

13 Magickal Cards

Tarot Insights By JohnnieTwoBrows

Leo: Release Your Inner Lion!

Merry meet! Welcome to the 1st Anniversary issue of 13 Magickal Cards.

Time flies when you're having fun, and I still find it hard to believe that my first newsletter went out over a year ago. To be honest, I couldn't be happier with how things have turned out for my Tarot business over the past year. In this short time I feel like I've become a better reader, and it wouldn't have happened without the support and confidence of everyone reading this right now. It humbles me a great deal that you trust me enough not only to let me read for you, but that you recommend me to your friends and family. So from the bottom of my heart, a sincere "thank you".

Two very special people also deserve to be mentioned here. There would be no Tarot business without my "Jennie Sunshine". Her constant support, encouragement, and common sense keeps me grounded. More than any other person she has helped me become the reader I am today. And I would be remiss if I did not mention the Rev. Samantha Beaty, who continues to help me grow spiritually and professionally.

A special thank you also to all of the Cancer people reading this. You were short-changed last month because this Scorpio had to put other things first. You were kind enough not to send me any...well, I guess "crabby" is the word...emails about it. To show my appreciation for your indulgence I'm doing an extra deck review this month with you in mind, the Tarot of Atlantis.

Now, moving on. Before you ask, Leo people, no, I did not forget that this was your time of year. So let me give a HUGE,

public roar of birthday greetings to everyone born under the sign of Lion. You are well-known for your generosity as well as for your occasional, spectacular hissy-fits. At least no one can accuse you of not knowing where they stand with you. And yes, I'm also doing a deck review with you in mind as well, the Tarot of Dreams. ☺

The Sun in the Tarot's Major Arcana represents Leo, that sense of enlightenment, good health, and feeling like a God or Goddess. There are few cards in the Tarot that are as positive or as welcomed by Querents.

The Sun, of course, also makes us think of summer, which is moving inexorably toward fall. As the wheel prepares to turn again, we need to realize that we have limited time to do what we really want to in life. We have jobs to do, educations to obtain, people to take care of, and many other responsibilities. With all of this going on, it's easy to put other people and their needs in front of ourselves.

While it's noble to put others first, we can't do it all the time. Sun in Leo reminds us that adult responsibilities can make us forget what being carefree is like. Sometimes we have to act like children and indulge ourselves for a change. So the question is this: What makes you feel like a Goddess or God? And how can you do what you want while balancing it with all of your other important responsibilities?

Maintaining a balance in life is a constant process, especially when it comes to doing sometimes what we'd rather be doing all the time. As I've said many times, for me it's computer and video games. It is so easy to get sucked into a game and play for hours on end. It used to happen a lot more

often, but I'm trying to limit my playing time. For anyone who is interested, no, I haven't beaten Civilization IV yet, but I've reduced the number of computer opponents to make the games shorter. One of Jennie Sunshine's passion is sharks, and since the end of Discovery Channel's Shark Week comes tomorrow, I'm hoping she'll come up for air any minute now. [Couldn't resist that one.]

In fact, I've promised myself some Civ time as soon as I'm done getting this newsletter out. So during this creative, fun time of year, make sure that what you like to do is part of your balanced life.

I hope to see you across my table soon. Blessed be, J2B



Tarot Deck Review

The Tarot of Dreams

Many of you remember the Gilded Tarot, which I reviewed in the first issue of this newsletter during Leo 2006. Well, the Gilded Tarot's artist, Ciro Marchetti, has created a new deck called "The Tarot of Dreams". And after the popularity that the Gilded saw in my Tarot practice—I actually had to stop bringing it for a while so people would pick different decks!—I was excited to see Marchetti's next offering.

I was totally blown away by this deck, folks. I could almost be content to read with it and nothing else for the rest of my life...almost. There's no other way to say it. The deck is bright, incredibly detailed, and just plain beautiful. I couldn't ask for a deck that just

exudes positive, Sun-sign energy than this one.

Before I start waxing rhapsodic on the virtues of this deck, let's get the negatives out of the way. Here is the big bad news: The price. This is one of the most expensive decks I have ever encountered, coming in at just under \$100. I wouldn't have bought it for myself, but Jennie Sunshine's mouse clicking finger was just too fast for me to protest. So instead of allowing my Capricorn moon to say "That deck was *how much??*", I stifled the Goat in me and thanked her profusely.

The other negative on this deck is Marchetti's ego trip. Now please don't misunderstand me...I am incredibly impressed with this deck. And the artist should be justifiably proud of his work. But

I don't need to be continually reminded of who created the deck, thank you very much. You'll see more of what I mean as the review continues but it's something to keep in mind.

Cost and ego aside, fire sign people and those who love brightly-colored, positive decks with much of the Rider-Waite imagery retained will gravitate automatically toward this deck.

I'm going to change the review up a little bit this time and look at one card from each suit and one Major Arcana card. So we'll start with the 8 of Coins. Marchetti's fondness for astrology can be seen here. The man traditionally seen on the Rider-Waite 8 of Pentacles is here, gazing closely at a coin next to a golden astrological clock. The attention to detail meaning of the card is reinforced by the man examining the coin, the papers and drawings sitting on the table in front of him, and the Gilded Tarot box sitting on the shelf.

The Five of Swords certainly looks dark, but it lacks the negative punch of the traditional Rider-Waite imagery. A man brandishes a sword as gray clouds swirl around him, while another figure cowers in fear at the bottom of the card. While not as chilling as its Rider-Waite counterpart, it's the little touches that make this deck stand out from the rest: Marchetti has placed a planetary symbol on each of the eight visible fingers of the man holding the blade.

The Three of Cups caught my eye right away, reinforcing the celebratory meanings of the card with...Mardi Gras! Masks and strings of beads adorn this card which just screams "YIPPEEEEE!" (feel free to insert another joyful exclamation of your choice as well.) Mermaids form a large part of the cups imagery of this deck. And just so you don't forget who designed the cards, two

small, golden letters, "CM", appear at the bottom of the card.

Now to fire...the Six of Wands shows a man in golden armor on a balcony, brandishing a wand, fist raised in a gesture of victory to five additional wands. It would be easy to imagine him addressing a cheering throng of people, but none is visible on the card. The triangle, a symbol of the element fire, is emblazoned on his chest, flanked by two golden dragons. At the bottom center of the card, a very unobtrusive "CM" can be barely glimpsed; you almost wouldn't see it if I hadn't mentioned the trip down Ego Street.

Complain about my predictability if you will, but my favorite card in this deck is Marchetti's Hierophant, which has been renamed "Faith". It shows so clearly the spiritual nature of the card. A holy man whose hands are clasped in prayer fills the card, surrounded by the symbols of the world's major faiths; the Christian Cross, the Islamic Star and Crescent, a Star of David, the Hindu OM, a Wiccan Pentacle, and many other spiritual symbols (like the Yin Yang) form a circle in the card's foreground. To my dismay, a very small "CM" floats in the sky.

This deck is fantastic but it is not for everyone. It's only available online from Marchetti (www.ciomarchetti.com), so if you can't live without it, I'd hint to a wealthy or generous friend or relative that this is what you'd like for your birthday or Yule. If you want a taste of Marchetti's work, have 13 Magickal Moons order the Gilded Tarot for you. You'll get a lot of the same energy spending less money and saving the ego trip for yourself.

Next month's review: The Medieval Scapini Tarot

Dorothy Morrison and M.R. Sellars

Yes, the Dynamic Duo will be back in our midst again on Saturday, August 25th! Make your reservations now for two classes that will make up an enlightening and fun day at 13 Magickal Moons. Jennie Sunshine will be away visiting her parents when they're here, but I will be there with bells on, and I am especially looking forward to Dorothy's class on **Tarot Magick**; her Everyday Tarot Magick is the best one I've seen that incorporates the Tarot into magickal work. See the 13 Magickal Moons website for more details (www.13magickalmoons.com).

Johnnie's New Credit Card Machine

As a result of your continued loyalty, it is my pleasure to announce that I have acquired a wireless credit card swipe machine, a huge technological step forward for my Tarot business. For your convenience, in addition to cash I now accept **Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and American Express** cards.

For those of you who receive readings at 13 Magickal Moons, it means that you will pay for your Tarot readings at the Tarot table, and your 13 Magickal Moons purchases at the cash register in the store. I'm very grateful to Sam at 13 Magickal Moons for graciously accepting credit card payments for my customers for the past few years, but she's extremely busy, and this is one less thing for her to deal with as well. Since the credit card reader belongs to my business, there will be NO FEE on credit card transactions; a \$20 reading on a card will be \$20, and not \$22 as it was in the past. I'm happy to be able to pass the savings on to you.

If you schedule a telephone reading, I still accept PayPal, but I accept the aforementioned credit cards for these as

well. This is helpful because the payment must be made in advance with PayPal, but can be made just prior to the reading on a credit card instead if you prefer. Also, it means that you can now lengthen telephone readings at your discretion if you feel that 30 minutes isn't long enough to cover what you would like to examine.

Finally, paying for Tarot parties is now a whole lot simpler. Cash used to be the only method of payment for Tarot parties, which can be a pain, especially in coordinating payment if the cost is divided between multiple parties. This also made it difficult to have a party go on longer than originally anticipated. "Have machine, will travel" is my new motto; because the connection is wireless, Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and American Express cards are graciously accepted anywhere, saving you (and your guests) the time and energy required to take out cash. Of course I will happily split bills over different cards.

Tarot Deck Review

The Tarot of Atlantis

Lovers of Greek mythology will enjoy this deck, which is meant to evoke the daily lives of the people who lived in the fabled city of Atlantis as Plato described it in his writings.

First of all, if you're looking for traditional Rider-Waite imagery, I'd suggest looking elsewhere for a Tarot deck. Each card has been re-tooled to reflect Atlantis, and while there is the occasional reference to something that looks like the Rider-Waite, you can't even be sure that it's intentional.

The Emperor, for example, looks a lot like Poseidon, complete with trident, and I can go with that. But there's a goat staring at him from a cliff, and that's where you lose me. Even my Capricorn moon couldn't help me understand what it's doing there.

The Swords cards are filled with battle scenes, with the Ten showing a battle royale filled with killing, dying and other assorted mayhem. I will say it certainly reinforces the traditional meaning of “victimization” or “bottoming out”; I guess things couldn’t get any worse for these two groups of people than open fighting and dying on the street. The Death card plays into this masculine battle theme with a woman holding the body of her dead son, his sword and helmet lying beside him.

I had a tough time with many of the Major Arcana cards. Judgment shows an exploding volcano and the citizens of Atlantis trying to flee as the lava flies down among them. I think I probably would have gone with this card for the Tower, which shows a fortress being destroyed by a tidal wave. The fear that is evident on the faces of the people on the Judgment card seems to evoke more of the idea of “What are we going to do?” that we often feel with the Tower. The Hermit was surrounded by people in a public square. I just didn’t feel like many of the Majors brought forth the standard meanings from my subconscious mind.

The Cups suit is quite erotic in nature, and my Scorpio nature is always fond of decks that show a little (or more than a little) skin and sexual activity. The problem is that the Five and the Ten of Cups look so similar that it would be hard to tell which one is the negative card and which one is the positive card. Both cards have men and women involved in various types of debauchery involving sex and alcohol (and sometimes both at once for you “9 1/2 Weeks” fans), and therein lies the problem. I don’t see any disappointment, loss, or grief in the Five, and I don’t see anything to evoke family, peace or joy on the Ten.

Sometimes, albeit unintentionally, the masculine nature of this deck comes through when it was not necessarily supposed to. The Five of Wands has a huge phallic-shaped monument that is being raised by two groups of men, with others around watching. Despite that, I can see the competitive spirit evoked by the card, as well as the chaos that can occur when groups of people are told to work together.

Picking a favorite card in this deck was difficult, but I’d have to go with the Devil, represented by a three-headed dragon, sitting on a red-rock cliff which evokes the fires of hell. If I was staring at this thing, though, I can say I’d be obsessed with getting away from it, instead of feeling reluctant of leaving it behind.

For many reasons, this deck is an acquired taste. I strongly encourage checking out the images from someone else’s deck or online before laying out your money. And I would sincerely discourage those new to the Tarot and anyone offended by references to alcohol or sex to give this one a pass.

Limited Edition Spread

From now through the end of September, I’ll be doing a **Planetary Spread**, which has no less than 15 cards and will cost **\$30**. Each card describes an area of your life based on the planet the position represents; the Sun, for example, represents your will, vitality, and “masculine” principles, while the Moon represents emotions and “feminine” principles and energy.

Shameless Marketing: Movie Quotes

The Tarot pops up everywhere, even in our most famous films. After doing some research, here is just a sample:

“Louis, I think this is the beginning of a beautiful Tarot party.”

“Luke, I am your Tarot reader.”

“You’re gonna need a bigger Tarot spread.”

“Houston, we have a Tarot party.”

“A Tarot reader once tried to read me. I ate his liver with some fava beans and a nice Chianti.”

“I love the smell of burning sage on my Tarot cards in the morning!”

“Tarot, my dear Watson.”

“I have always depended on the Tarot readings of strangers.”

“I feel the need...the need for Tarot!”

“Keep your friends close...and your Tarot reader closer.”

“Mama always said that life was like a box of Tarot cards. You never know what you’re gonna get.”

“I see Tarot people.”

“Of all the metaphysical stores of all the towns in all the world, and she had to walk into mine.”

“Nobody puts Johnnie in a corner.”

“Say ‘hello’ to my little Tarot reader!”

“E.T. phone Tarot.”

“Tarot means never having to say you’re sorry.”

“May the Tarot be with you.”

“I’m gonna make him a Tarot spread he can’t refuse.

“A boy’s best friend is his Tarot reader.”

“Tarot. Why did it have to be Tarot?”

—How do you know so much about Tarot?
--Well, you have to know these things when you’re a king, you know.

“There’s no crying in Tarot!”

“You had me at ‘Tarot party!’”

“Tarot, for lack of a better word, is good.”

“Forget it, Jake, it’s Tarot.”

“Soylent Green is Tarot!”

“Tarot! Tarot!”

“Tarot. Shuffled, not stirred.”

“You’ve got to ask your Tarot reader one question: ‘Do I feel lucky?’ Well, do ya, punk?”

Upcoming Dates

I'll be reading Tarot for the following dates for the remainder of Leo and Virgo at 13 Magickal Moons. All of these dates are tentative. Readings are done on a first come, first served basis; when I arrive at the store I start a list, and you may sign up at that time. I do not take appointments, so please do not call 13 Magickal Moons asking for one. Please check www.13magickalmoons.com for an up-to-date schedule.

Saturday, August 4	11:30am-5:30pm
Wednesday, August 8	6:00pm-9:00pm
Saturday, August 18	11:30am-5:30pm
Wednesday, August 22	6:00pm-9:00pm
Saturday, September 1	11:30am-5:30pm
Wednesday, September 5	6:00pm-9:00pm
Wednesday, September 12	6:00pm-9:00pm
Saturday, September 22	11:30am-5:30pm