gotten rid of, or "fixed," no matter how hard we try. We inherit them from the very universe and they express themselves through us. **They belong.**

So, which archetype is the first archetype? Some might say The

Mother. It is possible she has always been there. From her, everything derives. Yet others might say The Nothing is the archetype from which everything emerges. Some might say it is The Seed, which contains all of life's potentials. Others might say it began with The One, and they may name that power God, Goddess, Universal Intelligence, Cosmic Consciousness, or something of the sort. The point is, as soon as we name something "mother," we have (consciously or not) established something else as "not-mother." We come to see there is the **one birthing and the one being born**. This moment can be thought of as the origin of archetypal energy: when oneness comes to be understood more deeply through its separation into parts. The Mother and The Child. The Nothing and The Something. The Heaven and The Earth. The Self and The Other.

Origin stories across cultures reflect this primordial separation. They are infinite and everywhere. A few favorites are Shiva's dance of creation, the Zen concept of the original face, the Popol Vuh, and the book of Genesis. In these narratives you will find images that resonate deeply with the archetypes in this deck. Humans have long been grappling with naming, understanding, harnessing, and developing the archetypes that surround and inhabit us. This is one of our oldest and most universal tasks: to build relationship with the multitude of dynamics in ourselves and the world. We do it whether we know the word **archetype** or not. As soon as we exit the womb and the cord is snipped we become separate from The Mother. **We begin our own journey as The Child who longs to know The Self**. We can't help it. The cosmic drama begins, and never quite ends.

THEIR TERRITORY

Throughout this book you will hear me speak of the imaginal. What does it mean? Where is it? Though these questions defy answering, the simplest way to put it is that the imaginal is the realm of *poetry, images, metaphor, and the imagination*. It is the deep mystery where everything is possible. Please note it is the *IMAGINAL*, not the *IMAGINARY*. The latter term implies it is not real. The existence of the imaginal, however, is quite palpable here on Earth. When the two worlds collide, they take the form of chills while hearing a poem or song, a tear that rolls down the cheek when you least expect it, a synchronicity that confounds explanation, a night sky that is beyond comprehension or description. The imaginal is where the archetypes roam, waiting for us to visit.



THEIR QUALITIES

So, what is an archetype? To find your footing on the slippery dance floor of archetypal energy, here is a helpful checklist of qualities. Below are the defining characteristics of all archetypes:

ARCHETYPES ARE PATTERNS

From the messy chaos of life certain key images, tendencies, and personalities inevitably surface, with or without our conjuring them. These are archetypes.

ARCHETYPES ARE UNIVERSAL

Certain dynamics are so powerful that they appear in every culture, crossing every boundary we've constructed. If it's everywhere, it's an archetype. In this way, archetypes unite us in the experience of being human.

ARCHETYPES ARE TIMELESS

Archetypes may come in new images, iterations, and forms, yet their energy has been circulating since the beginning. There are no new archetypes, yet there are infinite new ways the eternal archetypes express themselves.

ARCHETYPES ARE INFINITE

We can't simply prune them into tidy short lists (or card decks of 78) without missing multiple gems. Since they evoke creative

energy, they are as unlimited as creation itself. Though some may be more popularized than others, there are always more to bring into consciousness.

ARCHETYPES CONTAIN BOTH LIGHT AND DARK

It is contrast that makes archetypes dynamic, complex, inherently unknowable, and infinitely compelling. They can contain the pairs of opposites because they are forces big enough to hold duality. If something has only a "good side," it is not an archetype...or, more accurately stated, it is not yet being perceived through an archetypal lens.

ARCHETYPES USE IMAGE

Archetypal energy wants to reach us, and perhaps the most reliable way it can do this is through image. An archetype may choose any potent channel available to it (song, word, memory, poem, dream, painting, story, nature, another person, etc.). This is why art is so compelling—it is built on archetypes.

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

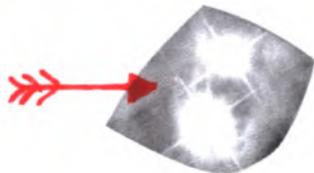
Even though archetypes use images, no image can ever fully capture the archetype. Another way of saying this is... these cards will never quite do the archetypes justice. They simply can't. They are too small in scope and too contained. Since archetypes are about potential energy, there is no way to capture them fully. In other words, any image of The Mother cannot fully express all that is The Mother.

THEIR INTENTIONS

What do archetypes want? What do they intend for us? It seems to me archetypes ask many things of us. They ask us to stretch our minds and hearts beyond their limits—and have a particular knack for getting us to do so. They confuse, conjure, contradict, and complicate. Don't be discouraged if you feel as though you understand them less as you study them more. This means you are entering their liminal world. Like a Zen koan, archetypes draw us in toward the power of the unknowable. What follows are just a few ways they do this....But there are surely more.

THEY INSIST ON THE IMAGINATION

Archetypes move us from the literal to the mythic. They do this by getting us out of our heads and into the space of dreams, emotions, and imagination. We may feel like we are swimming or under a spell when we first start to work with the cards—this is a sign that they're working their magic on us. We spend so much time in our egoic, rational, intellectual headspace that dropping into the sensuous dreams and longings of our soul can be wonderful...and unsettling. Relax as much as possible and let the images do their work.





THEY INSIST ON MULTIPLICITY

Archetypes move us from The One to The Multiple, from the right way to the many ways. They prefer potentials over answers, collaboration over convention, dynamism over singularity, and inclusion over rejection. In this way they challenge us to expand our sense of self to include what we had previously rejected. Archetypes will bring the grotesque, unlovable parts of ourselves (and our culture) to the dinner table so that we can get to know them. Archetypes throw the wildest of dinner parties, and everyone is invited.

THEY INSIST ON THE COLLECTIVE

At their core, archetypes tie us back to the collective. In studying The Mother, it's possible for us to look beyond our biography and sense The Mother in our culture, in history, and in myth. As soon as we step outside the drama of our story and see how it is a thread woven into the fabric of THE STORY, we are looking through an archetypal lens. The power in this method is that we build understanding and compassion for the world as we build understanding and compassion for ourselves. It's an infinite win-win.

WHY DO THEY INSIST ON THESE THINGS?

Because they want us to grow. The challenges and wonders the archetypes present to us move us toward our growth edge...toward the unknown...toward a deeper and more creative experience of life. They captivate our minds and hearts so we are compelled to take the next step on our inner quest.

ARCHETYPES VS. STEREOTYPES



Archetypes live in the big beautiful cosmos, swirling with potential. Stereotypes live in a small box with a tight lid.

Let's imagine we pass someone on the street. When we stereotype, we reduce them. We make assumptions, limit, judge, assess, decide. We misunderstand their complexity. We think we know their story. Most devastatingly, we deem ourselves as separate. No need to listen, no need to learn. This is done unconsciously, out of fear. With stereotypes comes the *pain of contraction*.

If, however, we relate to this person archetypally, we become curious. We see coexisting potentials within them. We see their struggle, and their shine. We realize they are unknowable and multilayered. We begin to relate, reveal. Heal. Connect. We see ourselves in them and them in us. All this can happen within a split second, without their knowing. With archetypes comes the *freedom of expansion*. Everything belongs.





THE SACRED PAIRS AND TRIFECTAS

Some archetypes in this deck are intrinsically tied to one another. They may appear as two separate cards, yet arise from the same archetypal source. The Mother and The Father cards, for example, are dual expressions of the archetype of The Parent. The Mother and The Father are inextricably linked, forever tied; one cannot exist without the other. They are like the sunset and sunrise. Likewise, there are also instances in the deck where three cards share a similarly interwoven dynamic. You may discover more interrelations than offered in this list below, but this is a starting point:

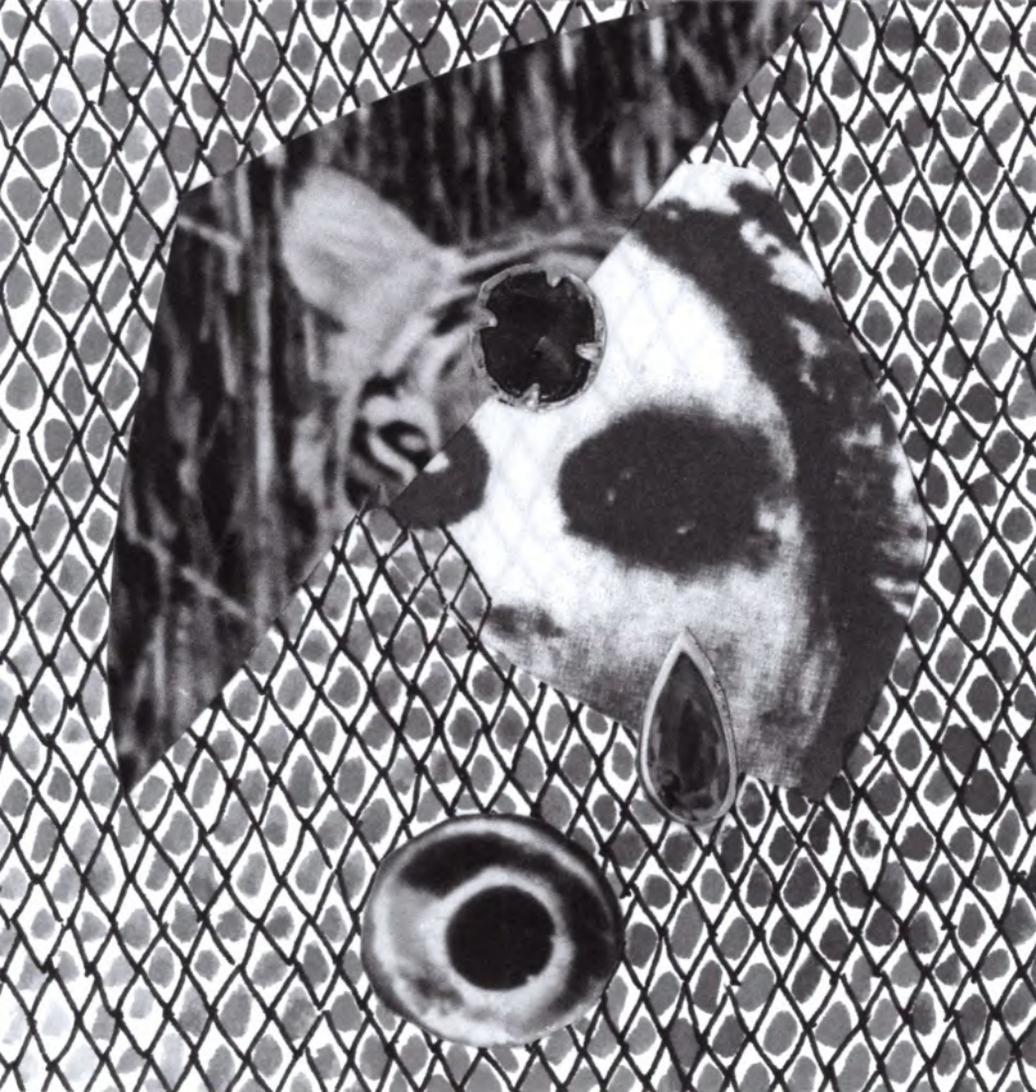
THE MOTHER / THE FATHER

THE CRONE / THE SHAMAN

THE CREATOR / THE SUSTAINER / THE DESTROYER

THE MAIDEN / THE MOTHER / THE CRONE





THE MISSING HERO

One of the great disappointments I faced in making this deck was confronting that I simply could not include every archetype. Since there are infinite archetypes, as we have discussed, this deck inevitably falls short in every direction. It simply can't keep up with the bigness of life. It is a drop in the ocean, a gust of wind in the great storm of archetypal energy.

Knowing this, I was intentionally slow with my selection process. I spent two years filling the pages of my notebooks with lists of people, places, and things that I sensed had particular potency and resonance. I came up with about 250 archetypes that I wanted to include—yet you're now holding only 78 in your hands.

During the final weeks of editing I simply could not decide between some cards and others. An example of my daily dilemma: Which to keep, The Witch or The Magi? Both are necessary! Both must be!

I had to turn to something beyond myself for help. I pulled out my pendulum and began to nix archetypes left and right according to its swing. Before each use I asked it to communicate on behalf of those who would someday use the deck. I asked it things like: Which archetype is the most needed, considering the dynamics of our current world: The Witch or The Magi? When the pendulum swung for The Witch I then asked it: Which is the most effective name for her energy? The Witch? The Crone? The Old Woman? The Sorceress? When the pendulum swung to name her The Crone, I had to listen.

So, when it swung hard against including The Hero (AND THE HEROINE), I had to listen. Still, I returned to the question again and again with disbelief. How can an archetype deck not have a hero card? Blasphemous!? Ridiculous!? The Hero is the protagonist on the journey! It is an omission, a failure right from the start! To the skeptics (and my skeptic within) I offer a few contemplations about The Hero:

Perhaps the image of The Hero is too gender specific. Naming the card The Hero or The Heroine excludes the other, and this is an exclusion that is no longer productive for our world.

Perhaps it is time to find The Hero within every card. It resides as a layer within The Orphan just as it does within The Warrior.

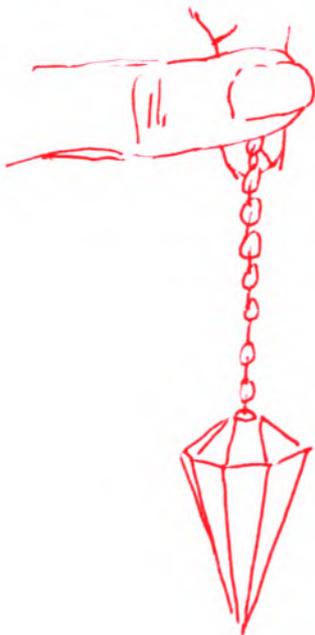
Perhaps the protagonist we truly long to know is more subtle than The Hero. We may need to turn the Hollywood spotlight from the enviable individual saving himself and the world to a more nuanced story centered around creativity, compassion, and collaboration.

Who knows. Whatever the case may be, The Hero is sitting on the bench this time around—a necessary ego check for every player on the team.

And there were so many more archetypes that were cut by the pendulum's swing. To them I humbly bow and say I am sorry. Take no offense. I trust you are alive and well at this very moment, appearing mysteriously in someone's dream, vision, drawing, poem, or conversation...looping yourself back into the collective archetypal fold without skipping a beat. To the handful of cards that

were cut at the very last minute...my heart aches occasionally, pondering your potency. The Magi, The Servant, The Shield, The Scar, The Basement, The Door, The Well, The Path, The Savior, The Gate, The Drum, The Pause, The Nothing, The Guest, The Friend...

And even that list, as you guessed, is much too short.





**UNDERSTANDING
THE DECK**

THE SELVES



Even if you are totally new to the idea of archetypes, it's likely you've come across a handful of the concepts behind cards 1-30. A yoga teacher might prompt you to embody The Warrior, Beyoncé might stir in you a feeling of The Queen, and maybe, just maybe...on the late-night dance floor you let The Animal run wild for a song or two. These cards represent the many sides of The Self that are either awakened or asleep within us. Since they are archetypal, we ALL have ALL of them within us. They may not be embodied or emboldened, but they are there. Remember, these are universal forces. There's no getting away from their energy. Repression won't work; denial will only complicate things.

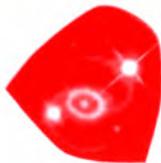
The goal here is to use the cards to awaken the full range of archetypal selves, giving light, space, curiosity, and acceptance to the ones that need it most. At the same time, we don't want any particular one to dominate or run the show. The more we can engage with the multiple selves within, the more we can live a fluid and adaptive life. Each of these archetypes has a time, a place, and a precise, potent energy that we will need someday.





THE PLACES

Have you ever been to a physical place that stayed with you even after you left it, as if it had nestled itself into your heart? Perhaps there is a stream, cabin, cliff, or open field that your mind drifts to occasionally, unprompted. Or a landscape that comes to you regularly in dreams. All of these are examples of engaging with the archetypal energy of *PLACE*. The archetypes represented on cards 31–50 exist within the realm of the symbolic as well as within our physical, tangible world. When they appear in a reading it is of utmost importance to keep an eye on *BOTH* the literal and imaginal places for clues to interpretation. Say you pull The River card. It is possible the card is depicting an actual location where a significant event has occurred or will occur (a pilgrimage to the Ganga, perhaps?), and it is equally as likely that the card is speaking through landscape to get to a certain emotion (a heavy dose of forgiveness, perhaps?). It is up to you to discern. Follow the interpretation that feels the most potent. If you want more clarity on how *PLACE* can be both within and outside of you, reread "The Ocean Within The Mountain."



THE TOOLS



Think of the many myths and fairy tales that are centered around a sacred object or tool. The protagonist may lose a glass slipper, be given a sword, need to find a ring, deliver a map, break a spell, or send a silver arrow into the heart of the enemy. In these cases the object represents much beyond itself. We, too, relate to worldly objects in this way. We may find ourselves terrified to plant The Seed for the next project. When things get tough our words may take on the sharp edge of The Knife rather than the gentle openness of The Prayer. Tend to cards 51-70 with your full awareness—they carry great weight. When they appear, know that they represent the objects, concepts, skills, or moments that need attention in the narrative of your life. They too can be literal and/or symbolic. Remember, there are no good or bad tools. Every tool has a time and a place. Discernment is key. The blade can stop a heart but it can also save a life. Tools must be used skillfully, cleaned regularly, and stored thoughtfully when not in use. Soon you will find an infinite treasure chest of archetypal tools will become available to you just when you need them most.

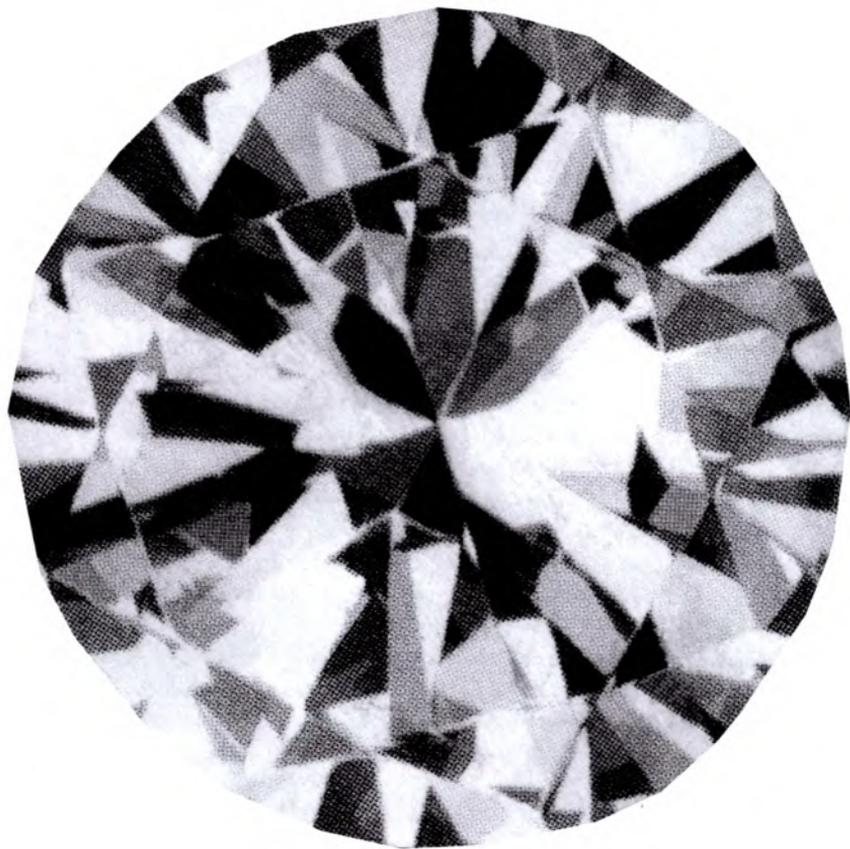




THE INITIATIONS

The Initiation cards (71-78) are similar to trump cards, or the Major Arcana in the tarot. They represent the big moments, junctures, and situations in life that carry major significance along our journey. Archetypally speaking, initiations are events that change us on a fundamental level. They are the big whammies of life. In the model of the Hero's Journey they may be called "the ordeal." Think falling in love, heartbreak beyond heartbreak, death of a loved one, marriage, divorce, moving, having a child, facing a trial, or experiencing a spiritual awakening that shakes your foundation. We know we have gone through an initiatory experience when the very fiber of life as we know it has changed. We can't go back to the person we were before, but we are not yet quite sure who the new self is. Because of the weight these cards carry, take time to contemplate them deeply. You could study one of these concepts for an entire lifetime and be left with unanswered questions. That is what makes them so powerful. They are the keys that unlock the entire deck. Eventually we come to understand that The Initiations are markers of a deeply personal experience that connects us with the timeless story of humanity.





**USING THE
CARDS**

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

There are limitless ways to use this deck. "Reading" the cards for yourself or someone else is only one possibility. Below are additional ideas; I hope you find many more along the way.

ARCHETYPAL STUDY

Grasping the concept of what archetypes are and how archetypal energy moves can be challenging at first. For that reason feel free to use this deck as a learning tool. Think of it as a set of mystical flash cards helping you learn a new archetypal language. Get to know the overriding archetypes that dominate your life, your town, social group, culture. Get comfortable with the terms and the Greek terms on the trump cards. Let the concepts challenge you, stump you, and stretch your mind—that is their job.

DIVINATION

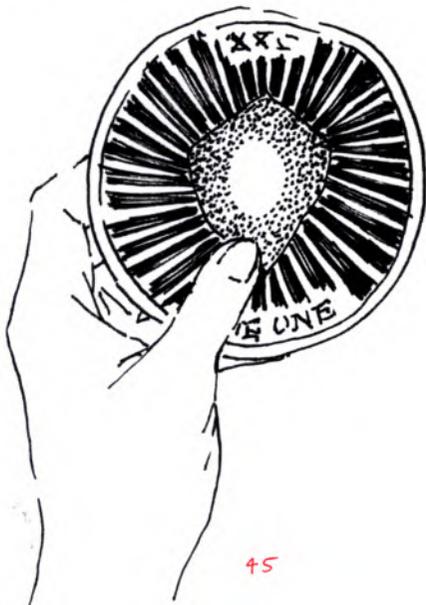
If you're already a reader of cards, weaving these gems into your pulls will deepen the story and conversation. Integrate them into your readings with other decks (The Wild Unknown Tarot & Animal Spirit decks, perhaps?) or use the archetype cards on their own. How this plays out is up to you—be open to unconventional methods of combining decks together and a new channel of insight and power is likely to open to you.

If you are new to using cards as a divination tool or method of gaining insight into your life or another's, go slow. Don't use too

many cards at a time. I would suggest working with the spreads "Follow the Image" and "The Inner Quest" as described in the following pages. Be kind and patient with yourself and the cards.

IMAGE INSPIRATION

It is my belief that archetypal images have the ability to guide us toward meaning, mystery, and new opportunities. In this light, have your favorite cards around throughout the day. Put one on your nightstand and one on your altar. I keep a card in my car at all times. Let the archetypes surround you. They don't like living in a box.



FOLLOW THE IMAGE

ONE-CARD SPREAD

My favorite way to use this deck is to work with one card for an extended period of time, and as the name suggests...follow the image on a journey. This practice is loosely based on a Jungian technique called amplification. The idea is that a single image can take us deeper into understanding our lives than we ever imagined. Within one card, an entire journey awaits. Here's how it might play out:

STEP 1: PULL A CARD

After a practice that gets you open and grounded (nature walk, meditation, dance, etc.) pick one card. Sit with it. Stare at it for longer than is comfortable for you. Keep looking at it. Don't read the description yet.

STEP 2: RIFF

Write about the card—describe it, draw it, ask it questions. Does it remind you of anything? You can't get this wrong. You just can't. Keep writing. Keep responding and engaging with the archetype. It is awakening. You will feel it.

STEP 3: AMPLIFY IT

Read the card description. Ponder it. Write some more. Then do an image search online, perhaps including the search word "myth" after the name of the card. Find one image that you especially like and save it. Go down a wormhole here, noticing how the archetype is much older than you. It has existed since the beginning of time.

STEP 4: REFLECT BACK

Now that the archetype is awakening, let it reflect back upon your life more deeply. What might it be trying to tell you? What situation, person, trouble, or longing does it stir up? Look for the most potent vein of connection and follow the energy.

STEP 5: KEEP GOING

Place the card on your desk, altar, nightstand, or in your car. Let it be with you, and let yourself be with it. This could go on for a week, a month, a year. Archetypes are not in a rush—they belong to time eternal. Notice synchronicities, and how the image may start to follow you around, as you follow it. Keep going. I promise the journey is worth it.



SUMMON THE DIVINE

THREE-CARD SPREAD

The shape and meaning of this spread is based on the model of the spine as a vertical path toward divinity. The old yogis and sages have been known to say, "We are only as awake as our spine." Although this spread is simplified to represent only three ascending chakra centers, you can of course include all seven. However, focusing on the root, heart, and crown will give you a grounded and clear vision of what is happening within those energetic centers on the spiritual, emotional, and perhaps physical level.

CARD 1: THE ROOT

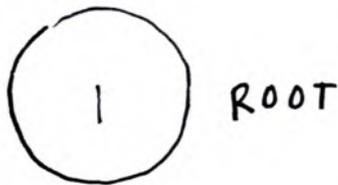
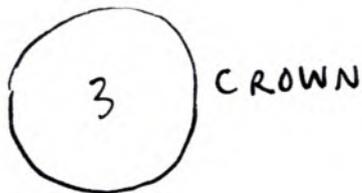
The archetypal foundation. This card represents the grounding (or lack thereof) by which you navigate core fears, habits, and stuckness. It can also point to the state of your primary relationships, family of origin, current community, or lovers.

CARD 2: THE HEART

The archetypal image currently residing in the heart. This card will tell you a deep longing, calling, or conflict that is at the center of all centers within the psyche. Without knowing and spending time with the energy within the heart, one can never be satisfied.

CARD 3: THE CROWN

The archetypal energy of the divinity within. This card represents the part of you that wants to reach beyond the self toward heaven. The card may show what is blocking this ascension. It can give you an idea of how you can serve the world.



THE INNER QUEST

FOUR-CARD SPREAD

The Inner Quest reading was the inspiration for the entire deck, so think of this as the signature spread of The Wild Unknown Archetype Deck. Sure, it takes a little preparation time...but it's so very worth it. Divide the cards into four piles according to their suits. The Selves (cards 1-30), The Places (31-50), The Tools (51-70), and The Initiations (71-78). Then allow a question to rise from within you. It might be something like, "What is the mythic narrative I am in?" or "What is the current story of my life?" If you want to do this spread for another person, use their name in your query. Draw a single card from each pile, and watch as an entire narrative is revealed before you. Remember we are working with metaphor and the imagination. Interpret with an expansive mind.

CARD 1: WHO

The archetypal side of the self that is most dominant in the story. This is the part of you that needs attention in order for you to understand and move forward on your quest.

CARD 2: WHERE

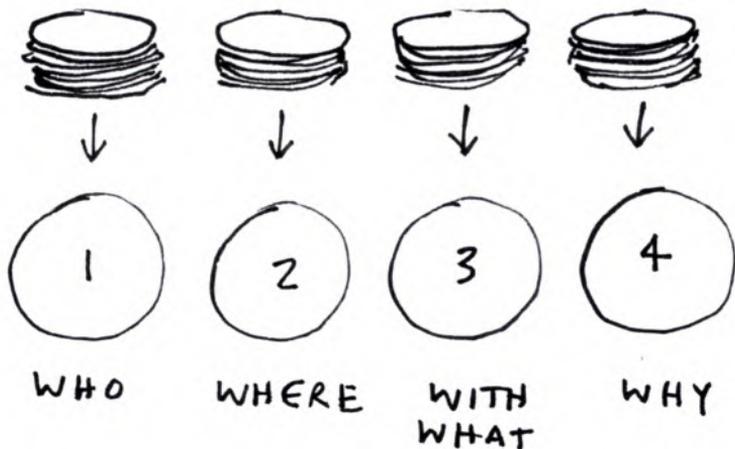
The archetypal setting for the journey you are on. This is the energy that surrounds the situation—the stage or backdrop that influences the story.

CARD 3: WITH WHAT

The archetypal tool you must use, find, or give up, so destiny can unfold. Think of this as the key to the situation, or the best tool for the task at hand.

CARD 4: WHY

The deeper purpose of your journey. This is the mythic theme or challenge that you will face as you approach your growth edge. Think of this card as what your entire journey is "about."



THE AXIS MUNDI

FIVE-CARD SPREAD

The Axis Mundi is a sacred model of the cosmos appearing in many mystical traditions by various names. It depicts the relationship between the sky and the earth, the cosmic and the day to day. If you are wondering what role divinity has to play in your life, this reading is for you. Doing a little background search of both the history and visual iterations of the Axis Mundi will make this reading even deeper for you. Do not do this reading if you don't have enough time to spend with the results. This reading links the personal to the universal, the earthly to the heavens.

CARD 1: UNDERWORLD

The looming shadow dimension that wants to surface. This card represents all that remains unconscious, begging to become known and embraced, perhaps causing trouble until it does.

CARD 2: PAST

The archetypal dynamic from the past that still lingers in your field of awareness. It is possible this energy needs to be let go of, or perhaps it is a key lesson, tool, or dynamic within your history that needs to resurface now.

CARD 3: HEAVEN

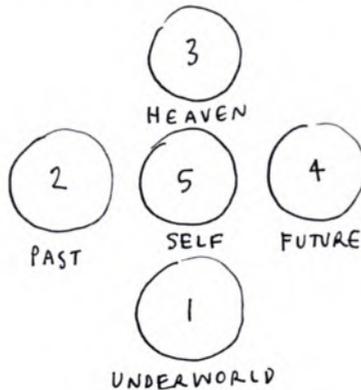
The potential blessing or guide that resides over the situation. It's likely this card represents an otherworldly, ephemeral grace that wants to guide you through any troubles. Listen closely.

CARD 4: FUTURE

The archetypal energy residing over what is next. Whether welcomed or not, this is the image on the horizon that you will soon encounter on both personal and collective levels.

CARD 5: SELF

The stable and central force within the axis, the part of you that holds the entire sense of Self together. Since this card appears in the center, take additional time to understand its implications.



THE HEROINE'S JOURNEY

FIVE-CARD SPREAD

Based on Joseph Campbell's story arc of the Hero's Journey, this spread reveals significant markers upon a seeker's path. It is a great reading to do when you are at the precipice of a big transition or significant milestone: the New Year, a birthday, a breakup, a new relationship, a graduation, or while preparing for a trip. It offers a complete overview of what to expect from a mystical perspective. Keeping in mind that this five-card spread is a pared-down version of Campbell's diagram, feel free to add additional cards as you see fit.

CARD 1: THE CALL

The inner voice, agitation, dissatisfaction, or inspiration that prompts you to courageously embark on a new journey.

CARD 2: THE THRESHOLD

The obstacle to your leaving, the habit that wants to hold you back. It's likely it has held you back many times before.

CARD 3: THE ORDEAL

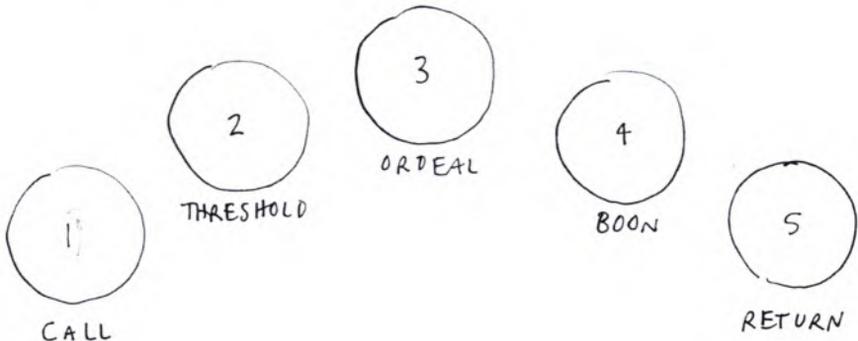
The deeply profound challenge or dilemma you will face along the way. This is the lurking shadow that will reveal itself, so you can grow.

CARD 4: THE BOON

The reward, wisdom, skill, or blessing you will attain on the journey. This gift is mystical by nature and can't be found in creature comforts.

CARD 5: THE RETURN

What you can expect to encounter upon your return. The "homecoming" impacts your ability to integrate meaningful change. Prepare accordingly.



CARD ROTATION

An entire book could be written on the implications of card rotation while using this deck. Perhaps someday it will be. For now, what is most important is that you get to know the archetypes like you would any friend: slowly and with care. Add the nuance of card rotation only as your relationship deepens. Once you've reached that point, there are two approaches to card rotation to try. I trust that either method you choose will provide the wisdom you seek to unveil. Feel free to mix it up.

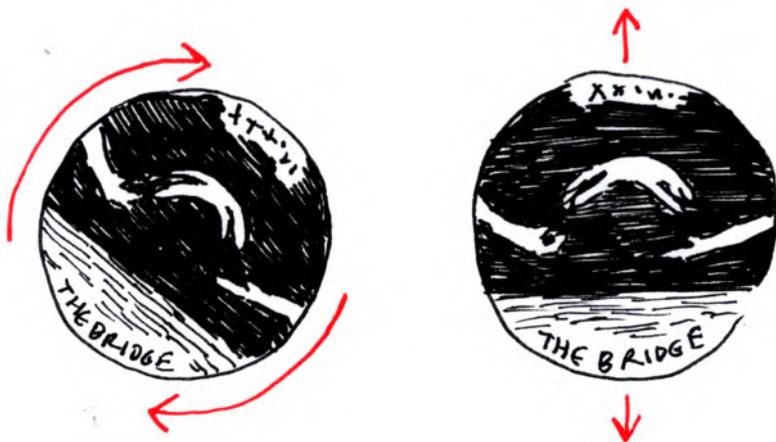
OPTION ONE: READ THE CARDS UPRIGHT

Orienting each card upright as you flip them over is a more straightforward approach, and one I prefer in many situations (especially when getting used to a new deck). With this method, the message of the image and archetype is prioritized over the message of the card orientation.

OPTION TWO: TREAT THE CARD ORIENTATION AS AN ADDED LAYER OF MEANING

This is a more complex approach, with subtle messages flying in from every direction (pun intended). Think of the cards as people walking down the street, and the rotation of the card implies a certain kind of imbalance, instability, or wound. Perhaps something within the energy of the card is "off" or "thwarted." If, for example, The Bridge card appears upside down, there

may be a sense of a broken, dysfunctional, or burned bridge that needs attention and repair. If it is slightly tilted, it could be pointing to a bridge that is weak, or just beginning to form. It is likely you will intuitively sense the implications of card rotation. If you are forcing it to become meaningful, it's likely you're off track. We are always looking for a "click" or "aha" sensation indicating we've touched a meaningful point while performing our archetypal acupuncture.

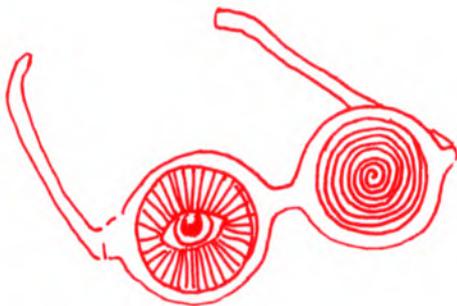


FINAL THOUGHTS

I'd like to leave you with the idea of THE ARCHETYPAL LENS. Let's imagine that as you open this deck, you are in fact discovering a pair of mystical spectacles and through their lenses you begin to view the world in a new and more vibrant way. These glasses have a knack for seeing The Unseen, unveiling the hidden, spotting the elusive, and bringing to life what has long been inanimate. For example, look at the mug that sits before you on your desk (or the one you drank from this morning). YES, INDEED, IT IS JUST A MUG. THAT'S ALL. A MUG IS A MUG! Yet through the archetypal lens of your mystical spectacles the mug mimics one of the oldest forms of all...The vessel. It tethers you to the innate desire of humans to hold something in, to contain a valued substance so it doesn't leak, spill, dissipate, diminish, or disappear. We suddenly recognize that vessels and containers are everywhere...the physical body, a house, a relationship, a classroom, a state, a nation—they are all containers. Their purpose is to hold, protect, support, and distinguish one thing from the other.

Through this type of contemplation we understand why the morning routine with our warm drink is so timeless and satisfying. Sure, the mug is just a mug, yet while wearing our mystical spectacles, we know it's more than that. We are now looking through the archetypal lens, where anything

can happen. We hold The vessel in our hands and bring it to our lips, and suddenly we are tied to an innately humbling human experience more universal than we could imagine. We are one human in the fold of the infinite, and for a moment at least, The vessel ties us together. The wild and unknown world of archetypal magic awaits you. It is there for the taking...go ahead and drink.





**THE
SELVES**





THE MOTHER

THE GREAT MOTHER, THE FEMININE, THE SOURCE



THE MOTHER IS PART OF THE TRIFECTA MAIDEN-MOTHER-CRONE. BECAUSE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM, TAKE SPECIAL NOTE WHEN THESE CARDS APPEAR IN ONE READING.

We begin our archetypal story with The Mother's love. Through her sensual, fertile, and life-giving energy all creation takes form. Regardless of our birth story, each of our hearts beat for the first time in the warm womb of The Mother, where she offered resources from her body for the building of our own. Yet her tale is not so simple, as The Mother (especially on the earthly plane) contains both light and dark aspects of the feminine. With the best of intentions The Mother wraps her loving arms around her creations and begins to grip what she meant to set free. *The mother both nurtures and prohibits growth. She gives, yet clings. She creates, yet restricts.* Amid this complex energy, The Mother holds the key to the eternal challenge of love.

NOTICE HOW THE MOTHER ARCHETYPE IS EXPRESSED IN NATURE. THIS IS PERHAPS THE MOST BALANCED AND RENEWABLE FORM OF THE MOTHER'S GRACE.



WHEN LIGHT: glowing, generative, creative, nurturing

WHEN DARK: dim, exhausted, controlling, limiting

GO DEEPER: read "Tao Te Ching" (chapter 1), and imagine The Mother of ten thousand things







THE FATHER

THE GREAT FATHER, THE MASCULINE, THE PROTECTOR



READ POEMS ABOUT THE FATHER: SHARON OLDS'S "HIS STILLNESS," WILLIAM BLAKE'S "LITTLE BOY LOST."

Alongside The Mother, The Father resides in the central axis of the archetypal family. The Father embodies both light and dark aspects of the masculine; thus he is infinitely dynamic and complex. His energy is strong and regal, embodying such virtues as honesty, wisdom, and loyalty. Yet **ironically** and **simultaneously** The Father is often absent (literally or emotionally). Through absence or action The Father eventually reveals that he is neither a king nor a god, but a human being with many flaws and wounds. **He is both the guardian and one who leaves us to the wolves.** Here, yet gone. The champion and the failure. The Father can never resolve or escape this duality—it is inherent in the archetype itself. Witnessing The Father's limitations allows the child to grow beyond the family and into the world.

BECOME A STUDENT OF THIS MASCULINE ENERGY. WATCH THE FATHER IN MOVIES, IN SHAKESPEARE PLAYS. SEE THE FATHER AS A PATTERN, NOT AS PERSONAL.

WHEN LIGHT: supportive, strategic, regal, kind authority
WHEN DARK: disappearing, disappointing, devastated by failures
GO DEEPER: "Saturn Devouring His Son," by both Peter Paul Rubens and Francisco Goya







THE STARBORN

THE DIVINE CHILD, THE STARCHILD, THE DESTINED



HAVE YOUR CHART READ. STUDY YOUR CONSTELLATED SHAPE, ASK QUESTIONS: WHAT DOES THE PROCESS CONJURE IN YOU? FAITH OR MISTRUST? WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU SAW THE GALAXY AS YOUR ALLY?

An elusive yet radiant aspect of the self, The Starborn archetype points to the cosmic spark of light that arrives with each being at birth. The moment the newborn "crowns" (whether vaginally or surgically), the royal stars above are said to constellate in a unique shape that maps our path in the world. The idea of destiny is controversial, yet The Starborn naturally feels a sense of *destination and purpose, aiming itself toward a future that is beyond the mundane.* When this card appears, travel back to your birth story for clues and insight. What did you desire when you were young? Practice seeing your life from a mythic point of view rather than as a series of logistics. Read the story of the Three Fates and envision yourself born under the stars with a unique destiny.

WHEN THIS CARD APPEARS, DON'T BE SURPRISED IF YOU RECEIVE A SURGE OF DESIRE FOR A LONG-LOST DREAM, ONE YOU HAVEN'T VISITED SINCE CHILDHOOD. LET THIS DESIRE SHAKE YOU UP.

WHEN LIGHT: alight, trusting, vibrant, aimed

WHEN DARK: feeling of misalignment, loss of longing

GO DEEPER: "Tripping Over Joy," by Hafez,
Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers







THE ETERNAL CHILD

THE INNER CHILD, THE CHILD OF JOY

THIS ARCHETYPE IS SO SPIRITED, THAT WHEN ITS APPETITE FOR LIFE ISN'T SATIATED, IT SEEKS SPIRITS AND SUBSTANCE ELSEWHERE. THE ETERNAL CHILD STRUGGLES WITH ADDICTIONS OF ALL VARIETIES.



The Eternal Child is connected to the timeless, ageless, and infinite aspects of life. It is radiant and fearless and seeks joy above all else and at any cost. It struggles being bound to an aging body with physical limitations in a world that demands attention to detail and logistics. The Eternal Child wants to nix all rules and responsibilities and *go beyond what others say is possible*. It wants to return (with plenty of friends) to the land of the free, where divine wine and creativity pour from the earth and sky. We all want a sip from the well of eternal youth...and this makes The Eternal Child naturally popular, perhaps even famous. The Eternal Child glimmers. It reminds us of what is possible, what is magical about this precious life.

WHEN LIGHT: joyful, playful, accepts all, magic

WHEN DARK: addicted, selfish, adrift, burns out

GO DEEPER: Icarus, Peter Pan, Rumi's "Has Anyone Seen the Boy"



CELEBRITY CULTURE IS BASED HEAVILY ON THIS ARCHETYPE, AS IS THE PHRASE "LIVE HARD, DIE YOUNG" AND THE SERIES OF ARTISTS AND MUSICIANS WHO DIED AT TWENTY-SEVEN.







THE ORPHAN

THE WOUNDED CHILD, THE ABANDONED, THE BEGGAR

ACCESS THIS ARCHETYPE THROUGH CREATIVE ACTS LIKE DRAWING, PAINTING, OR WRITING. KEEP IT SIMPLE. ASK THE ORPHAN WHAT IT WANTS TO DRAW, MAKE, SAY.

To study The Orphan is to study the deep and challenging energy of our time. We are ever more connected, yet face collective isolation. The refugee crisis haunts our planet, children are separated from parents, and the earth begs for our attention. We are in a time of universal orphanage—of nature, of each other, of our own hearts. Take refuge in the fact that we all share this core wound and dilemma. It is normal to fear this card, as it haunts the caverns of the soul. When it appears, take time—real time—to be in the presence of the feelings this card stirs in you. Let it humble you. What are you starving for? What is the deepest gift you could imagine giving to others? What has been rejected is quite possibly what is most needed, dear one.

TENDERNESS BEYOND TENDERNESS IS REQUIRED. IMAGINE HOLDING YOURSELF IN YOUR HANDS. TO RECOGNIZE THAT EACH ONE OF US FEARS REJECTION AND ISOLATION IS TO TAKE ONE STEP TOWARD THE ORPHAN. MORE KINDNESS ALWAYS.



WHEN LIGHT: deep solace, deep acceptance, deep love
WHEN DARK: distanced, "hates" and avoids, controlling, limiting
GO DEEPER: Mary Oliver's "The Kitten"







KEEP IN MIND HOW EASY IT IS TO PROJECT POWER ONTO ANOTHER. THE EXPRESSIONS "FEET OF CLAY" AND "CULT OF PERSONALITY" EXIST FOR A REASON.

THE MENTOR

THE TEACHER, THE SAGE, THE GURU

It is said that cosmic knowledge pours down on the world like a great illuminated waterfall. This can be an overwhelming force. The true teacher, though, is said to be able to hold this flow of wisdom at bay while the student sips from a focused stream. The Mentor archetype has a gift for reading the room, for sensing the exact ingredient that will stimulate growth within the student (whether pleasant or painful). The Mentor may appear aloof or available, harsh or tender, humorous or rigid...their gift is to know what serves the soul. Ultimately The Mentor is in service of the greater cosmic good and aids in the elevation of consciousness. Anytime The Mentor forgets this humble link and mistakes themselves for the source of enlightenment, the archetype falls into shadow.

WHEN LIGHT: focused, clear, bright, remains a student
WHEN DARK: self-serving, envious of youth, righteous, rigid
GO DEEPER: The riddles of Zen masters and their students



ALTHOUGH IT'S TYPICALLY TRUE THAT PARENTS ARE OUR INITIAL TEACHERS, THE CHILD WILL EVENTUALLY SEEK A MENTOR FIGURE OUTSIDE OF THE HOME TO ASSIST THEIR GROWTH.







IT'S LIKELY THERE IS A POEM OR POET THAT WAS MEANINGFUL TO YOU AT A YOUNG AGE. REVISIT AND REREAD IT NOW BE OPEN TO ITS MESSAGE.

THE POET

THE ARTIST, THE WITNESS, THE TRUTH-TELLER



The Poet's work is to feel immensely and not be afraid. They must seek out truth in the darkest corners of the world and carry it back for all to see. This unique capacity resides within us all, regardless of our relationship to creativity. When The Poet energy is present, there is a call for deep honesty and reflection, for seeing the big picture within the little one. The Poet rides effortlessly between the personal and universal. It's possible that others may not seem to listen or care about The Poet's work, but do not be discouraged. The words of The Poet ring true for centuries to come, soothing the wounds of despair and violence that captivate our world. The Poet's work is never finished. Find your voice, and trust that the wind will carry it.

THE POET IS RELATED TO THE SHAMAN AND THE BRIDGE. THESE ARCHETYPES HOVER IN THE MEETING PLACE BETWEEN THE EVERYDAY AND THE SACRED.



WHEN LIGHT: clairvoyant, wise, timeless
WHEN DARK: harmful words, sharp tongue, thwarted creativity
GO DEEPER: spend one hour reading poetry, then one more







MOVING FROM THE MAIDEN TO THE MOTHER IS CHALLENGING,
OFTEN LEAVING UNRESOLVED TENSIONS BETWEEN THE
TWO ARCHETYPES FOR YEARS, IF NOT A LIFETIME.

THE MAIDEN

THE VIRGIN, THE PRINCESS, THE INNOCENT

The Maiden archetype is the epitome of innocent arousal, naive sensuality, and precarious purity. She is compelling (and addictive) because of her flawless and youthful glow. She's the first archetype in the trifecta of Maiden-Mother-Crone, and rightfully so—because she has *oh so much to learn*. The Maiden is perfectly positioned for trouble to come her way and subject her to a challenge that leads to the next phase of womanhood. She must grow up, yet hesitates at the threshold, enamored by the charms of youth. The Maiden represents the side of us that is riveted and curious, drawn to shadowy forests, dark knights, and taking just one taste of poisonous fruit. Her magic is edgy and includes both shame and delight. Let yourself fall down the rabbit hole, young one.

WHEN LIGHT: curious, enchanting, sensual, full of vitality

WHEN DARK: pretends, projects, denies, fantasizes

GO DEEPER: Persephone, Alice, or any "princess" figures



DO YOU LONG TO BE "RESCUED" BY ANOTHER? OR RECEIVE A
KISS THAT BRINGS YOU BACK TO LIFE? BE WARY OF WAITING
FOR A PRINCE. BREAK THE SPELL OF YOUR OWN LIFE.





THE HUNTER

THE SEEKER, THE PURSUER, THE PREDATOR

The Hunter hunts. They are on a precise mission, with an aim. To return home empty-handed would be to fail, which is not an option in The Hunter's eye. This archetype will journey far and wide seeking the prize that calls to its heart (or stomach). Tales of bravery and feats of strength often result, creating a life full of adventure. The Hunter is skillful, quick, decisive, and results-oriented. Like the great hunting goddess Artemis, who carries her quiver upon her back, The Hunter typically has a weapon of choice. When this card appears, it is critical that you ask three questions: What am I hunting? Why am I hunting it? Is the weapon I hold so tightly in my grip truly needed for the task at hand?

STUDY THE GREEK GODDESS ARTEMIS. NOTICE HER NUANCED RELATIONSHIP TO THE MOON, THE EARTH, AND THE FEMININE. THE PREDATOR HONORS ITS PREY WITH A PRECISE AND SKILLFUL HUNT. THE HUNTER DEEPLY REVERES THE LIFE IT AIMS TO TAKE.

WHEN YOU ACTIVATE THE HUNTER ARCHETYPE, YOU ARE ALIGNING YOUR ENERGY WITH THE GREAT CREATURES OF THE WORLD—THE LION, THE WOLF, THE TIGER, THE SHARK. DO SO WITH CARE.

WHEN LIGHT: focused, energized, respectful, seasoned

WHEN DARK: irresponsible, violates, violent, poaching

GO DEEPER: Frida Kahlo's "The Wounded Deer"





THE WARRIOR

THE SAMURAI, THE SOLDIER, THE ADVOCATE



WITHOUT A TRUE PURPOSE, MANIFESTO, OR OATH, THE WARRIOR IS LOST. WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR? WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO RISE IN THE NAME OF? WRITE IT OUT.

We often envision The Warrior as an armored figure with sword in hand moving blindly toward battle. Yet the deeper aspects of this archetype bring us face to face with death itself. The Warrior stands precariously at the edge of life and death, trusting the eternal to guide the sword's blade. The Warrior's work requires presence, alignment, and purpose. If and when The Warrior loses its center, meaningless confrontations and violence are their default response. When this card appears, it is important to question the battle at hand. It is likely a great one, with deep roots and long-standing tensions. The actions you take will stay with you long after the dust settles, so choose wisely, brave one. As you draw your sword, realign with the eternal wisdom within. Then surrender to the battle.

BE CAREFUL, AS THE WARRIOR IMPLIES WAR. THE TWO GO HAND IN HAND. THOSE WHO DEFEAT OTHERS ARE STRONG; THOSE WHO DEFEAT THEMSELVES ARE MIGHTY.



WHEN LIGHT: fierce clarity, purposeful action, resolve, resilience

WHEN DARK: threats, savagery, abandoning mission and values

GO DEEPER: "Tao Te Ching" (chapter 68), "The Bhagavad Gita"







THE QUEEN



THE EMPRESS, THE MOTHER QUEEN, THE SOVEREIGN

Like her counterpart The King, The Queen has a dualistic nature. Either she presides over the realm with grace and eloquence that comes from the heavens to uplift the spirit of others or she falls into petty contemptuous moods casting a shadow across the land. If The King is the ego, The Queen is the expression of that ego in the world. She is the lotus's bloom, the dancer's bow, the moon's radiant reflection. When The Queen is seated in her rightful (and righteous) place, she is patient and forgiving. She waits for the grace of god and goddess to move through her, striving and grasping for nothing. To be the benevolent leader, to embody The Queen is to settle into deep trust, resolve, and power. The royal Queen fears nothing, for divinity itself cradles her heart.

THE QUEEN DOES NOT ACCEPT THE HAND OF A PRINCE,
BUT CLAIMS THE THRONE, KNOWING THE KING DRAWS
NEAR. SHE IS A MAGNET FOR THE FULLY EMBODIED
MASCULINE AND ENTERTAINS NOTHING LESS.

READ CLEOPATRA'S MONOLOGUE IN SHAKESPEARE'S
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA, ACT 5, SCENE 2. THEN
READ ABOUT INANNA, TARA, AND HERA.

WHEN LIGHT: the embodiment of grace, courage, resolve, stillness

WHEN DARK: vane, wrathful, self-righteous, demanding

GO DEEPER: Nikki Giovanni's "Ego Tripping,"

Nina Simone singing "Stars" at the 1976 Montreux Jazz Festival



XII



THE KING



THE KING



THE RULER, THE COMMANDER, THE EMPEROR

ONCE THE KING'S RELATIONSHIP TO DIVINITY IS BROKEN OR CHALLENGED, HE OFTEN ACTS FROM A PLACE OF FEAR, SCRAMBLING TO UPHOLD HIS IMAGE AND POWER.

If our lives are imagined as a kingdom containing the entire spectrum of human experience, The King presides over it all. Through the lens of The King we assess the state of our land, make decisions, and rule accordingly. Therefore, The King must be thoroughly and regularly vetted so as to avoid corruption. Recognize the dual nature of The King—he is either seated in benevolence and strength, guiding you toward peace, or he is oppressing the weak out of a need to control. There is not much middle ground. Some think of The King as the ultimate expression of the ego, yet the great kings of mythology and history serve from an egoless place. They take their throne with grace and humility, knowing the divine uses them as a channel to heal deep and long-standing discrepancies in the kingdom.

THE KING IS NECESSARY. HE IS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE ETERNAL AND THE DAY-TO-DAY. IT IS ALSO SAID THAT IT IS NECESSARY FOR THE KING TO DIE. THIS IS A DEATH OF EGO.



WHEN LIGHT: benevolence, divine leadership, service, nobility

WHEN DARK: oppression, misuse of power, corruption

GO DEEPER: The Dalai Lama, Indra, Richard III, Macbeth







THE CRONE



THE WITCH, THE OLD WOMAN, THE SAGE

THE CRONE HAS A DIFFICULT TIME TOLERATING SUPERFICIAL, PETTY, DAY-TO-DAY MUSINGS. SHE MOVES AWAY FROM SUCH RELATIONSHIPS AND SEEKS A DEEPER PATH, EVEN IF THIS MEANS A MORE SOLITARY LIFE.

The Crone has seen it all. Nothing frightens or surprises her. She is the final manifestation in the feminine trifecta of Maiden-Mother-Crone. In her long life she's witnessed endless cycles of death, sex, failure, rebirth, conflict, and regeneration—giving her the ability to rise above the world of duality. She laughs at notions of *good or bad, right or wrong*, as she has seen the earth churning, smoldering, taking life and giving life. The Crone energy accepts everything in, devouring beauty and suffering with the same mouth, using their energy to reveal hidden secrets and knowledge. Her energy resides in all of us, though it is feared by most for its power and unconventional relationship with death and the macabre. Awakening The Crone is dangerously rich and unapologetically magic.

THE CRONE IS THE MASTER OF LETTING GO AND RESIDING IN WHAT IS. SHE REJECTS NOTHING. THE CRONE IS OFTEN SEEN WITH THE CROW, SMOKE, NIGHT, THE MOON.



WHEN LIGHT: magic, clairvoyant, psychic, intuitive, wise
WHEN DARK: vindictive, bitter, isolated, ostracized
GO DEEPER: Dhumavati, Hecate, Baba Yaga, Lilith







THE JUDGE

THE CRITIC, THE DIPLOMAT, THE ADVOCATE



THE JUDGE'S ENERGY IS CONTAGIOUS. WHEN WE FEEL JUDGED, WALLS GO UP ALL AROUND. SIMILARLY, WHEN WE FEEL ACCEPTED, THE ENTIRE WORLD SOFTENS.

The Judge has an incredibly important job. They work every waking hour of every day—helping us discern what is safe, true, and just. When this archetype remains unconscious or is captivated by fear, wise discernment turns into painful judgment of self and other. Ironically, The Judge's energy can be the seed of racism, bigotry, and fear-mongering. This is The Judge out of balance—building walls, separating from "other." When this same discerning force is made conscious and healed, however, The Judge may be found advocating for civil-rights causes, standing up for the underdog, providing resources for those in need, and forgiving again and again. Love is the deciding factor. Awakening this archetype is **essential for the complex times we are in**. Get your judge in order—the world needs it.

GANDHI HAD AN INCREDIBLY ILLUMINATED INNER JUDGE (HE WAS A LAWYER). HE PRACTICED SILENCE ONE DAY A WEEK IN ORDER TO HONE HIS DISCERNMENT WHILE ON HIS REVOLUTIONARY PATH.



WHEN LIGHT: discernment, advocacy, right action, compassion
WHEN DARK: critical, punishing, unforgiving, wall building
GO DEEPER: Osiris and the white feather of Ma'at







THE SHAPESHIFTER

THE TRICKSTER, THE ELUSIVE, THE FORMLESS



THE ULTIMATE SHAPESHIFTER WORKS UNDERCOVER
IN SERVICE OF THE GREATER GOOD. THE DIMINISHED
SHAPESHIFTER BECOMES A PEOPLE PLEASER.

The Shapeshifter has a love of theater, games, and trickery. Its energy appears as one thing, only to reveal a more complex story below the surface. The Shapeshifter is within all of us to some degree; it is the side of ourselves that is slippery, noncommittal, and experimental and longs to dismiss the rules. We need its energy to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of our existence. When The Shapeshifter card appears, it's important to imagine you are looking at life through a kaleidoscope rather than a single-focus lens. At any moment the scene may shift, revealing a more enchanting vision than you imagined. Be wary though, as the allure of the kaleidoscope can leave you exhausted and yearning for solid ground. Dancing long-term with The Shapeshifter requires a central pillar of integrity that links us back to our center.

THE SHAPESHIFTER IS RELATED TO THE MASK.
NOTICE IF THESE CARDS COME UP TOGETHER IN ONE READING.
IF SO, YOU ARE IN THE REALM OF HEAVY THEATER,
ILLUSION, POSSIBLY DECEPTION.



WHEN LIGHT: vibrant, adaptive, humorous
WHEN DARK: charlatan, people pleasing, trickery
GO DEEPER: Cindy Sherman







THE SHAMAN



THE MAGI, THE SORCERER, THE MEDICINE WOMAN

THE SHAMAN CAN'T BE RUSHED. WORKING WITH THIS ARCHETYPE REQUIRES STUDY AND PERSEVERANCE. THINK OF IT LIKE BRINING OR MARINATING...THE CONTENT MUST PERMEATE EVERY FIBER OF ITS BEING.

Three archetypal ingredients constitute The Shaman—and all must be present in order to reveal its magic. First, The Shaman is activated by long-standing and diligent **study** (The Mentor). Second, its orientation is generously and accurately aimed toward the **healing** of the self, the other, and the culture (The Healer). And third, The Shaman has a knack for finding doorways to the **otherworld**, allowing psychic visions and old magic to leak into this world (The Unseen). In this way The Shaman is a master who bridges the everyday and the sacred, revealing potent power needed desperately in our time. Yet where there is power, there is shadow...so The Shaman must be vigilant in studying their darkness. This card reminds us that the force of healing is ultimately not our own. We must shape it and share it with the world.

CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, THE SHAMAN ARCHETYPE APPEARS IN EVERY VOCATION: TEACHERS, DIRECTORS, SURGEONS, POLITICIANS, AND POETS ARE JUST A FEW OF THE FACES A SHAMAN MAY WEAR.

WHEN LIGHT: fearless student and practitioner

WHEN DARK: overpromises, blames, hurts self and others

GO DEEPER: read "Black Elk Speaks" and Michael Tucker's "Dreaming with Eyes Open"







THE LOVER

THE HEART, THE BELOVED, THE DEVOTED



THE LOVER ARCHETYPE IS PRESENT EVERYWHERE, NOT JUST WHERE CONVENTIONAL FORMS OF PLEASURE AND BEAUTY ARE FOUND. THE LOVER'S AWE IS UNCONDITIONAL.

Pulsing through the heart of The Lover is gratitude. The Lover appreciates and experiences the world through the senses, reveling in beauty, song, art, music, scents, and sensuality. This energy awakens at the tip of our tongue when we taste the sweetness of honey, kiss a lover, or speak gentle words to a child. The Lover lingers in foreplay, aroused not by the "getting there," but by the slow merging of self and other. This energy is usually experienced for short periods of time, as in order to feel it, we must be fully present and awake, with no expectations or rules about what "should be." Rather, The Lover is in awe of what the world presents, reveling in the glorious details, grateful to savor every last drop of life's offerings.

WHEN YOU HOLD SOMEONE'S GAZE FOR SEVERAL MOMENTS, YOU'LL FEEL THE LOVER WITHIN YOU AWAKEN. IT IS COMMON TO SEEK THE LOVER IN ANOTHER. THE TRUE GIFT IS FINDING THE LOVER IN YOURSELF.



WHEN LIGHT: connection, expansion, devotion, awe
WHEN DARK: indulgence, attachment, obsession
GO DEEPER: contemplate Aphrodite, Krishna, and Radha





THE SIREN

THE TEMPTRESS, THE SEDUCER, THE FEMME FATALE

The siren calls, and the world spins. What we thought we wanted pales in comparison to the sweet allure of her song. We find ourselves lost in a spell of desire and longing, perhaps even lust. Whether the thing calling to us is ultimately "good" or "bad" is somewhat irrelevant—it's the journey that matters. And the work of The Siren is to take us on a deep psychic descent. Following her song, we go down, down, down...to a place where lessons are learned and courage must be rallied to find our way back to dry land. Try as we might, resisting the call may not even be an option, unless like Odysseus we bind our hands to the mast of our ship. It's likely, though, that falling for her call is the only way we will come to live more fully on the surface.

OTHER ITERATIONS OF THE SIREN ARCHETYPE INCLUDE THE NYMPH, THE MERMAID, AND THE FAIRY. THEY OFTEN COME IN SETS OF THREE, AS A TRINITY OF TEMPTATION.

EMBODYING THE SIREN ARCHETYPE REQUIRES THAT WE EXPLORE THINGS THAT ARE TABOO, THE SIREN LAUGHS AT CONVENTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS. SHE EATS RULES.

WHEN LIGHT: awakened sensuality, absorption, arousal
WHEN DARK: wickedness, adultery, wreckage, betrayal, insatiability
GO DEEPER: J. W. Waterhouse's nymph paintings,
Lana Del Rey's album "Ultraviolence"





THE ANIMAL

THE BEAST, THE WILD ONE, THE SHE-WOLF



NOTICE YOUR RESISTANCE TO THE ANIMAL
WITHIN. WHERE DOES IT COME FROM? WHAT HAS
IT KEPT YOU FROM DOING, WILD ONE?

We are mammals. The hair on our chest and between our legs reminds us so. We try hard to deny our unrefined animalistic nature—yet through this archetype we tap into power and direction. Activating The Animal within means reawakening our relationship to nature in the most broad and embodied sense—drinking from waterfalls, roaring at the moon, opening eyes underwater, eating berries from the vine. The life force of our planet begs us to set down the devices, the constraints, and the social constructs and remember the warm blood that pulses through our veins. The Animal longs for breath, food, procreation, and physicality. It wants soil under our nails and starlight on our skin. If this all sounds terribly unsophisticated to you, take note that it is said that when Buddha became enlightened, he roared like a great lion.

THE ANIMAL DEMANDS WE GET COMFORTABLE IN OUR OWN
SKIN. THE MINUTE YOU ACCEPT, EXPRESS, AND CELEBRATE
THE PHYSICAL BODY, YOU TAP INTO ANIMAL ENERGY.

WHEN LIGHT: vital, elemental, alive, dances

WHEN DARK: savagery, pent-up emotion, lashing out

GO DEEPER: listen to the audio recording of Mary Oliver reading "Wild Geese," repeat every morning for one week







EVEN IN THE STILLNESS OF MEDITATION THE PILGRIM FEELS
THE MOVEMENT OF THE HEART TOWARD WHAT IT LOVES.

THE PILGRIM

THE WANDERER, THE TRAVELER, THE APPRENTICE



For The Pilgrim, an outward journey is always an inward journey. This archetypal wanderer seeks wisdom, experience, and meaning in the farthest reaches of the globe and the deepest regions of the spirit. Others will wonder when The Pilgrim will settle down and claim a more conventional life, but The Pilgrim knows that the heart belongs in motion. Where there is motion, there is freedom, expansion, and growth. Responsibilities, social conventions, and logistics lull us to sleep, and soon The Pilgrim becomes veiled in the slumber of the day-to-day. Yet when this archetype awakens, it rallies our sense of adventure and leads us out the door toward a new reality. With The Pilgrim at your side you will never lack courage. Nor do you need every amenity. Travel light, travel soon...your spirit needs it.

WE ALL HAVE A DEEP LONGING TO ANSWER
THE CALL, TO GET "UNSTUCK," WHAT ARE THE
OBSTACLES BETWEEN YOU AND THE DOOR?

WHEN LIGHT: learns, grows, adapts, studies

WHEN DARK: aloof, noncommittal, flaky

GO DEEPER: "The Road Not Taken," by Robert Frost,
"Mameen," by David Whyte







LIKE ANY LIGHTWORKER, THE MYSTIC MUST BUILD A
RELATIONSHIP WITH FIRE. THIS BEGINS BY AWAKENING
THE INNER FLAME (OR TAPAS) WITHIN.

THE MYSTIC

THE SEEKER, THE LIGHTWORKER, THE DREAMER

The Mystic is often misunderstood in our culture, depicted as a wandering or lighthearted daydreamer. Yet like Shiva, the true mystic plays a critical role in society, remaining fearlessly dedicated to the path of transformation. In order to save the earth from darkness, Shiva swallows the poison of the world and holds it in his throat, slowly transmuting the liquid into nectar. This is the work of The Mystic. They do not fear darkness but rather sit in the presence of it, harness the potential and latent energy behind it, and embed it with light. They are patient and prudent changemakers, seeking growth above all else. Unanswerable questions are The Mystic's lifeblood. The Mystic revels in mystery, in the great riddle of life, dancing with the forces of light and dark upon its wings.

WHEN LIGHT: remover of darkness, visionary, ageless

WHEN DARK: expects results, seeks attention and recognition

GO DEEPER: Zen koans, poetry, Murakami novels



IT MAY SEEM THAT THE MYSTIC IS INWARD-
FACING, YET ITS LIGHT BEAMS BACK TO THE WORLD
WITH THE STRENGTH OF A THOUSAND STARS.







THE CREATOR



THE ARTIST, THE ALCHEMIST, THE INNOVATOR

TO INCREASE YOUR CREATOR ENERGY, WARD
OFF JADEDNESS AT ALL COST, RECOMMIT TO
CHILDLIKE CURIOSITY, AND NIX THE RULES.

The Creator—the first archetype in the *trio of existence*—is not intimidated by darkness or by lack. They know that from the void, creation inevitably emerges. With meager, minimal, and outlandish materials The Creator reveals a new image. They make The Empty Room resonate with healing sounds; they generate bounty from the seed that others tossed away. Though generative, this archetype *annihilates* preconceived notions of what is possible, leaving unexpected openings in the wake of its destruction. The Creator does this by, first, being absolutely present to what is (not imagining or wishing things were different) and, second, trusting that a force greater than themselves awaits constant collaboration with each human soul. Whether we call it nature, god, goddess, shakti, or divinity, it remains nameless...it is The Creator's lifelong companion.

THE CREATOR IS NATURALLY ATTRACTIVE (AND COVETED), AS
ITS ENERGY ZINGS WITH POSSIBILITY. YOU CAN FEEL WHEN A
CREATOR TYPE ENTERS THE ROOM. ALL EYES LAND ON THEM.

WHEN LIGHT: curious, playful, open, surprising

WHEN DARK: loses spark, feels burdened

GO DEEPER: Vincent Van Gogh's letters to his brother Theo







THE DESTROYER

THE SAVAGE, THE UNEXPECTED, THE REJECTED



CONSIDER PICASSO'S STATEMENT, "EVERY ACT OF CREATION IS FIRST OF ALL AN ACT OF DESTRUCTION."

The Destroyer—the final of the three archetypes in the *trio of existence*—has necessary yet painful work to do in the world. Culturally, we have an aversion to endings. And we hang on to permanence as a signifier of success. Yet The Destroyer pulls the rug out from underneath relationships, jobs, homes, and all forms of security. *It's the part of us that wants things to end.* Its painful orientation is to uncover our true purpose. The Destroyer does not let us linger long in comforts, as it knows not much happens in that realm. With its piercing eyes, it seeks out stagnancy from a distance and the rest...becomes history. In the old myths this is the moment when heads begin to roll, the ground opens up, and castles crumble. Hold on for the ride—The Destroyer has arrived.

IN OLD TALES THE DESTROYER SOMETIMES APPEARS AS A BLACK DOG. OTHER TIMES IT TAKES THE FORM OF GODS AND GODDESSES SUCH AS SHIVA, FALU, AND APOPHIS.



WHEN LIGHT: swift and precise blows that redirect our life
WHEN DARK: self-destruction, negativity, unwillingness to rebuild
GO DEEPER: Robert Rauschenberg's "Erased de Kooning Drawing"



XXIV



THE SUSTAINER

THE SUSTAINER

THE PEACEMAKER, THE UPHOLDER, THE PRESERVER

The Sustainer—the second archetype in the *trio of existence*—works behind the scenes tending to the tasks of life. They cultivate gardens, pay bills, keep the meals warm and the mouths sweetly fed. The Sustainer is at peace in the process of life, knowing there is no start or finish to humble yet meaningful tasks. They have a natural inclination to nourish others, to archive, to preserve Earth's resources, to consider environmental impact, to see their role in the divine cycle of life. It's common for The Sustainer to become overworked, leading to resentment. Their tasks aren't glamorous and therefore The Sustainer rarely receives the credit or attention. The Sustainer longs to hold things in place so badly (especially relationships) that they resist necessary change. Take time with this archetype. It is within us all and needs our love.

WHEN LIGHT: abundant, generous, supportive, reliable

WHEN DARK: overworked, resentful, trapped, tired

GO DEEPER: Lakshmi, Vishnu, Demeter

CONTEMPLATE WHAT TRULY SUSTAINS YOU. MAKE A LIST.
NOTICE HOW SIMPLE YET POWERFUL THOSE THINGS
ARE, AND SPEND SOME TIME TENDING THEM.

TAKE NOTE OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
MAINTAINING AND SUSTAINING: WHICH ACTION
DESCRIBES YOUR LIFE MORE ACCURATELY?





THE IMAGE OF THE SERPENT IS ETERNALLY TIED TO HEALING AND MEDICINE, BOTH WESTERN (THE CADUCEUS) AND EASTERN (KUNDALINI) STUDY THE SERPENT AND ITS POWER.



THE HEALER

THE LIGHTWORKER, THE GIFTED, THE OLD SOUL

Though some claim the work of The Healer as their gift and name it as their dharma, the force of this archetype is within everyone. It is our natural inclination to **remember**, to **return to**, and to **reclaim** that central and eternal life force from which we so easily drift away. In Sanskrit, the word **avidya** means "forgetting," and it is said that this is the source of all suffering and dis-ease. The Healer's mission then becomes to move through the comfort of forgetting, through the veils of ignorance and denial, to reveal the radiance that already exists. The Healer approaches this in multiple ways, from multiple angles, knowing the cycle of healing is not linear—it is a multilayered and circuitous process, always leading back to its own origin...much like the ouroboros.

WHEN LIGHT: self-contained, grateful, awake
WHEN DARK: tired, needy, forgetting its own practice
GO DEEPER: Asclepius, Eir, Dhanvantari



THE WOUNDED HEALER IS NOT SOMEONE WHO WAS WOUNDED AND IS NOW HEALED. IT IS SOMEONE WHO CONTINUES TO COURAGEOUSLY BREAK OPEN THE SELF AND EGO AS A MEANS FOR DEEP INTEGRATION.







THE COMIC

THE JOKER, THE CLOWN, THE FOOL



THE COMIC HAS PLENTY OF SHADE TO THROW ON OTHERS, AND IT CAN FALL INTO SHADOW AT THE DROP OF A HAT. BEWARE OF THEIR SHARP CLAWS.

The Comic carries a remedy for all that ails this world. Amid the deepest pain and suffering there is always the potential to lift up and out of the darkness through laughter. Though dismissed by some as low-brow or unsophisticated, this archetype actually has a highly advanced mind (some may use the word "genius"), as humor requires one to "see" the situation from afar rather than to be swept away by the drama. The Comic sees and accepts the messiness of life, using it as material to be mixed and shaped into a potion to soothe the stressed and serious mind. They literally "lighten" us up. Thus within The Comic is usually The Sage or The Magician, working healing magic upon any audience who will lend an ear. The Comic may be the archetype that heals the deep division in our world...one pun at a time.

JOY, JOKES, AND SMILES ARE SIGNS OF A HAPPY HEART. BE WARY OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICES OR TEACHERS WHO LEAVE THE COMIC BY THE WAYSIDE.



WHEN LIGHT: hilarious, ingenious, spirited, easygoing

WHEN DARK: sarcastic, harsh, brooding, drunk

GO DEEPER: images of laughing Buddha, stand-up or improv comedy



XXVII

THE UNSEEN



THE UNSEEN



THE SPIRIT, THE ANCESTOR, THE ETERNAL

BEING GRACED BY THE UNSEEN IS A GIFT. TREAT IT
KINDLY. ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE SEEN BY ETERNAL EYES.

The Unseen is just as it sounds. We cannot see it, yet it sees us—watching and waiting with wisdom both kind and instructive. We feel this presence, sense it, intuit it...and then doubt its existence, though it rallies our attention time and time again. The energy of The Unseen may come in many forms—a compelling dream, a sudden insight, a clear voice, a vision or message from a loved one who has passed to the other side. It is natural to fear these communications, as they challenge our perception of what is real. When this card appears, your guides are near. The eternal is present. The doorway between worlds is ajar. Listen. The sounds may seem as though they come from a distant land, but they call from your innermost chambers.

GUIDANCE COMES IN MANY FORMS. DON'T EXPECT IT TO BE
GLITTERY OR COMFORTABLE. THE SPIRIT WORLD SPEAKS THE
TRUTH—SOMETIMES IT SOOTHES AND SOMETIMES IT BURNS.



WHEN LIGHT: clairvoyant guidance, whispers of wisdom
WHEN DARK: dark looming energy, unwillingness to forgive
GO DEEPER: King Hamlet, the Three Fates, "The Shining"





THE SHADOW

THE UNSPEAKABLE, THE UNWELCOME, THE DENIED

Although every card in the archetypes deck has a shadow potential, this card asks us to delve into the qualities of The Shadow itself. We often think that The Shadow can be purified, illuminated, and made right through effort and achievement. However, it is typically the case that our lofty pursuit of ascension and perfection is the very source of shadow material itself. By rejecting parts of ourselves and the world we begin to separate from the whole. Rather than getting to know the qualities and content of our shadow, we busy ourselves with avoiding its presence. This is denial. When this card appears, it is time to take inventory of those things you've been denying. When the mind responds with, "No, anything but that," you are touching shadow. Find support for this deep inner work, and move toward The Shadow with patience and compassion.

WHEN LIGHT: revealing unconscious aspects of The Self and world

WHEN DARK: denying unconscious aspects of The Self and world

GO DEEPER: "Owning Your Own Shadow" by R. Johnson

CONTEMPLATE THE FOLLOWING SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATION:
THE CLOSER AN OBJECT (A PERSON, PLACE, OR COMMUNITY)
IS TO THE LIGHT, THE LONGER THE SHADOW IT CASTS.

"IN THE SHADOW OF THE GODS ARE THE VERY GODS
THEMSELVES." REFLECT ON THIS STATEMENT BY JAMES
HILLMAN IN A BLUE FIRE. WHAT DO YOU DESPISE ABOUT
YOURSELF? BY ANSWERING YOU MOVE TOWARD SHADOW.





IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT TWO CENTRAL MANTRAS IN THE YOGA TRADITION CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH THE SELF. EXPERIMENT WITH SO HAM ("I AM THAT") AND SAT NAM ("TRUE IDENTITY").



THE SELF

THE SOUL, THE WITNESS, THE WATCHER

The self is the prism that allows the spectrum of our personalities to radiate. It does not judge, prohibit, suppress, or oppress any of its parts, as it lovingly knows that all aspects have a time and a place, and leads us to experience the full breadth of life's offerings. The self is the central abiding container, the awareness of the infinite universe of possibilities. When this card appears, it's a call to step back in to witness consciousness, *to observe yourself navigating the world*. Ask yourself, "Am I the stew, or am I the chef?" In most situations our ego draws us into the cauldron where we swirl, spin, and smolder in chaos. Yet The Self is a graceful culinary dancer, watching, waiting, observing as the spectrum of ingredients become the flavor of our life. Look in The Mirror for thirty seconds or more. *Attempt to see the you behind the you.*

WHEN LIGHT: witnessing, accepting new aspects of self
WHEN DARK: disjointed, fatigued, diffused energy and purpose
GO DEEPER: watch Robert Bly read Kabir's poem "This Clay Jug"



IF THIS CARD IS PERPLEXING FOR YOU, YOU ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK. IT CHALLENGES US TO EXPAND OUR SENSE OF IDENTITY BEYOND THE LITTLE SELF, AND THE EGO RESISTS SUCH MOVEMENT.





IT IS SAID THAT OM IS THE PRIMORDIAL SOUND OF THE UNIVERSE AND THAT ALL OTHER MANTRAS ARE BORN FROM IT. SIMPLY IMAGINING THIS POSSIBILITY WILL ACTIVATE THE ONE.

THE ONE

NONDUALITY, ONE LOVE, UNUS MUNDUS

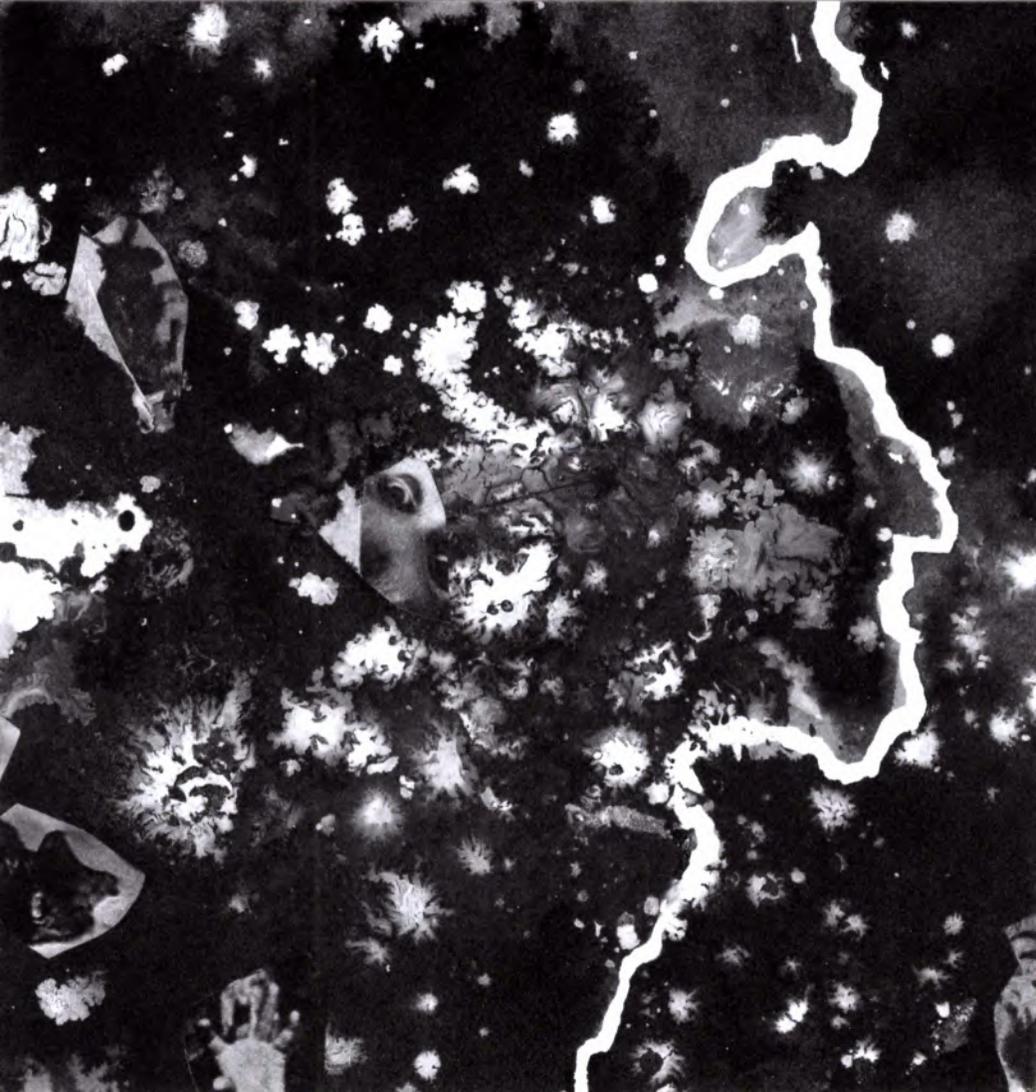
Our ability to experience this archetype firsthand is limited. It comes in brief and potent moments that we are left to savor for a lifetime. The One is both the energy that unites all living beings and our capacity to sense this intimate union. This archetype eludes us most of our lives, appearing as a concept in a distant galaxy. Yet when we are in the midst of its power, a solemn reverence falls across all the land. We glimpse ourselves in the vastness of all consciousness and are neither small nor large within that field. We are neither important nor unimportant. All duality fades away and we are left with what is—the precious knowing that life is a gift, and we are both the giver and the receiver of this fortune.

WHEN LIGHT: serves, loves, accepts, resonates

WHEN DARK: ignores, omits, excludes

GO DEEPER: James Turrell's "The Color Inside," the poem "Self Portrait," by David Whyte

THE UNUS MUNDUS IS A CIRCLE REPRESENTING THE UNITY OF EXISTENCE. IS IT POSSIBLE THAT THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF ALL THINGS IS LOVE?



**THE
PLACES**





THE HEART



THE HOME, THE CENTER, THE THRONE

SOME SAY THERE IS A CAVE AT THE CENTER OF THE HEART.
OTHERS SAY IT'S A POOL WITH A FLOWERING WHITE LOTUS.
IMAGINE YOURSELF THERE, AND DRAW WHAT YOU SEE.

It is possible, from an imaginal point of view, to *sense The Heart as a place*. Either we are there, within the realm of expansion and compassion...or we have drifted somewhere else. There is no in-between. It is common for us to leave this archetypal center without realizing it, as the world, with its seductive twists and turns, offers us frequent departure. We may even become a stranger to the landscape of The Heart, leaving it vacant for long stretches of time. The seat of The Heart is often reclaimed by nature, music, dance, and the presence of children or animals. This card encourages us to move past the layers of life's tangles and knots and enter the wild and sacred center of The Self. The most precious throne in the galaxy is awaiting your return.

RECALL THE LAST TIME YOUR HEART WAS TOUCHED. SOAK IN EVERY DETAIL YOU CAN AND FEEL THE HEART AWAKEN.



WHEN LIGHT: expansive, knowing, gentle clarity

WHEN DARK: fraught, tangled, betrayal

GO DEEPER: "Wild Is the Wind," by Nina Simone







THE CAVE



THE DARK, THE PORTAL, THE INTERIOR

SLOWLY AND STEADILY, CRYSTALS OF ENORMOUS
MAGNITUDE GROW WITHIN THE DARK CONFINES OF
CAVES. LET THE CAVE TEACH YOU PATIENCE.

Those who are fortunate enough to find and enter The Cave are forever changed. It is a place of potent power, acting both as portal to another realm and a space for sacred ritual and initiation. The Cave is a place to return for meaningful retreat, where one can "see" the true self in the darkness. In esoteric teachings, The Cave is known to reside in the center of the heart. Within its walls the whispers of compassion and self-understanding can be heard. Yet because of its mystery and power, many of us fear The Cave and never try to find it. We busy ourselves in the bright lights of the city while the cavernous and dimly lit chamber calls out to us in the night. Where is your cave? You already know. Return to it and tend the fire.

ENVISION YOURSELF AS AN OLD SAGE IN A CAVE.
WHAT AMENITIES DO YOU NEED? WHAT DRAWS YOU
EVER CLOSER TO THE CAVE WITHIN THE CAVE?



WHEN LIGHT: the sacred center within
WHEN DARK: withdrawal, isolation, hiding
GO DEEPER: Lascaux, The Cave of Crystals, The Blue Grotto







THE MOUNTAIN

THE ASCENT, THE PEAK, THE INSURMOUNTABLE



RESEARCH MOUNTAINS. FIND ONE THAT STRIKES YOU, AND STARE AT IT FOR A WHILE. WHERE IS IT? THE PILGRIM MAY BE AWAKENING IN YOU. THE SUMMIT CALLS.

The Mountain stands eternally in our awareness, calling us toward its peak. It stirs up stoic and regal feelings, reminding us of the long line of spirits, sages, sadhus, and gods that made their humble thrones within its snowy peaks. Beware, though, as The Mountain can affect us in two ways: it can inspire and enliven us to rise to new heights and peak experience...Yet it can also create isolation, competitiveness, and an inflated sense of self. Standing upon its heights can activate the purist and the perfectionist in us, creating separation from those we deem to be "below." No matter how high you ascend, remember that it is **within the core of The Mountain** that the gems, minerals, and jewels reside. If you think it's all about going up, you're following the fool's path and missing the miner's magic.

CONTEMPLATE JOSEPH CAMPBELL'S SUGGESTION, "YOU ARE THE CENTRAL MOUNTAIN, AND THE CENTRAL MOUNTAIN IS EVERYWHERE."



WHEN LIGHT: grounded in the eternal, steadfast, uplifting

WHEN DARK: ominous, daunting, isolating, frigid

GO DEEPER: Mary Oliver's "The Poet Dreams of the Mountain"





THE RIVER

THE STREAM, THE FLOW, THE CURRENT

There is a reason so many rituals of change and rebirth take place in The River—it is forgiveness embodied in physical form. Without asking anything in return, The River washes away what is no longer necessary, smoothing over sharp edges and accepting all our mistakes and grievances. Once we step in, we are no longer in control: The River carries us farther down the stream of transformation than we planned to go. Its waters have a special gift for reflecting back to us a new and dreamlike vision. Once the tears have passed, we see ourselves as we haven't before: with a little more lightness, grace, and fluidity. Keep in mind the you that stands within The River is the real you—full of deep emotion and potential, nothing to hide, nothing to judge. May you drink in the sight of your true self.

WHEN LIGHT: acceptance, grace, reflection, forgiveness

WHEN DARK: torment of emotions, flooding, overwhelm

GO DEEPER: Barry Lopez's "River Notes," Roni Horn's "Still Water"

YOU CAN ONLY RESIST THE RIVER FOR SO LONG.
EVENTUALLY IT WILL PULL YOU TOWARD CHANGE, SO YOU
MAY AS WELL GET IN WITH STYLE AND GRACE.

THE RIVER IS EMOTION. WHEN YOU ARE IN ITS CURRENT, YOU
WILL KNOW IT BY THE BURSTING FORTH OF TEARS, LAUGHTER,
SONG, DESPAIR. ALL THE EMOTIONS FLOW IN ITS CURRENT.



THE OCEAN

THE UNCONSCIOUS, THE DEPTHS, THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE

The power of The Ocean is unmatched. To step into its salty waters is to step into the unknown. By its sheer volume The Ocean represents the unconscious—all that is beyond our understanding. We cannot live within The Ocean. We cannot claim it, manage it, or own it. It rejects our every attempt to dominate nature. Yet amid its overwhelming power it calls to us, inspires us, and invigorates our life on land. It dissolves the "little us" into the "big us." When the energy of The Ocean is present, there is change stirring that is beyond any change you've known before. The ego must dissolve. The saline swells work on your very cells, your fibers, your deepest underlying beliefs. Like Aphrodite, we rise from The Ocean's froth a new being. Life is change. Let the wave crash.

WHEN LIGHT: deeper than deep, big dreams, discovery
WHEN DARK: subsumed, drowned, polluted, unpredictable
GO DEEPER: Shakespeare's "The Tempest,"
Géricault's "The Raft of Medusa"

THE OCEAN DISPLAYS EVERY EMOTION WITHOUT SHAME. TO WITNESS ITS GLASSY MOONLIT SURFACE AND ITS UNFORGIVING STORMS IS TO KNOW THE FULL SPECTRUM OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

STUDY WAVES. TOUCH THEIR SURFACE. GET IN THE WATER. NO MATTER WHERE YOU LIVE. EACH DROP IS PART OF THE WHOLE. THE OCEAN IS IN EVERY TEAR.





THE FOREST



THE WOODS, THE THICKET, THE JUNGLE

THE HUNTER, THE MAIDEN, THE CRONE, AND THE SHAMAN MAKE REGULAR APPEARANCES IN THE FOREST. DON'T BE SURPRISED IF THESE CARDS COME UP TOGETHER. LET THE NARRATIVE REVEAL ITSELF.

Consider for a moment your earliest memory of The Forest. It's likely it included all the mythic dynamics of this archetypal space: a little fear, a little enchantment, perhaps losing your way, perhaps discovering a secret mystical treasure. Such is the magic of The Forest. It requires first that you enter it, and then that you get lost within it. You may think there is a path to lead you straight through, but soon enough you'll be on what is known as the pathless path. There are tricksters here, dense foliage, and entanglement. But equally present are the glimmers of fairy light and friends among the trees. You're on an adventure now, and there's no turning back, so embrace the dim light and the moving shadows. Whether literal or imaginal—brave The Forest and get lost getting found.

IF YOU GET OUT OF THE FOREST WITHOUT FEELING LOST, YOU WERE ONLY IN A LITTLE GROVE OF TREES. THE GREAT ARCHETYPAL FOREST REQUIRES WE SPEND AT LEAST ONE NIGHT FRIGHTENED FOR OUR LIFE.

WHEN LIGHT: magic abounds, childlike wonder, adventure

WHEN DARK: concealment, density, savagery

GO DEEPER: the opening three lines of Dante Alighieri's "Inferno"







THE DESERT IS ALIVE AND PULSING WITH ENERGY
DESPITE ITS DESOLATE APPEARANCE. TURN
TOWARD IT RATHER THAN AWAY FROM IT.

THE DESERT

THE DROUGHT, THE WASTELAND, THE BADLANDS

The Desert leaves us disoriented, desperate for direction, grasping for meaning, longing for solid ground. For endless miles we are confronted with a lack of clarity and existential dread. We are thirsty, hungry, pleading with life to get back to normal—to become animated by the simple pleasantries of day-to-day life. The Desert offers no such comfort, and all must pass through it. If you can embrace the discomfort of The Desert knowing you will, someday, reach water again, you can tap into the potent energy of the landscape. Its lights are blindingly bright and its darks terrifyingly deep, which makes for unbridled creativity and clairvoyant visions. Truths reside in The Desert that otherwise remain hidden. The crows, the shadows, and the coyote's call surround you. Let the winds and sands work their deep magic, weary traveler.

WHEN LIGHT: surreal, strange, unexpected visions, silence

WHEN DARK: drying, deadening, disorienting, isolating

GO DEEPER: Frank Herbert's "Dune," Barry Lopez's "Desert Notes," Edward Abbey's "Desert Solitaire"



WHEN IN THE THROES OF THE DESERT CONTEMPLATE THE
FOLLOWING: YOU ARE NOT ALONE. YOU HAVE MORE SUPPLIES
WITH YOU THAN YOU THINK. WATER IS VERY NEAR.







THE BRIDGE

THE CONNECTION, THE LINK, THE GATE



IMAGINE BUILDING A BRIDGE. THEN IMAGINE BUILDING A WALL. WHICH ENERGY IS NEEDED FOR THE SITUATION AT HAND? WHICH IMAGE SOFTENS AND HEALS THE HEART?

Bridges are built to connect two worlds. They create flow, allowing us to travel between realms, ideologies, personalities. This archetype is the gesture of acceptance, of saying **yes** rather than withdrawing, separating, and saying **no**. When we cross a bridge to an unknown land, we are led magically into a new reality. We open up to otherness. Healing and communication are made possible. We enter a state of curiosity, wonder, and learning. The shaman, for example, creates The Bridge between the everyday world and the sacred. This card asks us to study the connections between the seemingly disconnected parts of our life (relationships, ideologies, histories). Remember that a bridge can't be forced. It must be made with love, or its structure will not withstand the inevitable weather of life.

LIE ON THE FLOOR AND LISTEN TO "BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER." NOTICE THE EASE AND ACCEPTANCE WITHIN THE MELODY, THE FEELING OF RISING ABOVE THE MUCK.

WHEN LIGHT: acceptance, magic, communication
WHEN DARK: lacking boundaries, forcing connection
GO DEEPER: Bifröst (the burning rainbow bridge of Norse mythology)







THE TEMPLE

THE SANCTUARY, THE SHRINE, THE ALTAR



THE ANCIENT YOGIS SAW THE BODY ITSELF AS THE TEMPLE, EVERY FUNCTION AND FEATURE OF IT AS AN EXPRESSION OF DIVINITY. BUILD A SHRINE WITH FOUND MATERIALS. DON'T SPEND ANY MONEY, ONLY TIME.

When we think of The Temple, we often envision an architectural structure in a far-off land. We are quick to distance ourselves from the sacred, assuming we must expend much effort in order to arrive there. Yet The Temple is a universal and omnipresent energy, accessible in the highest and lowest, richest and poorest of places. Visiting The Temple might be as simple as stepping into the dappled light of The Forest, slowly and sensuously kissing a lover, or closing your eyes to travel inward. This card is a call to reexamine what you pay homage to and what you reject. What do you spend your time worshipping (your phone, money, material goods)? What barriers do you draw between yourself and the sacred? Perhaps there is room on your altar for something new, something surprising. Offer it to the heavens.

THOUGH INDEED THE TEMPLE TRAVELS WITH YOU, THIS CARD IS INTERWOVEN WITH THE PILGRIM ARCHETYPE. IF YOU'VE BEEN LONGING FOR A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY, BOOK YOUR TICKETS.



WHEN LIGHT: reverence for all, life as sanctuary

WHEN DARK: idolatry, cults, strict spirituality

GO DEEPER: "Now Is the Time," by Hafiz







THE DEAD END



THE CLOSED DOOR, THE FINAL CHAPTER, THE IMPASSE

REFLECT ON DEAD ENDS IN YOUR PAST THAT LED TO UNIMAGINABLE WONDERS. THE MOMENT YOU ACCEPT THE ENDING, A FEELING OF GRACE WILL ARISE. DOORS BEGIN TO OPEN BOTH INSIDE YOU AND IN THE WORLD.

Contrary to what its name implies, The Dead End is very much alive. It is a force that stops us from moving forward as planned. It is thick, dense, uncompromising...a wall beyond all walls. With every bramble, thorn, and stone it simply states, "no more, child. You have reached the last page of this chapter." It is natural to resist its very resistance and struggle even harder to make our way, to prove our point, to hold on to what was. In this way we fight with life itself. From a mythic perspective, The End you face is very much a beginning. There are doors opening all around you, just not the one you planned on walking through. If you are honest and courageous enough to accept, adjust, and adapt, The Dead End becomes known as Life's Beginning.

NOTE THAT IN MOST STORIES AND MOVIES THE MOMENT THE PROTAGONIST REACHES THE DEAD END, SOMETHING RIVETING HAPPENS. YOU ARE THE PROTAGONIST.



WHEN LIGHT: acceptance, humility, relief, reverence for change

WHEN DARK: inertia, stuckness, tension, unconscious gripping

GO DEEPER: Kenny Rogers's "The Gambler,"

Donny Hathaway's "Giving Up"







THE VILLAGE

THE HOMETOWN, THE FAMILY, THE TRIBE



THE VILLAGE MOVES WITH YOU, AS IT IS MORE
OF A MINDSET THAN A PHYSICAL PLACE.

The Village presents us with a conundrum. On one hand, it's the place that feels most like home, the place to which you can always return. Nostalgia and comfort draw us back. On the other hand, it's the very place you must leave in order to grow. Around The Village an unspoken boundary exists, one most villagers do not want you to cross. Though some support your leaving, still you hear whispers of doubt as you venture beyond its borders, leaving them behind. The energy of The Village is present anytime we feel restricted by a certain group, community, family, place, or ideology. It may have served us in the past, yet staying within its parameters will never satiate our thirst for life. Thank The Village for all it has provided, knowing you will someday return. For now, the world awaits.

RETURNING TO THE VILLAGE IS AS IMPORTANT AS LEAVING
IT. THIS CAN BE THOUGHT OF AS A COMPLETION OR AN
INTEGRATION OF WHAT YOU LEARNED OUT IN THE WILD

WHEN LIGHT: intimate, rooted, intergenerational, communal

WHEN DARK: small-minded, gossipy, trapped, restricted

GO DEEPER: Haruki Murakami's "Hard-Boiled
Wonderland and the End of the World"







THE EMPTY ROOM



THE VORTEX, THE ABYSS, THE NOTHING

THE ARCHETYPE OF THE EMPTY ROOM IS ALSO PORTRAYED AS THE HUNGRY GHOST, ALWAYS FEEDING AND NEVER SATIATED.

The Empty Room haunts us all. It is the universal and all too frequent feeling of lack, of wanting, of the craving to fill ourselves with something, anything. We too often attempt to remedy the discomfort of The Empty Room by any means necessary, leading us to a *culture of more*. Ironically, The Empty Room is filled to the brim with potential, yet we perceive it as not enough. This card is a cry for patience, for *sitting within the barren walls of not knowing*, for awaiting true vision and purpose before attaching to what we "should" do next to save our outward appearance. Be with the nothingness. Be with the impatience. The Empty Room has immense power. Let others wonder what you are doing. If you can settle in to the magic of emptiness, you will soon hear its whispers of wisdom.

A DAY OF SILENCE IS A SUREFIRE WAY TO HARNESS THE POWER OF THE EMPTY ROOM.



WHEN LIGHT: spaciousness, potential, possibility
WHEN DARK: addiction, insatiability, more for more's sake
GO DEEPER: John Cage's "4'33"







THE CASTLE



THE PALACE, THE PENTHOUSE, THE FORTRESS

It's no wonder fairy tales tell of sleeping princesses within castle walls. Like most archetypes, The Castle is loaded with duality: it represents abundant riches, seductive fantasy, ornate wonders, and lavish adornments, yet the walls are thick, cold, and shadowy. This card points to a tendency to hold on to possessions (quite possibly a literal home) or position that project the image of achievement, while the soul longs to run barefoot in The Forest, leaving it all behind. At times we must "settle down," yet The Castle lulls us with its spell of materialism, and we fall asleep to our deepest dreams. The Castle can be a motivating force, an enchanting goal to travel toward—but it is best not to linger within its walls of decadent deception for too long.

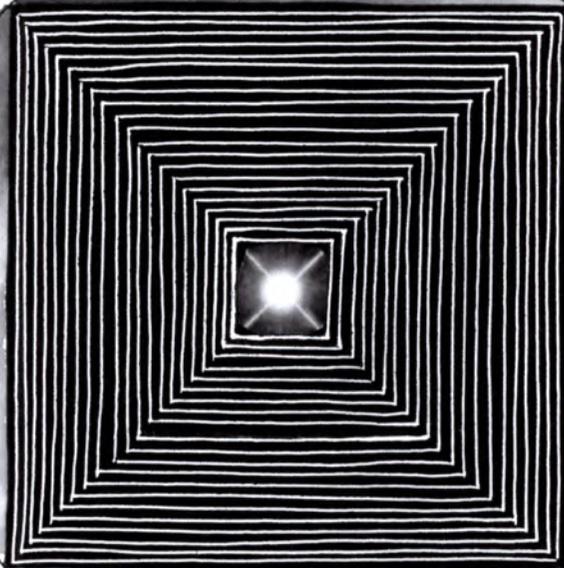
NOTICE HOW CASTLES ARE DESIGNED TO KEEP THINGS OUT. THEY DEFEND. THEY SEPARATE. IT IS LIKELY THERE IS CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY BEYOND ITS WALLS THAT WILL REVITALIZE YOU.

IF THIS CARD APPEARS WITH THE KING, THE QUEEN, OR THE MAIDEN, KNOW THAT YOU'VE ENTERED INTO LONG-STANDING FAMILY DYNAMICS THAT INCLUDE PROPERTY AND POWER.

WHEN LIGHT: visiting your throne of power
WHEN DARK: stuckness, depression, spells, walls
GO DEEPER: Rachel Whiteread's "House,"
Pieter Bruegel's "The Tower of Babel"



XLIV



THE BOX



THE BOX

THE CAGE, THE RULES, THE NORM



MOVING OUTSIDE OF THE BOX IS EXHILARATING AND EXPANSIVE,
BUT DESTABILIZING. OTHERS WILL WONDER WHAT YOU ARE
DOING, AND WHY. YOU WILL TOO. THIS IS PART OF THE PROCESS.

We all live, to some degree, within the confines of The Box. This archetype represents everything that is known, anticipated, and expected. It holds us in place while simultaneously holding us back from our greatest visions. The Box is sneaky, insidious, and everywhere...limiting us at the most unconscious levels. It is built of layer upon layer of social constructs and pressures. Breaking through its confines requires awareness, continued effort, and bravery. The Box may appear as expectations from parents, a well-paying but heartless job, the pressure to look or behave like others or simply to stay small. There is a box around you now, made of some type of confining thought. What is it? The Box shifts and morphs as we grow—this is part of its multilayered nature. Once you break through one layer, another will present itself to you. Keep going. Break through. An exquisite life requires it.

EVERYTHING WITHIN THE BOX IS KNOWN. EVERYTHING
OUTSIDE THE BOX IS UNKNOWN. THAT IS WHY IT IS MORE
COMFORTABLE TO STAY WITHIN ITS WALLS. CHOOSE FREEDOM.



WHEN LIGHT: structure, order, coherence, logic
WHEN DARK: limitation, rigidity, judgment, fear
GO DEEPER: Richard Serra, "One Ton Prop (House of Cards)"







IN HINDU MYTHOLOGY, GANESH IS THE ULTIMATE GATEKEEPER. LOOK TO THE GREAT ELEPHANT GOD FOR SUPPORT. HEKATE, JANUS, AND MENSCHEN ARE ALSO WATCHING OVER YOU.



THE THRESHOLD

THE DOOR, THE GATE, THE INITIATION



CROSSING A THRESHOLD MAY NOT ALWAYS BE VOLUNTARY. SOMETIMES WE ARE THROWN ACROSS THE BOUNDARY THROUGH CIRCUMSTANCES FAR BEYOND OUR CONTROL. EITHER WAY, WE CANNOT GO BACK.

We cross thresholds continually—consciously and unconsciously. Doorways, gates, and entryways grace our path on a daily basis. When this card arises, it signifies that the precipice you stand upon is not your typical one, however. You have arrived at a threshold of initiation, here to usher you into a new reality. It requires you to leave behind the "you" that you thought was so well formed. A new frontier calls. This is not easy work. Threshold initiation means a part of you will be lost in order to make space for what is next. A metaphorical death must occur. Some may not recognize you. You may struggle to recognize yourself. The ground seems to crumble as you freefall into your new reality. This is the liminal realm. One step, dear friend—just take that one necessary step toward the future that calls you.

WHEN LIGHT: growth, individuation, ease in the liminal
WHEN DARK: resisting, refusal to grow, barriers, boundaries
GO DEEPER: lie on the floor and listen to Bob Dylan's "Standing in the Doorway"







THE WOMB



THE NEST, THE BELLY, THE ORIGIN

CONSIDER THAT MOTHER EARTH MUST ALSO
HAVE A MOTHER. IMAGINE HER.

Everything has an origin story. The Womb archetype asks us to contemplate the beginning beyond the beginning, The Mother beyond The Mother. In a world that often negates the power and necessity of feminine principles, this card returns us to the warmth, tenderness, and sacred intelligence from which we came. It is a card of receiving, not achieving, of accepting love from The Mother of us all. She is the life-giving force that forgives and cherishes even the most wounded and disparate soul. No matter how lost you are, The Womb awaits your return to help you heal and grow. This card is a call to keep things simple, to return, to be reborn in the name of love. The Womb is everywhere. It is beyond gender, beyond time. We are within it as it is within us.

WHAT WOULD HONORING THE FEMININE LOOK LIKE
TO YOU? WHERE WOULD YOU BEGIN? IMAGINING
YOURSELF AS LOVED IS A GOOD PLACE TO START.



WHEN LIGHT: nourishment, harmony, warmth, love
WHEN DARK: stricken, ecological crisis, infertility, imbalance
GO DEEPER: Gustave Courbet's "The Origin of the World"







THE STORM

THE CHAOS, THE WHIRLWIND, THE DISORDER



THE STORM'S INTENTION IS TO REBALANCE YOUR EQUILIBRIUM. IT IS A RESULT OF PRECARIOUS CONDITIONS, NOT THE CAUSE OF THEM.

Possessing an energy much like the tarot's Tower card, The Storm undoes all that is. Everything that was solid, known, and relied upon is stripped away by the winds of fate. The ground becomes the sky, the sky becomes the center, and then the center disappears. The storm is a great equalizer—no matter how far we've come on the path, no matter our age, wealth, or wisdom—we can't hide from its savage winds. Their disturbing howls stir anxiety and make it impossible to see and think straight. You must wait it out. If you try to fight The Storm, you will lose. A better option is to seek temporary shelter and a reliable friend. When all else fails, go within. There, for a moment, you settle into the eye of The Storm.

THE STORM LAYS BARE THE TRUTH THAT THERE ARE FORCES LARGER THAN YOU. THIS UNDERSTANDING IS A RELIEF, BUT ALSO A PRECIPITANT OF POWER THAT REQUIRES YOUR SURRENDER.



WHEN LIGHT: meaningful obliteration and annihilation
WHEN DARK: meaningless disorder and dysfunction
GO DEEPER: the tornado scene in "The Wizard of Oz," Rilke's "The Man Watching"







THE UNDERWORLD



THE NIGHTMARE, THE ORDEAL, THE BOTTOM

SEARCH FOR IMAGES OF A MAP OF DANTE'S INFERNO.
WHAT DOES THE STORY OF EPIC DESCENT STIR IN YOU?

This is no time to mince words: the archetypal territory of The Underworld is fraught with nightmares, suffering, and pain. It is the darkest shadow realm, which we try vigilantly to avoid or deny at any cost. Try as we might, the darkness pulls us into its depths through disturbing dream images, unexpected accidents, illness, war, conflict, and ultimately death. Not visiting The Underworld (or denying its existence altogether) is what gives it dangerous power. Traversing it forces us to bow humbly to the greater forces that be, while summoning the inner strength we previously underestimated. Take solace that The Underworld subsumes everyone from time to time, making us deeper friends, more intimate partners, soldiers of light amid our shadowy times. Facing darkness and choosing light is the most profound calling of all.

ONE OF THE EARLIEST STORIES ON RECORD IS THAT OF
THE GODDESS INANNA'S DESCENT. TURNS OUT DESCENDING
INTO THE UNDERWORLD IS AS OLD AS TIME ITSELF.



WHEN LIGHT: bravery, depth, facing of deepest fears

WHEN DARK: denial, suppression, evil, unconsciousness

GO DEEPER: read "Meeting the Shadow,"

edited by Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams



XLIX

THE FAULTLINE



THE FAULTLINE

THE FISSURE, THE CRACK, THE WEAK LINK



IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOMETHING A LOVED ONE SAID CAUSED
A CRACK IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS NEVER BEEN
MENDED. REVISIT IT. THE TIME TO HEAL IS NIGH.

Imagine walking across a frozen lake that begins to crack before your eyes. No matter how optimistic and brave you might be, panic ensues. You become fearful and tense and long for stable ground. Such is the energy of The Faultline. It's the energy of walking on eggshells, of precarious dynamics, of sensing what is ready to break open into chaos. It's likely this cracking open is overdue, as faultlines develop slowly and naturally from underlying elemental pressures. This card comes as a potent warning not to deny the shakiness that's afoot. It's much better to prepare yourself for change than to walk along The Faultline pretending all is well. There is no easy fix for the situation at hand—it will require a foundational shift that alters the current dynamics from the ground up.

IN JAPANESE KINTSUGI POTTERY, GOLD IS USED TO
MEND CRACKS. BREAKS ARE THOUGHT OF AS PRECIOUS
RATHER THAN SOMETHING TO BE HIDDEN.



WHEN LIGHT: redefining reality, breaking open
WHEN DARK: precariousness, pretending, delusion
GO DEEPER: dance to "Everything Is Broken," by Bob Dylan





THE BARDO

THE LIMINAL, THE IN-BETWEEN, THE TRANSITION

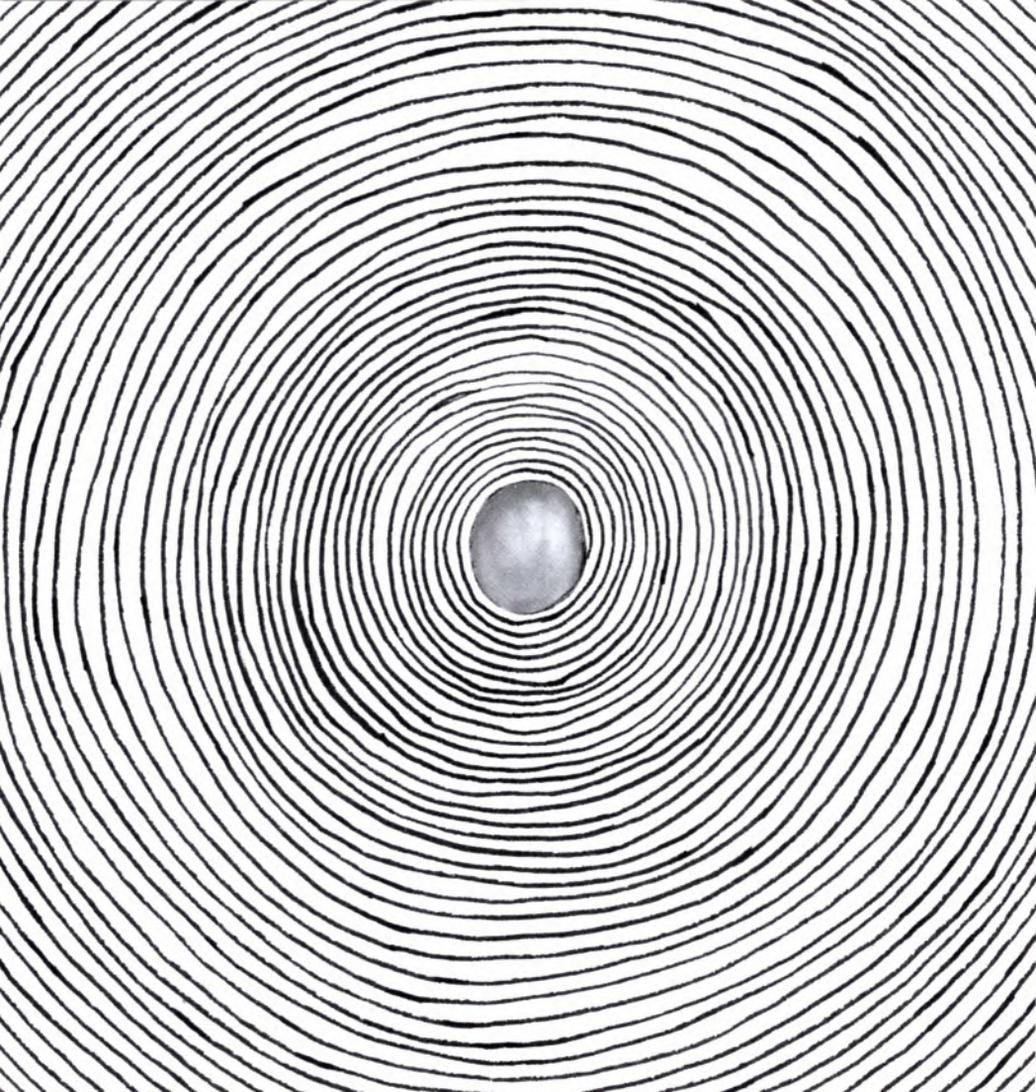
It is said that The Bardo is a place between this life and the next, a liminal realm through which souls pass. Envisioning this inherently mysterious space creates the potential for us to rise above the concerns of this world and see our relationships through a cosmic and timeless lens. We may receive messages from those who are no longer with us or see visions of lives not yet lived. In The Bardo there is potential to forgive the unforgivable, to say the unsaid, to see The Unseen, to love the unloved, to let go of all the things that cause us pain. The Bardo suspends us in its spaciousness for just long enough to open us to higher wisdom. Its energy does not belong to Earth as we know it, but rather to the Cosmic network of which we are a single thread.

WHEN THE VEIL BETWEEN THIS LIFE AND THE NEXT IS THINNED, ENERGY IS STIRRED. THIS ALLOWS FOR REMARKABLE HEALING AND VISION.

THE BARDO IS NOT TO BE FEARED. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ITS ENERGY BY RECOGNIZING WHAT NEEDS TO BE RESOLVED. TRUST THAT THERE IS A MESSAGE FOR YOU FROM BEYOND. WHO IS SPEAKING? GO AHEAD AND LISTEN.

WHEN LIGHT: spaciousness, grace, forgiveness, truth
WHEN DARK: torment, dislocation, hallucination, transience
GO DEEPER: "The Tibetan Book of the Dead,"

"Lament of the Dead," by James Hillman and Sonu Shamdasani



THE TOOLS





THE ARCHETYPAL FIRE IS AT THE BEGINNING OF ALL TRANSFORMATION, PURIFICATION, AND MANIFESTATION. NEARLY EVERY SPIRITUAL LINEAGE HONORS THE FLAME.

THE FLAME

THE FIRE, THE SPARK, THE GLIMMER

In Sanskrit, the word for fire is *agni*. The ancient yogis saw this flame at the center of the abdomen and believed it to be responsible for our vitality. When it is lit, we are connected to our purpose and sense that life is a sacred gift. It is said that those who cannot see the sacred around them have let their inner flame go out. Think of this card as a call to reignite that fire, to cup your hands gently around those things you've forgotten and protect the flame, no matter how harshly the winds around you blow. It could be an inner archetype that begs you to light its wick. It is likely that The Poet, The Mystic, or The Shaman would call to you with the language of The Flame.



TO ENLIVEN THE CONNECTION WITH THIS ARCHETYPAL ENERGY, PRACTICE THE CANDLE-GAZING TECHNIQUE CALLED *TRATAKA*. NOTICE HOW LIGHTING A SINGLE CANDLE IN ANY SPACE BRINGS MAGIC TO THE ROOM AND CREATES A SENSE OF REVERENCE.

WHEN LIGHT: health, mental clarity, good digestion
WHEN DARK: excess heat and anger, complete darkness
GO DEEPER: "The Light You Give Off," by Rumi,
Gerhard Richter's candle paintings







THE TEAR



THE MOURNING, THE RELEASE, THE RAIN

THE TEAR IS POWERFUL, AND IT IS POSSIBLE TO
BE SUBSUMED IN ITS WATERS. FIND A SUPPORTIVE
PLACE TO OPEN THE FLOODGATES.

Tears are droplets of letting go. Once they begin to fall, we allow the swelling tide of emotion to run its elemental course. Often The Tear is what is needed in order for a conversation or situation to break into the next level of intimacy and vulnerability. Some say that tears are so powerful in softening our egos that they open up a portal to The Unseen world. Through our watery eyes the ancestors catch a glimpse of us, and we are reminded of their eternal embrace. We sense our humanity, our humility, and we allow ourselves to be held. It is likely this card appears when there is grieving yet to do, a sinking down into disappointment or despair that, once acknowledged, will bring a shimmer of clarity to our dewy eyes.

IF BOTH THE TEAR AND THE RIVER APPEAR IN A
READING, THIS INDICATES AN EXCESS OF THE WATER
ELEMENT IN YOUR LIFE, AS IN THE AYURVEDIC
TRADITION, BALANCE IT WITH FIRE AND EARTH.



WHEN LIGHT: melody, melancholy, flowing through
WHEN DARK: drowning, drama, murkiness
GO DEEPER: "Rain," by Vachel Lindsay



LIII



THE RIDDLE



THE RIDDLE



THE PUZZLE, THE QUESTION, THE MYSTERY

PONDER THESE KOANS:
THE COIN THAT'S LOST IN THE RIVER IS FOUND IN THE RIVER.
IF YOU MEET THE BUDDHA, KILL THE BUDDHA.

When The Riddle is present, one must stop searching for "the right answer." It cannot be found, and ultimately it is not important. Rather, there must be a shift from the literal to the metaphorical, from logic to mythic. You are thinking too small and literally about the situation. The Riddle card appears when the energy is deep and mysterious, like the elusive wisdom in a Zen koan. Focusing harder won't do it. Neither will increased effort. Time, surrender, and humor are your only allies. What feels like the most pressing dilemma won't reveal its deeper wisdom for a long time. Eventually you'll learn a profound lesson from The Riddle. For now, get comfortable with the limitations of your intellect and the reality of not knowing. It may, in fact, be the only reality there is.

WHO AM I?
THE ONLY WAY TO WORK WITH A RIDDLE
SUCCESSFULLY IS TO NOT WORK.



WHEN LIGHT: a great awakening or "aha" moment
WHEN DARK: manipulation, deceit, trickery
GO DEEPER: practice the Buddhist "I don't know" mind







THE VOW



THE PROMISE, THE OATH, THE CONTRACT

ANYTIME THE ENERGY OF THE VOW IS PRESENT, WE ARE IN THE ARCHETYPAL REALM OF CEREMONY AND RITUAL. THAT MEANS TIME STANDS STILL, AND ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.

When The Vow is spoken, the air shifts, karmic ties are formed, and destiny tilts on its axis. Our words and intentions have immense power. There is a reason the great mythic stories of our past often include the recitation of oaths and the mixing of drops of blood as a mark of union. The tricky part is that reciting The Vow (no matter how casually) activates the eternal and unseen forces of the world. The ancestors bear witness. The laws of nature respond. These promises cannot be unsaid or forgotten, so breaking them can leave lingering complexities and loose ends. This card calls us to acknowledge The Vow we are living by (consciously or unconsciously) and either recommit to it or create a ritual that signifies its closure. You've been underestimating the power of your promises.

THINK OF THE LAST PROMISE YOU MADE. WAS IT TO YOURSELF OR ANOTHER? HAS IT BEEN UPHELD OR BROKEN?



WHEN LIGHT: bearing witness to the shift toward destiny
WHEN DARK: unconscious vows, unkept promises, messy karma
GO DEEPER: learn the Yamas (the five vows of the seeker)







THE VISION



THE DREAM, THE IMAGINED, THE REVEALED

YOU CAN GAUGE HOW CONNECTED YOU ARE TO YOUR VISION
BY HOW TIRED YOU ARE. SINCE THE VISION FEEDS US
ENERGY, IT AFFECTS OUR LIFE FORCE AND VITALITY.

It is said that we are each born with a unique vision, a destiny toward which we are aimed. It is also said that we forget this vision the moment we are born...thus we are sent on a lifelong journey of rediscovery. Such is the elusive nature of The Vision. It slips away, yet it guides. It appears in strange dreams and surreal images, seemingly unattainable and preposterous. When we are connected to The Vision, we carry an inspired, enchanted aliveness that others recognize. We trust the world and its synchronicities. We walk through new doors into wondrous opportunities. **We all want to be near those with vision.** They emit energy more potent than any elixir. When we lose connection to The Vision, life becomes dull and exhausting, lacking meaning. Bring back the mystery, bring back the dreams.

LOOK AT ART YOU LOVED WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG.
LISTEN TO OLD RECORDS AND POEMS.
THESE ARE ALL WAYS TO ACTIVATE THE VISION.



WHEN LIGHT: potent imagination, synchronicity, trust
WHEN DARK: disconnected from art and dreams, listless, aimless
GO DEEPER: "Twin Peaks," by David Lynch,
"The Dream," by Frida Kahlo







THE GEM

THE DIAMOND, THE GOLD, THE INNER TREASURE



THE MOMENTS OF YOUR LIFE THAT GLIMMER ARE CLUES TO WHERE THE GEM RESIDES. DON'T COVET THE SPARKLING DIAMOND OF ANOTHER. THE GEM IS LIKE A FINGERPRINT, NEVER TO BE REPEATED AGAIN. FIND YOURS.

There are infinite names for The Gem. It is also known as the jewel, the star, the talent, the gift, the gold. One thing for certain is that it is found deep within a substance that is very much **unlike** it (for example, a diamond in the rough). The Gem always stands in contrast to its surroundings. You can't find it when you are among comforts and pleasantries. Precious stones develop slowly deep in the earth, amid pressure and darkness. Discovering The Gem requires a descent beneath the surface, where there is no definitive map. Yet the longing to touch the true gem within us is so strong that we cannot help but seek out its radiance. Your gem, like your destiny, is unlike any other in the entire world...keep digging.

IN MYTHOLOGY, THE DIAMOND IS OFTEN LINKED TO THE DAIMON, OR INNER LIGHT, THAT LEADS US TOWARD OUR TRUE SELF, OUR PURPOSE, OUR DESTINY.



WHEN LIGHT: unique, shining, generative, irreplaceable

WHEN DARK: envy, greed, grasping

GO DEEPER: Legend of the Crystal skulls,
Leonard Cohen's "Diamonds in the Mine"







THE RING



THE INFINITE, THE WHEEL, THE CONNECTION

TAKE STOCK OF THE JEWELS YOU ADORN YOURSELF
WITH. WATCH OUT FOR RINGS YOU WEAR OUT OF HABIT
THAT KEEP YOU CONNECTED TO THE OLD YOU.

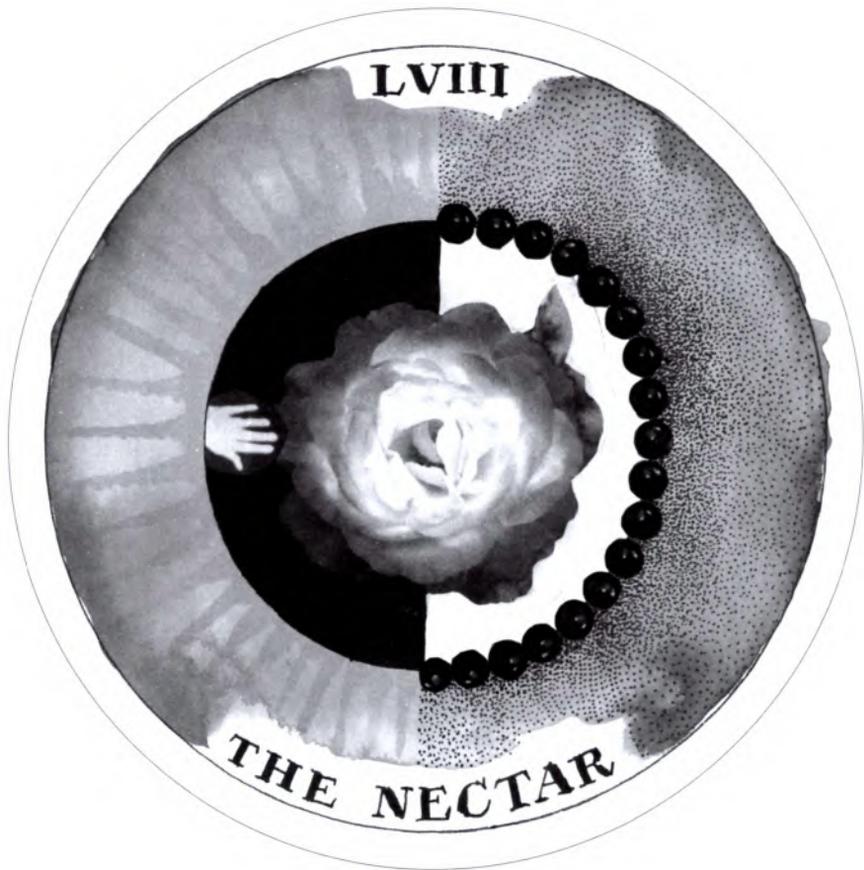
The Ring is an image of connectedness. Rather than viewing life as linear, as a series of progressive achievements, The Ring challenges us to sense the cyclical, infinite nature of our world and experiences. Beginnings and endings fall by the wayside as we practice seeing ourselves as part of the cosmic circularity of creation. For this reason, it's no surprise a ring is worn on the finger to represent eternal love that surpasses space, time, and worldly things. So much can be projected onto this archetypal image, because it mimics the Earth's orbit around our great sun and the intimate bond between two lovers. It is the micro and macro united. This card calls us to deepen connection with self, other, and the world at large. Meanwhile, there may be a literal ring waiting to adorn your finger.

STUDY IMAGES OF THE MANDALA, THE UNUS MUNDUS,
THE OUROROBOS, AND THE MEDICINE WHEEL.



WHEN LIGHT: connectedness, humility, sacred cycles
WHEN DARK: unconscious repetition, starving for connection
GO DEEPER: Rilke's "I Live My Life in Widening Circles"







THE NECTAR



THE MEDICINE, THE ELIXIR, THE GARDEN

THE NECTAR, THE MYSTIC, AND ALETHEIA CARDS ARE LINKED. IT IS THE MYSTIC WHO, LIKE KRISHNA, TURNS POISON INTO NECTAR. AND IT IS TRUTH THAT CAN OFTEN SERVE AS A POTENT ELIXIR FOR HEALING.

In Hindu mythology there is a miraculous substance known as *amrit*, or nectar, that contains infinite healing power. This golden nectar or sacred elixir is the drink of immortality and, like its sister substance *soma*, is known to activate subtle intelligent forces that ease the mind, body, and spirit. Though esoteric, these images lead us to the central energy of this archetype—the sweet, potent, heavenly essence that lubricates our spirit back to life. The Nectar card calls us to identify and relish in places, practices, people, and activities that regenerate and heal. Medicine is needed, and it comes in subtle form that you may be overlooking. Seek the most sensuous fragrant flower in the garden you have forgotten. Don't underestimate this remedy. It is said when someone has activated this substance within, it is reflected in their shimmering eyes.

SENSE THE NECTAR WITHIN YOU, DRIPPING FROM THE CROWN OF THE HEAD AND SOOTHING THE BRAIN. LET IT DRIP DOWN THE SPINE LIKE SWEET HONEY.



WHEN LIGHT: glowing, relaxed, subtle illumination
WHEN DARK: fixation on fixing, aggressive approach to healing
GO DEEPER: "The Wind, One Brilliant Day," by Antonio Machado







THE MEDALLION

THE AMULET, THE TALISMAN, THE HEIRLOOM



IMAGINE IF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY, SCHOOL,
OR SOCIAL GROUP HAD A CREST, EMBLEM,
OR AMULET. WHAT WOULD IT BE? DRAW IT.

The passing on of sacred objects is an ancient ritual within families, between lovers, and in tribes across the globe. We gift jewels, treasures, keepsakes, and mementos of all kinds...some of great material value, others that hold emotional resonance, and still others with both. Yet when these gifts are bestowed upon us, it is important to recognize that they may bind us to an unspoken agreement or promise. When The Medallion card appears, be aware of how the objects you hold dear may be embedded with unconscious energy or expectations. Materials hold consciousness, and it's time to reconcile the vibration of the objects around you. What do you covet and collect? Why? Is there an object you have held on to for years that you are ready to release? Perhaps it is time to reach for The Medallion that aligns with your deepest values.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT OBJECTS CONTAIN SUPERNATURAL PROPERTIES? WHEN HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED THIS TO BE TRUE?



WHEN LIGHT: upholding tradition, protecting, honoring

WHEN DARK: burdensome inheritance, habituation

GO DEEPER: ancient Egyptian scarab amulets







THE KISS



THE TOUCH, THE CHEMISTRY, THE SEX

Before a first kiss the air is electrified. Each breath is alive with possibility and magic. *What will their lips be like? Their tongue? Do they want me in return?* The archetypal energy of The Kiss is a heightened sensation of merging with other, of letting in what was moments ago separate. Two become one. It is risky but beautiful business. These moments forever change us as we move past the solitary self toward union and acceptance. This card suggests true intimacy is around the corner, which requires bravery and surrender. When The Kiss takes a nonhuman form, it may be experienced as touching the sacred, hearing a whisper, or being graced by a divine being. You will recognize the presence of The Kiss by cold chills and an awakening of the heart.

WRITE DOWN THE STORY OF YOUR FIRST KISS.
WHAT WAS CHANGED IN THAT MOMENT?

INTIMACY IS MULTILAYERED AND REQUIRES OUR
REFLECTION. REVISIT WHAT YOU CONSIDER TO BE
SENSUAL, TABOO, ACCEPTABLE, SHAMEFUL.



WHEN LIGHT: sensual expressiveness, merging, inviting
WHEN DARK: neediness, pressure, dominance, disrespect
GO DEEPER: Andy Warhol's 1963 film "Kiss"







THE MASK



THE PERSONA, THE PERFORMANCE, THE REVEAL

AS THE ZEN KOAN SUGGESTS, MEDITATE ON
YOUR ORIGINAL FACE—THE ONE YOU HAD BEFORE
YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER WERE BORN...

We often think of a mask as something that **conceals** our identity. Yet contemplate the possibility that The Mask permits our true identity to be **revealed**. It **allows**. The Mask gives voice to that which was previously rejected. When this card appears, enact the side of you that is seeking expression, yet was never given a role to play on the stage of your life. You are in the realm of theater, so anything is possible. Speak with the Other's voice, embody the Other's limbs. You are taking part in the ritual of expanding The Self. There may be mischief and deception around, and others may be trying on new masks too. No one is sure who is who. It's likely you've become so attached to a single mask that you need to fall face forward into this perception-bending time. Trust it.

THINK OF A MASK OR COSTUME YOU WORE THAT FELT
EMPOWERING, MARVELOUS, OR FUN. WHO WAS IT YOU
WERE BEING? IS THAT "WHOM" STILL WITHIN YOU?

WHEN LIGHT: reveals what has been suppressed

WHEN DARK: further conceals what is rejected

GO DEEPER: the masks of James Ensor,
Joan Jonas, Jimmie Durham





THE SWORD

THE KNIFE, THE BLADE, THE WEAPON

To use The Sword is to decide. The blade separates one reality from another. The choice is made, and all else falls away. If you find The Sword in your grasp, you can no longer hesitate. This weapon requires a clear and decisive mind and a willingness to act. An onlooker may think The Sword bearer is hasty and violent, but the most compassionate and responsible gesture is one that is honest, swift, and accurate. Our first encounter with The Sword is at birth, when the cord we share with The Mother is cut. This moment defines our separation from her and begins our journey of becoming our self. We must make these cuts again and again, if we are to grow. Decisions shape our life, and The Sword is an infamous shaper of destiny.

CONTEMPLATE THE BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF THE FIRST AND SECOND ARROW. SWING THE SWORD ONCE, WITH PRECISION AND COMMITMENT. MORE THAN THAT WILL BE PAINFUL FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED.

WHEN LIGHT: cutting through to what is essential
WHEN DARK: hasty, backstabbing, a dull and painful blade
GO DEEPER: Marina Abramović's "Rhythm Series,"
Caravaggio's "Judith Beheading Holofernes"

BOUNDARY MAKING, PRIORITIZING, AND CLARIFYING ARE ALL GESTURES MADE POSSIBLE BY THE SWORD. THE SWORD IS A METAPHOR FOR THE PEN AND THE BRUSH—THE ARTIST'S FIERCE AND GRACEFUL TOOLS.





THE SPREADING OF THE VENOM IS LIKE A CHAIN REACTION. WHEN WE STRIKE OTHERS, IT IS LIKELY WE HAVE OURSELVES BEEN STRUCK. BREAK THE CYCLE.



THE VENOM

THE POISON, THE CURSE, THE TOXIN



Much to our dismay, The Venom is always lurking in the shadows in one form or another. Its toxic presence may be found in our relationships, thoughts, speech, or environment. Thankfully the cycle of purification and detoxification comes so naturally that it is built into our every exhale. We breathe out carbon dioxide, and the plants return it to us as oxygen. Archetypal venom is rarely remedied as easily, however, and it can come in potent forms and quantities that are deeply damaging to us and to the world. When The Venom card appears, there is a harmful substance in our psychic realm that must be identified. Perhaps your words have a sting of poison about them; perhaps a relationship is slowly draining your reserves. Acknowledgment is the first step. Change is the second. The remedy will reveal itself in time and, with it, forgiveness.

WHEN YOU HARM ANOTHER, YOU HARM YOURSELF. KEEP IN MIND THIS GOES FOR OUR EARTH AS WELL, WITH COSMIC CONSEQUENCES.

WHEN LIGHT: self-realization through suffering
WHEN DARK: unwillingness to find a solution or forgive
GO DEEPER: "A Poison Tree," by William Blake







THE OFFERING

THE GIFT, THE PRESENT, THE SACRIFICE



ONCE A WEEK, GANDHI GAVE UP SPEAKING FOR A DAY, OFFERING HIMSELF TO DIVINE SILENCE. THE OFFERING CAN COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.

Unlike many of the other cards in the deck, The Offering carries a clear-as-day message and a call to action. As you may have guessed, it is time for something to be given—and given up—for the sake of the bigger picture. If nothing comes to mind immediately (though it's likely it will), take time in meditation to consider what must be offered and who is to receive it. It's likely you'll feel attachment and hesitancy. You'll make excuses. *But recognize the link between the word "sacrifice" and the word "sacred."* One leads to the other. When we offer up something to the greater good, we lighten our load and become more able to serve. Imagine for a moment if you were to offer your whole self, unconditionally, to the world. For now, start small.

IF THERE IS A GIFT YOU'VE BEEN THINKING OF GIVING SOMEONE SPECIAL, NOW IS THE TIME.



WHEN LIGHT: generosity, donation, volunteering
WHEN DARK: giving with expectations, keeping track
GO DEEPER: Odin's sacrifice of his eye in Norse mythology







THE PRAYER

THE WORSHIP, THE REVERENCE, THE HOMAGE



EXPERIMENT WITH THE ACT OF BOWING DOWN. NEARLY ALL SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS MAKE A PRACTICE OF PROSTRATION.

What is prayer? When are we in a state of prayer and when are we not? To whom or what do we pray? Archetypally, the practice of prayer has been with us since the dawn of time as a remedy for the omnipresent self-centered thinking that spins us toward illusion. Prayer leads us beyond our ego, as we move from our little story to the big one. Some say we are in a state of prayer anytime we are not the center of our own thoughts. Others say prayer is a natural result of gratitude. Perhaps it is simply surrender. Or service. Whatever prayer is for you...this card reminds us of its importance. Get quiet, low, humble, and soft. Bow and touch the ground as your heart lifts to the sky. Though it may be uncomfortable, it is time. Nothing else will do.

EVERY SONG, KISS, BREATH, WORD CAN BECOME A PRAYER.
IT IS A FEELING, NOT AN ACTION. CONSIDER THE ANCIENT
MANTRA *ONG NAMO GURU DEV NAMO* ("I BOW TO THE CREATIVE
CONSCIOUSNESS WITHIN. I BOW TO THE TEACHER WITHIN").

WHEN LIGHT: offering to be of service, asking for guidance

WHEN DARK: expecting results, self-aggrandizement

GO DEEPER: ask to be of service







THE SEED



THE BEGINNING, THE ORIGIN, THE PEARL

Beginnings come in many forms. They are not always a beautiful seed placed intentionally in nourishing soil. Origin stories (like any birth story) are complex, surprising, multilayered and usually reveal a central image or detail that represents the fully formed being. Simply stated, the end is present in the beginning; or the entire oak tree resides within the acorn. Whether you follow this imaginal theory or not, know that when this card appears, there is potent generative energy all around. It stirs your very insides and usually results in an antsy, impatient feeling. Pay particular attention to what agitates you, as it is a sure sign of growth to come. You are bumping up against a growth edge. It is from the grit that the pearl eventually comes to be.

ONE OF THE ALCHEMISTS' FAVORITE IMAGES WAS THE PEARL. THE IRRITANT, OVER TIME, BECOMES THE TREASURE. WHAT IS YOUR GRIT?

THE TRUE SEED IS ELUSIVE. IF WE FOLLOW ANY STORY TOWARD ITS ORIGIN, IT SPIRALS FARTHER AND FARTHER BACK IN TIME. IN THIS WAY, WE ARE ALWAYS THE SEED AND ALWAYS THE FRUIT IT BEARS

WHEN LIGHT: generative, fertile, germinating, building

WHEN DARK: festering, stewing, dormant

GO DEEPER: James Hillman's acorn theory in "The Soul's Code"





THE STONE

THE ETERNAL, THE ANCHOR, THE ROCK

As an archetypal object, The Stone holds psychic and literal weight. Its energy is one of permanence, concreteness, and reliability. The Stone's ability to transform is nearly imperceptible to us, as it changes ever so slowly over countless human life spans. A single stone may see thousands of generations come and go; therefore it contains an ancient and eternal presence. The Stone is best used to anchor our wild side, so no matter how far we roam, we can always find our way back. The Stone tethers us to Earth, helping to ground and connect us to stillness, quiet, and peace. When this card appears, it is likely The Stone is a remedy for what ails us. Humble and easily unnoticed, the power of The Stone balances the frenzy of our world.

WHEN LIGHT: steadfast, loyal, committed, present

WHEN DARK: weighted down, holding back, cold

GO DEEPER: Caspar David Friedrich's "A Walk at Dusk"

BUILD A CAIRN IN NATURE. FIND INSPIRATION IN
ANDY GOLDSWORTHY'S STONE EGG FORMS.

IN JEWISH MOURNING TRADITIONS, STONES ARE LEFT
AT GRAVES RATHER THAN FLOWERS. SIT WITH THIS
VISION FOR A MOMENT AND SEE WHAT UNFOLDS.





THE MIRROR



THE REFLECTION, THE ILLUSION, THE LOOKING GLASS

SPEAK TO YOURSELF GENTLY AND KINDLY IN THE MIRROR. IT WILL FEEL AWKWARD AT FIRST, BUT IT IS A SURE WAY TO BECOME FRIENDS WITH YOURSELF.

We look into mirrors every day without recognizing them as portals into another realm. They can shatter, flatter, distort, reflect, and project an image back to us that we deem to be true. The energy of The Mirror is all about self-perception. When the archetype of The Mirror appears, we are in the mythic land of Narcissus, who saw himself reflected in a pool and fell in love with his own image. So compelled by his reflection, he could not turn away—a fixation that eventually led to his death. Recognize the power and danger of The Mirror: it is a construct, one that may drive a shard between you and your true self. The Mirror contains trickster energy. Put the phone down, stop with the comparisons, and let The Mirror stand empty for a while. Rest with the one inside.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTIONS, READ THE POEM "I AM NOT I," BY JUAN JIMENEZ, AND YOKO ONO'S "MIRROR PIECE," IN GRAPEFRUIT.



WHEN LIGHT: witnessing the deeper self, pure awareness

WHEN DARK: narcissism, comparison, harsh edges

GO DEEPER: Yayoi Kusama's "Infinity Mirror Rooms"







THE VESSEL

THE BODY, THE CONTAINER, THE CUP



THE PHYSICAL BODY IS THE MOST SACRED VESSEL OF ALL.
IT IS THE ONE IN WHICH YOU RESIDE FROM YOUR FIRST
BREATH TO YOUR LAST. IT MAY NEED YOUR ATTENTION.

The Vessel may be the most powerful archetypal form on Earth. It is everywhere. Cups hold liquid, stoves hold fire, our bodies hold organs, our homes hold families. Through the simple act of separation, The Vessel protects what it contains. Nests protect the eggs; savings accounts protect our earnings. Even the planets are contained within their circular orbit. When this card appears, it's time to assess what is being "held together" and how. Is The Vessel too tight? Too loose? Broken? Empty? Full? Or perhaps there is no vessel at all, and the contents spill in every direction. It is natural for structures to be formed and eventually fall apart. The Vessel has a life cycle that must be honored. Is it time for you to build, break, or repair? You must find out.

THE MENTOR AND THE HEALER MUST PAY PARTICULAR
ATTENTION TO THIS ARCHETYPAL FORM. HEALING CANNOT
BE SUSTAINED WITHOUT A STRONG CONTAINER.



WHEN LIGHT: stable, strong, graceful
WHEN DARK: trapped, being in a bubble
GO DEEPER: "Loving Cup," by the Rolling Stones







THE THREAD

THE PATH, THE VEIN, THE CIRCUIT



YOU MAY THINK YOU HAVE TO FIND THE THREAD AND
PULL IT. IMAGINE, THOUGH, THAT IT'S ALREADY TIED
AROUND YOU, WAITING FOR YOU TO FOLLOW IT HOME.

Life is a tangle. So much happens simultaneously and circuitously, leaving us grappling for meaning and direction in a network of distractions. When we connect to the energy of The Thread, however, we strike the deepest vein in the body. Our whole being responds to its tug. Meaning is pumped through our bloodstream. Our mind and spirits are lifted. We remember who we are and what we came into this world to do. Though this happens on the most profound level, it could be the simplest incident that activates The Thread—a song, an image, a conversation heard in passing. No matter how confusing and multilayered our modern lives become, if we are connected to The Thread, we are free. Being tethered to it is the only anchor our heart requires.

RECALL A MOMENT IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU
FELT FULLY ALIVE. THE THREAD IS WAITING FOR
YOU AMID THE DETAILS OF THAT MEMORY.



WHEN LIGHT: the circuit of meaning within chaos
WHEN DARK: binding, frustrating, taut
GO DEEPER: the sculptures of Eva Hesse





**THE
INITIATIONS**





EROS

LOVE AS DESIRE, EROTICISM, SENSUALITY

PLATO REMINDS US THAT EROS CAN BE EXPERIENCED AS PLATONIC LOVE. IT IS ACTIVATED WHEN WE WITNESS BEAUTY AND TRUTH IN THE WORLD, WHEN OUR BARRIERS SOFTEN.

Though Eros can be depicted as unbridled sexuality and eroticism, a more contemplative understanding of this archetypal energy leads us to *the root of desire itself*. What do we long for? Why are we awakened by love? What makes us hesitate in the face of intimacy? Eros reconnects us with the primal longing to merge with another human being, nature, music, art, plants, food, or anything that we perceive we are separate from. Eros allows us to momentarily unite. Our heart embraces Otherness, and in doing so we further understand our own. Our life force awakens. This card reveals an inevitable initiation into love's labyrinth. You may find yourself swirling in a new territory of desire and sensuality. Explore the labyrinth with a curious and honest heart—and remember, though the way is circuitous, you are always being led toward its center.

WHEN LIGHT: passion, playfulness, sexual health

WHEN DARK: madness, projection, obsession

GO DEEPER: "Love Sonnet XI," by Pablo Neruda,
"Basket of Figs," by Ellen Bass



THE HINDU GODDESS LALITA ("SHE WHO PLAYS") CAN HELP ACTIVATE EROS ENERGY. SHE IS ALSO KNOWN AS KAMESHWARI ("EMPERESS OF DESIRE").





AGAPE

DEVOTION, UNCONDITIONAL LOVE



AGAPE CAN ALSO BE FELT AS AN OVERWHELMING
LOVE OF FAMILY, PARTNER, COMMUNITY. RECOGNIZE
IT BY A DEEP SWELL OF GRATITUDE.

What if instead of putting yourself at the center of your spiritual practice, you put god, goddess, or nature at the center? How would this change your approach? Such is the energy of Agape. It is alive when we are in awe and wonder, our breath taken away by the sacred force that surrounds us and asks for nothing in return. This card can indicate a spiritual initiation that stretches your capacity to love and serve. You sense the earthly as the heavenly and vice versa. Such an initiatory moment can appear in any form, and, like a healing balm to the modern soul, its effects last a lifetime. The Agape card may also suggest you reassess what you worship every day (consciously or unconsciously). What are you elevating? Where does the sacred ladder you climb ultimately lead to?

THE GREEK WORD AGAPE INFORMS THE ENGLISH
WORD "AGAPE" TO HAVE THE MOUTH AGAPE IS TO
BE AWESTRUCK BY SOMETHING OF BREATHTAKING
DELIGHT WE ARE MADE HUMBLE ONCE AGAIN.



WHEN LIGHT: service, reverence, honor, joy
WHEN DARK: spiritual bypassing, righteousness
GO DEEPER: children's choirs from around the world







FACING THANATOS (DEATH) LEADS US TO ALETHEIA (TRUTH)

THANATOS

DEATH

It is tempting to oversimplify death and sum it up as transformation. But the true archetypal resonance of Thanatos cannot be easily assimilated or contained. Death is ongoing and omnipresent, an eternal response to the gift of birth. Witnessing the ending of another being, creature, phase, or stage has deep consequences for the psyche. We are forever changed by Thanatos as it sweeps us under its wings, making us relinquish control in every form. It leaves a mark of ash upon our heart, signifying we have touched the cusp of The Underworld and will return to the land of the living eventually, with more compassion and wisdom to share. This capacity is needed in our world. One who has faced the annihilation of Thanatos can face anything. When this card appears, it signifies an initiation into The Underworld.

THERE ARE THOSE WITH A GREAT GIFT FOR NAVIGATING THANATOS ENERGY. THANKFULLY WE FIND THESE GENEROUS SOULS IN EMERGENCY ROOMS, HOSPITALS, HOSPICE CENTERS, AND THE LIFE.



WHEN LIGHT: grieving, mourning, bearing witness to all that is

WHEN DARK: fear or insensitivity to old age, illness, the dying

GO DEEPER: "The Mower," by Philip Larkin





APOCALYPSIS

REMOVING THE VEIL OF DECEPTION

ALL KINDS OF THINGS WILL BE REVEALED DURING A TIME OF APOCALYPSIS—FROM BIG GLOBAL LIES TO LITTLE WHITE ONES THAT LACE THE BEDROOM SHEETS. BRACE YOURSELF FOR THE HORSE OF TRUTH TO STORM YOUR EVERY FIELD.

Apocalypse indicates a particularly painful time, one that unfolds when two disparate dynamics occur simultaneously, pulling the psyche in seemingly opposing directions. The first is a *lifting of the veil*. This means truths that have been kept in the dark are revealed, seen, and unearthed. No matter how relieving it is to witness them come into the light, an element of despair and grief follows. The second dynamic is *the regeneration that comes from the wreckage of the revealed truth*. The old narrative breaks, and a new story forms. Apocalypse energy is similar to a forest fire's: devastation for the sake of regeneration. The veil lifts and we see who and what has been hiding. From the nakedness of the truth a child is born. Have faith in the process, hold on to your center—that is the only way.

WHEN LIGHT: the unknown becomes known and guides the way

WHEN DARK: nihilism, fatalism, hopelessness

GO DEEPER: Michael Meade's "Why the World Doesn't End," the movie "This Is the End"

THIS CARD HAS A STRONG RELATIONSHIP TO ALETHEIA. IF BOTH CARDS APPEAR IN ONE READING, YOU'VE GOT SOME REAL UNCOVERING TO DO. TAKE HEED.



GNOSIS

INNERMOST KNOWING, MYSTIC TRUTHS

True knowledge is not found in facts and figures in scholarly books on library shelves. Rather, Gnosis points to the deep and timeless archetypal wisdom that rises from **the felt experience** of having touched the unknown with every one of the senses. Those who are drawn to Gnosis find themselves in esoteric studies, likely involving mysticism, alchemy, healing, or perhaps science. Knowing is their calling. Not knowing is their job description. No matter how far the alchemists take their studies, they come to the ultimate conclusion that facts slip toward mystery and soon the mystery results in facts. This card signifies a "knowing" that is life-changing. Once you experience it, you are forever changed and become a guardian of Gnosis. The eternal mystery is calling you...study your passion in the deepest way available to you.

WHEN LIGHT: contemplating the mystery, unanswerable questions
WHEN DARK: overintellectualizing and literalizing, asking others
GO DEEPER: Bruce Nauman's "The True Artist Helps
the World by Revealing Mystic Truths"

THIS CARD RELATES TO THE RIDDLE AND THE SHAPESHIFTER.
ALL CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH REVEALING MYSTIC TRUTHS.



THOSE WHO SAY THEY KNOW, DON'T.
THOSE WHO SAY THEY DON'T KNOW, KNOW.





KAIROS

MYTHIC TIME, SYNCHRONICITY

We have all had the experience of timelessness, of life beyond the ticking of the clock. It may be felt as time standing still, slow motion, or losing track of time on a walk or in a lovely conversation. This is known as *mythic time*, and it is the territory of Kairos. This card suggests there is a secondary time continuum that goes beyond any earthly clocks and schedules. Within this nonlinear realm we access divine timing. A single moment ripens with auspiciousness...and our actions change the trajectory of our whole life. Time becomes a living thing that watches over us and tells us precisely when to speak or act. When this card appears, it is all about patience and precision. No clock can guide you...wait for the rush of inner knowing and not a moment longer.

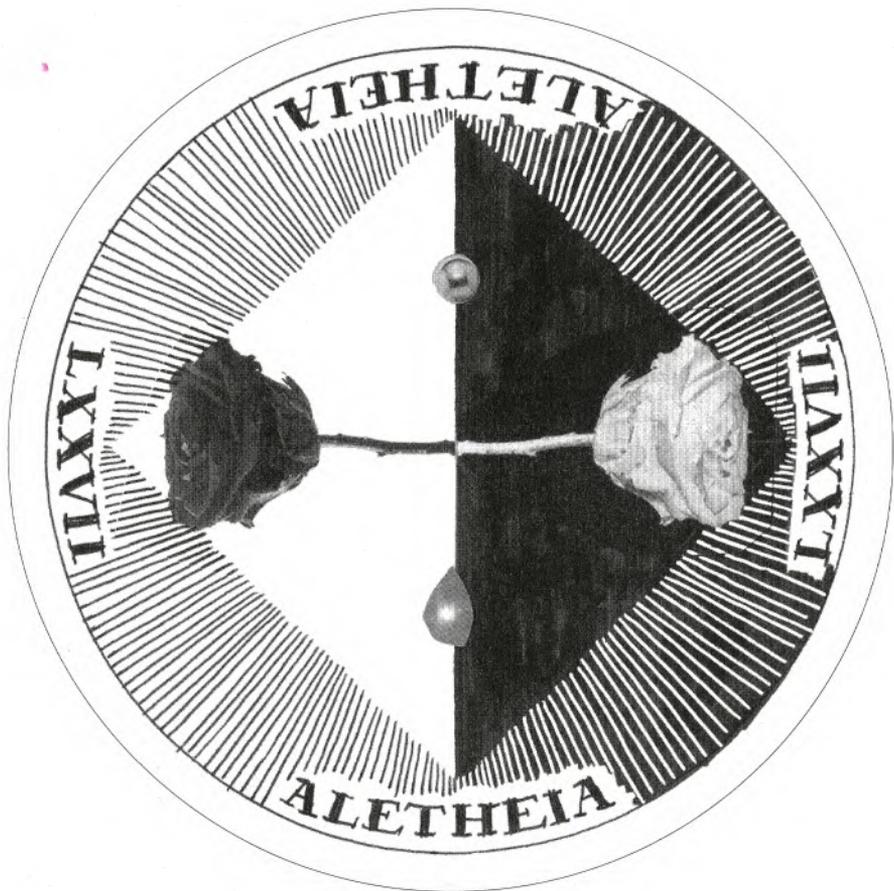
WHEN LIGHT: alignment, ease in decisions and action

WHEN DARK: fighting against time

GO DEEPER: Felix Gonzalez-Torres's "Untitled (Perfect Lovers)"

THE WORD "EVIL" COMES FROM THE ROOT "UNRIPE."
CONSIDER THAT **EVERYTHING HAS A TIME OF RIPENESS,**
WHEN IT BECOMES A NOURISHING FRUIT, SWEET TO THE LIPS.

COMPARE THE GREEK WORDS CHRONOS AND KAIROS. THIS WILL
GUIDE YOU TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF LOGOS AND MYTHOS.





PICASSO SAID, "WE ALL KNOW THAT ART IS NOT TRUTH. ART IS A LIE THAT MAKES US REALIZE TRUTH, AT LEAST THE TRUTH THAT IS GIVEN US TO UNDERSTAND."



ALETHEIA

TRUTH

Our soul recognizes the truth. When someone speaks it, a cool wave of relief washes over the room and all the facts and figures in the world fall by the wayside. Such is the power of Aletheia. It has an undeniable resonance that goes beyond the rational. We can also recognize Aletheia by its contagiousness. When we hear someone speak the truth, we see the truth within ourselves and are more likely to tell our own story. The Aletheia card requires us to step toward *an act of truth*. This might look like a conversation, a gesture, a poetic act, or a ritual that honors the unveiling of what's been concealed. Reclaiming your own truth is a way to reclaim your vital energy, health, and sense of belonging in the world. Truth has its own wings. Set it free.

WHEN LIGHT: clarity, revelation, disclosure
WHEN DARK: distortions, gaslighting, excuses
GO DEEPER: the goddesses Ma'at and Veritas



IT IS SAID THAT THE RESONANCE OF OUR VOICE CHANGES WHEN WE SPEAK A FALSTY. IN THIS LIGHT, PRACTICE SEEING TRUTH AS A VIBRATION.







THE EMBRACE OF ANIMA MUNDI IS AVAILABLE ANYTIME,
ANYWHERE, TO ANYONE—DAY OR NIGHT, RICH OR POOR. IT IS
A PROCESS OF UNVEILING OUR RESISTANCE TO ITS LOVE.



ANIMA MUNDI

THE SOUL OF THE WORLD, ALL THAT IS

Anima Mundi epitomizes the principle "Accept all. Reject none." Simply put, it is the living soul of the world in all its multifaceted, multidimensional layers, bonded together by loving cosmic forces. Diversity is celebrated, multiplicity is honored, and nothing is denied embrace. Constructs of separation dissipate into the wonderful mess of shared consciousness. Anima Mundi is the link between the literal and the imaginal, the rational and the mythic. It is the connective fiber that makes life meaningful. This card indicates an initiation on the level of the soul. You will awaken the unique light within and witness how this light contributes to the radiance of the entire universe. You will sense yourself as a critical note in the cosmic orchestra. Destiny is altered as you hear the enchanted melody of all living things.

WHEN LIGHT: tending to the sacred details of life
WHEN DARK: overwhelmed by the bigness of existence
GO DEEPER: alchemical drawings of Anima Mundi,
the life and paintings of Hilma af Klint



ANIMA MUNDI IS THE ENERGY BEHIND THE WORLD
CARD IN THE TAROT DECK. BOTH CARRY THEMES OF
UNIVERSAL UNITY, COMPLETENESS, AND EMBRACE.





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