

Vesna Balaban & Žel El

**GIPSY CARDS IN A NEW  
LIGHT**



# **Gypsy Cards in a New Light**

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*“If we really accept that we are lead by the  
hand of destiny,  
even failures have a taste of victory.”*  
**Žel El**

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A whimsical illustration of a child with blonde hair sleeping peacefully in a wooden rocking chair. The chair has a decorative panel with a floral design. The child is wearing a blue and white checkered nightgown. The chair is positioned on a green and yellow striped rug. In the background, a window with white curtains is visible, and a potted plant with red flowers sits on the windowsill. The room has light-colored wood-paneled walls. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent white rectangle containing the title.

# Introduction

# Introduction

## Foreword

Our original plan was to write a simple handbook for Gypsy cards interpretation. After a mutual agreement and exchange of ideas between the authors, we joined forces and made a decision that it should be a more extensive work, of approximately 200 pages. The book which is the result of our efforts and which you are holding in your hands ended up having almost 400 printed pages of text. During the writing process, new ideas replaced old and effete ones, and the entire concept of spreads and card interpreting that we will present to you in this book evolved and grew together with us, its authors. We wrote and worked tirelessly. It took us more than a year for the actualization of this endeavor, in which we have invested tremendous effort and energy. Now we proudly present to you our new-born work, our final product: ***Gypsy Cards in a New Light.***

Literature on the subject of Gypsy cards is almost nonexistent. At the end of the book, where you would expect to see the list of literary works that we used, you will find nothing. So far, we have encountered one handbook for interpreting Gypsy cards (**Stela Look, Priručnik za sudbinske karte (Handbook for Destiny Cards), Zagreb 2010, 70 pages**) and one book (**Esther Gombor, Fortune Telling with Gypsy Cards**). They are the only available pieces of literature known to us. We did not have an opportunity to read any of these two works. Since we were not able to use other works on this subject, everything you can find in this book is the result of effort and creativity of the authors. A small part of the material was transferred to us verbally, and we ourselves conceptualized everything else. Therefore, it represents the product of our research and many years of work.

Although Gypsy cards have been present for many years, we have not been able to find reliable information on their origin. We even wrote to “Piatnik,” the company that manufactures the original cards of the Gypsy deck, asking them to provide us an insight in the history of their creation, but they also were not able to help us find more pieces of information. However, they were kind enough to allow us to use the pictures of the original cards, and we use this opportunity to thank them kindly. Anyway, we do not know almost anything about the history of cards. We even do not have any data on who the author is, when they were created, or how they ended up in this part of

## *Introduction*

the world. On the basis of the images presented on the cards, we can conclude that the period of their creation was the second half of the 19th century. Of course, this does not mean that we are certainly right. **Kipper cards** and **Madam Van Helsing deck** are also decks from a similar era. The former contains 36, and the latter 52 cards. The former originates from Germany and the latter from Italy. The former uses the terms identical with the Gypsy deck, only the pictures are different, while the latter contains some new additional terms. We would also like to mention **Lenormand cards**, and the fact that there are allegations that the Gypsy deck is their copy, in which we are not very convinced. We would like this book to reach the hands of people who have accurate information on the origin of the deck, so that some of them could contact us and present genuine information. If that happens, we will find a way to share it with you.

You can perceive that the motives on the card pictures have nothing to do with the Gypsy people. You can also perceive that, in the card pictures, most people are dressed in the way which exudes the atmosphere of a European metropolis at the end of the nineteenth century. Therefore, we assume that the author of the cards was a city gentleman or lady. The clothing, uniforms and buildings in the pictures are typical of and indicate to Central or Western Europe. We would say that the country of origin of these cards is Austria, or perhaps Hungary. The fact that the company which manufactures the cards is from Austria, and that Ferdinand Piatnik, the man who established the company, was born in Budapest, and also the card pictures lead us to that conclusion. Take a look at the way of dressing in Austria and Hungary at the end of the nineteenth century, and you will understand everything. At the time, it was one country, Austria-Hungary.

The capital city, Vienna, is especially interesting, known for gentlemen, waltzes and refined manners, but on the other hand, it was also known for a large number of Gypsies who lived in the suburbs or just passed through the city. Nowadays, the situation is similar. It is very likely that a gentleman or lady from Austria-Hungary created these cards in Vienna in the second half of the nineteenth century, not even dreaming that they would appeal to the Gypsies, who had fortune-telling and auguring in their blood. The cards became a tool for their work. Thus, the traveling Gypsy women, fortune-telling at fairs, interpreting cards at squares and in the streets, made this deck famous in Central and Western Europe, and then it reached the farthest corners of the world. These women passed on from generation to generation their skills of card arrangement and interpretation, and they also passed it on

## ***Introduction***

to the people they chose. However, the author had to give up on popularity in favor of the Gypsies. It is no longer his/her deck, but the Gypsy deck for fortune-telling. The name **“Gypsy cards”** has remained and it lasts. Unfortunately, no one knows about the ingenious author of the cards. On this occasion, we would like to express our deep gratitude to him or her, and we hope that someday we will find out his or her honorable name, or perhaps the names of people who also participated in the creation of the Gypsy deck. **Thank you, the unknown author, for creating the cards, but also thank you, the Gypsies, for bringing them to us.**

The symbolism of these 36 cards enters the deepest areas of the human psyche and spirit, so the following question arises spontaneously: how wise the man who invented them had to be? You will see it for yourself when we describe them in detail in the chapter entitled Symbolism. Thus, we conclude that the author was very wise, that he/she knew symbols, and that he/she understood excellently the phenomenon called life. The author was also familiar with philosophy, religion and esoteric sciences. It is a pity that this remarkable person did not leave us more information on the cards, which are his or her legacy. On the other hand, we are pleased that we have had more free space to express ourselves.

The wise author created the cards, and we are the pioneers who took on the task of reviving, rising and putting them to the place where they belong rightfully and which they deserve. It is certain that they deserve more than people think and state about them nowadays, that they are a mere tool for fortune-telling and auguring. They are much more than that. They will give you advice when you need it most. They will provide you with comfort to accept what you cannot change. If your wish to be a better person is really sincere, they will show you the way to accomplish it. The inner wisdom that leads you, the soul that wants to indicate something to you, the guardian angel, God, can speak to you via the cards. But in the same manner, if you are trapped in blocks, fears and negative energy, your personal “demons” and “bad spirits” can speak to you, as well.

***You should bear in mind that your inner world speaks to you via the cards, and in this way, it comes out. You should not blame the cards for something that comes out of you. Instead, you should find a way to cleanse yourself and calm down.***

## Introduction

In this area, two decks are used, the **Piatnik original** and **Bonart deck**. The original deck is more beautiful, of a better quality and authentic. We would like to highlight that you can easily come across authors and card readers who use the names **Gypsy Fortune Telling Cards**, **Gypsy Tarot** or **Destiny Cards** for their deck. These are only different names for the above card decks. This book comes with the Piatnik deck, and the names, pictures and symbols which this deck contains are discussed in the book, so we do not recommend using the Bonart deck with our book. However, if you are a fan of the Bonart cards, this note mostly refers to the chapter Symbolism, because of different pictures, and partially to the chapter Combinations. You can freely use the chapter Spreads in its entirety.

Perhaps you had an opportunity to hear that the deck you use for interpretation has to be given to you as a present, and that given cards would open in the best and most accurate way. The two authors of this book possess given decks, although we are sure that there are many interpreters who bought decks for themselves. Anyway, if you buy your own cards, think about it as of a gift to yourself. We would like to emphasize something in what we deeply believe, and that is: it is not important how you got the cards, but the cards are the ones that found you. In the end, the only thing that matters is that you have a deck of cards and the book which teaches you how to use them. We have made an effort to provide that for you.

Many people asked us who should shuffle the cards, the inquirer or card reader. There are card readers who do not allow their deck to be touched, and there are two reasons for it. The first reason refers to the influence of negative energy that the inquirer potentially transfers to the cards, and the second refers to the fact the reader is the channel and medium via whom the cards open. Therefore, in this case, the emphasis is on the card reader. On the other hand, it is perfectly okay to allow the inquirer to shuffle the cards, because then his or her energy connects with the cards, which will open and depict the situation. Now the emphasis is on the inquirer, who is the channel and medium, while the only task of the card reader will be interpretation. We use and recommend this approach, although both are justified. The only thing you need to check is whether your deck prefers yours or somebody else's hands.

We met many people who were interested to learn how to read the Gypsy cards. The interpreters to whom those people went offered the services of card reading and interpretation, but almost no one wanted to transfer their knowledge, or perhaps they were not able to do it. This book solves that



## *Introduction*

problem, because it is written in the form of a handbook for interpreting. There will be no need to attend an additional course or some similar schooling for those of you who like to learn all by yourselves. However, if you are not the type of person who will learn the theory that we presented all by yourself or if you perhaps need additional answers to new questions which arise after studying this book, feel free to contact us and schedule a consultation or visit our school of Gypsy card interpretation. Please do not mind if some things remained incomplete or insufficiently explained. Simply, everything was not able to fit into the framework of this book.

There is one more thing we should mention before we go any further. Logic and reason could lead you only to a certain degree of accuracy of your interpretation, but in order to achieve brilliant and correct interpretations, intuition is the crucial factor. As clients, we visited some Gypsy deck card readers, and this is the conclusion we drew. Since we ourselves deal with the subject, we observed the actions of card arrangements and interpretations. There were card readers who used the cards only as a mask. They are psychics, which some of them confessed. They knew almost nothing about spreads and interpretation techniques, which is understandable, because they did not need to know. The second group of readers used the cards, but without any clearly defined interpretation techniques. The cards which they arranged, and the symbols on them, were enough to encourage intuition and the card reader would tell his/her vision of the situation regarding the question asked. The third group relied only on analyzing the cards, using a predetermined procedure of card arrangement and interpretation. In this case, intuition is present in the smallest amount, while reason and logic are mostly used. The book you have in front of you teaches you the third way, but it depends on your intuition whether you will stay in the third group of card readers, or your intuition will keep developing and make you a card reader of the second or first group. To master the knowledge of card interpreting and to possess reliable intuition at the same time is the ideal to which we, as interpreters, should aspire.

# Symbolism



# Symbolism

## Card Descriptions

We are at the beginning of the chapter where we are going to elaborate on symbolism of every card. Several precursory notes are needed to come to a deeper understanding of the way in which we are going to describe them. We put the Fortune card in the first place, and the reason for this is this card's positive energy which guards and protects us, and our card deck, as well. We will explain this in detail later. The further sequence of cards is described in pairs of opposites. Fortune – Misfortune, Lover – Sweetheart, Widow – Widower, etc. We believe that it is easier to understand the cards when they have a pair with which you can compare them. Like two married people, like a husband and a wife, these cards are either ideal partners that complement each other, or they are worst enemies, always opposed to each other. They should be reconciled in some way.

Here are the couples of all 36 cards of the Gypsy deck.

**Fortune – Misfortune** --- the wheel of Fortune turns around, again misfortune will be found

**Lover – Sweetheart** --- a young couple in devotion, they will cause a great commotion

**Widow – Widower** --- an older couple went through much pain, so they're a little bit insane

**Money – Some Money** --- much cash, little cash, deceitful feeling causes rash

**Unexpected Joy – Loss** --- a winner or loser, that is the question

**Constancy – Falseness** --- truth and lie are between us

**Journey – Visit** --- out of town or to the neighborhood

**Hope – Sadness** --- hope dies last, and then sadness comes

**Love – Jealousy** --- love is divine, jealousy kills love

**Merriment – Anger** --- we either hug or argue, that is all

**Letter – Message** --- sometimes we write letters, and sometimes we give speeches

**Ecclesiastic – Thought** --- someone believes in God, and someone in intellect

**Marriage – Death** --- let us tie the knot until death do us part

**Gift – Desire** --- you either enjoy life, or it is only a mere wish

# Symbolism

## 15. Card --- Hope

*"To hope and chase your dreams is the food of love.  
Without dreams, man is only a hungry animal."  
(Žel El)*

### **Introduction ...**

My name is Hope.

I am the dream of the awake, inspiration for the artist, the spiritual ideal of the visionary. I have a highly developed imagination. My shortcoming is an escape from reality, because I am very sensitive and the pain of the world hurts me. I have long blonde hair, blue eyes and I love the sea. I love makeup and masks. I am a great actress and sometimes a fashion model. Sometimes the fish, mermaid, goddess and wife. I point to traveling across the ocean and far abroad. I am also the boat you sail. I am also everything else related to water, the professions related to water or boats, aquariums and swimming pools. I carry a veil of the future with me. I am the hope for a better tomorrow and I die last.



### **In general ...**

The card of waters, lakes, rivers, seas and oceans. If you pour water in a glass, it will take the form of the glass. Water has a perfect ability to adjust and reflect. An ideal trait for actors. Water is a magical element and it is the source and origin of everything created. The original ocean from which everything possible and impossible emerged. An ideal trait for designers and artists. Water is the element of emotions and gives us empathy, compassion and subtlety. Ideal traits for psychologists and doctors.

For those less fortunate water will be a cursed element. Sensitivity is troubling them and they are running away from reality. They often turn to various kinds of opiates, to escape harsh reality at least for a moment. They live in their imagination, and hopes and dreams are an excuse to avoid dealing with cruel consequences of boring everyday life. They live in a different world and keep persuading themselves in its real existence. But they are moving away from people and sinking to the bottom of the deep sea of the

# Symbolism

unconscious. The mental dam is breaking down, and the suppressed contents penetrate the consciousness. Chaos is knocking on the door.

## **Symbolically ...**

**The picture** --- in the card picture, a girl with long blonde hair in a blue dress is standing at a seacoast, three roses are falling down from her hand, while she is holding an anchor with the other hand, waiting for a boat to set sail - this is picture of a girl who hopes for something - these are all those who dream and wait for the realization of their ideals, like the girl sees off the ship for which she does not know when and if it will return - but these are also the ideals and dreams that collapse in reality, like the three roses falling down from the girl's hand - this is also a picture of all the people who firmly hold on to their dreams, like the girl holds the anchor - this is a picture of hope that cannot be eradicated

**psychologically:** hope, imagination, visualization, fantasy, escapism, magic, ecstasy, rapture, hypersensitivity, empathy, emotionality, naivety

- **The female figure** --- the picture of a girl, young woman, with long blond hair and often blue eyes - this is a very emotional girl, imaginative, a girl who dreams, writes poetry, believes in fairytales and fairies, an idealist, artist - this is an actress, a fashion model, a TV personality, a photogenic woman who loves putting on makeup and masks - these are the women with the aura of film divas, fascinating appearances - but these are also unrealistic, fragile, vulnerable people who tend to escape from the world - these are psychologically vulnerable people who tend to take opiates

- **The blue dress** --- these are blue clothes - but these are also all the costumes, clothing for fashion shows, dressing styles of glamorous people - these are slippers, thongs - swimsuits

- **The sea** --- this is a picture of a sea and ocean, but any other water, too - lakes, pools, rivers, rain, snow, aquariums, water in the body, water in waterworks and house pipes, and the like - the sea is a symbol of the unconscious and the unknown to human consciousness - this is the fertility of feelings and imagination

- **The boat** --- this is a picture of any vessel - boats, yachts, sailboats, ships - this is a picture of overseas, islands - cruising, traveling by boat or ship, working on boats or ships

- **The anchor** --- the symbol of endurance, calmness - the anchor tightens, fastens and fixes - it keeps our hope when the storms of life attack us - everything that helps us sustain and maintain stability - our dreams,

# Symbolism

hopes, ideals to which we hold on firmly

- **The seacoast** --- these are ports, coastlines, beaches - this is our safe haven in the sea of unconscious

- **The color blue** --- the color of the sea, the sky and the girl's dress, therefore blue, and the shades of bluešto nam pomaže da istrajemo i zadržimo stabilnost - naš san, nada, ideali za koji se čvrsto držimo

## ***Astrologically ...***

- planet - modern - **Neptune** - ♆ - Poseidon, the God of the sea, the planet of inspiration, artists, empathy, divine inspiration and ecstasy, the future, the sea, the unconscious, but also escaping from reality, imagination, fantasies, hallucinations, opiates, hypersensitivity, ships and ports --- traditionally - **Jupiter** - ♃ --- the planet of goodness, compassion, empathy, naivety, inability to comprehend and accept evil in human beings, optimism

- zodiac sign - **Pisces** - ♛ --- the sign of artists, imagination, fashion and television, illusion, hypersensitivity, empathy

- the house of the horoscope - **9th house** --- the house where the Sun rejoices - creativity, overseas, dreams, imagination

- number - **3** - the number of hope, optimism, comfort, creativity

## ***Health ...***

- **Long life** --- if it appears after the Malady card, it can mean that you will live for a long time, because hope always dies last - also, the symbolism of the anchor is endurance, perseverance, tenacity

- **Teeth** --- the anchor has two points, which resemble the root of the tooth, and a handle that shows a tooth - hence, a picture of dental and gum diseases - tooth decay, periodontal disease, tooth cracking and the like

- **Water in the body** --- as a card of the water element, it can indicate a fluid metabolism disorder, fluid retention, leg swelling (Neptune, Pisces), the diseases of the lymphatic system (Neptune), increased secretion of mucus, blood dilution

- **Addictions** --- psychic sensitivity that this card implies often points to the need for opiates, which is the main reason for running away from reality - this card primarily indicates smoking, alcohol, drugs, medications that treat mental disorders (Neptune, Pisces)

- **Mental illnesses** --- the card indicates hypersensitivity, the penetration of the unconscious and moving away from reality - in severe cases, serious mental disorders are possible

# Symbolism

## Orientation

It is time for us to introduce you to the **orientation technique**, i.e. **the direction of figures and cards**. This is an ingenious tool in the service of the card reader, and soon you will understand why.

You can notice that every figure in card pictures, regardless of the fact whether it is a being or an object, is turned to one direction. Let us take a look at the Fortune card, for example. The girl shown in the card picture turned her head to the right, while her body is just slightly turned to the right.

### *Orientation of cards and figures*



It goes the same way for every other card. Some figures are completely turned to one direction (Thief, Thought, Message, Enemy), while others are slightly leaned (Lover, Widow, Constancy). In this way, the cards, through figures, direct attention to the side towards which the figures are looking, and they turn their back to the opposite side. The more the card figure is turned to one side, the stronger her direction to that side is. This shows clear intentions and determination, but in the opposite sense, it shows stubbornness and one-sidedness.

The Judge card is a proof of this statement. It is dedicated to find a

# Symbolism

balance and its aim is to reconcile the opposing parties. Indeed, the card picture shows the symbol of the scales, and the figure of the judge is almost in the middle, with his head only slightly turned to the left. It is a shame that not even the Judge card can establish a balance, so our Judge prefers the card on the left.

There is one more card whose figure is almost in the middle. The man in the Unexpected Joy card is barely turned to the right. The card shows a mature man, spontaneous in living, who is fond of adventures, quite unusual and uncaught in the trap of social rules. Both pleasant and unpleasant surprises happen to him every day, but it does not confuse him. This card is the equivalent to The Fool in Major Arcana of the Tarot, and both cards, with their spontaneity and non-committing, win the life lottery jackpot. They win nothing less than freedom. Remember, be just and weigh like the Judge, and be spontaneous like the Fool. And the balance will be in your hands.

There are cards in which the figures are looking in one way, but their body is turned to the other side (Love, Sweetheart, Desire, Hope). The heart makes us do what the reason would never let us (Love). Little Eros and three women. He hit all of them with his little arrows. First, the one in an emotional relationship (Sweetheart), then the one who is in love and who is yearning (Desire), and in the end, the one who is dreaming about sublime love (Hope). But these women, if not in love, can be reluctant and hesitant; they can say one thing, think something else, and do something completely different. They are often very complex persons. They can be spoiled, so often they do not know what side to choose. This problem does not exist for the male figures in the cards. They are all turned to one side with both head and body. A general conclusion that we can draw from the cards is that a man is direct and simple, unlike a woman.

The cards which have two or more figures in their pictures function in a slightly different way, and the situation becomes significantly complex. Let us take the Jealousy card for example.

The observer peeking from the bushes is looking to the right. When it comes to two lovers, the woman is also looking to the right, while the man is looking to the left. Now you should not worry about how to interpret all this. The time for it will come. At this moment, it is important for you to understand how card directions function.





## Combinations

### 9. Card --- Unexpected Joy

**Unexpected Joy - Loss** --- unexpected financial losses; you will share something quickly; you will lose at gambling or games of chance; a shock because of an emotional loss; stress because of losing money

**Loss - Unexpected Joy** --- bad company of strange guys; company of men who are joking; a professional gambler; winnings at gambling; you lose a little, you gain a little; you are spending both time and money on adventures

**Unexpected Joy - Constancy** --- good deeds; some truth will surprise and gladden you; an unusual man who radiates positive energy; a famous comedian; an eccentric person draws people's attention

**Constancy - Unexpected Joy** --- a weirdo's eyes; a strange look; enlightenment; cognition; liberating truth; insights that change your outlook; an unexpected eye contact; an accidental look and meeting

**Unexpected Joy - Falseness** --- you will be surprised by somebody's inappropriate response; you feel happy for wrong people; eccentric people who draw negative attention; an insulting joke

**Falseness - Unexpected Joy** --- you will tell a lie with good intentions; unexpected contacts with bad people; accelerated deterioration; an unexpected rush of negative energy

**Unexpected Joy - Journey** --- a sudden departure; horrified, you are driving fast in shock; you will find a lost item on the road; a road traffic engineer; extreme sports

**Journey - Unexpected Joy** --- a nice surprise on a trip; a modern car, train, trolleybus; driving too fast; some stress will happen to you on a trip; pay attention to careless pedestrians

**Unexpected Joy - Visit** --- a sudden meeting on the street; a surprise by two women; an eccentric who likes badmouthing people; two women and an unusual man with them; a short-term adventure

**Visit - Unexpected Joy** --- a sudden encounter with a person who will cheer you up very much; somebody's visit and surprise; you are shocked because



## *Combinations*

of gossiping; a quite strange neighborhood

**Unexpected Joy - Hope** --- a sea adventure; a rush of artistic inspiration; an idea has dawned on you, in which you put your hopes; a blonde girl will shock you; a marine engineer

**Hope - Unexpected Joy** --- a person from other country or a fair-haired female will throw you a nice surprise; a girl with a blonde wig; an unusual and sensitive girl

**Unexpected Joy - Sadness** --- a sudden encounter with a dark-haired girl; a shock will make you feel despondent; a melancholic villager; a sad surprise; you will become sad suddenly

**Sadness - Unexpected Joy** --- a despondent girl will be cheered up quickly; a dark-haired female will shock you; an unusual dark girl; alternation of depression and anxiety

**Unexpected Joy - Love** -- an unexpected arrival of love; shocks and stress in love; a man in love declares his love in an unusual way; you will find an object you like

**Love - Unexpected Joy** --- love out of the blue; surprises in love; a short-term love adventure; love at unusual places; a mischievous boy

**Unexpected Joy - Jealousy** --- unexpected scene of jealousy; shocks and stress because of jealousy; a weirdo is following and observing you; you will be surprised unpleasantly and you will catch your partner committing adultery; someone from a village is interfering into your life

**Jealousy - Unexpected Joy** --- an unusual way of showing jealousy; someone will catch you in an adventure with another man; an adventure in a love triangle; voyeurs and exhibitionists

**Unexpected Joy - Merriment** --- you will come across someone unexpectedly and you will go out for a drink; someone or something will make you very happy; stress caused by a man and a woman; an engineer is dancing at a party

**Merriment - Unexpected Joy** --- a surprise party for your birthday; entertainment in a public place; modern dances and music; company of strange men and women

**Unexpected Joy - Anger** --- a sudden blow and physical attack; you will say something incautiously, and it will cause you troubles; nervous handymen; electric appliance breakdowns

**Anger - Unexpected Joy** --- stress because of mistreatment; you will get out of trouble unexpectedly; harassing someone who is different; bad luck will

## ***Combinations***

not last for a long time; a danger of electrical shocks

**Unexpected Joy - Letter** --- you will be surprised by something you read; unexpected post mail will be delivered to you; you will find a lost document or book; an engineer with newspapers in his hand; thunder

**Letter - Unexpected Joy** --- someone will be cheered up by your letter; adventure novels; science-fiction literature; e-mails; modern planes; a package is delivered quickly

**Unexpected Joy - Message** --- you are telling everyone about the surprise which has been thrown for you; a person who is talking all the time; a telecommunications engineer; jokers; comedians; an encounter with a person who is running

**Message - Unexpected Joy** --- a surprise message; conversations about modern technology; extreme sports; cell phones and computers; the Internet communication; a quick action

**Unexpected Joy - Ecclesiastic** --- a surprise on a Sunday or on a religious holiday; a man of unusual spirituality; anxiety and a visit to a psychologist; a spiritual adventure

**Ecclesiastic - Unexpected Joy** --- your father is preparing a surprise for you; you will be shocked by the attitude of a person who used to be your role model; a new age priest; a priest's dramatic speech

**Unexpected Joy - Thought** --- you will come across a fair-haired man; a brilliant idea that you are working on; a young fair-haired engineer; a very intelligent weirdo; a nuclear physicist

**Thought - Unexpected Joy** --- a young fair-haired man enjoys shocking people; an intellectual with strange tendencies; a genius; unpredictable thoughts; a restless mind; crazy student days

**Unexpected Joy - Marriage** --- suddenly you will meet a partner and get married quickly; a person with strange ideas offers a business partnership; you will get a contract unexpectedly

**Marriage - Unexpected Joy** --- an unusual wedding; an informal marriage; adventures in marriage; an open relationship; a quickly reached agreement; unexpected events after starting a relationship

**Unexpected Joy - Death** --- a surprise from a grandfather or grandmother; black humor; a shock because of somebody's death; a tall thin weirdo; stress can be fatal for you; a suddenly interrupted rapture

**Death - Unexpected Joy** --- someone from the past will surprise you; sudden unexpected mortal danger; a sudden termination of a relationship; an ec-

## *Combinations*

centric strange old man; a grandfather from the village

**Unexpected Joy - Gift** --- you may find an object on the street or see a person you want to see; an eccentric person is giving you something; an amazing idea which makes life easier

**Gift - Unexpected Joy** --- an unexpected gain; a surprise present from someone; an electrical appliance as a gift; you will be shocked when you open a present; exotic and strange candies

**Unexpected Joy - Desire** --- a surprise from a female with short brown hair; your lover will shock you; adventures for which you are longing; a person you find strange is expecting you

**Desire - Unexpected Joy** --- an unusual and original dark girl with short hair; suddenly you will get something that you have wanted for a long time; strange desires; you want to be in contact with special people

**Unexpected Joy - Fidelity** --- surprises are being repeated; a surprise from your close friends or relatives; a strange person offers friendship; stress has lasted for a long time; a weird man with a dog

**Fidelity - Unexpected Joy** --- the dog will be found; dogs of unpredictable behavior; a close person is preparing a surprise for you; your eccentric friend; you are faithful to your originality

**Unexpected Joy - Enemy** --- an unpleasant surprise; you will experience stress from a person who cannot stand you; a person of unusual physical appearance is an enemy; you have been pleased by the outcome too soon

**Enemy - Unexpected Joy** --- an unpredictable dangerous man; a danger that appears suddenly; an ingenious psychopath; a sudden attack around the corner; liberation from the enemy

**Unexpected Joy - House** --- you will experience stress at home; an introverted eccentric; you find an apartment suddenly; stress because you do not have a house; an architectural engineer; arable land in a village

**House - Unexpected Joy** --- electric substations; power plants; an unusual or original house; skyscrapers; your stability will be impaired by a shock; lottery ticket retailers; lightning strikes a house

**Unexpected Joy - Thief** --- you will feel happy for someone who will take advantage of you; a short-term rapture will disappear quickly; stress because of a robbery or losing some things; you are hiding a surprise

**Thief - Unexpected Joy** --- someone is making an effort in order for you not to find out about the surprise they are throwing you; an unexpected encounter with a thief; you will find a lost object; an ingenious thief; an elec-

## ***Combinations***

trical device theft

**Unexpected Joy - Baby** --- a surprise in the form of a new job; new original ideas; an immature person of unpredictable behavior; a court jester; foolish people; you will find a baby

**Baby - Unexpected Joy** --- a piece of news that will surprise you; unexpected pregnancy; a risk of miscarriage due to stress; an unusual child; restless and lively children; a child of an electrical engineer

**Unexpected Joy - Malady** --- you will have to lie down due to stress; a surprise in bed; experiments with sexuality; a strange person offers his/her bed; a villager and his sick wife

**Malady - Unexpected Joy** --- brief pain; an illness that appears suddenly; a quick recovery from a disease; an unexpected sexual contact; a one-night stand; a sexual adventure

**Unexpected Joy - Judge** --- an unexpected encounter with a man of high rank; a sudden start of a trial; you are not capable of making a decision due to stress; an educated engineer

**Judge - Unexpected Joy** --- you are making a decision in a moment of euphoria; a man of high rank in shock; an ingenious professor; a professor of electrical engineering; a court decision will delight you

**Unexpected Joy - Officer** --- surprises at work; you can get a job quite unexpectedly; stress caused by a uniformed person; an engineer in his office; a job in the suburbs

**Officer - Unexpected Joy** --- an unusual uniform; eccentric costumes; an unpredictable uniformed man; an Air Force pilot; a strange colleague from work; a modernly equipped office

## ***10. Card - Loss***

**Loss - Constancy** --- a loss that has to happen; you have to endure a temptation; you have a vice which is obvious to everyone; two men are keeping an eye on you; you should be careful not to commit a sin

**Constancy - Loss** --- you will realize the truth regarding the bad company you are in; two famous men; you will understand why you had to lose something; a premonition of loss

**Loss - Falseness** --- losses due to a severe vice; heavy drugs, extremely bad

A stylized illustration featuring a white bird with grey wings and tail, perched on a large, yellow, diamond-shaped envelope. The envelope is tied with a pink ribbon. The scene is set against a light blue background with stylized pink cherry blossoms on dark branches. The word "Spreads" is written in a bold, black, serif font across the center of the image.

# Spreads

# Introduction to Spreads

Spreads give soul to card interpreting. Every interpreter has their own way of arranging cards and giving a personal touch to interpreting. It is the same with amateurs, as well as with the people who make a living of reading cards. While some people learned from their grandmother how to arrange and interpret cards, others dreamed their spreads. The third kind of people designed their own way. Thus, nowadays we have a large number of spreads, as well as variations of some special ones. Spreads are often very similar in different interpreters, and sometimes identical. We attribute this to the same source from which people learned about the Gypsy cards.

The spreads which we are going to describe in this chapter will be developed gradually by complexity, from the simplest ones (a one-card spread, three cards, daily spreads with four or five cards) to the most complex ones, where all thirty six cards are in consideration and where special ways of combining and moving through the arrangements are used.

Most of these spreads were collected from various places and from various sources, from fairs and Gypsy women, professional interpreters, all the way to the Internet. We, the authors, designed several spreads. The spreads typical of the Tarot cards can be used. In fact, here we are going to describe certainly one of the most famous spreads in the Tarot, the **Celtic Cross**. We should highlight that there are so-called “*intuitive readings*”. In the following pages, we will demonstrate such a spread. Besides all these, there are special spreads intended for spiritual question interpreting. We use two spreads, the **Tree of Life** and the **Pyramid**, but we will not discuss them in this book; we are explaining them exclusively in our Gypsy Card school.

We will repeat once again. First things first. We are starting with simple spreads and going towards more complex ones. Mastering the card meanings and symbolism, as well as the methods of their combining, is an important prerequisite, which will provide that you move through every spread easily. In its essence, the spread is just a procedure for arranging, combining and interpreting cards in a certain way. You need the intuition for cards and the knowledge of their meanings. Otherwise, no card arrangement will be useful, not even the most complex one.

We will make an effort to give at least one example for every spread. With the spreads which we use the most in practice, there can be more ex-

## Spreads

amples. There will be many examples for describing so-called **Daily Spread**, because we believe that it is the best and the most efficient way of practicing card interpreting and combining. But all in good time.

Before we start describing spreads, let us first deal with a few important things which will be necessary for you to understand and interpret spreads.

### Significators

In most spreads, special cards called **significators** are used. They can also be called **indicators** or **signifiers**. Therefore, a signicator is a card that indicates or signifies something. Some cards represent you as the inquirer, others are related to particular people, and there are also cards that indicate objects, phenomena and situations. First things first.

**Inquirer significators.** They are the most important and we have already mentioned them in card descriptions. Let us repeat it here. If the inquirer is a man under 40 years old, the Lover card will be his signicator. If the inquirer is a woman under 40, the Sweetheart card will signify her. For older than 40, we consider the Widower card for men, and the Widow card for women. **These are four basic (main) significators.**

Less frequently, the other cards that signify people can be used. For example, if you are a fair-haired young man, you can be represented by the Thought card. Also, if you are a female with dark long hair, the Sadness card can signify you. The authors have chosen four main significators, while we use all other cards in which there are human figures as **person significators**.

In the Symbolism chapter, in the part where we discuss card figures, you can see what kind of a person a certain card indicates. We are not going to repeat it here, but we will give a couple of examples. The Message card indicates a young man or a sportsman regarding the physical appearance, and a lively and communicative person in a psychological way. The knowledge of symbolism and card figures will make it easier for you to signify any physical or psychological type of person, and choose the right signicator.

Let us mention a specific situation. The cards which indicate a young man (about 25 years of age) are: Officer - a brown-haired man, Thought - a fair-haired man, and Lover - a black-haired man. Note that here we have the Lover card as a person signicator, not the inquirer signicator. Let us imagine that the inquirer is a young man and that he has asked a question about



# Ways of Arranging Spreads

## The Basic One-Card Spread

### **The procedure:**

- *while shuffling the cards, think about your question intensively*
  - *a) cut the deck and look at the card where you cut*
- or*
- *b) spread the cards in the form of a hand fan, and then draw a random card*

This is understandably the simplest spread, and it can offer us only few pieces of information. But you can certainly use it for the purpose of practicing. The answer to the question is too general, so it is often necessary to draw additional cards in order to shed some light on the situation and get a clearer answer to the question. Although, it is the topic of next spread.

The best use of one card is for getting answers to clear yes-no questions, in such way that a bad card gives a “no”, and a good card gives a “yes” answer. For example, the Fortune card will indicate a convincing affirmative answer, but the Enemy card will be a strong indicator that the answer to the question asked is negative.

Example:

***“Will I make money from the business I have started?”***

Let us say that you cut the **Some Money** card. In this case, the answer would be: “You will not be satisfied with the profit from the initiated business. There will be little or no money.” However, the same card can also show regular incomes, so when we draw only one card, we cannot be sure which of several potential answers is the right choice. To solve this dilemma, it is necessary to draw at least one more card.

# Spreads

## The Two-Card Spread

### The procedure:

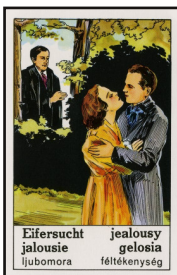
- while shuffling the cards, think about the question intensively
- a) cut the deck and look at the card where you cut it, and then repeat the procedure
- b) spread the cards in the form of a hand fan, and then draw two cards randomly
- pay attention to which card was drawn first, and which second

In the chapter about combinations, where we described combining the cards, we discussed three possible ways of linking the cards. You can use all three ways or chose the one which gives the best results. We mostly use and recommend the way of combining in which the first drawn card represents **the essence of the answer to the question**, and the second indicates the **factors which influence on the realization or prevent the realization** of the situation in the question asked.

Let us take for example the question we have asked earlier, ***“Will I make money from the business I have started?”*** and assume that we have drawn Some Money as the first card, and Jealousy as the second card.

The essence of the answer is represented by the Some Money card, and the factors which, in this case, prevent the realization, are represented by the Jealousy card. Our answer would be:

*“You will not be pleased with the profit. The business will not pay off (Some Money), because someone will interfere (Jealousy).”*



But who will interfere in business and what worries may occur, only drawing an additional card can explain it. Therefore, besides this simple two-card spread, we have just shown the ***“spontaneous spread”*** principle, that

# Spreads

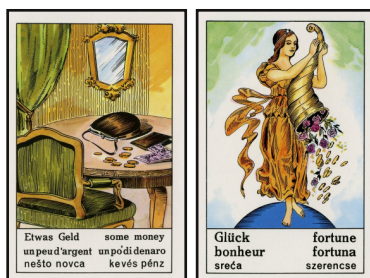
you can build on your own until you get a satisfying reply to your question. Let us demonstrate it in the same example. After the first two cards, we have drawn the third (Officer) and the fourth card (Anger).



*“The business will not pay off (**Some Money**), because inspectors will come (**Jealousy** - inspectors, **Officer** - official services) and you will get into serious troubles (**Anger**).”*

Let us return to the case when the Some Money card will have a positive meaning in the answer to our question. It happens in case when the second drawn card is positive. For example, in the following situation, we will have a completely different interpretation. Now, the Some Money card will show us regular incomes. Therefore:

*“You will probably not obtain a large amount of money quickly (**Some Money** - serious effort, work), but you will have regular incomes (**Some Money**), which will be growing gradually (**Fortune** - material abundance).*



# Spreads

## 36-Card Spreads

### **The procedure:**

- *while shuffling the cards, think intensively about the wanted question*
- *cut the cards, and place the cut part below the remaining part of the deck*
- *arrange 9 cards in a row, and in this way, make 4 rows of cards (9x4)*

We have reached a spread in which the entire deck of Gypsy cards is used. There are various possibilities for interpreting such a spread of 36 cards. We will describe five different spreads. From the simplest, to the most complex spread, which uses the system of astrological houses.
































### **1 --- The Seven Spread**

We use only one interpreting technique in this spread. The **count-down of every seventh card from the significator. We do not include the significator.** We are counting the cards until we reach the significator again, and we interpret them individually or we link two cards in a combination, and we build a meaningful story that the cards indicate. Let us take for example that the Sweetheart card is the significator and that it is at place 25. In this case, we have the following series of two-card combinations, which we will interpret --- 32-3, 10-17, 24-31, 2-9, 16-23, 30-1, 8-15, 22-29, 36-7, 14-21, 28-35, 6-13, 20-27, 34-5, 12-19, 16-33, 4-11, 18-25 --- we have returned to the Sweetheart card, with which the interpreting ends.

### **2 - A Practical Spread**

In all the spreads which we have described so far, first we arranged the cards according to a specific pattern, and once they were properly arranged, we started interpreting them. The card arranging procedure takes some time. Although those are only minutes, sometimes it is very important that we start interpretation right after shuffling the cards. For example, if you

## Spreads

 1	 10	 19	 28
 2	 11	 20	 29
 3	 12	 21	 30
 4	 13	 22	 31
 5	 14	 23	 32
 6	 15	 24	 33
 7	 16	 25	 34
 8	 17	 26	 35
 9	 18	 27	 36

## Spreads

work at a call center, where it is expected from you to interpret the cards right after receiving a call, and where every minute is precious, you need a spread that is interpreted while arranging the cards.

a) The card spread is developing in the series from 1-36. An interpretation starts immediately, as soon as we arrange the first two cards, by linking them in the 1-2 combination. Then we arrange the other cards, and we interpret them combining two by two (3-4, 5-6, 7-8). We interpret the last card in a row as the final outcome of the row (9). We interpret the second, third and fourth row in the same way.

b) After arranging all the cards, we move on to interpreting the surrounding cards. In this way, we find a connection between the story from the first part of the spread and appropriate signifiers (the inquirer and other people or situations important for the interpretation).

c) Finally, we move on to a countdown of 7 cards from the inquirer signifier if the inquirer is a female, and 5 cards if the inquirer is a male. After that, we can perform countdowns from the signifiers of other people (boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, father, mother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, etc.) who are important for the interpretation. In this way, we enter the life and events of the inquirer or other people who are important for the question. We use the **countdown forward if we want to describe the future events**, and the **countdown backward** for describing the **past**. We do not count the signifier.

d) In the end, we join all the parts of the interpretation into a unique whole.

Here we will mention another version of this spread. Namely, it is a spread which Gypsy card readers use most frequently. We came across the same procedure of spread arranging and interpreting at three different interpreters in three different parts of Serbia. We assume it is one of the oldest spreads which is still in use.

We use all 36 cards. We arrange them face up, 9 cards in a row from left to right, and we form three rows in this way. We put only 5 cards in the fourth row, and leave the remaining 4 cards face down. The interpretation starts with the first card arranged, and it continues with the other cards. After finishing the interpretation of these 32 cards, we overlap the signifiers in which we are interested, i.e. the person, field of life or situation on which we want to shed some light, with the remaining 4 cards. Regardless of little details which defer in different interpreters, the main procedure of card arrangement, which we have just described, is the same in all.

# Appendix





## Appendix

# Gypsy Cards and Astrology

## Planets

### THE TRADITIONAL CLASSIFICATION

This is our attempt to link 7 planets of traditional astrology to 36 cards of the Gypsy deck. We will assign the same number of cards to each planet (5 cards x 7 planets + 1 remaining card = 36 cards). Mars, which is the only planet with 6 cards, is an exception.

**The Moon** --- Baby, House, Fidelity, Visit, Widow

**Mercury** --- Thought, Message, Letter, Some Money, Thief

**Venus** --- Love, Marriage, Sweetheart, Merriment, Desire

**The Sun** --- Constancy, Judge, Gift, Widower, Unexpected Joy

**Mars** --- Anger, Misfortune, Enemy, Jealousy, Officer, Lover

**Jupiter** --- Money, Hope, Ecclesiastic, Fortune, Journey

**Saturn** --- Death, Malady, Sadness, Loss, Falseness

### THE MODERN CLASSIFICATION

An attempt to link 10 planets of modern astrology to the Gypsy cards. We have also used the numerological correspondence of the planets and numbers, so here we can see the connection between the cards and numbers.

**1 --- The Sun** --- Constancy, Judge, Gift, Officer

**2 --- The Moon** --- House, Baby, Fidelity, Visit

**3 --- Jupiter** --- Fortune, Hope, Ecclesiastic, Journey

**4 --- Uranus (North Node - Rahu)** --- Unexpected Joy, Loss, Money

**5 --- Mercury** --- Message, Letter, Thought, Some Money

**6 --- Venus** --- Love, Merriment, Sweetheart, Desire

**7 --- Neptune (South Node - Ketu)** --- Falseness, Thief, Jealousy

**8 --- Saturn** --- Sadness, Malady, Widow, Widower

**9 --- Mars** --- Misfortune, Anger, Enemy, Lover

**0 --- Pluto** --- Death, Marriage