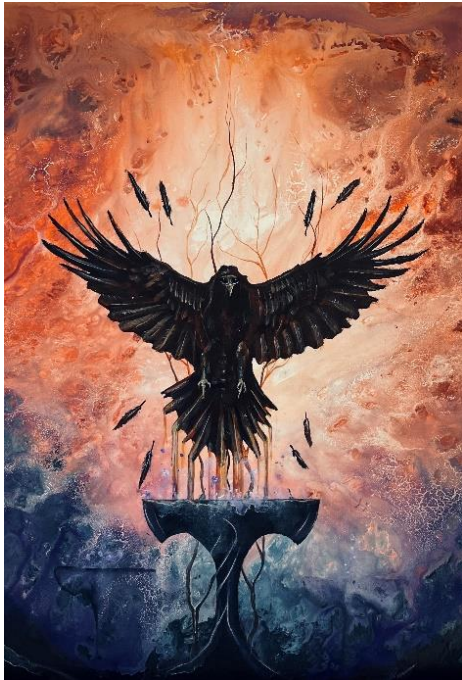


Wisdom

of the

Raven

An Oracle Guidebook



J Edward & Heather Neill

All Art by J Edward Neill



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Ravens...

Corvus corax...

What other creature in the world is as mysterious and wily as the blackest of all feather-bearers, the raven?

Wander through the folklore of almost every ancient civilization, and you will encounter numerous tales of this magnificent bird.

Guide, prophet, messenger, they will speak of.
Scavenger, brigand, murderer, they will claim.

The stories are many, but the truth of the raven is apparent. They are highly intelligent creatures. Their curiosity and capacity to learn are renowned, and their symbolism transcends cultural boundaries.

Yet, for as wondrous as their ability to learn may be, perhaps even greater is their ability to *teach*.

Wisdom of the Raven is the sixth deck illustrated and conceived by artist J Edward Neill. Within these cards, you will discover the secrets of *Corvus corax*, and in doing so, you will awaken many truths about yourself. This deck, like all those before it, is meant to be intuitive. The card names and imagery are intended to appeal directly to each querent's soul. No matter the words you find within this guidebook, this deck will be defined by you.

That said, perhaps the definitions which follow will prove useful. Use them as starting points for self-discovery. Let them illuminate your path through each reading.

And always remember, this deck is for you.



AVARICE

Avarice

Keywords: Materialism, Ambition, Desire

What we want, sometimes we must take.

But just as often, we must *leave*.

If you've pulled this card, it may be that you're feeling a fierce need for something. It could be a physical, materialistic thing you desire. Or it could be a person, a specific outcome, even a career.

Be careful what you wish for.

The raven of avarice wants you to consider the object of your desire. Are you certain this is what you want? If so, if you feel in your heart a deep and well thought out need for this shiniest of things, then reach out your hand and take it. Be mindful, of course, of the consequences.

Always consider the cost. Is this what you truly want? Most importantly, is this something you very much *need*? In life, many times you will discover that some treasures are best left alone.

Never let greed be your compass. Take only that which will enrich your soul.



BALANCE

Balance

Keywords: Equilibrium, Poise, Equality

Deftly and without err, the raven soars from tree to tree.

So must you, if you desire contentment.

When the Balance card arrives in your hand, it's time to take stock of all the things into which you pour your valuable time.

Work. Play. Rest.

Relationships. Money. Creativity.

Consider all the efforts you've made in the recent past, all the things you're doing right now, and all that you desire for the future. Is there something you're doing that isn't rewarding? Are you overextended, maybe even teetering on the edge? Do you lack the time to do the things you most enjoy?

Are you balanced?

From time to time, it's best to recenter yourself. Your life is but one narrow branch stretching out from a timeless tree, but you possess the power to shape its growth. Cut away the things which bring you no joy, and perch atop your branch with pride and steady composure.



BATTLE

Battle

Keywords: Conflict, Confrontation, Determination

Something brews on your horizon.

A struggle. A confrontation. A war within your heart and mind.

When it comes to life's most epic challenges, we can sometimes run and hide. But this isn't one of those moments. There's no fleeing this particular battlefield. To succeed, you'll need to face your foes directly and put an end to them.

Your enemy?

It could be anything in your life: A heavy conversation with leadership at work. Erecting firm boundaries with family members or loved ones. Challenging unruly friends or children to do better.

Or...

Your most fearsome foe could be *yourself*.

Remember that while conflict can usually be avoided, in some cases it's better to embrace life's important battles. This is true especially when your heart and happiness are at stake. The best defense (of yourself) is a good offense. Take the initiative, visualize the outcome you desire, and wade onto your chosen battlefield with a clear head and an open heart. Seek not to destroy, but to learn, improve, and overcome.



CHAOS

Chaos

Keywords: Mayhem, Disorder, Unpredictability

When the ravens scatter, trouble abounds.

Most of the time...in fact almost *all* of the time, we live our lives mere inches from the edge of chaos. All of the rules with which we exist, all the societal norms, and all the apparent structures are never as far from anarchy as we would like to believe.

It may be that you are (or are about to be) plunged into a state of disruption. You may have suffered a loss of security, a deep financial challenge, or a scattering of your usual social circle.

It's okay. These things happen.

When you pull the Chaos card, it's time to remember that when the wings of mayhem beat loudly in your life, you are a survivor. You must approach everything, even the loudest disturbance, with the notion that you will recover, and that nothing can defeat you. It may even be beneficial to *embrace* the idea of shaking things up. After all, too many rules and too much complacency are far from ideal.

Sometimes it's wisest to tear down the towers of your orderly life and rebuild it all from scratch. And sometimes you merely need to survive the storm and emerge stronger on the other side. You will know what to do when the moment arrives.



CITADEL

Citadel

Keywords: Home, Safety, Defend

All things, whether earthbound or soaring through the skies,
desire the feeling of *home*.

And so must you.

If you've pulled Citadel, the moment is right for you to consider what home means to you. It may be time to retreat behind your walls for a while, and to reassess all the things which lie beyond. It could also be time for a little housecleaning.

Are there people whom you consider home? If so, tend to them, reach out to them, make sure they are well. They're on your side, after all. What serves one of you may serve you all.

Are your personal boundaries useful and well-defined? If not, consider making changes to broaden and strengthen your comfort zone.

Lastly, are there undesirable circumstances which have slipped inside your feeling of home? It could be time to break out your broom and sweep them away. You don't need that kind of clutter in your life.

Having a strong, unified sense of home is what enables you to stride into the world, confident that when you return, you'll always have a safe place to rest your head.



COMPANIONS

Companions

Keywords: Bonding, Friendship, Mate

It has been said that we enter and exit this world alone. Perhaps it's true, yet what about all the space between beginning and end?

Quite a bit more enjoyable with companionship, yes?

Ravens are known to mate for life. Before pair-bonding, however, they tend to lead lonely, solitary lives. This dichotomy mirrors our own lives. Very alone at times. And tightly bonded during others.

If you've pulled the Companions card, it suggests one of two things:

You're very much bonded with someone, an intersection of friendship or love which you treasure. If this is you, cherish these moments. They tend to be rare. A true connection is sacred, and should be revered. Do not take these days for granted.

Or...

You're feeling alone right now. You crave friendship, or perhaps love, or maybe even something as simple as another person with whom you can share your deepest thoughts. In this case, the Companion is your reminder not to despair in loneliness. Know that it will pass, and even more importantly, if your alone time is spent with strong purpose and an open heart, you will again find the companionship you desire, and you will be all the wiser when that moment arrives.



CONNIVING

Conniving

Keywords: Untruthful, Sneaky, Conspiracy

The most challenging thing to see in others and sometimes even within ourselves?

Intentions.

As a general rule, whenever you dip your feathers into a new, unknown situation, and whenever you encounter someone who introduces *their* big plans into *your* life, it's wisest to be wary. If you've pulled the Conniving card, it may be that you've encountered someone who doesn't necessarily have your best interests in mind. They might not be outright malicious (or maybe they are) but in their propositions to you, motives are questionable. It's time for you to keep both eyes wide open. Look deeper. Gauge for yourself what's truly at stake.

Alternatively, it could be that your own motivations are worthy of review. Are you helping someone, but doing so with thoughts of your own personal gain? Are you hiding the truth of why exactly you're engaged in a certain behavior? And most importantly, are you being honest with *yourself*?

Now is not the time to assume innocence. Take flight high above and see things (in others and yourself) as they really are.



CREATION

Creation

Keywords: Making, Life-Giving, Nurturing

In the beginning, all that exists is an idea.

If you've drawn the Creation card, something new has begun to take shape in your mind. And in your heart.

It points to you being the architect of something wonderful.

An artistic endeavor.

A moment of self-discovery.

A budding new passion.

A friendship.

A family.

Whatever seed has begun to germinate within your life signals a powerful opportunity. The slate is wiped clean. What happened yesterday is not as important as what's happening right this very moment. Remember that we are all creators if we choose to be, and that all creation is sacred. If you're a parent, you can shape the destiny of a new life. If you're a builder, an artist, a writer, or a maker of things, great power and responsibility lies in your hands. Look upon this chance with wonder and awe, and then go about reshaping your world.



DEATH

Death

Keywords: Transformation, Endings, Possibility

All things must end.

And all things will change.

It may frighten you to pull the Death card. But fear not. It seldom portends the literal ending of life. Typically, Death means that something which has long endured is now coming to an end, or will soon change into something new.

Remember...

As the bones of yesteryear crumble in the earth, so too will the trees of tomorrow blossom.

Now of course the transformation from old to new may not be entirely comfortable for you. The sudden end of something with which you've grown comfortable can feel like a grave injury, and can lead to suffering if resisted or begrudged. Death, when looked at in an optimistic way, is a key forged by the past for use in the future. It's best not to fight the change that is coming. Accept it, and unlock the next chapter in your life without regret. Endings (and new beginnings) will come whether or not you desire them, and so it best to embrace them, rather than despair.



DISGUISE

Disguise

Keywords: Conceal, Misdirect, Secrets

Not everyone is as they seem. The sleekest feathers may conceal the darkest hearts, while the most ruffled and frayed might hide a heart of gold.

If you've pulled Disguise, it may be that you're not seeing the truth of something. It could be that, at least for a particular person or situation, your judgment is clouded. Perhaps you're biased against (or for) someone close to your heart. Or it might be that your vision is more clouded than usual. In any event, something might lie hidden just beneath your nose.

Now is the right time to embrace your intuition. If something in your circle of life seems off, if someone is behaving in an unusual way, or if you're carrying around the weight of extra uncertainty or anxiety, look closer at the object of your stress.

Often, the truth is hidden in plain sight.

So...

Investigate. Search. Shine a light into the shadows. With intuitive thinking as your guide and a heart cleared of prejudice, you just might reveal that which has eluded you.



DISINTEGRATION

Disintegration

Keywords: Break Apart, Divide, Simplify

If a group of ravens (known as an *unkindness*) cannot locate enough food in a given area, they will separate into smaller groups and spread out across a larger space.

A wise choice.

Oftentimes in life, things become too big.

Neighborhoods. Cities. Companies.

Social circles. Personalities. Egos.

And when something becomes very large, it will almost inevitably fall apart. In other words, it will disintegrate.

For you, this means that something has grown too big in your life.

Perhaps a specific situation commands too much of your time. Maybe something that was once small and manageable has grown out of control. Or, if you're an introspective type, it could be you've realized that an aspect of yourself has become too dominant.

So then...it must be broken down. Whether a life situation or a part of your own personality, now is the time for simplification. Shatter the patterns of yesterday, destroy your own bad habits, and remove yourself to a place of simplicity, in which everything is far less complex.



DIVINE

Divine

Keywords: Sacred, Spiritual, Core

Beyond guile, pretense, and disguise, we are all our one true self. This is who we really are, and who we are meant to always be.

If you've encountered the Divine card, the time has arrived for you to get in touch (or back in touch) with the true you. As you've moved through life, it's probable that you have masked your innermost self. Whether for protection, advancement, or simply out of social courtesy, the real you has lain dormant for too long.

No longer.

For your own benefit, it's time to peel off your outer layers, molt your downy feathers, and soar through the sky as yourself. What this means in practical terms is that you should consider dropping all behaviors which are inauthentic. For the moment, politeness should not be your concern. Cease doing the things you don't want to do, and begin doing the things you most desire. Start speaking your inner truth, even if those around you aren't quite ready.

You're ready, and in this moment, that is the most important thing. Being ourselves is the one sacred right we all possess. From birth until our end, we are best served to drop our masks and set our souls free to be themselves.



DUALITY

Duality

Keywords: Complexity, Opposition, Balance

Two things, though seeming at odds with one another, can both be true at the very same time.

Perhaps, at this precise moment, you feel pulled in more than one direction.

You may experience moments of joy even while grieving.

You may love someone, and yet find them at times insufferable.

You might have a choice before you, one which seems both appealing and frightening.

The nature of Duality is one that requires acceptance on your behalf. Know that it is possible to feel sorrow and joy simultaneously. It is normal to experience love, fear, anger, and peace all the span of a single day. Too much of a singular emotion or state of mind tends to become monotonous. You will never appreciate the light without first experiencing the darkness.

Take the time to look at the various conflicting situations in your life. Adopt a nuanced, rather than monolithic, viewpoint. Accept that although you may feel one thing is at odds with another, in all likelihood they are the same thing, but with multiple facets. Take a balanced view of your world, and find greater peace of mind.



ECCENTRIC

Eccentric

Keywords: Unusual, Different, Outlandish

Ravens, tricksters that they are, will often play games that other animals do not. Taunting, teasing, and sometimes annoying, they are known to ignore all the usual social agreements in favor of acting *odd*.

The social constructs of our society are useful, yet sometimes stifling. And often, those who are willing to bend or break the rules of behavior are those who will excel.

Now then...

You've pulled the Eccentric card. This isn't an excuse for you to go berserk, prank your friends, or adopt the fashions of a teasing, taunting raven. But perhaps now is the right time for you to step away from the usual social protocols. They say that fortune favors the bold, and that well-behaved people rarely make history. It may be that you'd like to express yourself creatively, maybe even outlandishly, but you haven't yet found the courage.

So perhaps now is your time.

Do the thing. Surprise your friends and family. Wear the bright feathers. Shock the world with something new and amazing of your design.



ELEVENS

Elevens

Keywords: Manifestation, New Beginnings, Oneness

When two ravens come together as one, they typically become life-mates, and never separate until death.

If you've pulled the Elevens card, chances are that a life change is near to manifesting within you, one that will forever change how you interact with the world.

You might already see the signs:

A new relationship (romantic or platonic) which feels unlike all the ones before it.

An idea which you have held dear in your heart for a long while, finally coming to life.

A powerful feeling of unity or harmony with another person, place, or situation.

Whether or not you believe in fate or destiny, it's likely you have held within your heart a specific dream, idea, or hope. This feeling inside you isn't like the others. It's sacred, and an integral part of who you truly are. When the Elevens arrive, it could signal that this sacred feeling, whether manifested directly by you or encountered through a series of curious coincidences, is about to change everything in your life. If so, this is only the beginning. Honor this moment. It is exceedingly rare, and to be cherished always.



ESTEEM

Esteem

Keywords: Honor, Admiration, Achievement

Hold not the object in high regard. Instead honor the person who created it.

When you pull the Esteem card, one of two things has happened:

Someone in your life has accomplished something extraordinary.

Perhaps they've created something wonderful, achieved a goal which they've long pursued, or broken through into a new and better state of mind. In any event, now is the time to honor them, and if possible, learn from them.

Or...

It could be that the person who has broken through...is *you*.

In either case, while this isn't the time for boasting, it is time for recognition. Honoring the achievements of others or yourself is a sacred moment in life. The important thing to remember is to hold *oneself* in high esteem, and not to idolize the achievement itself. Whenever someone close to you succeeds, absorb the knowledge that you can also succeed. And if it is you who has reached a sacred goal, consider becoming a mentor to others who seek the same.



F E A R L E S S

Fearless

Keywords: Bold, Directness, Conquering

Many of our fears, having formed during childhood, tend to last a lifetime.

Heights, Deep Water, the Dark

Confrontation, Rejection, Vulnerability

Encountering the Fearless card means only one thing. It's time to choose your most nagging fear and erase it from your life. In the case of physical fears, this usually means taking them on directly.

Putting yourself face-to-face with the object of your terror and repeatedly staring it down will result in that fear losing all power over you.

In the case of emotional or intellectual fears, a more nuanced approach is required. What's important is that you consciously bring yourself into close proximity with the very behavior of which you're afraid. Read books about your specific fear. Practice strategies in the mirror for dealing with others. Look yourself in the eyes and acknowledge the detrimental effects your fear has upon your life.

There is nothing to fear, not even fear itself.



FIXATION

Fixation

Keywords: Focus, Preoccupation, Obsession

Once a shiny object catches your eye, it's hard to let it go.

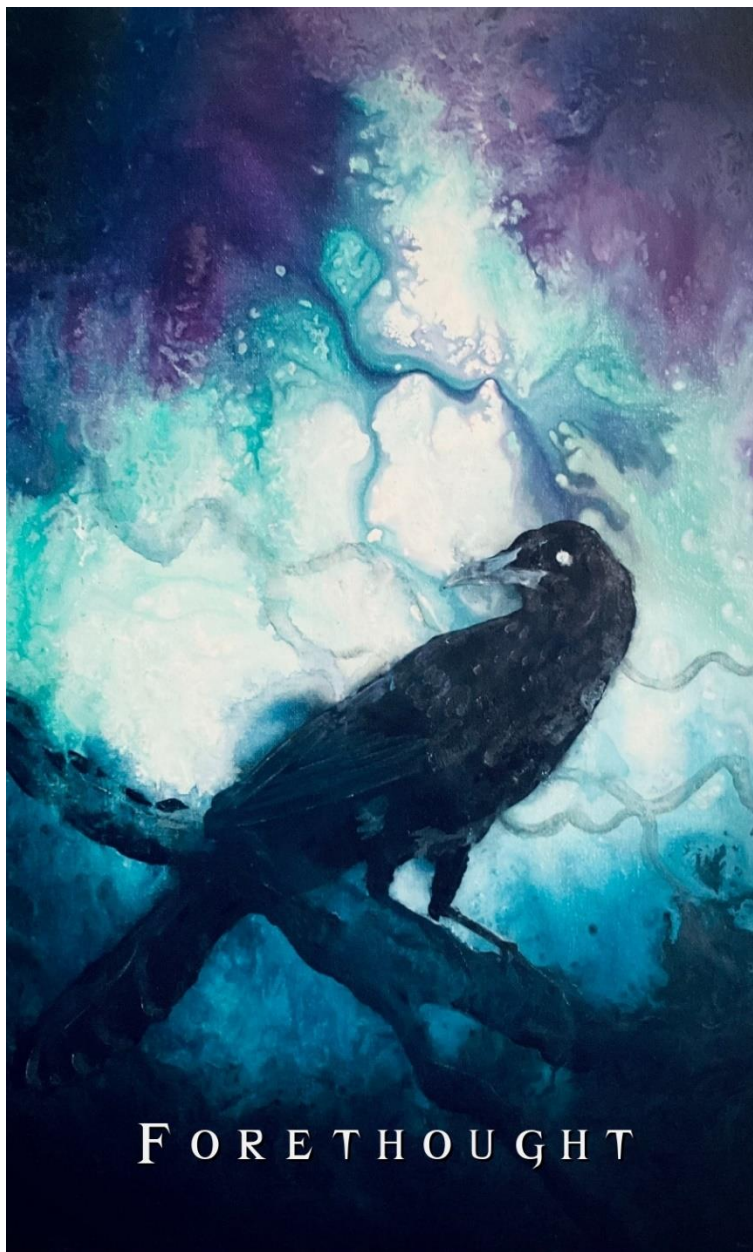
Fixation is a concept with dual meaning. When you encounter this card, you will need to look deep within yourself and decide which meaning is for you.

The first...

An important *something* is at hand for you. A task, a person in need of help, a major life commitment. In this case, you will need to commit nearly all of your energy to this something. Not forever, of course, but long enough to see it finished or transformed. In the case of another person, you may find yourself needing to commit extra time to them. In the case of a job or task, consider evaluating its worthiness in your life, and if you find the task to have merit, pour your (positive) energy into it. Don't simply *do* the thing. *Live* it, and see it blossom.

The second...

It may be that you've committed too much of yourself to a particular person, task, or state of mind. And now, after a long while, you've found yourself caught in a negative cycle. Perhaps you're involved with a person who takes advantage of you. Or it could be you're repeating unhealthy behavior, perhaps even obsessively. Take a good long look at yourself, and if this is you, find the strength to end your dark fixation.



FORETHOUGHT

Forethought

Keywords: Planning, Caution, Intuition

The wisest ravens are those who look upon anything new with suspicion, and who make their approach without unnecessary haste.

You're up to something, aren't you?

You've stumbled upon a new idea. You desire a change of pace. You've met a new person. You're eyeballing a new location to live or work.

Congratulations. After all, it's newness (and not simply variety) which is the spice of life.

But if you've pulled Forethought, it's a signal to take careful stock of this new thing or idea. Consider the unintended consequences of change. Mind your intuition. What does it whisper to you? Just as the raven bounces cautiously up to earthbound things, nosing and prodding with its beak, so should you be equally careful. Perhaps it's time for a written plan. Or it may be that you should continue your approach, but from a different direction.

Forethought doesn't want you to not do what you desire. It simply wants for you to think about what you're doing. Do it right the first time, and have no future regrets.



GUARDIAN

Guardian

Keywords: Watchful, Protective, Family

The Guardian card is your sign to protect.

...and to be protected.

Someone in your life is in need of defending. The pressures and tribulations of the world have gathered momentum, threatening to wreak havoc. The moment is now for you to take up your shield and deflect danger, be it physical, financial, or emotional, from those who are in a state of weakness.

What this means for you is that it may be time to step up and perform tasks that are not normally yours. You may be asked for advice regarding a difficult matter, and you could be put in a position to offer a hard-to-hear, yet honest truth. If you're involved with family, you may need to protect someone's feelings, especially those of children or vulnerable adults. If someone in your life is sick, consider offering your aid as they convalesce.

Keep in mind that the one in need of protection might be *you*. In this case, now is the moment to ask for help. Do not be afraid to appear weak. Seek guidance from your closest friends and family, and trust in them to keep you safe beneath their wings.



GUIDANCE

Guidance

Keywords: Leadership, Mentor, Education

Everything we know, we learn from encounters with the world
beyond ourselves.

The raven of Guidance has arrived. It's time for you to become
the best student you can be.

You may find that in the past, you have shied away from learning a
new skill, taking a new job, or meeting an exciting challenge head-
on...because of all the learning involved. Sometimes it's easier,
although less rewarding, to remain on the tried-and-true path.

And yet, if you've pulled Guidance, a fresh opportunity could be
at hand.

Are you facing a steep learning curve involving a new activity?

Struck a ceiling in your professional life?

Hit a wall when dealing with a challenging person in your life?

This is your cue to seek the advice of others. If possible, find a
mentor. It could be the right time to advance your education, take
new lessons, and allow yourself to follow the wisdom of someone
else. Consider initiating conversations with an elder, a parent, or a
teacher. Approach your near future with humility and a willingness
to devour as much wisdom as your mind (and heart) can hold.



HEROISM

Heroism

Keywords: Boldness, Adventure, Bravery

Courage isn't the absence of fear. Rather, to be brave is to take direct action even when your fear is strongest.

Like the raven, we all must learn to (metaphorically) fly. And to fly, we must first leap from the safety of the nest.

If you've pulled Heroism, it could be you're facing a high challenge. There's something important which needs doing, and you may find yourself wishing to avoid it.

Anxiety. Timidity. Panic. These are the things which will hold you back. They want you to stay in your nest, safely tucked away. Someone *else* will surely step up to the challenge at hand, right?

Wrong.

Every situation in life, good or bad, is best viewed as an opportunity. Change will always track you down, but if you look at it as a chance to learn, to become stronger, or to transform into a better version of yourself, you may find that your fear melts away.

Most of the time, on the far side of a major challenge, things of which you used to be afraid are no longer as formidable. The first leap of faith is the hardest.

So take your fear, give it a firm squeeze, and then jump. Chances are, you will be rewarded.



HUNGER

Hunger

Keywords: Needful, Essential, Absence

When Hunger arrives, it signals that you are in *need* (not merely desirous) of something important.

There are things in life we want. And there are things we must absolutely have if we are to thrive:

Food, Shelter, Money

Friendship, Love, A Sense of Purpose

If you're feeling a powerful absence in your life, a loss of meaning, or even a lack of essential sustenance (whether for your body or soul) now is the time to act.

Perhaps your health has become tenuous, and a dietary change is needed. A new fitness routine might also be wise, in case you've become too sedentary. Or it may even be time for a different living space. If your current location causes you significant stress, consider taking flight to a new home.

Or it may be that your needs are closer to your soul. If you're feeling particularly isolated or lonely, consider putting yourself in a better position for socialization. Leave the highest tree branches behind, and fly into a healthier social space. Neglect your innermost needs no longer.



INITIATION

Initiation

Keywords: Beginnings, Entrance, Youth

Something new is about to begin.

A birth. A rite of passage. An entirely new situation with entirely new rules.

You will recognize the moment of change when you see it. All you have to do is accept it into your life.

To begin, consider the following:

Your age will not matter.

Your previous experience, good or bad, cannot hold you back.

Your level of comfort, or total lack thereof, should not deter you.

When you pull Initiation, it's likely you have entered into a new phase of life. It will probably feel uncomfortable at first, and may cause you much anxiety. Like a hatchling, you've opened your eyes to a different reality than the life to which you were accustomed.

This is your cue to push forward. However awkward or tentative you might feel, this change is an opportunity for you unlike all the others. Once you clear the opening hurdles and begin to unravel the many new mysteries, you could be aligning yourself for great reward, or at the very least, a unique adventure.



ISOLATION

Isolation

Keywords: Independence, Self-Love, Healing

Until finding their mate, most ravens spend their time alone or in very groups.

So must we all, if we're to truly understand ourselves.

It may be that something has happened recently which has affected you deeply. An emotional disruption, perhaps. A change in your social life. Or perhaps even a startling moment of clarity, which has given way to self-reflection.

And now it's time to retreat, separate yourself from outside influences, and dwell upon what happened. If you've pulled Isolation, try not to think of it as a lonely event. This isn't the time to pull the plug on solid relationships and connections. Rather, this is an opportunity for you to spend some time with your own thoughts. What's important is not to allow anyone else to intrude upon your moment of clarity. Independent of outside stimuli, ponder yourself, the meaning of your life, and what it is you desire to do next.

And then, once you've reached a new sense of calm, healed any inner wounds, and feel at peace, reengage with the world as a stronger, better you.



LOST SOUL

Lost Soul

Keywords: Loneliness, Detachment, Out of Place

At one point or another in our lives, all people tend to feel a sense of not belonging.

If you've pulled Lost Soul, perhaps you or someone in your life has become detached from the world around you. Perhaps this feeling exists in an overall sense, or possibly it arises only in a specific situation, such as at school, at work, or at home.

It might be the first time, or it could be a lingering feeling which returns seasonally.

The first step is to realize that feeling detached is not altogether abnormal. It's entirely natural to question the meaning of existence, and completely reasonable to be bewildered by humanity.

Best not to let it linger, however.

It's one thing to forge ahead alone, fiercely independent, shrugging off all the normal social standards of the day. It's another thing entirely to feel lost, chronically lonely, or disconnected from the human experience. If the Lost Soul is you, it's best that you not let the feeling go unattended. And if you suspect it's someone around you, consider nurturing their return to a warmer state of mind.



LUNA

Luna

Keywords: Emotions, Subconscious, Dreams

Things are rarely as they seem...

Keep this in mind when you encounter Luna. She's here to remind you that you might be chasing illusions.

Perhaps you're under the impression that a recent bout of emotional distress has fully healed. Or that you've overcome something which was fearsome. Or that everything has fallen neatly into place.

And yet, your subconscious could be saying otherwise.

Pay attention to your dreams. They tend to speak what your waking mind doesn't want to hear. Also pay heed to the most subtle of your emotions. Small anxieties which repeat themselves in specific situations are indicative of a troubled heart. Resist the urge to bury difficult emotions beneath the illusion of contentment. Face your feelings in the waking world.

Now is the time to trust your intuition. Your intellect might say one thing, but presently it's your heart which speaks truest. Follow her guidance, and uncover what your subconscious desires to tell you.



MAGIC

Magic

Keywords: Power, Resourcefulness, Materialization

It's time to beat your wings, and to manifest what you desire.

If you've pulled Magic, it's a sign that all the tools you need to achieve what you desire are already in place. An idea or vision for your near future awaits your action. Your mind and spirit are likely in balance. With your strongest effort, the shapeless putty which was once merely a hopeful thought can now become reality.

Now is the time for:

Focus

Planning

Concentration

Commitment

And now is definitely not the time for:

Procrastination

Self-Doubt

Immobility

Consider setting aside all existing distractions and pouring yourself into your goal. Applying the skills you've assembled throughout your life will reap rewards, but only if you're willing to fly higher than ever before.



MEMENTO MORI

Memento Mori

Keywords: Acceptance, Impermanence, Humility

Memento Mori translates directly to:

'Remember you must die.'

If you've pulled this card, do not take the message literally. What it means for you is that all things, good or bad, will end. You are human, and much like the raven, nothing in your life will last forever.

This is a good thing, if viewed through the lens of acceptance, reverence, and living-in-the moment. It can be challenging if seen as something to be dreaded.

And so, knowing that all of us and everything surrounding us is temporary, Memento Mori is a reminder to live now, live well, and live with a sense of immediacy. What exists today, including all the people in your life, will be different tomorrow. Waiting for happiness to find you, pining for faraway hopes, and allowing yourself to fall into unhappy routines...

...these should not be acceptable to you.

In your life, every day has the potential to be a unique and powerful experience. Embrace the ephemeral nature of everything, accept the eventuality of change, and live your one true life with passion.



Memory

Keywords: Remembrance, Nostalgia, Ancestry

Perhaps you've forgotten something which was once of great importance to you. Or perhaps you've just now remembered it.

If you've felt nostalgic of late, or experienced déjà vu, or lingered in thought on the stories and lessons learned earlier in your life...

...these might not be accidents.

It may be that something important from your past (a person, place, or even an idea) requires your renewed attention.

Remember not to take these things for granted. They were once foremost in your heart and mind, and while they can be stored for a time, they were not meant to be forgotten.

If an elder bestowed a valuable lesson upon you, especially one from your childhood, it could be time to recall it to mind and make it a part of your life

If you've not visited a person or sacred place in a long while, this could be your cue to return.

If the effects of an important personal experience have begun to fade from your mind, consider reawakening the event as a reminder to yourself.

Remember always - The past can be a window into the future.



MERCY

Mercy

Keywords: Compassion, Kindness, Charity

Pause to consider how many people we fly past in our busy lives, never once giving a second thought to their hopes, dreams, and experiences.

It's easy, of course. There are so very many of us. And when riding the clouds on the way to our next adventure, the world below us can seem so very remote.

When you pull the Mercy card, let it serve as a reminder to slow down and to reflect on the world surrounding you. Your ambitions become no less valid if, now and then, you contemplate the needs of others. In fact, someone in your life might desperately need your help at this very moment. They may have become invisible to everyone else, but if you open your keenest eye, it's possible you will see them as they truly are, and you will know what you can do to aid them.

If you've reached a position of strength, good health, and stability, you may soon find the opportunity to help someone less fortunate than you. This is a blessing. In giving to others, in avoiding the trap of transactional relationships, you may find great spiritual reward.



MESSENGER

Messenger

Keywords: Revealing, Diplomacy, Secrets

Listen closely...

Either someone has something to tell you.

Or...

You have something important you need to say.

The Messenger appears when there's a key piece of information which needs to be revealed. Look to those around you. One or more of them could be a courier of something significant. Or perhaps the courier is *you*.

If you're bearing the weight of something on your heart, now is the time to speak up. Find a confidant and open up. More importantly, listen to what they have to say in return.

Conversely, if you're in a situation in which you feel secrets are being kept, it's time to speak less and hear more. Messages aren't always delivered directly, but are assembled by paying close attention to your surroundings. And of course, if someone does give you a direct message, especially one which is difficult to hear, remember to follow the golden rule:

Don't shoot the messenger.

The Messenger reminds us to follow our intuition, to be mindful of our environment, and to listen closely when others speak.



MIMICRY

Mimicry

Keywords: Inspiration, Imitation, Follow

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery...

...or so someone once said.

If you've encountered the Mimicry card, it's likely you're in a position to learn something new. You've become a student, if not in a literal sense, then in the sense that you're trying to master a skill which someone else already possesses.

Of course, you're not going to directly copy anyone. You want to achieve this new something in your own way, and you're not a copycat. That said, the lessons of those who have come before us are usually the finest lessons of all.

If you're attempting to learn something new, whether a physical skill, an intellectual discipline, or a spiritual achievement, it's very much okay to study the habits and practices of experts, elders, and masters. Without being plagiaristic, allow yourself to be taught, and to approach new rituals and routines with humility.

More often than not, it's not the end result you should attempt to mimic, but the habits and lifestyles used by those who have succeeded in your chosen field. Study the way the masters practice their art. Study the roads they've traveled. And then, with hard work and patience, you may find it is others who will wish to mimic *you*.



MOURNING

Mourning

Keywords: Sorrow, Loss, Disappointment

If an event in your life failed to turn out the way you hoped or expected, you may find yourself face-to-face with Mourning.

Drawing this particular card suggests one of several things:

You've lost someone important in your life (not necessarily to death.)

You've failed to achieve something for which you hoped, and you're struggling to accept it.

You've learned a hard truth which struck a blow to your heart.

The first thing you should consider is that while you may be hurting right now, you also possess the power to heal. If you feel the failure or loss is your fault, or if you're experiencing regret, it's important to know that forgiveness can turn away the darkness and bring you back to the light.

If someone else has wounded you, consider forgiving them. Doing so is primarily for your wellbeing, not theirs. If you've lost an important someone or something, or if an important goal has eluded your grasp, know that tomorrow is a new day. The memories of yesterday can and will become the growth of the future. Time will become your ally, and self-love will heal you.



MYSTERIOUS

Mysterious

Keywords: Uncertainty, Dilemma, Patience

Something glides through the fog of your near future. What is it?
What could it be?

When the Mysterious card slips into your hands, it's likely something is taking place in your life which you've yet to fully comprehend. An unclear choice, perhaps. A person whose intentions are murky or unclear. An exciting yet shadowy experience awaiting you.

This is your reminder to be both inquisitive and patient. It's okay to ask questions and to investigate, but be aware that the truth of what's happening will only fully be revealed when the time is right. Some mysteries can't be broken by sheer force of will. Sometimes, even while remaining alert, you'll just have to wait for the fog to clear.

Of course, if your particular mystery feels risky or even dangerous, you'll want to be extra wary. Keep your distance, reserve judgment, and don't fully commit until your intuition tells you it's safe.



MYTHICAL

Mythical

Keywords: Spirituality, Conception, Evolution

Mythical is the most abstract of cards you can pull.

When you encounter this concept, the implication is that you are experiencing intangible thoughts, ideas, or memories. Your spiritual side could be gaining momentum. A change is drawing near—not a physical transformation, mind you, but an awakening from much deeper inside your soul.

Perhaps your beliefs have been challenged, or it may be that you've walked straight into the glow of a powerful and enlightening new idea. This is a time of inner reflection. Look closely at the things you believe and contrast them with the things you *know*.

Of course, knowledge and belief are two entirely different things, and yet each is powerful in its own way.

If you're considering adding to or making an alteration to your core belief system, do so with an open heart and mind. True spirituality arrives from a place of honesty, clarity, and a willingness to accept things you don't fully understand.

If, in fact, you're contemplating changing some core part of your belief system, know that this is a natural part of spiritual evolution. Changing from one belief to another doesn't destroy all your previous growth—it merely adds to the wondrous assembly of thoughts and ideas that is uniquely *you*.



OMEN

Omen

Keywords: Sign, Predictions, Warning

This isn't the time for superstition.

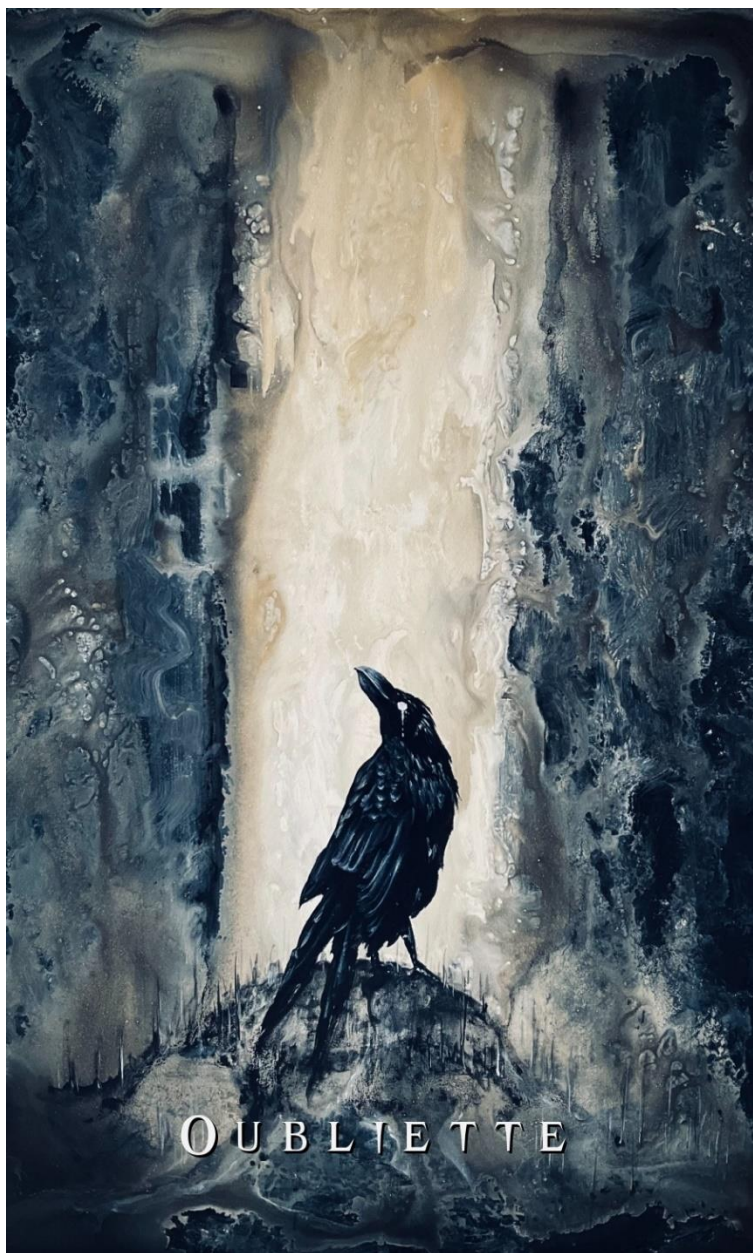
Or ignoring the obvious.

If Omen appears, it's likely that a portent of an upcoming event (good or bad) has shown itself to you. Your intuition may be shouting from the rooftops, 'Hey listen!' The raven has looked into your eyes, and you've seen something vital in the reflection.

Now pay attention...

Often, we are guilty of overlooking warning signs. The tides begin to rise, the warning waters start lapping against our shores, but we fail to react. And then, when the flood rolls in, it's much too late. The signs and patterns were there for us to see, but we ignored them.

In other words, when your intuition shouts, when you sense something bad (or good) is about to happen, do not allow yourself to be unprepared. Stockpile your resources, make a plan (and a backup plan) and steady your emotions for what you know is likely to come. If nothing comes of it, then at the very least you've practiced your readiness skills. And if something *does* come of it, you're either prepared to weather the storm or make the most of a big opportunity.



OUBLIETTE

Oubliette

Keywords: Imprisonment, Trap, Forgotten

Oubliette:

A dungeon, the only entrance or exit to which is through the top

Word origin: French – from oublier, meaning *to forget*

When Oubliette tumbles into your hand, it often signals that you feel trapped in some part of your life, or that you feel forgotten by someone who is important to you. Moreover, there is only one way out. When one is lost at the bottom of something, one must climb up. There's no avoiding it, side-stepping it, or choosing an easier road.

For this journey, you're on your own.

What this means for you is that if you're feeling caught up in a life situation that is negative or not in your best interest, you will need to extricate yourself, and quickly. Independent of other people's judgments and opinions, escape the situation now and save your explanations for later.

Alternatively, if you've been forgotten or neglected by a key figure in your life, it can also feel like a form of imprisonment. There you are at the bottom, awaiting them to pull you up to safety, but their hand never appears. In this case, you are responsible for letting the other person know what you're experiencing. Call for their attention, and know them better by how they respond.



PERCEPTION

Perception

Keywords: Insight, Observe, Visionary

The best vantage from which to see and hear everything?

...the sky.

If you've pulled Perception, it indicates an opportunity to comprehend a situation (or perhaps another person) from a broader point-of-view. Up until now, it may be that you've been too close to something to see it as it truly is. In other words, you haven't seen the forest through the trees.

This is your reminder to fly a little higher, perch on the highest branch of the tallest tree, and take in all there is to see. To view others as they truly are, step away, if only for a moment. Remove yourself from the day-to-day routines in which you've been embedded. To make the best decisions in your near future, a little distance is required.

Perception is all about: Objectivity, Understanding, Truth

From on high, assess everything you see. You may find your new vantage offers you the chance to change your mind about something important. Look, learn, and then come back to the ground with a fresh perspective.



PROPHECY

Prophecy

Keywords: Fate, Prediction, Destiny

In life, certain events will take place that will be entirely out of your control.

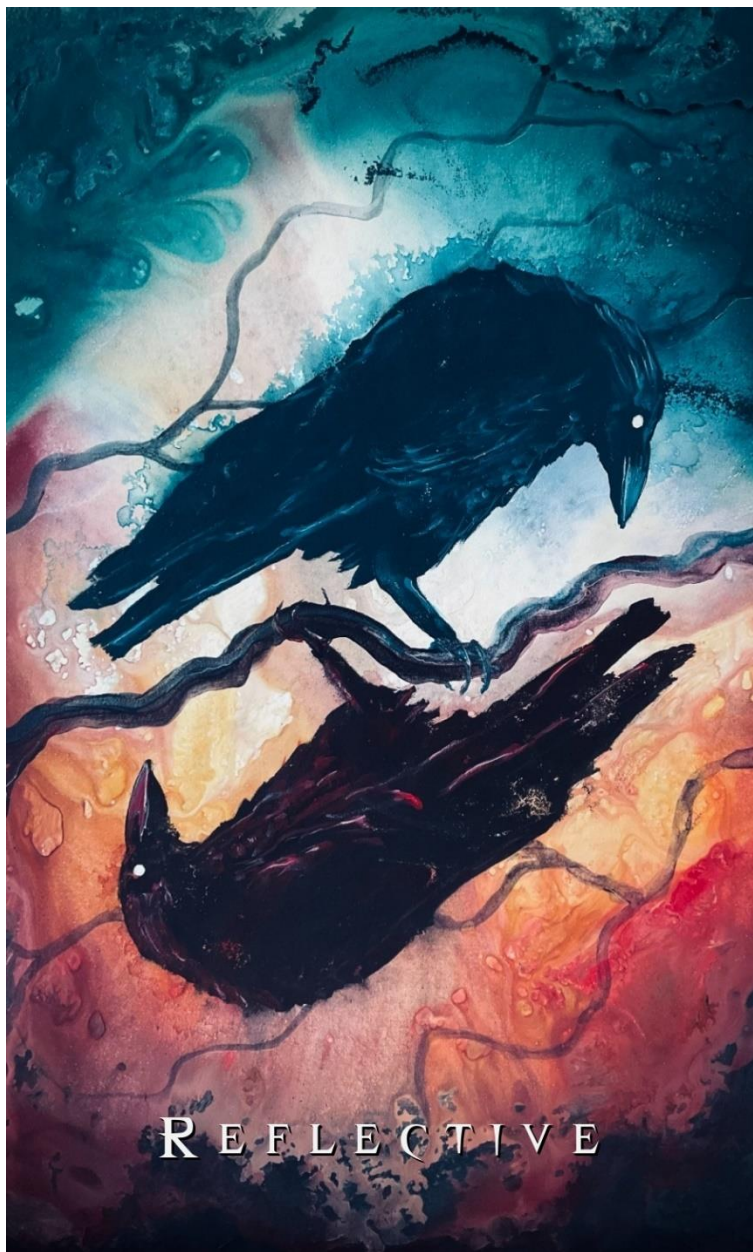
You can resist them, and be filled with anxiety.

Or you can accept and embrace what is coming, thus giving yourself an opportunity to be at peace.

When the Prophecy card appears, it's a sign that one such inevitable moment is drawing near. You may be approaching a milestone in your life. Something could be about to reach its end, such as a career, a friendship, or a temporary living situation. Or perhaps you're about to be thrust into an entirely new life-state, a moment you have long known was coming.

Be mindful, but not afraid.

All of us must face these same moments. Birth, death, and so many things in-between, they are our destiny as human beings to encounter. Facing down an event over which you feel powerless can be uncomfortable, painful (or sometimes even wonderful.) Rather than panic or flee, consider embracing a deep sense of acceptance. Look not at the coming event as a bane, but as a sacred rite of passage.



REFLECTIVE

Reflective

Keywords: Awareness, Self-Image, Knowledge

Before you can truly see the world, you must first see *yourself*.

Reflective is your reminder, in all that you face, to first look inward. With thorough knowledge of yourself, with knowing who you are and what you desire, all the things you do will have greater meaning.

It begins with honest self-assessment.

What are your skills?

What are your deficiencies?

What are your boundaries?

What do you truly want in life?

Perhaps now is the best moment to gaze into your mirror. It's never a bad time to take a long look at oneself, but recent events in your life might warrant extra self-attention. Consider the paths you're currently walking. Consider the people you've invited to share your journey in this life. And then, reflect upon your position in all of these things. You might like what you see, or it's possible you may see a spiritual blemish which needs your attention. Know that nothing about yourself is irreversible. It's never too late to become the person you desire.



RESILIENCE

Resilience

Keywords: Determination, Calmness, Experience

When properly preened, the raven's shiny black feathers are marvelously resilient, shielding against cold, heat, rain, and dirt.

When Resilience appears in your card spread, it's a sign for you to tap into your inner strength, proving that you are as invulnerable as the raven. Moreover, it signals the right moment is now for you to exert your willpower, bending all the world's many pressures with your resolve.

You may be feeling particularly challenged right now. This period of your life calls for you to remain calm despite any of the forces arrayed against you. Tame your raw emotions. Shrug off any feelings of anger, guilt, or pride. If you are worthy, the rain will bead upon your wings and burn away with the coming sunshine.

Additionally, there may be other people in your life who do not support your goals. They might make jokes at your expense, condescend to you, or speak ill of what you're trying to accomplish. Fly right past these naysayers. Let your inner strength guide you. Even if you should fail, you will gain invaluable knowledge, a far better result than surrendering or never trying in the first place.

Resilience lies within you. You need only spread your wings to let it show.



SCAVENGER

Scavenger

Keywords: Thrifty, Earthly, Conservation

Sometimes, when all your resources appear to be spent, an ocean of wealth lies just beneath the surface.

You may have approached a period in your life during which you feel exhausted. Perhaps you've worked hard toward something, only to find yourself spent, stretched too thin, or soul-weary. Or perhaps you're facing a financial struggle.

Not to fear. These are normal things to experience.

If you've pushed yourself toward a goal and found it elusive, or if you've seemingly run out of options in a particular area of your life, it's time to dig deeper. Your strategy may need an overhaul. The road you've traveled until now has ended, and you'll need to take a detour to continue ahead.

This isn't the time to stick to your usual routines. It's time to change lanes or to abandon the beaten path entirely. Consider cutting out unnecessary labor, travel, or expenses. Search for new resources in the form of friends and neighbors. Don't be afraid to reach out to other people in your life (or even those outside your usual social circle) who have experience with what you're facing.

Also remember—scavenging isn't always about what you can glean from the outside world. Just as often, it's about the strength and skill you unearth from within *yourself*.



SHAPECHANGER

Shapechanger

Keywords: Movement, Growth, Flexibility

Day to day, moment to moment, we are never quite the same person we once were.

The Shapechanger card is here with a powerful lesson for you. It reminds you that every time you learn something new, every time you encounter a new experience, and every new morning you awaken, you become slightly different than you were yesterday.

Sometimes these changes are incremental, and build up almost unnoticed within you. And sometimes they are dramatic. An experience or realization hits you, and you awaken as if reborn.

If you've pulled Shapechanger here and now, it's symbolic of a recent (or upcoming) change within yourself. It asks you to not only accept and embrace this change, but also not to look backward. Remember—to remain static is a small death, while to grow and expand your soul is the essence of life itself.

When new knowledge comes to you, accept it, even if it is unfavorable or challenging to your beliefs.

If you find yourself in a new living situation, consider becoming an essential part of it, rather than simply molding it to take the shape of your previous circumstance.

Do not be earthbound. Shed yesterday's feathers and fly higher than you thought possible.



SOARING

Soaring

Keywords: Freedom, Escape, Rashness

A chain, once binding you, is about to break.

Perhaps you've been attached to a person or place for a long, long while. Months, or even years, have gone by without significant change. And now, whether for better or worse, the force which bound you has melted away.

It may be that you've:

Quit a job

Ended a relationship

Moved far away from home

Severed a deep connection

Now you're free. The responsibility you once held is gone. You may feel a certain wild exuberance during your escape, a desire to put as much distance as possible between you and that which previously held your attention. Naturally, the feeling of freedom is a powerful one.

Just take care where next you fly. It may be that you absolutely needed to make your big escape, but leaving will still likely have consequences. Be mindful of the next direction you soar.



SOL

Sol

Keywords: Abundance, Happiness, Energy

It's time for you to bask in the radiance of warm, lifegiving energy.

If ever there was a moment to be enthusiastic, outgoing, and confident, that moment is now. Soon, or perhaps right this very second, the sunlight will cut through the clouds and deliver unto you a marvelous opportunity for success.

If you've pulled Sol, it's likely you're currently (or will soon be) at your peak energy level. Success in your endeavors is near, and a moment of happiness awaits you. You need only be ready.

Don't look at Sol as a reason to inflate your ego or boast of your accomplishments. Rather, spread your wings wide and allow the pure sunlight to warm you and those around you. Instances of raw, unencumbered joy tend to be rare, so allow yourself to savor what's coming.

This is also the time to set aside all of your usual anxieties. Without burden, step into the light and use the incoming energy to soar as high as you can. It will not last forever. Realize the potential of this moment and let it carry you to bigger and better things.



STRINGS

Strings

Keywords: Restriction, Obligation, Conditions

The raven might share its shiny new toy...

...but it will cost you.

Strings is your reminder that almost nothing in life is free. If you've recently received a gift, made a deal, or had a run of good luck, be aware that sooner or later, you will likely have to pay for it. Whether with money, time, or energy, you'll find yourself breaking even.

Of course, this isn't to imply you shouldn't proceed. If you have an offer on the table, consider its merits and by all means sign the contract. Just because something is reciprocal doesn't mean it's not worthy of doing. That said, it's important for you to ensure the strings aren't too numerous or unfair. In negotiations (and new relationships) always read the fine print.

Moreover, if you've extended yourself and made a gift of your time, money, or energy to someone else, consider the strings *you* may have attached. It's okay to ask for what's fair in return, but a detriment to hold unpaid debts over the heads of people about whom you care. Steer well clear of pettiness. Allow small favors to go unreciprocated. When giving gifts, give with a pure heart, and not with the hope of receiving something in return.



TALISMAN

Talisman

Keywords: Reverence, Fortune, Gifts

Be mindful of sacred things. Never take them for granted.

The Talisman in your life may be one of several things:

An object, gifted to you by someone special, something you will
always treasure

A parent, child, friend, or mentor, one whose existence makes
everything around you feel more alive

A lesson. Long ago (or recently) someone may have gifted you
with the sort of wisdom you're certain will always remain in your
heart.

These are the essences of the Talisman card. If you've pulled it
today, it's your reminder to get back in touch with the most sacred
things in your life. Meditate upon what your personal Talisman(s)
may be, and seek them out. That piece of wisdom an elder once
offered you—apply it in your life. That gift you received—
remember who gave it and why it was given. That special person—
seek them out and remind them of their value.

Most of all, this is your sign to remember the best things in your
life. Treasure them today, for tomorrow they could be gone.



THAWING

Thawing

Keywords: Warmth, Reunion, Springtime

No winter lasts forever.

When the ice melts and the bitter winds cease, the warm season will come again.

Remember this.

When Thawing lands in your palm, it's a sign that a difficult cycle in your life is about to break. If you've been distant (either physically or emotionally) from someone about whom you care, a happy reunion could be inbound. If you've been feeling down of late, perhaps even frosty, it's time to reheat your heart and break free of icy thoughts.

Thawing wants you to snap out of negative thought cycles.

Grudges, rivalries, and petty conflicts should be forgotten and forgiven. Hard feelings have no place in the warm season which is coming. A better, brighter state of mind is ready to blossom within you.

There's no better time than now to reminisce, to bask in good memories, or to rekindle old flames and friendships. Brush the snow from your wings and be free!



THIEF

Thief

Keywords: Injustice, Dishonor, Heartbreak

The Thief has appeared.

It's time to be on your guard.

When this sneaking, pilfering bird flutters into your hand, it's a sign that some injustice has occurred (or is about to take place) in your life.

The ways it could manifest are many:

An unfair situation in your career

Difficulties with a friend or lover, costing you time (and several nights' sleep)

A mistruth has been spoken

A literal loss of material possessions due to something beyond your control

It's important to remember a few things. Firstly, don't ever assume the mantle of the Thief. If you sense your actions are robbing someone else of their joy, cease and desist. Secondly, assuming you're the victim, know that how you react to injustice is the key to your recovery. Be firm and keep the truth close to your heart, but never allow yourself to hate. Chase down wrongdoers, but let no violence or vengeance darken your soul.



TRADITION

Tradition

Keywords: Wisdom, Culture, Ceremonial

When Tradition appears in your card spread, it signals an opportunity for spiritual learning by following the teachings of those who came before you.

It's possible (though not absolute) that you've neglected your spiritual values of late. The rituals and cultural aspects of previous generations may have fallen out of your thoughts.

It's always tempting to blaze your own trail and cast aside the archaic teachings of yesteryear. But today, just this once, consider a second look at the tried-and-true methodologies of the past.

This might not be the best time for creativity. It could prove more valuable for you, at least for the time being, to follow the rules and invest yourself into a traditional approach.

Planning to reinvent the wheel?

Not this time.

Moreover, Tradition is a sign to get in touch with your elders, or at least their teachings. You don't need to hurl yourself headlong into an unfamiliar culture or religion, but reading about history, talking with those who have 'been-there, done-that,' and expanding your cultural literacy would be wise. Consider deepening your spiritual knowledge. You'll be grateful you did.



TRINKET

Trinket

Keywords: Objectification, Superficial, Overthinking

We are not the crude matter which composes our bodies. Rather, we are soulful, complex, and marvelous creatures, crafted by nature over the span of billions of years.

Only...sometimes we overlook this truth.

When Trinket slides into your hand, it's a sign that you may have forsaken your mind, heart, or soul for the promised treasures of the physical world. These treasures, shiny though they seem, are not your key to happiness. They are distractions, and should be regarded as temporary delights.

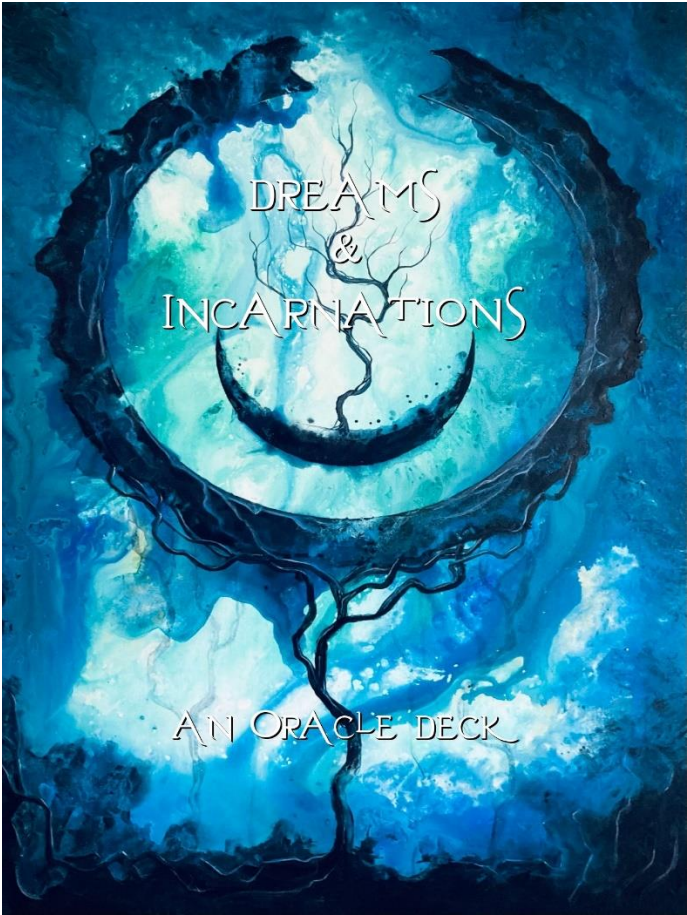
This is your reminder not to chase things which appear beautiful on the outside, but which are truly hollow on the inside. Steer well clear of obsession. When you find yourself dwelling overlong on a new thing you wish to possess, consider instead the riches you already have.

Moreover, do your best not to chase looks at the expense of substance. This holds doubly true for other people, of course. Often, your time will be better spent thinking of ways to improve your life using what you already have, rather than adding more things and more pretty faces to your collection. True contentment comes from within. Remember this, and be happier for it.

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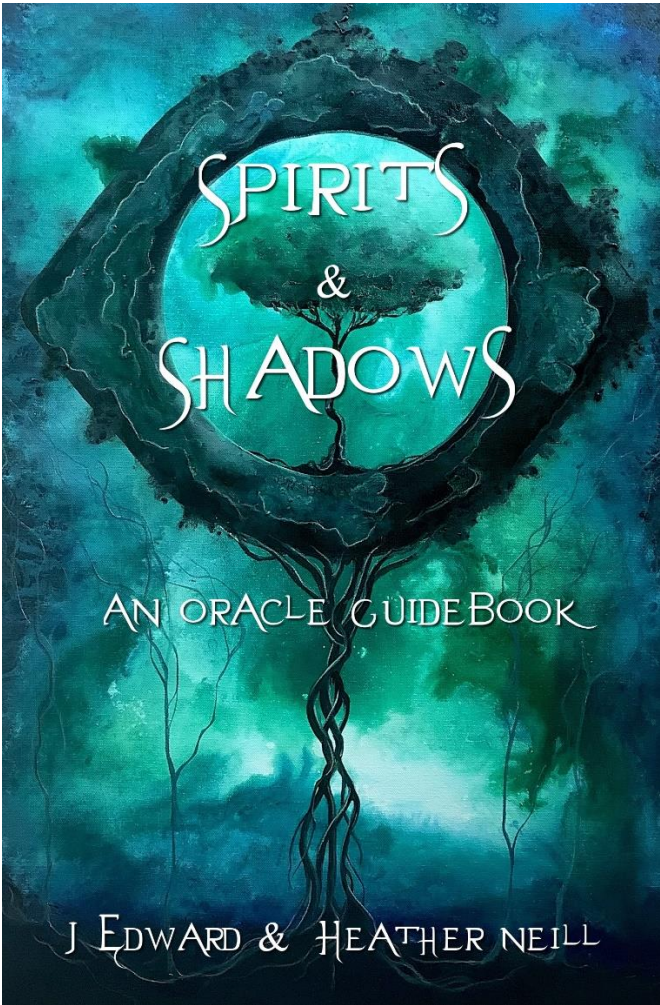


Haunted
Cat
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&
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J Edward & Heather Neill live in the highlands of North Georgia, sipping tea, baking sweets, and wandering the deep woods. Together they've published five card decks, two poetry books, and three teenage sons...

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