

Down
and Dirty

Tasseography

Tea Leaf Reading

*Each cup of tea represents an
imaginary voyage.*
Catherine Douzel

Essential Requirments:
Tea cup, Winter shape
Tea pot, no strainer
Tea spoon
Tea in leaf form
Water at the boil
An imaginative eye
A dose of good humour

Optional Extras:
Napkin
Milk and your choice of sweetner



Warm the teapot and cup with hot water. Tip out the warming water from the pot then add to the empty warm pot one teaspoon of tea for each person drinking plus one more 'for the pot'. Let steep the desired amount of time. Pour tea for each person WITHOUT the use of a strainer. Leaves should enter each persons cup. No leaves indicates that their future is hidden at the moment. No reading for them today. The Querent should sip their tea and enjoy its aroma and taste. Gossip at this point is appropriate. When the tea is nearly cleared from the cup, leaving about a tablespoon of liquid remaining in the cup begin the swirling-and-turning Tipping Ritual.

Holding the cup in your less dominant hand, swirl it three times sunwise. Take the cup in both hands and slowly carefully turn the cup on its rim as you invert it onto the saucer. If youre worried about spills over the edge of the saucer, a clean napkin can be waiting on the saucer to catch your tea slops. Complete the action by placing the cup upside down on the saucer immediately after completing the turn out.

Leave the cup upside down for approximately one minute, then slowly turn the cup and saucer three times sunwise. Turn the cup back up the right way with the handle facing the readers heart. The read runs from handle sunwise, from rim to base. The rim being the near future, the base is the distant future. Saucers can be read as well. All tea leaf reading should be taken with a light heart and treated as speculative.

Milk and sweetners do not change the read and should be used if it makes the tea more enjoyable.

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CHAPTER IV

AN ALPHABETICAL LIST OF SYMBOLS WITH THEIR SIGNIFICATIONS

A question that will very naturally occur to persons of an enquiring turn of mind in regard to the figures and symbols seen in the tea-cup is: Why should one symbol necessarily signify one thing and not something quite different?

The answer, of course, is that the meanings given to the symbols are purely arbitrary, and that there is no scientific reason why one should signify one thing and not another. ...

It is obviously necessary, however, in attempting to read the future by means of any kind of symbols, whether pips, dots, numbers or anything else, to fix beforehand upon some definite meaning to be attributed to each separate symbol and to hold fast to this meaning in all events. In the case of tea-leaves, where the symbols are not mere 'conventional signs' or numbers but actual figures like the pictures seen in the fire or those envisaged in dreams, there is no doubt that the signification of most of them is the result of empirical experience. Generations of spae-wives have found that the recurrence of a certain figure in the cup has corresponded with the occurrence of a certain event in the future lives of the various persons who have consulted them: and this empirical knowledge has been handed down from seer to seer until a sufficient deposit of tradition has been formed from which it has been found possible to compile a detailed list of the most important symbols and to attach to each a traditional meaning. These significations have been collected by the writer—in a desultory manner—over a long period of years chiefly from spae-wives in both Highland and Lowland Scotland, but also in Cornwall, on Dartmoor, in Middle England, in Gloucestershire and Northumberland. Occasionally it has been found that a different meaning is attributed to a symbol by one seer from that given it by another. In such cases an alternative signification might, of course, have been given here, but as the essence of all such significations is that they shall be stable and unvarying, the writer has fixed upon whichever meaning has been most widely attributed to the symbol or appears to have the best authority for its adoption, so that the element of doubt may be excluded.

Although included in their alphabetical order in the list which follows, there are certain figures and symbols which are of so common occurrence and bear such definite interpretation that it is advisable to refer to them here in detail. Certain symbols are invariably signs of approaching good-fortune: certain others of threatened ill-luck. Among the former may be mentioned triangles, stars, trefoil or clover-leaves, anchors, trees, garlands and flowers, bridges or arches, and crowns. Among the latter, coffins, clouds, crosses, serpents, rats and mice and some wild beasts, hour-glasses, umbrellas, church-steeples, swords and guns, ravens, owls, and monkeys are all ominous symbols.

SYMBOLS AND SIGNIFICATIONS

ABBEY, future ease and freedom from worry.

ACORN, improvement in health, continued health, strength, and good fortune.

AIRCRAFT, unsuccessful projects.

ANCHOR, a lucky sign; success in business and constancy in love; if cloudy, the reverse must be read.

ANGEL, good news, especially good fortune in love.

APES, secret enemies.

APPLES, long life; gain by commerce.

APPLE-TREE, change for the better.

ARCH, a journey abroad.

ARROW, a disagreeable letter from the direction in which it comes.

ASS, misfortune overcome by patience; or a legacy.

AXE, difficulties overcome.

BADGER, long life and prosperity as a bachelor.

BASKET, an addition to the family.

BAT, fruitless journeys or tasks.

BEAR, a long period of travel.

BEASTS, other than those mentioned, foretell misfortune.

BIRDS, a lucky sign; good news if flying, if at rest a fortunate journey.

BOAT, a friend will visit the consultant.

BOUQUET, one of the luckiest of symbols; staunch friends, success, a happy marriage.

BRIDGE, a favourable journey.

BUILDING, a removal.

BULL, slander by some enemy.

BUSH, an invitation into society.

BUTTERFLY, success and pleasure.

CAMEL, a burden to be patiently borne.

CANNON, good fortune.

CAR (MOTOR), and CARRIAGE, approaching wealth, visits from friends.

CART, fluctuations of fortune.

CASTLE, unexpected fortune or a legacy.

CAT, difficulties caused by treachery.

CATHEDRAL, great prosperity.

CATTLE, prosperity.

CHAIN, an early marriage; if broken, trouble in store.

CHAIR, an addition to the family.

CHURCH, a legacy.

CIRCLES, money or presents. They mean that the person whose fortune is read may expect money or presents.

CLOUDS, serious trouble; if surrounded by dots, financial success.

CLOVER, a very lucky sign; happiness and prosperity. At the top of the cup, it will come quickly. As it nears the bottom, it will mean more or less distant.

COCK, much prosperity.

COFFIN, long sickness or sign of death of a near relation or great friend.

COMET, misfortune and trouble.

COMPASSES, a sign of travelling as a profession.

COW, a prosperous sign.

CROSS, a sign of trouble and delay or even death.

CROWN, success and honour.

CROWN AND CROSS, signifies good fortune resulting from death.

DAGGER, favours from friends.

DEER, quarrels, disputes; failure in trade.

DOG, a favourable sign; faithful friends, if at top of cup; in middle of cup, they are untrustworthy; at the bottom means secret enemies.

DONKEY, a legacy long awaited.

DOVE, a lucky symbol; progress in prosperity and affection.

DRAGON, great and sudden changes.

DUCK, increase of wealth by trade.

EAGLE, honour and riches through change of residence.

ELEPHANT, a lucky sign; good health.

FALCON, a persistent enemy.

FERRET, active enemies.

FISH, good news from abroad; if surrounded by dots, emigration.

FLAG, danger from wounds inflicted by an enemy.

FLEUR-DE-LYS, same as LILY (q.v.).

FLOWERS, good fortune, success; a happy marriage.

FOX, treachery by a trusted friend.

FROG, success in love and commerce.

GALLOWS, a sign of good luck.

GOAT, a sign of enemies, and of misfortune to a sailor.

GOOSE, happiness; a successful venture.

GRASSHOPPER, a great friend will become a soldier.

GREYHOUND, a good fortune by strenuous exertion.

GUN, a sign of discord and slander.

HAMMER, triumph over adversity.

HAND, to be read in conjunction with neighbouring symbols and according to what it points.

HARE, a sign of a long journey, or the return of an absent friend. Also of a speedy and fortunate marriage to those who are single.

HARP, marriage, success in love.

HAT, success in life.

HAWK, an enemy.

HEART, pleasures to come; if surrounded by dots, through money; if accompanied by a ring, through marriage.

HEAVENLY BODIES, SUN, MOON AND STARS, signifies happiness and success.

HEN, increase of riches or an addition to the family.

HORSE, desires fulfilled through a prosperous journey.

HORSE-SHOE, a lucky journey or success in marriage and choosing a partner.

HOUR-GLASS, imminent peril.

HOUSE, success in business.

HUMAN FIGURES must be judged according to what they appear to be doing. They are generally good and denote love and marriage.

INTERROGATION (mark of), doubt or disappointment.

IVY, honour and happiness through faithful friends.

JACKAL, a sly animal who need not be feared. A mischief maker of no account.

JOCKEY, successful speculation.

JUG, good health.

KANGAROO, a rival in business or love.

KETTLE, death.

KEY, money, increasing trade, and a good husband or wife.

KITE, a sign of lengthy voyaging and travel leading to honour and dignity.

KNIFE, a warning of disaster through quarrels and enmity.

LADDER, a sign of travel.

LEOPARD, a sign of emigration with subsequent success.

LETTERS, shown by square or oblong tea-leaves, signifies news. Initials near will show surnames of writers; if accompanied by dots they will contain money; if unclouded, good; but if fixed about by clouds, bad news or loss of money.

LILY, at top of cup, health and happiness; a virtuous wife; at bottom, anger and strife.

LINES indicate journeys and their direction, read in conjunction with other signs of travel; wavy lines denote troublesome journeys or losses therein.

LION, greatness through powerful friends.

LYNX, danger of divorce or break off of an engagement.

MAN, a visitor arriving. If the arm is held out, he brings a present. If figure is very clear, he is dark; if indistinct, he is of light complexion.

MERMAID, misfortune, especially to seafaring persons.

MITRE, a sign of honour to a clergyman or through religious agency.

MONKEY, the consultant will be deceived in love.

MOON (as a crescent), prosperity and fortune.

MOUNTAIN, powerful friends; many mountains, equally powerful enemies.

MOUSE, danger of poverty through theft or swindling.

MUSHROOM, sudden separation of lovers after a quarrel.

NOSEGAY, the same as BOUQUET (q.v.).

NUMBERS depends on symbols in conjunction with them.

OAK, very lucky; long life, good health, profitable business, and a happy marriage.

OBLONG FIGURES, family or business squabbles.

OWL, an evil omen, indicative of sickness, poverty, disgrace, a warning against commencing any new enterprise. If the consultant be in love he or she will be deceived.

PALM-TREE, good luck; success in any undertaking. A sign of children to a wife and of a speedy marriage to a maid.

PARROT, a sign of emigration for a lengthy period.

PEACOCK, denotes success and the acquisition of property; also a happy marriage.

PEAR, great wealth and improved social position; success in business, and to a woman a wealthy husband.

PEDESTRIAN, good news; an important appointment.

PHEASANT, a legacy.

PIG, good and bad luck mixed: a faithful lover but envious friends.

PIGEONS, important news if flying; if at rest, domestic bliss and wealth acquired in trade.

PINE-TREE, continuous happiness.

PISTOL, disaster.

RABBIT, fair success in a city or large town.

RAT, treacherous servants; losses through enemies.

RAVEN, death for the aged; disappointment in love, divorce, failure in business, and trouble generally.

RAZOR, lovers' quarrels and separation.

REPTILE, quarrels.

RIDER, good news from overseas regarding financial prospects.

RIFLE, a sign of discord and strife.

RING, a ring means marriage; and if a letter can be found near it, this is the initial of the future spouse. If clouds are near the ring, an unhappy marriage; if all is clear about it, the contrary. A ring right at the bottom means the wedding will not take place.

ROSE, a lucky sign betokening good fortune and happiness.

SAW, trouble brought about by strangers.

SCALES, a lawsuit.

SCEPTRE, a sign of honour from royalty.

SCISSORS, quarrels; illness; separation of lovers.

SERPENT, spiteful enemies; bad luck; illness.

SHARK, danger of death.

SHEEP, success, prosperity.

SHIP, a successful journey.

SNAKES are a sign of bad omen. Great caution is needed to ward off misfortune.

SPIDER, a sign of money coming to the consultant.

SQUARES, comfort and peace.

STAR, a lucky sign; if surrounded by dots foretells great wealth and honours.

STEEPLE, bad luck.

STRAIGHT LINE, a journey, very pleasant.

STRAIGHT LINES are an indication of peace, happiness, and long life.

SWALLOW, a journey with a pleasant ending.

SWAN, good luck and a happy marriage.

SWORD, dispute, quarrels between lovers; a broken sword, victory of an enemy.

TIMBER, logs of timber indicate business success.

TOAD, deceit and unexpected enemies.

TREES, a lucky sign; a sure indication of prosperity and happiness; surrounded by dots, a fortune in the country.

TRIANGLES, always a sign of good luck and unexpected legacies.

TRIDENT, success and honours in the Navy.

TWISTED FIGURES, disturbances and vexation; grievances if there are many such figures.

UMBRELLA, annoyance and trouble.

UNICORN, scandal.

VULTURE, bitter foes.

WAGON, a sign of approaching poverty.

WAVY LINES, if long and waved, denote losses and vexations. The importance of the lines depends upon the number of them and if heavy or light.

WHEEL, an inheritance about to fall in.

WINDMILL, success in a venturous enterprise.

WOLF, beware of jealous intrigues.

WOMAN, pleasure and happiness; if accompanied by dots, wealth or children. Several women indicate scandal.

WOOD, a speedy marriage.

WORMS indicate secret foes.

YACHT, pleasure and happiness.

YEW-TREE indicates the death of an aged person who will leave his possessions to the consultant.

ZEBRA, travel and adventure in foreign lands.