

Blueprint

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**Abstract**

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*Blueprint* is a set of 57 cards comprised of four different writing forms/constraints (erasure poetry, micro essay, short story, and freewriting) inspired by the author's original Tarot deck. These 57 cards, their faces a collection of hybrid vignettes, are their own deck, set as a book object, and are meant to be shuffled and read in whatever order they are shuffled and drawn, mimicking that of a Tarot reading. For the purposes of this document, the 57 cards are in alphabetical order. The vignettes host the themes of home; a feeling of reluctance, shame, or guilt; the act of being an outsider or foreigner in a place known. There are two main voices: internal and external. These are a parallel to what is seen and what is known; curb appeal and interior design. The book object's function itself is also two-fold: to keep the reader at arm's length, developing an empathy for what it means to be home but not feel at home, and to allow the reader to interject their own conclusions and narratives. The work itself combines the

theories and poetics of Jane Bennett's writing on vibrant materiality, OuLiPo writing practices and constraints, the use of divinity aids in creative pursuits, and reader engagement. This combination adds to the larger conversation within the literary world of what it means when writing is taken off the page, explores physical space in a different form, and influences a reader.

# Poetics Notes



## **Nonsense, No Sense, Nuisance, and Nuance**

*Blueprint* is a set of 57 cards comprised of four different writing forms/constraints (erasure poetry, micro essay, short story, and freewriting) inspired by the author's original Tarot deck. These 57 cards, their faces a collection of hybrid vignettes, are their own deck, set as a book object, and are meant to be shuffled and read in whatever order they are shuffled and drawn (mimicking that of a Tarot reading). For the purposes of this document, the 57 cards are in alphabetical order. The vignettes host the themes of home; a feeling of reluctance, shame, or guilt; the act of being an outsider or foreigner in a place known. There are two main voices: internal and external. These are a parallel to what is seen and what is known; curb appeal and interior design. The book object's function itself is also two-fold: to keep the reader at arm's length, developing an empathy for what it means to be home but not feel at home, and to allow the reader to interject their own conclusions and narratives.

The heavy-handedness of the home theme is continued in the titles of each vignette – house construction terms metaphoric for (inter)personal experiences. The self as home, the house as home, a deck of cards as a home or used to make a house of cards all mimic the fragility of a structure (a house, a person, a relationship). But, there is still more room to play with this theme and the poetics described below.

Is a tarot deck another search for home – are constraints a form of home? Is the divination process, the process of “listening” or being a conduit for other sources to manifest, an act of homemaking? Is home personal, or is it something outside the self like divination can be?

If you're searching for it, you've yet to find it – home –, thus making it something external. External like searching, listening, divining, communing. It's not so far of a stretch.

Home is the search for roots – to get at the thing at its most fundamental level, at its blueprint or construction notes. Home is a raw center. When divining, communing, listening, even waiting, aren't we vulnerable? And isn't vulnerability a raw, pink center? Or, maybe it's unformed – like a deck of cards. A collection of separate things coming together, seeking to commune, seeking for home. And, ultimately, what is homemaking anyway? To make a home, you seek whatever is familiar and merge it with the unfamiliar. Tarot is one familiar thing and the divine is the unfamiliar. Homemaking then becomes an act of forging together the unforged, just as art is a merging of unlike ideas, entities, or actants.

As part of the process for this thesis, I would do word-association exercises. In one of these exercises, I found “homemaking” and “weaving” to be next to each other. The rabbit hole continues: weaving the stars (divination); weaving the cloth (home); weaving the words (art).

Ultimately, what I have woven here, on the surface, is the entanglement of the Tarot and of writing. Both decks, the Tarot and the written component or complement, are inseparable. Neither would exist without the other: without the need for a thesis, the Tarot deck would not have surfaced; without the Tarot deck, the book object would not exist. The two objects and all their actants, of which I am only one, have each other to thank for their being. Below the surface, the weave becomes more complex, fibers twisting and sometimes knotting together and

incapable of being pulled apart, similar to being incapable of escaping the actants of one's own roots: a home, a person, a self, or a relationship.

**Of Magic, the Divine, and Constraint**

“The sentences of this book also emerged from the confederate agency of many striving macro- and microactants: from “my” memories, intentions, contentions, intestinal bacteria, eyeglasses, and blood sugar, as well as from the plastic computer keyboard, the bird song from the open window, or the air or particulates in the room, to name only a few of the participants. What is at work here on the page is an animal-vegetable-sonority cluster with a particular degree and duration of power. What is at work here is what Deleuze and Guattari call an assemblage” (Bennett, 23).

Naturally, any work has its own long list of macro- and microactants, as Jane Bennett describes in her book *Vibrant Matter, a political ecology of things*. This work is no exception and I'll defer to Bennett's default list mostly. However, there is one particular sect of actants that should be expanded on to grasp the becoming of a thing: poetic actants. There are a number of poetic actants at work here: a poetics of magic, of the divine, of the reader and the uncanny, and of chance, constraint, and coincidence. I'll begin with the first listed, though each are so reliant and intertwined with the others they become difficult to separate.

It's no secret that I employ a poetics of magic, believing I am not a genius but sometimes one will visit me and want to work together. Words do not live within me, I do not create them. They exist externally and choose to collaborate with me, or, at the very least, through me. I

choose to pose as a conduit, which a genius can flow through, in my work as an artist and writer. In doing so, in choosing to distance myself from my creativity in this way, I am freed from the pressure of having to produce the absolute best thing and able to simply... Produce. The lightness is worth the construct, saving me from the inner critic and allowing space to make choices not out of fear, but out of curiosity.

That curiosity led me to a thesis of two parts: A Tarot deck and a writing component or complement. I could argue the act of creating an original Tarot deck as a creative writing tool is enough of a poetics statement by itself. I won't, but I could. Instead, the creation of the 78 Tarot cards, following the more traditional imagery and practice, is the heart of the second poetics listed above: A poetics of the divine. In letting "something else" decide or guide a creative pursuit is to open one's self up to the intangible. It's a blind-faith move, a trust of both oneself and whatever else is out there, to believe everything will fall into place.

Like a coin-flip, there's two sides to using a Tarot deck as a creative writing tool. One side, let's say heads, is the above-mentioned. The other, tails, is the outlook that using anything as a writing tool is a writing constraint. Both ideas, and many more, are simultaneously true. Constraints are like bumper guides to the creative process. They help you narrow down exactly what needs to be said/made/communicated. Meaning, without the constraint, I'd probably say/make/communicate whatever a thing is regardless, but the constraints become a faster way to get there. A "short cut" to the "answer" – what many people (mistakenly) believe divinity aids (cards, coins, tea leaves...) to be. Any communing with the divine/universe/what-have-you is

akin to creative constraints: you'd end up at the same place eventually, but why not get there faster? Or, going with my bowling metaphor - you end up with less gutter balls.

The Tarot deck images are listed at the end of this document.

### **Of the Reader and the Uncanny**

Bennett defines the general inconceivability of material objects having their own agency to that equal of human agency. There is an uncanny element when artists and writers relinquish their work to audiences and readers. The audience or reader add to a narrative without the artist or writer having any input. That is to say, a definition of this uncanny element I experience could be found when Bennett quotes W.J.T. Mitchell, “[...]objects are the way things appear to a subject – that is, with a name, an identity, a gestalt or stereotypical template. . . . Things, on the other hand, . . . [signal] the moment when the object becomes the Other, when the sardine can look back, when the mute idol speaks, when the subject experiences the object as uncanny and feels the need for what Foucault calls ‘a metaphysics of the object, or, more exactly, a metaphysics of that never objectifiable depth from which objects rise up toward our superficial knowledge’” (2).

Something magical happens when a narrative removes itself from the page. For me, that “something magical” revolves around reader-audience participation that helps to build the narrative and the materiality of the thing that surrounds the narrative but refuses to directly be the narrative. Generally, I leave space on my pages for my reader to see themselves reflected, furthering a narrative I have laid out beyond what was produced. Naturally, I would also add the

reader's memories, intentions, connections, etc..., as part of the actant list in the creation of a thing, whether that thing is a book, an essay, a poem, a painting, a photograph, or a deck of cards.

## Blueprint

I start each day as a murderer, killing the black ants & they come - Squishing their small bodies to nothing but black  
 my fingertips. Squishing their small bodies to nothing but black  
 of my unhappiness with this home. Before them, I could deal  
 stains and how it has ruined the dishwasher. I could cope with  
 drying the clothes and could even handle the furnace, in the  
 catch, buying space heaters and dragging them from room to  
 the last straw. Actually, the last straw is possibly more accurately  
 catch, buying space heaters and dragging them from room to  
 last straw. Actually, the last straw is possibly more accurately  
 brew his coffee, and heating up a bagel or oatmeal with  
 them. No, that isn't right either. Maybe, at the core of it all, the  
 see the unpleasant things before anyone else does and, thus, I am  
 annoyed with finding a solution. But do I truly want to be less observant  
 with finding a solution. But do I truly want to be less observant  
 and the remote, his keys, his chargers. I always know where he's hid  
 his keys, his wallet, his chargers. I always know where he's hid  
 marriage is going himself. I also always notice when he's in a  
 nd the remote from himself. I also always notice when he's in a  
 marriage is going, but this is an observation I keep to myself. And  
 dissequential burden of responsibility is an emotional labor I don't  
 r I mention, "The facts are back." Or take the time to respond to  
 I'll mention, "The facts are back." Or take the time to respond to  
 last time you set them down. "Check to the right of the  
 across the country in school or work, "Check to the right of the  
 e last time you set them down. "But, I'd draw a hard line when they  
 is unkind of me to know. When a friend distraught over their  
 is to me with complaints, all I can give are options, "Do your w  
 re wrong or do you want me to shut up and listen? Or, at least  
 to try to change the subject? "I don't have the patience to guess, ti  
 patience and kindness are zero for two. I need to meditate more, seek  
 an I demonstrate kindness comes from within and only when I an  
 of patience and kindness to others. I can't write about these an  
 self can I demonstrate them to others. I can't write about these an  
 ing the black ants on my counter tops with my fingertips &  
 nothing but black smudges. And still, I can't write about these an  
 about these...

He resumed his paused, on-demand college basketball game and, when one of their three cats came up to him and meowed, he said, “Yeah, I know.”



**ADDITION**

She looked at her house now, at her windows with their lights on, and noticed she had left the blinds of her office up past dark. Her private space on display for the entire world to see. She studied it, trying to be as outsider as she could. The four empty glasses she hadn't taken to the kitchen, the bowl of finished ramen and the plate leftover from frozen pizza. One of their cats curled up on her computer chair. The red light of the space heater still on, indicating she forgot to turn it off. And, finally, her budding library on shelves made of particle boards. She stared hard at the odd little arrangement that made up her new altar.

## APERTURE

Being considered  
impressive,  
I have always had the  
ability to get things,  
see the failing conditions changed  
at the last moment,  
innacurately understand why.



**ARCHITECT**

She was getting cold, her nose dribbling a bit, and her mouth hidden in the zipped-up collar of her coat. She had to continue to flex her fingers to keep them warm. Disheartened further, she stepped out from under the gazebo, replacing her glove to her hand even though the walk to her backdoor was 30 feet away.



**BACKFILL**

Driving home from work the next evening, the sky was still bright enough to feel her day wasn't gone already, yet a rather detailed white moon hung in the blue. She always loved a moon like that, on display even during the daylight. When she parked in the driveway – naturally, their garage was full of everything but their cars – she stared at the moon and gave it some silent appreciation. Her fingers typed into her phone, asking it when the next full moon was. Three days. She'd never danced under a winter's full moon before. Maybe she'd go outside and sit with it then.

**BEAM**

“I think I will go outside.”

“I thought you didn’t want to go for a walk?”

“I don’t, but I’d like to go outside. You’re welcome to join me.” He knew he wasn’t. She was already rummaging through the entry closet to find her coat and snow boots. He watched her as she sat on the arm of the couch and tied her laces. She went into her office to grab her phone, and headed for the backdoor through the kitchen.

**BEVEL**

I am very  
dishonest. More dishonest  
than anyone knows.



**BLUEPRINT**

Slipstream into a sound sensitivity,  
a whooshing of overwhelm, a  
stable state of anxiety. A sapien  
shouts into his cell, a she sweats  
and runs past, a spring laps, waves  
resound against themselves. A  
slant shield – for years I’ve slept  
with ear plugs to stopple the  
sounds of sleep. My ears now snap,  
crackle when I swallow.



**BREEZEWAY**

I long to apologize,  
apologize to numerous  
Saturday nights –  
a one-sided nothing for us.



**CIVIL PLANS**

I will be watching with just  
enough time left.  
Still time to push,  
and I can get out of this  
incredible surreal moment  
heard at such a forgotten core.  
A fantastic first –  
like incited love –  
a small protest,  
a passion for phenomena.



**CONTOUR LINES**

Everyone knows an excuse  
must find the  
two of you to  
honor little prayers; honor years of  
a great plan and  
piece together a border, a defeat,  
a win, a failing addiction, a  
freedom.



**CROWN MOLDING**

And so, for about a month, she would come home to greet the house. Announcing, most of the time in her mind, that she was home and she was thankful for the physical space she had. She tried, like a lover does, to find unconditional love within the structure's faults. The hard water has ruined the dishwasher, but it makes a great drying rack. The furnace is temperamental, but if you cheer it on the pilot light may actually catch this time. The clothes dryer takes two 70-minute cycles to fully dry a load, but it's a great timer. You know it's time for bed when the second cycle buzzes its completion. It wasn't a bad home, necessarily. But it was a new build in a subdivision, too far from the college-town's center to really feel like they were in the middle of anything but nowhere.

## DETAIL DRAWING

The next trick was to see from other perspectives. One day, sooner rather than later, this house would find its ideal family: a young couple starting out, maybe with a kid, and most definitely with a dog. This family would grow together within these walls. Maybe they, the current owners, were meant to simply keep it warm for its fated, future ones.



**DIMENSIONS**

This storm you imagine,  
aimed at us,  
was progress for  
the story.



**DOWNSPOUT**

“Want to do something?” He asked.  
“I don’t know! Everything is exciting and exhausting at the same time.”  
He knew this conversation by heart, but still played along. He didn’t need to, she was perfectly capable of having similar conversations with herself, but he wanted her to know that he was still there for her.  
“Ok... Want to watch a movie?”  
“No, movies have a definitive end. That makes me feel weird.”  
“Video games? We can play one of your favorites?”  
“No, too much of a learning curve. Takes too long to get to the meat of things.”  
“...Bed?”  
“Too early, I’ll feel like I’ve wasted the day.”

**DRAFT**

And we tried to play catch –  
the act of making tomorrow  
morning truly great.  
I picked up the thing,  
a hard move. It,  
or some other entity,  
talking about movement.  
I say you will be the biggest of all  
waters.  
Of water: that wonderful phrase.



**DRIP EDGE**

But, she did have an extra shelf available now, not being occupied by books, and did have the rudimentary elements needed to put together the semblance of an altar... If only out of respect for the craft. She set the book aside, leaving it for future reference, moved the pieces of furniture into their new homes, spent the evening futzing with loading software, and went to bed after a round of YouTube and a couple Netflix stand-up specials. The book waited patiently next to her tarot decks that displayed prominently as decoration on her desk.

## **ELECTRIC PLANS**

The thought of getting dressed was such a momentous task she didn't think she could be bothered do it tomorrow, or the next day.

"Wait, what day is it?"

"Sunday."

"Alexa," she called, "When is the next full moon?"

A blue light lit up on a gray cylinder on the couch's end table,

"The next full moon is today."

"Well, that explains it!" She said as if it really did explain it. She fell into the couch and looked at him.

"Knowing is half the battle?" He offered as a consolation.

**ELEVATION**

The first way she tried to trick herself into loving the house was to remind herself it was temporary. Soon, they would sell the house off and move to a bigger city that was metropolitan enough for her and local enough for him. “We’re only here for a couple months,” they told everyone. They tore up the old, stained carpets full of dog smell and hair and brought in new carpets and laminate. They painted the walls, began staining the back deck, called in family to help with landscaping, and put covers on all the outlets. They had a lease signed with a deposit, ready to go two months ahead of time. A distant aunt even came to look at the house and advise them as their realtor.

## FACADE

We are misleading the people we  
want to  
celebrate our growth, taking care  
to  
keep good the fake negative.



**FASCIA**

She looked at the moon, upset with it before realizing she was just upset at herself; upset at her frustration. There would, naturally, be no resolve here. The house would continue to feel cold and be unclean. She would continue to pace the hallways under the influence of full moons. They'd sell the house in a rush because she was crying every night, taking the first offer instead of waiting for the best one. And, they'd move to only do it all over again.

**FIXTURE**

She flipped through the book again, this time stopping at the familiar illustrations. She paused too long on the drawing of an altar, and entertained what she currently had on hand that could serve as the knife, the wand. Were emergency candles ok to use? What had happened to all her pentacles? She supposed her current journal was enough of a substitute for a book of shadows. And, anyway, why should she bother? She hasn't practiced in over a decade and, frankly, considering a small wooden rod used to hold up the window in her husband's office as a substitute wand was shameful, even for a modern witch. And also anyway, didn't she get this book at Barnes & Noble when she was 14? Is that really the type of practice she wanted to continue?

## FLOOR PLAN

She had already tried numerous ways of accepting the house. And really, at its core, she just wanted it to be a home. It wasn't hers to begin with, a remnant of her new husband's past life. But the mortgage was cheaper than the rent they were paying on the other side of the country and, anyway, he was miserable being so far from his friends and family. One night, she simply turned to him and said, "We're moving back."



**FOUNDATION**

The night of the full moon, she was restless. Naturally, she'd forgotten what day it was and what the moon was doing. It was the weekend, and weekend meant far too portions of far too many glasses of boxed wine. She moved from her office to living room and back again two times over before she noticed her husband staring at her.



**GEOMETRIC TOLERANCE**

Her third trick was to simply drink and forget any house duties. Maybe her husband would pick up her slack if she let it get bad enough and she could focus on naming what was wrong and accepting it in order to move on. The week-old standing water in the sink's dishes stated otherwise, but she had started stealing plastic ware from work so she wouldn't have to wash forks.



**GUTTER**

Why, I could tell you about the day  
Jacq and I planned to go to the  
beach in two-days' time. To breathe  
in the water, swallow the salt,  
yearn to swim but honor our  
pricked skin. Instead, the sand  
turned us away, that unwanted  
souvenir. Sun-licked noses and  
shoulders still proved our time  
spent unwise, at riverbanks, pool  
sides, and sidewalk bends.



**HIDDEN LINE**

You, scraping to find  
the devastating effect  
of me.



**ISOMETRIC DRAWING**

I've never sat in a meadow and dreamed. I've thought about it, had access to overgrown fields of grasses and wildflowers. I'm a creature of comfort. Itchy plants and buzzing insects never suit the life of a Taurus – one so grounded in their own nest. I'll continue to appreciate from afar, through glass windows, unaltered, and light a candle in honor of those breezy plains – a mutual understanding between earth elements.



**LANDSCAPING**

Still, she was determined. She began taking her books off their shelves to move them to the opposing corner. To save future time, she alphabetized them in their boxes according to genre. When she came to commercial nonfiction, a small but mighty collection of how-tos and self-betterment guides, she started to weed the collection further. Any style guides were right out. Yoga and Buddhism could stay, but Reiki should find a new home and 'How to Win Friends and Influence People' belonged to the trash (which was now being taken at regularly scheduled weekly intervals again). Just behind a collection of quotes by Cheryl Strayed her nose picked up on that delicious old book smell, equal parts dust, leather, and a hint of tobacco. Reaching for the dark green spine, her fingers grazed the soft, yellow edges of the hidden book's pages. Turning the book to its cover, she flipped through it. Took in its potency. And she smiled at her younger self. 'True Magick: A Beginner's Guide'.

## LEGEND

And then, she was offered a job she thought she wanted. They talked, and he told her to take the job; she could always quit when they were ready. The decision, however, came with a heavy heart: living in the house would be less temporary now. They cancelled their lease and didn't finish staining the deck in time for winter.



**LINEAR DIMENSIONS**

They talked like this while she paced the hallway between office and living room, growing more and more frustrated. Not with him, he knew, but in general. He stopped taking personal offense to her mood swings before they were even married.

“I wish it wasn’t so cold, we could go for a walk.”



**MAIN GIRDER**

I hear her lying  
with a sacred process.  
Leaving me to hack  
a secret said to cross  
the core of  
spirit, optimism, principles



**MASONRY**

I am working hard to stay  
in Indiana, to fill up  
the badly defeated night when she  
called me,  
stated, "He said something truly  
horrifying."  
She then said, "We have to accept  
the sad state  
instead of the convincingly  
forgotten problem."  
Unwilling to deal with  
another fraud,  
her loss would get worse.  
My thoughts stay safe in the  
wonderful fact:  
I will be leaving again.

**NOT TO SCALE**

Our wonderful disaster  
is imploding. For years  
I tell you we are getting along. I  
will come with  
a new disaster vital to the beautiful  
picture.



**OVERHANG**

The worst thing you could do will  
only get worse –  
It is rude to be better.  
The worst will come and save the  
day.



**PADDING**

The border is being restored. I,  
between the right time and the  
same game,  
am running weak. Weak on force  
and calling.



**PARAPET**

The fight has disgraced me  
for two solid years – looks like  
Some great cut where care can no  
longer  
be prepared. This witch hunt:  
An honor to the woman we defend.  
The path offers things responsible  
– some unmasked.



**PARTITION**

He sent a letter to me in the night,  
after the intensity of us. I have,  
more easily,  
played one who typically fails to  
receive calls.  
I just look like a fantastic friend.



**PITCH**

The most observant, the first to notice wayward insects, a public scene, spectrals. The only one to notice, out of eight total eyes, a single plastic bag fall from nine stories high and tumble down passed the window's view – this is not a metaphor for something beautiful. I am tired of being the only person who notices these garbage things and exhausted for I must turn them into something stunning.



**PLUMBING**

The candy in the cabinet tastes sweeter knowing it is medicine for some – an even guiltier pleasure, a reminder of mortality; a starburst of awareness. That first chew, the release, the swishing of saliva from one cheek to the other, a promise to savor, a weak will to nibble, a grind between teeth. Another thrill: tonguing the line between wellness and illness and a hope there will be enough candy left when his blood sugar drops again in the middle of the night.

**PLY**

In those early morning dues, the rustle of sheets, the stomping of footsteps down the hall, the soft bang of the door, the click of the latch. A moment of reprieve to slip back into sleep, into comfort. The turn of the handle, a gushing of water. The pipes creaking, rambling to keep up. Another moment of solace, a gripping of the pillow, a comforting squeeze. I know the morning rhythms of married life, sparked from the sound of his shower. A blessing – a baptism of belief.

**RELIEF VALVE**

He does not know love and  
strength are going to be the  
crooked sanction of this –  
A long hosting for our formed  
garden; for a wonderful power of  
promises.



**RISER**

Self-consciously, she walked over to the playground equipment and, after a thoughtful glare, decided she didn't trust any of it. She settled for sitting on top of the picnic table, but it was under a gazebo that blocked her view of the moon.

'Close enough, I guess.'



**ROOF PLAN**

She looked over at the only windows in the room, the ones that faced their backyard, which butted up against a small suburb playground. Through the broken blinds, she saw the moon there. Her chest was heavy, most likely from the alcohol, but she liked to pretend otherwise.



**SAFETY GLAZING**

She wasn't good at these things. Instead of basking in the winter moon's light, she looked at the nearby houses, focusing on the windows with their lights on, wishing to see inside. How did other people manage to own and take care of houses? Did they ever let theirs get as disgusting as hers? She dug for her phone in her pocket, removed her glove, and was about to look at houses in their destined future city, when she heard some windchimes – hearing the cold air breeze before she could feel it. The warning a gross annoyance. 'Just be colder if you're going to be colder, air.'

**SCALE**

Please be forewarned:  
it was OK for our companies to  
build a massive control.  
Can you imagine the  
opposite?



**SCHEMATIC**

She never felt natural in her own skin. Tonight was no exception. She tried leaning against the railing on the back porch and looking up, but that didn't feel right. She tried sitting on the steps of the back porch, because they had given away their patio furniture in one of the three moves (she couldn't remember which). She contemplated laying down on the back porch, but agreed it was just too cold for that. Her breath poured from her mouth like it usually does during winter. She remembered it had been months since she'd touched a real cigarette and was surprised to find herself not craving one now.

## SECTION DRAWING

Happy wife happy life, he knew, was hard to achieve when the wife referenced was always restless. But, that night, after she came back inside, she sat with him, complaining and crying and cuddling, until they both went to bed. He waited for her to fall asleep first and, as she slept, slipped his arm around her, breathing her in before breathing her out again.



**SEDIMENT**

This seemed to have started working, until the weather became too cold and snow started piling up in the lawn. Seasonal depression set in, making each over-compensation that much more of a feat and chore. The entry-way closet didn't have a light, which meant she had to fumble for her outerwear each day and blindly toss her boots on the mat at the bottom of the closet, as to not bring in melting snow. One month, they forgot to pay their trash bill and their overflowing bin sat at the curb for three weeks over holiday, neglected and frozen. A different month, they found their water shut off because ambivalence also tends to make unopened disconnection notices disappear.

## SITE DETAILS

We will always be trying  
to expand as  
the world comes to its senses.  
My conflict is  
a ridiculous shame.  
This is a purely religious treat:  
Hatred is a hard-to-negotiate  
peace.



**SOFFIT**

Look forward to  
the condolences that  
have let us lie.



**SPECIFICATIONS**

Her fingers typed into her phone:  
'home blessing spell'

About 12,700,000 results in 0.39 seconds.

She tried again: 'house warming spell'. No, that wasn't worded correctly either.

'How to fall in love with your house spell'.

She rolled her eyes at the results.

'Alright, think.'

She tried numerous others. Generically, 'house spell'; 'happy house spell'; 'love house spell'; 'dwelling spell'; 'what objects do witches keep in their house'; and 'how to love your home'.

## STRUCTURAL PLAN

Her husband, the literal resident expert on the best wall for the TV, refused to let her rearrange the living room. So, she fussed. She needed something new and fresh. Her computer was on the fritz, and a new computer is a great excuse to rearrange her office. As her husband toiled to set up the new machine, she began the process. First, cleaning the space: bringing the dishes out, reorganizing loose papers, labeling bins and baskets accordingly. She fell asleep arranging the furniture in her mind, only to wake up the next day to find it wouldn't work.

**TAPER**

It isn't the creaking, loose floorboards that let me know this isn't our home. The tour of the kitchen, though disappointing, isn't either. I try to explain why the property isn't for us – it wasn't the sloping floors or the water in the basement. It was the scent of old wood and older memories, a stale coffin, a potent loss. It was the smell of aging, the breaking down of something sacred, cherished. It was not meant to be ours because our home will smell of lavender, of memories yet to be made.

**THRESHOLD**

There is a certain kindness in tuning out of conversation. A self-care defense, a shifting of the too-strong drink to be perfectly centered on its cardboard coaster. There is a note made that the purse of the woman to your right is barely hanging on to the back of her chair, and the man to your left has been chewing his right thumb, the skin exposed, pink, chapped. There is an acknowledgement of hand gestures and you remember to smile, the beige haze of the room overtaking you. You've been addressed in the conversation among friends, asked to bestow some ridiculous revelation. Instead, you reflect the spectacle of questioning, summon the waiter with coifed hair and soft hands for another round and, "Would anyone like something to nibble?"

## UNDERLAYMENT

The truth has a future course.  
For first time – fairly played to  
mask the  
view of a hypocrite.



**WINDOW FRAME**

I've written about this before – the stinging of hot water to skin, the torture of a just-too-hot shower as repentance for sins. The flesh turning pink, then bright red as a moment of solitude to pray over what I've done. If I ruin a man's life, will he ever know the sacrifices I made? The nauseated stomach of self-induced suffering and the inhale of relief I finally give myself when I open the door and the steam – the steam that billows around me like dragon's breath only moments before destruction.

**YOKE**

## Process Notes

### Card Back Artwork: Freewrite

1. Draw three cards, try to make sense of them. Example:

Card	XII-The Hanged Man	VII-The Chariot	Four of Coins
<b>Meaning</b>	A limbo, a meditative state, sacrifice, transition, little things to see big picture	Victory, competition, awareness of ego and unconscious working together	Too much restriction or constraint can cause a project to go stale

2. Freewrite your thoughts. Do not filter or prohibit yourself. Meditate like the Hanged Man, create awareness like the Chariot, and give up restraint as the Four of Coins warned.
3. Eventually, put these thoughts on the page, copy the content three times, overlay the content to create a visual pattern. Let these freely written thoughts separate the content of a collection of creative work.

## Microessays

1. Draw three cards, try to make sense of them, then draw two more.
2. Look at the cards, pick out specific elements or icons that can relate to the five senses.

One sense per card. Example:

<b>Card</b>	0-The Fool	9 of Coins	3 of Cups	7 of Cups	Knight of Wands
<b>Imagery/Icon-Sense Inspiration</b>	Sea salt from the waves on the card	Hawk on shoulder of figure	Riverbed	Meadow	Fire
<b>Sense</b>	Taste	Sight	Sound	Smell	Touch
<b>Activity</b>	Gargle salt water while reading	Read card through the film of a plastic bag	Water sounds at high volume while reading	Meadow-scented tea candle burns while reading	Light the card on fire and read while the card burns

3. Limit word count to a maximum of 100 words, pulling from recent experiences or freewriting, and create a small collection of microessays, each inspired from the Icon-Sense Inspiration of a card drawn.

## Erasure Poems

1. Draw three cards, accidentally read second card first. Example:

<b>Card</b>	Four of Cups	XIV - Temperance	Knight of Wands
<b>Meaning/ Interpretation/ Reading</b>	Pay attention to the thing you are purposely ignoring – there is plenty of creative fodder within your reach, wanting to be used	Find the balance	Use your anger to empower creative pursuits instead of letting the anger destroy you.
<b>Output</b>	The fodder: Trump's tweets	The balance: erasure, introducing my own confessional, contemporary voice to this collection of words	The anger: Trump/my views of Trump

2. Go to <http://www.trumptwitterarchive.com/archive>, export all tweets to current date.
3. Get overwhelmed. Readjust dates to something more meaningful (personal or otherwise).
4. Remove all hashtags, links, and any proper nouns you may come across.

5. Create erasures, letting the words to use jump out at you instead of forcing them to fit together. Protip: Unfocus your eyes if you're having a hard time with this.

**Rest Day**

1. Shuffle cards.
2. Pay attention to the card that “jumps” from the deck and onto the floor. Example:

<b>Card</b>	Four of Swords
<b>Meaning</b>	Rest, take a break



## Short Story

### *Prior to this reading*

Develop or determine a system for the card suit/element and writing genre alignment. Example:

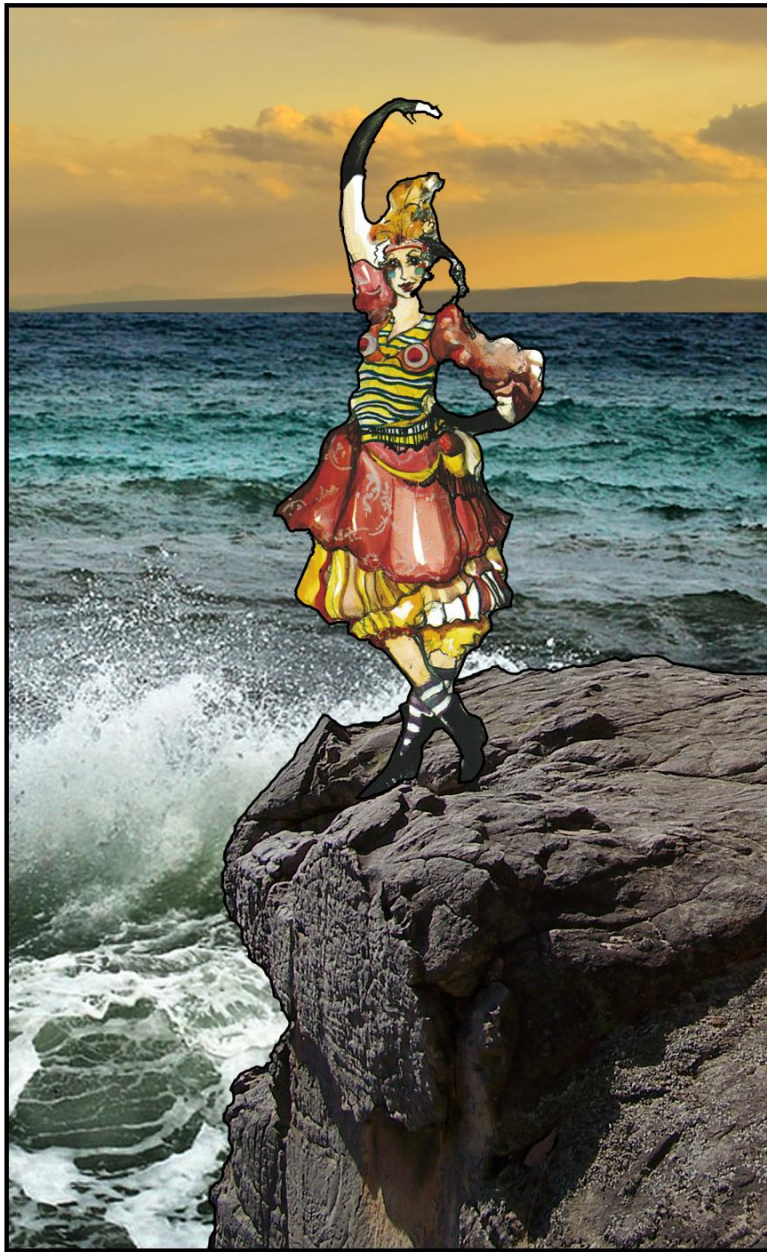
<b>Card Type</b>	Pentacles/Coins	Cups	Swords	Wands
<b>Element</b>	Earth	Water	Air	Fire
<b>Genre</b>	Fiction	Nonfiction	Poetry	Experimental
<b>Alignment</b>				

1. Draw three cards, try to make sense of them in this way: genre, content, theme. Example:

<b>Card</b>	King of Coins	Ten of Coins	The Moon
<b>Meaning</b>	Genre: Coins – Earth - Fiction	Content: Home, contentment, stability	Theme: subconscious desires

2. Write a short story, as indicated by the King of Coins genre, containing elements of home, contentment, stability and the theme of subconscious desires.

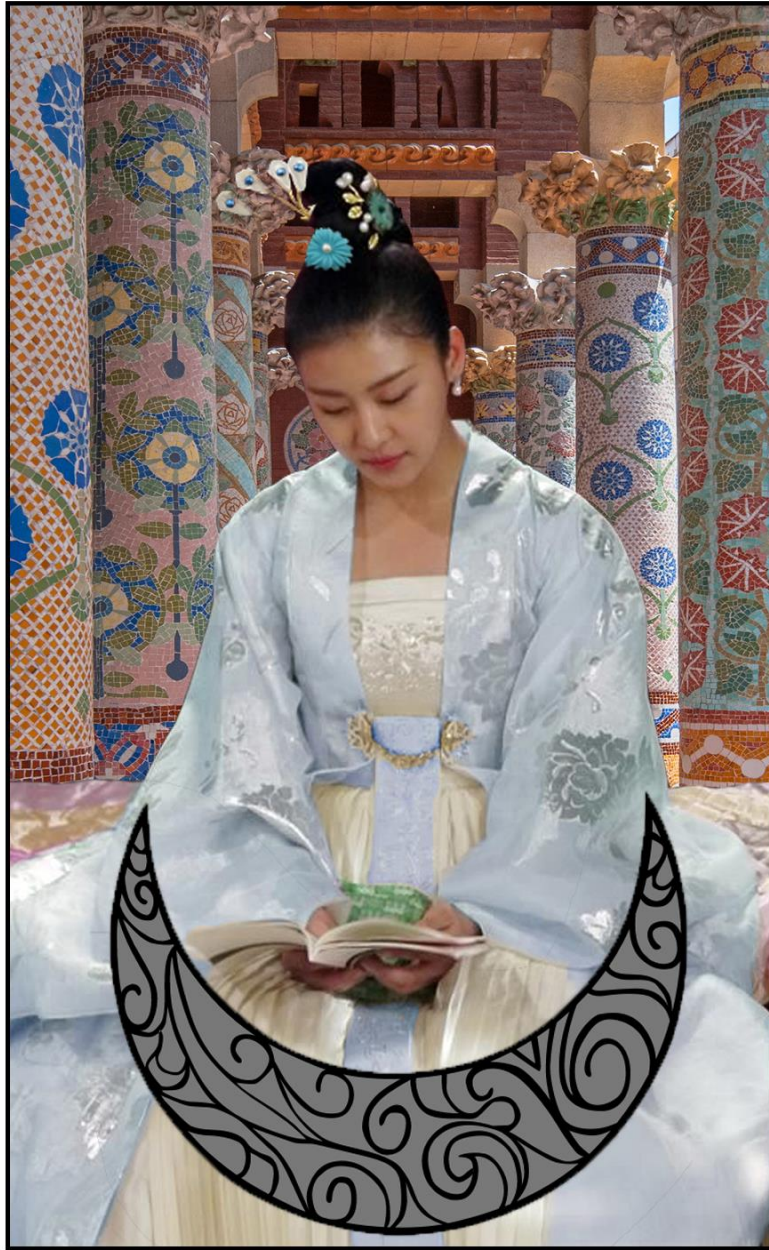
## Tarot Deck



**0 - THE FOOL**



**I - THE MAGICIAN**



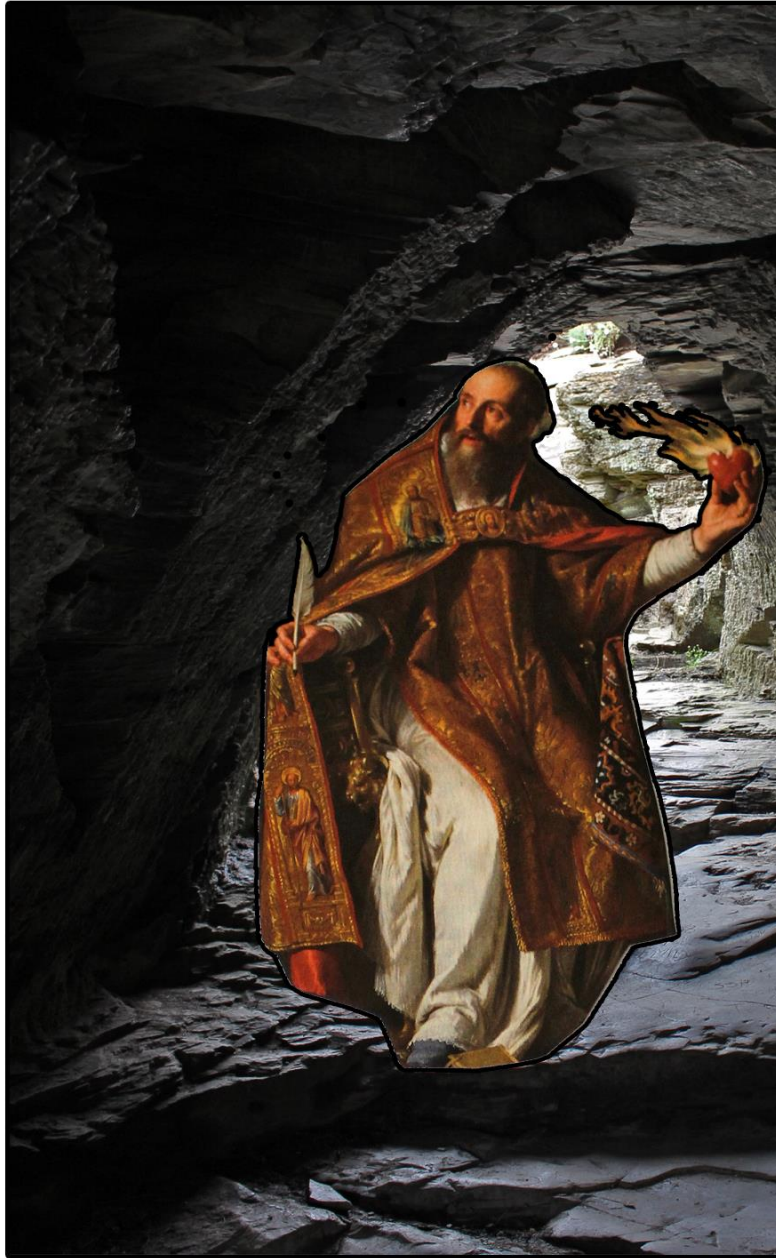
## II. THE HIGH PRIESTESS



### III - THE EMPRESS



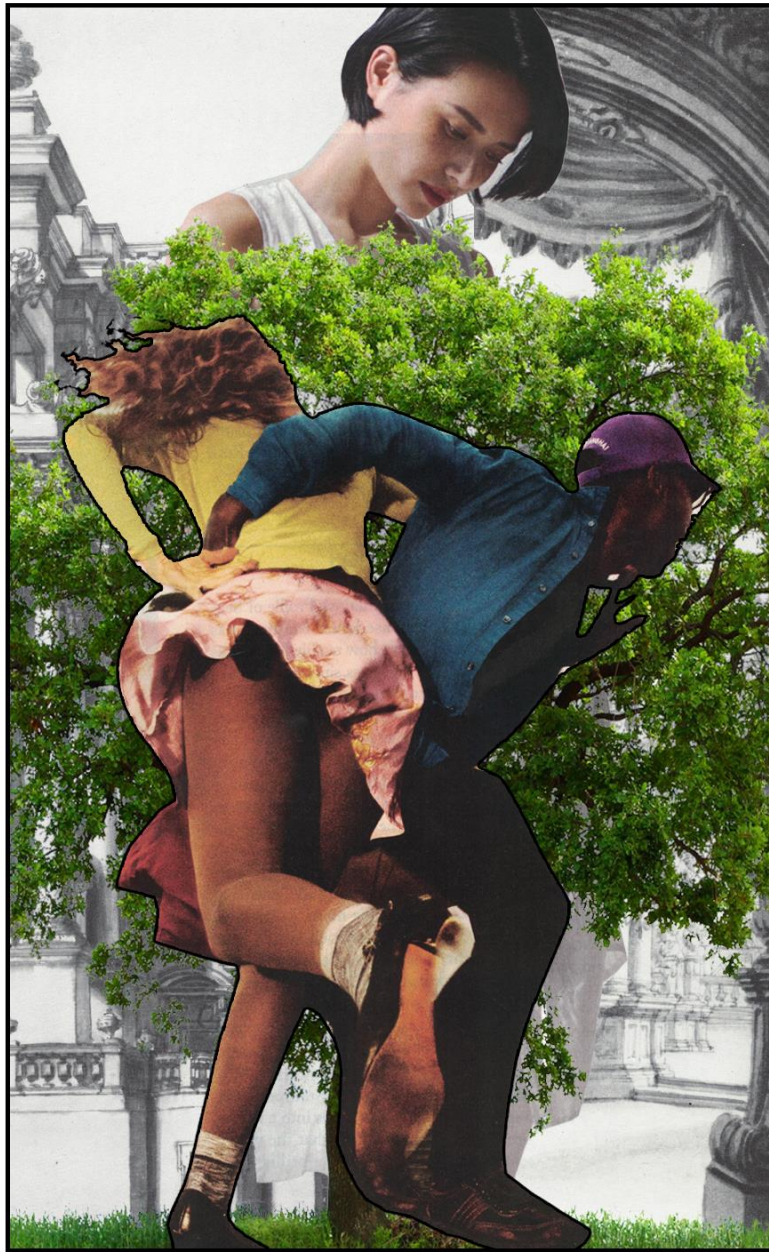
**IV - THE EMPEROR**



**IX - THE HERMIT**



**V. THE HIEROPHANT**



**VI - THE LOVERS**



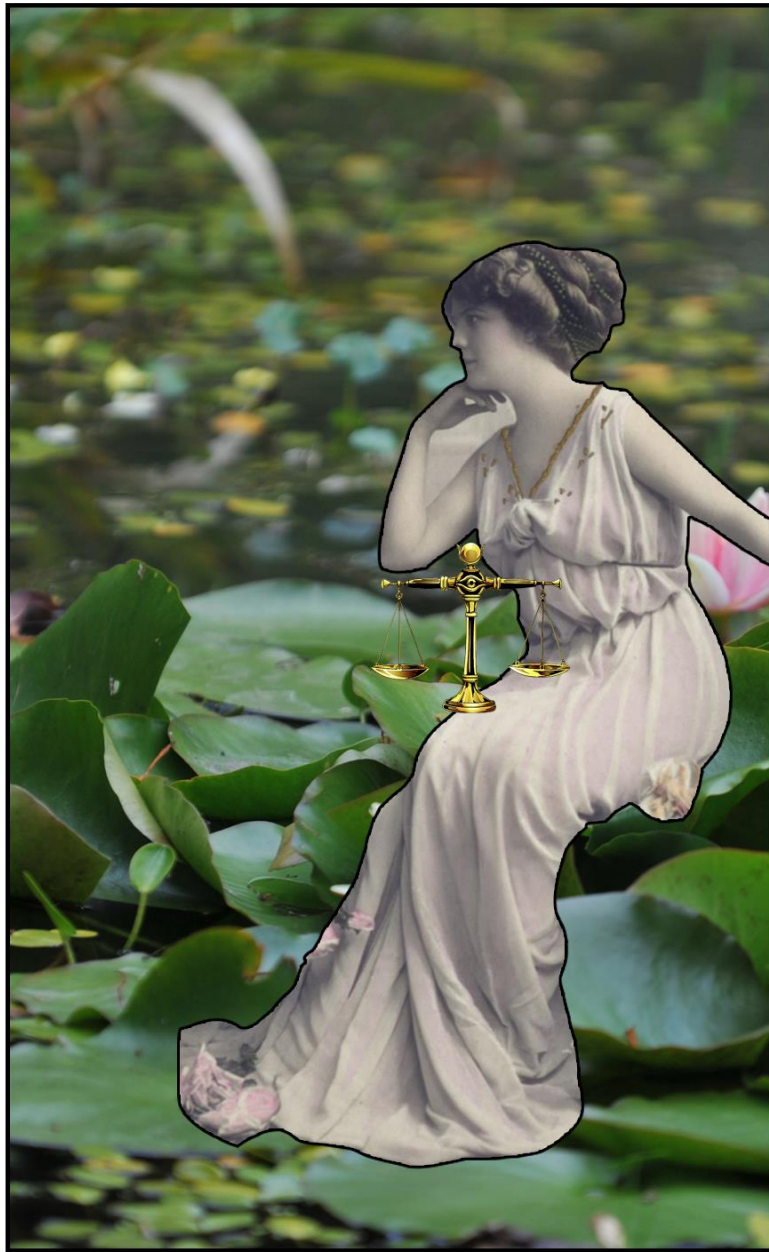
**VII - THE CHARIOT**



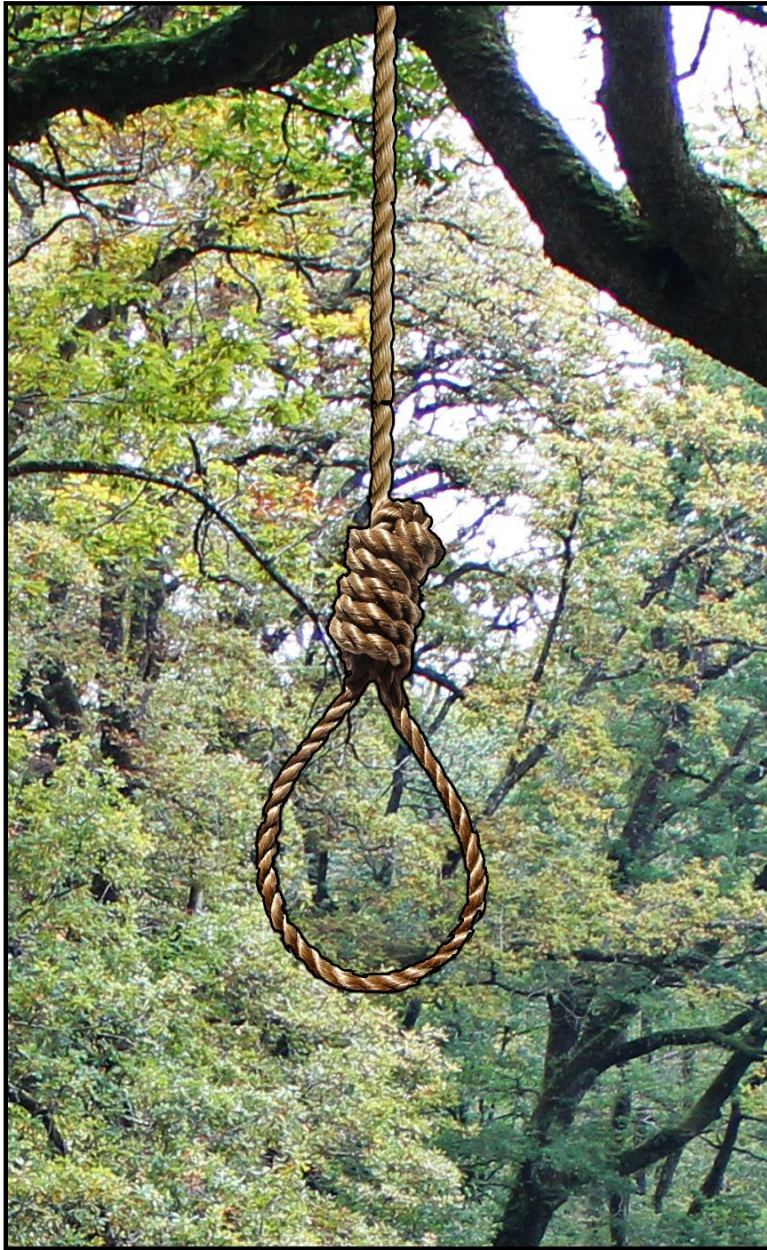
**VIII - STRENGTH**



# X - THE WHEEL



**XI - JUSTICE**



## XII. THE HANGED MAN



**XIII - DEATH**



**XIV - TEMPERANCE**



**XIX - THE SUN**



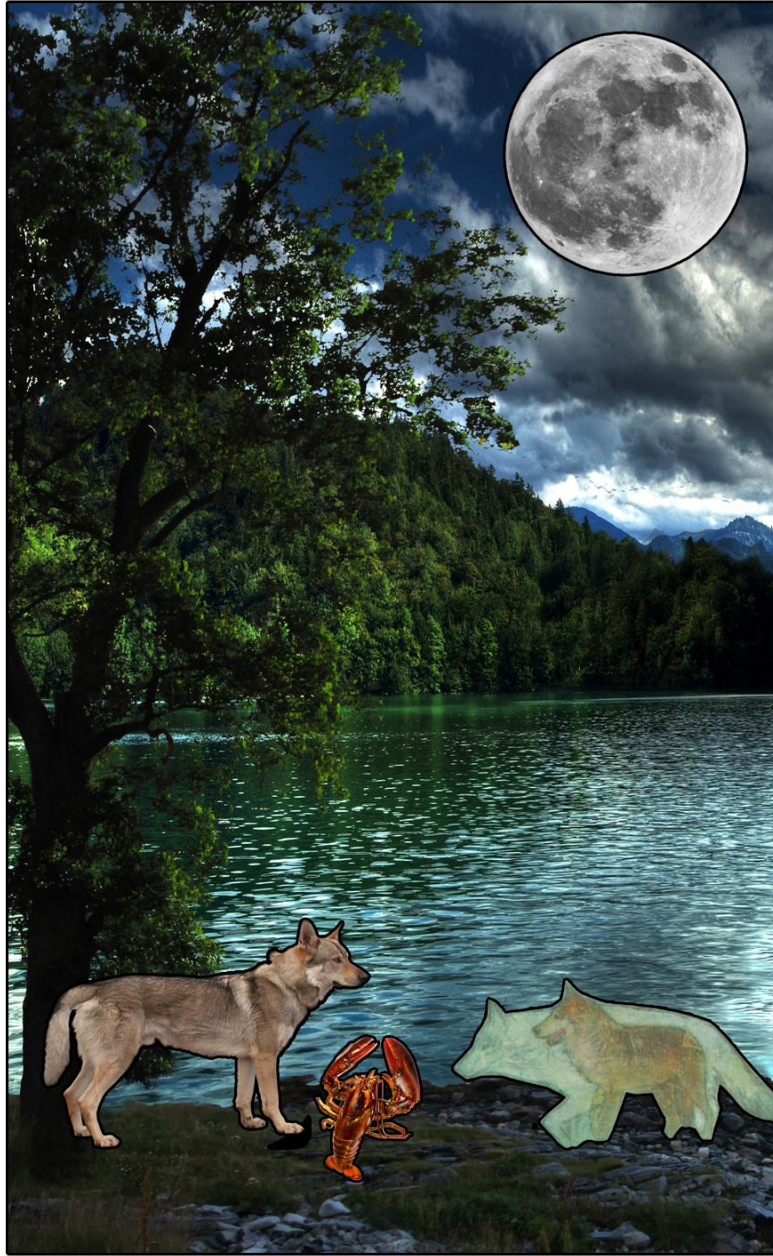
**XV - THE DEVIL**



**XVI - THE TOWER**



**XVII - THE STARS**



**XVIII - THE MOON**



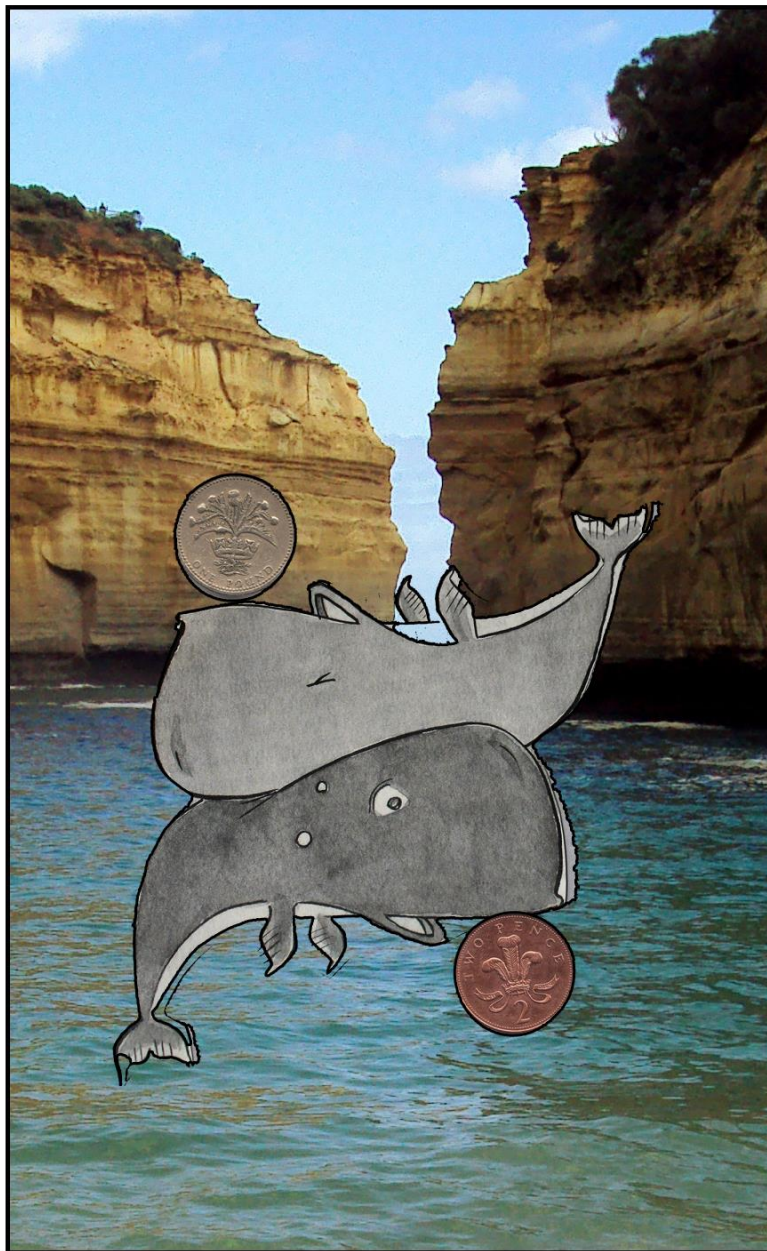
**XX - JUDGEMENT**



**XXI - THE WORLD**



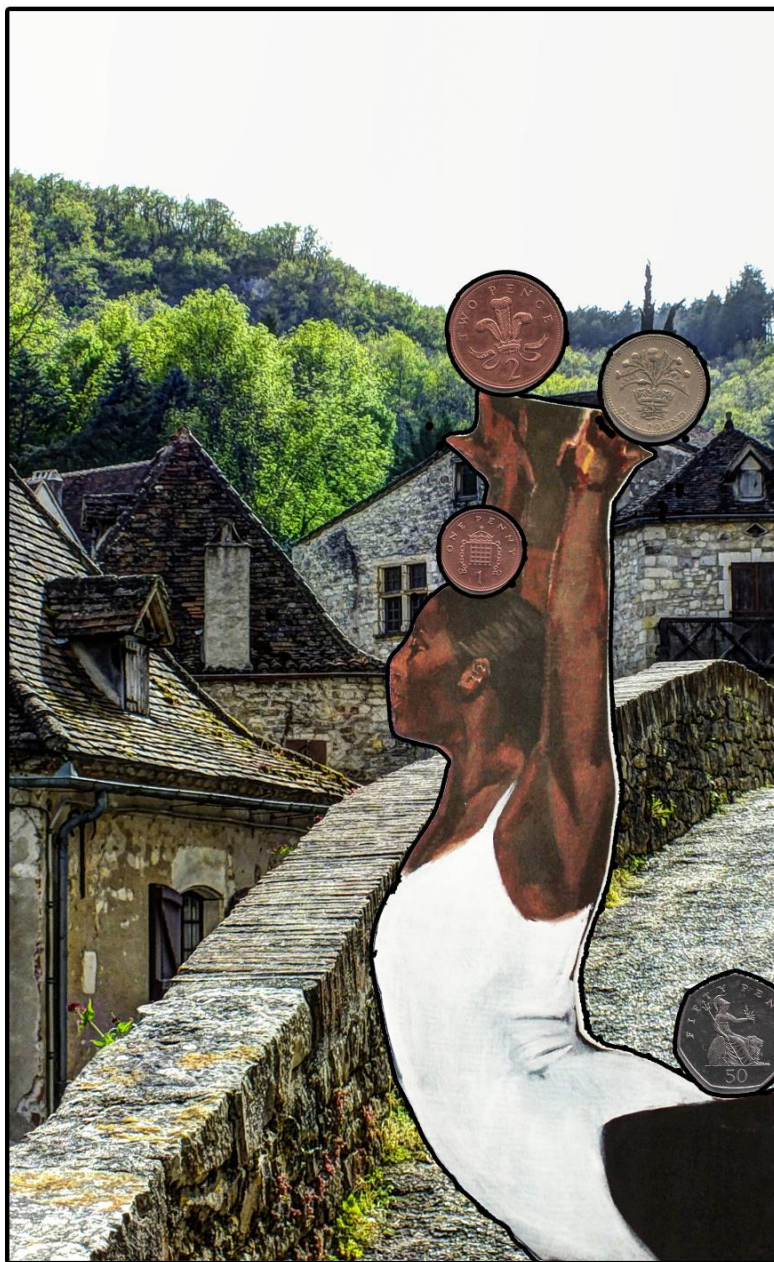
**ACE OF COINS**



**TWO OF COINS**



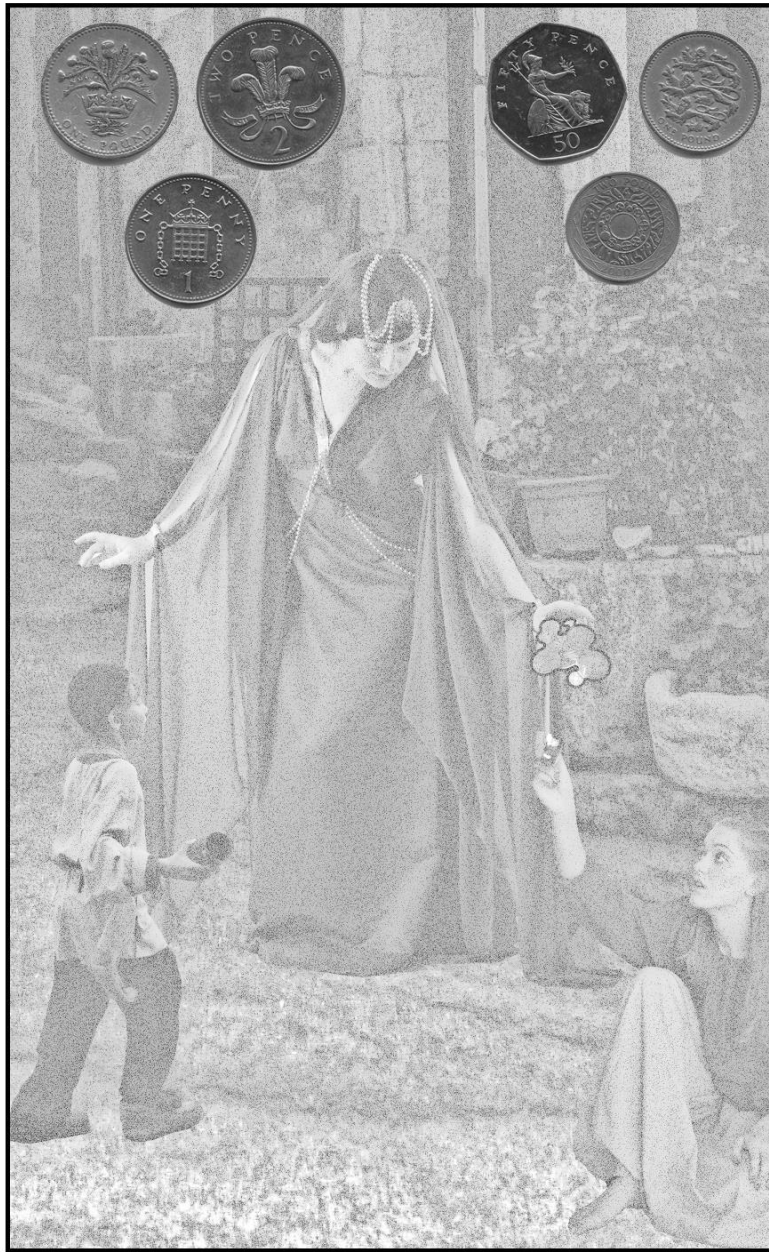
**THREE OF COINS**



FOUR OF COINS



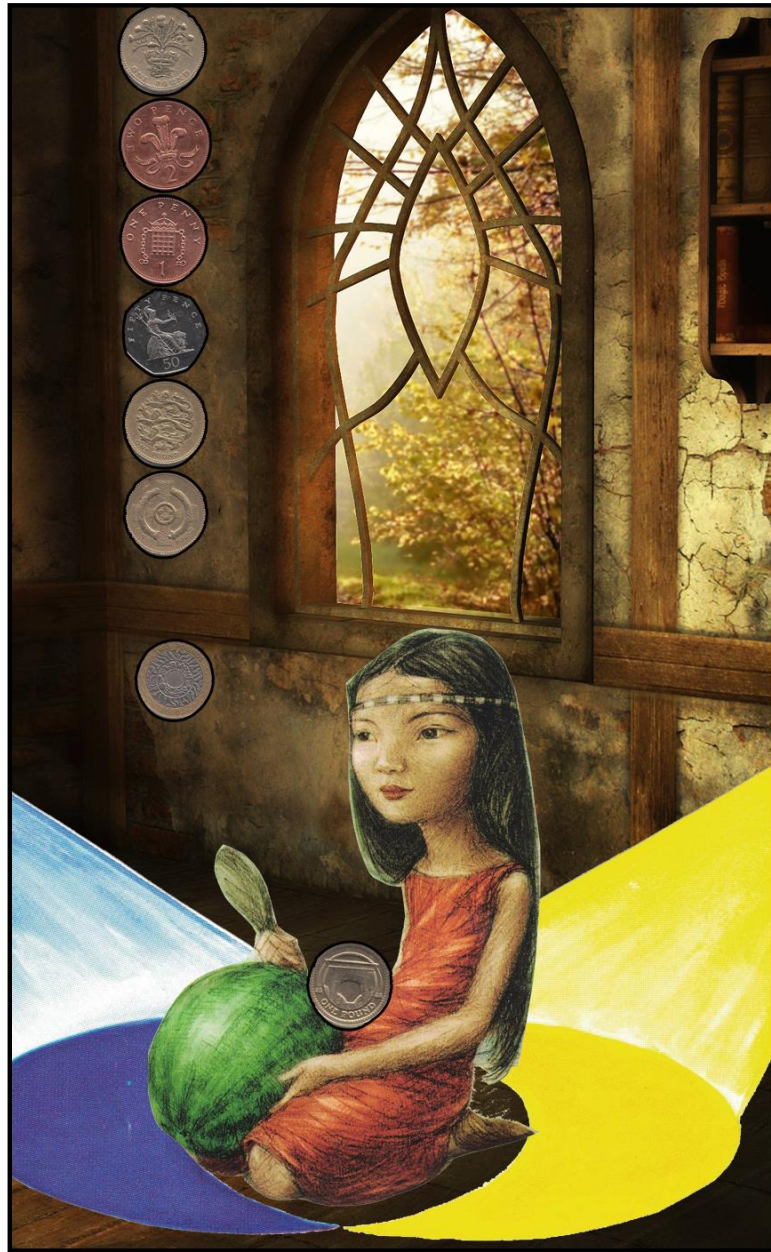
**FIVE OF COINS**



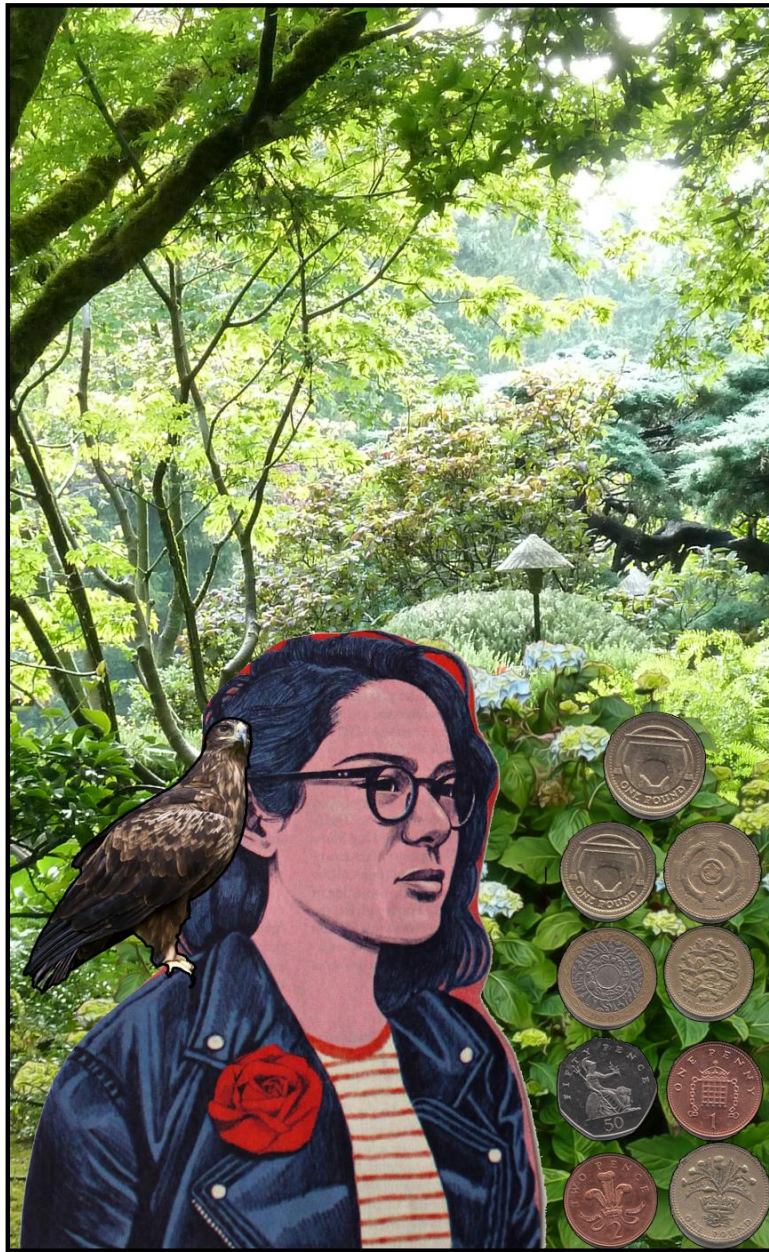
**SIX OF COINS**



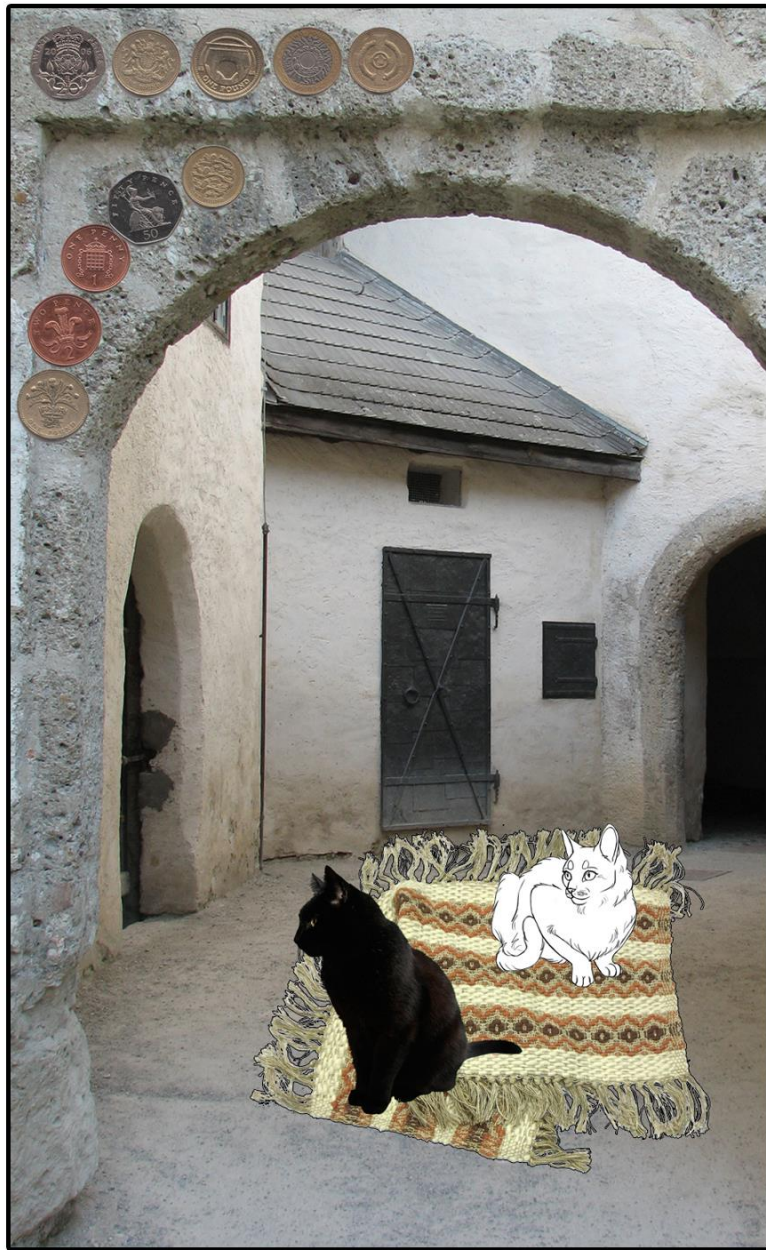
**SEVEN OF COINS**



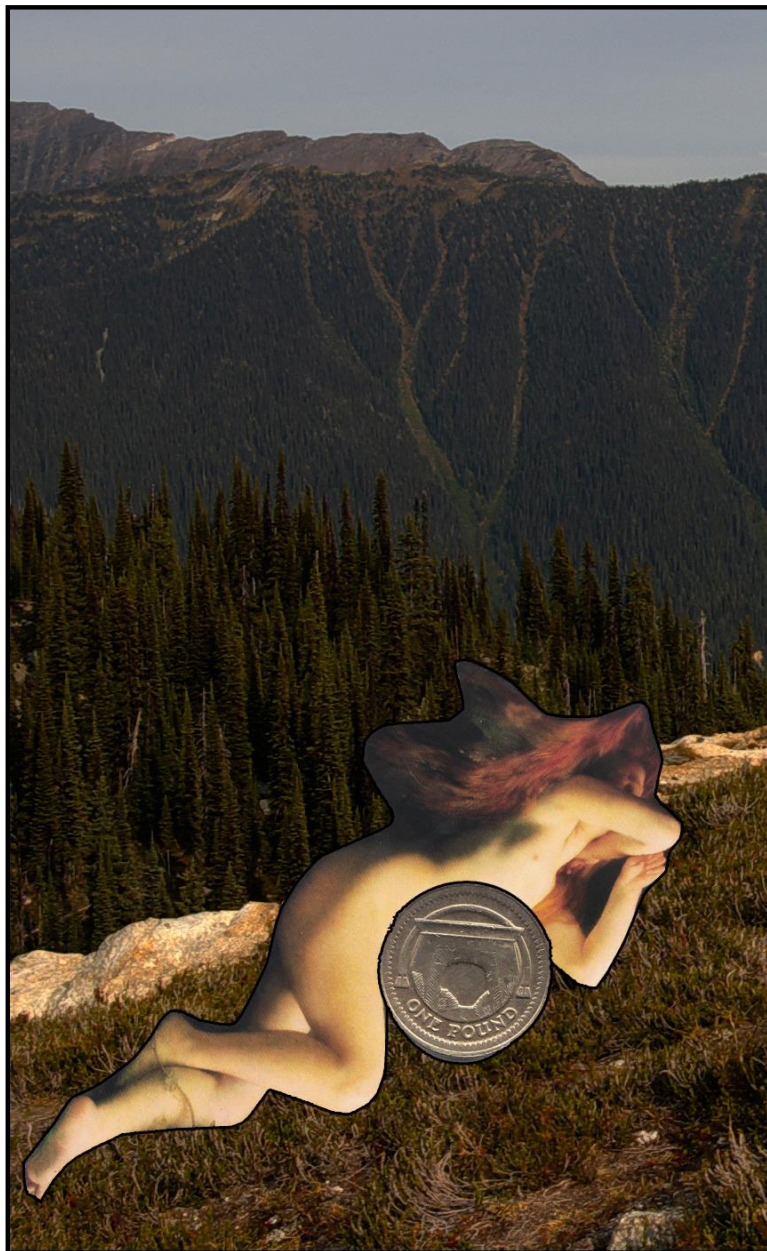
**EIGHT OF COINS**



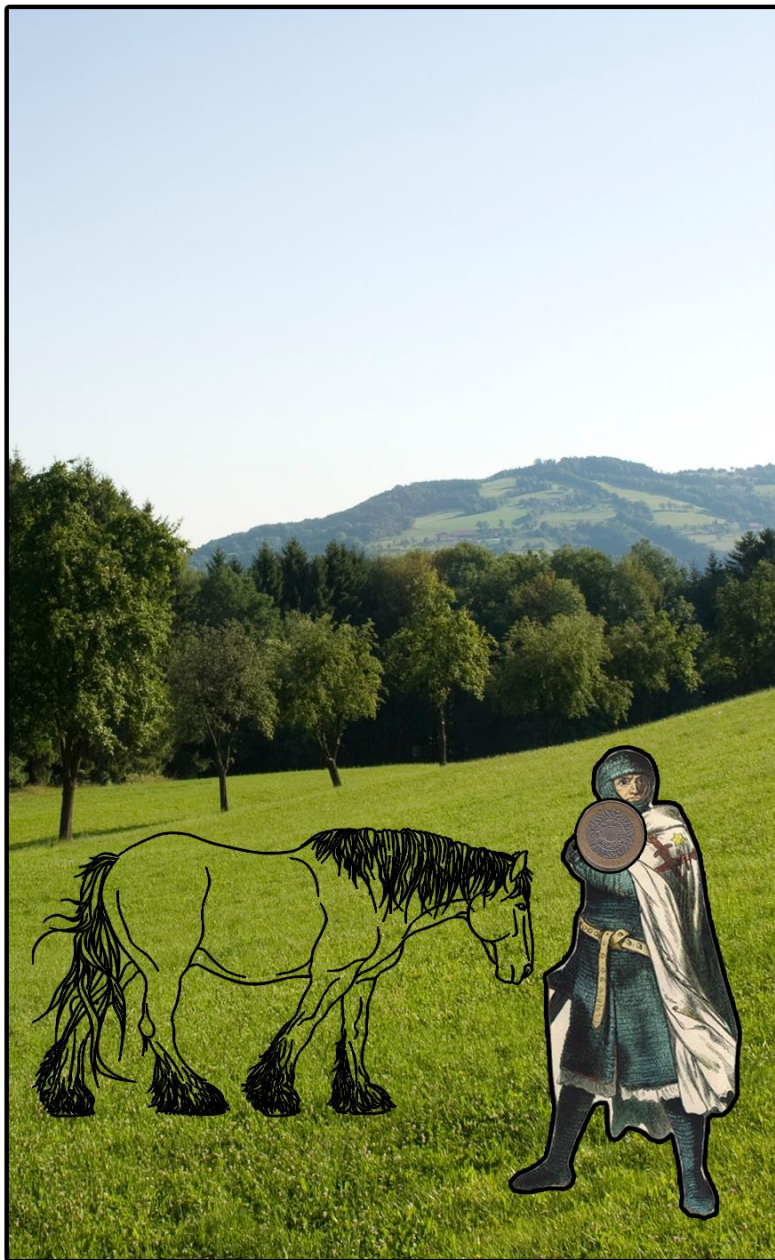
**NINE OF COINS**



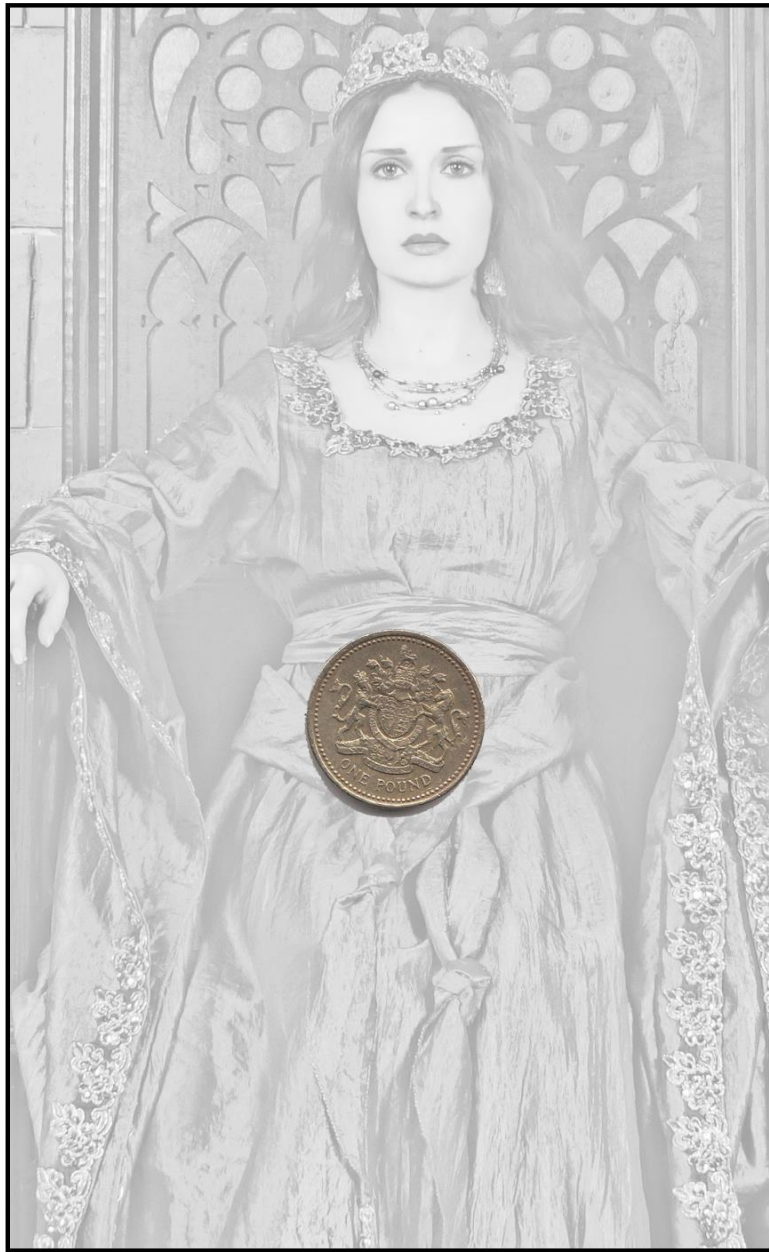
TEN OF COINS



**PAGE OF COINS**



**KNIGHT OF COINS**



**QUEEN OF COINS**



**KING OF COINS**



**ACE OF CUPS**



**TWO OF CUPS**



# THREE OF CUPS



**FOUR OF CUPS**



**FIVE OF CUPS**



SIX OF CUPS



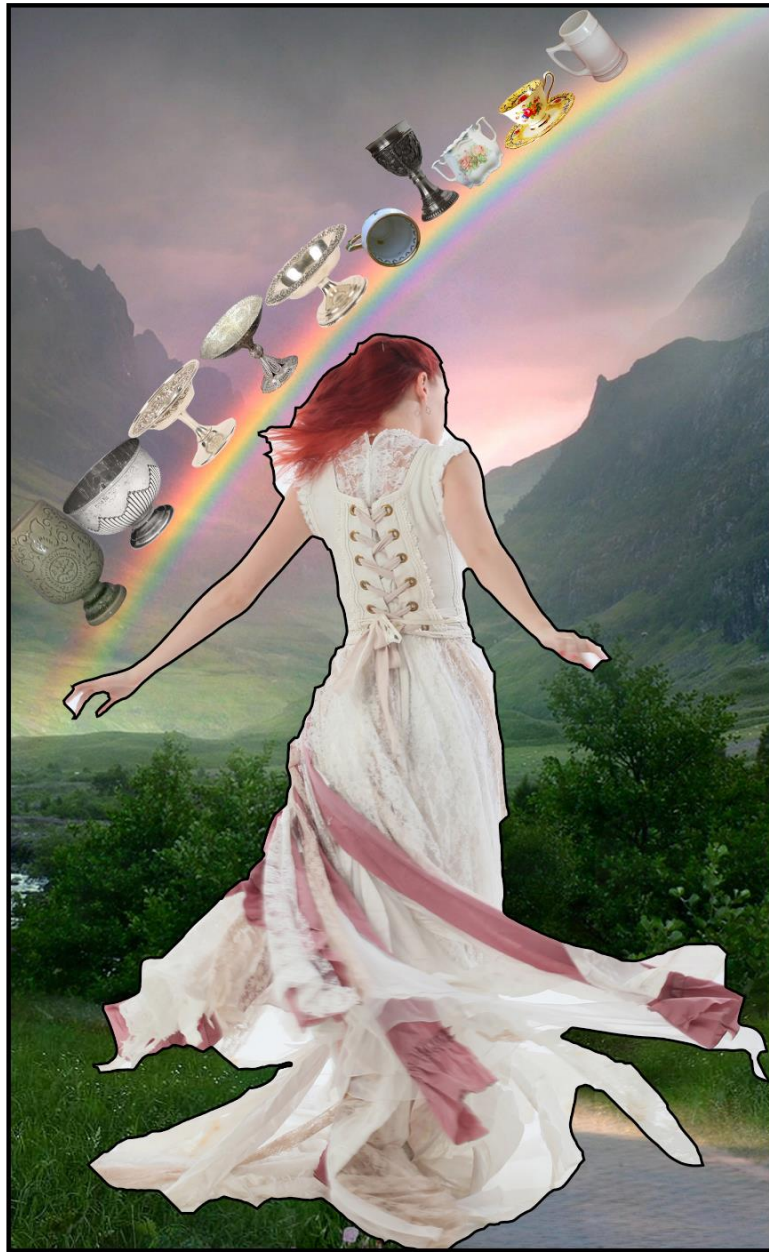
**SEVEN OF CUPS**



**EIGHT OF CUPS**



**NINE OF CUPS**



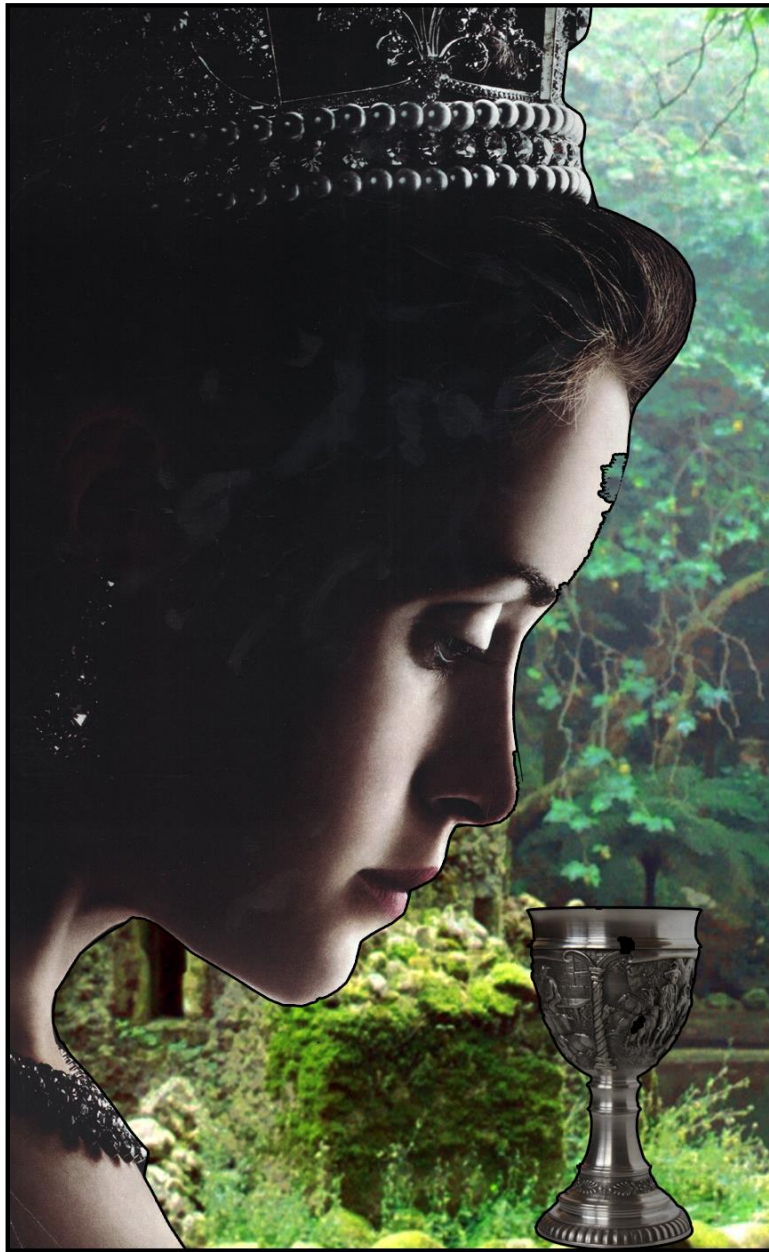
TEN OF CUPS



PAGE OF CUPS



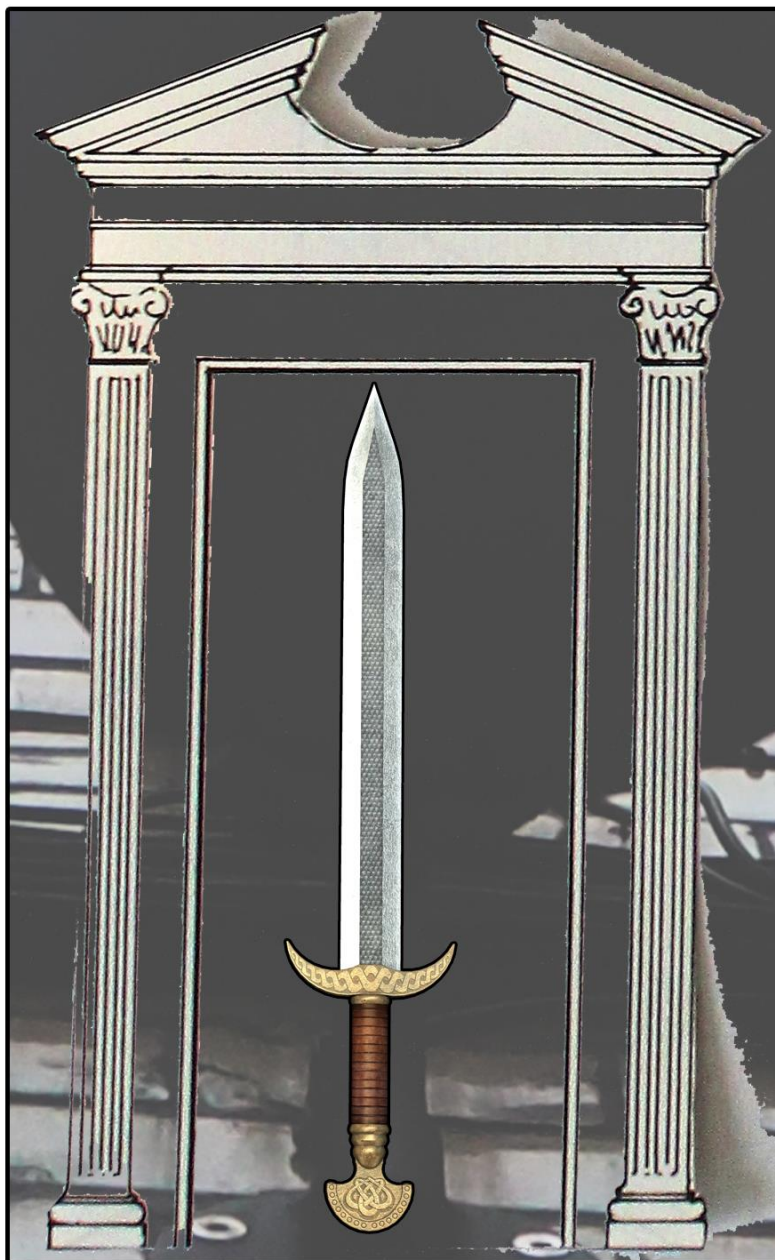
**KNIGHT OF CUPS**



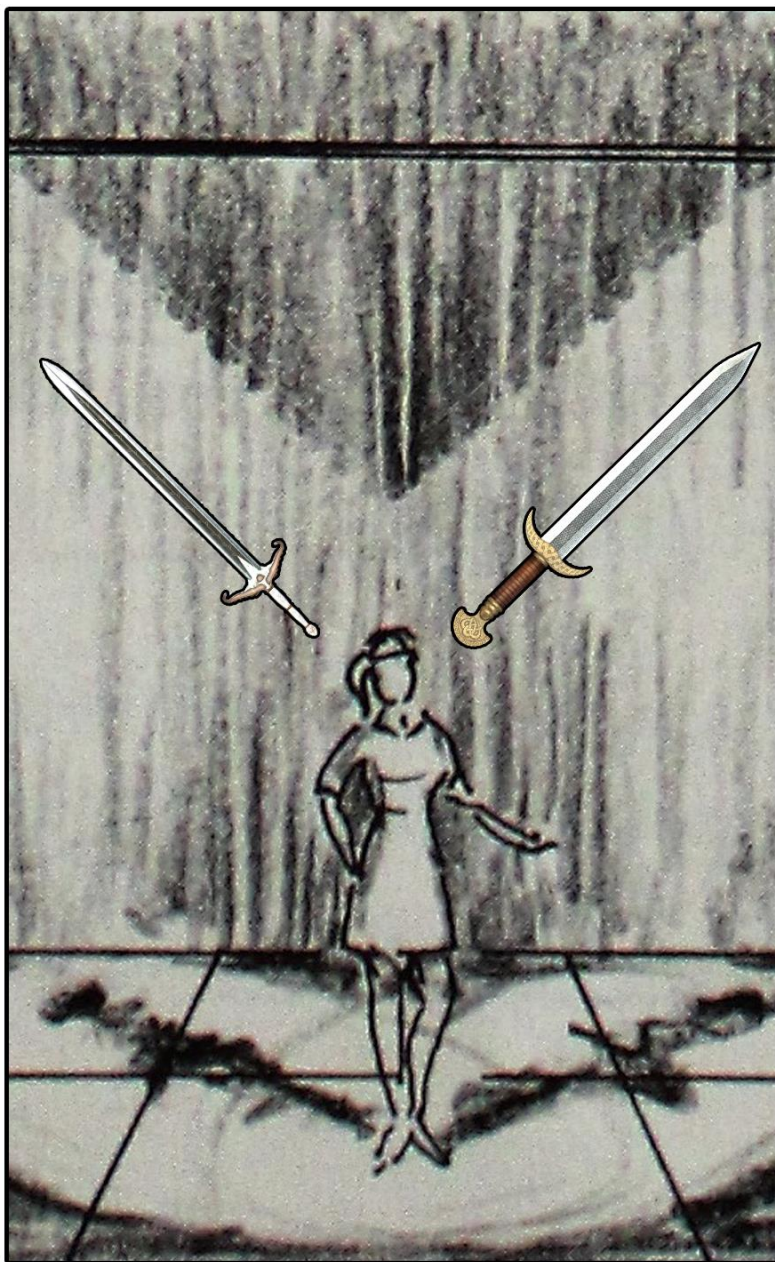
**QUEEN OF CUPS**



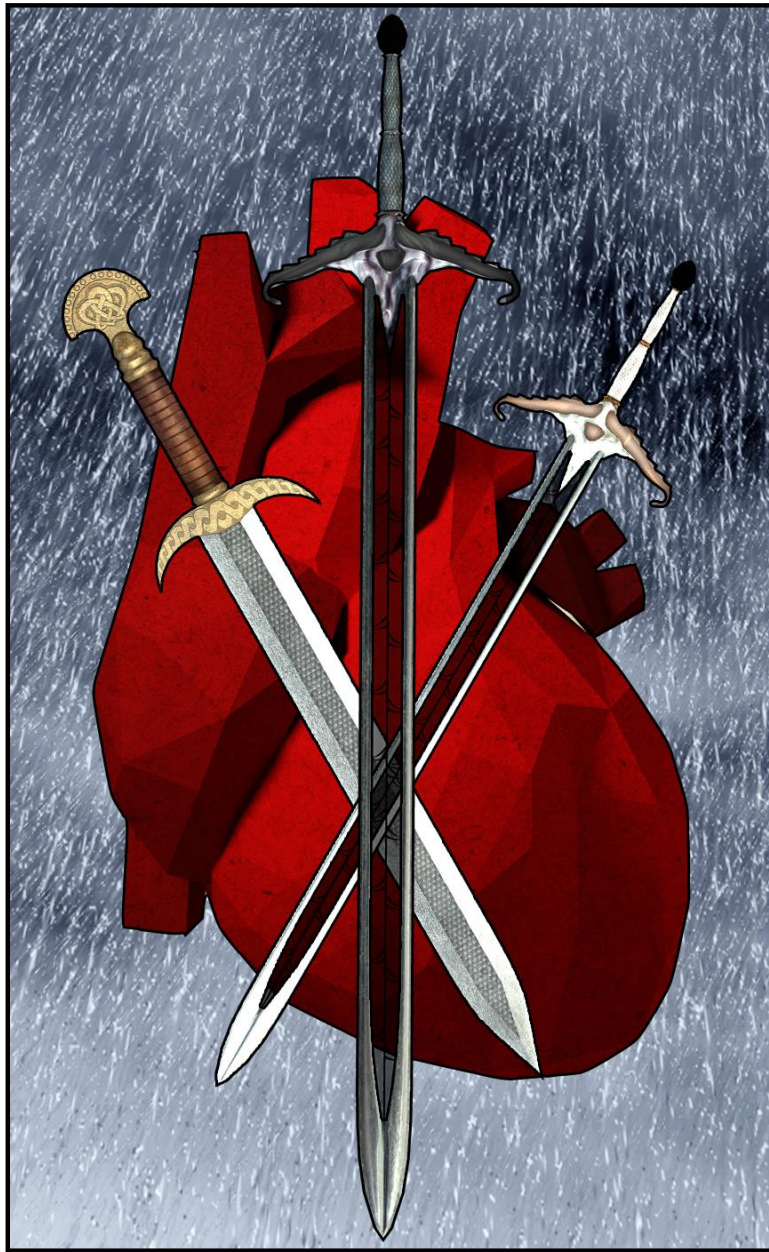
**KING OF CUPS**



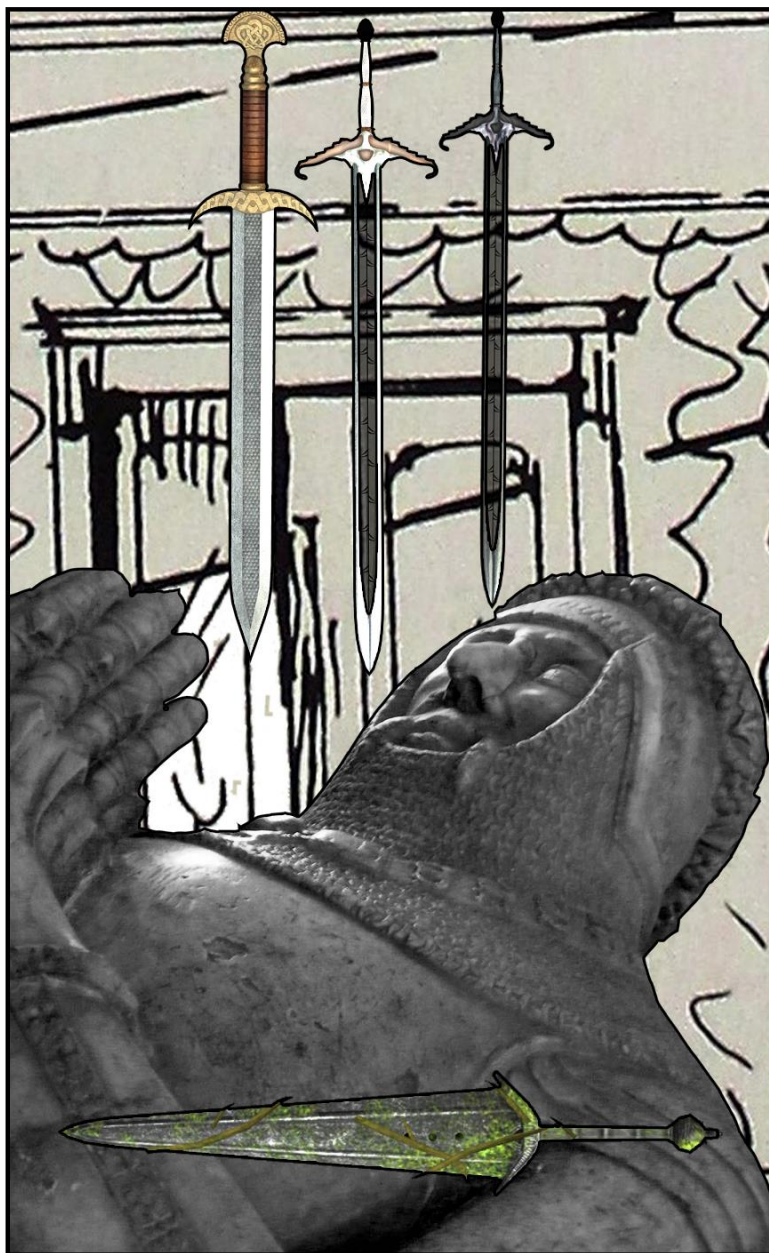
**ACE OF SWORDS**



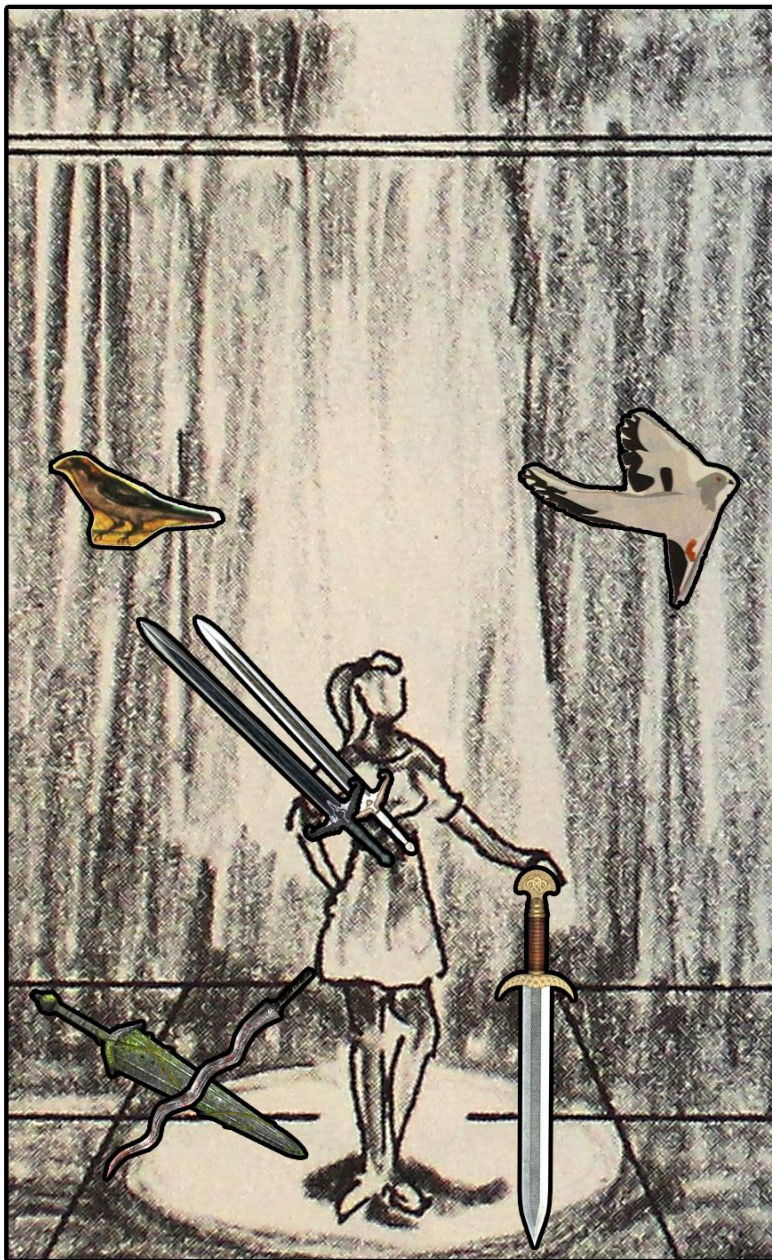
**TWO OF SWORDS**



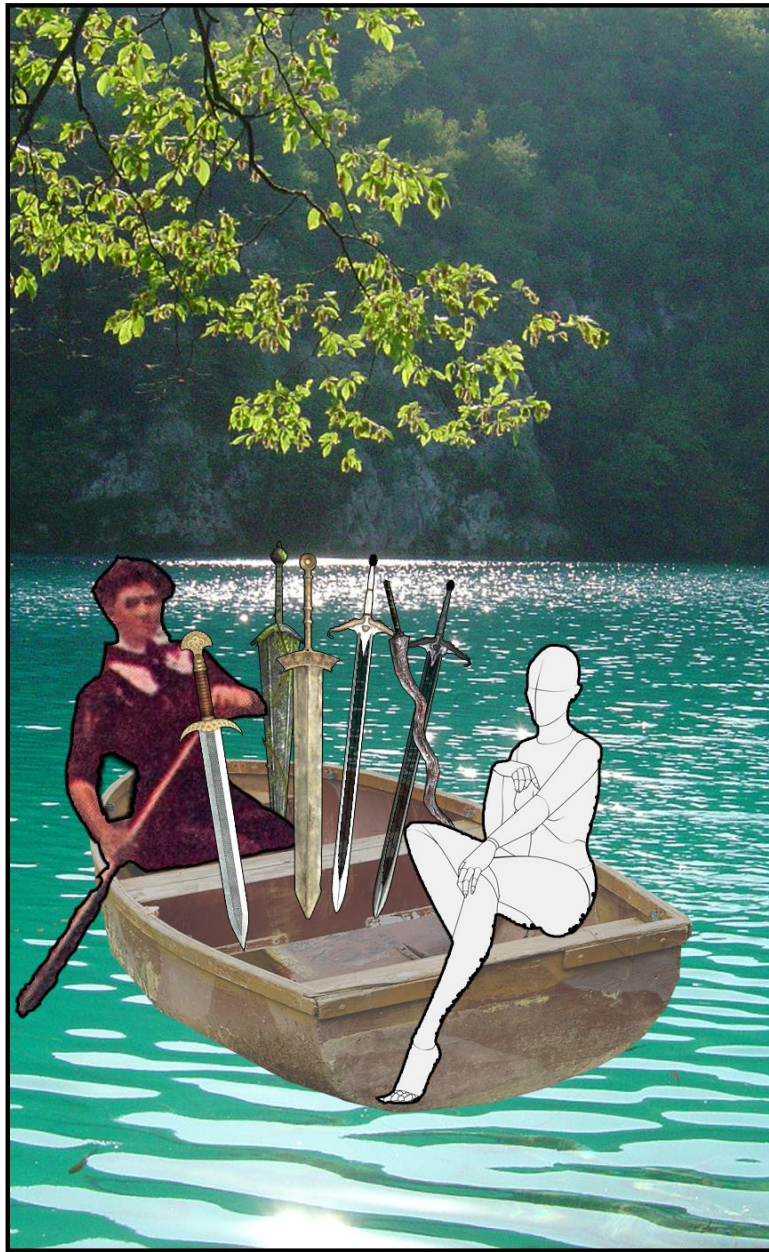
**THREE OF SWORDS**



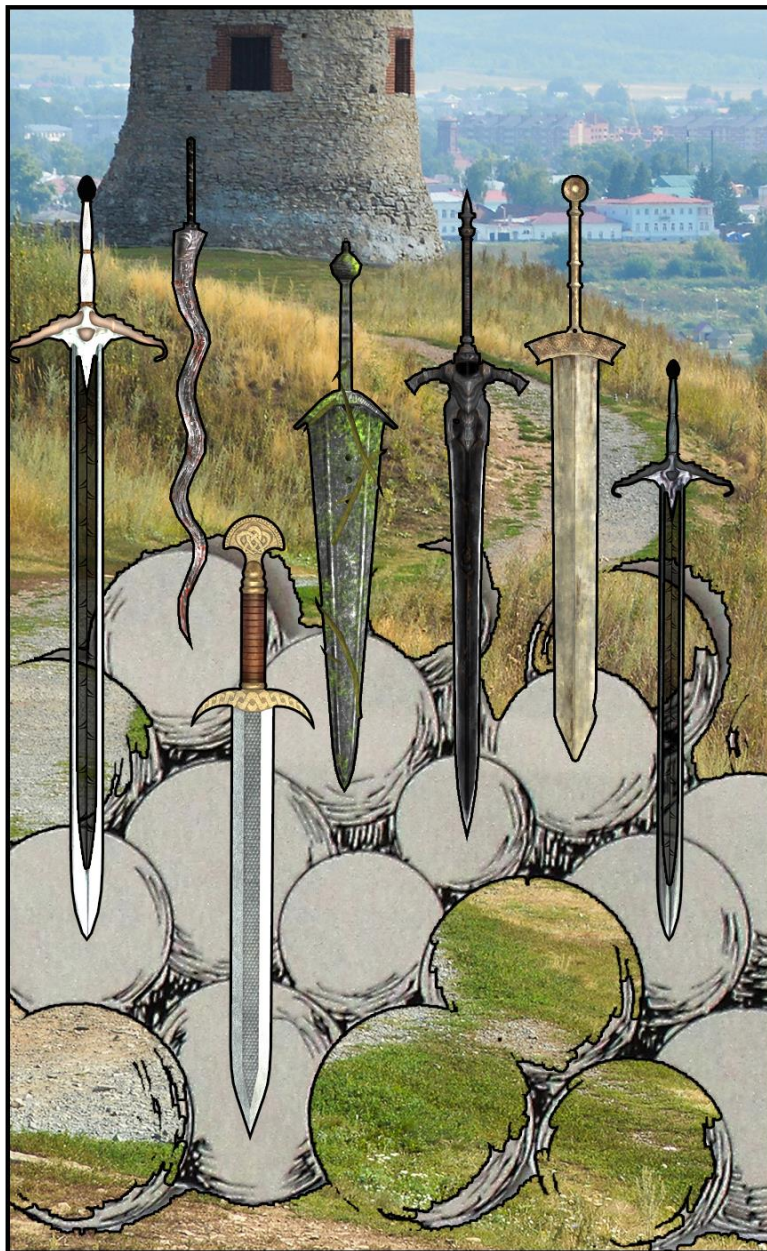
FOUR OF SWORDS



**FIVE OF WANDS**



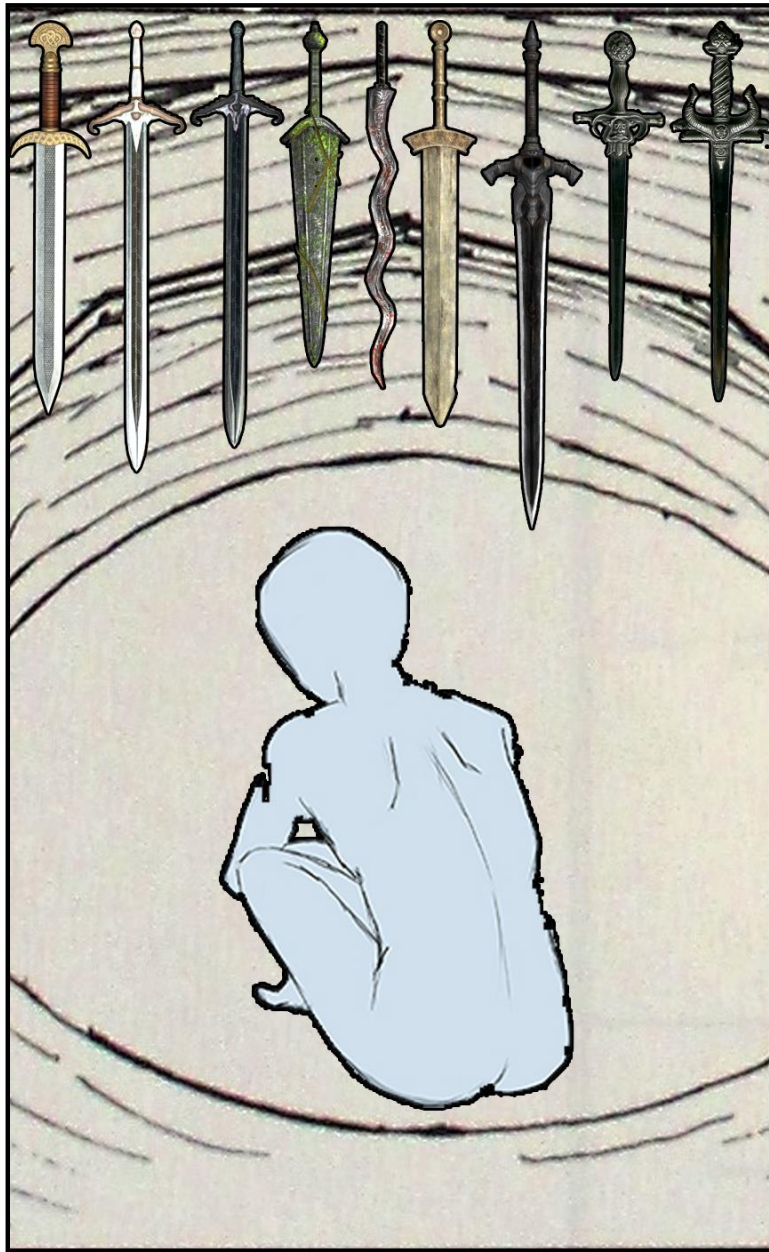
**SIX OF SWORDS**



**SEVEN OF SWORDS**



**EIGHT OF SWORDS**



**NINE OF SWORDS**



TEN OF SWORDS



**PAGE OF SWORDS**



**KNIGHT OF SWORDS**



**QUEEN OF SWORDS**



**KING OF SWORDS**



**ACE OF WANDS**



**TWO OF WANDS**



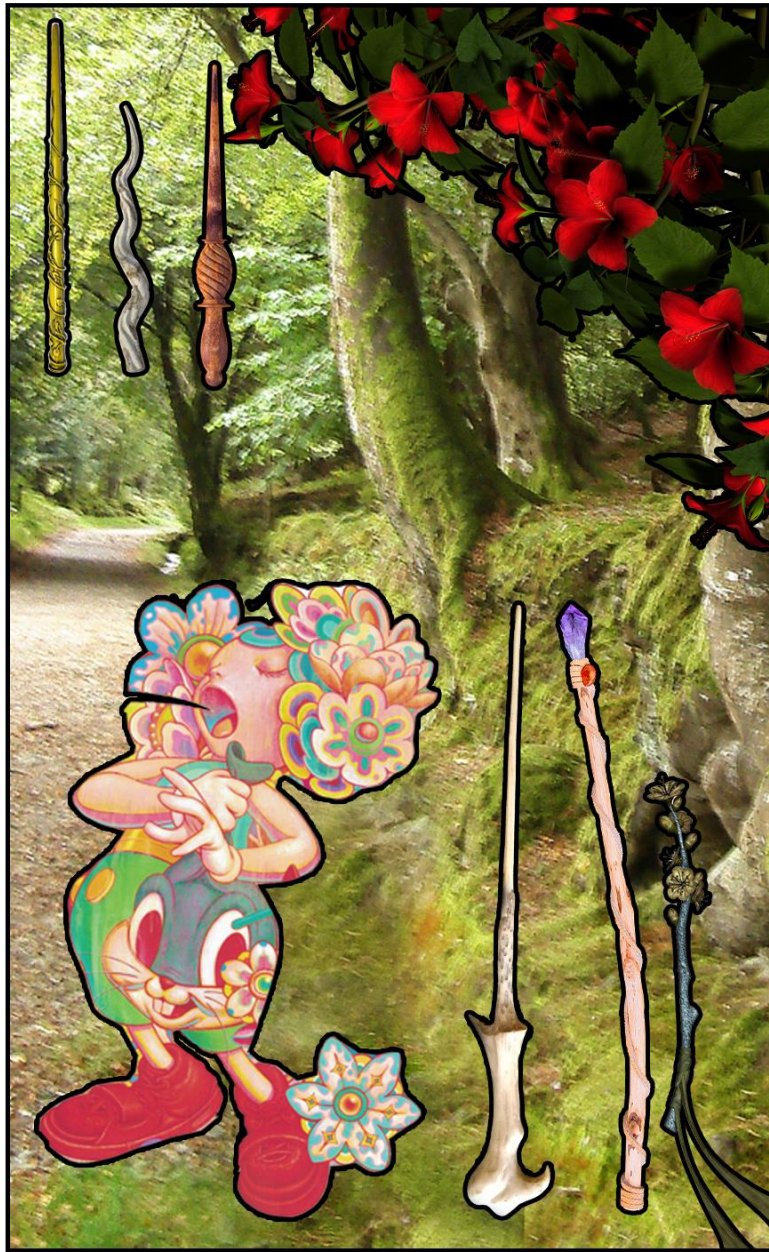
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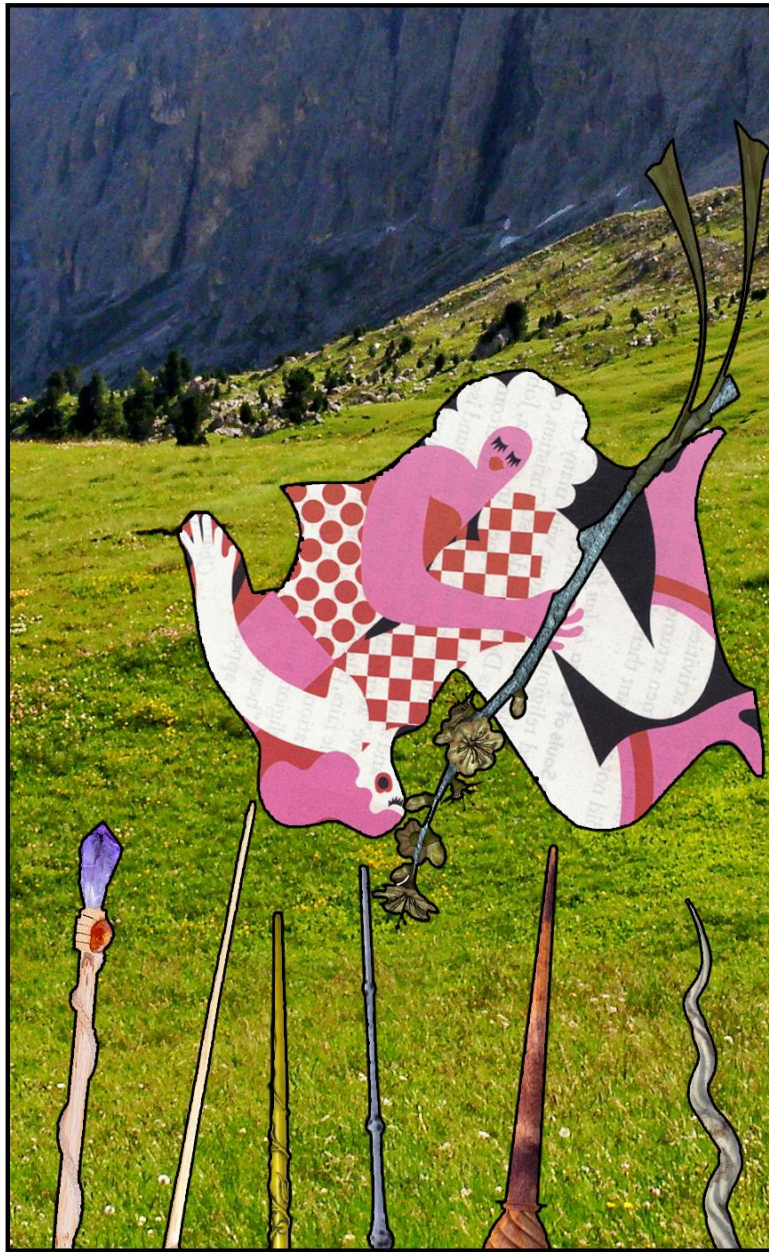
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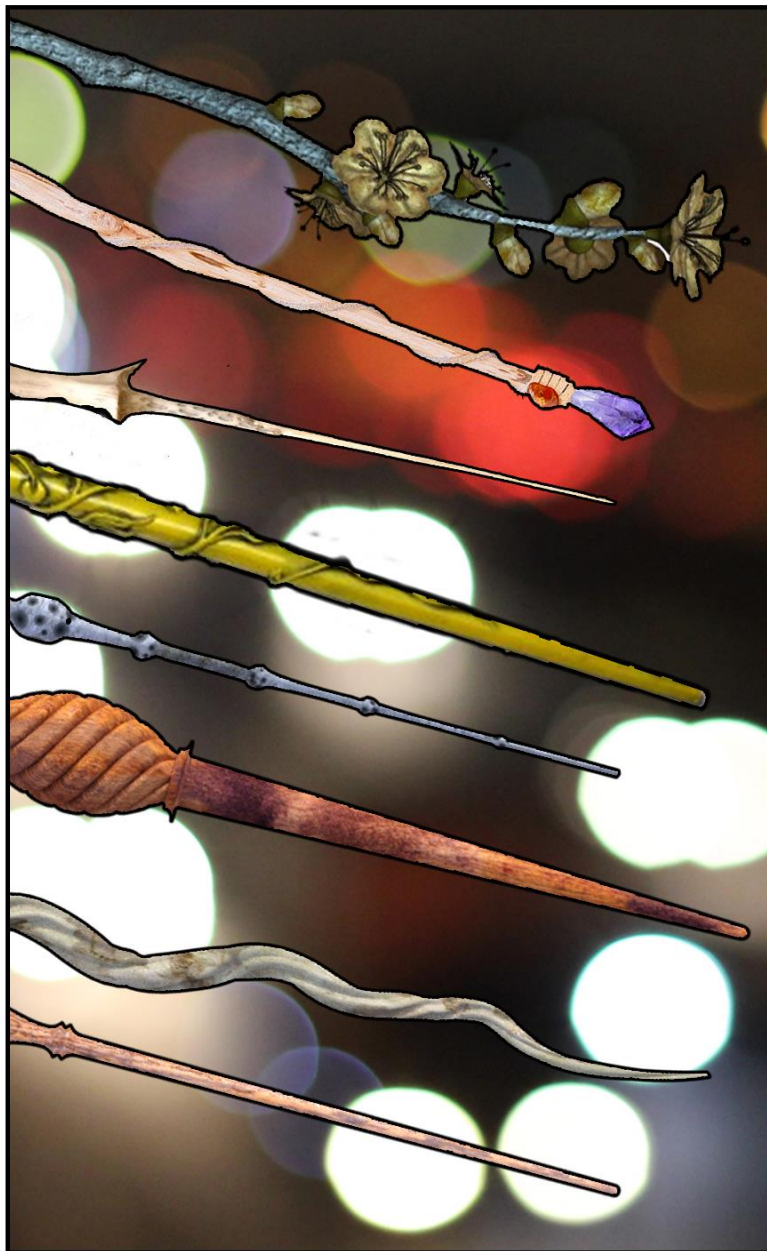
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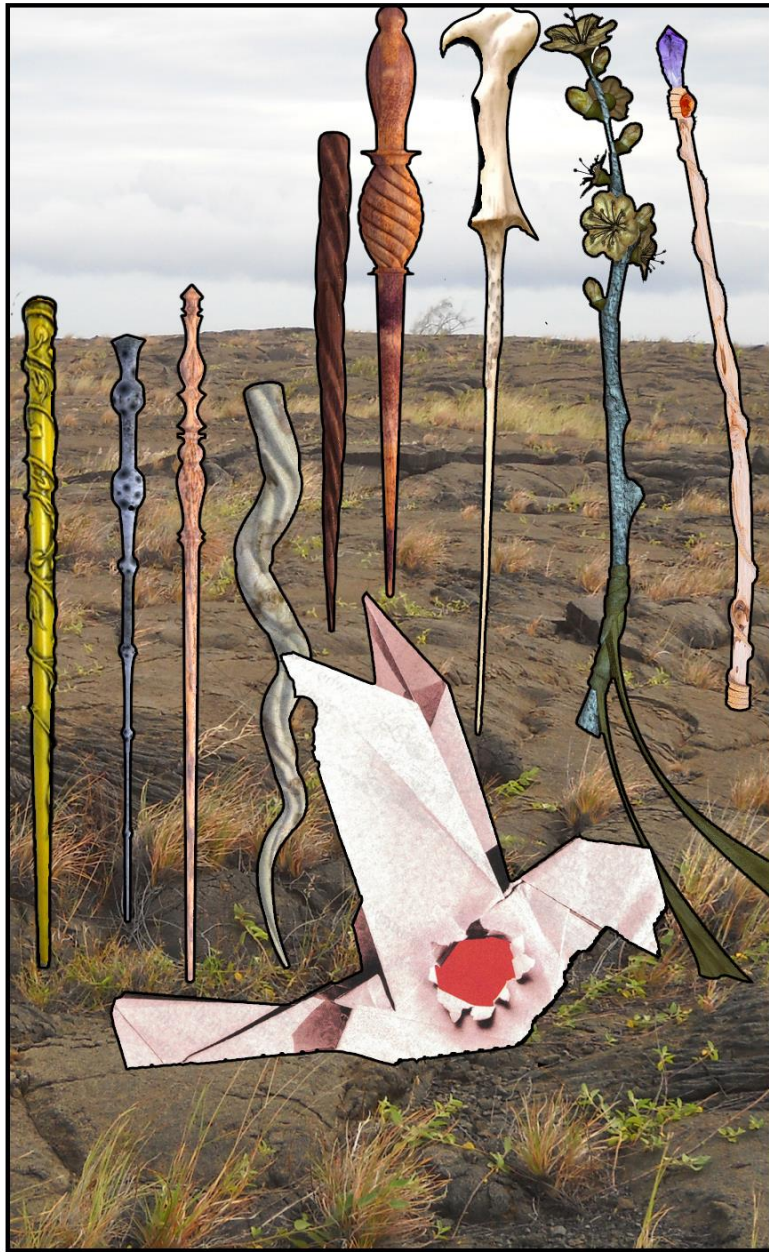
SIX OF WANDS



**SEVEN OF WANDS**



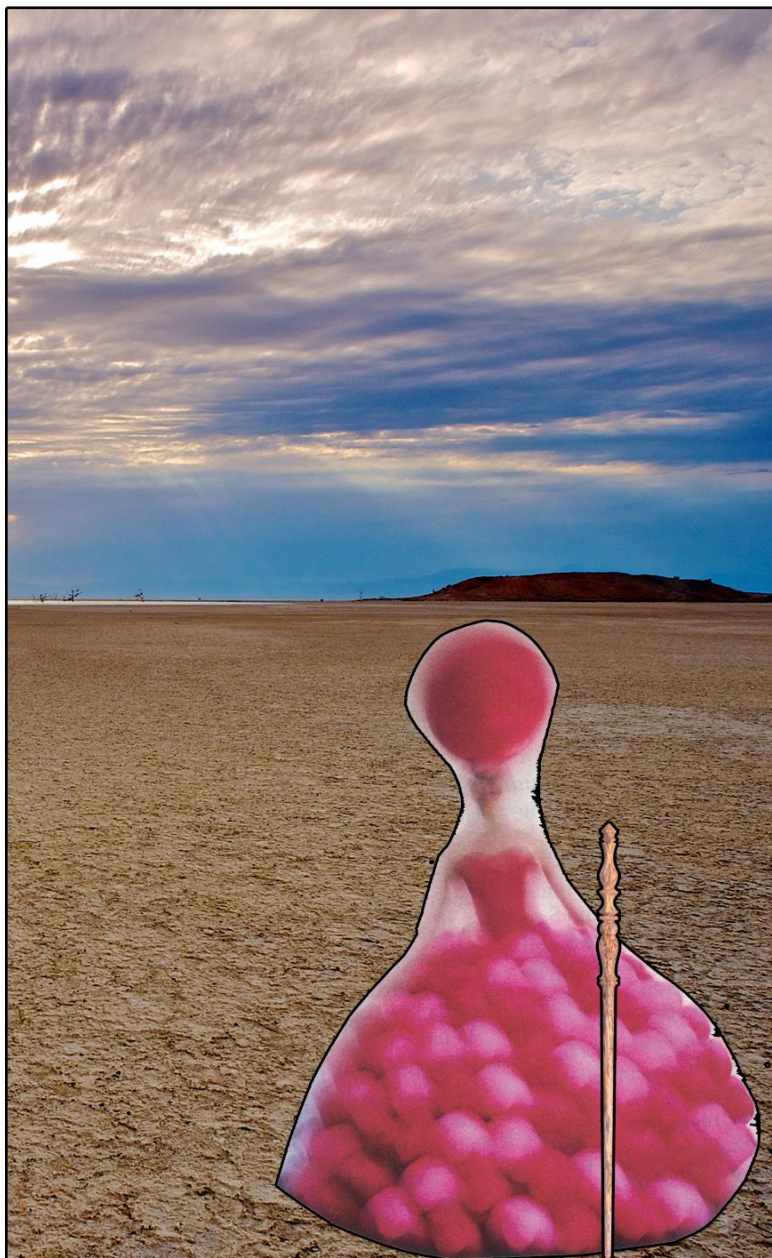
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**NINE OF WANDS**



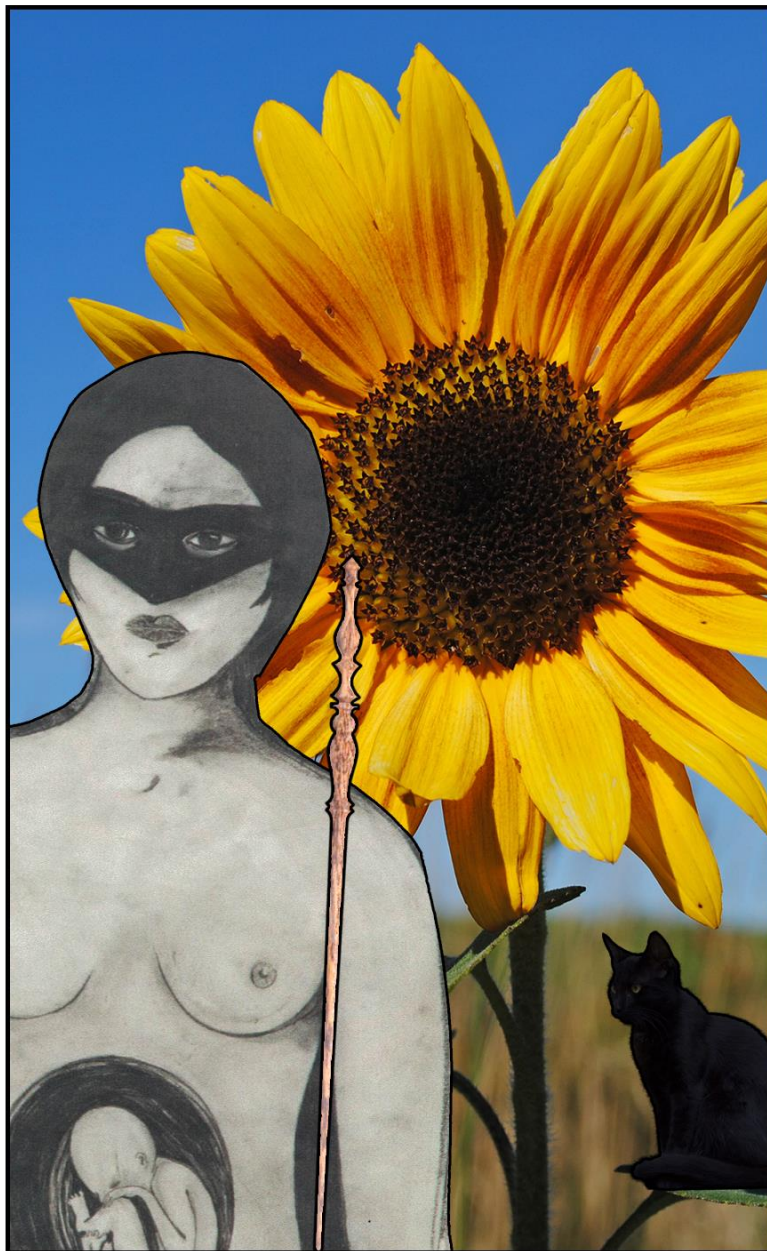
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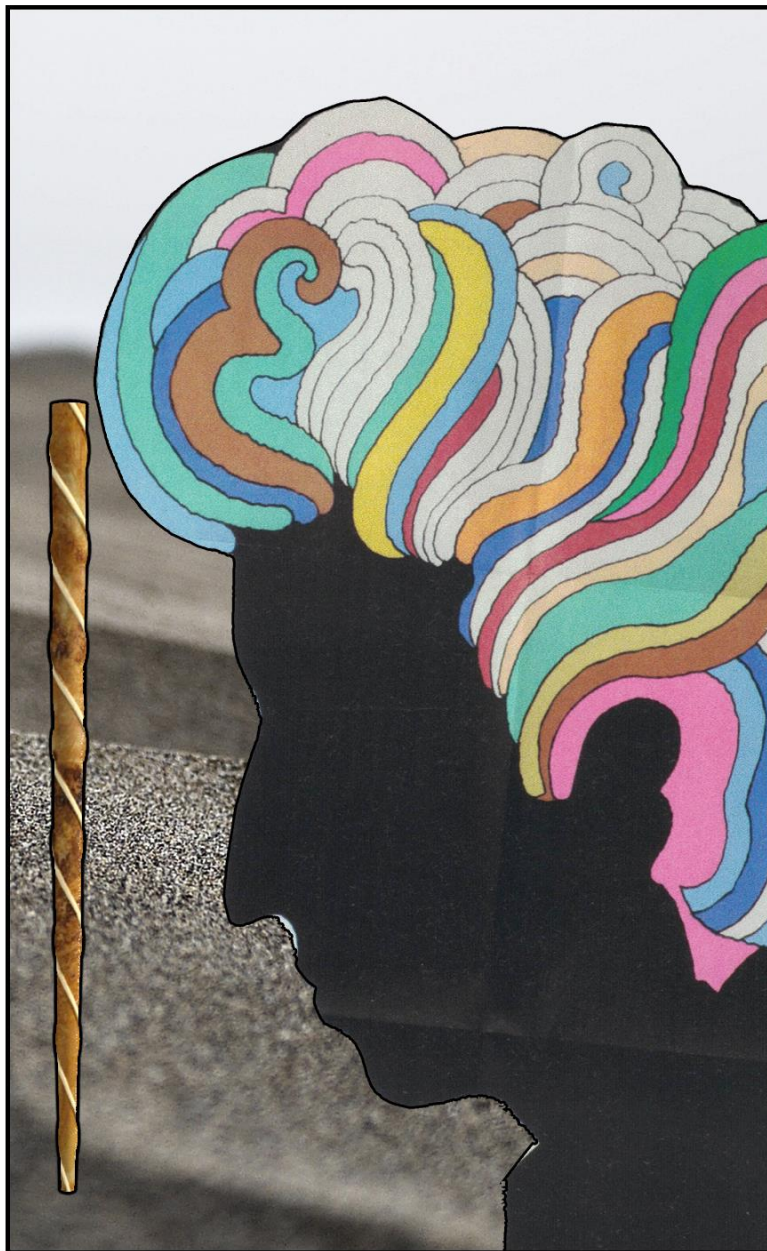
**PAGE OF WANDS**



**KNIGHT OF WANDS**



**QUEEN OF WANDS**



**KING OF WANDS**