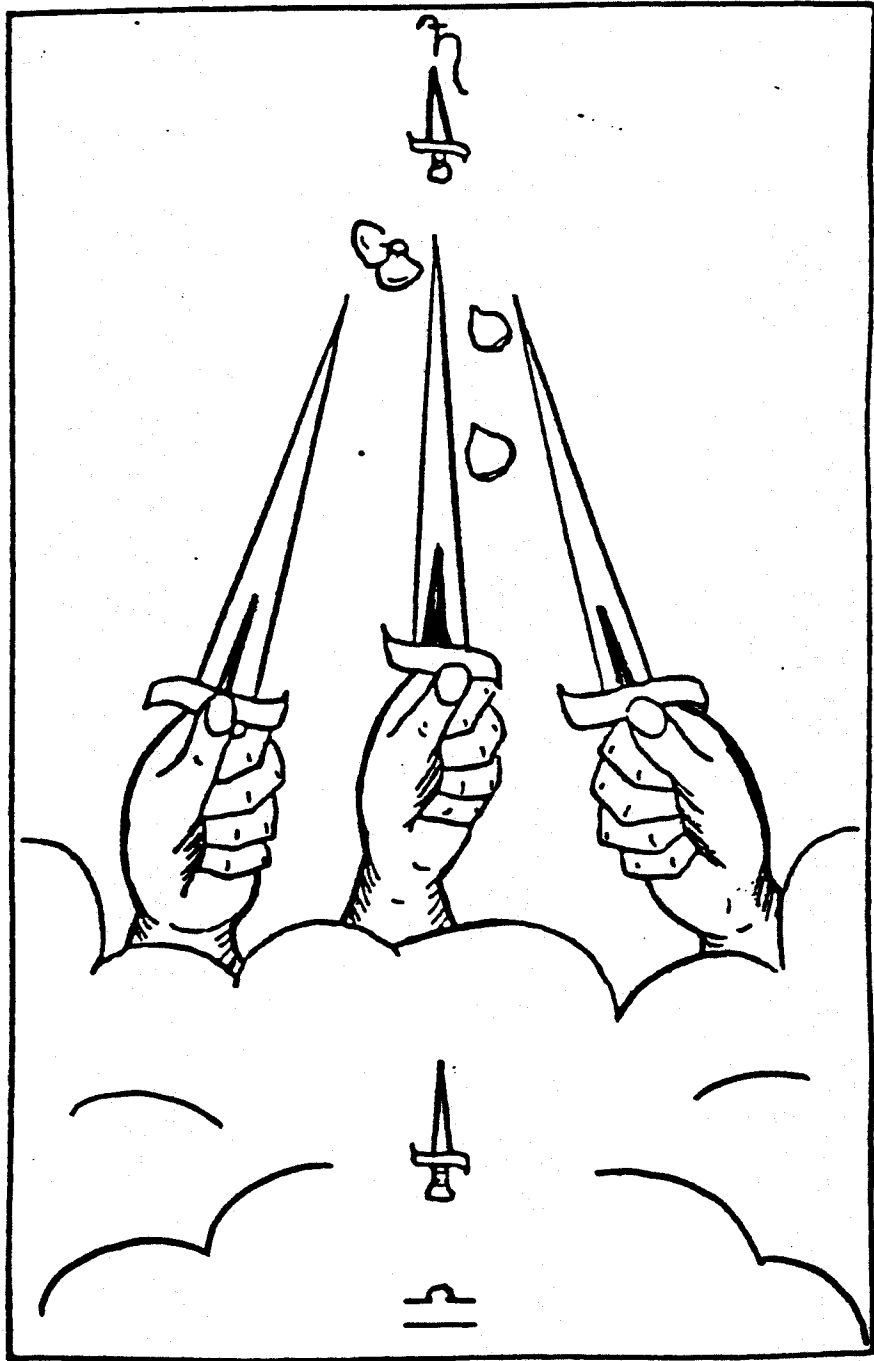


LESSON 74

THREE OF SWORDS



## LESSON 74

## 3 OF SWORDS

"Lord of Sorrow"

10 to 20 degrees Libra

3 η in ♎

Three white radiating angelic hands, issuing from clouds, and holding three swords upright (as though the central sword had struck away the two others, which were crossed in the preceding symbol). The central sword cuts asunder the rose of five petals, which in the previous symbol grew at the junction of the swords, its petals are falling, and no white ray issues from it.

Here too much force has been applied recklessly and the gentle penetration has been shattered as the object one is trying to save (the rose) is broken apart by the upward thrusting of the three swords. The three upright swords allude to three faces: the left and right swords show the gateways to the face of creation and the face of restoration, but the middle sword which pierces the rose shows the face of the 3 of Swords which is one of destruction. Nevertheless the 3 of Swords is not destruction in totality, but is more a disruption and a scattering as the rose petals are scattered.

Alchemically, the White Eagle has descended (the falling petals of the shattered rose) into the great waters (shown by the clouds now formed at the bottom of the card) and has become the

Bird without Wings, and represents the forming of the Crow's Head. The 3 of Swords has a dual role: destroying the united and uniting the destroyed. It personifies the aqua permanens (dew) due to which hostile elements are united into one. The aqua permanens was considered to be the tears of the moon which mourned the death of the night and flooded the land, just as the tears of Isis bathed the limbs of Osiris while they were laid beneath the bank of the Nile. Symbolically the aqua permanens comes from the Moon and the shattered rose from the sun, thus the 2 of Swords sheds tears as its perfect centre is shattered in the 3 of Swords. The dried matter has now been dampened and thus a mild form of heat is produced.

Macrobius says:

"But there is a certain property ... and nature in the light that flows from it, which moistens bodies and bathes them as with a hidden dew".

Although the alchemic concept of mourning is a symbolic one the 3 of Swords has been named "Lord of Sorrow" depicting that in the realm of the human mind such a state exists. It represents the shattering of plans, ideas and beliefs and the mental despondency and darkening resulting thereof. This card alludes to secrecy, and brooding; plans being reformed bent on destruction, and intent to harm. There is a type of perversive quality that hangs heavy over all affairs distorting them beyond any hope of purity of intent. Nevertheless this is a necessary and very serious phase to effect the necessity to rise above all

strife, and this must not be taken lightly. The 3 of Swords also represents the mind of the scientist who pulls down every kind of philosophy or belief to find the material root of its essence, then recreates it by an explanation acceptable to the intellects of those of the earth.

The 3 of Swords is coloured in the Prince Scale. The backdrop is coloured in Chrome Green (Bright Bottle Green) and the swords are coloured in Brownish Grey. The rose petals, clouds and hands are Brilliant White. A complementary colour doesn't show in this card which shows the Light to be disunited.

The Brownish Grey of the swords surrounded by the Chrome Green shows that the mind has been penetrated with doubt, fear, and melancholy. The very essence of life is questioned and despised, and an attitude of selfishness and self-centeredness evolves, leaving one with a sense of destruction as nothing is what it appears to be. A lack of understanding of Karmic law clouds the mind with self-pity as the 'whys' and 'what fors' of life are questioned. However, this card is not without hope, for the Chrome Green also relates to an imperfect state of growth, and the Brownish Grey shows something which has ripened.

The Planet and Sign associated to the 3 of Swords is Saturn in Libra. Saturn in Libra represents the dynamic and karmic transformations that are experienced in human relationships. It is important for a Saturn in Libra person to assume a relationship of equality. An equilibrium is not only important

in relationships but within the self as well. Due to this there is a constant internal struggle with the scales being tipped in extremes as one constantly attempts to compensate for his/her over-balance. Life is attacked by force in the attempt to extract everything one can. The Saturn and Libra person must learn not to fight relationships, as they more often do. Their fight is due to a fear of losing individuality, and being negated through relationship. They can become almost frantic to form a relationship, but when formed they panic and feel themselves becoming lost. The lesson to learn is to meet your relationships with an inner freedom. Marriage is usually late in life and to a father figure. Problems occur in marriage as the Saturn in Libra person tends to see a person as an ideal or image rather than who they really are. Astrologically Saturn is exalted in Libra and this position is considered fortunate for Saturn to bring out all its positive and creative qualities. This is fortunate in most cases but the scales tip with the slightest pressure.

The 3 of Swords shows a well meaning force incorrectly applied which results in disruption. The astrological aspect here is overturned by the meaning of the card. What actually happens is that the astrological potency, when applied to the card as an archetype, is overruled. The outlet here is the framework in which the planet in a sign is digressed. The results are not good for the potency of the planet in a sign cannot be handled correctly by its framework, that is, the three swords pushing aside the rose. The good intentions of the main power behind the card cannot get through to be fully expressed

because of the limited scope available. In short, the good energies of the card are twisted by the narrow opening, which is how it is expressed, that disruption and distortion take over.

Binah of Vau (unhappiness, sorrow and tears).

#### DIVINATION

ON MATTERS OF the Physical Body; Selfhood; Self Projection; new ideas; new beginnings; reactions to outside stimuli; the life force; first encounters:

The 3 of Swords depicts two extremes in this position. It shows one who would go to any end to alleviate suffering, and on the negative side it shows one who will go to any end to cause suffering, no matter what the consequences. A situation is analysed, the centre of its source located, its strength and weakness then weighed up, and then the centre is pierced. The 3 of Swords represents the dogmatic and the ignorant. New enterprises are destroyed before they get off the drawing board, and first encounters invoke unhappiness and dissatisfaction. No matter how well one reacts to any outside stimuli the end result is disruption. "Disruption".

ON MATTERS OF possessions and personal attitude towards such; personal estate and resources both physical and material; principles and feelings; management and projection; commerce, personal, commercial, governmental and national financial affairs

directly relating to the self:

Financial loss and limitation are depicted here. There is a tendency to unwillingly destroy what you have through recklessness and lack of respect for anything that works in harmony with you. Delay occurs in any matter concerning the above. This causes personal worry and anxiety. The third and central sword applied to the rose in fact shows over-kill. Promises are unfulfilled and lies are told then found out causing sorrow. Governmental and national financial affairs become personalised and due to a change in policy, may disrupt your personal sphere of activities. This card represents vandalism and theft, and the aftereffects it causes. The 3 of Swords here shows distorted principles and false values. "Worry".

ON MATTERS OF short journeys; communications; relationships; brothers, sisters, neighbours; humour; identity; early education; books; correspondence; enlarging ones field of activity:

Here a situation comes about where the concept of familiarity breeds contempt. In this instance this old saying is an apt description of the 3 of Swords in this position. What one has to look out for here is not the new, but the old which has slowly built up to a crescendo point. The problems that have occurred in human relationships are old ones that have been swept under the carpet for so long that they have reached a point where they are ready to blow. And blow they do, bringing arguments and slander leaving only bitterness. For the young, this card shows



classroom disruption and delay in education. The 3 of Swords also shows the receipt of bad news. "Contempt".

ON MATTERS OF the end of one stage and the commencement of another; the home and private life; buildings; land; parents; security; emotions; significant shifts in lifes directions; concerning the soul; the occult in its practical terms; divination:

In this position the 3 of Swords represents suffering and loss. It shows discord and strife within the home, arguments and bickering, and sorrow and tears arising from such happenings. Stormy weather is sure to come to those receiving the 3 of Swords in this position. It also shows a time of isolation, not necessarily where one is actually alone physically, but a time when one is isolated mentally from those in ones life. This can be self invoked as ones mind plunges into a state of obscurity, or enforced on one by the mental cruelty of those you come into contact with. Nevertheless, even this cruelty is self-evoked and can be avoided with a different mental approach. "Storms".

ON MATTERS OF love given; creativity of selfhood; the creative will; children; entertainment; recreation; speculation; sports; the arts; gambling; fulfilling potentiality:

A lover runs away and sorrow (a broken heart) resulting therefrom is depicted by the 3 of Swords. This card shows severe discipline, not only with yourself but with others, especially children, which under adverse conditions can be taken to the

extent of sexual perversion, and distortion of right and wrong. The minds of those under the influence of such a person are twisted and reshaped until the pain blinds them from all forms of reality. On a better note the 3 of Swords shows the removing of the obsolete for the hope of better things to come. Seeing the old fall away leaves a sense of loss and sorrow for times of old. However the future now has a stronger pull causing such necessary destruction. "Sorrow".

ON MATTERS OF sickness (generally due to work problems); employment: employees; relationships within the work environment; conflicts; service; ones sense of service; the acquiring of skills; psychology:

Here the 3 of Swords represents someone who won't look after themselves. Everything they do is directed at being destructive to their physical and mental wellbeing, whether their intent be conscious or unconscious. Health afflictions are due to heavy smoking and general abuse of ones health through anxiety and tension in ones job, irregular and improper eating. There is danger of a rupture, for example a stomach ulcer, of the spleen or haemorrhoid. The 3 of Swords also shows the problem solver where all and sundry unload the burden of their sorrows for one to solve. This depicts an element of generosity and self sacrifice. "Self Abuse".

ON MATTERS OF marriage and divorce; contracts; the other party; competitors, adversaries, and known enemies; partnerships; public

relationships; social interaction; the law of compensation; what is lacking; the workings of karma:

Those who have made a commitment find themselves dispensable, and attract disrespect and are emotionally used. The 3 of Swords shows blackmail and mental cruelty. There is a great deal of responsibility shown here where partners rely heavily on your mental agility in all areas of life, and tend to compensate their failings on you. For any accomplishment there must be enduring co-operation, but the 3 of Swords does not depict (unless fortunately aspected) that any help will come your way. There is sorrow for the misgivings of your relationships. Problems occur when you attempt to match your accomplishments with those you emulate. Try to develop your own powers of thought, ideas and talents. There is reserve and caution in opening up to new relationships as one tends to attract people that will restrict your freedom. "Regrets".

ON MATTERS OF death and rebirth; accidents; effects of others; crime and retribution; legacies; wills; others estates and finances; joint resources; moods; sex; spiritualism; rejuvenation; mysticism; transformation; psychotherapy:

The 3 of Swords represents a situation where there is a separation of partnerships, unions and agreements are broken and people disperse. Delay in insurance payments, heavy taxes and a dispersion of corporate finances. There is a scattering of mental energies in all of the above matters leaving little accom-

plished. It is not advisable to invest in stocks and shares during this time as changes are being made behind the scenes which may adversely effect you finance. You will get little satisfaction from Wills or Estates as there are too many other people involved. "Dispersion".

ON MATTERS OF religion; metaphysics; philosophy; higher study and education; legal systems; morals; institutions of learning; long distance travel; exploration; public communications; the collective mind:

Success in law and sciences but success at a price - one tends to sacrifice the spiritual self for success. There is difficulty for the student in studies, finding doctrines and lectures hard to comprehend. An academic workload appears heavy causing intensity of mental pressure during times of examinations. The 3 of Swords represents narrow concepts in areas of the above matters and a distortion of the truth. Publications are delayed and there is difficulty in becoming accepted in any institution of learning. Disruption and delays in communication, and a great deal of senseless chatter. Travel is rushed and disruptive. "Delay".

ON MATTERS OF public honour; status; ambitions and goals reached; achievements; profession; the other parent; causes for disgrace; recognition; identity:

A confused state of the mind distorts the interpretation of

even the most innocent of intentions. Increased responsibility becomes too much for the mind to contain, scattering and confusing thoughts and words. These are the drawbacks of the 3 of Swords under the above matters. No matter how good ones intentions, your words and actions are misunderstood and situations turn foul. Career opportunities are lost due to lack of foresight. Very often one walks away from any chance of advancement, throwing back ones opportunities in the faces of those who try to help. The 3 of Swords also shows a person of disrepute, whose words dart from one subject to another confusing those that listen, creating a state of mental disorder. "Disarray".

ON MATTERS OF friends; income; social alliances; legislation; ones attitude; group activities; government, counsellors; love received; spiritual and intellectual aspirations; ideals; fulfillment; what you yield and how you benefit others:

In this position the 3 of Swords depicts an upheaval of situations, for example clubs, organisations, current values. One must not despair with this for such upheavals are necessary for new trends to set in. Changes will be for the better although loss of what has been brings sadness. There is a loss of friends and a shattering of ideals which can create an air of despondency. Take a good look at yourself, your motives and behaviour - perhaps you brought all this on yourself. Perhaps you were too self-centered! Do you realize that your actions deeply affect others? In general the 3 of Swords represents a destructive mode of action in all of the above actions.

"Upheaval".

ON MATTERS OF responsibility and contribution to others; humanistic concerns; karmic debts; unresolved problems; hidden resources; the unconscious; sorrow; health afflictions; secret enemies; hospitals; secret societies; self undoing; total identification:

Health afflictions may be bright's disease, toxic blood, renal colic, sterility, suppression of fluid. Mental health is afflicted through neurotic fears and unconscious problems. The 3 of Swords can also mean in this position a breakthrough of barriers through psychological therapy which leaves the mind in a disarray. Possible admission to a hospital for such problems. There may be punishment due to ones uncontrolled behaviour. This card also represents one who is hurt through social injustice. It reveals a secret enemy in the most unlikely place, and one who speaks with a forked tongue (to use the vanacular of the American Indian). These are the karmic enemies, who do not know themselves that they may have evil intent amongst their best of intentions. "Neurosis".

---ooOoo---

3 of Swords: "Lord of Sorrow"

(Second Stage Cibation - Soul's Return)

In 1st position: "Disruption"  
 In 2nd position: "Worry"  
 In 3rd position: "Contempt"  
 In 4th position: "Storms"  
 In 5th position: "Sorrow"  
 In 6th position: "Self Abuse"  
 In 7th position: "Regrets"  
 In 8th position: "Dispersion"  
 In 9th position: "Delay"  
 In 10th position: "Disarray"  
 In 11th position: "Upheaval"  
 In 12th position: "Neurosis"

---ooOoo---

MEDITATION ON THE TWO OF SWORDS:

Let the Student first study the overall picture of the card, then study each detail. Study the colours.

Now let the Student look at the card and feel its vibrations.

Write down your overall impression.

---ooOoo---

exercise

Now paint this card with the above described colours. An outlined drawing is supplied with this lesson.

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