

THE DA VINCI CODE TAROT

By Richard Webster

The worldwide success of Dan Brown's books has popularized anything relating to *The Da Vinci Code*. Here's something that I was shown at the Frankfurt Book Fair a few years ago by someone who reads Tarot cards. He has no interest in magic, but was fascinated that the cards can tell the story of the Holy Grail. There's no magic here, but I can assure you from experience, your audiences will love it. I have written this for the Rider-Waite or the Universal Tarot cards. You can get much more symbolism from earlier decks, but these are the cards your audiences will likely be familiar with.

Show the deck of Tarot cards and remove the Major Arcana. Ask if anyone has read *The Da Vinci Code* or seen the film. Explain that the order of the cards has slightly changed over the years, but that the cards tell a fascinating story.

Show card 0 – THE FOOL “This is Parsifal, the uninitiated seeker,” you explain. “He needs to learn the right questions, so he can obtain the correct answers.”

Show card 1 – THE MAGICIAN “The magician already knows the secrets, as he is a teacher of the Hermetic tradition.”

Show card 2 – THE HIGH PRIESTESS “This is the Female Pope. In the allegedly heretical church, women were able to hold the same positions as men – and even rise to the rank of pope. In the secret organisation known as the Priory of Sion, the grand masters were always known as Jean or Jeanne.”

Show cards 3 and 4 – THE EMPRESS and THE EMPEROR “These represent King Philip IV and his wife, the rulers of France at the time of the Crusades.”

Show card 5 – THE HIEROPHANT “This is the pope. Notice the two keys to the kingdom that the Gospel says were given to Peter.”

Show card 6 – THE LOVERS “This card shows the bloodline of the heresy as it travels through time, from generation to generation.”

Show card 9 – THE HERMIT “This is the original order of the Tarot cards. The hermit is Peter the Hermit whose preaching led to the Crusades and the liberation of the Holy City.”

Show card 8 – STRENGTH “Notice that strength is symbolized by a woman. The lion symbolizes the Lion of Judah and the royal Davidic succession.”

Show card 7 – THE CHARIOT “The chariot shows a knight in armour returning home in triumph. This symbolizes the Knights Templar and the riches they brought back from Palestine.”

Show card 10 – THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE “This card symbolizes the abrupt and massive change in fortunes that the Knights Templar experienced. On October 13th, 1307 King Philip IV of France ordered the arrest of all the Knights Templar. On that day, the wheel of fortune turned irrevocably against them.”

Show card 11 – JUSTICE “Justice is again a female figure. The Knights Templar were accused of heresy and brought to trial.”

Show card 12 – THE HANGED MAN “The hanged man shows the torture of the knights, as the Inquisition tried to find where their wealth was hidden.”

Show card 13 – DEATH “Jacques de Molay, leader of the Knights Templar, died at the stake in March 1314. Before he died, he predicted that King Philip IV and Pope Clement V would join him at the judgment seat of God within the year. He was correct on both counts. Notice the two figures beneath the horse ridden by Death: the king and the pope.”

Show card 14 – TEMPERANCE “This symbolizes a time of patient waiting. Notice the figure of Temperance is pouring water from one cup to another. In Christian symbolism, water indicates spirit and truth. The truth has not been lost.”

Show card 15 – THE DEVIL “The devil symbolizes the Inquisition, which held all of Europe in fear.”

Show card 16 – THE TOWER “The tower shows the destruction of the City of God. Sadly, in a world that represses the truth, it cannot remain standing.”

Show card 17 – THE STAR “The Star shows a woman pouring water from two vessels, one into the water and the other onto the earth. This indicates that spirit and truth have not been totally lost. The woman could well symbolize Aquarius, the Water Carrier, showing that feminine qualities of love and truth will always survive.”

Show card 18 – THE MOON “The Moon symbolizes the night time, a period of waiting. The Moon itself is a symbol of the occult, that which is hidden.”

Show card 19 – THE SUN “Daylight comes again. Flowers are growing, the sun is shining, and a new light is casting its glow on the world.”

Show card 20 – JUDGMENT “Judgment day symbolizes the day of enlightenment, when people wake up and realize their destiny as children of God.”

Show card 21 – THE WORLD “The final card shows fulfilment of this dream. The righteous ruler has ascended to the throne, and all of humanity is at peace. And that, my friends, is what the Holy Grail is all about.”

It’s a nice story, and the cards hold people’s interest. People often ask me if this is the “secret” behind the origin of Tarot cards. I reply, “So people say.” That doesn’t say anything, of course. I’d love to believe the story, but sadly, you can arrange the cards to tell almost any story at all. All the same, I’m having great success with it. Just be prepared to read the Tarot cards afterwards!

This is one of a series of occasional essays produced by Richard Webster, 8 Napa Court, Shamrock Park, Manukau 2016, New Zealand (esp@psychic.co.nz).

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Doug Dymont

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