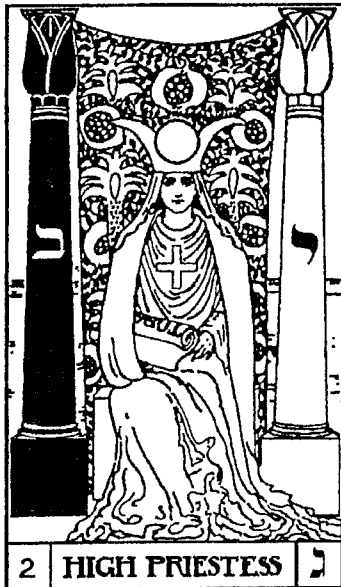


INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Two

KEY 2. THE HIGH PRIESTESS



As Beth, the House, is a contrast to Aleph, the Ox, and as the number 1 is a contrast to zero, so are the letter and number of the High Priestess antitheses to those of the Magician.

Gimel א, means “camel”, and suggests travel, commerce, the carrying of news from one place to another, and so on. These ideas are opposite to those of fixed location, and the “stay-at-home” attitude which are among the associations of the word “house”.

In the doubling or duplication which 2 implies, we have, again, a contrast to the singleness of 1. Combined with the ideas suggested by “camel”, 2 gives us the notion of the two extremes of a journey, its beginning and end; of the two parties necessary to strike a bargain in commerce; and of the two concerned with news, those who hear and those who tell.

Thus even this slight consideration of the meanings of Gimel and 2 shows that they are related to the High Priestess. This woman in her place between two contrasting pillars at the doorway of a temple, is a picture of what modern psychology calls subconscious or subjective mind.

Look at this calm, seated woman. The High Priestess is passive, receptive, and, by ancient meanings of the title, virginal.

She is, moreover, concerned with records of the past as her book or scroll makes evident. In prehistoric times, these records were unwritten. They were transmitted orally. Thus they were all committed to memory. The written word is simply artificial memory.

Proper sequence of teaching in these graded courses of instruction on the spiritual significance and practical use of the 22 Tarot Keys has been carefully planned. First it is necessary to become familiar with the form aspect of the Tarot Keys as given in this introductory course. In the course immediately following this one (Tarot Fundamentals), the student is required to color the Tarot Keys. This later correlation of form with color in the archetypal language of the Tarot develops a heightening of the senses and has such a profound effect on subconsciousness, that old frozen negative patterns become readily accessible to

transmutation. All experience and awareness becomes intensified and this is preparation for direct spiritual awareness and expanded consciousness which goes with it.

Careful tests conducted in the fields of hypnotic and reverie regression have fully demonstrated that subconsciousness retains and remembers everything . . . yes, **everything** down to the smallest and seemingly **insignificant** detail. It records the trivial and useless just as well as the significant parts of what we experience. No clear impression escapes being written on the scroll of the High Priestess. Subconscious memory is perfect and therefore cannot be improved.

Memory is the basic power of subconsciousness and the High Priestess sums up in the details of her symbolism all anyone need know in order to make maximum and practical use of memory.

Note that we say **practical** use. To clutter up our conscious minds with the unimportant and trivial details contained in our subconscious memory is just as bad as failure to remember the significant and important items of our experience. Indeed, several mental diseases are characterized by too perfect recollection.

What we **can** develop by intelligent use of Key 2 is our power of recollection, our ability to duplicate past experiences, our skill in use of the laws whereby mental images are grouped together in our subconscious filing system.

Such skill presupposes concentration and attention, the mental activities associated with the Magician. Much of what is called faulty memory is just want of attention. Substitute for the scroll a motion picture film and this brings the symbol up-to-date. If the camera be badly focused, or not even pointed at what is going on, the pictures will either be dim, or the film will be blank.

Hence the first requisite to better powers of recollection is to make sure of being **alive** and **alert** to what is going on around us. We must be "here", or we shall be sure to forget.

Now look at the High Priestess and you will see that she is perfectly quiet, perfectly passive. This is the first requirement for good recollection. Strain to remember something, and it refuses to rise to the surface of your mind. Just sit still and relax and you will find the needed information rising easily to the surface provided only that the **first impression was clear and sharply defined**. We know no remedy for blurred, hazy images except a change from slovenly inattentiveness to deliberate determination to be fully alive to what goes on during every waking moment.

Artificial mnemonic systems are of little value except for mental tricks. Give your subconsciousness a chance by furnishing it with clear images as you go along and its automatic filing system will soon put your mental house in order.

We say automatic because the laws of recall do work automatically. We make them useless by inattention. We interfere with their operation when we strain and struggle to remember. If we know what they are and **let** them do their work, we shall be able to recall anything we may require.

Key 2 symbolizes all the laws of recall. The two pillars are alike in shape because we naturally group together whatever images are like one another. Yet these pillars are opposite in color because a second law of association is that of contrast. Think of light and you think also of darkness. Mutt's lanky length calls up the squat chubby form of Jeff. So similarity and contrast are both symbolized by the pillars because these two laws always act together.

A third law is recency. Other things being equal we recall easiest what we have most recently experienced. The latest news, the funny story we heard this afternoon, the interesting display in some window we passed an hour ago, all these we recall without effort. The High Priestess does not have to turn her scroll to read what she has just recorded.

The fourth law is the law of repetition, and this is not only directly related to the number 2 but has several other representations in the various details of the design. If you are interested in tracing them, by all means do so. You will find aids to this in HIGHLIGHTS, but unless yours is the analytical student temperament, remember this is not necessary in order to make use of this Key. You know that anything frequently repeated is easy to recall. Give the casual glance most of us grant to a new acquaintance, and a second meeting may call forth no flash of recollection. See a man day after day and you recognize him even at a distance.

The fifth law is intensity. We remember our first experiences of this or that because they received full voluntary attention. Childhood is therefore more vivid than yesterday, but if we learn to renew our youth—and the secret of this is in the reconditioning we achieve through use of the Tarot Keys—we shall once more live deeply and fully and shall have vivid memories instead of the hazy impressions we are content with now.

As we have said, artificial mnemonic systems are of little value. The reason is that all of them are arbitrary. One popular system of this kind is based on association of words with numbers. It enables persons patient enough to master it to dazzle their acquaintances with pyrotechnic displays of memory. Yet even experts in these trick systems admit that what real value the system possesses is to be found in the fact that, in a roundabout way, it exercises our basic powers of recollection.

Tarot itself is, among other things, one of the best mnemonic systems . . . one that is valuable because its association clues are **not** arbitrary. By the time you finish this course, you will possess twenty-two sharply defined mental pictures, each associated with a number.

Think of a picture and you will see the number printed on the Key near the title. Think of a number and the picture will flash instantly before your mind's eye. No effort is needed. Numbers and pictures go naturally together.

Since the associations are not arbitrary, it is possible to make the Tarot sequence the basis for a wonderful aid to recollection.

Suppose, for instance, you have five things you must do without fail tomorrow. It takes no time, and little effort, to link these activities, by means of visual images, to the first five Tarot Keys.

Begin by making a list. Get the things you have to do into proper order. Suppose the first is to see your physician. You might imagine the word DOCTOR written in large, white letters on the Fool's wallet. The more fantastic the association, the easier the recollection.

If the second thing you have to do is to attend to some correspondence, you might imagine a big pen lying on the Magician's table with the rest of his implements. Or perhaps the image of a pile of letters on the same table may suggest itself. It does not matter what, so long as the image is directly related to what you desire to remember. As a rule the first picture that comes is best.

In the same way you may organize the main headings of a speech so that you will realize to the full the truth of Eliphas Levi's promise that Tarot is the key to the oratorical art. Just put the headings in order and look for some pictorial element in each. Then associate what you find with the Tarot Key corresponding by number with the heading.

No one needs notes to speak in public. Using them is just a bad habit. Rely on your memory even though you may stumble at first. Before long you'll be able to say whatever you have to say to a thousand just as easily as to one.

Be careful not to jump ahead of this course in order to acquire the mnemonic system we have just described. During the three days covered by this part of the lesson and for the present, make your use of Tarot for recollection training nothing other than your five minute session with the High Priestess.

Remember, Tarot speaks a pictorial language you know subconsciously. You do not have to learn it. What you **are** learning is how to make conscious use of this subconscious treasure house. You have only to let yourself be spoken to through your eyes. Even three days with the High Priestess will do wonders in the way of making your subconsciousness realize that you expect it to put at your disposal its wonderful power of associating ideas.

After three days, whenever you want to recall something, sit down quietly for a few moments and bring before your mind's eye the picture of Key 2 with the express intention of recalling what you desire. Be as relaxed as you can. Don't cast about in your mind for the desired piece of information. Just look mentally at this image of the Perfect Recorder of all experience. You will be amazed at the result.

KEY 3. THE EMPRESS



With the letter printed on Key 3 we are back home from our journey on the camel of association, back at the door of the house. For the meaning of 7, Daleth, is "door". Hence we know that in Key 3, though the symbolism is predominantly feminine, we are once more at the self-conscious level of activity. And sure enough the Empress, like the Magician, is in a garden and red roses are prominent features of the scene.

Yet there is an echo of the preceding Key. For the Empress is not only a woman, but is also a seated figure like the High Priestess. She is in sharp contrast to the High Priestess also for she is a wife, and the Tarot tradition says she is a pregnant mother, by implication the wife of the Emperor whose picture follows hers in the series.

Your tables in HIGHLIGHTS will tell you the High Priestess corresponds to the Moon, related in mythology to chaste, virgin

Diana. No mere fancy, this, for who cannot see the connection between acts of memory and the hunting associated with Diana, lady of the moon?

The Empress is a sea-born Venus, traditional patroness of childbirth and mistress also of beauty and of the arts. Key 3 is by number the sum of 1 and 2, or a symbol in the Tarot series of the Magician's union with the High Priestess whereby the cold virginity of Diana is transformed into the rich fertility of Venus, astrological correspondence to Key 3.

This fertility, be it remembered, though its immediate agent is subconsciousness, the feminine member of the two aspects of personal consciousness, has its field of operation in the realm of self-consciousness. For the Empress is imagination, the mind's power to make new combinations from the store of remembered experiences. Associated rightly, therefore, with Daleth, the door, because creative imagination is truly the entrance to new life and to new worlds.

See how true to your own mental nature this Tarot sequence is. All your mental and other powers are specializations of the limitless Life-power pictured by the Fool. A power which can, and does, assume all sorts of particular forms.

What forms it does assume are the ones to which you **pay attention**. What you make the object of your attention is what you become, sooner or later. Fix your attention on images of misery, poverty and weakness, and their actual physical embodiments will become part of your surroundings. Even your body, remember, is part of your environment. If your personal

Magician works the black, destructive transformations resulting from fear and doubt, your house of life will be built in strict agreement with those ill-drawn plans.

Change the patterns by attending to their opposites, and presently creative imagination, symbolized by the Empress, will begin to build you a new life and will impress even the conditions of your environment with new ideas. No mystical theory, this. It is sober fact attested by the accumulated experience of ages.

Again, this process is almost automatic. If you do the first thing needful, the rest follows of itself. Look at your problem closely and you will discover the answers in the problem itself. More than this, your memory record, as you continue this wise approach to all experience, will be enriched by numerous clear Realizations of the way things really are, instead of being cumbered with useless repetitions of the way things look.

In consequence of this, the combining and associative power of subconsciousness will make you aware of new images continually. Your mind will be fertile as the Empress' garden, and you will reap a wonderful harvest of ideas.

This is by no means a fancy picture, neither is there any particular difficulty about it. The yoke of the true Law of Life is easy. Rest for mind and heart are assured for those who are persistent enough to keep facing forward on the Path until it leads them out of the fogs of appearance into the clear Light of true Realization.

All the wise have understood the power of imagination. None have expressed it better than Eliphas Levi whose words were inspired by this Tarot picture of the Empress. We pass them on to you because we know nothing more useful at this stage of your work.

“The understanding and the will of man are instruments which are incalculable in their power and capacity. But the will and understanding have an auxiliary instrument in a faculty which is too little understood . . . I speak of the imagination.

“Imagination is actually as the eye of the soul, and it is therein that forms are delineated and preserved; by its means we behold the reflections of the invisible world. It is the mirror of visions and the apparatus of magical life. Thereby we cure disease, modify the seasons, ward off death from the living, and resuscitate those who are dead, because this faculty exalts the will and gives it power over the universal agent.

“Imagination determines the form of the child in its mother's womb, it gives wings to contagion, and points the weapons of warfare. Are you exposed in a battle? Believe yourself as invulnerable as Achilles and you will be so, says Paracelsus. Fear attracts bullets, and courage turns them back on their path.

“There is no invisible world, there are merely various degrees in the perfection of organs. The body is the crude representation and the perishable coating of the soul. Spiritual and corporeal

are merely words which express degrees in the tenuity and density of substance. What we call the imagination in man is the inherent faculty of the soul to assimilate to itself the images and reflections contained in the living light. These images and reflections are revelations when science intervenes to disclose to us their Logos or light.

“The man of genius differs from the dreamer and the madman in this only, that his creations are analogous to truth, while those of madmen and dreamers are lost reflections and wandering images. Thus for the sage to imagine is to see, as for the magician to speak is to create . . . The seer knows with an absolute knowledge that the things he imagines are true, and experience invariably confirms his visions.”

Powers like those Levi describes may seem to be far beyond your present attainments. Yet no sage ever lived who was not once where you are now, no adept walks the earth today (and many are now living in all parts of the world) who was not once beset by the same delusions which are the causes of whatever miseries you may suffer now.

The rich fertility, the calm peace and happiness, the ability to order all things aright, which are pictured in Key 3 are not something for you to acquire. They are inalienable possessions which it is your right, and more than your right, your **duty**, to put to use.

Let your contemplation of this Key begin for you the process of renewal. Like this happy, radiant woman, your inner life is even now forming the image and likeness of a **new personality**. It does not matter what your past has been. Your future is yours to create! To build the meaning of this Key of Tarot into your very flesh and blood is to set in motion forces which, though at first they work almost imperceptibly below the surface, will inevitably bring to pass fulfillments far beyond the best of your present expectations.

As yet, we add nothing in the way of practical methods to the instruction given in Lesson 1. Simply look at these two Keys during the coming week, five minutes a day. As you look, summon whatever knowledge you may have gathered as to the wonderful power of that silent potency, **Light**, to aid you to understand that “mere looking” is actually directed use of the same radiant energy which is the basic substance of the entire physical universe.

There is nothing you know that is not made of light. There is no force or power you employ which is not a transformation of that same illimitable radiance. No matter how much you utilize, there is always room for more. Infinity is inexhaustible.

Simple the practice is . . . too simple for some types of mind who are of the opinion that nothing can be effective unless it be full of sound and fury. Yet we may remember the old saying, “The world belongs to the silent ones.”

The potent forces of the universe work noiselessly and without friction, like an engine in perfect order. Our faulty machinery requires tremendous temperatures (indicative of enormous

waste) to bring about chemical transformations and transmutations which even the least of weeds performs without any appreciable output of heat.

The human body is far, far higher in the scale of evolution than are those of plants. Already men and women walk this earth like the gods they really are. The Tarot Keys are their gift to us, to the end that, by right use of these most potent instruments, we may become members of that increasing host, the Great Companions who tread the Path leading to the heights of liberation.

I AM the Door of Life,
The passage from the world of ideas
Into the world of form.
Expressing myself, I take form in substance,
But the power which worketh in that substance
Is the sovereign force of mine outflowing ideas.

Consider well, O Israel,
The knowledge of me which thou hast
In the sacred letters.
For with them, even as it is written,
Hath the universe been created.

From the BOOK OF TOKENS
By Dr. Paul F. Case