

MEDIEVAL MISCHIEF —TAROT—

by Riccardo Gil Ferraro

SAMPLE



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THE CREATION OF MEDIEVAL MISCHIEF TAROT



Since I graduated from Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan, I've been delving into esoterism and medieval art, frequently visiting the great churches and monuments in Italy. The first topic to pull me into this fascinating and symbolic world was tarot. I've started collecting the most interesting and unusual decks from Marseilles-style tarot to Italian decks (the ones

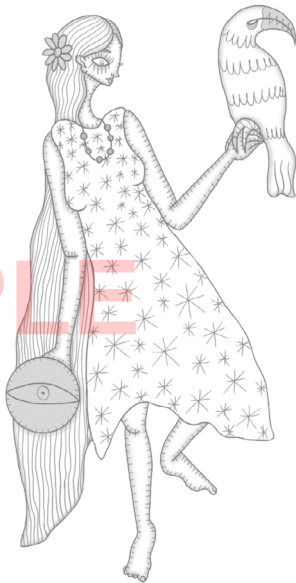
that started it all), to specifically esoteric decks, such as those from the Golden Dawn school of thought. Each and every one of them expanded my knowledge of symbolism. My love for the medieval era continues to grow as my knowledge becomes deeper. For me, the Middle Ages were not a dark era; it was a period when splendid art, innovation and culture was made and thrived. For that reason, I decided to incorporate a bit of light-hearted medieval atmosphere in my deck. Knights, damsels and of course mischievous demons are presented here in a new and unique way.

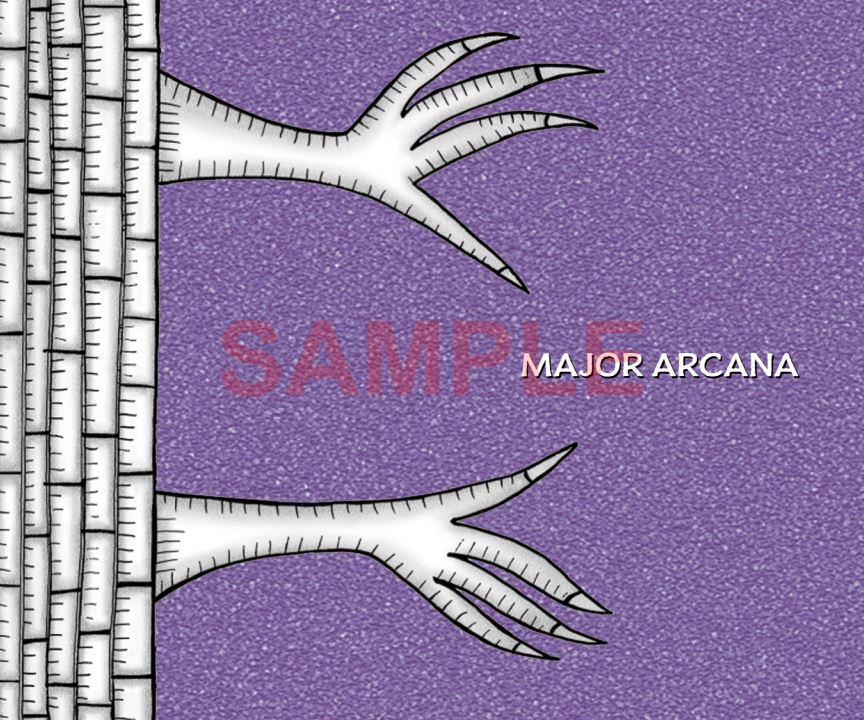
The symbolic cards of tarot are a way to dig into oneself, to know oneself better and to meditate about the past, present and future choices. While doing that, it's important to not be overwhelmed by the numerous and sometimes contradictory symbols. Syncretism is absolutely important for a tarot deck, as much as simplicity and effectiveness are. All symbols can help us in our path to knowledge, but only when they are fully understood. Thus, I have limited the introduction of symbols to elemental triangles and astrological correlations for each card. Every Court Card has a double elemental correlation because each grade

has a peculiar element in it. Page is earth, Chevalier is fire, Queen is water and King is air. Of course, these symbols are not meant to represent a reality. Their purpose is to help you reveal your own path through reason and introspection, while hopefully having a bit of fun along the way.

I really want to thank the wonderful team at U.S. Games Systems for believing in my project and helping me bring it to life. I am especially grateful to Jennifer Kaplan, Lynn Araujo and Joe Boginski.

—Riccardo Gil Ferraro





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MAJOR ARCANA

O - THE FOOL

Air Element



Innocence and carefree joy of life. This is the card that represents the reader; the Fool is the main char-

acter. The artist is very close to the Fool; both actively maintain their inner-child energy and cultivate it to achieve the next step of knowledge. No disturbance will make him stop as he is one with nature itself, whimsical and carefree. The Fool isn't exactly an arcanum, but it is described here for the sake of simplicity.

I - THE MAGICIAN

Air Element



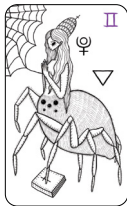
This card is the first real arcanum. The Magician is the beginning of the supreme work and through the

Fool he reconnects to the World (the last arcanum). He has all the elements at his disposal and through them he can access the secrets to life itself. The Magician is as fluid as Mercury. While perfecting his discipline he knows how to stay humble. He remembers that knowledge can be put to good use, but of

course it can also be put to bad use. Being the messenger isn't always pleasurable. His hat is the symbol of infinity, because the path to knowledge never really ends.

II - THE POPESS

Water Element



She is the reincarnation of Pluto, god of the underworld. She is a mother waiting for her brood to

hatch. She patiently weaves her web as she reflects on higher knowledge. She is a solitary and

unique hybrid creature. The web represents the veil, which the Popess pulls back in order to let you grasp the truth of existence, even if for a brief period of time. Revelation is coming.

III - THE EMPRESS

Earth Element



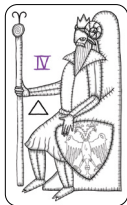
She is the power of the divine feminine, Venus. She is also Lucifer, the morning star, and she is surrounded by

lesser stars. Like Lucifer, her rebellion could be interpreted as the most powerful form of love.

The Empress rules over emotions, the earth and the heavens. While the Emperor is more static in his power, the Empress is very dynamic and fluid.

IV - THE EMPEROR

Fire Element



The Emperor stares at his people with fiery eyes. He dominates his empire with power and intransigence.

At times he can be a tyrant, yet he can be the wisest man on the planet. The Emperor embodies earthly power and as charismatic

leader, he appeals to the people's will. Stubborn and severe, he is like Aries, instinctive and always ready to wage war.

V - THE POPE

Earth Element



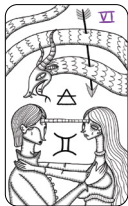
Under the Taurus sign, the Pope is a solid figure. He embodies stability, reliability and sometimes complete stasis.

The Pope rules all of the churches with his feet firmly planted into the ground. His wisdom and the dogma evoke respect and sometimes fear, but

he is also sympathetic and knows how to listen and understand what his people are saying. He is in communication with the heavens, even if his reign is strictly anchored to the ground.

VI - THE LOVERS

Air Element



Gemini rules the Lovers. They love each other but too much love may lead to stagnation. The dragon/snake

above them is the personification of apathy, a situation in which love slowly turns to ashes and

the fire of passion dies. Their bond is absolute but every bond means suffering: the suffering of separation or death. The dragon/snake is an invincible enemy: it can be fought over and over but, if the Lovers are not attentive, it will always crawl back to them. The only way to survive is through never-ending transformation and the abandonment of all anxiety and worrying.



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