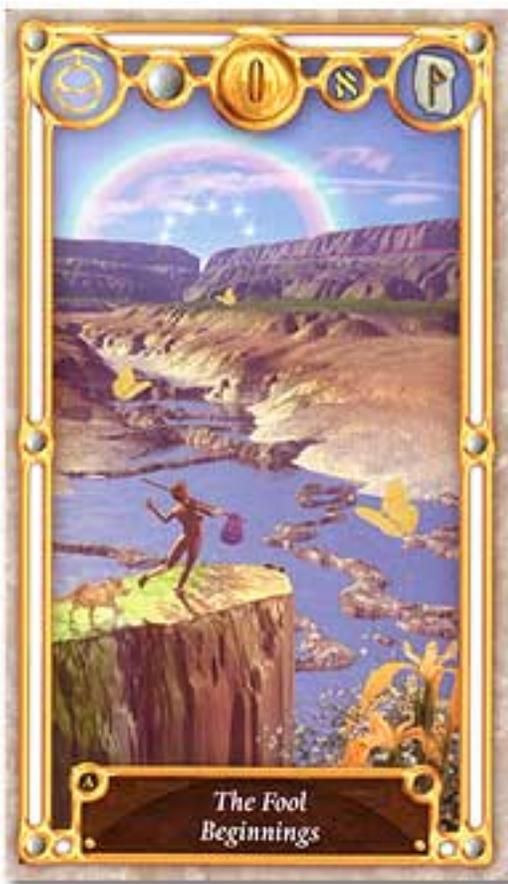


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The Quest Tarot by Joseph Ernest Martin

Joseph Martin begins his introduction to the Quest Tarot by saying, "My intent is to get you up and running with the Quest Tarot as fast as possible and in a language you can easily understand. I want you to be able to pick up the deck, put the book by your side, and start having fun." I would say he succeeded, because as soon as I opened the box I started reading with the cards. I hadn't read his introduction, or any other part of the book, first. The cards are very pretty, a pleasure to look at, and they offer an invitation to begin using them immediately. Of course, once I began reading with them, I realized there were a few symbols on each one that I needed to understand, so I dove into the book, and finished reading it the same afternoon. I used the cards in trying out a new tarot spread I was fine-tuning, and they worked remarkably well.

Though the Quest Tarot does share many similarities with its predecessors, it stands alone in its imagery, symbolism, and art. The artwork was done with

computer graphics, and reminds me a bit of video games. People in the cards appear to be made of glass or metal; they are meant to represent the myriad faces of human beings. The images are rich and complex, and use color, shape, and form to create a whole new world for this tarot. Cards express a deep sense of spirit, humanness, and universality, and are surprisingly warm for their medium. Though there isn't exactly a New Age feel to the set, it does provide a strong impression of interconnectedness between ourselves and all of being, including the outer reaches of the universe. There is a twenty-third Major Arcana card, called the Multiverse, numbered Zero, like the Fool. The reason for this additional card is that "Science predicts that there may be an infinite number of universes existing at the same time in the same space." The card represents having numerous choices ahead, finding the right path in life, and moving forward in a new direction. It perhaps reflects the avenues science may be traveling down.

There are a few changes to the Major Arcana cards, and though the suits correspond to the traditional, they have also been altered just a bit. They include Wands, which are depicted by red borders, and symbolize fire, passion, and creativity; Cups, which are depicted by blue borders, and symbolize water, fluidity, emotions, and mystery; Swords, which are depicted by white borders, and symbolize air, thought, precision, and challenges; and Stones, which are depicted by yellow borders, and symbolize earth, business, the physical, and solidity. There are ten pip cards to each suit, and four court cards. The court cards in this set are unique and interesting. They include Son, Daughter, Father, and Mother, which reflect the family, rather than a medieval hierarchy that perhaps has lost its meaning in our modern society. It is an effective and enjoyable way of seeing the court cards. There is also a blank card, decorated by a border, with space for a personal image. Martin suggests ideas for making use of this new card.

Every card in the deck is beautiful, and demonstrates a real skill in design, composition, and computer artistry. Within the borders of each card are a number of symbols. Some of these will be immediately recognizable to tarotists, such as astrological glyphs or Hebrew letters. Runes have been added to some of the cards, as have I Ching Hexagrams, gemstones, and letters from our alphabet. This seems like a lot, but becomes quite usable in practice, and is explained clearly in the book. Aces all have a very small clock within the border, with three numbers highlighted in red. These are part of a new system of determining time periods in readings. Court cards all include indicators for hair, eye, and skin color, which should point to the specific features of people represented by the cards. Another interesting element of these cards is a method of finding answers to direct questions. Each of the court cards has two small daggers centered at the top of its border. When pointing up in a reading using the court cards only, these daggers will indicate a yes answer; when pointing down, a no answer. An answer of maybe can also be indicated. The method is fully explained, and is easy to follow. With these unique elements, the cards are incredibly accessible and offer comprehensive guidance in all manner of query. The colors, the variety of images in the cards, and the symbols in their borders, all offer us a complete story.

Martin has a very friendly and easy writing style. He has made the tarot quite easy to use from the start, which will appeal to absolute beginners, and he has answered all the questions that might come along. He has also made it fun, offering a number of tarot games, and advice on keeping it lighthearted and joyful. The interpretations in the book are insightful and useful. They emphasize free will, transformation, and personal growth. Lists of meanings for astrological correspondences, Hebrew letters, Runes, I Ching Hexagrams, and gemstones are provided. There are also useful charts and diagrams, and a reading record sheet that can be copied and used for recording all readings for self or others.

With the Quest Tarot, Martin has offered us a new way of working with the old, born from his own vision of tarot and experience as a professional reader. It speaks of our contemporary lives, and holds within it our expectations of the future.

The Lovers - Relationship

[an excerpt from the book]

Sign: Gemini

Stone Influences: Agate

Stone Associations: Moonstone, Pearl, Emerald

Border: White, Air, Sword, Lungs, Breath

Letter of Roman Alphabet: G

Card Number: Six

Hebrew Letter: Zain or Zayin; Sword

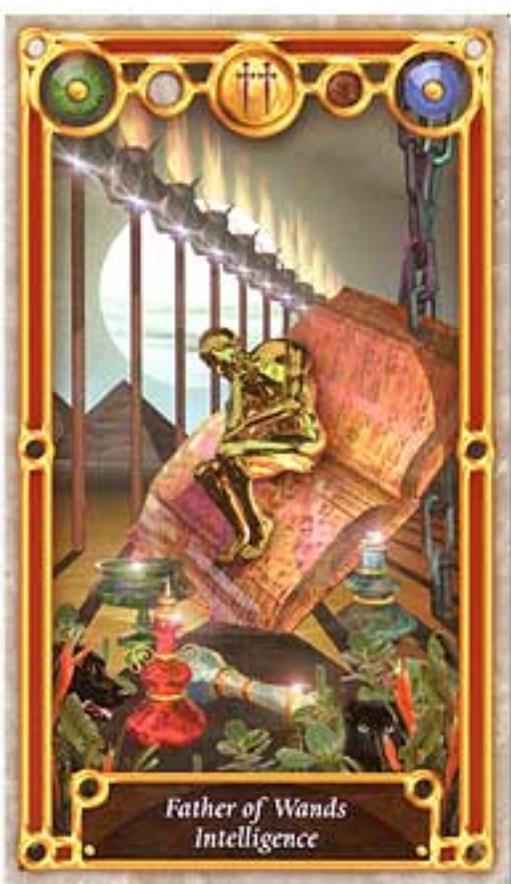
Rune: Ken, K, or Cen; Torch or Light

Ahh ... the Lovers card. I'm sure in the early days of the Tarot this card was rather simple to depict. However, in modern times this card can prove troublesome. In the sky you see three major romantic orientations represented by their gender symbols: heterosexual, gay, and lesbian. The Lovers card is often referred to as the marriage of opposites. You can see the sword and the cup, the yin and yang, the

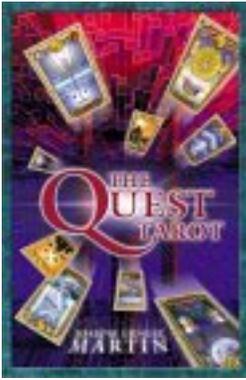
sun and moon, and the two rings joined together. The word *opposites* does not have to mean gender opposites. Two people of the same gender can be in a relationship, one person expressing a different archetype than the other. You also see the repetition of twos. Observe the two pillars, two mountains, two trees, two statues, and the two lovers. The lovers are depicted in a rather foggy, androgynous way, allowing the reader to drift into the real intent of the card. The flames below the lovers show the heat of passion while the rings below the fire show unity. The Tree of Life, shown beneath the rings, heralds the future and even the small statues at the bottom show one cupid with a wreath while the other cupid has an arrow. The red roses symbolize love and affection, and the generally happy, though surreal, scene depicts the bringing together of the two.

Faceup Meaning: Love and relationship. Support to overcome trials. Harmony, beauty, and perfection. The marriage of fire and water; individuality and sameness. Choosing a partner. Being responsible. Emotional fulfillment. A meaningful relationship. Having an affair. Optimistic point of view. Trust and honor. Deep yearnings for another. Taking a higher path. Using both the conscious and unconscious minds. Becoming far more than the sum of your parts. Sexual energy and passion for another.

Reversed Meaning: The end of a relationship. Poorly thought out relationships. Separation. Being unfulfilled in love or marriage. Not being supported. Fickle and untrustworthy. Unable to find the right partner. Having different goals. Feeling like you can't make a decision. Heartsick. Unable to move forward with another.



For More Information:



Learn more about The Quest Tarot and author Joseph Martin:

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