

## Poems and Tarot Insights from the Yacht House B&B

1999-2001

by Teri Ekland



My first husband Don was a standup guy with a good job as an electrical engineer at Intel. In 1999, after comfortably living in our suburban Phoenix home on Night Hawk Way for ten years, we found ourselves in a stressful situation and moved to a twenty-acre ranch in rural Maricopa. Then Cecil came along. After a year, I left the ranch and Don, took my hired hand Cecil and my two Doberman Pinchers Minnie and Max, and traveled in a Mallard trailer for ten months around the southern states. As part of the divorce settlement, I was looking for a bed and breakfast as a business investment for both Don and I and as a source of income for me as a woman now on her own. During my thirteen-year marriage to Don I had never worked outside of the house. In fact, my last job had been at Kuwait University about five years before Operation Desert Storm.



I decided on the Yacht House B&B in Pensacola, Florida because it seemed like a promising investment. The YH grounds spread over an acre with magnolia trees and honeysuckle vines that scented the yard. Hydrangeas, irises, lilies, and hyacinths bloomed around a crystal-clear koi pond in the back yard that made an ideal spot for weddings. Across Cyprus Road from the YH was the Pensacola Yacht Club and Sanders Beach where pelicans, cranes, and seagulls flew around the piers, sailboats tacked in the Gulf Bay, and tugboats maneuvered the Inner Channel. The salty moist scent of the sea was not the arid desert that I loved, but it was a beautiful setting and a quaint B&B.



Don flew to Florida to sign the mortgage papers with me. We were still married at the time. Our credit scores were excellent but we needed Don's Intel salary to mortgage half a million dollars in real estate. The B&B owner, Bob Peterson, put Don and I together in the Mariner's Room; Bob was unaware that we were divorcing. We slept together but nothing happened, rather like our marriage

Don was swept away with the B&B and the setting. He had his own dreams for the business and during the first year I was running the Yacht House, he made several trips to Florida. He would stand on the veranda like a sea captain, gaze at the estate, and say that the Yacht House would be his retirement home in ten years. (Like me, Don was a bit of a dreamer. When we were dating years before, back in Portland, he said he wanted to marry me as soon as

he became a millionaire. He had a few side businesses going, namely Amway, and he wanted an enterprising wife to help him with his business projects. So goes that story.)

The first year of operation, Don and I were still cordial; we were on the phone at least once a week discussing the B&B, its new décor, and the remodeling. Everything was up front and friendly. He seemed happy with our investment. His last project with me. But this was before Don's new bride from China arrived; then he became edgy about our 50-50 joint ownership, per the divorce decree, and he tried to weasel out of the deal and dump everything onto me, including all the blame for the situation he was in with his new wife who did not like him being in business with his former wife. And so goes that story.

Because of my law degree, I had thought I could draw up a solid divorce decree. At the same time, Don had urged me not to get a lawyer. I didn't. That was a big mistake on my part. But like all my Unitarian friends, I held Don in high esteem and believed him to be forthright. At least the divorce decree provided me with the Yacht House in a 50-50 partnership with Don. With the proceeds earned each month, I paid the Florida mortgage while Don paid the mortgages in Arizona (the ranch on Barnes Road and our house on Night Hawk Way where he moved soon after I left him). I was too fair with him. He was lucky and got off easy but he would turn on me with a vengeance. That's a story I tell in my memoirs "The Desert's Edge" and "Law School High."



My parents, sister, and niece at Sanders Beach.

I thought of Pensacola as the beachfront property of my desert home, although Maricopa is nearly 2000 miles away. The city was named for the Panzacola Native Americans who had lived in the region for centuries. It lies on the Gulf Coast with Santa Rosa Island offshore across the Bay Bridge. Beyond Santa Rosa stretches the Gulf of Mexico.

In the movie “Contact,” Jodi Foster lands in Pensacola where palm trees are swaying over a white sandy beach. The water tower on the way to town proclaims that Pensacola has “Florida’s Finest Beaches.” It does. I have been all over Florida and have seen beaches around the world (I invested in a bungalow business on a beach in Thailand). Pensacola’s beaches are as white as salt. Sometimes the skies have soft wispy clouds, sometimes the clouds are dark, ominous, and billowing. But most often, pure golden sunshine looms over Pensacola.



The Blue Angels are based at the Pensacola Naval Air Station which is also home to the world’s largest naval aviation museum. Most people go to Pensacola beach, over the Bay Bridge, to watch the Blue Angel’s fly their McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 Hornets. On occasion, the squadron appeared in formation over the Yacht House. It was a very patriotic sight—a Star-Spangled Banner affair.



Blue Angels. Breakfast bar with Bob serving Teri. Pensacola Yacht Club.

The previous owner, Bob Peterson, had bought the estate and converted its two houses into a B&B with a nautical theme—the Mariners Room, the Captain’s Quarters, Skipper’s Cove. (Maybe there was a Buccaneer Room). Bob was a sailing man who had even sailed to Cuba and back, alone. He was a good standing member of the Pensacola Yacht Club which sent a lot of business his way.

Because of my world travels, I gave the Yacht House more of an international motif. To keep with the nautical theme, Bob had suggested that I re-name the rooms as “ports of call.” I changed all the room names except for the Mariner’s Room on the ground floor of the guesthouse, across the hall from the Bengal Room.



The Mariners’ room had a hot tub on the veranda, sailboat paintings, and a hand painted seascape coffee table. I added a copy of “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” an epic poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge written in 1797. *At length did cross an Albatross, Through the fog it came . . .*

There were six rooms to rent, seven in a pinch (once or twice I converted my office into a bedroom during a busy weekend). Rooms went from 90 to 150 dollars a night; the Shanghai Suite was the most expensive, the Bengal Room the least because it had no hot tub. But it was a nice room with an armoire, two double beds, and French doors onto the veranda. I decorated it with tapestries of tigers and jungle scenes and my Nepali, Indian, and Sri Lankan imports.



The main house had a large living area that included the kitchen and a dining area with Don's piano that he let me take to the B&B because he never played it anyway. The large front doors had leaded glass panes and on each side I placed a dolphin fountain bought from domestications.com. Large picture windows overlooked the veranda and yards. Off the veranda were French doors to the Amazon Room where Cecil and I slept when not staying in other guest rooms. It was the room we rented out the least. It really had no décor. Just the basics.

Bob's Captain's Quarters upstairs in the main house became the Shanghai Suite. It had three rooms with a loft and a terrace partly shaded by the huge magnolia tree in the front yard. In addition to a hot tub, the terrace had a claw foot tub that my lady guests tended to love. I decorated the suite with my décor and paintings from China, and a Chinese calligraphy scroll made for me in Wuhan. I ordered panda bedspreads and shams for the king bed and panda night tables. I even painted a Chinese dragon on the sitting room's wooden floor.



On week days, when there were no guests, Cecil and I slept in the Shanghai Suite, especially toward the end of our stay at the Yacht House. We would enjoy the hot tub on the terrace then relax on the wooden chaise lounges handcrafted by Miller's Swings and Things, Pensacola. (Bob had smartly furnished the B&B with lots of wooden Adirondack chairs and swings on the verandas). Even in a downpour, we slept on the Shanghai terrace, listening to the rain pattering onto magnolia leaves and the canvas awning overhead. The refreshing smells and cooling winds of the intense subtropical weather was as excitingly as a clashing monsoon storm in the Arizona desert.



The guesthouse had four bedrooms, each with its own bathroom, phone, TV, and small refrigerator. The upstairs Sahara and Nairobi rooms, had hot tubs on wooden decks with stairs leading to the back yard and pond. From the eaves above these decks, I hung coleus plants and sword ferns that thrived in the subtropics. I watered them every evening; it was a pleasurable task.



We sometimes slept in the guesthouse rooms. The Sahara Suite was my favorite and was a popular room to rent out. The décor included a large ceramic camel, brassware and Bedouin woven pillows from Kuwait, and my coffee table painting of the ancient Egyptian goddess Nut. The bedspread shams and curtains were covered with red roses and on a wall cove behind the bed, I placed a copy of “The Prophet” . . . *even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you* by Lebanese-American philosopher and writer Kahlil Gibran, and a copy of “The Rubaiyat,” by Omar Khayyam, a Persian mathematician, astronomer, philosopher and poet. *A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou.*

I received several compliments in the little guest diaries placed in each room on the writing desks Bob had furnished. One woman wrote that the Nairobi Room, with its African décor, was too masculine. It had a black panther coffee table with a matching lamp, a giraffe lamp, an elephant and a giraffe mirror, and elephant decorative nightstands. From my import/export business, I had lots of African tapestries and wood carvings of water buffaloes, lions, and elephants. One guest requested we remove my wooden statue of a bare breasted African woman carrying fruit over her head. He was making reservations for his elderly parents and had inspected the room. A bare breasted African woman wouldn't do.





At the beginning of each guest diary, I wrote this little ditty:

These words I leave for you,  
These words you left for me,  
A breeze of passing thought,  
A time of what is true!  
I hope you enjoyed your stay.



Guesthouse and veranda of main house.

#### Part I: Innkeeping: Those thirty plus jobs

(Written while at the Yacht House circa 2000)

When I walked into the hospitality business, I thought, “I can do this.” Even with the help of my Sri Lankan friend Wilson, and Cecil—a clumsy, rash, and moody man prone to using drugs. It was a teetering act. But as with my ranch house in Arizona, I was sprung loose in all directions with big ideas for decorating, remodeling, and running a business.

I often do many things at the same time. I’m not condoning this behavior; it can be out of focus. But I have vast interests and often need to multitask. It’s not easy. How many faces do I wear? I am a business entrepreneur and partner, innkeeper host, writer, artist, girlfriend, daughter, friend, socially responsible citizen, and responsible member of humanity. The most difficult face to slip on is the face of a host and problem solver.

Law School and the Army were one thing, but how did I drift into being an Innkeeper Host? Am I the stereotypical innkeeper in Sedona—earthy, well dressed, well mannered, probably middle-aged (kids grown. re-married). Don’t think so. I am not a cook, unless you’re willing to

experiment. I am not a housewife, although now I clean rooms and make exquisite beds as tight as an Army cot. I neatly fold towels, almost like my mother folded them when I was a little girl. During my marriage to Don, I never chose to be a stay-at-home wife even though my work was at home on business projects and writing books. I'm not very domestic or traditional. Maybe I haven't the patience for it. Most likely it's the distasteful gender thing. "You can't tell me what I'm supposed to be doing or how I'm supposed to behave. I'm not my grandmother. Or my mother. And you are not my Pope."

When guests gather at the counter in the kitchen, I adorn my host face and slip into the job. "Good-morning, coffee?" We served a Caribbean breakfast of cut cantaloupe, honeydew melon, pineapple, fresh rolls or doughnuts, and always coffee and Florida orange juice.

I don't remember my first or last guest but I remember a few in between. Sometimes, someone says something polite and gracious. Probably with a southern accent. Or French. And the whole room lights up with magnolias. Then I like being a host.

"Sign in please. Where are you coming from?"

I should know. I took down their reservations. But I don't rehearse for guests. I know people are coming for this or that room; If ordered, we'll get the anniversary package ready—roses, chocolates, Champagne. But I don't study the names, or where my guests are coming from. I'm not standing at the door prepared to say, "Oh, you must be the Johnstons, all the way from Shreveport." Maybe I should, but I don't. Besides, it's nice to ask, "Where are you from?" It's a good conversation starter and that's my job. Helps me understand the guest. Are they friendly, boring, disgusted with the place, ready to leave. Then again, if I did say, "Why hello Mr. and Mrs. Johnston from Shreveport" maybe those who are disgusted with me would feel they couldn't let me down. I'm their new friend. But I've never been quite that fulsome.

Sometimes I just retreat into my office for a moment and write things down with a blunt pencil,  
not on the computer. Then return for more conversation with my esteemed guests.

Most of my YH poems are self-explanatory, in my opinion.

### A Good Conversation

A good conversation,  
No matter who you are,  
Or what you do,  
A good conversation is  
True to view:

A “toss the ball” suit; a  
“listening and learning session.”  
A good conversation  
Is meant to be had—  
By me.

A bad conversation goes  
Straight down the toilet  
After a flush,  
There is silence.

A mediocre conversation  
Is a short toss of the ball,  
Or really,  
A “handing over of the ball,”  
Slowly and steadily . . .  
Ho hum, “Did I leave my clothes in the washer?”  
“Where’s the cat?” ho hum.

But a splendid conversation,  
Well,  
I have met my match.

### I am going to make myself

I am going to make myself  
(and maybe make you too)  
dance along the way of life  
to a Krishna floating tune.

I am going to make myself  
Into who I aim to be

In full decorum and accord  
With whom I want to see.

I am going to make myself,  
You'll see  
I am going to make myself.

(Comments and meaning 7-11-23): As I've said, while at the Yacht House I felt very ambitious and capable of making all my aspirations come true. It seems, in my mind, there was no limit to what I could do. No limit to the possibilities. Although this is a good, positive trait to have, a strong belief in the self, it can also become a symptom of delusion. The mind has no bounds to what it can imagine. However, sometimes a person needs to re-evaluate her situation and maybe start small and work toward goals rather than becoming immersed in the delusion that she has already achieved those fantastic goals or that they are just a doorstep away and soon to arrive. I won't ascribe this to any kind of mental issue because I believe people commonly dream big dreams and it's the big dreamers who become the most successful. People who don't believe in themselves or dream big generally aren't society's billionaires, movie stars, top executives, or commanders in chief. However, there is an extraordinary difference between delusion and reality and delusion can also bring about a spiraling downfall. My self-perception at the Yacht House often marched several steps ahead of myself. And a lot of these poems reflect this.

#### Everything made possible by me

Everything I have  
Everything I do  
is made possible by Me  
with help here and there—opportunity,  
with initiative on my part.

In the end it's me Alone  
who makes possible what I  
have going for me—  
Being a married Woman.  
Being a divorced Woman.

I slept my way to the top

I slept my way up  
to the top  
to the top  
By down down down going  
to the top  
to the top  
by finding, discovering  
(through worry and fret)  
a way to Eternity  
to the top  
to the top  
by waking from where  
I once slept.

Short term memory

My goodness.  
How much of the day  
Do I run around  
Looking for things I should never lay  
Where my short-term memory  
No longer wishes to display–  
My goodness.

It was too simple a matter–  
The placement of keys, sun glasses, wallet, nail file . . .  
To draw it out long term  
Where memory is keen and sharp,  
Ripping asunder the words of my heart!

Too simple to make  
The placement of everyday things  
a permanent fixture  
Of my remarkably variegated industrious mind.

And now  
In this present  
I suffer in search  
(such a waste of time).

How much of each day  
Is spent in an assortment of acts,  
In places I'm at ALL THE TIME,

places soon forgotten?  
My Goodness.

How will I ever learn  
When it's simply  
Too short term?

### Irregular Days

I have such Irregular Days—  
Breezing  
by the moment  
In a flashy sparkle, a  
Horrendous sort of way.

These irregular times  
are mine  
Dancing moments Dancing thoughts  
harping harping tunes  
(oh my, when is doom?)

Irregularity—  
it's Monday  
and I'm already drained.

### A Lucky Little Day

What a lucky little day  
I had  
I claimed it (mine)  
to reign.

I always have myself  
to talk to  
to Party Hardy.  
If I choose  
YOU LOSE  
not I  
(for a moment comes  
the verge to cry).

I claim the reign  
I claim not the pain.  
TODAY IS MY DAY.

What a lucky little day

I had.  
I found a journal  
thought quite lost  
then another one appeared  
along with twinkles many  
foreshadowing  
the “lucky” rumblings of Today.

Happy Birthday to the lucky one.

(Comment and meaning 7-11-23): Yes, I wrote this on my birthday at the YH. I must have been turning 46 or so. Ironically, in two days I am fortunate enough to have another birthday. Obviously, when I wrote this poem I felt lonely. Perhaps I hadn't even shared that it was my birthday with Cecil because he was so volatile. And in two days, I'm not sure I'll be sharing this milestone as well. But I'm not sad or lonely. I am merely enjoying what I do and thankful for the gift of life. Happy Birthday Teri.

### Security and Notoriety

Security and notoriety  
I want—  
The 2 Not the one  
Not the common one that means  
“by all our standards”  
if I am secure  
I survive.

The jungle, the plane, the city, the class—  
I want my survival set up for me—  
I want security—by my own decree  
and that, I suppose,  
leads to Notoriety.

(Comments and meaning 7-11-23): I am having difficulty understanding what I meant when this poem popped from my thoughts. Maybe it means I don't want to be common and ordinary and merely survive day to day like a cat or dog. But why not? I wasn't being very Buddhist at this moment if I was aspiring to live beyond the moment at hand. And what is the

jungle, plane, city, and class. Jungle: the quagmire of humanity, the plane: something to fear, the city: humanity, but what is the class? Where we learn, most likely. "I want my survival set up for me" I think means I don't want to be bothered with common things (the common one) but then I say "I want security by my own decree" which means that I would set this up. And if I make my own security, it will lead to my notoriety which means I would have gone beyond the common and ordinary. This poem is rather too complex, I think. Or maybe not.

### Sifting for Poems

They're a wonder,  
I display  
even little ones  
I toss away.

Little gems  
of ancient years—  
Little stones  
of bygone fears.

Sifting for a poem  
through piles of prose  
(of which, when written,  
knew not where it goes.)

They are a wonder  
my little gems—  
I'm counting their number  
for you, now and then.

### Forever Friends

Friends I thought I'd have forever  
Now far away, forever now.  
Have they emerged in another  
World like he and I?

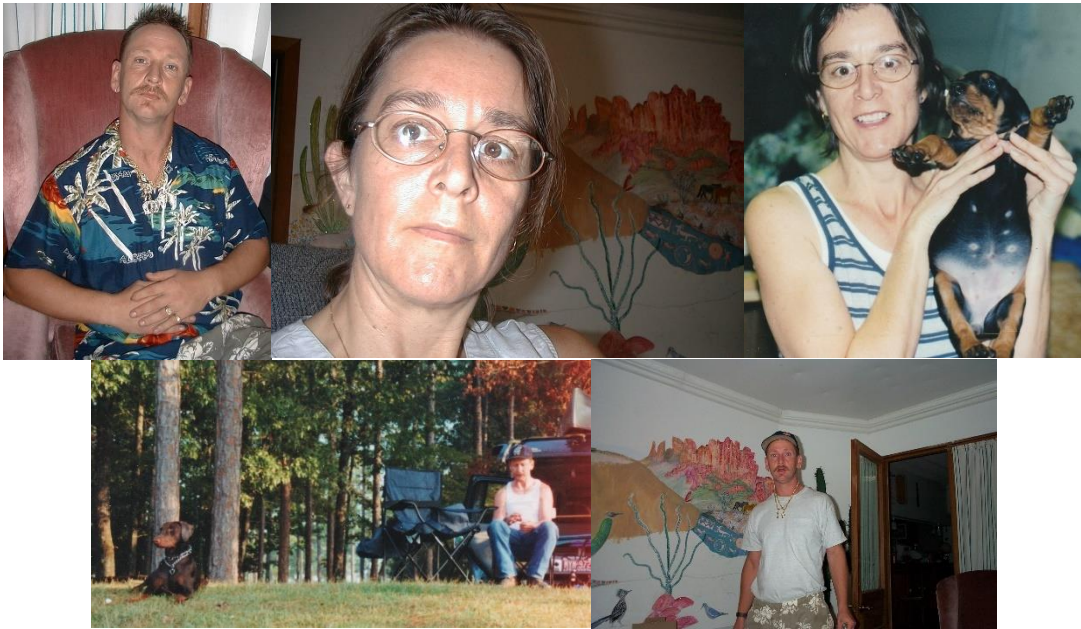
Are they still about?  
Passing faces passing time.

People at the Inn  
Become my friends

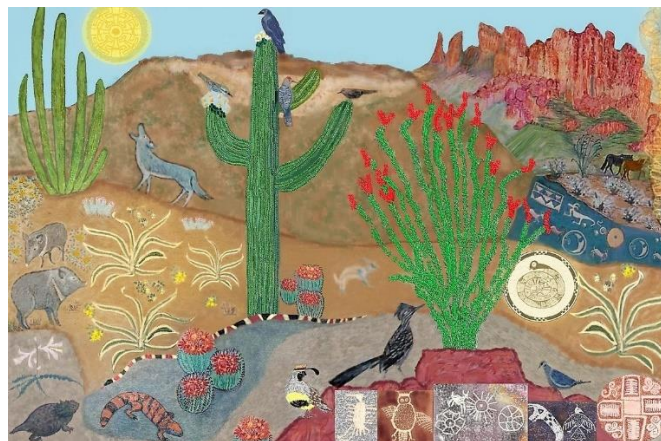


If even for a time of conversation  
(who says true friendship comes from childhood?)

Friends,  
In my heart,  
No matter who or where,  
I will always have  
Forever.



Behind Cecil in the picture is a mural of the desert I was painting on the wall of my office. I never finished it before I left the YH and actually returned to the desert I loved. I finished the picture on Photopaint.



The Sonora Desert by Teri Ekland

## Part II: A Tumultuous Relationship at the YH B&B

Many of my Yacht House poems are inspired Cecil Albert Newsom (he went by Sonny before I began calling him by his real name Cecil). We have nothing in common and at our worst times together, my life has been as tumultuous as my difficult childhood. At best, Cecil is my sole and constant companion.

When the Inn was empty of guests, Cecil and I sometimes drove across the Bay Bridge to Ft Pickens, an old Civil War fort guarding the entrance to Pensacola Bay on the western tip of Santa Rosa Island. Florida join the Confederate States of America but Fort Pickens remained a Union stronghold. We also went camping at a nearby lake or picnicking at Escambia Bay park. Nearly everywhere we went, Minnie and Max came with us and after Minnie had her puppies and we kept three, Tuffy, Biggie, and Runyan joined us as well. I adored my five dogs and loved going on outings with them. And it was always nice to be with a man who enjoyed my dogs as much as I did.





Me and my five Dobermans. Biggie and Tuffy

The following series of poems are specifically about my relationship with Cecil who became my second husband Valentine's Day on Arizona's statehood centennial. We happened to get married on this auspicious date completely by random (rather like our lives together, very few things have been strategically or romantically planned out). We are still together after nearly twenty-five years. The journey hasn't always been easy. But something between us has endured. Perhaps the following poems will indicate, somehow, what kind of epoxy binds us.

Uncertainties of an Undying Love

“Can't live with them  
can't live without them—  
especially when they won't leave”  
period.  
my time with Sonny  
has many shortcomings—  
  
uncertainties of  
an undying love.



### His point of view

He has his point of view,  
and it's wrong, immature, idiotic.

Well, so what.

He's entitled to an opinion. He's entitled  
to his own choice of religion, profession, denials, delusions—  
although he degrades and insults my gender proud.

But so, what.

He's entitled.

(although one day I may force him to leave).

### You do not want to share

You do not want to share

That part of you  
with me.

That "man's" part of  
Life,

That proud secret separateness

Once learned, perhaps,

In boyhood strife.

Therefore,

I close a part of me

To you.

I do not give up

All of me

For

Bits and pieces

Of your time.

### Don't Even Bother Me

Don't even bother me

If it's just for blame.

Don't prod me,  
Don't nudge me,  
DON'T DRIVE ME INSANE.

Don't ask my opinion,  
If it's only yours  
You care to hear.  
Just leave me alone  
Go on! Scram,  
Get out of here!

(I knew I still loved you,  
despite all of this,  
when you entered my room now,  
with a soft subtle kiss).

### The Man

I know that it's a man—  
I told him not to do that  
But he never hears my speak  
or if he does, it's not  
to be noticed:  
I know that it's a man.

### YH ditty

is she a good cook?  
is he a hard worker?  
is she pretty?  
is he strong?  
is she pretty  
is he smart  
is she pretty  
does he have a good job—or—  
what does he do?  
is she pretty?  
is he handsome?

### And the Headache Comes Back

And the headache comes back  
When I see him  
on the steps—  
I am by the pond  
Where I lose my thoughts to the flowers.

He is weeding, the man I intend to hire.  
Then I catch a glimpse of him  
on the steps that Wilson made—  
He sits slumped over and hardened (somewhat like those kutchra brick steps).  
And the headache comes back.

We cannot talk for long—  
he and I.  
A moment too long and we are way out of step—  
off the mark—emotional and misunderstood!!!

We cannot talk for long now,  
When the headache comes back.

(Comments and meaning 7-11-23): Long ago I decided it was useless to write negative things about the person I'm with and when I complained to friends about him, I came off sounding like a whiny victim. Just get rid of him! They might say. Relationships are too complicated to explain, sometimes, and it's best to leave them alone or describe them abstractly in poems. Which is what I did. (I also wrote several journal entries about the unpleasantness I often experienced but I later destroyed all these notes. They did me no good and they certainly did not do any favors for the object of my contempt.)

Now for the meaning of this poem. Why would a person behave with anger and accost another person with abusive words that bring about a headache? Because the abusive person does not have a clear head and cannot see himself proudly without demeaning another. Does it make him feel better about himself? It all boils down to a mind cluttered with misogyny, low self-esteem, a need to control, have power over another, anger, hatred, ignorance, and the constricts imposed on the individual by society, traditions, religions, cultures, and other forms of human institutions. The only way to have clarity of mind and gain wisdom is to empty the mind of all the human created clutter and find a compassionate center. Stop being mean-spirited.

## An Abomination is Abuse

An abomination is abuse.  
There is no truce.  
At least,  
None everlasting.  
Only fleeting lulls  
That shimmer in a stew  
Of trouble.

We are momentary people,  
He and I  
And sometimes I would rather be dead  
Than live with him in constant flicker.

(Comments and meaning 7-11-230): Why did I stay in a relationship that was toxic for me, that brought me troubling emotions? Probably because I experienced similar trauma as a child from a harsh bullying brother who berated me as a girl. Possibly I could not separate myself from the trauma because I hadn't come to terms with PTSD from childhood. It's just a theory and I am not a psychologist. I cannot psychoanalyze another person, especially someone close to me in a relationship. I can criticize, hate, complain, but I cannot know the tormenter's mind. I can only know my own mind.

When I wrote these Yacht House poems I was far from shedding myself of the PTSD from childhood. In part, I had become delusional about myself, viewing myself as a strong, capable, renaissance woman who could handle anything. Even torment. At the same time my inner core was weak and vulnerable and at times I literally begged my tormenter to forgive me and to love me. That is how far PTSD and delusion can take a person if she doesn't come to terms with her past haunts and clear her mind of the stigmas and social, cultural, and religious clutter. At the same time, although I could get away from the tormenter, couldn't discharge myself from his torment, I recognized what an abomination it is to be tormented (abused).

And what is verbal abuse? It's when the tormenter casts demeaning, degrading, controlling, gaslighting, manipulating, blaming, and a whole shitload of other words that create a mental stew of delusion. For both the tormenter and his victim. Abuse is hatred, anger, and or ignorance—the poisons of humanity.

### Impact Crater full of Hope

Though I dwell in an impact crater of hope,  
I just can't do it, now.  
I'm a bundled-up knot,  
My stomach churns,  
My heart palpitates,  
Vultures circle overhead.  
I'm alone in the desert  
And cannot survive.  
I don't even want to try.  
Some days  
I do not care to survive.

I survive?  
Because I try,  
Because I continue forward on a vision quest that has no limits beyond  
My imagination.  
My heart.

Beyond all hope, I fly through  
Pain, agony, and sometimes  
I burst with hope for survival . . .

But I am exhausted now,  
And alone  
(every one's got their own problems.)  
I am  
"oh, ah," all too tired  
of trying day by day,  
hour by hour,  
Always stretching forward  
To quench my thirst in a dry desolate land,  
A difficult thorny land,  
I pull myself across.

Tug and pull until I die.  
Thus, sayeth the Prophet of Hope,



the spirit who roams Earth  
Like a dust devil spinning high and long  
disturbing those upon the scene,  
those who cross my weary path of  
murals on the wall of  
hope, like my heart–  
or is it that  
hope is my heart  
and both have no limit.

There is no limit to hope  
As there is no limit  
To adjusting  
In order to survive.

Survive the desert crawl:  
Behold!  
All around there is water in hidden places–  
Water pure and clean, like breath itself.  
All the gold and jewels of Earth  
are not as wonderful as water  
to quench my thirst,  
as I walk to the desert's edge  
and paint bedazzling frescos  
about adventures beyond my scope,  
I am an impact crater full of hope.

(Comments and meaning 7-11-23): I include this poem “Impact Crater” and the following poem “Life I struggle through” in this collection because I wrote them while at the Yacht House. However, they prominently fit into my collection “Family Secrets” where I offer a lengthier commentary on both.

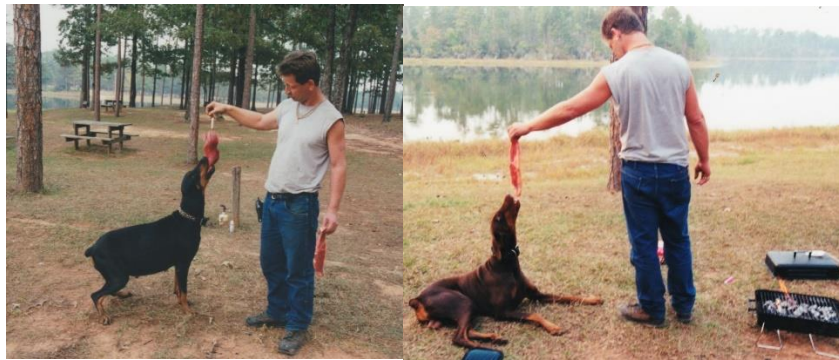
Life I Struggle Through (circa 2000)

Life I struggle through  
The struggle is not the end  
It is always the beginning  
The now  
The present  
The happening–madness  
Or Hope?

For some reason–

(unbeknownst to the seagull  
or the Doberman proud)  
Struggle is the ceaseless movement  
Of a cloud  
About a world  
Of spectacular speculation  
As stupendous  
As “right on hit.”

As  
The Earth, this solar planet  
That offers food and shelter  
And ALWAYS struggle  
Even when—and  
Whether or not—  
I choose to adventure through life  
I struggle on and on and on.



I have known the Bodhisattva

And we had vegetarian  
Tamales by a Coleman fire.  
By now we were having soy  
Burgers as well . . .

“How do you like the smell?” he asks,  
the man of “Wat sup” town.  
“Make it as you like it,” she says,  
the divorcing woman  
still friends with her spouse.  
The woman  
Who ran away with he—  
Man of the jungle, the wilds of the streets  
And other curiosities rather unknown,  
To her.

He—  
The third great adventure of her 43 years.  
He—  
Who would not leave her.

The times were hard—  
a time of learning each other's dance.  
We are each other's avatar—  
bodhisattva,  
in two,

I have known the Bodhisattva  
I became.



Bodhisattvas Vajrasattva, White Tara, and Vajrapani in the Himalayas.

(Comments and meaning 7-11-23): I wrote this poem while we were camping at Superstition Mountain shortly before heading to the Yacht House B&B in Florida. In my tumultuous relationship with him, I obviously have a great deal of affection and respect for him, as a person, as my sole companion, to write this poem and some of the others in this collection. That's what makes the relationship tumultuous. I could never force him to go and when he was kind and descent to me, helpful and considerate, I simply felt good and normal about "us." When we first got together I was a practicing Buddhist in that I believed in the Asian philosophy of compassion for all beings. At the same time, I was suffering from a lot of self-inflicted manic ideas that created a fair number of delusions. But I don't think it was a delusion when I thought of myself as Cecil's Bodhisattva. I even went so far as to believe my assignment on Earth was to

see him through to a better place. He was, after all, homeless and on drugs when I hired him to work on my ranch. Isn't it true for a lot of women? Don't women fall into seeing themselves as the "savior" of the wayward man? I believe this is common. Maybe there's even a psychological term for it. But here's what I'm saying in this poem. I may see myself as the one saving him but in our "dance," our tumultuous relationship, he is also imparting wisdom upon my psyche, my mind, and my soul. We don't learn about life by being spoon fed like little babies. Sometimes the more we suffer the more we find out the reality of our true nature. We chisel away at each other and either make the other into a piece of art or into a pile of rubble.

At his worst times, he still rages from his anxious nature and his biased notions about our reality brought on by religious and cultural beliefs that he cannot shed. But I have grown mentally strong, powerful in fact, because my mind is clear about who I am, I suffer no delusions about my nature and that of the world, and I know how to be content with what I have, love what I am doing, and not engage in anything stressful, which is the tumult. And so, with this lengthy diatribe I come to the point. By his nature which is raw and rough with a tender heart deep inside, he has helped me shape myself into who I now am. That makes him as much my Bodhisattva as I ever was his. Why? What is the purpose of a Bodhisattva? To guide, lead, and impart wisdom and enlightenment on those who are delusional and ignorant about their true nature. That is why we are each other's avatars, bodhisattvas. "I have known the bodhisattva I have become" means that I understand he has chiseled me as much as I have shaped him. It is the dance of Kali and Shiva. Kali's dance becomes so manic and passionate that she is about to destroy the world until Shiva throws himself under her feet and pacifies her in her dance. Am I Shiva or Kali or am I both?

In other words, I doubt I would have achieved the clarity of mind I now possess, in my humble opinion, if I had remained with my first spouse. Why? Because we were too much alike and that is boring and boring probably does not take a person into the farthest reaches of human compassion and intelligence. Status quo is a no go.



### The Instigator

It's him. Really all him.  
Who stirs the voices of my head—  
the dervishes, the angels,  
the voices divine.  
It's really him,  
the Instigator  
of my present time  
of all my present time.

(Comments and meaning 7-12-23): I believe this poem compliments what I was describing in the previous poem about being each other's bodhisattvas.



I am like a rapper

I am like a rapper  
I would say  
in many ways  
F T World.  
I do my own thing  
although my mantra shall be  
“my actions bring  
serenity—not pain.”

“Let’s try to get along—  
(words of Rodney King)  
words—  
that I pass on to Him.

There are rapper sounds  
with funny names—  
Snoop Dog, Master P, Biggie Big, Queen Latiffa  
and Tupac too.  
And of course, Ice-T.  
Green  
Ice-Tea, that’s me.

Though sometimes I want to say,  
F the World  
Let me be  
Let me see  
for the World is all that is—  
created by the Rap Man of Possibility  
of Language  
of Power  
of Vitamins to see.

AND Rap Man, Ice -T—  
Your soul is no less tormented than Mine—  
My Green Ice-T drinking  
Valentine.

(Comments and meaning. My birthday 2023): I like this poem. I’m sure I wrote it because Cecil (Sonny) was a big rap fan. He love Tupac and constantly played “Dear Mama” especially while we were camping. At first I thought I liked Tupac and rap music because I have eclectic tastes. I love Indian raga music, Classical music, Latino music and so on. But I soon

grew tired of rap especially with all the “F” bombs and “N” words in play. In fact, I wrote a poem where I called myself the “N” word because sometimes the misogyny of the world makes me feel like that’s what they’re calling me. But really, I was so offended by the use of this word in this poem that I discarded it. This poem, however, seems pleasant. “That I passed to Him” is my asking Cecil for us to get along. “My Green Ice-T drinking Valentine” is simply a nice ending but I also feel it’s like my “serene and pleasant” gift to the world, or at least to readers of this poem. If to no one else then to myself and maybe to Cecil although I am quite certain he will never read this poem and I will never share it with him. He is too self-focused for me to step beyond our living moment by moment with whatever is going on in his world, not mind. We live harmoniously together these days by living our separate lives and coming together when need be. It’s all good this way. I have learned to adjust to a complex simple man while living my life and enjoying what I do (writing and enjoying my animals). Perhaps he has also found this equilibrium with me (when he is not in his dark Mr. Hyde moods!) Viva la difference.



### From the shadows of this world

From the shadows of this world  
Came my inspiration  
As the spirits laughed with joy  
For we had waited a long, long time.

But there is a twist, an edge—  
When inspiration comes.  
It—inspiration—  
Is not an easy thing.  
No! Oh No.  
With it comes pain,  
Agony,  
Betrayal,  
And loneliness.

We are, after all,  
Every one of us all,  
from the shadows  
Of this world.  
And, for, within  
These shadows stays  
“the heart” awaiting to be pierced,  
awaiting  
to laugh a great laugh.  
And,  
Awaiting  
To be loved  
For a long, long time.

Written about Sonny. I started writing this poem for what I thought would be my vows to him. But then all the chaos came during my “Vision Quest” traveling in a Mallard Trailer with two Doberman Pinchers and a crackhead. As I just re-read this poem, I felt very emotional at the end. It’s about finding love that lasts through all of life’s tumults. (2018).



I need him

I need him  
Really need him  
To make me a go.



I am proud  
Of him  
(there's that too),  
proud of his efforts  
and accomplishments  
here at the Yacht House.

All that I feel is hard to deal.

And he is really trying now  
to please me  
to be with me  
to stay himself,  
a man  
a father of a son.

(what is this husband thing?)  
I now know  
If he were to go  
That would cripple my heart  
(like watching my old cat die).

He and I  
need much space around us,  
individually.  
At the same time,  
We must be  
Very close together  
I and he.

Can I be at peace with this man?  
Maybe, if I leave him in his space  
And gently nudge him from mine.

(Comments and meaning. My birthday 2023): This poem seems self-explanatory and goes along with what I've been saying in my other YH poems about my relationship with Cecil. We have nothing in common, he scarcely knows me (no one ever really has), he puts me through tumults when he becomes his Mr. Hyde self, and yet, he makes me into who I am and when he is not in his ruptured place, I am quite content sharing my life's dance with the man who would not leave me.

### Part III: Cats and Dogs



Running a business, being a writer, creating art, is like training Doberman Pinchers, an ongoing process if you want a sharp dog. (although Dobermans are naturally trained. Naturally sharp. Just need to command them.) A good piece of advice I read somewhere suggested, “Treat your dog like you are always training him. Otherwise, he’ll think it’s time to play.” Dogs NEED to be trained. Cats prance the world in slippers, self-absorbed. People are probably a mixture of both. Run your life like you are always in training. Run your business with an open mind to learn. Remember you have influence as an innkeeper, over your guests.



#### My Doberman Puppies at the Yacht House B&B

In my memoir “The Desert’s Edge” I describe how Doberman Pinchers became a big part of my life. It all began after my first spouse and I moved to our rural ranch and we needed good watch dogs. My father recommended the Doberman and I traveled up to Phoenix twice and purchased Minnie and then Max. I completely fell in love with my Doberman puppies and when

I left Don and the ranch and traveled the southern states in search of a B&B, Minnie and Max were at my side as much as Cecil.



There is no doubt that when I acquired Minnie and Max I intended to breed them. But this didn't happen until perhaps a few months after we were settled at the YH. Minnie must have had close to ten puppies. We kept her and her pups in the side room of the main house, a large unfinished room that the previous owner had used for his business of making sails, canvas awnings, and masts.

Minnie had somehow bitten one of the newborns, perhaps because she was so new to being a mother. It had a patch of white on its chest because Minnie, unlike Max, was not fully pedigreed. I felt terrible and rushed the puppy to the Vet, a woman who took the puppy home to see if she could help it recover. But it didn't survive and I felt terrible.

I used to be very emotionally attached to my animals in an obsessive and non-Buddhist way and any death of my animal companions left me devastated. Even newborns. But I have overcome a lot of my tendencies in life that really serve no purpose but to bring about suffering.

I have since learned to appreciate animals as spiritual beings, as my bodhisattvas really (which I express in my final poem in this collection.) Don't get me wrong, animals own my heart and I am sad at their passing, but I don't become overwhelmed with grief because they are merely showing me the transitory nature of life and love and devotion.

But let me continue with the story of my little puppies from Minnie. I attended to them diligently and when they were old enough I placed an ad in the local newspaper and sold all but three of them. Cecil liked the biggest pup and named him Biggie. I debated over keeping the runt of the litter and the female I called the pick of the litter because she was a beautiful well shaped puppy. I ended up keeping the runt because she seemed attached to Biggie; they were bonded litter mates and she was extremely smart. I named her Runyan, for runt, and she became a special Doberman to me, forever in my heart and psyche, as are all of my Dobermans.

A side story is that I sold the Pick of the Litter to a young woman with kids and one day, a few weeks later, the Pick showed up at the YH and was soon followed by her new owner. The young woman said she had named (pick) Honeybun which I thought was a very suitable name. When this young woman was driving by the YH, Honeybun jumped from their car window and ran up to our porch. The puppy remembered her birth home and I was touched but not surprised because Dobermans are about the smartest dogs I've ever encountered. Smarter than humans in many ways, but so are a lot of animals. I am partial.

I kept a third puppy that I named Tuffy because I couldn't bear to part with his cuteness. I first took notice of him when Max was near their whelping box where all the puppies line up excitedly against the board railing. Max growled at them and little Tuffy whined and whimpered and ran to the corner to hide, or sulk. Cecil suggested that his feelings had been hurt. I picked Tuffy up, held him, bonded, and decided on the spot to name him Tuffy and keep him along with

Runyan and Buggie. Throughout the ten years I had Tuffy, he was devoted to me like no other dog I've ever shared my life with. When I was in the yard, for example, he would be nearby staring at me with the eyes of a devotee to his guru. And at night, he would sleep outside my bedroom window. I'm sure he would have killed anyone who tried to harm me.

We had the ears of our three puppies cropped and bandaged but Tuffy's never took. And on every outing to the lake or Escambia Bay or Sanders Beach, we took the five dogs and I loved every minute with them.

Whenever we were about to go somewhere in the Explorer, I would say to my dogs "in" and each Doberman went to his designated spot. Runyan went to the front passenger floorboard, Minnie and Max sat in the back seat like people, and the boys, Biggie and Tuffy, jumped into the back end. When we slept overnight by a picknick table in a rest area, on our way back to the desert, my five Dobermans surrounded me and I felt safe, secure, and protected for the night.

My original Dobermans were amazing dogs. Since their passing I've had several more. I bred them for a while. In recent years I assumed my life with Dobermans was over but then I found a red male in need of a forever home on the site [rescueme.com](http://rescueme.com)—an animal rescue site worth every cent of any donation.



Runyan Biggy and Tuffy

### My Doberman Pups

How can any religion  
Tell me that

My Doberman Pups  
Don't have souls?

That's preposterous!  
They have souls  
That light my heart  
Afire with glee.



### Escambia Bay

Here I sit,  
An evening cool breeze,  
Off Escambia Bay.  
They walk out into the water,  
Father and son,  
And the dogs,  
Minnie and Max.

They parade out to fish,  
Wading, Waltzing,  
Then casting lines  
Far into the Bay,  
(As the Dobermans dance  
In their idle play.)

The dogs are now chased  
back to my shore.  
And I hear gayful calls,  
Father and son,  
They are catching fish!

(Comments and meaning 7-14-23): Not long after Cecil and I took over the YH, and before Minnie and Max had their puppies, Cecil's 15-year-old son Cameron came for a visit and stayed with us for two weeks. He slept in the side room where Bob had his canvas shop and we provided him with a computer during his stay. We took him to Escambia Bay to go fishing. I

never fished but I enjoyed sitting on the beach, relaxing, and watching father and son enjoy themselves. They mostly caught stingrays which they unhooked and released back into the channel. I loved watching my Dobermans Minnie and Max have as much fun in the water as Cecil and Cameron.



Young Cameron, Cecil's son, with Minnie and Max. Teri with her Doberman Pups

#### My cats at the Yacht House B&B

Before I ever became a Doberman person (a dog lover) I was firmly a cat person especially when I lived on Night Hawk Way. (Please see my collection of poems from NHW which describes all the cats I adopted, starting with two beloved Siamese cats—Mai Tai and Ginseng.) When I left my first husband and my ranch in rural Maricopa I also left behind my cats. They stayed with Don because I was traveling the country in a Mallard trailer looking for a B&B and I had with me Minnie and Max and Sonny (Cecil).

The previous owner of the YH, Bob, left behind two cats, Snowflake and Tiger (a white cat and a yellow tabby). Not long after I was settled and running my new B&B, Don's new wife arrived from China and she didn't like cats. Don asked me to come get them and Cecil, my dogs, and I drove the 2000 miles and I picked up my two Siamese and four other cats: a black tuxedo cat named Andrew, a Persian named Inca, a yellow tabby named Damian, and a long-haired Siamese named Tara.



Andrew, Ginseng, Damien and Tara.

After the stressful journey to their new home, my six cats quickly adapted to the YH and enjoyed the sunshine on the veranda. By this time, my original cat, my beloved Siamese Mai Tai, was seventeen-years-old and was showing his age. I took him to the Vet and she told me he had something going on with his kidneys. I felt broken. I cried in the Vet's office and she advised me to enjoy each day I had left with my cat. When Mai Tai was unable to eat, I had the Vet put him down. She gave him back to me in a box with a very Buddhist poem that said something like "although this pet passes, a new one will come like reincarnation and you will find the same love for your new companion."

I buried Mai Tai in the front yard under a platform intended for a large lion fountain that I found in town. The fountain cost about two-thousand dollars and it was never delivered because by the time I was ready to complete this massive memorial to my cat, everything was falling apart between Don and me. He wanted to pull out of the YH and I couldn't sustain the business without his support. I got a partial refund on the lion fountain and within weeks, I was returning to the desert leaving Mai Tai buried in the front yard under the concrete platform. The idea may seem manic, but I think of it as a big hearted and massive tribute to a cat I adored for seven-teen years.

The cat story doesn't end with Mai Tai's fountain. While Mai Tai was still wandering the YH grounds during my second year running the B&B, two other cats came into my life. Two



young black cats. The first one crossed Cyprus Street from the Yacht Club and approached me while I was on the YH grounds. I picked him up, took him inside the main house and that was that. I named him Mai Tai's Shadow because he was black like a shadow. Shortly after this, while Cecil and I were at the local Blockbuster getting videos (this was over twenty years ago) a black kitten approached us in the parking lot and we took her home to be a companion to Mai Tai's Shadow. Cecil named her Pretty Girl and she stayed with us for nearly twenty years. Sadly, and most unfortunately, Mai Tai's Shadow didn't survive too long after we moved back to the desert and I purchased a home on three acres in Maricopa. Cecil and I had built a kennel at the back of our home so the Pretty Girl and Mai Tai's Shadow could step outside in the sun and use the litter box. Shadow got out of this kennel and before we could stop it, Biggie nabbed him. The cat put up a fight and caused Biggie's neck to swell up. But Shadow didn't make it. I felt terrible because I had envisioned having my two black cats for many years. Shadows of my Siamese cats. I carried Shadow's body out into the raw desert, like I was an ancient Egyptian priestess mourning her cat, and placed him on the earth for the vultures and desert coyotes. It was a Zoroastrian funeral.

As for all the other cats: I left Bob's cats Snowflake and Tiger at the YH and brought back to the desert Ginseng, Tara, Andrew, Inca, and Damian (along with my two shadow cats). I also brought along another black stray that showed up at the YH shortly before we left. He was a rough looking Tom, a tuxedo cat, that had obviously been in many scrapes. For this reason, I named him Lucky. Sadly, most of my cats disappeared during our first few years back in the Sonora, or grew old and had to be put down. But that's the nature of cats, of pets, they prance into our lives wearing slippers and often sneakily prance away, like ethereal spirits.

These days, 2023, to complete my story of cats, Cecil and I live with two: Mama, who is actually a neutered male gray tabby, and another Siamese I call Ginseng. Ginseng lives outside and in the garage because she drags her butt, but she's stays in the front courtyard and has been with us for ten years. Mama has the run of the house, the run of Cecil and I. Actually, Cecil named her (him) and thinks of her as his cat. But Mama likes to sleep on my desk and interrupt my writing on my laptop. Such is living with cats.



Mai Tai's Shadow and Mai Tai at pond. Teri with Mai Tai's Shadow and Pretty Girl and holding old Mai Tai like I had since he was a kitten.



Andrew and my Siamese enjoying the veranda. A black stray kitten that showed up at the YH.



Mai Tai young. Mai Tai old with Snowflake.

My Tai (My first Siamese Cat from a Boston pet store in 1987. He cost \$200)

The time of sharing  
is overcome  
by the reaches of your life.

I've loved you all the time  
(It's not like loving a man  
when there are times  
I do not love).

I love you all the time  
perhaps now  
more than ever before  
as I repose  
before my old and dying cat.



Second Ginseng with Cracker. Second Ginseng with Second Ruby Red

### The nature of cats and dogs

A cat is there when he wants to be there  
like a ghost he appears,  
“I’m here, I’m your cat!  
Your time is mine, all the time.  
I demand to sit on your writing pad.  
Tuna fish, oh?  
Good-bye I go.”  
And that is that for perhaps a long while—  
the cat has style.

The dog, on the other hand,  
likes Mommie near.  
“We are happy all happy  
when Mommie is here.”

We women, like the cat,

are on our own.  
We like to roam  
and wander about, if even in our mind—  
although you try to keep our spirit suppressed,  
like the cat—our style is best.

The dog, on the other hand,  
is much like a man.



### A Moment Stretched Across the Room

A moment stretched across the room,  
Where spools of yarn play with cats,  
Where windows open for Arizona Sunshine,  
In winter's polluted but wonderful air.  
Where trees outside are silly creatures,  
Offering branches to the  
Sweet songs of nightingales,  
That are never there.

No.  
Here are house finches, males with red Shakespeare collars  
To decorate their feather pride.  
They come to the window for seed  
Put out to amuse the cats.  
And here are warblers, thrashers and Gila woodpeckers  
That make houses in idols  
Tall and green  
With trifurcated thorns.

The moment now wears no clothes,  
Though sometimes,  
It beholds  
The collar of a nightingale.

(This poem is from my collection of Night Hawk Way poems but I include it here because it pertains to cats.)

### I am the Bodhisattva

I am the Bodhisattva,  
Here to assist you,  
Here to gently guide.

I am the Bodhisattva,  
That is all my pride,  
That is all my joy.

(Comment and meaning 7-10-23): I place this little ditty here because for me, animals are my bodhisattvas. My dogs and cats ground me and teach me to live life with contentment, tranquility, and in the moment at hand.



### Tarot-Insights

About five years before I moved to the Yacht House B&B, my first husband and I formed a website business called Arastar Internet. It was during the onset of the world wide web back in the mid-1990's. I spawned several website businesses from this initial hosting site including writtenweb.com (for my books), arastar.org (for my nonprofit interests and customers), and worldproducts.com (for an import-export business). One of the businesses I had at the YH was the website Tarot-Insights.com. On the site I did readings for the questions visitors submitted.

At the time, in addition to my standard Rider-Waite deck, I had accumulated a variety of Tarot decks featuring themes from the Maya, ancient Egypt, Herbs, Native American cultures, and even cats. Eventually, I gave them all away and here's why. Twice in my adult life I fell into

a period of time where I adopted the tenants of a religion. Otherwise, my philosophy and sentiments have primarily been Buddhist or even Hindu. Asian philosophy, in other words. The first time I became religious occurred while I was in Thailand and suffering from a lot of culture shock. I am a very direct person and Thai people have a very indirect way of expressing themselves. I found myself facing a lot of clashes. At the same time the many missionaries in the small community where I worked as an English teacher basically became my only friends. Either they convinced me to follow their beliefs or I fell under their sway. But soon after I returned to the US, married, and got on with my life, the religion began to lose its appeal and I once again became much more comfortable following the ways of Asian spiritualism, such as having compassion and relying on the self to obtain clarity of mind.

The second time I fell into religion, and the time I gave away my tarot decks, occurred during my second marriage. After being together with Sonny/Cecil for twelve years, we married and a few years later I adopted his religion. Why? He and I have so little in common and I think I felt that we could relate better if I spoke in his religious way of thinking. That lasted a few years and my adopting his religion didn't soften any of the misogyny lodged deeply in his brain and supported by his religion. I didn't gain his respect or anything else other than becoming subservient to him as his wife. I had to shed my attachment to his religion in order to achieve any kind of self-awareness. I returned to the Buddhist way of thinking, of meditating on images and of understanding the true nature of my life apart from all the delusions religion and society impose on the individual.

Ironically, the Tarot cards are a tool for achieving clarity on the journey of life. They are a source of imagery to help the mind focus and understand the self in the context of his or her surroundings. These days, twenty-three years after I lived at the YH and had my internet

businesses, I have resumed reading the tarot if for no one but myself. A reading is as good as any meditative practice at an altar of Buddha, Tara, Krishna, and Ganish statues.

I started reading Tarot when I worked at the University of Kuwait in 1985 so when I started Tarot-insights.com I had been familiar with the cards for about fifteen years. They really suite my artistic way of thinking, that is, in images more than in words.

Tarot-Insights.com opened with the words “Intuitive Tarot of the Collective Unconscious, a Jungian archetypal view of the subconscious mind through TJ Huntington.” I selected this name as my “pen-name” because it was the last name of a great-great-great-grandmother Jane Hoontz Huntington, who is as far back as I can trace my maternal lineage.



Annette May Huntington Frye (Jane Hoontz’s daughter) in the center with her children

From my website:

About TJ Huntington:

While earning degrees in anthropology, English and law, and while compiling a variety of books and novels, TJ Huntington has researched Egyptology, World Religions (Abrahamic and Asian), Eastern mysticism—notably Buddhism, Hinduism and Taoism; Maya, Aztec, and Inca pre-Columbian spirituality and archaeoastronomy. She has been an amateur astronomer for

25 years while living throughout the world as both a university lecturer (China, Thailand, Kuwait) and as a student of law (Tel Aviv University) and languages (Guatemala, Costa Rica).

Explore the tarot cards through TJ Huntington, tarot reader since living in China, India, Thailand and Kuwait from 1982-1985. TJ Huntington lives to explore the natural world and the reaches of inner space. Each tarot reader offers a unique perspective on the cards. Some people read for occult fortunes and magic. TJ Huntington uses the tarot to discover subconscious wisdom and insight. Through tarot, Huntington reveals hidden meanings to the Questioner, offering universal images that have existed since antiquity.

With Huntington as your guide, delve into archetypal images stemming from the collective psyche of human experience. Gain a new perspective of your nature and the world at large. Challenge the truths you hold and discover the depths of imagination. Learn to identify unconscious trends, end recurring bad habits, and enhance attributes. Find answers, make affirmations, and grow in the wisdom and spirit of tarot.

If you like what you read on this web-insight and the card descriptions, request a reading from TJ Huntington.

#### Suggested Areas of Exploration:

Career: advancement, change, influences and obstacles

Relationships: marriage, family, friends, job, school

Unresolved problems: from childhood, past relationships

Anxieties, stresses, fears, phobias, aspirations, wishes, hopes

Sample questions: aim for situations that need resolution

What is bothering me?

Why can't I sleep at night?

What are the influences around me? The obstacles?

What are my recurring habits? Why am I so unhappy?

Choice of spreads:

Love, Travel, Life, Situations, One card for yes or no situations



Choice of Tarot Deck:

**Maya Tarot:** ephemeral life is flowers and song, death a blessing to the sun

**Egyptian:** the esoteric and ancient land along the Nile

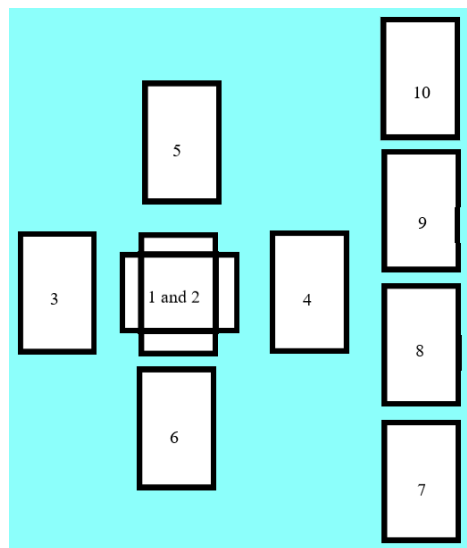
**Rider:** the traditional set of tarot symbols

**Morgan-Greer:** bold and colorful cards **de France**

**Herbal Tarot:** herbs are the healers of life

Celtic Cross Spread:

For most of the following readings, Huntington uses a spread called the Celtic Cross. The spread is a cross with four cards at the side.



The meaning:

1. The first card in the spread is the Questioner's present state-of-mind. His positioning.
2. This card is crossed with the immediate challenge or problem facing the Questioner.
3. To the left of the positioning card is the Past event that led to the present mindset.
4. To the right of the positioning card is the nearby Future card of possibilities.
5. Above the positioning is the Questioner's aim or goal card.
6. Below the positioning is the card representing the Questioner's deeper motives, his subconscious mind.
7. In the line of four cards next to the above cross configuration, the bottom card offers advice for an approach to resolve the issue or conflict at hand.
8. Above this card is the card representing outside influences beyond the Questioner's control.
9. Above this is the card representing the Questioner's hopes, fears, aspirations—hidden or obvious.
10. And the last of these four cards, at the top, is the card suggesting the final outcome, the resolution to the Questioner's issue or challenge.

### Reading 32:

General Situational Reading with the Herbal Deck and Celtic Cross

Question: “What are the influences/obstacles around me?”

	<b>Ace Wands</b>		<b>5 Swords</b>
<b>King of Pentacles down</b>	<b>World over 3 Coins</b>	<b>6 Wands</b>	<b>The Sun</b>
			<b>4 Cups down</b>
	<b>7 Cups down</b>		<b>High Priest down</b>

### The Interpretation:

I like these kinds of questions for a Celtic Cross reading! This reading shows tremendously powerful influences in two of the highest Major Arcana—the World and the Sun. No swords, mostly wands (3), which is the suit of spirit or deeply held matters and beliefs; and two cups, the suit of emotions and love.

Your starting position is the 3 of Coins, the novice card, the apprentice developing a skill. In the herbal deck a farmer begins toiling the soil on his knees. The land is vast and green, the moon appears over the distant hills. A very nurturing place to be. Seeds are planted now for future growth. The herb is the Gentian, a bitter tonic used to aid digestion before meals (the seed theme). It indicates the apprentice needs to take the time to develop (digest) talents and skills.

Then you have a powerful and enlightened crossing over of this position with the World card, the Universe. The final goal of everyone on the spiritual path to enlightenment is to understand the self in the world at large. The image shows the Earth, clouds (weather), and the sun, and the roots of the plant Comfrey growing deep into the soil. The herb promotes healing

and is used both internally and externally. The entire plant is used for healing purposes—for burns, abrasions, broken bones, fevers, and infections. In other words, the herb heals within and without. This is a card of coming together, of wholeness.

The World card points to the recent past, indicating a pull toward some positive influences or lessons you had that will propel you forward. What lies in that past is a personality influence as the King of Coins upside down. This indicates the diminishment of a strong personality or the loss of control in the financial realm (but bear in mind what the World is saying that you have learned a great life's lesson from whatever that upheaval was.

The King of Coins is a business figure, usually, (could be a man or a strong dominating personality). He is rigid though well organized and conservative. Things didn't work out as he would have it, so he lost control and became overbearing, causing stress and even loss of a sharp shrewd wit (the kind needed in good business deals). His herb is alfalfa, a familiar herb that we sprout to enjoy on a nutritious sandwich or in a salad. If we had but water and alfalfa seeds we could manage to live a long time. Could these be the seeds you now are trying to harvest? Alfalfa is an herb used to regulate weight and control arthritis and other painful afflictions.

There is an interesting pattern in your other cards—the cups and wands cards in particular. Starting at your foundation you have the Seven of Cups upside down. And later, in the outer environment position you have the 4 of Cups down. Very similar cards in that both talk of “pie in the sky,” that is, overlooking what you have in order to reach for more, and both are upside down. The 7 of Cups down in your foundation indicates you are “no sucker.” You overcame disillusion during your early years (years you were most susceptible to influences when you were learning the truths of life or being disillusioned by untruths). This is a dreamer card but being upside-down means that you don't let your dreams overrule reality. The herb is

Juniper Berries, an herbal tea used to calm the dreamer and help with digestion. This is a good card at the foundation. If you are facing decisions that are too uncertain, you won't act hastily.

In the near future stands the victory card, the 6 of Wands, a warrior standing with his wands in line after having returned from a battle victory. You are in store for rewards based on your efforts as the apprentice. The card is also a pause card, a respite before moving forward. The herb is the hawthorn which we all know from Socrates. The greatest western philosopher took his own life with the herb. The herb is actually good for heart problems and promoting blood circulation.

Above the positioning is another positive card, the Ace of Wands. Aces stand for new beginnings, new possibilities, a clean sweep into a new venture. Aces also stand for victory at the deepest level of self-knowledge. You will find simple fulfillment in your endeavor. Or, you will simplify the endeavor. The herb is yarrow and is used to help sweat out colds and fevers and relieve congestion and cramps.

In the approach toward resolution, you start with the attitude of the High Priest upside down. He is reflective of the King of Coins down, perhaps the attitude is shaped by a past experience. This card indicates blind obedience, which seems to go against the other influences in the spread. There is perhaps an attitude block in your progress to reach the Ace of Wands. The block could be the same controlling personality and in this position it indicates that you might let that control influence your attitude. The herb is tasty sage used to enliven food, scent the air during ceremonies, and help with indigestion. An all-around powerful herb. There is indication of religious influence as the blockage.

The environment, as mentioned, is the 4 of Cups down, reflecting the 7 of Cups in your foundation. This card shows a meager Spartan environment. You won't have the luxury to turn

down offers, reject gifts, because what's offered will be needed. It appears, with your given influences, you will act wisely in the environment if you do not allow the wrong attitude to interfere with your decisions. The herb is burdock, a nutritive herb used for surface skin ailments. The seeds are used for fevers.

Moving on to the position of inner hopes and anxieties you reach the other major arcana of powerful and positive influence, the Sun. Here you overcome any bad attitude and find clarity, warmth, and contentment. The herb is angelica, a stimulant and tonic that warms the blood and promotes circulation.

The spread ends on a compliment of the 6 of Wands in the near future. In a sense your spread is like the wheel of fortune which tells us that life has its highs and lows. That's truth. That's reality. This card pairs with the Ace of Wands and shows that what you reach for is with commitment and struggle. Nothing worthwhile comes without hard work, in other words. The card speaks of being serious, dedicated to a cause and an endeavor. The herb is the wonderful yellow turmeric which spices up Indian food, aids in beauty, and promotes good health.

### **Reading 33:**

General One Card with the Herbal Deck

Question: "Will I ever have children/a child?"

### **The Interpretation:**

I am not a divinatory reader. My readings are best viewed as situational, suggestive, and insightful. The tarot offers insightful images that reach into our subconscious minds and tap into archetypes that bring about a better understanding of ourselves in our environment.

In a case like this, with such a hopeful future-oriented question, my suggestion is to view the archetype of the card as possibilities arising from attitudes, influences, and actions.

Why all this preamble? The selected card is the “Three of Swords” which offers obstacles and disappointments rather than promotions and joy. But, I must immediately add, it is the rough times that bring about a stronger character and steadier mind, heart, and spirit.

Swords are a suit of intellect, of force, a combination of all your attributes. If used wisely, it means using all your wit, emotions, spirit, and financial powers to propel you toward your goal (which should always be that of enlightenment—an honest understanding of the self).

The three in the Herbal Deck is a heart pierced by three swords. It can mean painful love and emotions, but it also indicates that a decision will be made in opposition to the heart (feelings). The promise of this is the power of the mind progressing beyond dependent painful habits or emotions (such as recurring emotional insecurities). It may be a painful step to take, but a maturing one. In making a firm decision, one that is well thought out, you can become detached from negative influences and a painful relationship.

The herb is pleurisy root. Roots are the source of life. Our channel to the nutrients of Earth, our home, our mother. This root is used to cure deep afflictions.

In sum, though wounded, the heart grows stronger with a firm mind steadying the course ahead. At the same time, the card could indicate that another direction from childbearing lies ahead. Possibly, you will meet unexpected success and rewards after a period of emotional disappointment. (Your life’s rewards may not be in childbearing, as you now might imagine).

I don’t want to answer the question directly, merely suggestively as is the nature of the cards. As I said, I’m not a divinator of the tarot. But you can gather from the meaning what is possibly in store.

### **Reading 34:**

General Situational Reading with the Celtic Cross Spread  
 Question: "Future?" This reading occurred at Mt. Shasta

	<b>Devil</b>		<b>King of Coins</b>
<b>5 of Wands</b>	<b>Ace of Coins over the 9 of Swords</b>	<b>Fool down</b>	<b>Page of Wands</b>
			<b>3 of Wands</b>
	<b>6 of Swords</b>		<b>7 of Cups</b>

**The Interpretation:**

In this spread you have three wands, two swords, two coins, and one cup: the future offers spiritual awareness. Intellect and finances will play more a part than the emotions. There is some conflict though it's not severe. Personalities seem more in harmony than at odds and outer influences align with your inner powers.

The positioning is a severe card of self-doubt and worry, self-imposed burdens, and real sorrows. But knowing sorrow offers balance to your perspective. To progress, we must embrace sorrow as well as joy.

The card is crossed by the Ace of Coins pointing to a struggle in the recent past as embodied in the 5 of Wands. The 5 represents a struggle, one that you could have voluntarily entered in order to find gain. Competition brings gain. The Ace signifies a new beginning in the realm of finances, possibly reminding you of the gain from recent conflict. The influence could pull you from the 9 of Swords slump, though it isn't as powerful as a major arcana card. It indicates an opening into new ventures built on past ground work.

Below the positioning is the 6 of Swords, card of intellectual movement toward progression. Influences from childhood or formative years help bring about this movement away from what isn't right for you, toward better territory. Because it is under the 9 of Swords, it

indicates movement from debilitating sadness or self-imposed burdens. You have learned to problem solve and will work your way out of torments.

The two Major Arcana shelve the near future and the possible outcome. The Devil, overlooking the positioning, indicates a potential for clinging to emotions or possessions. An obsession, for example. Perhaps there is a potential to cling to burdens and sorrows that stifle progression. This card seems at most to be a warning against clinging to tendencies that prevent your progress toward an enlightened future. Don't deny tendencies represented by the Devil, however. Face them and let them go. Become un-chained.

The fool in the near future also suggests the new beginning of the Ace. There may be one or two attempts before the progress takes hold because the ace points away from the Fool and the Fool is upside down. Be careful of heedless careless attempts. Use the intellect and avoid an obsessive tendency.

The 7 of Cups starts the attitude on your path toward resolution. It signifies optimism, hope, dreaming or wishing for many things. There is a lot of promise in the card. One must hope and dream to progress. The down side is of course pie in the sky dreaming. Talk without action.

But the next three cards show much promise. Starting with the 3 of wands in the environment - the world outside yourself that you pass through to reach a higher state. It shows achievement, wealth, the ability to rest a while and view what you have established. The environment would be a friendly one. There is peacefulness here, perhaps a secure place after the 9 of Swords experience. You have something to look forward to.

This feeling extends to the inner hopes and fears as manifested in the Page of Wands, the next card. Pages also signify a new beginning, a new start - so you have three cards in a row signifying this trend toward the future. Pages are messengers setting forth to deliver the message



with quiet calm poise. The Page of Wands has deeply rooted tranquility in the message he delivers. He knows the 3 of Wands, the poise of taking time to know your landscape, yourself. There is something new, peaceful and healthy in store for you, after some adjustment, it seems. Perhaps some painful experience.

And it is not all peace and tranquility ahead. Ending with the King of Coins signifies financial security as well. There will be control over finances and the physical domain. With the Page at his feet, there will be generosity in the financial poise and joy in the success of this new endeavor.

**Reading 35:**

General Situational Reading with the Celtic Cross Spread and Herbal Deck

Question: “having money problems and men problems” This reading occurred at Mt. Shasta

	<b>Chariot down</b>		<b>Lovers</b>
<b>10 of Cups down</b>	<b>Ace of Wands over 5 of Coins</b>	<b>5 of Cups</b>	<b>King of Swords</b>
			<b>4 of Swords down</b>
	<b>3 of Cups</b>		<b>Fool down</b>

**The Interpretation:**

The three cups in this spread range from torment to joy -- we are exploring the emotional realm. The two sword cards invite intellectual intervention into this emotional state. The two 5 cards show dejection, rejection. Three Major Arcana suggest some outer influence beyond your control, but not much. Most of what’s going on is from your reactions to influences and obstacles. “Get a grip” may be the message.

The positioning card is the 5 of Coins, signifying being turned away (rejected). It lies beside the 5 of Cups, the card of lamenting. Fives are self-pitying cards, but they don't signify burdens that are too heavy to bear. The 5 of coins can mean a loss or hardship, a painful rejection, but it also shows the ability to survive difficult times. It's herb is Mugwort, used to stimulate appetite - to revive the spirit.

Your present positioning is crossed by the Ace of Wands, indicating a spiritual uplifting, promise for a new venture that brings about intuitive awareness, personal growth, change. Its herb yarrow is used to help circulation - movement ahead. Look ahead for something new. I see movement in the spread with the ace, and the chariot. The lamenting may have to do with two strongly positive cards in your recent past and foundation.

The 10 of cups is in the recent past. The Ace points away from it, indicating you should move on away from this joy. The 10 represents emotional fulfillment and satisfaction with the surroundings. Perhaps the lamenting and rejection comes from this episode. Either you were turned away and are lamenting over the loss of a situation that was emotionally rewarding, or you are basing your desires on an unreal ideal. Thus, you lament and feel rejected. The herb is marijuana. You smoke the weed and feel good. But how real is it? Isn't it a temporary foggy mind. It can be a cure for pain or it can bring a sense of heights, but the effects aren't sustained indefinitely. So, the Ace points ahead. The Three of Cups at your foundation, though upside down, is one of the most pleasant cards in the deck. It will reinforce this sense of joy, the perfect emotional state you seek. Because this state is mostly unreal or seldom achievable or if achieved only temporary, you lament and feel rejected in the 5 cards. There is some lack of responsibility in too much desire for joy. The herb for the 3 of cups is Trillium, the wonderful mountain flower

adorning the Oregon cascades and lake sides. As a drug it helps the feminine cycle and the thinning of blood, again easing circulation and movement.

The herb of the lamenting 5 of cups in the near future is Horsetail, an ancient plant that was around when dinosaurs tromped the earth. The herb helps with the pains of arthritis, the movement of joints. There is preoccupation with loss here. You tend to revel in hurt and pain, trying to let that make you feel better. Restore your spirit with the pleasure innate in the three of cups, and look ahead.

The Chariot overlooking the spread has taken charge of this forward movement. He guides the reins and forges ahead to where he needs to be (in an improved state). His herb is Cypress, a wonderful herb used to restore and energize the whole body. Bring you from a depressing mood to one of stability and direction.

In brief, the center spread indicates a need to pull yourself from self-pity and look ahead. Try to avoid lamenting over what you can't affect. The chariot will pull you from this mood and set you forth in the right direction.

Your attitude on the path toward resolving the matter at hand is the Fool upside down. The Fool is the beginning and end of matters. He sets forth toward resolution without fear, careless and a bit haphazard. Often this state is necessary to progress. Sometimes we must take risks or we'll never get anywhere. His being upside down suggests an attitude of being overly careless, irresponsible. Perhaps you've allowed the lamenting mood to influence your direction a bit too much. The herb is Ginseng - a major herb bringing powerful restorative energy for anyone and anything. Have a cup of ginseng tea every afternoon for a pick-me-up. Actually, the fool here right side up or upside down is a great start in this position. He is what you need, along with the chariot, to pull you up from the slump you're in.

Next we pass an environment of rest and reflection. This card, the 4 of Swords, will slow down the careless fool, make him think twice before leaping. This is actually a very good card to come up anywhere in a reading. It's upside-down meaning may warn that you won't take enough time to reflect about actions you take. It almost reinforces some of the carelessness of the upside-down fool, because of the alignment. The herb is Mullein, a lesser-known herb, an anti-inflammatory also used for pneumonia. Deep breathing can help you relax and reflect upon actions, especially new ventures. Here we find recuperation from the lament.

Next we enter the realm of inner hopes fears and anxieties that weigh upon your efforts to achieve resolution to your matter at hand. The King of Swords sits stoically, guarding over this realm. He demands truth, realism. He could be a personality influencing you here. Your new relationship since this matter involves men problems. If you meet him at this time, you must understand his stark realism. It may play upon your proclivity toward folly as seen in the moodiness of the positioning (10 and 3 of cups and the two 5 cards). He is very serious because he knows how foolishness can lead to disaster. But he is good hearted, just a little difficult to feel close to, but he loves very deeply. He is also very sharp and intelligent, though he will never be enormously rich, though he is not necessarily poor. The herb is St. John's wort, an herb more for women during their moody times. Perhaps he will pacify the moods. A good match, especially because we see above him in the card of resolution - the Lovers.

Here is a point of your coming together with another person and the problems you now face. This is a card of choice in direction, a point you will reach when you'll know where you're headed. The herb is parsley, its root considered an aphrodisiac and a cure for impotence. If you drink a shot of green parsley juice, you will experience a rush of energy, a high like marijuana, except parsley is a wonderful nutrient for your body, soul and mind.

**Reading 36:**

One Card Reading

Question: "Will Tom and his dad get back together?

And will they get along?" This reading occurred at Mt. Shasta

Card: Nine of Wands

**The Interpretation:**

The wands is the suit of spirit, of deeply held beliefs, values -- a person's philosophy of life. The 9 shows a person standing with his wands lined up behind him. Though he may feel ordered, organized, he probably is overly concerned about matters. Things going wrong impinge upon his sense of how things should always be. This leaves him in a vulnerable position. He may not be able to deal with problems in the way a person can who knows that life has its ups and downs.

The card may indicate a trapped conflict. A domination. A clinging to possessions of the soul (values conflict). The person is prepared to defend what he has gathered and gained, what he owns, how he feels.

Unfortunately, the awareness that generally comes with the flowing suit of wands is blocked somewhat in this card, due to the stubborn nature of guarding possessions. Sometimes, the clinging is so strong, the person does not give up the conflict even after the other party has surrendered.

A more positive note may be that the card represents a standoff, a final butting of heads. From this may come the first recognition of what needs to be done to regain the movement of the wands.

Question: **What is the potential of this endeavor?**

Celtic Cross Spread

	<b>7 CUPS</b>		<b>6 COINS</b>
<b>2 WANDS</b>	<b>6 COINS/3 COINS</b>	<b>HANGED MAN</b>	<b>6 WANDS</b>
			<b>KNIGHT SWORDS</b>
	<b>JUDGMENT</b>		<b>STAR</b>

Reading 1:

The Interpretation:

The reading is spread across the board with 2 wands, 2 coins, 2 cups and 1 sword, 1 face card and 3 Major Arcana. This concerns the Questioner's spirit, intellect, emotions, and physical/financial forces. Outside influences are equal to those of the Questioner's own choices. In other words, choices may not be entirely up to the Questioner, at the same time, the Questioner isn't helpless in making choices. Strike a balance in this endeavor, a balance of gut level feelings, values, drives and wit with what can or can't be done in the given environment. A compromise looks inevitable. Results won't be entirely what the Questioner wants, nor will they be entirely contrary. Be steady. Though, the cards say -- you are steady!

Three sixes:

I don't read the numbers, as in numerology, but I see numbers as beginning levels and advanced levels, evens and odds and the power of mathematical configurations in themselves. I see the beauty of symmetry and asymmetry (balance, addition, subtraction, fraction). Here we have a mid-level force, an even force indicating balance or compromise. But it is a compromise on the side of intelligence and understanding the best way to manage the compromise, to strike the balance. Sixes are all promising steady cards, cards of an honest nature with an edge of pride and egotism (the down side). This is a slight edge here, but beware of the edge if the balance tilts too much in your favor. Perhaps the Questioner needs to consider other people in the endeavor.

Outcomes:

All difficult (pie in sky, hang-up, lack of generosity). This suggests a tilt toward egoism -  
- not considering others when you should.

Configurations:

The hanged man, knight of swords and card of victory suggests overcoming a hang up.

Foundation:

There is tremendous strength of will at the foundation with the high-level major arcana cards of Judgment and the Star of Hope. In combination, the cards indicate strength in attitude will surpass shortcomings and setbacks. This is a configuration of fortitude, in it rests a wise and stable person. For positive influence, look to times of poise and openness in your past, a settled time of joyous emotions. This works well with the Hope card. You can and will overcome the burden of egoism, if you want to.

Outcome:

A possible loss of what the Questioner originally hoped to gain from the endeavor, or a tilt to the greedy side of achieving the gain. But this seems less likely because of the fortitude in the foundation. Look to the foundation and past to restore energy lost in the endeavor.

Remember hope and strength come from a poised past and the ability to understand your foundation (formative or childhood experiences), work ethics, and drive for victory. There may be problems from clinging and reaching for more than you can bite. This can make you lose sight of your present positioning and hope, a loss of generosity can be what you do to yourself.

Reading 5:

Single card Question:

**Is something good going to happen to me, soon?**

I asked this as a yes no reading and drew the very best card in the deck, in my estimation. The 4 of wands. It was upside-down, but as I read the power of this joyous card, it's strength and festivity is unfettered, or if fettered, only by a modicum. It is the only card I read this way. So, my answer is that I have something Wonderful to look forward to, a great celebration, a joy, a festivity of spirit and heart.

Reading 11:  
General Situational Reading, no question

	<b>2 wands down</b>		<b>3 coins</b>
<b>4 coins down</b>	<b>10 coins crossing sword king down</b>	<b>Priestess</b>	<b>Pope</b>
			<b>8 cups down</b>
	<b>8 swords</b>		<b>Moon</b>

The Interpretation:

Immediately I see a financial movement from a weak position caused by past insecurities with money to a strong crossing (guide) of stability, security and happiness to an outcome of apprenticeship - a newly developed outlook toward financial security.

Another interesting configuration starts with the positioning, you're positioning toward what you expected from the cards. The king of swords upside down presents a weakening of forces, of reserves, a draining of intellect due, probably to the past disappointment involving financial insecurity. But the strong and stable crossing (10 coins) points to a higher card, the Priestess in your near future. There is a turnabout to come in this positioning. The priestess is a guide to inner wisdom, intuition, making the right choices based on deeply rooted common sense. Let these powers guide you. Let the stability (10 coins) influence you. You will recognize



these influences. They will not be hidden. Then beside the priestess, in the reach of hidden fears, anxieties and hopes, (unknown), lies the pope, guide to the external world of wisdom and ritualized foundations that provide our lives with clarity (books, wise thoughts from others).

When the priestess and pope are paired together, as here, and not in conflict (one upside down against the other) you have a peaceful marriage, so to speak, of the inner sanctum of wisdom (dreams, tarot) and the external world of wisdom (books, institutions). Together, they can help determine accurately truths, wisdoms, against falsehoods and misleading dogmas of institutionalized religious forces.

In other words, it appears from the path to the apprentice outcome, you have strong forces, both within you and from the external world, carefully and wisely leading you, guiding you toward the rewards of a sagacious life.

There are weaknesses, however, along this directed path. The disappointment of the past, the positioning and the foundation, as well as the potential future outcome. At your foundation, the formative years of growing up, lies the 8 of swords, beneath the king of swords upside down. Herein lies a period of feeling, as a developing child, that you are somewhat helpless, unable to affect the world around you, bound, in turn, by that very world. Most definitely, this thread of influence along with the financial disappointment in the recent past (4 coins) has created the positioning of the King down.

I see a worry then, in reaching for life's rewards, a worry that what you're after will somehow let you down. In other words, future expectations play a strong force in our lives, affecting us spiritually (hampering our spirit, drive). It could be the self-fulfilling prophesy if you let the disappointments control or let feelings of ineptitude take hold and pull you down to where you felt helpless as a child.

And so, the cards say look to the crossing of positive stable influence, possibly family. Let the good thoughts reach your inner reflections and proceed ahead with the knowledge and wisdom around you. You will recognize it because you first reach your own inner sanctum where you embrace (marry) the wisdom of the external world (the marriage). And if you proceed with these influences, you will become the apprentice anew, willing to work alone, with others, construct, appreciate and prosper, rather than lament over what could have been, feeling helpless (2 wands).

One more angle to this spread, which might also influence the outcome. You have the moon in the position of your attitude toward progressing on a spiritual journey (or toward understanding the self in the world). The moon is a difficult and powerful influence, difficult because the vision it presents is not clear. Picture a moonless night. What can you see? Even on a full moon, shadows are cast creating misleading interpretations. In the attitude position, with the sword king down in the positioning position, you have to pay attention to your gut level instincts and not your base emotions created most likely by the fears of inability as a child, or disappointments in the past. Accept the wisdom of the moon, the phases of life, the good and bad, ups and downs, the yin and yang. Move on. Don't coddle the same old attitudes over and over again throughout life.

Through the passing of the moon, you reach the outer influences of the 8 cups upside down. Here, you encounter from outside you an understanding from others. Probably, someone other than yourself will really understand a situation you face. Empathy. And this will propel you forward. The 8 cups down in this position speaks of calm realizations about our human condition. You are not wandering off in disappointment, seeking what you don't have, forsaking what you do have. You are calmly reacting, with the outer environment, to the truths of existence

(the pains, sorrows and rewards). Then you truly meet your marriage of the pope and priestess and can start your apprenticeship. Good luck!

Reading 15:

General Situational Reading with Egyptian and Herbal Decks

Question: “Will I ever have any more children?”

	<b>Emperor</b>		<b>Hanged Man down</b>
<b>Priestess down</b>	<b>Priest over Fool down</b>	<b>Queen Cups</b>	<b>Nine Swords down</b>
			<b>Six Wands down</b>
	<b>Ten Coins down</b>		<b>Four Swords</b>

The Interpretation:

The request for this reading was a Celtic Cross Situational spread using the Egyptian and Herbal decks. I decided to use the Egyptian deck first, supplementing meanings with the Herbal cards. The influences surrounding the Questioner portray a direction toward the resolution - what is more or less likely to happen than not.

A quick overview of the spread shows fertility in the near future followed by a period of rest, some disappointment because of assumptions delays and difficulties. Thus, to answer this yes or no question, it appears that the possibility of a child will occur in the near future, followed by the likelihood of no more fertility.

Now, let’s examine what the spread indicates. In an overview a lot of outside influence concerns the question. Priestess, Priest, Emperor, Queen all personalities surrounding the Questioner’s positioning.

The Fool represents a beginning, a setting forth on a venture with unabashed hope and ideals - the perfect beginning to any endeavor. The herb is ginseng, one of the most powerful tonic herbs, used to stimulate health and even sexual drives (the hope of fertility?). Because the card is upside down, some of the carefree ideals have been hindered, upset, the Questioner is not completely confident. Why? The reason for this is imposed by personalities around the Questioner - strong personalities deeply affecting Questioner's choices.

In the recent past, Questioner has the Priestess upside-down. Priestess represents peaceful, intuitive wisdom, the knowledge of the self, the guide into the subconscious mind. Peony is the herb of intuition, a flower of feminine softness and beauty, love, peace, tranquility. The down side is again a hampering of Questioner's intuitive wisdom (or a weakening of that influence). This of course has distressed Questioner's present positioning, thus the Fool down.

From past present to near future Questioner's path is toward fertility manifested in the Queen Cups, one of the fertility Queens. Queen of love, emotion, nurturing - gentle yet wise love. Water is her symbol, birth of life. Lady's Mantle her herb, fertility.

The crossing is the Priest, not opposed to the Priestess down, but pointing forward to the Queen Cups. In the Egyptian cards, he is Osiris, husband to Isis, the Priestess. A pairing leading to fertility in the Queen Cups. He represents open revealed wisdom, knowledge of books, religious traditions and ceremonies (wisdom of how knowledge, human knowledge, can improve our journey toward truth and enlightenment and resolution of life's problems). As a crossing, Priest presents a stable strong guide toward the resolution of your situation. His herb is Sage, a favorite herb in fragrance, taste and healing powers. It'll render strength and pleasure.

The undercurrent of the spread, from the formative card of childhood is the 10 Coins down. Questioner has many down cards in this spread, indicating distress, especially from the

childhood and recent past (don't we all!?). The 10 Coins is the peaceful, stable family home of traditional quality - wealth from family, advice from father, nurturing from mother, loving siblings. Because it is down, this happy home had stressful qualities that influence life's decisions. Mostly, the down influence is some rejection of overabundance. Perhaps of feeling smothered by the traditional family gathering. Such an influence would affect fertility, even subconsciously and spiritually. This card could also indicate a fear of lack of financial and familial stability, though it is the only coin card in the spread so such a fear is minimal. Just be aware of this influence. The herb is wild yam, a wonderful nutritious food that helps balance the body's digestive needs, rendering strength and health. Don't neglect the positive values of the family gathering.

Above the present position is the Emperor, another personality overlooking the Questioner's position. Strong male influence reigns in this decision. In the Egyptian cards, he is Ra, sun god and Ram, fertility god. He also represents control, outer control over the situation. A strong father. His herb is Atractylodes, used to increase potency. Lots of power and influence building up to the fertility of childbearing, especially with the Queen cups, our mother archetype, in the near future. In many ways, Questioner will be guided into this fertility.

Following the fertility comes a period of respite, a quiet time away from the goal of childbearing (after the child?) A healthful promising card - we all need rest and time outs. The herb is Mullein, used to recover from the ailments of a cold, to get over a calamity, a period of contemplation. In the Egyptian cards, four soldiers rest after battle. There may be a compromise here, a forced respite before taking on more.

This is followed by the Six Wands down, opposing the restful period are outer influences of urgency because this card butts against the respite. In general, however, this is a card of

success, a triumphant return from battle. The down side is potential for over confidence. The herb is Hawthorn, healer of the heart, though too much is poisonous.

The next card on the final path toward the outcome of this situation is the Nine Sword down representing inner fears, hopes and anxieties. Turmoil, though lessened because it is down. Being down, there is pause in pursuits - another time for self-examination. Accordingly, this entire 4 card path is of pause, delay self-examination and rest. The Nine Sword represents introspection, a solitary matter, a soul searching brought on by self-imposed anxieties - expecting too much from yourself. The herb Valerian is a calming tonic, used to quiet nerves, anxieties, quell the advent of stress. It will help you sleep and pass through your troubled times (anxieties over more childbearing??)

At last, we end in the final outcome with the Hanged Man down. Card of self-sacrifice (the nurturing mother, thinking not of herself but of others - not a balanced psyche). In this position, things can be deceiving, the person is close to earth, yet suspended from it by self-infliction. Questioner feels martyred, and is her /his own executioner. It is a state of limbo, yet high on the spiritual path between the truths of earth and ideals of heaven. Because it is down, the illusion that things are set right occurs. Just be careful of the out of balance that comes from too much nurturing of others. The herb here is Kelp, vitality of the sea, tied to the Queen Cups, Queen of water, the sea, filled with minerals (more than any other herb) and nutrition. For balance, let the nurturing trend heal the self.

Reading 23:

General Situational Reading with the Herbal Deck

Question: "When will I become pregnant again?"

	<b>Pan</b>		<b>Hanged Man down</b>
<b>Nine Pentacles</b>	<b>Moon over Two Cups</b>	<b>Five Wands</b>	<b>Six Pentacles down</b>
			<b>Eight Wands</b>
	<b>Three Swords</b>		<b>King Cups down</b>

The Interpretation:

An appropriate choice in decks for the question. Immediately I see an interesting configuration in that wands, cups and coins predominate with only one sword in the bottom position. Three Major Arcana is average. So, the spread is basically even. No major outside upheavals, or one area (realms of love, money, power and spirit) predominating another.

You start with the most appropriate card for your question - Two Cups, the lovers coupling in harmony. This is your positioning to the question. How appropriate. Conception is soon to come. The herb *Uva Ursi* is taken after childbirth to prevent infections and restore the mother's womb.

The hazy foggy moon is your crossing, obscuring the psyche, pushing you into melancholy. Ah, but the moon is feminine, the cycle of womanhood (childbirth) and the herb is sweetly scented *Lemon Balm*, a calming and relaxing elixir, a tea meant to counter act the moodiness that follows childbirth. What a strong force indicating a child soon to come -- the card points to the near future.

The Five Wands, realm of the spirit with a favorite herb, *Turmeric*, a coloring, a nutrient that promotes luster, and health, that spices and flavors. It is used to help regulate the menstrual cycle, a return to regularity after childbirth? Let's continue and see.

In the recent past rests a most excellent card, especially for women - Nine Pentacles -- the woman in repose, relaxed, rewarded for her high standards and values, her nurturing qualities, her appreciation of beauty and life and her intelligence with regard to all she possesses. She is not greedy, nor will she ever be left impoverished on any level. She knows herself and her world and all around appreciate her calm demeanor. And with the herb *Dark Grapes* we again return to fertility. Grapes in Latin is *Uva* ovaries, *Ouva* -- eggs. During menstruation and pregnancy, herbalists advise a woman to eat grapes because they are so rich in iron and nutrients .

The middle spread indicates fertility to happen soon. It rests upon the Three of swords, the only sword in the deck -- a disappointment, a broken heart, a diminishment of confidence. Something happened to bring about doubt. A stormy relationship, perhaps, though in the past, during early years, formative times in love, it can affect the present positioning. Your present position is "in love" the Two Cups. Just beware of previous disappointments interrupting the fluidity of your present goals. The herb is Pleurisy Root. All roots are the source of nutrition, the anchor into the earth, the vessel between life as we see it and the earth's hidden minerals and resources. This herb is used to help recover from grave illness, such as pneumonia. A needed aid for a deep wound.

Above the spread rests Pan down, in most decks the Devil. This does not mean evil. It means attachments to any realm (too spiritual, too greedy, too promiscuous, selfish and so on). The reverse meaning indicates a lessening of those fixations toward spiritual enlightenment. It is a higher-level major arcana card and offers a positive overview, a guardianship of sorts, of the birth process. Pan is playful, tricky, but now serious and intent on working out the situation by letting go of what may hinder the pregnancy or birth. The herb *Lobelia* calms the nerves (the



intense fixations of overindulgence, passions out of control, obsessions). It relieves nausea (post childbirth or during pregnancy?).

Over all the present situation looks like pregnancy and childbirth. Then comes the spiritual journey toward the outcome. Here we start with the King of Cups down, Cups is the suit of love and emotion. The King is ruler of this realm. Reversed, his rule is weakened. This is the attitude position, so it indicates a period of diminished “in love” feelings. The reason for this could be the outcome of pregnancy and childbirth which diminishes the sexual urge for women. The man is still potent, however, sexually desirous while the woman’s body changes and she is focused on the process of giving and maintaining life. The sexual life changes during this period and the man pushes his desires on the woman, which affects the overall attitude of being “in love.” She is mother now and needs room to readjust to being the lover. The herb is *Saw Palmetto* a drug used to promote potency and fertility, interestingly enough. (Another pregnancy?) It’s also used to treat prostate disorders (quell the man’s desires?).

In the environment position we have the card of movement, forward, in the Nine Wands - the spiritual realm. The environment allows progression, recovery. High ideals and gain after great physical strife. There could be a journey involved, a needed vacation. The herb is *Bayberry Bark*, used for toning and conditioning externally. Restoring the body.

Inner fears, hopes and anxieties that could affect the entire spread is the Six of Pentacles, the alms giver. A card of generosity. The herb is everyone’s favorite *Hops*, a component of beer. It relaxes, is a hypnotic, relieves nervousness and aids digestion. Because the card is reverse, it seems a fear predominates, an anxiety over losing the ability to be generous, giving. Guilt over a needed vacation, a needed rest, a needed time for the self? Be careful, guilt can corrupt the heart and spirit. Have a beer!

Interesting that this reading, like reading #15 which also pertained to childbearing, ends with the same card - the Hanged Man though here our suspended person is upright thought upside down. Perhaps this happens with all mothers after the baby comes. It is a card of confusion over the spiritual self, sometimes subconscious confusion. Are you the martyr? And then, does anyone care that you are now the selfless person caring for others? You are suspended by choice? It appropriately indicates the new mother who suspends her goals for that of the child. The child is her goal. Her reward. She is like the herb *Kelp* suspended in the sea, moving rhythmically to the torrents of the sea. Anchored to the depths of the oceans, providing the most nutritious source of food for babies, mother's milk, as kelp is one of the most highly nutritious food sources in existence. Take refuge in your suspension for you are where your spirit guided you, though at times, you may lose sight of this.

Reading 24:

General Situational Reading with the Egyptian Deck and Celtic Cross

Question: "Will I ever get married and when?"

	<b>Princess Swords down</b>		<b>Eight Disks down</b>
<b>Ten Cups</b>	<b>Prince Cups over Strength down</b>	<b>Seven Wands</b>	<b>Ace Cups down</b>
			<b>Ten Wands down</b>
	<b>Princess wands down</b>		<b>King Swords</b>

The Interpretation:

Your positioning is Strength, the only major arcana in the spread. It indicates your positioning to the question comes from within, rather than from external forces. Do you hold yourself back from opportunities? Strength Card means the courage to look within, to open the

lion's mouth and discover inner courage as opposed to showy ostentatious prowess. This is a card of adjusting to circumstance with poise, holding back base emotions (anger, jealousy, greed), disciplining such emotions that cripple progression toward your goal of fulfillment in marriage. The card in this position necessitates balance between your internal instincts, intuitions and powers with external forces beyond your control. Your judgement may be impaired by influences around you, which is why the Strength card is down. Don't react with too much passion, too much "in love" based on fluttering emotions (flighty, ephemeral) or you will not find fulfillment in any prospective relationship. But the upside-down card merely indicates a lessening of your intuitive powers, inner strength. To reach your goals you must return to that strength.

I am not surprised that there are 4 face cards - personalities in the spread - two women, two men - given your question. Also, the majority of suit cards are wands (3) and cups (3), which indicates spiritual love or spirit and emotion.

First, let's look at the personalities involved in your spread, to address your question. The Prince of Cups is your crossing and he points to the near future. He is the knight of Love and romance, a dashing prince of intense and ambitious passions. His passions lead to distortions, however. He offers a "stormy romance," sweeping you off your feet, carrying your emotions away (as opposed to that inner strength -- no wonder it's upside down). Beware of this kind of "in love" especially because you are addressing marriage - a mature love. Can such a man ever be completely faithful to his spouse?

He may, however, lead you to a more suitable true love, the type that would make a stable spouse. So, caution with nearby romance. Take a close look at what you are heading into. He can be the right guide toward resolution, but the wrong spouse.

To better determine who this mysterious guide (or overbearing influence) might be, let's look at influences around your present positioning. In the recent past you have the Ten of Cups, a wonderful card of hope, peace, joy all brought about by familial stability or the stability of good quality friends. It indicates that based on something from your past you have idealized what you are after (in a marriage). Such influence (idealistic outlooks) more often than not distorts present realities (you may overlook how things are actually going). How are you seeing yourself, your goals in life? Is your view through predetermined expectations? The Ten of Cups is a happy card, but sometimes too much of a good thing leads to complacency and skewed perceptions. Perhaps with such strong influence from this past, you overlook the good qualities of a possible romance, or possible directions toward finding a life's mate. And it's interesting that out of that past comes the Prince of Cups, of the same mettle - he would be from that very Ten of Cups past. However, because I see three wands surrounding you, I note that you are seeking or are needing a more spiritual relationship. A deeper meaning than that from a mate who can show you a good time. To be truly happy in life, with a life's mate, you need to find spiritual commonality, mature love, not merely emotional love or physical gratification.

Below and above your positioning of Strength are two female personalities, one pointing to you the other away from you. At your foundation lies the Princess of Wands. At a spiritual level, a truly enlightened being with a broad perspective (many cards in the suit of wands show a person overlooking her or his landscape, as in this card). Because the card is down, I see heart break of a somewhat cruel nature. There may have even been violence. And because this is in the formative position, it indicates a personality that was a first relationship, a first love, friendship, or even a parent (the card becomes general, not just female). You were hurt by the violence (verbal violence can be as painful or cruel as physical). The point being, this may influence how

you react to possible relationships. Do you chase them away, unconsciously or leap to someone not right (the abusive-clinging codependency duet). I think there was too much feeling involved in this formative relationship, a great disappointment and now the strength is down and this card down.

Above the position of Strength is the Princess of Swords. There is a pattern here of looking back to a first experience and losing heart. Swords are the cards of intellect and resource, gathering wit to plunge ahead. The unexpected may happen as a possible outcome, an unexpected direction. There may be revenge at hand, a conflict, a rivalry. And this conflict appears in the near future, the struggle card of the Seven of Wands. In the Egyptian deck, it is a woman struggling at a cliff edge with a man, stronger than her of course. However, through struggle comes gain, perseverance and confidence. Which seems to lead to the next card.

The King of Swords, another personality, male, sits at the forefront of your approach toward resolution. Here is a personality of intellect and strength in logic. He is a driven man, not held back by past torments (and he has known trouble). He is a card of resolve, a complement to the card of Inner Strength.

With this personality you pass through an environment of lessened burden, lessened oppression, a release from troubles - an opposition to that period of struggle. From this there can be a gain of control in the union of matrimony?? Or love? Keep heart, the environment is also Spartan, perhaps not what you're hoping for, but life is becoming calmer.

And then you discover hidden fears and anxieties, as you pass from this environment. The Ace of Cups, fears of a new beginning in love, but you fear a false love. Why? It could be merely a pesky worry based on all the influences leading you to the relationship. The Ace of Cups is True Love - mature, happy love - the relationship with a life's partner, not flighty "in

love” passions of overnight romance. This personality (king of Swords) is not from the “happy group” of the past (ten cups) which may be why you will harbor this fear of uncertainty about the new beginning. Hang in there and you will have a wonderful new beginning in the Eight of Disks - the apprentice card. This is how you build up the bonds of a good marriage. The down side will come from your fears that can mislead your perceptions. Two new beginning cards are together at the end of your quest - a true new start, not a continuation of past ideals. This will be your marriage after meeting someone not quite right, though at first sight, he seems to be who you want, who you think is “Mr. Right.”

It is also interesting that the Eight of Disks is your only disk card, also an indication of a rounding out, a balance of nature leading to a new and needed direction. To be happy, you will break from the idealism of a past comfort zone.

So, to answer your question. Yes, I see marriage ( a true fulfilling life partnership), but it is not immediate. It will come after some struggle and misperception about a torrent relationship.

**Reading 25:**

General Situational Reading with the Maya Deck and Celtic Cross

Question: “Am I where I’m meant to be?”

	<b>The Sun down</b>		<b>Warrior Swords</b>
<b>8 Staffs down</b>	<b>Lady of Jade over 9 Swords</b>	<b>10 Staffs</b>	<b>Warrior Jade</b>
			<b>1 Sword down</b>
	<b>Warrior Cups down</b>		<b>2 staffs down</b>

**The Interpretation:**

First of all, this is a perfect question for the Tarot. Secondly, I wonder why you selected the Maya cards. People generally view the Mayas as less spiritually attractive as say the Egyptian

or herbal deck. But the Maya myths and spirituality offer powerful imagery. Sharp and intense passions. Perhaps you feel some hidden connection to the forces from the New World of the Americas.

See [“The Ancient Americans”](#)

An overview of the spread reveals intense sadness, conflict and disappointment. You have three Warrior cards on quests to battle forces, to prove themselves, to gallivant in ego. Five cards are down, which indicates opposition and the major suits are 3 swords (realm of resource, intellect, aggression, ambition) and 3 wands (spiritual realm). Only one cup (emotions) and two jades (physical and financial realms .) With only one Major Arcana (higher card), the conflict is mostly within and at a spiritual and intellectual level with some strong personality conflicts.

There is effort in movement, but obstacles appear right and left. Beginning with your present positioning, the 9 of Swords you face terrible dread in this card, the misery of true sadness. A painful positioning with your full cognizance. The pain probably comes from an event, or failure over some enterprise. Unfulfilled relationship, impotency, intense conflict at work. A drain in all areas. Take head, this is merely how you now face the challenges of life and you are ready for a change of heart.

Your crossing is a positive card, the Lady of Jade (Queen of Coins) who points toward your immediate past. She will help you out of your slump by helping you to recall energy you once knew - energy of movement, progression. You are not where you're meant to be. However, this could be spiritually and consciously because the physical realm is not as dominant. But the Queen is of the physical realm, pointing to spiritual stagnation in the past (8 staffs down). First, about this crossing force. She, a personality in your midst, is a poised compassionate figure, highly intelligent, secure, a good friend to have at this time. Look for such attributes in others

and in yourself and remember positive movement, a change of course from the past, recent past, that helped in your progression through life. But don't over indulge in the physical poise of this Lady of Jade. She can become obsessed with the fear of failure or with greed. This fear or down side of the card, reappears later in the spread in the Warrior of Jade, which we will address shortly. (The Warrior of Swords will offset the possibility of greed and strike balance).

The 8 of Staffs in your recent past is the card of movement, but it is down. A stagnation occurred, a movement that took you in unexpected directions, causing stress, conflict. But you gained something from this lesson and it seems the Lady of Jade wants you to focus on this in your progression out of the slump you are presently in. Again, it looks like you aren't meant to be where you are. But on what level?

At your foundation is the Warrior of Cups, a lover card. He is down. Energy drained. Did you experience betrayal? In love? Career? Is this affecting how you now poise yourself in your goal to progress positively through life, to find fulfillment? He is the first of three warriors, all determined to set their own course without anyone's input. Thus, conflict with anyone in disagreement. In relation to the 10 of Staffs, the stagnation or unexpected direction is reinforced. You are not where you want to be in life. And going to the next card, in your near future, we find the card of burden, heavy spiritual burden (deeply affecting you) in the 10 of Staffs.

The 10 Staffs seems to carry through from the past 8 Staffs, a spiritual link, a drain from the past and present that continues to suppress your spirit in the near future. But this card has positive attributes. With burden we carry forth in movement, working our course through life, performing our duties. In doing so, we encounter new opportunity all around, thus -- the birds in this maya card. The birds are brightly colored messengers, harbingers of possibilities. The problem may be that with the burdens you carry, stemming from the past and the present pain,



you may keep your eyes shut to these new possibilities. You may miss what opportunities are surrounding you, with blind eyes and deaf ears. Do not coddle your burdens. Carry forth with open eyes, open heart, and clarity. This is how you'll progress to new opportunities. How you'll avail yourself to where you're meant to be (perhaps spiritually).

Resting above the spread is the one Higher card, The Sun. A bright cheery card overlooking the spread, the situation, a new day to come, a bright future if you heed to your positive guides and influences. That it is down indicates a slight possibility of missing opportunity because of closed mindedness. But the overriding indication, with the two Warriors forging ahead at the end of the spread, is that of clarity and contentment -- psychic enlightenment. Don't dally too long in the sunshine, however. Life is a trail of progression to Death. The best we can do is keep a sharp wit, clear open mind, and positive and continual self-improvement, as the warriors ending your spread.

Now for the outer path toward resolution, starting with your attitude toward this change in stance. The 2 of wands indicates you will keep looking back, (it's tied to the other wands of near past and future). You hesitated to move ahead, out of the slump. And rightly so, with the 1 of sword pointed against this progression, a sword crammed down your throat, someone else's words, voice, attitudes, plaguing your progress. They (he, she, or general environment) wants you to go where they would have you go, not where you should go as only you can determine. And they will be self-righteous about their claims, saying that they know what should be your new beginning, what's good for you. Because the 2 of Staffs is down, this 1 of Sword environment can influence your decisions. Don't let it. Turn to your Lady of Jade, look toward your Sun and pass this difficult environment. These two cards are low in number, so the passing won't be as difficult as it first may seem. You will pass the oppositions and wonder what all the

fuss was about. Bear in mind that all swords are double edged. What may be good advice for one person, may not be for you. This could be a work situation, with the boss trying to overpower your progress.

But you pass and take hold of your resources, relying on the depths of spiritual wisdom. And you meet your two Warriors heading in the same direction, toward resolution. How grand! Definitely, you are meant to be elsewhere (spiritually, intellectually, not necessarily, though quite possibly, physically). We are now happy to meet these two warriors, courageous, unbending when tenaciousness is a must. Now no one can tell you “you should do this, or that.” Forge ahead toward the clarity of the sun. First, the Warrior of Jade picks up where the Lady of Jade started. He guides your hopes forward, he assuages your fears about change. He is a dark hair / eyed personality, patient, kind, a lovable sort. There may be a new large purchase here, such as a house or land. A large acquirement. You will like being here. And then you meet the final outcome in the Warrior of Swords, just in time. He tends to balance out the attributes of the Warrior of Jade. He is more accustomed to a Spartan life, to opposition, conflict, so in combination the two warriors offer charity rather than overindulgence or greed from the new acquirements. The card also indicates a finality in the path, indicating you reach where you are meant to be once and for all. But because he is Warrior of Swords, he doesn't let you forget the pain brought on by the 9 of Swords. It is wise to know pain, it makes us more alive, less complacent, sharper, like the cutting edge of a sword!

**Reading 26:**

General Situational Reading with the Herbal Deck and Celtic Cross Spread

Question: “Why is my love life in the pits? Why am I so unhappy?”

	<b>Nine Swords</b>		<b>Four Cups</b>
<b>Three Swords</b>	<b>Judgment over Medicine Wheel down</b>	<b>Death</b>	<b>The World down</b>
			<b>Ten Cups</b>
	<b>King Wands</b>		<b>Five Swords down</b>

### **The Interpretation:**

First impression of the spread are the four Major Arcana in a row, all high cards, two the highest in the deck, indicating a strong outside force. Elements beyond your control. Not internal forces predominating. Three troubling sword cards also predominate the spread, followed by promising cups and one stable wand. No coins. The avenues aren't in the financial or physical realm.

Beginning with your positioning. The Medicine Wheel upside down crossed by Judgment pointing to your past. The Wheel represents the ups and downs of life, the cyclic nature of reality. When things are going your way, suddenly, something troubling happens. Likewise, when you are in a slump, things will get better. In fact, with the Death card beside your positioning, change for the better is in the near future. (The Death card means change, not literal death).

That the Wheel is down indicates you are in a state without focus or direction. You have forgotten that life has its ups and downs. The herb for this card is Slippery Elm, used to sooth the upsets of ulcers. To quell worries, you must bring about rest and make time for much needed focus.

Your crossing influence is most excellent. The Judgment Card, second highest Major Arcana, symbolizes true wisdom and poise. The wisdom to judge fairly, to discern truths --NOT

to cast self-righteous notions of justice. The judge is fair. He/she is also judged by others because the truly wise person is criticized by those with less wisdom. But his poise is unbending. This card is telling you to heal by looking to a past conflict with wisdom and discernment. Heal yourself now by knowing yourself then and now. The card speaks then of renewal, an awakening, enlightenment and the change to change for the better. The herb is Goldenseal, a bitter tea used to cleanse and detoxify after a period of self-abuse.

Judgment points to the recent past, the Three of Hearts (a heart pierced by three swords with the herb Pleurisy Root). This is a card of torment and conflict, a broken heart, a failed romance, or self-abuse through tormenting yourself, being too critical of your actions. There was a period of division, a breaking, severing from attachments that caused much grief to the ego. You did not heal. The herb is used for curing grave ailments such as pneumonia. The Judgment card possibly says look to this period and heal by discerning truths from your self-battering emotions. Foremost, don't be afraid of healing the wound. Especially with the Judgment card as your guide. Some powerful influence, as manifested in the Judgment, will direct you toward true wisdom and a reconciliation with the pains of recent past. Probably the source of your present unhappiness. A situation of mental anguish and conflict with another mostly brought on by your reactions.

In your foundation stands the stanch and stoic King of Wands. Now, he is directed. He knows his realm, his heart and the heart and spirit of those around him. He is also available to you to help you escape your present slump. And he is someone, an influence, that comes from your formative years - the period of your life when ideas and notions of truth were developing in your mind, becoming etched in your thoughts and reactions. There was something, someone good to you, not in a nurturing way, but in a directing way and this kind of influence is what you

now require. I wonder even if this figure hasn't reemerged as the Judgment card, really pulling together the needed influence of direction and focus. You are in the pits and unhappy because you lack focus (about what you want or need with a loving relationship?) His herb is Cinnamon, a basic herb known by everyone worldwide. An herb that charms our taste buds, adds fragrance to our meals and beverages. An herb from the early spice companies of the East. And foremost an herb that invigorates and increases metabolism and health. Try a cup of cinnamon and peppermint tea to calm the upsets. Rest. Focus. Think of the positive influences around you.

I have mentioned that the Death card stands in your near future. The statement is bold, blunt! Change is in store and if this change does not come by your actions, I see the overriding melancholy of the Nine of Swords, who overlooks the present positioning, dominating the positive influences guiding you out of this slump. Death is also a high-level Arcana card, reinforcing the inevitable change about to occur in your near future. The herb is Elder Flowers, used for purifying the blood - clearing yourself of the past, letting go of that pain, old antiquated ways of reacting to situations. This is an indication of a spiritual rebirth. A new, second chance, to make things better, make things right.

Just beware of the lamenting self-overlooking the spread in the Nine Swords. This card wants to remain sad by clinging to the real and painful events of life. These pains are not psychosomatic. They are real. The pain from an event. Loss of job, a real death, an illness, a wrenching conflict from someone close (lover, friend, family, boss). Keep your eyes focused on the Card Death, the card of change, and work past this Nine and Three of swords. The herb for the Nine of Swords is one I use on occasion. Valerian is a bitter tea used to calm out of control stress. Of course, as with any herb, you don't want to over use it. But a cup of this tea on occasion works wonders.

So, you are unhappy because life's events forced an unwanted situation on you (swords) and you react in ways that don't promote your spirit out of the slump (pits). Move on with your positive influences toward the ladder of resolution toward the goal of wisdom, enlightenment, true fulfillment. A reason to be alive.

Along this path toward resolution, you first encounter another sword, another burdensome conflict. But alas, this Five of Swords is upside down in the place of your attitude toward resolving your woes. Good! It means a diminished response toward rejection. The healing is beginning with the right attitude. Interestingly enough, this is a turning point card. You are at a turning point after a change that involves your attitude. Here you will either become honest with yourself or go deeper into self-deception --- the three and nine of swords at pull. But your guides, or positive influences, are powerful so I have a feeling your attitude is sharpening up. You realize defeat and move on. No problem. Just another event in life. And you have too much to do to trouble yourself over the woes of life. The herb is the Mistletoe, which most of us know as a holiday decoration of good cheer, of coquettish love. It is cheery. As a tonic, mistletoe calms the nerves, but the berries are toxic. So be careful.

And with your attitude gathered up and strengthened, you will pass a wonderful environment. Highly positive, festive, joyous and supportive. The ten of cups. And guess what? The herb is Marijuana. Need I say more? Just don't over indulge. The cards suggested that you have a propensity toward overindulging. Too much great joy, as the wheel of life turns, brings a deeper slump. The key is to balance joy and sorrow.

Hidden hopes and fears, anxieties appear as the World upside down. This is the highest Arcana, the card of true enlightenment and fulfillment, so close to your resolution. It is what you want and it can be by you. The down side suggests you may react too early to your success,

especially coming from the environment of Ten Cups. You may believe you are truly happy and lose sight that life is a continual progression until death. But the positive power of the card will probably override any negative effect of hastiness. Probably a period of minor misconception about your situation, but the card and other high influences will propel you on. The herb is Comfrey, another healing herbs but aren't all herbs healing. Food is healing. Life is healing if we put the things around us to that task of healing. Comfrey can be used both as a tea and externally to sooth abrasions and burns. The scars are not so hidden any more. The wounds heal at the deepest subconscious level.

The resolution ends with a contemplative card in the Four of Cups. After the heavy influences of the Arcana and the burdensome swords, you reach a lower numbered cup card. An area more restful, gentle. Conflicts aren't so prevalent, so bothersome. You appear more at peace with yourself. And the card speaks of a gentle, kind influence at hand. You are weary hear, tired of what you now realize is false, fake, unimportant. It's almost as if you don't want to be bothered anymore with such trifles and petty attentions imposed on you. That you impose on yourself. And though you may be in this state of isolation now, you won't be alone. Someone of your ideals is there to offer you the kind of rewards from life you seek. You will then find abundance in what you're truly after. Love, respect, peace, and hope. The herb is Burdock, used within and without to cure the skin surface of abrasions. The only warning here is - don't become too aloof or you may overlook something good placed before you.

**Reading 27:**

General Situational Reading with the Celtic Cross Spread

Question: "When will I be expecting my second child?"

	<b>8 Coins down</b>		<b>Hierophant</b>
<b>Ace Cups down</b>	<b>3 coins over three hearts down</b>	<b>Page of Pentacles</b>	<b>9 of Wands down</b>
			<b>8 of Cups down</b>
	<b>Judgment</b>		<b>3 of Wands down</b>

### **The Interpretation:**

I see a failed beginning in the recent past (Ace of Cups down), an indication of an unhappy start and emotional disturbance. It caused the distressed heart appearing in the 3 of Swords --your present position. Conditions have been eased up at present, except for remaining confusion over troubling matters.

The young apprentice (3 of Coins) crosses your position, bringing growth and indication of gain in the near future. This card, with the Page of Pentacles -- a solid forthright figure, offers a slight promise that your desires may come to fruition in the near future. However, the strength of the other cards indicates that most likely the occurrence will arrive after some delay, after reaching a plateau of solidity in marriage, or finding marriage itself.

The journeyman overlooks the spread (8 of coins) but he is upside down and represents some discouragement overlooking the matter at hand. He or she cannot quite manifest what all his efforts promote. Take heart. The Judgment card rests at the foundation. This card represents a solid and promising influence. An awakening period of knowing yourself and those who influence your life. With this card, you can ride out any disappointment and progress.

The path toward resolution has three upside down cards in a row. Starting with the three of wands which represents the attitude of looking back at what was once within reach. It suggests disappointment again (assuming you want this second child, this suggests, along with the



journeyman upside down, a delay in that result). With this attitude you pass the 8 of cups upside down, an environment of understanding truths. The external environment will force you to face reality (fertility issues? relationship issues? stress inhibitors). Hidden anxieties then emerge in the 9 of Wands upside down. The card indicates that you fear things won't be going the way you would have them go.

But overriding the spread, in the resolution, is the Hierophant. A figure of strength, understanding, power. An authority who knows what is truly good for you and such a person could be none other than yourself. He represents conformity, a marriage. And here it seems that you must reach a point of marriage (literal or allegorical -- such as a union of thought, belief, habits) before you can obtain your second child.

To answer the question, it appears a second child is not obvious in the near future, though there is some promise. Most likely, it could happen after a period of trial and disappointment, and then a solidifying of a relationship (Hierophant). Just remember you have the Judgment card in your foundation and that card evokes truth, self-knowledge and the wisdom to pursue the right path and make the right choices along the way toward reaching your goals.

**Reading 28:**

General Situational Reading with the Celtic Cross Spread and Egyptian Deck

Question: "When will it all pay off?"

	<b>The Devil</b>		<b>Nine of Disks</b>
<b>Three of Disks down</b>	<b>Princess of Cups over Two of Disks</b>	<b>Princess of Wands</b>	<b>King of Cups down</b>
			<b>Eight of Swords</b>
	<b>Nine of Cups</b>		<b>Prince of Swords</b>

## **The Interpretation:**

This is a difficult question because it asks a time element with a situational reading - though the question of when is generally answered by the situation.

Coins and cups predominate with only one major Arcana and with four face cards. This evokes a financial and emotionally tied positioning with both personality conflicts and harmony at play.

You begin with two low numbered disk cards, one in your positioning the other in your recent past. Your present position is the Two of Disks. This card emphasizes the harmonious influences of the princess cards that both cross your present position and stand at your near future. The two of disks is a card of agility, balance, of using the skills you've developed to carry out multiple endeavors. The down side is juggling too much, spreading yourself too thin. But the powerful and positive influences (the princesses) don't push toward this result. It seems something positive is in store for you. Your question is when?

From your recent past lies the Three of Disks upside down. This indicates the beginning of an endeavor that perhaps was stifled before it took off. This card is one of the apprentice cards, revealing enthusiasm and eagerness as the apprentice performs her training. Approval from influential people (boss, parents, spouse) is important in this card because the young apprentice has not developed the maturity of a journeyman. You needed patience here. To develop skills takes time, to gain, takes skill. You perhaps did not receive the credit you were after, were too hasty in looking for rewards. However, the card is low, the influence minor and your position now is pulled up by the powerful princesses. However, you should be careful with impatience and haste. Your positioning is not at a high, strong, level.

The spread rests upon the 10 of Cups, a foundation of knowing comfort, love, of feeling fulfilled and satisfied. This influences your decisions to pursue your goal. You have known something you like, and you seek to experience more. Just be careful of complacency, of lack of perspective. Those who have experienced hardships often have more power to change the status quo than those who have known only the happy home. But the ten of cups is a good foundation card, providing you with security, self-assurance and the ability to know what you like.

Now let's look at the two princesses who together point to the resolution in the Nine of Disks (a marvelous finish for any financial goal). These two shrewd powerful yet kind forces are working with you, rather than against you (as in the Prince of Swords and King of Cups). The Princess of Cups is contemplative, thoughtful, and able to create actions from her ideas (as opposed to the Prince of Swords). She moves you closer to the payoff. In harmony with her is the Princess of wands, a resourceful, ambitious persona lurking in your near future. There is great power in these two cards placed together, the power to override obstacles by sheer wit and determination. The payoff is soon with such forces at hand.

But how forceful are the obstacles. I see difficulty before the payoff in the next three cards on the journey toward resolution. These cards show conflict from personalities that are determined to have actions their way. There is a difficult and burdensome environment to cross in the 8 of Swords. These three cards can lead to the alternative outcome or the down side of the resolution. This is the Devil card hovering over your present positioning. It opposes the Ten of Cups that you rest upon. It indicates clinging to desires, rather than keeping a well-rounded open perspective. It could be greed, selfishness, if money is the goal. It is a blocking card caused by the obsessions that keep you from obtaining fulfillment.

The devil is something to bear in mind. If you are not fulfilled by the resolution, most likely you have become obsessed with your desires.

The Prince of Swords rides in opposition to your reaching the goal. He is a headstrong personality, all attitude and intellect. (attitudes around you, your attitude in reaction to the advice of others). He rides in the sky, ungrounded. He is not aligned with your two positive influences, the Princesses. He may cause them grief, but he is too head strong for them to influence him, at least he would never admit to their wisdom. He is intelligent, though he speaks without action. He slows down your progress toward the payoff. Damn him. Move him aside. He is an idea man without action. And he has rattled your progression. Now you face an environment that further slows down the progress toward payoff. Look back to your influences in the Princess cards.

The 8 of Swords is a card of obstacles along a journey. A gap made more severe by complications, accidental interference - things not in your control. It almost seems that now you face obstacles that you needed to face in your foundation to give you the edge of perspective and power to push ahead. In meeting these unforeseen obstacles, you will encounter anxieties in the King of Cups upside down. In general, he is an open-minded renaissance man, yet he butts against your progression. It's your own fears, a narrow perspective caused by recent difficulties, that slow you down further. This dragging is strongly tied to the Devil and you must fight against success as the goal or you become obsessed and lose progress and fulfillment. So, what is the goal? Progress.

The fine card at the end of the spread, the 9 of Disks, indicates reaching a resolution that brings contentment and pride (a good kind of pride in the self and your accomplishments, not a boastful pride as the down king might exhibit, or the Devil would promote). This card is material success, accomplishment, deep satisfaction. It ties to the Ten of Cups, though it is even better for

the ten can bring over satisfaction, the kind brought on by gluttony, over stuffing yourself. This card brings poise, beauty, appreciation for what you have.

To answer the question, “When will it all pay off?” it seems it will after a period of difficulty caused by various personalities and your attitude and reactions to those personalities. However, the difficulties will bring you the needed perspective on how to handle the payoff.

**Reading 29:**

General Situational Reading with the Celtic Cross Spread and Maya Deck  
 Question: “Should I take the risk of changing my job?”

	<b>Lord of Jade</b>		<b>Hanged Man down</b>
<b>Servant of Cups</b>	<b>Seven of Cups over One of Staffs</b>	<b>Lord of Cups</b>	<b>Warrior of Jade down</b>
			<b>One of Swords</b>
	<b>Nine of Jades</b>		<b>Servant of Jade down</b>

**The Interpretation:**

You have five face cards and two aces, lots of personalities involved and strong indications of a new beginning. The predominant suit is Jade (the financial or physical realm) followed by Cups (realm of emotions). Interesting that each Ace card represents the other two suits. (Aces indicated new beginnings and so do the servant cards -- you have two of those as well).

The positioning card, the Ace of Staffs suggests a new beginning from the depths of your psyche - not a wanton, passing folly. Career wise, staffs portray ambition toward a professional occupation, a deep burning drive for sustaining yourself in a new professional enterprise. The card indicates a recognition of opportunity that has enabled you to set your sights on a high-level

goal. There is a willingness to take a calculated well thought out risk. It offers a positive positioning that may enable progression toward the goal of changing jobs despite obstacles.

The Seven of Cups crosses this position, pointing to the recent past - the Servant of Cups. In fact, the suit of cups stretches across the position from past to near future, indicating the emotional thread playing on your decision to change jobs. In the Maya deck, the suit represents the path of water, the flowing nature of existence, the sustainer of life. It is a suit of changing moods, though good cheer generally prevails in the well positioned and balanced heart. In this card, a man stands before an altar filled with religious and sacred treasures. It brings excitement to the heart, the thrill of hope. There are many wishes in this card and not all will come true. Some will, if we steady our aims and avoid building "castles in the clouds." So, it seems a warning here, perhaps from something you experienced. Be careful about not thinking critically when making the decision. Don't let the heart of desires and wishes push you ahead without time for pause to assess the opportunity.

In the recent past rests the Servant of Cups. A positive, intuitive personality willing to sacrifice goals for the self for the good of a common cause. A nurturing type. Someone who is there for you. He or she will act for you (has in the past). I think this is a figure of inspiration and motivation. Keep him/her in mind when facing obstacles. The Servant of Cups would pacify some of the uncritical ambitions brought about by the 7 of Cups.

Then, stretching to the near future, in the flowing cups suit, awaits the Lord of Cups, indicating a strong powerful pull toward making the risk work. He has taken risks without regret, perhaps another mentor in store for you - or possibly the Servant of Cups matured to a more seasoned leader (advisor). This Lord manifests compassion, compromise and persuasion - all needed attributes in a new endeavor. The card also indicates new beginning (especially as it is

placed between the two aces) in professions with more artistic or therapeutic angles (therapeutic in what is offered to you).

In the possible result overlooking the spread sits another Lord. The Lord of Jade could conflict with the Lord of Cups, but they seem faced in the same direction and not in opposition. I think you have another mentor to keep in mind, one that rules over financial security and a good working environment. He offers good business sense, and he recognizes attributes as well as short comings. He is no fool in the business world. He can work well with the Lord of Cups - they can balance each other out, though the Lord of Jade will try to predominate any disagreement. He is authoritarian, a CEO or entrepreneur, master of his own business.

So far the positioning looks great for risking a job change. And it appears even better with the 9 of Jades at the foundation. Here is a card of financial stability and poise, a fine complement to the Lord of Jades. The Maya deck suggests a tinge of loneliness in the poise, which may be from earlier experiences of attaining a goal. In other words, when we reach a goal that we've been struggling to reach, there is a certain let down. The striving is over and you have to set new goals. But mostly, the card suggests a rich and positive platform of success. It suggests you will find fulfillment in work if you follow the course of your nature, what you are most suited to do, what your nature is most suited to do - career wise.

Now for the rough and tumble path toward that goal. In other words, the risk looks minimal around your present positioning. You seem well armed, well equipped to tackle the risk. But the progress toward the attainment of the goal (career goal) has some personality conflict in store that may leave you somewhat stifled in the Hanged man upside down.

First you face the Servant of Jade upside down. She or he counterpoints the suave Lord of Jade overseeing the drama. There is rebellion faced in attitude. Someone contrary to the norms

set by the Lord of Jade. Generally, the Servants indicate a new beginning but here with this card upside down, there is possible rejection of that new position. It's all in the attitude

The environment however, reinforces the new beginning opportunity in the Ace of Swords. It can also emphasize the clashing of opposites, the rebellious attitude. But from it may arise leadership in a much-needed new direction.

Furthering this rebellious path is the Warrior of Jade. He is not at all opposed to the Servant of Jade's attitude. He represents hidden fears anxieties and may indicate a fear of going against the norm, of become careless, reckless in the affairs of work. Those who take risks, who go against the traditional path, have a lot of social pressure against them. Such pressure can be unsettling. It creates anxieties and leaves you as the Hanged man upside down - now you are on your own. The mentors are gone and you must find your own way to continue the progression of finding fulfillment job wise. What it all may mean, the risk-taking looks promising, but up ahead there will come another time of re-thinking your situation because of difficult negotiating powers in your career. You're up against a wall and what you perceive may not be how things actually are. Here you must call upon the Servant cards, especially the Servant of cups, and the Lord Mentors. Reflect on your poised foundation in the 9 of cups. Otherwise, you may misinterpret the situation.

The spread is just a sign that even after this risk, more "risks" lie ahead that will probably have more impact than the risk you would now take. In any event, the risk taking seems well set up and with all the positive influences and mentors around, it looks like the time to consider that risk. Just bear in mind that down the road you may have to revisit the same situation you now face. But what's new?!



**Reading 30:**

General Situational Reading with the Celtic Cross Spread

Question: "Will CM and I ever be together again?"

	<b>The Fool down</b>		<b>Six of Wands down</b>
<b>Temperance down</b>	<b>Ten of Coins over Nine of Cups</b>	<b>Six of Swords</b>	<b>The Lovers</b>
			<b>King of Pentacles down</b>
	<b>Strength</b>		<b>Nine of Coins down</b>

**The Interpretation:**

This is a difficult question to address because it entails a desired result, presumably, and the cards don't always lean toward our wishes. Here, the cards suggest you have strong outside influences that pull you from your present position. There is a draw toward the past and movement to the future. There is folly, strength and hope, but most of all, movement. You also have three "coin cards," indicating that physical aspects override the reading.

The Ten of cups starts your positioning in relation to the question posed. This is a card of experiencing pleasure and enjoyment, of feeling satisfied, in control because your needs are filled. Yet, given such abundance and satisfaction, complacency lies around the corner and there is an edge of over indulgence - too much satisfaction. Is this a hope? An expectation? The crossing emphasizes stability in the Ten of Coins and combined with the nine of cups, you have a position of abundance, security, absence of want. But the ten of coins points toward the past where Temperance is upside down.

The Ten of coins is the happy secure home, a patriarchal establishment where we are all taken care of by father, rather than learning to take care of ourselves. Temperance indicates balance, awareness of the excesses in life (and this would play off the nine of cups). Temperance

indicates an influence from your recent past of not meeting the balance needed to function with insight and awareness. Perhaps this is why the present position indicates complacency. It's as if a sword card is needed, to sharpen awareness, to tune the intellect. Perhaps the ten of coins is pointing out something from the past to help you propel ahead in the right direction, presumably away from what caused imbalance, or disharmony. There could have been a quarrel in your recent past, a conflict of interest or in ability to relate in the manner of a balanced person who can stand with objectivity.

The ten of coins is a good card, a promising crossing. And at the base of your reading stands Strength, a guiding force that most likely restores any imbalance and forwards you on. There is passion in this card influencing the outcome. Combined with the ten of coins, there is a promise of collecting the powers of the self and finding what is truly right for your happiness. But that only you can decide, not the patriarch of the happy home, unless of course you yourself are that happy patriarch!

In the near future is the Six of Swords, indicating movement away from the present position. It could be swift intellectual change, the needed sharpening of the wit, away from the passions of over indulgence in the physical realm. It can mean leaving a bond to move on to new shores. If so, it would indicate the outcome may not be togetherness with the person asked about. It is a card of giving up, leaving behind and moving on. With the ten of coins pointing to the past, there will most likely be a clean break from the past and present position. The chain does not link past present and future. It links present positioning with past. And the near future works its own independent course. Look to the Strength card. The secret of inner strength will restore any disappointment and invite new promising ventures.

With the Fool upside down viewing the present positioning, and opposing Strength, there is an indication of breaking loose from folly. The Fool is both beginning and end of all ventures. He offers the freedom to set off without hesitation, without perfectionism holding him back. And he returns where he set off, with the self, wisdom of the self. The card could mean a re-freshening of a relationship (returning to the self), but it is upside down and seems to indicate a turning to folly, haphazard ventures without considering the consequences. The action could be thoughtless and it seems this would be the outcome if you don't rely on the inner strength guiding your passions. The kind of folly presented by the upside-down Fool leads to nowhere, not to the self, not to desires. And with the Temperance also down in this positioning, the tendency to reach for this folly is possibly as strong as the Strength at your foundation. This is presumably the conflict. Inner Strength vs. Folly.

The cards leading to the most likely outcome start with the poised nine of coins upside down in the attitude position. This card indicates mature relationships that are poised, understood, not run by out-of-control passions and emotions. Because it is upside down, the possibility is loss of that sort of relationship. Then, with the King of Pentacles above the nine of coins, also upside down, it seems there is a loss of the physical satisfaction in a relationship. Expectations not met. There could even be a period of resentment and jealousy as you pass the environment you encounter.

However, the Lovers card stands in the hope position, bringing the promise of restoration and new choice. This is not the card of "falling deeply in love." Rather it is the card of finding true love, true satisfaction from a lasting spiritual relationship. Your soul mate. Your life's partner. This card, with Strength at your foundation, offers the needed realism in examining our passions and desires for love and relationships. These cards don't play on our notions of the

idealized love, the mythical romance. You are challenged into seeing love as it really is, no longer deceiving yourself about what it should be for you (as in perhaps the nine of cups).

The outcome emphasizes the change in the desire of the question posed. It is the 6 of wands, returning from battle victorious, but it is upside down, like the fool. Not the victory you expect. Someone else’s victory. Things might not work out as planned, as hoped, as expected, but you will find success in your endeavor if you permit positive influences to guide you ahead. It is better to end up here, with the Lovers in your heart, than as the Fool turned around!

**Reading 31:**

General Situational Reading with the Celtic Cross Spread, Rider Deck

Question: “Will I find work soon?”

	<b>10 Swords down</b>		<b>Ace of Cups</b>
<b>Knight of Cups down</b>	<b>Justice over The Emperor</b>	<b>The Magician</b>	<b>The Hanged Man down</b>
			<b>4 Coins down</b>
	<b>The Empress</b>		<b>The Devil down</b>

**The Interpretation:**

The spread is very promising at first sight. Overwhelmed with major arcana, which means outside factors help or hinder. The suit cards are almost even, though without any wands (the spiritual level) and with the suit of cups slightly prevailing (an emotional leaning).

You start with a very interesting configuration at your positioning: The Emperor, steadfast, strong, a ruler, a knower of his/her domain, crossed by the Justice card pointing to the defeated knight of cups in the recent past. What this indicates is a clear ordering of priorities.

There is seriousness here, a show of strength and determination.

The Justice card does have a down side - that of being too critical and judgmental. But overall, it appears forces are guiding you to a promising resolution from a mis-start in the recent past. The knight of cups in the recent past becomes the Ace of cups at the end of the reading, suggesting a very positive future, a new beginning in a fulfilling endeavor. But the real question is, how soon? Let's examine the spread.

Was there a firing in the recent past? A false start (the knight on his quest stifled)? Justice indicates a learning experience that propels you on a new quest.

The foundation card (the Empress) complements the positioning, a marriage of stability in the Empress and Emperor. This would allow creativity with discipline, a very promising combination. In other words, for a writer to write, she needs discipline. Without it, her creative mind might live exclusively in thought. This combination of cards, (marriage) also allows you to soften your attitude when necessary in order to progress. The emperor alone is too headstrong and authoritarian. Keep in mind these influences whenever opportunity appears.

In the near future stands the Magician, another major arcana card of influence. The card is one of maneuvering, of skill in working out problems, but the skill necessitates initiative. Don't hold back thinking others will make things happen for you. You must manage the situation. Make that extra call, send that extra letter, weigh out the situation and reason out how to best achieve your goal. The entire configuration after the recent past looks very promising for you.

Above the spread is the ten of swords upside down. This is a position of possibilities. Because it is down, it indicates that what was overbearing, what plagued you, or what burdened you is suddenly let loose. Your burdens are eased. It suggests courage and potential success.

With the Devil upside down in the attitude position, the meaning behind the 10 of Swords is reinforced. There is soon to come, after some initiative, a lessening of what probably troubles you now. The Devil stands for attachment. Perhaps, through the Magician, through opening yourself to opportunity, you let go of some attitudes that tied you to one way of doing things. You opened yourself to new creative ways to work for a living.

Then you pass through a charitable environment in the 4 of Coins upside down, another letting go card (because it's upside down). This is the "letting go" of stinginess and greed. Because it is down, progression is possible. Probably financial progression (coins). However, the next card is a hidden fear in the Hanged Man upside down. This indicates that though the environment and surrounding influences provide progression, a fear or anxiety may keep you at bay. There may be a period of confusion. You need to look back to your influences of the Empress and Emperor, the stability they offer, and remember the letting go of burdens and the opening up to new possibilities. This card, the Hanged Man, suggests you may still cling to ways that stifle progression.

However, the ending outcome is the Ace of Cups. It suggests a promising new beginning with emotional fulfillment. A unique opportunity lies ahead if you let the proper forces guide your way -- Initiative, balance, letting go of troubles and fears. Your job is around the corner (near future) with your initiative.