

A Field Guide to the Stolen Child Tarot



0. The Fool

He contains raw and new energy, untempered, undiluted without influence or molding. The Fool laughs at the four points of the quaternary, the world of phenomena. He prefigures the mindset of differentiation, of conceiving or marking time, direction or choosing labels. He is both the beginning/seeker and the enlightened/transcended. Freedom, Energy, Vitality, vs. Madness, Chaos, Instability

1. The Magician

Clever as a fox, all elements are tools at his command. Trickster and master of improvisation, he can strip away disguises and see through illusions. (Although he may not let on when he does this!) He commits to the present moment and represents the election and recognition of one's path and vocation without reservation. Possibilities, Skills, Talent, vs. Con man, Gullibility, Hesitation



2. The High Priestess

She represents the purity of purpose in the gestation of inner and outer spirit. Her nest can be high, hidden and unattainable. The potential of her egg is related to the abundance realized in the Star's tide pool, an ocean in a shell. Associated with Isis and the



Virgin Mary, she represents spiritual purity inhabiting the material world. Faith, Accumulation, Patience vs. Frigidity, Intolerance, Isolation

3. The Empress

The creative Mother becomes the creative Self. She is budding forth in the flowers, receptive to nature and spring's possibilities. Like the bear, powerful, omnivorous, availing itself of all the world has to offer despite thorns or stings. She embodies uninhibited and confident personal expression. Enthusiasm, Creativity and Abundance vs. Adolescent Rashness and Thoughtless Action.



4. The Emperor

The traditional Emperor sits on top of a square, symbolic of the quaternary, elements expresses as stability in the material world.

The polar bear, an Arctic animal, literally lives 'on top of the world'. He can represent severity like his harsh snowy environment. Secure in physical and mental will, he is the embodiment of material force. Powerful protector and father figure. Mastery in the material world.

5. The Hierophant

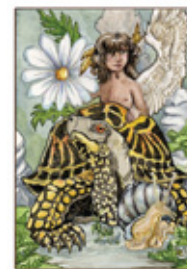
Early observers of the pelican did not understand that it was dipping into its pouch to feed its young. Instead, they believed it was rip-



ping open its chest, offering its own blood to feed its children, leading to its association with the sacrifice of Christ. As a teacher, the Hierophant is the intermediary, able to bridge between the heavens/spiritual realm and return to the land and water of earth. Teacher, Union of Opposites, Communication vs. Dogma, False Leader

6. The Lovers

Represents one's emotional life and the joy of living. Unconditional Love. Bats pollinate plants unaware of the intimacy they play in the flowers life cycle. They colonize without imposing hive mind; each individual remains autonomous while still joining a massive communal wave. Social life, Choice, Joy, Siblings vs. Conflict, Pride, Inability to reconcile ones Ideal with Reality.



7. The Chariot

The Charioteer journeys fourth to make his fortune. His forward motion is not from his vehicle but the movement of the Earth itself, represented by the turtle. Victory, Journey, Harmony of Animus/Anima and Yin and Yang. Triumph, Center and the potential of immortality within the live material being.

8. Justice

Blind Justice's antlers symbolize station and authority. The feathers in this deck replace the air suit of swords, but also evoke the scales of the Egyptian mythology where

Anubis weighs the heart of the dead against a feather. Rather than the slightly tilted sword of the Marseille deck connoting and questioning the fallibility of human and social law, here Justice illustrates this by evoking the regimented society of bees. This society provides order and some degree of safety but complete subjugation of the individual identity. Justice points to the examination of every law system for it's pros and cons because none can be perfect and any system of absolutes crushes life and growth.



defenses, the pangolin has unfurled itself, spinning like the Wheel to open and join the world. Closure with the past. Expectation of the Future. Cycle, Change.

11. Strength

Recognition and management of the animal nature. Connection to the instinct in a conscious way. Early psychologists wrote about animal nature as 'the beast within' as if it were something to be feared, while numerous indigenous cultures made concerted efforts to discover and communicate with their totem or spirit animal. Recognition and empathy with the Other.



rotting materials. Spirit: The Raven in myth is both a harbinger of death and a guide to the spirit other world. Mind: The Death's Head Moth while considered an omen of death, specifically evokes the head/mind with its prominent back pattern resembling a skull. The child is a new babe, beginning transformation.

14. Temperance

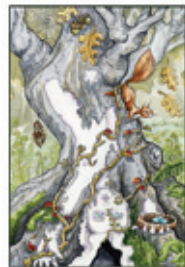
The junction and entrance from the land, or material life, and the water, or unconscious/spiritual life, represented by the frog whose amphibious nature travels the water of birth, to land, then back to the water again for reproduction. Frogs, whose health has been called the barometer for health of the environment, are a good symbol for the virtue of Temperance necessary to preserve the natural world. Circulation, Blending, Harmony, Healing, Protection, Moderation, Balance and Prosperity.



9. The Hermit
The Hermit is willing to let go and explore the unknown for its own sake. The illumination of the bug could be a beacon to draw others of its kind or a warning to scare predators away. Pure Science, Pure Research, Curiosity, Wisdom, Advanced Age, Leaving ones comfort zone, Humility vs. One who does not suffer fools, Silence, Asceticism.



12. The Hanged Man
Like the Marseille deck, the figure is in a state of total passive submission to his suspended state. The tree with its gape in the roots, aged bark, squirrel and other inhabitants pays homage to the tree of Norse myth Odin hung himself upon. Like the dryads of Greek and Roman myth, our human figure may become one with this state of contemplative torpor, and swallowed, become the tree itself.



10. The Wheel of Fortune

The Wheel of Fortune revolves in an impartial cycle on every thing, live or inanimate. Like the weather, the rain falls on the just and the unjust, the guilty and the innocent. There is no luck or karma that the conscious mind can control or explain, but only flatter or distract itself in seeking pattern. Letting go of its



13. Death

A triad of transformation, Mind, Spirit, and Body. Body: Death's Angel mushroom is toxic to many mammals including humans. Mushrooms also fill a scavenger niche in nature helping break down

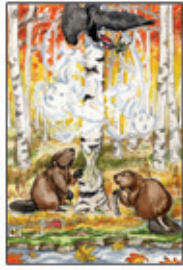


15. The Devil
The snake has long been associated with the idea of the Devil as tempter. Rats have also been associated with him, believed to be in league with him for spreading plague, corrupting and stealing food, or as souls lured away to Purgatory by music (pleasure) in stories like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Material concerns eclipsing true values, Carnal Desire, Obsession, Fear, Taboo



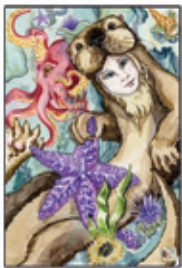
16. The Tower

Trees, without bias, record and tell the history of the world around them. Their rings tell age, growth and weather patterns while their bark and wood record environmental events such as fires or scars reveal their use by animals. The Temple, or the body housing the deity (consciousness). Related to the Hanged Man, the end of isolation and introspection, Rapunzel breaks free. Illumination, Overflow, Release vs. Rupture, Catastrophe, Evacuation.



17. The Star

The bountiful source that allows us to find our place in the world. Otters move from land to water with ease—and both environments are equally necessary for their survival. Tide pools are like small galleries of sea treasures and are ecosystems unto themselves while still reflecting the larger ocean. The octopus over her shoulder represents the eight stars of the traditional card. Ecosystem, Dance, Success, Luck, Harmony, Generous Waters.



18. The Moon

The sleeping child in the moon dreams. It's reflected light draws out the subconscious and can flip flop ones urges. Normally timid and solitary, mad March hares are known to box one another in the moonlight during mating season. Instead of the two fortresses of the traditional card image, there are



two groves of trees. Figuratively, look at the hare's ears as the towers, with the head falling between as the lower wilderness of the subconscious mind.

19. The Sun

Like a cosmic architect, the naked sun child helps spread the seeds of the garden. The golden cat represents independence and liberty. Like the reed-cat of the Book of the Dead, he can destroy serpents defending herself and others. The twin birds represent the work of cooperative duality within us; our conscious mind may guide and interpret the subconscious while our subconscious process the events of waking life through dreams. Rebirth, New Dawn, New Construction, Illumination, Openness, Ascension, Truth



20. Judgment

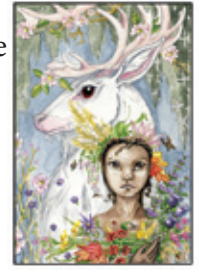
New consciousness emerges via birth or resurrection. Like the life stages of the moth or butterfly, the call to transformation is irresistible.

The dawn emergence of this new understanding hangs within the life spiral, the arching leaf and divided twig evoking the Golden Mean. A Culmination of effort is bursting forth. Metamorphosis. Desire and True Calling. Grace, Acceptance of inner voice. Emergence vs. Stunted Growth, emotional or spiritual immaturity and self-repression.

21. The World

Instead of the mandorla, the fullness of the World is held and offered as the cornucopia in the

child's arms. The male stag and female child evoke the yin yang or recognition of the androgynous nature of the spirit. The traditional frame of the quaternary is evoked in the four-petaled dogwood blossoms. Realization, Simultaneously Active and Passive Reception. The Fool's journey completes.



“WHERE dips the rocky highland
Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water rats;
There we've hid our faery vats,
Full of berry
And of reddest stolen cherries.
Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping
than you can understand.”

The Stolen Child
--William Butler Yeats

