



Embodying the Tarot Majors

by MoonCrone – following pages

My Journey into Embodying the Tarot Majors

by MoonCrone

I began studying and working with Tarot in the late 1980s as a part of the goddess and feminist movements. I took classes from Suzanne McAnna and Cat Dancing and read books and collected decks over the years.

The part of my journey into the Tarot that led me to develop a card for each of the majors in which I appear in a featured role began at the 2005 Tejas Web Witchcamp, Dancing with Dionysus, in a Path taught by Suzanne McAnna & Todd Herriot titled The Path the Soul Walks. Campers had been asked to bring some photos of ourselves to use in an art project and in the Path we created one or two Tarot cards.

Soon after that camp I found myself spending most of my time far from my home in Texas in order to help my Dad, and myself, through the first year that followed upon my Mother's death. We were both trying to figure out what life would hold for us with this absence at the center of our relationship. I didn't have access to most of the types of pagan activities and responsibilities that kept me busy at home and decided that this could be a good time to continue exploring a deeper relationship with the cards by attempting to embody each of the 22 majors.

I tackled a few cards at a time. I spent time thinking about how I wanted to dress, pose, and what other elements I wanted to make part of the cards by studying the symbolism in assorted decks that I owned. I then enlisted my girlfriend to take photos of me and embarked on the bold journey of embodying each of the majors. I used a combination

of photography and collage, taking images from magazines and from nature catalogs.

The project had that wonderful creative flow that happens when one finds an idea, medium, and a process that brings a joyful focus, inventiveness, and satisfaction. I didn't rush through the work and stopped and started several times as I moved back home and got involved once more in my local pagan activities. My weight and hair color changed more than once in the 15 years it took to complete all 22 cards.

I proceeded more or less in numerical order but when I reached the final seven cards I found myself not ready to continue and I took several years off.

Eventually I did follow through getting someone to take pictures of me for the final cards but still I didn't go ahead and tackle those cards until 2020 when so many activities that seemed essential just stopped. Perhaps I was awakened by thinking about card number 20 or perhaps I was inspired by turning 79 during a pandemic and being forced to consider that I might not get to finish the project if I didn't get on it right away. It felt like the time was right and the creative flow returned.

Once I had finished all the cards, I decided to redo a few of the earlier ones because my view of what The Hierophant, Strength, and Justice should look like had changed and, I believe, deepened enough to make me think I needed to do them over. Other cards don't necessarily





seem “perfect” to me, but I’m working on “letting go of my ‘perfect’ offering” and will let them be.

The Tower (page 46) was inspired by the idea of the Tower of Babel and by thoughts of how social media and screens dominate and stand in for our reality. As symbols of the mighty being brought down, I used a crown and a top hat to represent the traditional powers in charge. I am in the frame of one of the screens upside down. I’m wearing a tee shirt that reads “I talk to myself when I want expert advice,” representing the ego being disrupted by a powerful shock that results in a completely new perspective. The snake under the tower and the dove flying up toward a break in the clouds represent the possibilities for transformation and for hope that something better can emerge once the Tower comes down.

The Fool (this page) is one of my earliest cards and is discolored by my foolish choice to use a cheaper glue. I am very fond of the card nonetheless and no longer own the coat in which I was photographed. My cat, Persephone, bravely trying to keep me from stepping over the edge, passed in 2011. There is no going back to this moment. I will have to trust my wings.

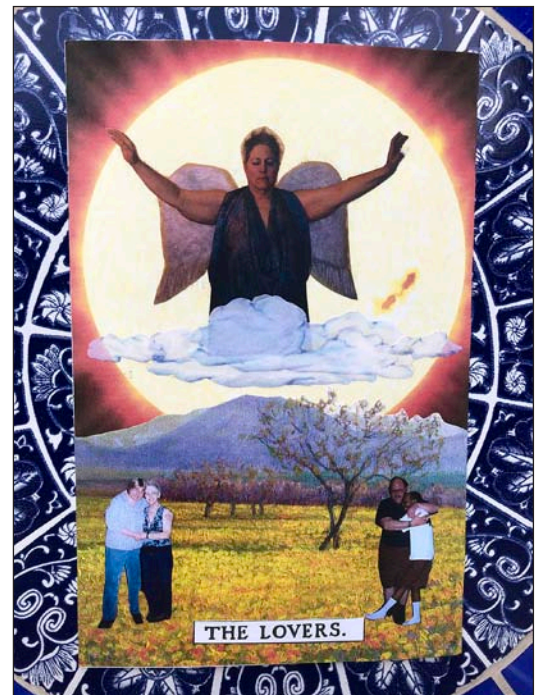
The Moon (page 47) contains some of the classic symbols of the Rider-Waite-Smith deck but reflects my very different understanding of lunar energy. In many decks The Moon is treated as negative (female) energy and I never felt like that was right for me. Since I carry the magical

name, MoonCrone, I might be expected to see the moon as providing light of a different, but certainly not evil or dangerous, sort. It brings the insight of dreams and the clarity of intuition. I see nothing wrong with those ways of knowing, as long as one knows when and how to use them. I liked using the Cancer crab, rather than the crayfish. The three Celtic realms of sky, sea, and earth are represented with water dominant. The dog and wolf represent instinct – of both the domesticated and wild varieties. The moon itself and the opening to another realm is represented by the swirl of an entire moon cycle.

Temperance (page 47) – Trying to depict the mixture of the sun’s fire with water in the Temperance card was not easy to figure out. I liked using a rainbow stole to echo the prismatic rainbow which can be seen as either emerging from or pouring into (or both!) the chalice I am holding. The sky and earth are balanced.

The Lovers (this page) – I appear twice (and at two different times and weights), as the angel blessing the people with love and also as one of the lovers. I especially loved being able to represent gay couples as the lovers—love is love and, to me, represents choice regardless of gender or orientation. It was sweet to be able to have my brother and his husband and me and my wife represent the lovers. I did have to edit the card after I broke up with the woman with whom I was depicted in the first version of it.

I identify as a white witch, priestess, queer, lesbian, person with a mobility disability, and former academic librarian. I weave threads of many communities (Reclaiming, Tejas Web, Feri, RCG, and UU). Finding beauty in nature and the arts as well as supporting racial, economic, and environmental justice are my focus along with creating and sustaining a loving home and marriage with my wife, Lucy, and our cat Lily. I attended Diana’s Grove camps and SpiralHeart’s recent virtual gathering and have been an organizer, student teacher and/or attendee at all Tejas Web Witchcamps and Dandelions.



Missing Tarot Cards

Recently Discovered Major Arcana Omitted from Standard Decks!

When the modern Tarot deck was codified during the early Italian Renaissance, difficult choices were faced regarding which aspects of human experience would count as Major Arcana, which relegated to Minors, and which would be left out entirely.

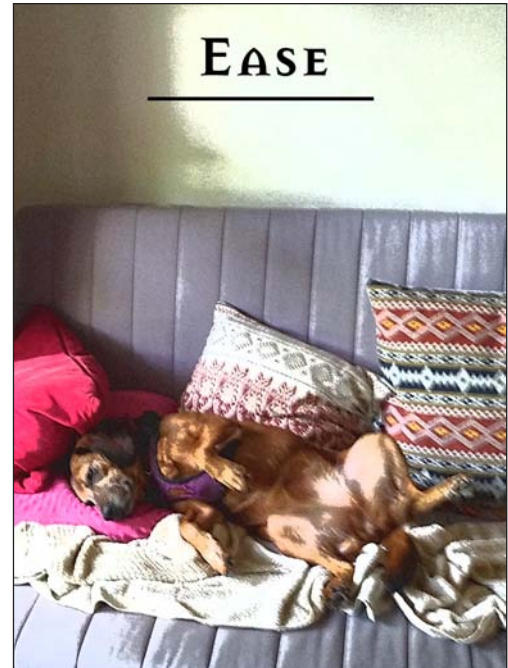
The magical authorities who made these decisions inevitably overlooked realms of experience which subsequently proved central to human culture as we know it today: shopping, spectator sports, paying taxes, giving your cat a bath, and reality television, to name just a few.

Reclaiming's dedicated team of intuitive archaeologists, fresh from their work uncovering vestiges of ancient pagan witchcraft covens, has dug through the imaginary archives and discovered a bunch of Major Arcana that were omitted from early decks.

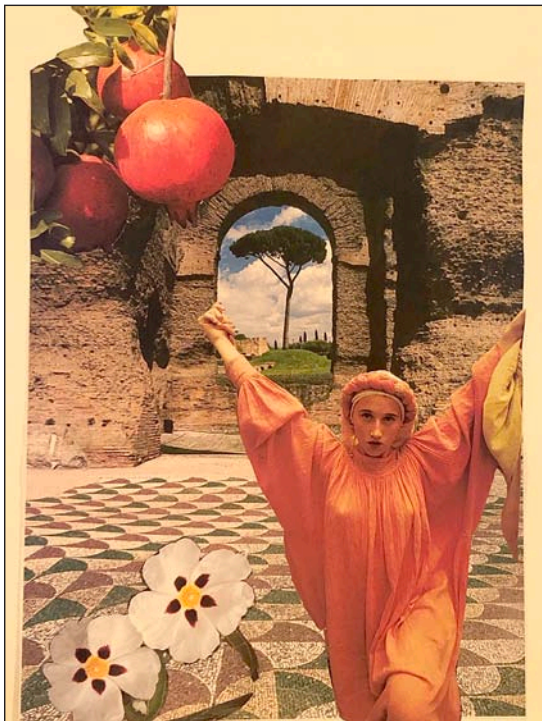
We encourage folks to do deep divination with these new cards and begin to call their energy into the world!

This feature was created by a Reclaiming Tarot class in Summer 2020 – including re-creating two of the missing cards.

Thanks for the painstaking research by Celia, Mimi, Whitney, Catherine, Rebecca, George, Daisy, Kai, Nolan.



"Ease" from the Lazy Dog Oracle by Kevin & Darcy.



Faerie (Puck), created by Elizabeth De Simone.

Sarcasm – tongue in cheek and eye rolls, hands with fingers crossed, snapdragons of many colors (a trickster of the plant family). – *Lori*

Baby-with-the-Bathwater – arms flailing water from a bathtub, astonished-looking baby riding the wave out of the tub. In a reading it refers to impetuosity, and may portend a need to let go and act without fear of consequences. Reversed, it reflects a need for caution. – *Victoria*

Shoveling – life is full of endless clean-up tasks, the sort things that must be done, yet quickly get undone. Laundry one washes only to be dirtied. Meals one spends hours preparing which are gobbled. The card does not speak of futility, because these tasks are absolutely necessary. Perhaps the myth of the cleansing of the Augean stables, which fill up with filth as soon as they are shoveled, would be a lofty interpretation of this archetypal dilemma. – *Rose*

More Missing Tarot Cards

Dolly Parton	Hypnagogic State (between waking and sleeping)	Grand Slam
Pagan Poseurs	Stuck on Hold (No. 12 from Mystical Accountant Tarot)	The Cosmos
Card No. -1	Accidentally Muted (from the Zoom Oracle)	Passing Go
Exile (No. 9.5)	Priestess of Pleasure	Party!
Clean Room		Lost Keys
Getting Stupid		Birth (No. -13)