

HANSON-ROBERTS TAROT DECK



Illustrated by
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Instructions by
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HANSON-ROBERTS TAROT

BY STUART R. KAPLAN

The complete seventy-eight card tarot pack is divided into two sections: twenty-two Major Arcana and fifty-six Minor Arcana cards. The twenty-two Major Arcana cards, also known as Triumphs, Atouts, and Greater Arcana, comprise twenty-one allegorical cards numbered from I to XXI plus an unnumbered card known as The Fool.

THE 22 MAJOR ARCANA CARDS ARE:

0 The Fool	11 Justice
1 The Magician	12 The Hanged Man
2 The High Priestess	13 Death
3 The Empress	14 Temperance
4 The Emperor	15 The Devil
5 The Hierophant	16 The Tower
6 The Lovers	17 The Star
7 The Chariot	18 The Moon
8 Strength	19 The Sun
9 The Hermit	20 Judgment
10 Wheel of Fortune	21 The World

The sequence of the Hanson-Roberts Major Arcana follows the designation by Arthur Edward Waite who assigned number VIII to Strength and XI to Justice. By contrast, most traditional tarot decks designate VIII as Justice and XI as Strength.

Generally the Major Arcana cards represent the physical and spiritual forces of life—illness, death, storms, strength, power, religion, and love. The remaining fifty-six cards are called Minor Arcana or Lesser Arcana.

They are divided into four suits:

Swords	—	spades
Rods (Wands)	—	clubs
Cups	—	hearts
Pentacles (Coins)	—	diamonds

Each of the four suits contains four court cards and ten pip cards numbered 1 (ace) through 10. The four court cards in each suit are called King, Queen, Knight, and Page.

The Minor Arcana cards generally represent occupations, social position, and status.

The precise origin of tarot cards remains obscure. It is sometimes theorized that the tarot deck was created as a seventy-eight card deck. However, it might be that the twenty-two Major Arcana cards with their emblematic designs and the fifty-six Minor Arcana cards in their familiar four suits were originally devised separately and later were combined into one pack.

Italian Renaissance nobility of the mid-fifteenth century in northern Italy amused themselves by playing a game called *trionfi*, subsequently called *tarocchi*, using the earliest extant tarot pack.

THE ARTIST

The artist of the Hanson-Roberts Tarot deck was born on April Fool's Day—April 1, 1947—and grew up in Massachusetts. She won a scholarship to Dean Junior College and graduated in 1966 with a major in Fine Arts.

After graduation, Mary Hanson-Roberts joined a summer stock company and, finding her drawings more in demand than her acting, she became their poster designer. She also began freelancing on a part-time basis. While concentrating mainly on portraiture, she gained valuable experience in a variety of areas. One project, the design of a logo for Summerthing, a program sponsored by Boston's Department of Recreation, led to staff work as an illustrator on the Department's newsletter. There were also several small gallery shows and a commission to design a coloring book that was distributed to hospitalized children at Christmastime.

In 1977, the artist moved to Florida to try freelancing on a full-time basis. She produced a second coloring book that received favorable notice at the World Science Fiction Convention in Miami. Her work, becoming more oriented toward fantasy and occult themes, began to win recognition and awards at local galleries and shows.

At one of the shows, the artist met her future husband and they live today in Florida with

their two sons and a menagerie of cats. Ms. Hanson-Roberts is now primarily a magazine illustrator. In addition, she also prepares designs for books and film animation. She especially enjoys science fiction work, but her diverse interests recently led her to complete a series of paintings of the twelve disciples.

The Hanson-Roberts Tarot deck represents a major work of the artist. She devoted approximately eight months to the execution of the eighty-one pieces of art (seventy-eight face cards of the twenty-two Major Arcana and fifty-six Minor Arcana, plus top card, introduction card, and back design). The original artwork, approximately twice the size of the finished printed cards, was created with colored pencil.

The artist has long admired the work of Pamela Colman Smith in the Rider-Waite Tarot deck. The Hanson-Roberts designs provide added relevance to the work of Pamela Colman Smith while presenting a new dimension to the tarot through the special interpretations and artistic genius of Mary Hanson-Roberts and her magnificent illustrations.



THE 22 MAJOR ARCANA

0 • THE FOOL

A YOUNG MAN dressed in colorful garments is shown walking in an open field. In his right hand, and resting over his right shoulder, is a stick which symbolizes his desire and will. A bundle bearing his previous experiences is attached to the stick. In his left hand he holds a white rose to symbolize his spiritual desires.

Divinatory Meanings: Thoughtlessness. Folly. Extravagance. Lack of discipline. Immaturity. Foolishness. Inconsideration. Frenzy. Enthusiasm. Irrational insecurity. Frivolity. Delirium. **Reverse Meanings:** Faulty choice or a bad decision. Indecision. Apathy. Hesitation. Negligence.

1 • THE MAGICIAN

THE MAGICIAN stands before a table on which are the suit symbols of the Minor Arcana: a sword, a rod, a cup, and a pentacle. Above his head appears the figure eight, the ancient occult number ascribed to Hermes and the symbol of eternal life. Around him is a garden of lilies and roses. The Magician holds in his upraised hand the phallic wand of creativity—with his other hand he points downward. This dual sign suggests that all creation on earth is derived from above. The Magician possesses the ability of utilizing the diverse objects on his table for success in thought, word, and action.

Divinatory Meanings: Originality and creativity. Ability to utilize one's capabilities in order to accomplish a task. Imagination. Self-reliance. Ingenuity. Spontaneity. Self-control. Self-confidence. Flexibility. Masterfulness. Deception. Sleight of hand. **Reverse Meanings:** Weakness of will. Indecision. Ineptitude. Insecurity. Disquiet. Delay. The use of one's skills for destructive ends.

II • THE HIGH PRIESTESS

THE HIGH PRIESTESS is seated within the precincts of her temple. She holds on her lap a book of knowledge and esoteric wisdom. She is a large woman—suggesting challenge to masculine domination. She is the eternal feminine goddess of the ancient world, emanating both knowledge and wisdom into the life around her.

Divinatory Meanings: Wisdom. Sound judgment. Serene knowledge. Common sense. Serenity. Objectivity. Penetration. Foresight. Intuition. Comprehension. Perception. Self-reliance. Lack of emotion. Platonic relationships. **Reverse Meanings:** Shortsightedness. Ignorance. Selfishness. Passion. Acceptance of superficial knowledge. Poor judgment.

III • THE EMPRESS

THE EMPRESS IS SEATED upon her throne. In her right hand she holds a scepter of authority. She is surrounded by ripe fruit and grain. The

Empress suggests the symbol of feminine productivity and action. By effectively mobilizing all her capabilities, she can create meaningful and noteworthy developments in her life.

Divinatory Meanings: Feminine progress. Fruitfulness. Fertility. Mother. Sister. Wife. Accomplishment. Ability to motivate others. Practicality. Intuition. Marriage. Children. Feminine influence. **Reverse Meanings:** Vacillation. Inaction. Lack of concentration or interest. Indecision. Delay in accomplishment or progress. Anxiety. Infertility. Infidelity.

IV • THE EMPEROR

A REGAL MAN of middle age sits upon a throne decorated with rams' heads. He wears a crown of living leaves. A ceremonial scepter is in his right hand and with his left hand he holds a worldly globe of dominion. He exudes confidence and accomplishment.

Divinatory Meanings: Worldly power. Accomplishment. Confidence. Authority. Wealth. Stability. Indomitable spirit. Leadership. War-making tendencies. Male influence. Patriarchal figure. Father. Brother. Husband. Domination of reason and intelligence over emotion and passion. Strength. Attainment of goals. **Reverse Meanings:** Immaturity. Ineffectiveness. Lack of strength. Indecision. Inability. Weakness of character. Feebleness. Failure to control petty emotions.

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