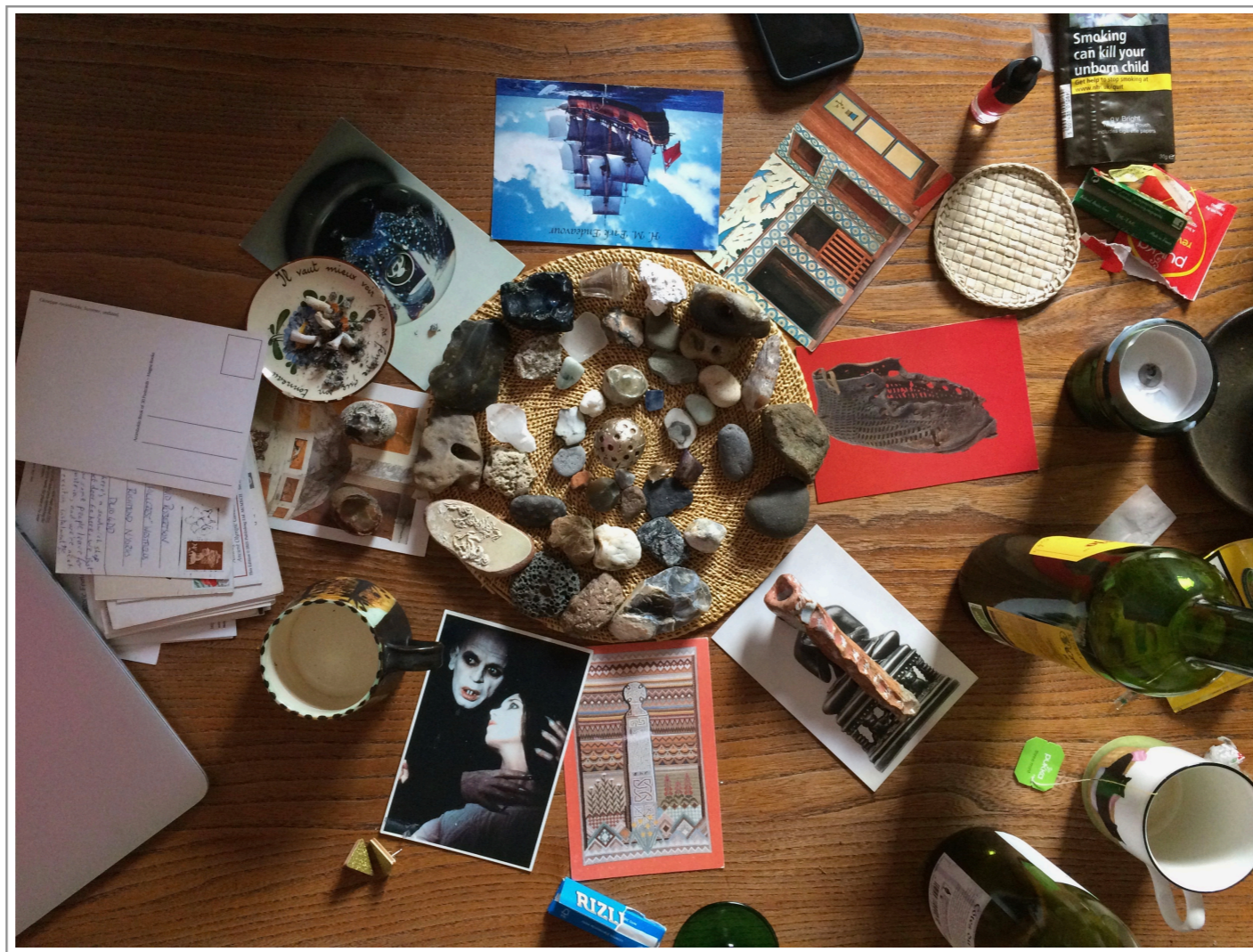


THE RASPBERRY ORACLE



Lesley Guy and Tom O'Sullivan

INTRODUCTION

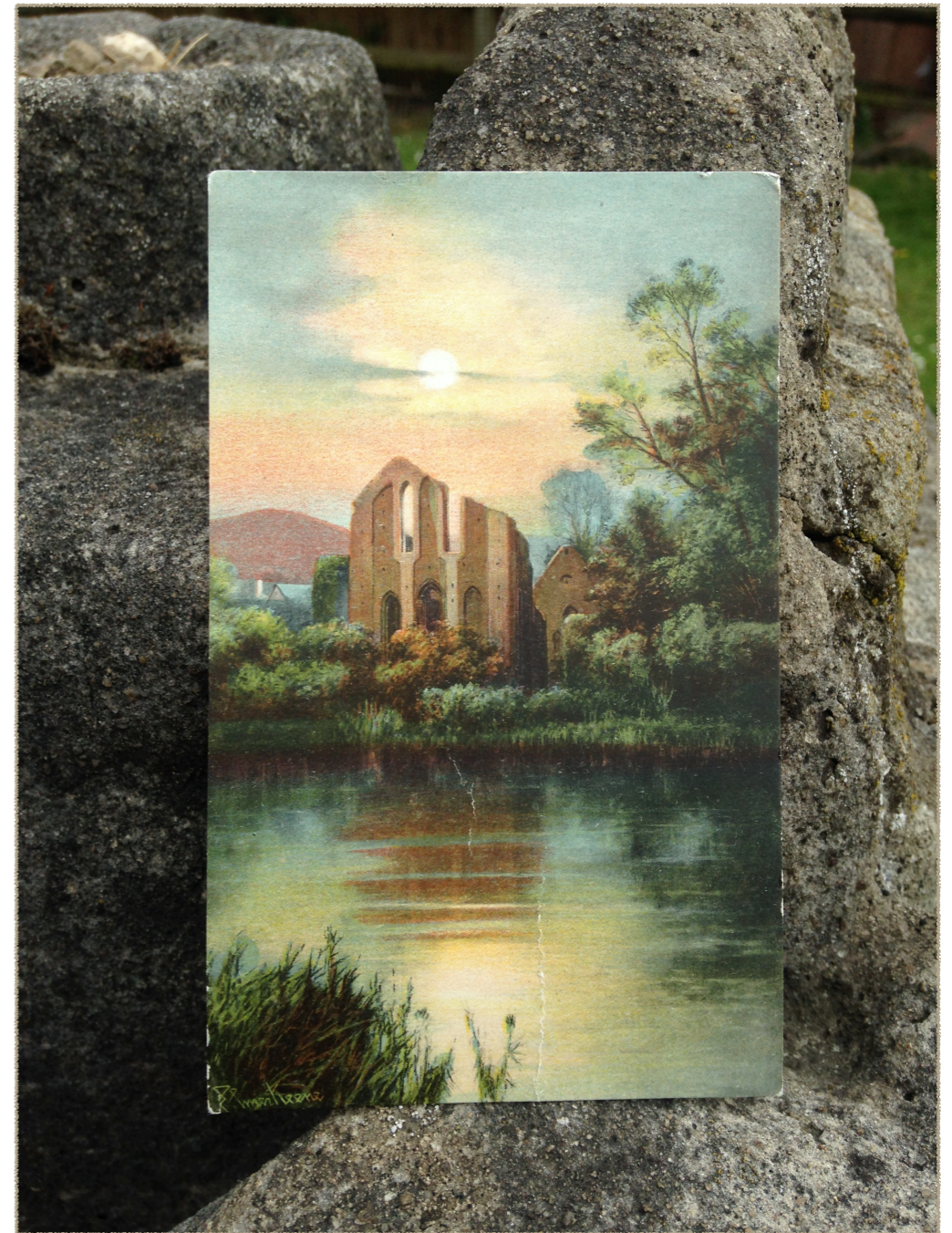
The Raspberry Oracle is a tool for divination and psychological enquiry that takes as its starting point a set of 52 postcards. We have been collecting these cards for a few years now, and trying to make sense of them, so the invitation by ArtHouses to produce an artwork in response to the Lockdown has been a welcome prompt to organise and share this private project.

The cards have, for the most part, been used in readings within the privacy of our own home. The process of finding each card, and then developing our interpretations, has been an intimate and domestic act of shared creativity. For ArtHouses Inverted, we have somewhat formalised the deck and produced a guide to the Oracle. This includes our own interpretations of the cards, together with further commentaries and notes. You can read the inversions as an extra commentary if you wish or ignore them completely.

We've included details on how to make a simple reading using a pack of regular playing cards, details of which can be found at the back of this booklet. Otherwise, there is the random card generator created by Rob Smith on the ArtHouses Inverted site.

The Raspberry Oracle is a playful experiment in how meanings can be generated through images, conversation and shared imagination. Readers are encouraged to find their own meanings for the cards, and ways to organise the 'spreads', alongside those presented here.

We consulted the cards, asking how they felt about being shared with ArtHouses and the wider world. They replied with FOLLY, the card of art making, fiction and constructed worlds. We will take this as a good omen.



Card 19, FOLLY. *The world is a ready-made.*

ALTAR

Supplication

Invocation. Prayer. Request. Sacrifice.

**You never get what you want because you never ask.
Your heart yearns for many things. It sends out a
signal that your mind cannot translate so you flounce
off into a huff, feeling bereft. Just open your mouth
and ask for love.**

Commentary:

Sacrifice your so-called dignity.

Inverse:

You demand to see the manager. Expressing outrage is
the new opening up. Radical preacher.

APARTMENT

Sanctuary

Safety. Necessary withdrawal.

A room of one's own. To set oneself apart for a time is a necessary luxury. Fuck the lot of them. Shut the door.

Commentary:

There is no door but the rooms are deep.

Inverse:

Open up - its dark inside.

APHRODITE

Lack of Agency

Fixed Ideal. A fetish. Cliché. Stuck. Restriction.

There is nowhere to go when you are placed - or you place the other - on a pedestal.

Commentary:

You are still capable of getting attention. Can you use this to get your way?

Inverse:

Emancipation. Some lizards grow new tails.



B

Cryptic Illumination

Dreams. Puzzles. Poetry. Riddles. Encryption. Because.

I saw the creature crawl away; it was weirdly wreathed in wonder - Anglo Saxon riddle.

Commentary:

Answer unknown.

Inverse:

Ask Google.



BEAST

Shameless Creature

Unruly. Uncivilised. Smelly. Messy. Rebellious. Refusal.

Remember that beasts exist. Acknowledge and accept your fear and disgust. We are all capable of being beastly but beasts are beautiful too. It's okay to smash your way through the thicket and then stroke your stinking hide with pleasure.

Commentary:

Don't suffer the indignity of being stuffed and put on display.

Inverse:

Forgiveness. Acceptance.



BOOKSHOP

An Imaginative Space

*A place to get lost in. Potential Intellectual adventure.
Encounter.*

**The feeling of possibility when you entered the old
second-hand bookshop. Breathe in the motes of dust and
survey the many worlds laid out before you.**

Commentary:

You hope to meet someone special in the bookshop.

Inverse:

Netflix and chill.



BOOTIE

The Cycle of Life

Decay. Rot. Compost. Earth. Growth. Cosmic interconnection.

The baby who wore this bootie has been dead for 2,000 years. Maybe you are her descendant? Maybe you ate the fresh, tangy apple that grew from the tree planted atop her grave or that of her children?

Commentary:

There is no death. Your ancestors are all around you.

Inverse:

The cult of youth. Overpopulation. Barren ground.

BREAST

Sensual Nourishment

Comfort. Sensitivity. Warmth. Basic needs.

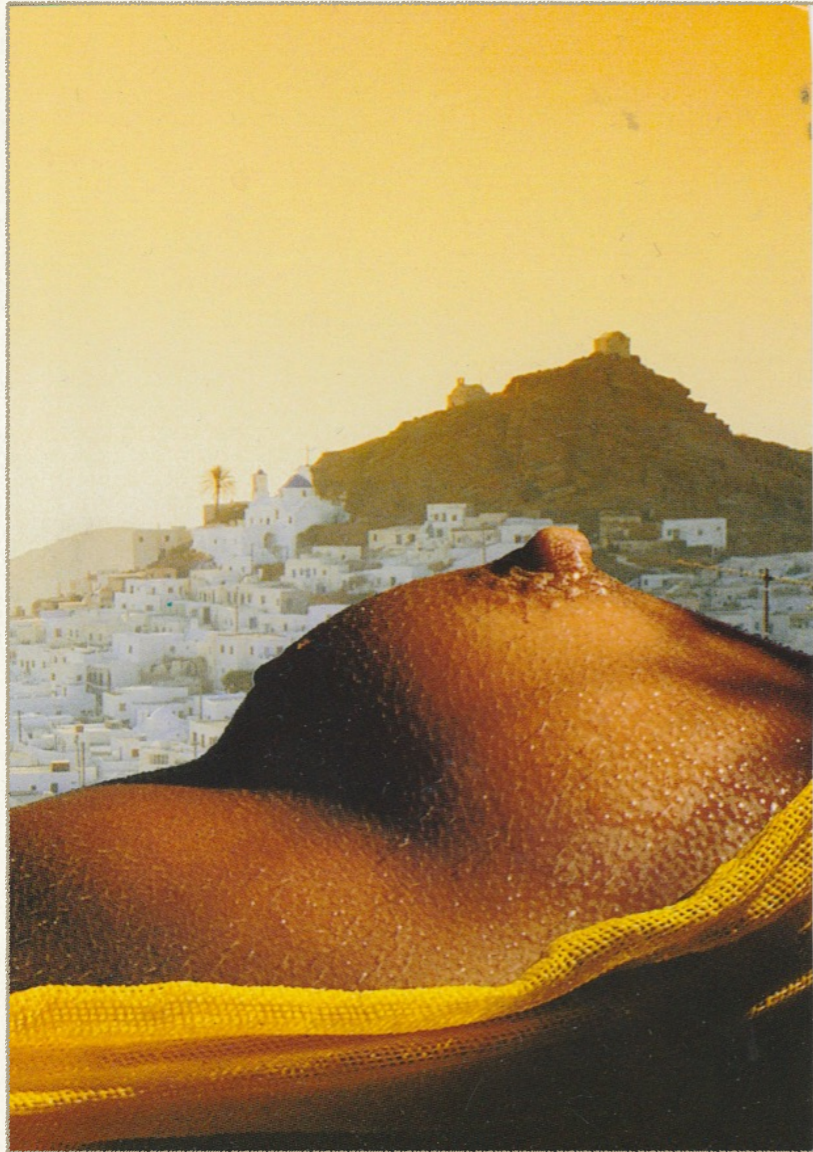
You are full of sensations: warmth, tingling, itching, aching even tiredness and grief. The slow, careful caress of a finger running over your skin acts as an analgesic to your pains. Stroke the side of your mouth and the cheek in a slow circular motion and close your eyes.

Commentary:

It's going to be alright.

Inverse:

Eroticism. The body as object. Addiction. Longing. Unmet needs.



BRIDGE

Connection

Communication. Reconciliation. Facing your fears.

Two cities are separated by a river. A bridge crosses the river. But which city does the bridge belong too?

Commentary:

Drop a penny in halfway across, and make a wish.

Inverse:

Disconnection. Harboring a grudge.



BUCKLE

Physical Force

Work. Labour. Effort. Tension.

**Hold it together while the trousers need to be up, then
release your grasp and let gravity prevail.**

Commentary:

Take a position. Be appropriate. Look the part.

Inverse:

Your heart's not in it. Overcommit-underperform.



BUDDHA

Misconstrued Icon

Meditation. Emptiness. Stillness.

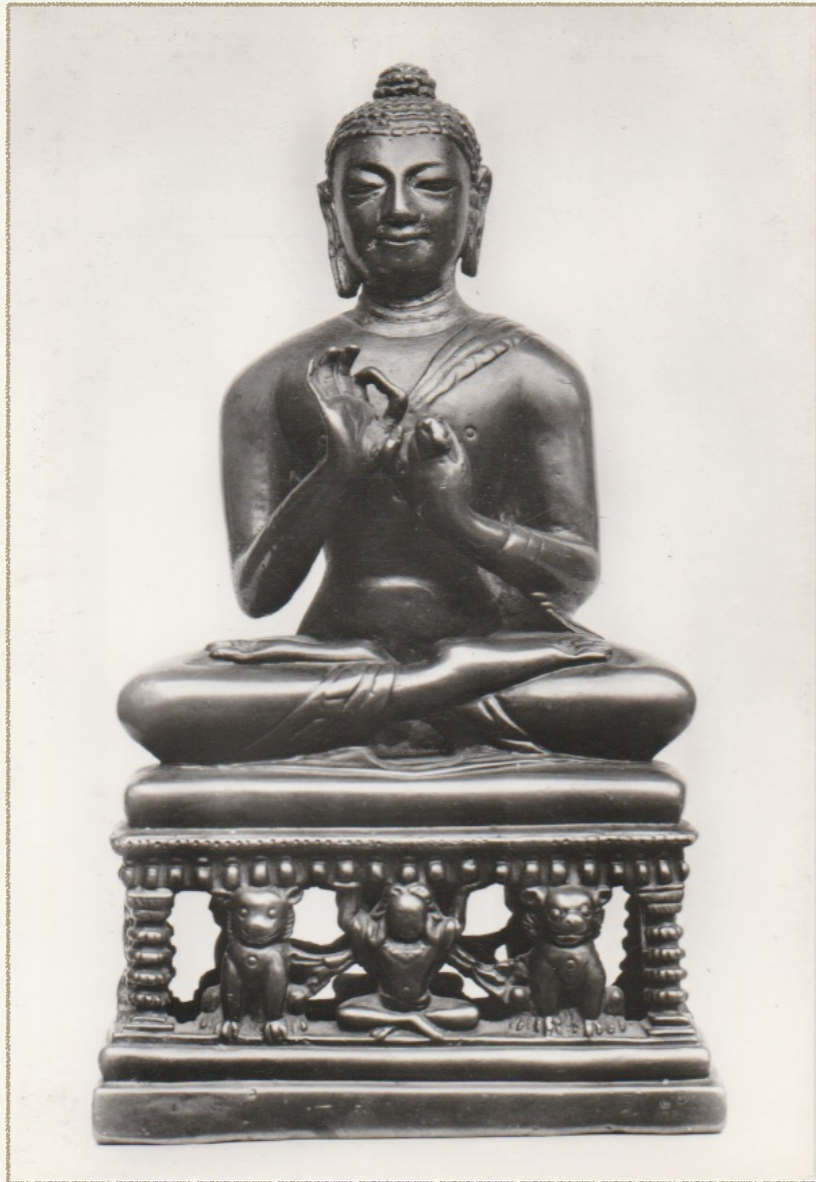
There is nothing there for you to worship; beneath the tree is an empty seat.

Commentary:

Sit down and do nothing.

Inverse:

Loot. Stolen goods and stolen ideas.



BUDGERIGARS

Tamed Affection

*Love. Care. Friendship. Intimacy. Tolerance. Compassion.
Maturity.*

The initial burst of passion has died down. You are no longer obsessed and drunk on love. Yet, the affection has deepened and trust has grown. These bonds will be difficult to break.

Commentary:

A fully fledged lover.

Inverse:

Over familiarity. Dissatisfaction. Boredom.



CLOCK

Linear Time

*Linear thinking. Numbers. Progress. Order. Music.
Trajectories. Logic.*

**Each second follows the last in an endless procession.
Time to step out of this machinery.**

Commentary:

This clock is astronomical, showing the passage of the Sun and the Moon - where are you in relation to them?

Inverse:

Open to spacial, non-newtonian thinking. Twisted time-line.



CROSIER

Authority of Wisdom

Leadership. Wise counsel. Responsibility. Stewardship.

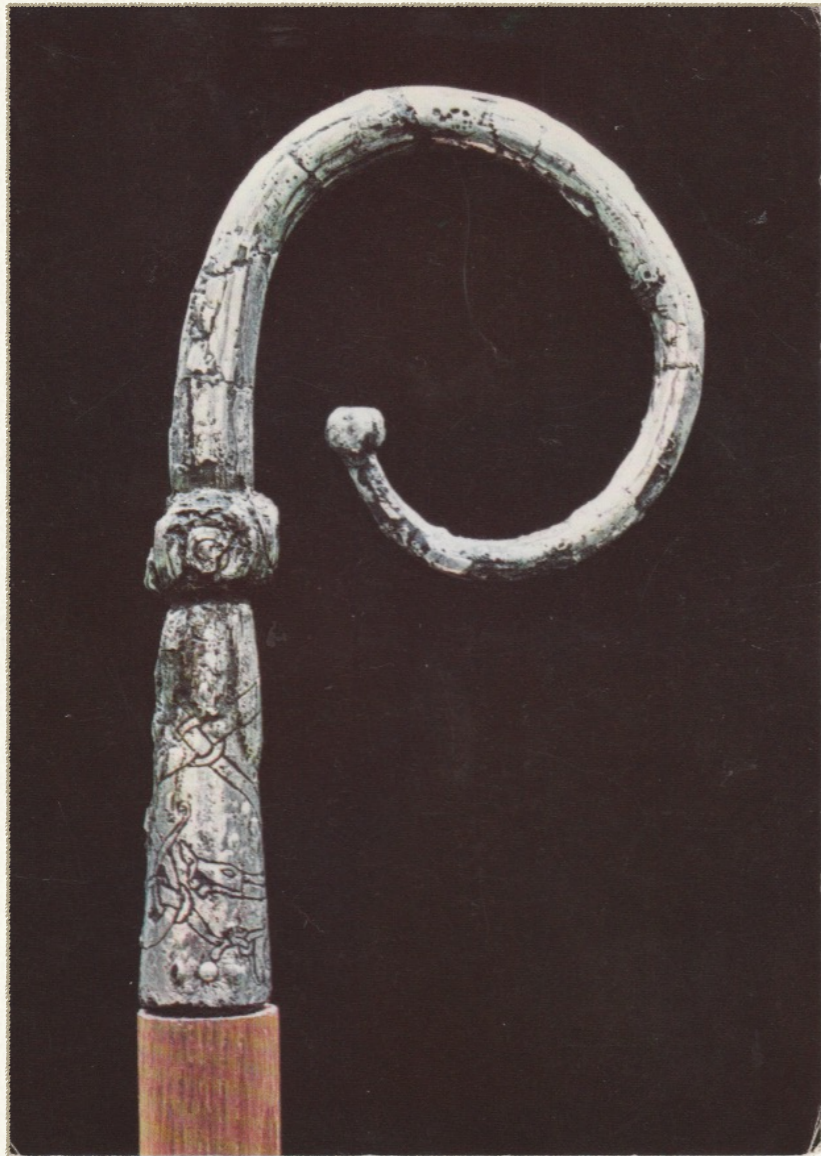
A shepherds crook to gather a flock. A staff, magically imbued.

Commentary:

Used to pull a bad act from the stage.

Inverse:

Abuse of power comes as no surprise.



CROSS

Crossroads

Choice. Decision. Travel. New direction. Agency.

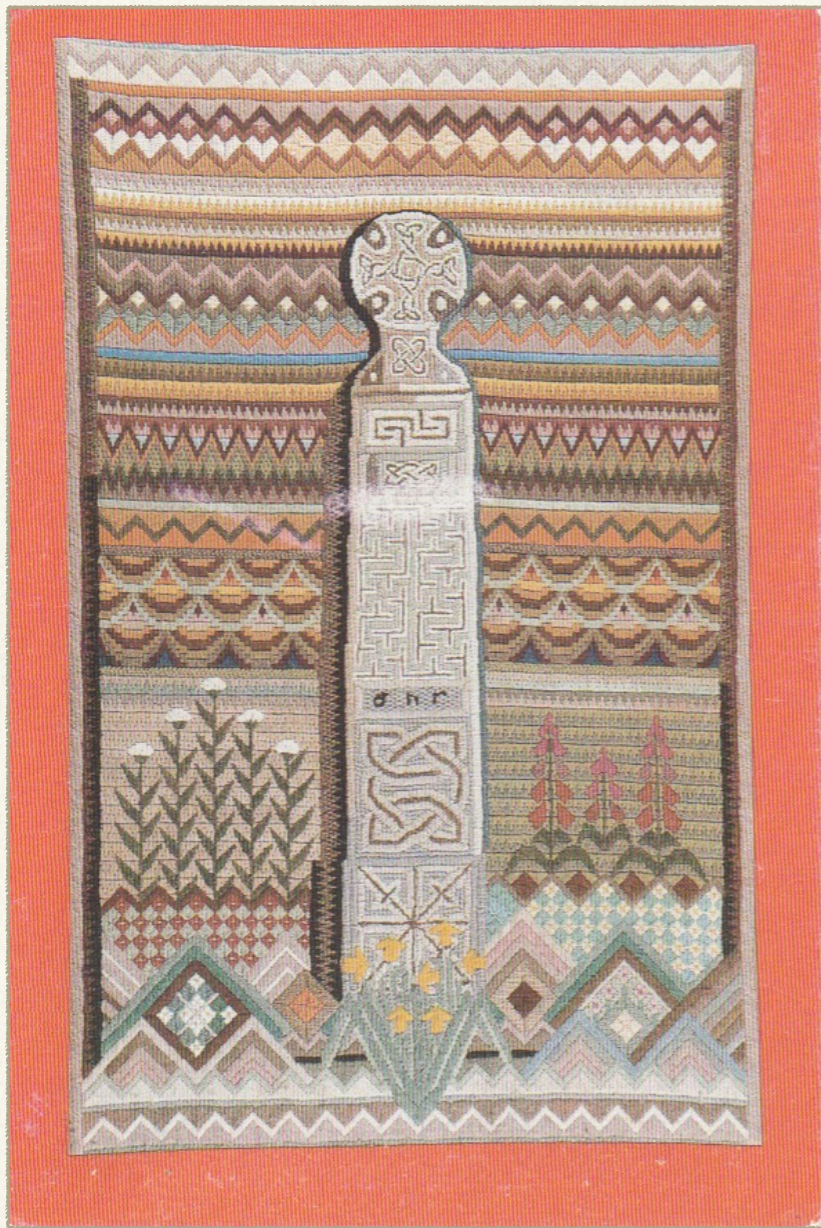
You seem to be at a crossroads, but maybe it's a zigzagging path that looks like a crossroads. Do you need to burden yourself with decisions or should you just take the next small step of the zigzag and sit down for a nice cup of tea and a bun?

Commentary:

Life is also a rich tapestry but don't get fixated on the details.

Inverse:

Stuck in a rut. Choice paralysis. Fear of middle-age.



CROWNS

Sovereignty of Self

Self-worth and self-value. Autonomy.

Decide for yourself the crown that you will wear and how you wish to wear it.

Commentary:

And the men who hold high places must be the ones who start, to mould a new reality closer to the heart - Rush, A Farewell To Kings.

Inverse:

Decadence and/or austerity. Extremes. Dichotomy.



DRUM

Make Some Noise

Anti-establishment protest. Voice.

Sick and tired of everyone banging on about what you should want, what you should be doing and where you should be heading? Time for you to bang your own drum on your own terms in your own time.

Commentary:

Don't believe the hype.

Inverse:

It is the empty vessel that makes the most noise.



FALSE PROPHET

Discernment.

Judgement. Taste. Reckoning. Strength. Trust.

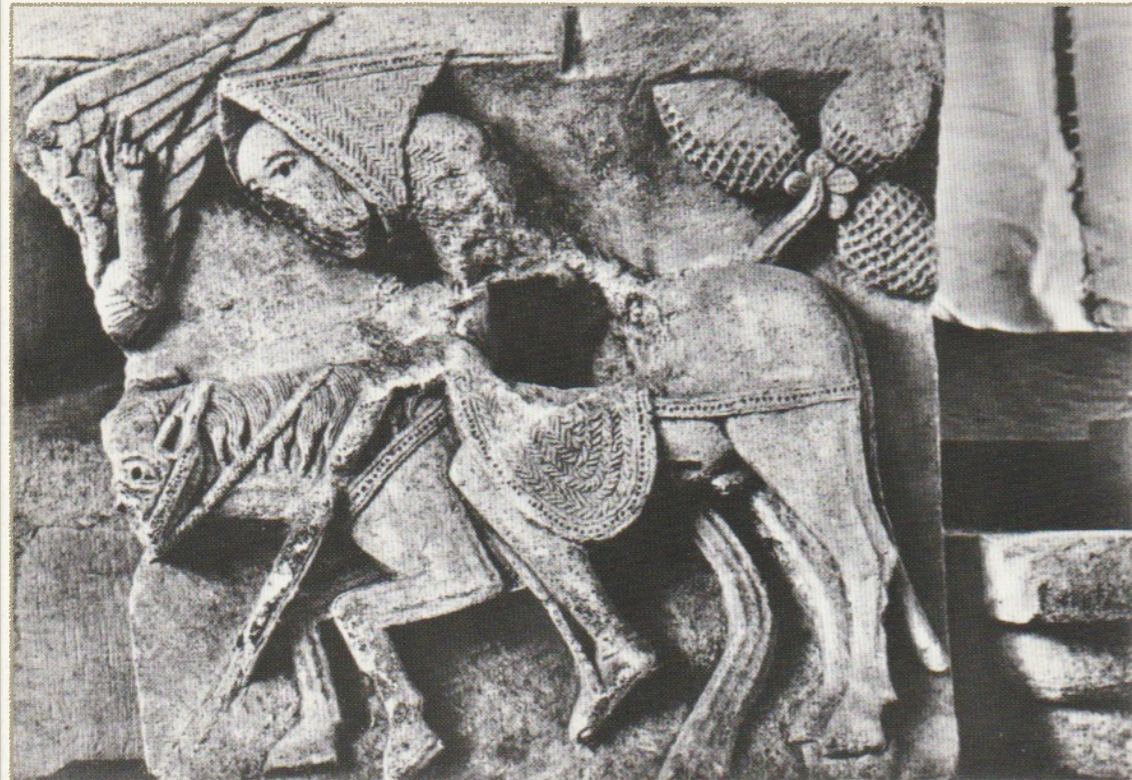
Everyone is flocking to the marketplace to hear the prophet speak. Better to stay at home, stay still, and listen to your own heartbeat.

Commentary:

Be critical of the stories you are telling yourself.

Inverse:

Fake News.



FOLLY

Fabricating an Image

Representation. Romanticism. Art-making. Fiction. Signs and symbols.

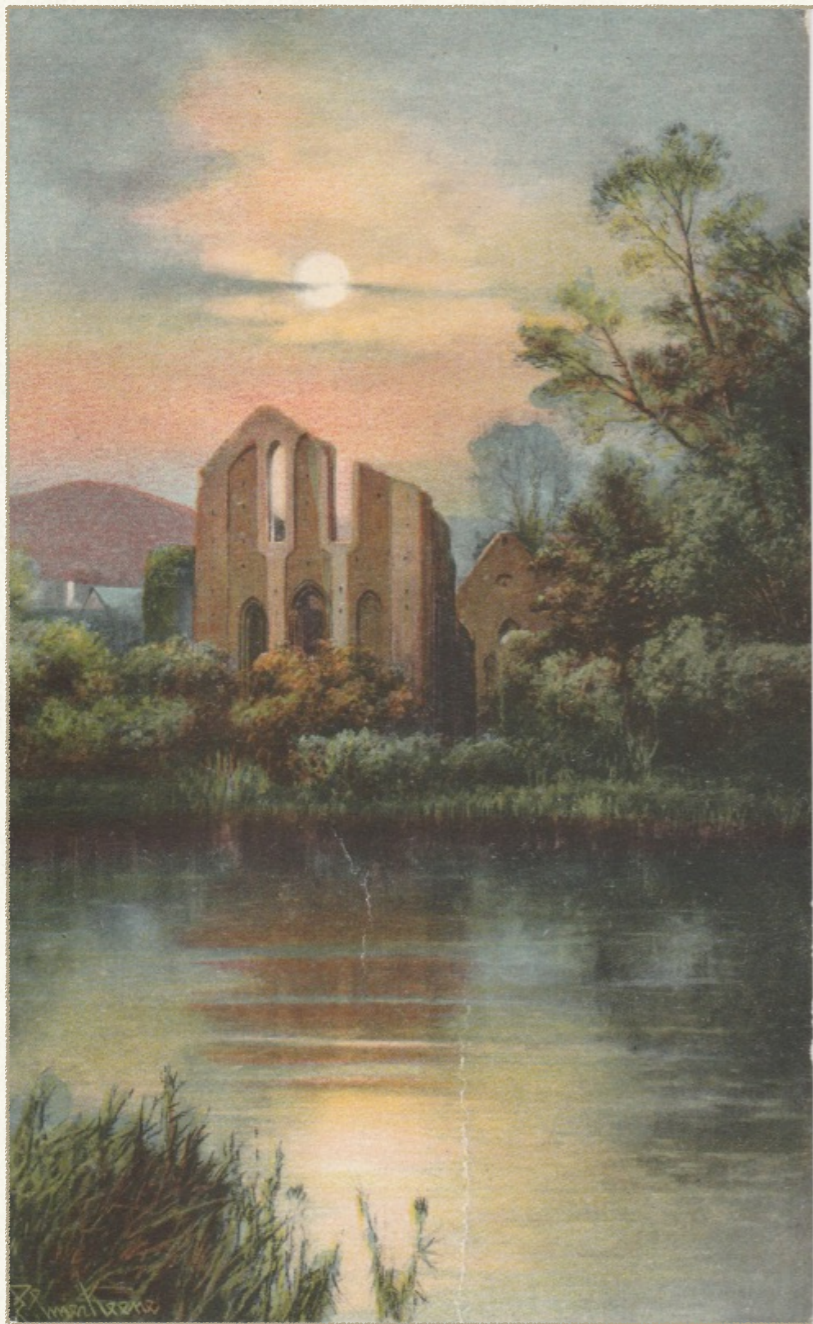
Before you is the sheet of white paper. You make a mark, and then another. Slowly the image takes shape. Congratulations - you have begun to make a world.

Commentary:

The world is a ready-made.

Inverse:

Deception. Dogma. Rose-tinted glasses. Nostalgia. Haunted.



FONT

Ritual

*Initiation. Discovery. Blessing. Rebirth. Appreciation.
Consciousness.*

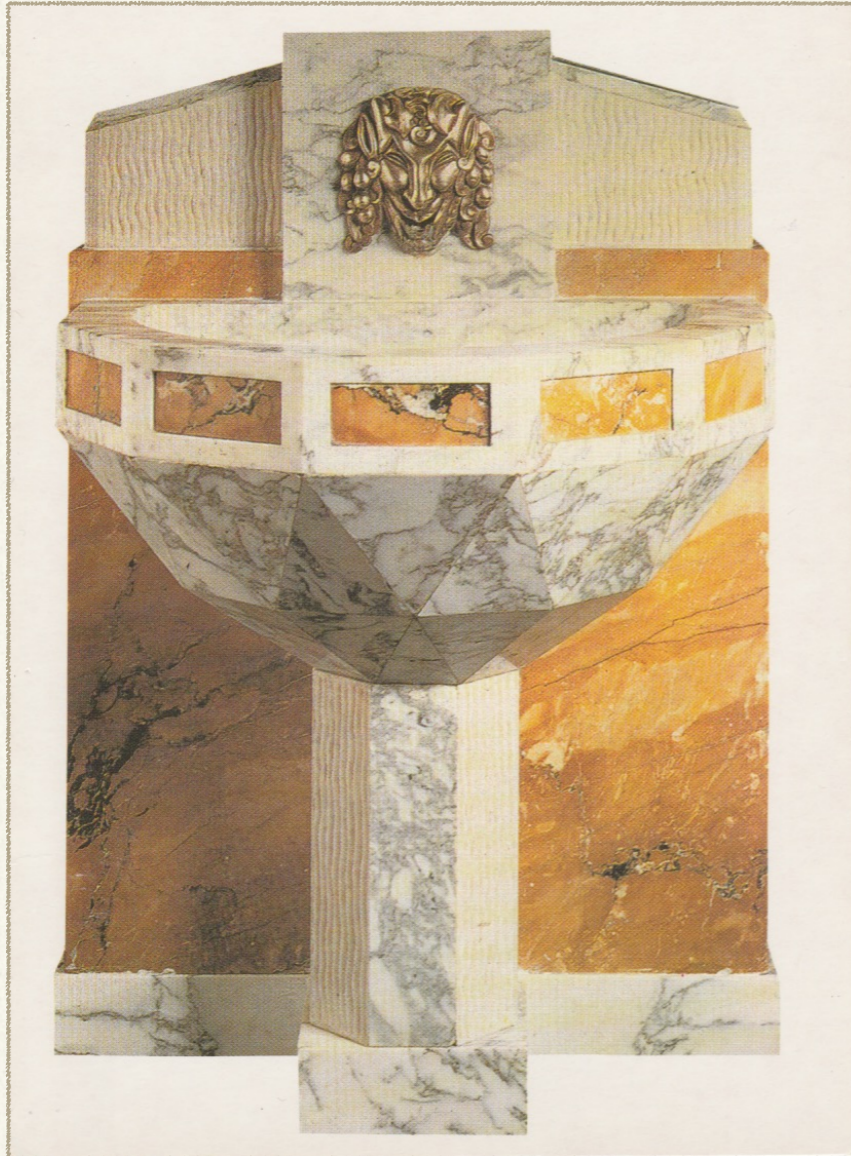
Every time you wash your hands, take a shower or fill the kettle, stop. Take a brief moment to collect yourself and consider the power of the water. Value every drop. Don't let the tap run too long, this is sacred liquid. Every moment could be like this.

Commentary:

The top of your head opens up and light pours out.

Inverse:

Discontent. No value. Mindless activity. Wastefulness.



FOREST

The Wilderness

The natural world. Beyond humanism.

The trees are oblivious of your troubles. They were living long before you were born and will live on long after you are gone.

Commentary:

A place in which to hide, or where things are hidden from you.

Inverse:

Fear. Anxiety. Darkness. Ignorance. Strange sounds.

GARDEN

Eco-system

Care. Growth. Balance. Responsibility. Cause and affect.

*Pulling weeds and picking stones, man is made of
dreams and bones, Feel the need to grow my own 'cause
the time is close at hand. Grain for grain, sun and rain,
find my way in nature's chain, Tune my body and my
brain to the music of the land - Garden Song, John
Denver.*

Commentary:

You are a part of this world.

Inverse:

Imbalance. Out of touch. Stalemate. Enclosure. Regime.

GATEWAY

Threshold

Entering and exiting spacial or mental states. Decision making. Portal.

The more fortified the gate, the greater the reward behind it.

Commentary:

Keep going forward, don't look back.

Inverse:

Anxiety. Fear. Indecision. Doubt. Barrier.



GROTTO

Underground Creation

Cave. Lair. Buried. Hidden. Revealed. Secrets.

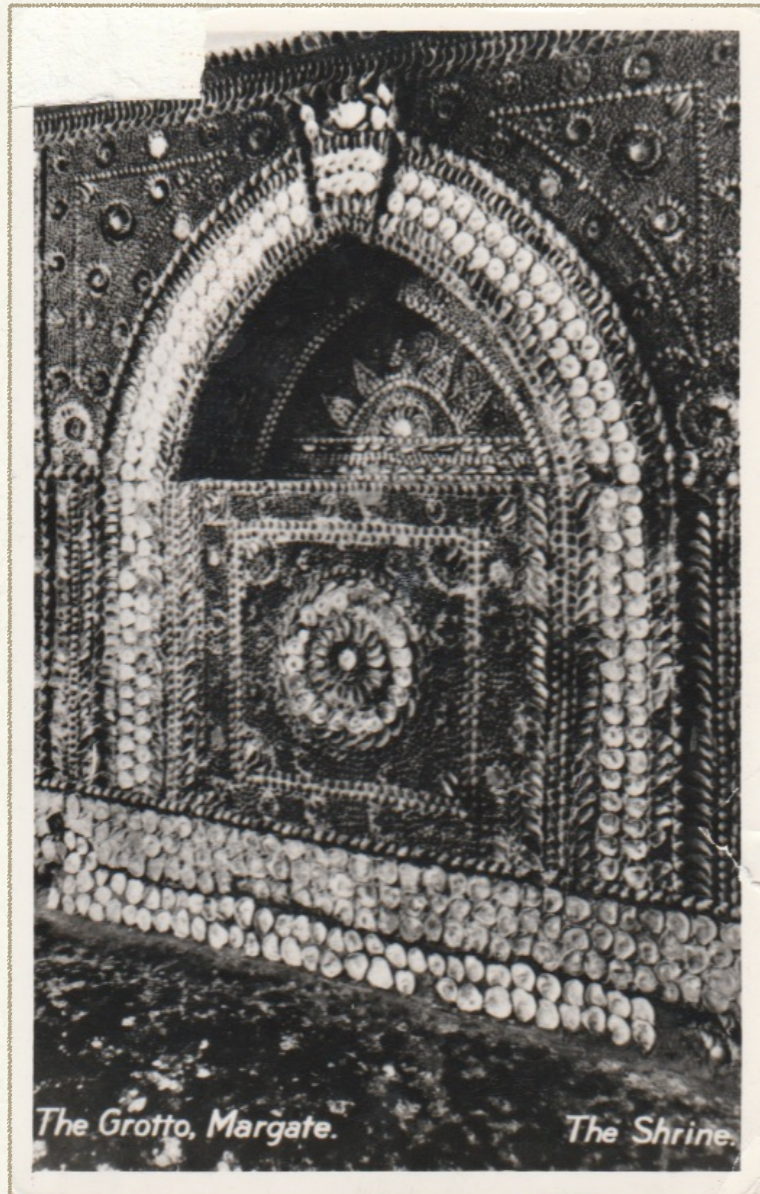
You are misunderstood and unappreciated in your own time. The thing you love is grotesque and hidden. A labour of love.

Commentary:

There is great freedom in being overlooked.

Inverse:

Oversharing. Lack of wisdom. Creative block.



HARLEQUIN

The Tears of a Clown

Attachment. identity. Authenticity.

Performance imbued with melancholy. Are you in love with your sadness?

Commentary:

The painted tear on Pierrot's cheek.

Inverse:

Absurdity. Silliness.



HAWK

The Ego

Focus on oneself.

All of us are watched by a Hawk of self-doubt. Pick up your bow, take aim and let fly the killing arrow.

Commentary:

Don't fire the second arrow into yourself!

Inverse:

Foresight. Expectation.



HERMIT

The Scholar

Knowledge. Focus. Solitude. Vow. Cerebral. Inner world.

Why do you keep a lion outside the cave? Is it a pet? Or a critic waiting to pounce?

Commentary:

You know that a tomato is a fruit, but do you have the wisdom not to put it in a fruit salad?

Inverse:

Rigidity. Set in ways.



ISLAND

Fortress of Solitude

*Necessary withdrawal. Distinctiveness. Community.
Defensiveness.*

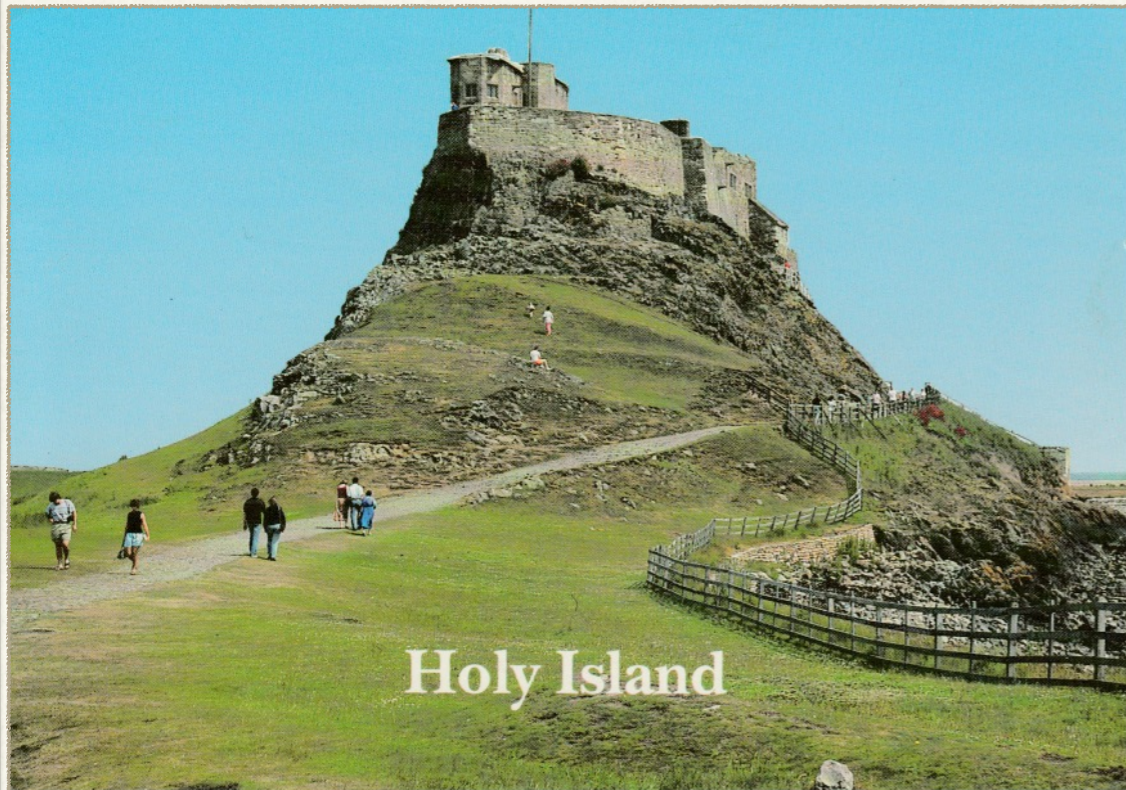
*Twice every day, the waves efface / Of staves and
sandalled feet the trace - Marmion by Walter Scott.*

Commentary:

*And a rock feels no pain,
and an island never cries - Paul Simon.*

Inverse:

Misanthropy. Separation. Cut-off. Social distancing.
Shielding and self-isolation.



Holy Island

LANCELOT

An Alpha-male Undone

Release. Freedom. Strength. Vulnerability.

Put on your silver armour, your gauntlets and plumed helm. Take up your shield and lance and mount your steed. Everyone cheers – hurray for our Champion! But your heart is no longer in this quest.

Commentary:

We don't need another hero - no more heroes anymore.

Inverse:

An Actor. Aggressive. Overbearing.



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LID

All That Glitters Is Not Gold

*Security. Entrance. Lock. Outer appearances. Finances.
Value.*

**Your bag is bright and made of many colours, but what
lies within?**

Commentary:

Looking fair but feeling foul.

Inverse:

Looking foul but feeling fair.

LOTUS

Fertile Ground

Beauty. Roots. Birth. Self-worth. Possibility. Karma.

Anyone who's seen *What's Love Got To Do With It*, the Tina Turner story, will know that the lotus flower blooms most beautifully from the deepest mud. You've been through hell. Some day you will find the courage to break free, find meaning in your suffering and go on to be successful in your own sweet way.

Commentary:

Remember to honour the Universal Mystical Law of Cause and Effect.

Inverse:

Putting on a brave face. Using your pain as a shield or weapon.

MERCURY

Runny Metal

Mutability. Curiosity. Adaptation. A message. Strangeness.

You can't quite put your finger on it. You are chasing it. It is just out of reach and changing form. It is adapting. It comes back towards you. Run!

Commentary:

You have changed your mind!

Inverse:

Toxicity. Madness. Poor communication.



MOTH

The Change

*Transformation. Vulnerability. Process. Pheromones.
Hormones.*

The moth has a short life, or rather, two short lives. She starts as a robust caterpillar but as an adult she has wings so delicate they turn to dust when handled. She woke up one day totally changed. No-one warned her.

Commentary:

You feel it coming, you can handle this.

Inverse:

The flame is irresistible. Trial by fire.



MOUNTAIN

Deep Time

Sacredness of Planet Earth, Endurance. A huge task. Risk.

**This is a really huge thing, beyond any of our ken.
Together we will climb up to find out what's going on.**

Commentary:

Make your mind as big as the mountain.

Inverse:

Erosion. Eruption. Disrespect, Destruction. Climate crisis and denial. Danger.



MURAL

The Public Body

Civic life and institutions. Icon. Struggle. Movement. Community.

Everyone paints their politics on the outside of their homes. Imagine the new look for the city!

Commentary:

You wear your heart on your sleeve. Be brave.

Inverse:

Sectarianism. Partisan. Intimidation.



Wall Mural, The Parade, Plymouth, Devon.

Photo: D. Noble, John Hinde Studios.

MUSCLES

Body Building

*Strength. Youth. Work. Inflexibility. Vanity. Achievement.
Friendship*

Some people have got so many muscles that there isn't room left in their body for anything else. They push themselves to the point of damage and then crave the bulging growth of repair. Hard work has made you tight. Knots have formed in your back but you can't reach to relieve them. Where are your friends?

Commentary:

Leave room for feelings to flow.

Inverse:

Weak. Flabby. Untrained. Out of shape.



PANELS

Everything the Right Place

*Systems. Sections. Order. Compartmentalise. Organisation.
Stationary. Creativity.*

It is usual to begin on page one and follow the sequence of narrative until we get to the end. Sometimes the story is spread out all around the room, the house, the town, the earth. You've been putting the pieces together your whole life. It makes perfect sense.

Commentary:

Don't spend too much time choosing the font.

Inverse:

Uncreative. Chaos. Blurred vision. Fussy.



PANORAMA

Figures in a Landscape

View. Vision. Perspective. The present. Rest

You stand on high ground and survey the landscape before you. Below you is the town in which you live and there in the distance, just perceptible in the fading evening light, is the village where you grew up. Look how far you have come!

Commentary:

Step back and see the bigger picture.

Inverse:

Snobbery. Shunning. Outcast. Resentment. Disappointment.



ROSE

Transformation

Resurrection. Confidence. Acknowledgement. Cosmic acceptance. Joy. Body.

Every Morn and every Night, Some are Born to sweet delight, Some are Born to sweet delight, Some are Born to Endless Night - Auguries of Innocence by William Blake

Commentary:

The night is never endless.

Inverse:

O Rose thou art sick.



SATUR

Virility as a Joke

Animalism. Pleasure of the body. Excitement. Readiness.

The exuberant body is a threat to patriarchy.

Commentary:

Don't be afraid to come.

Inverse:

Performance Anxiety.



SHAT

Lighten Up!

Fool. Cat. Potty. Flowers. Shapes. Nose. Imperfect.

The shat sat on the mat. A foolish pun, yes, but you are a fool like the rest of us so stop burdening yourself with what's correct. Past and present tenses collide and you don't know where or when you are. It doesn't actually matter, go with it.

Commentary:

Pretty pussy in a potty.

Inverse:

You've gone too far, we're getting tired of you.



SHIP

The Wooden World

Exploration. Adventure. Travel. Movement. Reckless.

A colony, out to colonise. Are you on the way there or the way back? What mess did you leave behind?

Commentary:

In civilisations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates - Michel Foucault

Inverse:

Unnecessary journey. Tourism. Destruction. Snobbery.
Insularity. Xenophobia.



SORCIÈRE

Paradigm Shift

*New ideas. Liberation. New tools. Fresh eyes. Realisation.
Reclamation. Revision.*

**In this cave the scales have fallen from your eyes.
Emerge, blinking into the sunlight of your fresh
perspective. The men who discovered this cave tainted it
with their limited view. You have seen for yourself and
understand!**

Commentary:

Not a phallus. Seems obvious now.

Inverse:

Information overload. Conspiracy theories.



LA GROTTTE PRÉHISTORIQUE DU SORCIER
Saint-Cirq - Dordogne

STONE CIRCLE

Not Knowing

Ancient. Circular time. Mystery. Culture.

In the experience of nonknowledge about which I am speaking, if there remains a religious experience, it is entirely detached from our anxiety over the future, it is entirely detached from a possible and threatening suffering that would govern this future, it is no more than a game. Georges Bataille.

Commentary:

Open your mind to not knowing.

Inverse:

Prejudice. Misunderstanding. Misuse.

SUMMER

Bountiful Fruits

Fruition. Karma. Productivity. Pleasure.

Step lightly through the fields of corn and pick the apples on the bough. You are ripe and ready. What you have sown is plain to see by the fruits of your labour.

Commentary:

Be generous.

Inverse:

Unripe apples can give you an upset belly.



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TIBET

The Forbidden Kingdom

Secret knowledge. The sacredness of home. Imaginative fulfilment.

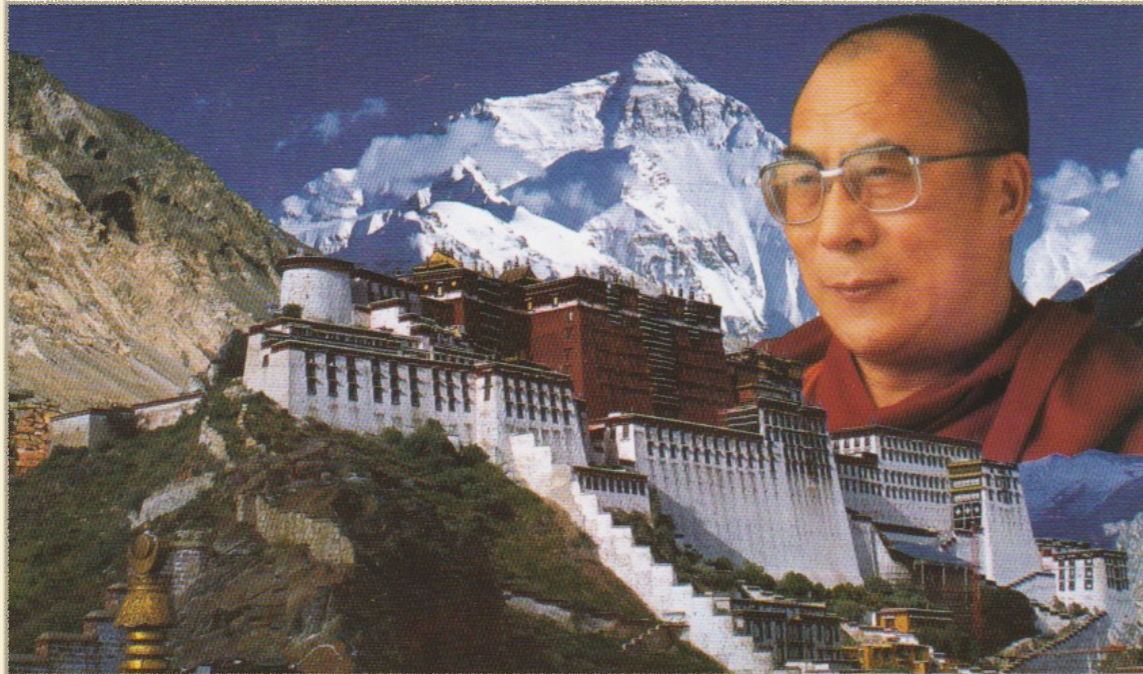
The palace below the mountain has been fortified. Inside are the secrets you yearn to return to. But how will you storm its gates?

Commentary:

Arm yourself wisely. Choose your battles carefully and on your own terms.

Inverse:

Exile. Homesickness. Lust for wealth. Weak will.



TOKEN

Good Enough

Stand in. Material value. Fetish. Evidence. Intention. Charm.

A kind gesture, no matter how small, can change everything. Likewise, a careless one can break someone's heart.

Commentary:

Bad intentions come back to haunt you.

Inverse:

Vagueness. Lack of detail. Bad faith. Meanness.



SANCTE MARIE DE HADINTYNE

I have prayed for you at
Whitekirk and Haddington

TOMB

Temporary Resting Place

*Inevitability. Memory. The deep future. History. Dwelling.
Shelter. Communal storytelling. Death.*

Bede lies here. He recorded the story of a community and their belief system for future generations and was honoured as a Saint. He died. We still know him, but for how long?

Commentary:

Honour the past, learn the legends. Move forward.

Inverse:

The Abyss. Forgetfulness. Blind faith. Morbid thinking.



TREASURE

Emotional Baggage

*Hoard. Traditions. Possessions. Nationalism. Mythology.
Delusion.*

Shiny, beautiful displays of power. Old stories filled with fairytale splendour. What are yours? What do you have too much of? What could be shared, and what could be discarded? What Myths do you spin?

Commentary:

The Holy Grail was just a wooden dish, they say.

Inverse:

Emptiness. Loss. Rubbish heap. Burden.



The Crown Jewels in the Tower of London.

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UNION

Two Become One

Pact. Agreement. Binary. Commitment. Fluidity. Protection.

Two came together to make a deck of cards: since each of us were several, there was already quite a crowd.

Commentary:

Let go your individuality.

Inverse:

Divorce and separation. Kill convention.



VAMPIRE

Old Habits Die Hard

*Drain. Energy. Limited resources. Borrowing. Debt. Shadows.
Unknown intentions. Subconscious.*

You are being sucked dry but you haven't noticed because you've not been paying attention. You are draining another being of it's energy but you haven't noticed because its just what you've always done. This is how it goes. Just be aware and be honest in your dealings.

Commentary:

Stand to face me beloved and open out the grace of your eyes - Fragment 138, Sappho.

Inverse:

Eternal life. Renewal. Alternative lifestyle. Workaholic.



ZEUS

Mistaken Identity

Choice. Identity. Character. Language. Interpretation.

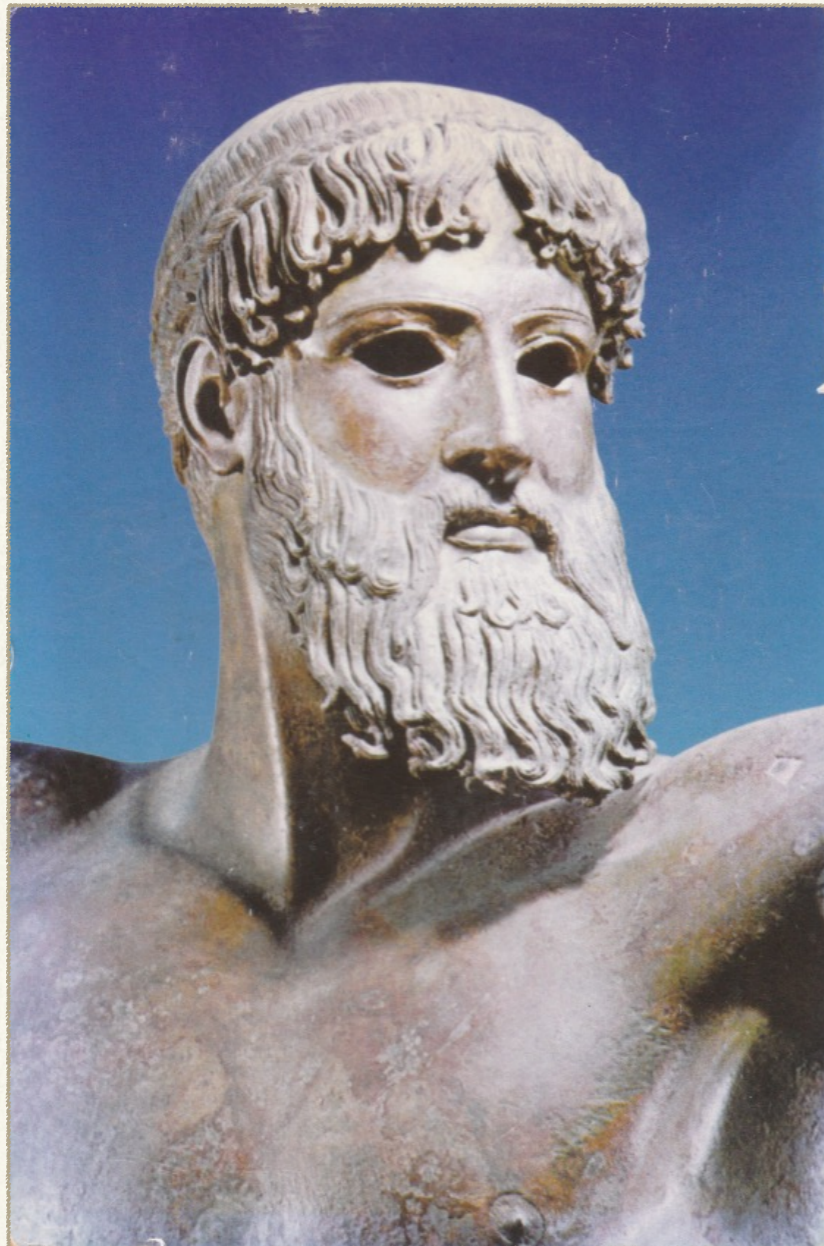
It could be Zeus or Poseidon. In the museum his hands are raised as if holding something. A Thunderbolt or a Trident perhaps. You decide. Your actions define who you are, the tools you use to manifest those actions say something important.

Commentary:

Assumed authority.

Inverse:

Ignorance. Privilege. Patriarchy. Blind ambition.



How to Make a Basic Reading

Take a pack of regular playing cards. Remove the jokers and shuffle the remaining 52 cards. As you shuffle think of a question or situation that you would like the cards to respond to. Really concentrate and let it permeate into each card. Continue shuffling until you feel that each card has been touched. Retaining this sense of intention and concentration select a card from the top of the deck. This card is YOU or your present situation. Take a second card, place it to the left of the first. This card is what has just passed, the thing influencing your present. Take a third card and place it to the right of the first. This is the future or an outcome that the first two cards are working towards. The playing cards all correspond to the Raspberry Oracle - see the chart! The Reading below would have been drawn as Q♣, A♥ and 5♦.

Consider the card meanings in relation to the question you asked.



- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| A♦ 1 ALTAR | A♣ 27 HERMIT |
| 2♦ 2 APARTMENT | 2♣ 28 ISLAND |
| 3♦ 3 APHRODITE | 3♣ 29 LANCELOT |
| 4♦ 4 B | 4♣ 30 LID |
| 5♦ 5 BEAST | 5♣ 31 LOTUS |
| 6♦ 6 BOOKSHOP | 6♣ 32 MERCURY |
| 7♦ 7 BOOTIE | 7♣ 33 MOTH |
| 8♦ 8 BREAST | 8♣ 34 MOUNTAIN |
| 9♦ 9 BRIDGE | 9♣ 35 MURAL |
| 10♦ 10 BUCKLE | 10♣ 36 MUSCLES |
| J♦ 11 BUDDHA | J♣ 37 PANELS |
| Q♦ 12 BUDGERIGAR | Q♣ 38 PANORAMA |
| K♦ 13 CLOCK | K♣ 39 ROSE |
| A♥ 14 CROSIER | A♠ 40 SATYR |
| 2♥ 15 CROSS | 2♠ 41 SHAT |
| 3♥ 16 CROWNS | 3♠ 42 SHIP |
| 4♥ 17 DRUM | 4♠ 43 SORCIÈRE |
| 5♥ 18 FALSE PROPHET | 5♠ 44 STONE CIRCLE |
| 6♥ 19 FOLLY | 6♠ 45 SUMMER |
| 7♥ 20 FONT | 7♠ 46 TIBET |
| 8♥ 21 FOREST | 8♠ 47 TOKEN |
| 9♥ 22 GARDEN | 9♠ 48 TOMB |
| 10♥ 23 GATEWAY | 10♠ 49 TREASURE |
| J♥ 24 GROTTA | J♠ 50 UNION |
| Q♥ 25 HARLEQUIN | Q♠ 51 VAMPIRE |
| K♥ 26 HAWK | K♠ 52 ZEUS |

Dedicated to our friends.



2020