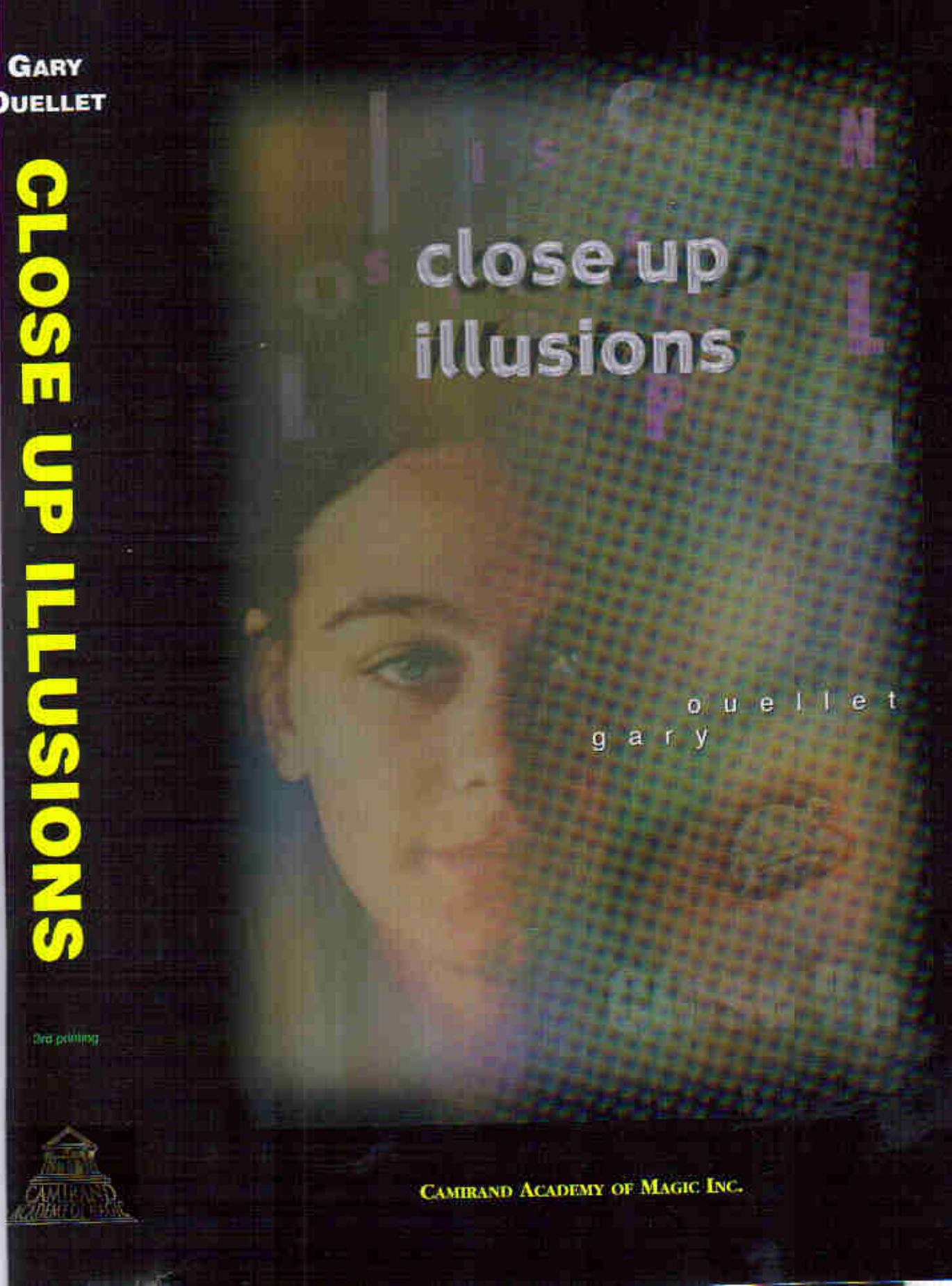
GARY
OUELLET

# CLOSE UP ILLUSIONS

3rd printing




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In case you were wondering, Ouellet is pronounced Wull-lett

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*For the wonderful women in my life:*
*Jo, Renée, Marie and Jamie*
*And a special guy, Christopher Ryan*



The real magic in my life:
Standing: Marie, Gary
Sitting: Christopher Ryan, Renée, Jamie

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## Publisher's Foreword

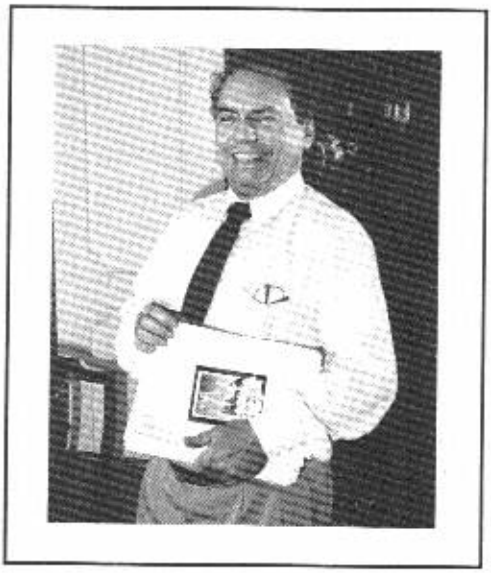
Videonics is the world's top suppliers of learning videotapes for magicians. Run out of Newfoundland, Canada, by Hans Zahn, the company offers over one hundred different titles, starring some of the top contemporary names in magic.

I was therefore very surprised when Hans Zahn told me recently at a Tannen's Jubilee that Gary Ouellet's tapes were his biggest sellers. Gary is not a full time professional: he is a lawyer and businessman. He lectures rarely: only once in the US, and that was almost ten years ago.

"Gary is a great teacher," said Hans. "His effects and methods are clear and simple. His sleights are improvements. His magic plays well to a large audience; it has mass appeal. And his methods are accessible - most magicians can perform Gary Ouellet's magic".

**Close Up Illusions** is my most ambitious publishing venture to date. But the strength of the material in this book is the best collateral I could hope for. You are in for a treat.

Guy D. Camirand
1990



# Introduction

*Unprovided with original learning, uninformed in the habits of thinking, unskilled in the arts of composition, I resolved to write a book.*
Edward Gibbon

---

I have been preparing to write this book for ten years; critics may well suggest that I have rushed to print too soon. But with the passage of time, many of these concepts have been making their way into magicdom through my Videonics videotapes, the **Genii** issue, **Apocalypse,** in Compuserve uploads, in lecture notes, or simply by word of mouth. And so, ready or not, here I come.

At the end of the day, **Close Up Illusions** must be judged as any cook would rate a cookbook: on the strength of its recipes. The prose may have been tighter, perhaps an explanation is too laconic or too wordy, perhaps the page design more or less crisp. But after all reviewers have filed their copy, are any of these ideas finding their way into your repertoire?

While awaiting that verdict, let me thank my mother Jo Ouellet, whose **Wonderword** puzzles will always reach a wider audience than these inadequate pages, and who started it all by giving me a Gilbert magic set at age six. And I am beholden to Henry Hay for writing **Learn Magic**. And thanks also to Dai Vernon, to Harry Lorayne, and to Slydini for inspiring an apprentice sorcerer.

And sincere thanks to my wife Renée, who has picked altogether too many cards, to my children Marie, Jamie and Christopher Ryan, who must carry the torch on its next lap, and to Guy Camirand for having faith many years ago.

Magic has permitted me to meet so many genuinely nice people: Peter and Coral Reveen, and the Reveen sons; Gilles Couture, Pierre Barry, Raymond Dionne, Yves Tourigny, Marc Rood, and the other Quebec City magicians; Mike and Lou Gallo, Obie Obrien, Ascanio, Howard Schwartzman, Jimmy Ray, and Fantasio; Akiro Yamada, Hiroshi Kondo, Hideo Kato and the rest of the Tenyo geniuses; Hans Zahn, Michael Ammar, Daniel Cros, Tom Craven, Ken Krenzel, David Williamson, David Copperfield, Steve Freeman, Tony Spina, Ross Bertram, Jay Marshall, Phil and Evy Matlin; Haruhito Hirata, Barry and Miriam Shapiro, the late Sid Lorraine, Jerry Andrus, Gary Kurtz, Paul Belanger, Jeff McBride, Harry and Renee Lorayne, Herb Morrissey, Jay Sankey and Richard Saunders; fellow 'Masters of Magic' Meir Yedid and Eric DeCamps, my dear Club Med friends Jean Pierre Garnier and Bruno Bazzuchi; Glenn Brown, Denis St-Jean, Roy Cottee, Jack Marshall, Roger Latour, Roger Coté, Jeff David, Mark Montreuil, and the other members of the Ottawa Ring, my second home; and Bill and Irene Larsen, Dai Vernon Slydini, Jimmy Grippo, Frank Garcia, Gary Darwin, Seigfried and Roy, Bob Farmer, Steve Freeman and Johnny Hart, and so many others whom I have surely offended by neglecting to mention.

Finally, for those technically interested, I wrote this book in Microsoft Word 4.0 and pasted it up with Quark Express on my Macintosh IIx. The main body of the text was set in Bookman 12, with Optima and Palatino rounding out the fonts. The cover was drawn in Illustrator 88.

Gary Ouellet
Sillery, Quebec
January, 1990

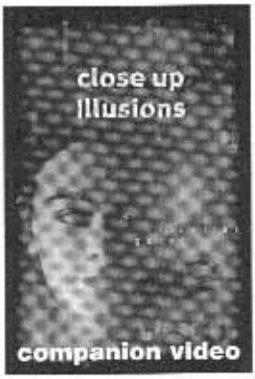


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**The**

**Companion Video**




A special videotape has been prepared to assist the student of Close Up Illusions master the sleights explained in the book. This is not the normal lecture on video: **no explanations are included**. This is a reference video only, showing all the sleigths being performed by Gary Ouellet, the man who created them. **Here you will learn what the moves are supposed to look like**. Each sleight is prefaced by a page number reference . In other words, this is not a substitute for the book - rather, it is a companion aid. Although not a professional studio production, the video was recorded in high resolution with professional lighting and edited on a digital video editing suite. Guy Camirand is the online host. We have kept the price very low to encourage readers to make use of this special teaching aid.

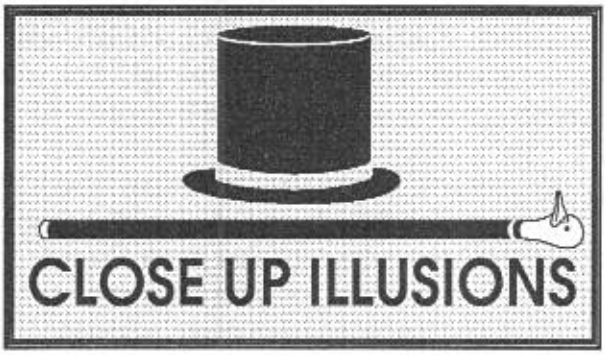
At the time of publishing this edition, the video is available in VHS NTSC and VHS PAL format In the future other formats and media may be offered to meet demand.

To get your Close Up Illusions Companion Video ask your favorite dealer or contact the Camirand Academy at our internet address **www.camirandmagic.com**





# Close Up Illusions




# CHAPTER 1

## THE CLOSE UP THEATRE

Magic is a performing art. As such, it is subject to the challenge and rewards of stagecraft, drama, design and direction.

Derek Bowskill, in his book **Acting And Stagecraft**, has noted that *Life, as we know it, means experiencing and communication. Drama selects what is meaningful and presents it with style. It can be defined, therefore, as the imaginative communication of significant experience.*

The actor in a play communicates that significant experience by skillfully pretending to live the experience before our eyes. But consider this: the magician creates the actual experience itself on stage, not a simulated replay.

It is fact, of course, that the magician performs feats, much in the same manner as a juggler or acrobat. Yet magic has an inherent capacity for drama and can combine the thrill of the juggler's art, the actual experience, with the capacity of the actor for imaginative communication. Magic thus emerges as a medium with a potential for powerful theater.

Stage magicians of calibre have long realized this fact. When Reveen goes to the gallows, when David Copperfield creates a cameo, when Richiardi suspended a girl on a broomstick, when Jeff McBride does just about anything on stage, the audience experiences the imaginative communication of significant experience.

Close up magicians, perhaps because the field is still in a state of artistic infancy, tend to forget about theater. We are hypnotized by a fascination for moves, sleights, novel techniques and clever patter. We seek out with endless appetite new controls, vanishes and triumph handlings (as well we should – curiosity is the foundation for invention) but paying only lip service to the adage about the importance of entertainment, which we usually mean to describe a capacity to deliver comic lines.

Leonard Read, writing on the loss of individual freedoms in our society, observed that *We are perishing, not from lack of wonders, but from lack of wonder.* In a cosmopolitan age of vertiginous speed and microbit technology, where pyramid power sharpens razor blades and men explore the heavens in person, the magician can still instill even among the most sophisticated a childhood sense of wonder.

This must be our quest.

In close–up magic, the performer forgoes the extravagance of the theater stage, the excitement of the grand illusions, the glamour of lights and costumes and orchestras and assistants, the electricity of bigness.

But he substitutes for all of this the practicality of making any individual his audience, any corner his stage, the commonest of items his props; and he weaves his spell on a different but ever so powerful level. For in close–up the astonishment and the wonder are truly personal. And even more: the accomplished close–up performer retains in his art all the theater and emotion of the large hall and transforms them into an intimate and memorable experience.

If nothing else, I would hope to instill in you a realization of the untapped potential for theater in the close–up medium.

*Good evening, ladies and gentlemen,*
*And welcome to my theater of close–up magic.*

*Although the stage is small*
*And the players only two*
*Let me offer for your enjoyment*
*Some whimsy with a deck of cards*
*Some choreography with two goblets*
*Some poetry with a rope*
*Some drama with coins.*

*A long time ago,*
*Magicians ruled the world.*
*The universe was their theater*
*And the earth itself their stage.*

*But magicians no longer rule the world.*
*They have repaired to their lairs*
*And await their moment.*

*For you and me*
*The moment is here, now.*

*So sit back and imagine*
*What it was like*

*When magicians ruled the world.*

## Body Memory

Close–up theater is a pipe dream until the practitioner has mastered his moves, until he has committed the handling sequence to body memory. Bowskill reminds us that *body memory is used to guide us through a series of physical gestures that we cannot easily remember in their proper sequence – or, if we can, the actual business of thinking them out so delays the action that it may well be too late when it is finally accomplished.*

The series of actions that together form the trick must be burned into our memory so that we can perform them by instinct, by sheer physical rote. No effort at all is expended on recall. As a result we can not only concentrate all our attention on communicating the significant experience, but the automatic sequence of physical gestures, which do not require our attention, ensures that our performance will be anguish–free, without pangs of fear at critical junctures. From a magical perspective, the performance is improved.

If we have time to perform, we have time to practice.

Even erstwhile Erdnase pointed out that the joy of magic comes in its acquisition. We practice because we like to practice.

And we are better magicians for it.

## The Spectator

The audience, Bowskill observes, is always right.

*In the performance of the ritual celebration of the human condition,* he writes, *there can be no place for a 'take it or leave it attitude. The actor must go out to the audience to touch their spirit. It is his job to reach out to them – not theirs to struggle to contact him..*

If the performance left our audience indifferent, it was most certainly our fault. Did I perform poorly? Was my choice of material all that it might have been?

The audience is always right.

Good magic can and should reach everyone. Are the effects too obscure to instill wonder? Is our magic beautiful to watch? As an artist, is our work artistic?

Remember who is always right.

## Conviction

THEY: *So you are a magician?*
YOU: *Yes.*
THEY: *Can you saw a lady in half?*
YOU: *No, actually I do close-up magic.*
THEY: *Like card tricks?*
YOU: *Yes.*
THEY: *My father used to do card tricks.*

Father Cyprian has astutely observed that close-up magicians have an inferiority complex and are often aggressively trying to canonize close-up. The syndrome is aided by the sort of treatment usually reserved for the close-up performers at magic conventions: lower fees, pitiful performing conditions and little attention. The stage performers seem to be the real magicians (even if, as Harry Lorayne points out, almost the only time you hear someone say *That's real magic!* is during a close-up performance). Sometimes, the poor cousin feeling is difficult to accept.

YOU: *No, actually, I do close-up magic. That is the most difficult kind.*

The above is factually incorrect. Both stage and close-up require great skill.

Consider that most laymen (humans, as Looy Simonoff would say) have never seen a master close-up magician, but have probably enjoyed, in person or on television, a master stage magician. Rather than adopt a defensive attitude, choose instead to educate your audience by showing them good close-up.

YOU: *No, actually I specialize in performing illusions right up close; here, let me show you...*

## The Script

When Richard Burton moves grown men to tears with a performance, we all know that a great playwright penned his lines, that a great director plotted his delivery; and yet, we think no less of Burton. Pavarotti must rely upon the strength of the composer and the ability of the orchestra leader.

Pity the poor magician who must often be a jack of all trades. He invents, directs, manages, produces and performs. Yet often, he can benefit from others. De Kolta invented the vanishing girl from the chair. Copperfield, Sigfried and Roy and Richiardi all bring the house down with De Kolta's trick. We stand, Russell Kirk has warned, "on the shoulders of giants, and must be prepared to fall to the ground should we choose to leave those shoulders.

I have seen magicians with great talent and great presence insist on performing their own material. The material was terrible, and I felt like suggesting they go out and try a Paul Harris effect for a change. In other words, if you have no talent for this sort of thing, don't worry if you are not an inventor. Many great magicians couldn't invent the simplest effect, yet we all admire their artistry.

Tap some of that solid gold on your bookshelf.

## Drama

*Chase your hero up a tree.*
*Throw stones at him.*
*Get him down from the tree.*

The above is the classical recipe for romantic drama.

The magician can also plot. He can chase his hero (a selected card) up a tree, throw stones at him (shuffle the deck) and finally get him out of the tree (find and reveal the selection).

The plot may be intricate (Macdonald's Aces) or simple (a coin penetrates a table) but it must always be compelling. Theater, in other words, demands a script.

## Choreography

In close-up, most obvious movement comes from the hands, whereas body language and eye gaze are more subtle and are used primarily to misdirect.

Few magicians remember they have magic in their hands. A magical wave changes copper to silver, makes cards rise out of a deck, makes dollar bills float and sponge balls vanish. A magic wave does all that.

Most magic waves look like the death rattles of a wounded lizard.

One can only conclude that some still believe an elegant gesture signifies an abandoned virility. It is unfortunate, because in the bargain they sacrifice style and artistic content.

The elegant close-up magician not only remembers that there is magic in his hands, but his props reflect his art: new cards, polished coins, clean rope, fresh sponge balls.

If you would seek to be Merlin, act like Merlin.

## Suspense

Every mystery presupposes anticipation.

In that instant before the coin penetrates the table, there is the question: *Will he make it?* Magic carries with it the very real possibility of failure. Take advantage of that fact to create suspense.

Bob Farmer has remarked that in the simple transposition of a coin from one hand to the other, all theater is lost if both hands open at the same time. One hand must open first to create anticipation; then, the other hand opens to disclose victory and resolution.

## The Sound of Magic

Music can create an atmosphere of mystery, suspense, triumph, irony and action. On stage, it is often put to symbolic use to underline theater.

Most stage magicians would not leave home without a music system, a score, or at least a recorded cassette, yet close up magi-

cians rarely have recourse to one of theater's most compelling tools. Although I cannot claim to have invented the concept (Ganson suggests carrying along a tape player, and Goshman chink-a-chinks to music) I did spend some time choreographing an entire close-up act to music.

The performance became a **Concerto For Two Hands** with music not only setting the mood but indeed dictating the timing of all the moves. If you want to try it, use a quality system and a quality recording.

If you are going to speak, foresee an automatic volume decrease.

And never forget the power of occasional silence.

## THE STAGE

*The shape of the stage always reflects the nature of the dramatic ritual that is to be played out* – Bowskill

The stage, he claims, can be defined as *that area occupied exclusively by the select-elect of the theater...a place where drama occurs...(It must) permit the desired relationship between the elected and the electorate...(and) must represent and evoke the events that take place there – the rituals with which we pretend to control the uncontrollable.*

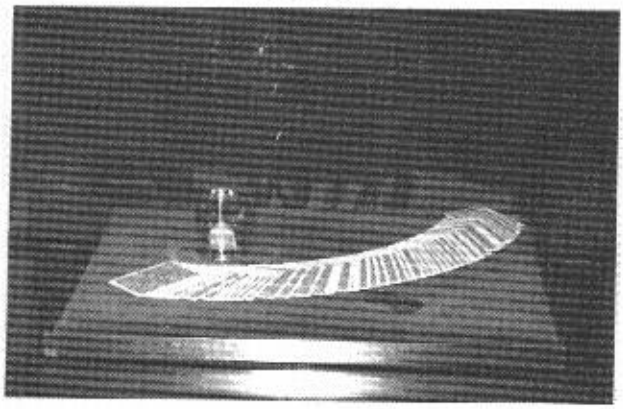
In close-up, the magician uses an Open End Stage (in actor's jargon), where stage and auditorium share the same place and where the audience can partly surround the stage area.

Actually, by having speakers on both side of the performing area, you can approach the Closed Proscenium End Stage: PHOTO 1-1.

Close-up mats are favored by magicians primarily for utilitarian motives: they make much close-up work so much easier. But I have always felt that they also added a bit of theater, giving importance to subsequent events.

Accordingly, some twenty years ago I designed and built my first Close-Up Stage. It was a board, covered with foam and felt, with wood modeling around the sides and rubber feet below. It was crudely made but added tremendous theater.

**Photo 1-1**



Since then, the Close-Up Stage has undergone many transformations. The current model was refined by Guy Camirand (who sometimes makes some up for sale) and the result is professional. PHOTO 1-2 shows Dai Vernon at my Close-Up Stage.

## Building Tips

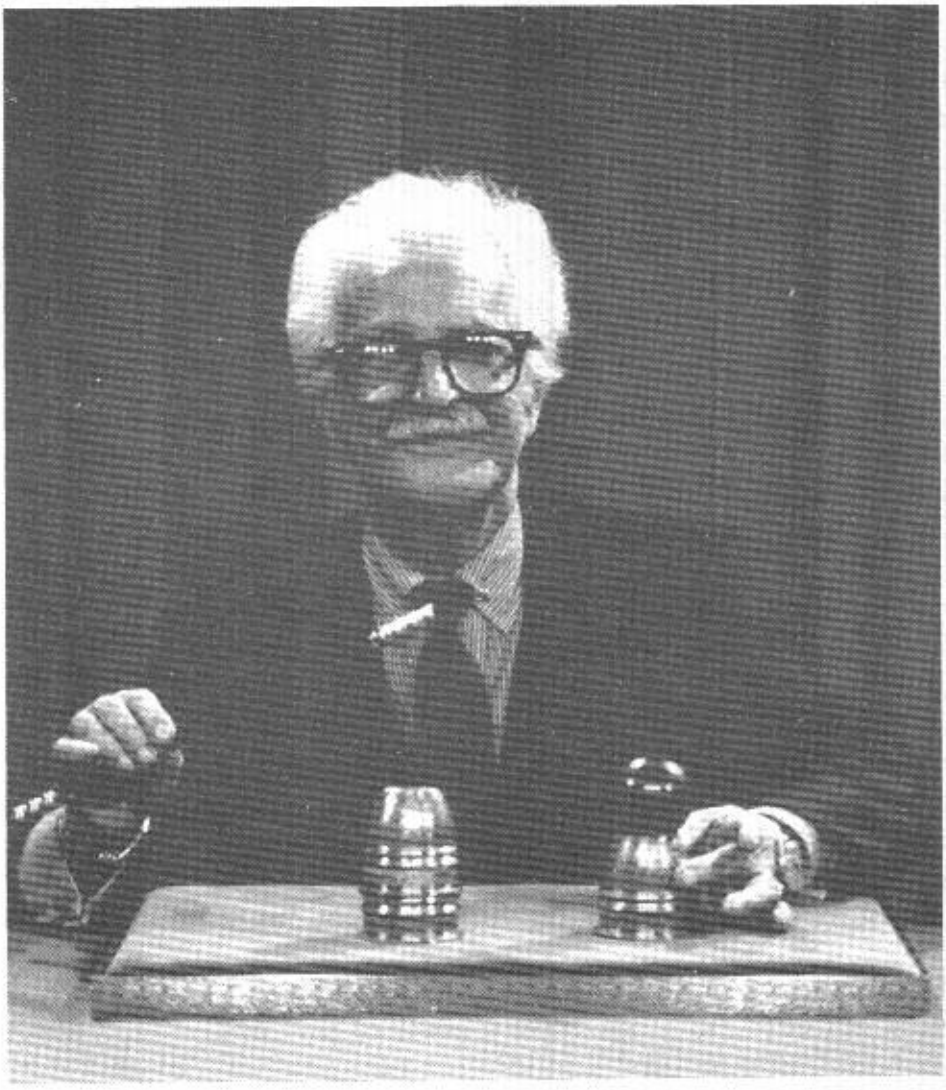
• The covering should be green. Green contrasts with almost all magic props: coins, cards, sponges. Furthermore, green is elegant, and remindful of the opulence of the casino. Black and red cannot make such a claim. And if you are using a purple close-up mat, you are probably wasting your time reading this book.

• The undersurface should be foam or carpet, the latter being far superior for card work, glued to a piece of plywood.

• The underside should be plexiglass or formica, giving you a portable solid surface for certain effects, such as dice stacking.

• Rubber feet are a must.

The Close-Up Stage as pictured has a gold metal trim. If you go to an art shop, framing material does quite an adequate job. Whever you do, try to keep the overall look professional.



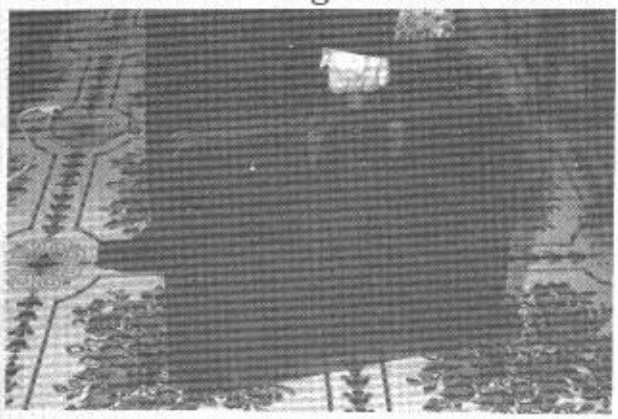
Professor Dai Vernon and the Ouellet Close-Up Stage

**PHOTO 1-2**

Unlike other theater stages, a Close-Up Stage can be carried to performance. I use a leather carrying case: PHOTO 1-3

There can be no argument that the Stage is more trouble

**PHOTO 1-3**



than a small close-up mat that you whip out of your pocket (and how many of these have we seen that look like they have been to the Crimean wars and back?). But a true stage demands respect.

And the Close-Up Stage is a true theatre stage, ready for the ritual to begin.

## The Close Up Stance

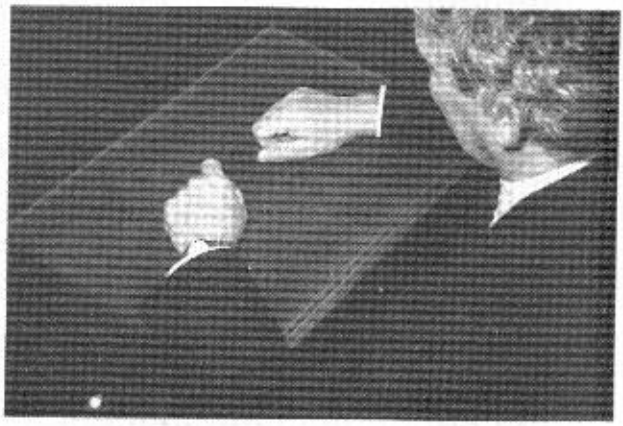
Although stand-up close-up is preferred by table workers and lecturers, much of your magic will be performed sitting down. This, of course, permits advantages, such as lapping, but it also limits body movement. And there is more involved. PHOTO 1-4 shows the seated position, and PHOTO 1-5 shows a top view of the arm position in normal close-up stance. The performer is comfortably seated. The arms are held at roughly a 45 degree angle to the table edge. This is the crucial point.

A stand-up performer can turn, bringing the right or left side of his body to the audience. Certain sleights, such as thimble vanishes, require such a shifting of stance for angle considerations. These moves cannot be used in close-up.



**PHOTO 1-4**

**PHOTO 1-5**



False transfers, for example, must be worked out from the close–up stance. You cannot stop in the flow of a movement and turn sideways without warning that you are about to make a move. (One seeming exception to this rule is the Rear Shift Lap, first described in my lecture notes and later in **THE HOMING RING**; in fact its success is predicated upon the psychology of the close–up stance.)

The arm angles of the close–up stance are valid even if the performer works from a standing position.

Videotape yourself next time you perform and notice how often you are in the close up stance. The position is natural. The body assumes the stance without thinking.

The moves, handling and techniques in this book pay tribute to the close–up stance.

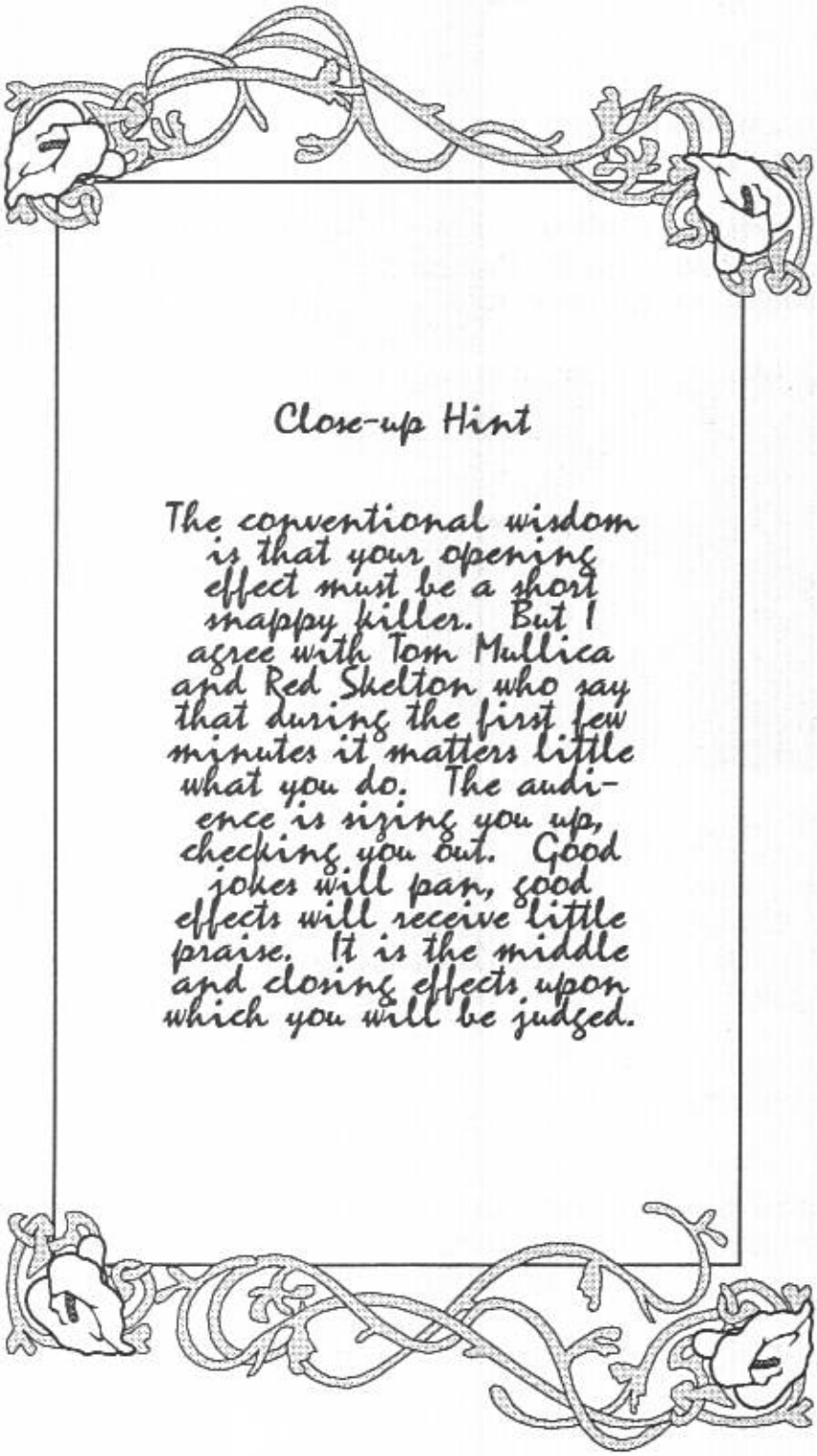
## SHOWTIME

Too much unsolicited advice at one sitting may lose some readers who are wondering if this book contains any actual tricks!

Henceforth, I will try to give you bits and pieces as we go along, much like John D. MacDonald's hero Travis McGee takes his retirement: in installments!

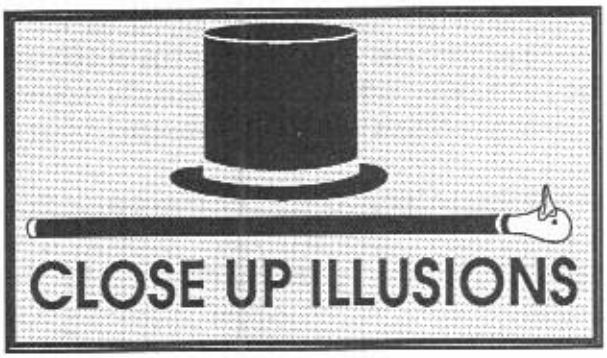
I think they are about to raise the curtain.





## Close-up Hint

The conventional wisdom is that your opening effect must be a short snappy killer. But I agree with Tom Mullica and Red Skelton who say that during the first few minutes it matters little what you do. The audience is sizing you up, checking you out. Good jokes will pan, good effects will receive little praise. It is the middle and closing effects upon which you will be judged.




# CHAPTER 2

## THE GREATEST EFFECT IN MAGIC

The title of this chapter may be misleading. I am not going to teach you (in this chapter, at least!) the definitive magic trick. I do want to suggest an unbeatable effect, and a method that is an introduction to my kind of magic.

If the technique of a trick is so difficult that only a handful of magicians have the skill to ever perform it, then the technique should be passed on by word of mouth to those fortunate enough to possess the skills required to execute the move in question, and not clutter up a book. None of the effects published herein demand that kind of fingerwork. But they demand a dedicated study of the underlying principles and a commitment to theatre.

Of all the effects in close-up, the following is one of the most memorable to your audience:

*He picked up a coin, squeezed it and it was gone. It was like real magic.*

Putting aside pulls or other mechanics, and excluding bluff set-ups, the art of vanishing a small object from the hands demands dedicated practice and a developed sense of timing. But every minute of practice is worth the investment, because the dividends are real magic. The ability to make something vanish is the ability to do things which are VERY magical.

Sooner or later, every true magic book must eventually become a conjurer's cookbook, a compilation of recipes, and this book is no exception. But for openers, let us take the time to really carry out an anatomy of a move. The space is a luxury, but the effect is universal and timeless.

The move about to be taught is similar to many in print, although the particular sequence has never been explained correctly.

Sleight of hand vanishes based upon false transfers are invariably a "false take" or a "false put"; in the first you create the illusion of taking something but the object never leaves the original hand - and in the second, you create the illusion of putting the object in the other hand but again, the thing to be vanished never reaches the destination point. The distinction between false puts and false takes lies in the hand which originates the transfer action.

The false transfer to be taught is a false put: an object displayed in the left hand will supposedly be transferred to the right.

Of the many types of palms, the finger palm is certainly the easiest to execute. Although the classic palm has its advantages (as Michael Ammar and David Roth conclusively demonstrate), it is much more difficult to accomplish in an acceptable fashion. Furthermore (and I don't care what anyone says) the ability to execute a classic palm is directly related to the physical structure of the hands: some magicians can practice until a hen grows fur and will never be able to convincingly classic palm anything. On the other hand, a finger palm is available to anyone who has fingers.

The claimed weakness of the finger palm (the dependency upon a partially closed hand) does not take into account the fact that a hand at rest is precisely half closed naturally. Al Schneider

will convince the most hard-boiled critics of this fact. Learning to finger palm is child's play. Learning to live with a hand in finger-palm position, to accept it, to cultivate a stillness of the hand and a credible absence of guilt or anguish, is the true challenge. Throughout this book, with very few exceptions, I have structured the moves around finger-palm handling.

And now, the vanish: hold a small ball (or coin) in the left hand. Pretend to place it into the right hand, but secretly retain the ball in the left hand. Squeeze away the supposed ball into nothingness with the right hand.

The above description is standard fare in most magic books. While correct, the description neglects the true finesses which can make a standard handling into magical magic. To convey the beauty of the move, I have evolved a series of practice drills that, taken together, constitute a tutorial on vanishing small objects.

Referring to the previous chapter, body memory is perhaps the single most important element of the move. The technical quality of execution pales behind the importance of nonchalance, the vital necessity to carry out the move without for a moment thinking about what you are doing. And only repetition can build body memory.

## Practice Drill Number One: The Finger Palm

The hands and arms are held in Close-Up Stance. A small object, say a ball, is held on the outstretched left fingers, at the base of the third finger. As the hand is turned over – back towards

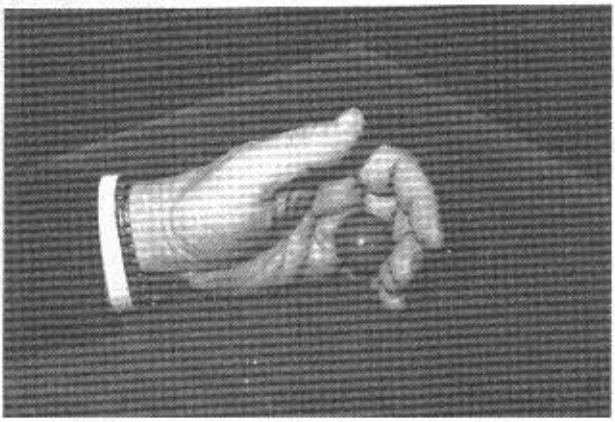


**PHOTO 2-1**

your body – the left fingers contract ONLY ENOUGH to lightly grip the ball: PHOTO 2–1.

Note that the turnover is a wrist action only, NOT an arm action.

Practice this for a minute or two.

## PRACTICE DRILL NUMBER TWO: THE CLOSING OF THE RIGHT HAND

The right hand is held palm up, in Close Up Stance.

As the fingers close, the hand revolves counter–clockwise to the right. PHOTO 2–2 and PHOTO 2–3 show the start and the finish of this action.

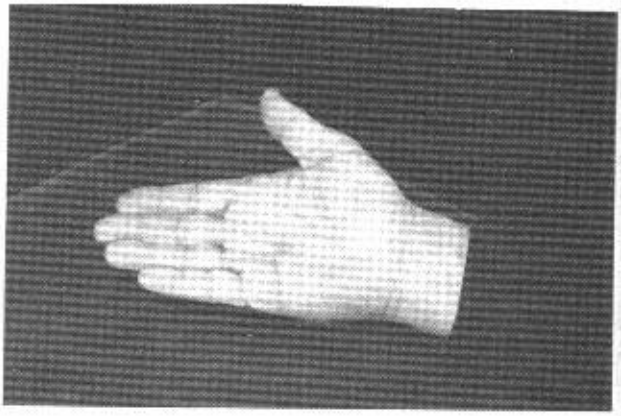
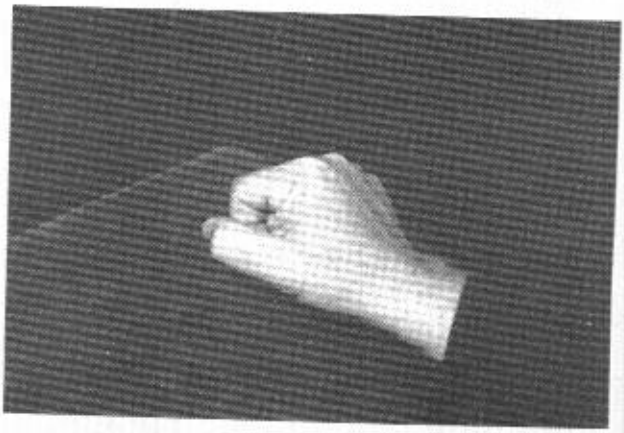


**PHOTO 2-2**

**PHOTO 2-3**



**Checkpoints:**

- You must imagine that a hinge is attached to the back of the right thumb, and the right hand, as it closes, pivots, or swings, down and up.

- The hand does not turn over in place. At the end of the movement, the hand does not occupy the same space as it did at the start.

- The cue to begin the movement is that moment when the ball is supposed to first land in the hand. Thus, the hand becomes a sort of slow mousetrap, reacting immediately to the arrival of the object.

## THE VANISH

At the start, the hands, in Close-Up Stance are as shown in PHOTO 2-4.

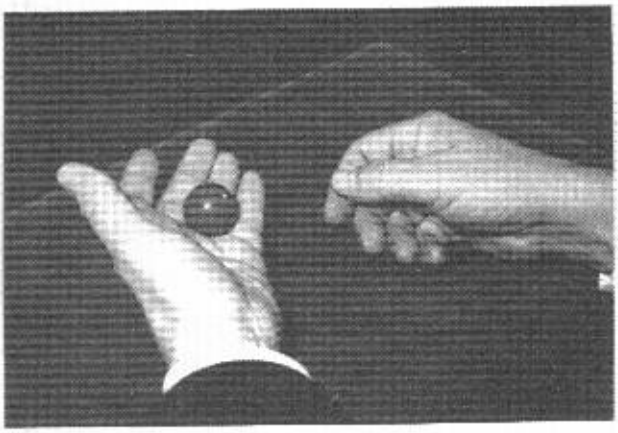


**PHOTO 2-4**

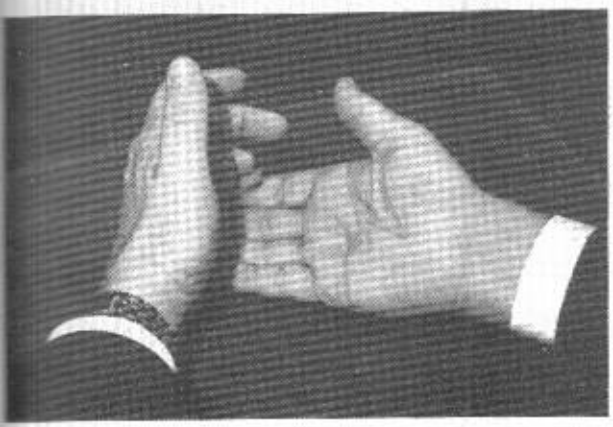


**PHOTO 2-5**

The left hand turns over backwards, at the same time fingerpalming the ball: PHOTO 2–5. At the instant the ball would have landed in the left hand, the right hand closes as it turns over:PHOTO 2–6.

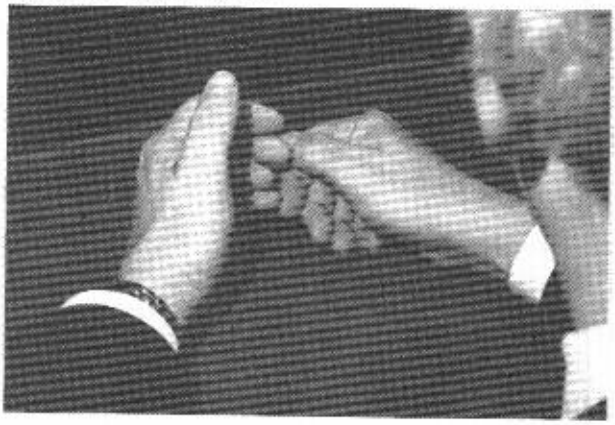
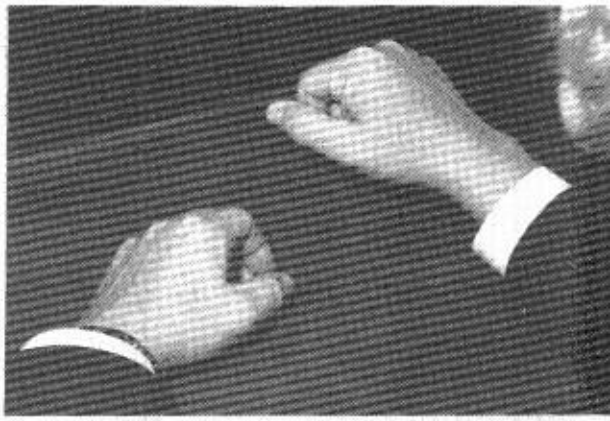


**PHOTO 2-6**

Obviously, timing is critical. Imagine the ball really is being dumped.

Now the right hand slowly revolves bringing the back of the right fingers up, as the left hand falls DEAD to the table: PHOTO 2–7.

**PHOTO 2-7**



## Eye Movement

The vanish is helped along by your gaze. Just prior to the vanish, look at the ball. During the vanish, glance at your audience. The moment the false transfer is executed, look back at your closed right hand.

This little eye sequence is deceptive because, firstly, when you look at a spectator, he is naturally inclined to meet your gaze (as Slydini has so successfully demonstrated). Secondly, by not looking at your hands when the dirty work takes place, you convey that at that particular moment, you are not expending any effort, and therefore are probably not cheating.

## The Mystery of the Crystal Chamber

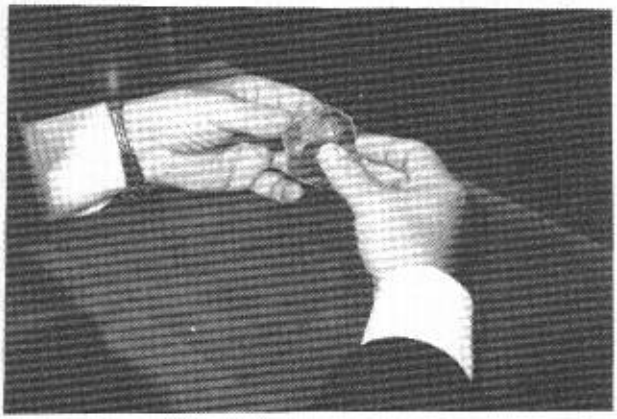
The S.S. Adams Company, well known manufacturer of pranks and magic tricks, has a little item on the market known as the *Disintegrator.* I suspect that this trick was an afterthought, when wondering what to do with the molds used to make the little plastic box in the *Colorvision* trick. The product sold under the Disintegrator name is a small clear plastic box and cover, as well as a super-bounce ball.

The instructions supplied describe a trick that is, frankly, terrible.

Here is something else that is a lot more fun, and worth the dollar investment for the apparatus.

Show the box containing the ball. The left hand holds the box, and the right hand comes over to grasp the cover: PHOTO 2–8.

**PHOTO 2-8**



Box hands separate, allowing the ball to fall down onto the table: PHOTO 2–9. The momentary distraction caused by the falling ball allows you to bring both hands directly towards each other, replacing the cover onto one of the sides: PHOTO 2–10.

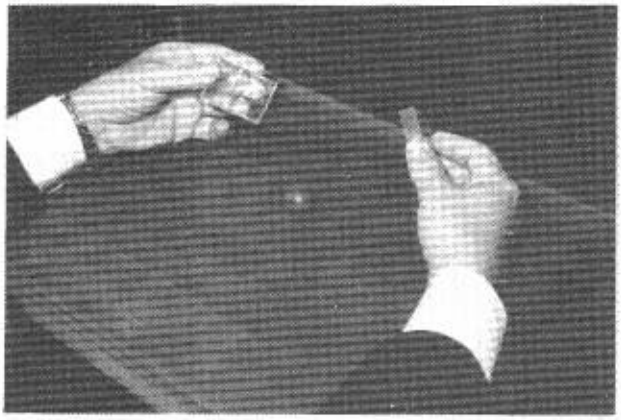
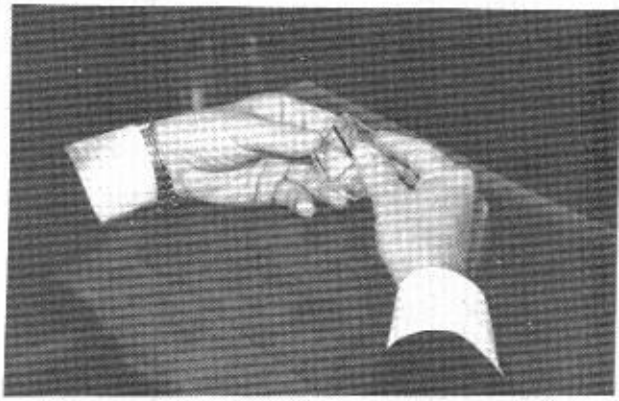


PHOTO 2-9

PHOTO 2-10



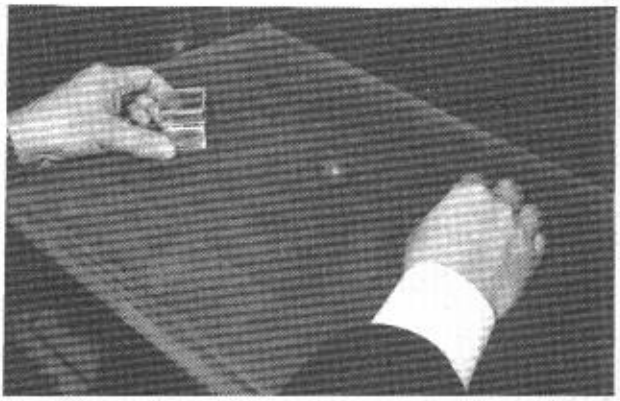
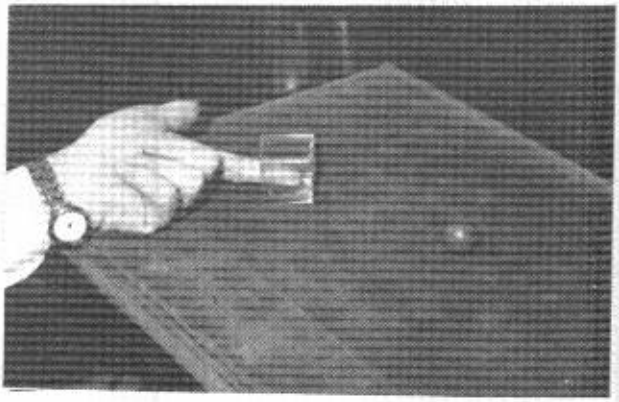


PHOTO 2-11

PHOTO 2-12



The box is replaced onto the table –PHOTO 2–11– with the secret opening on the rear left face. PHOTO 2–12 shows an exposed view of the opening.

Take the ball onto the left hand. Execute the vanish described above. However, instead of the left hand falling dead, it immediately picks up the box, which automatically pops the ball into the box: PHOTO 2–13.

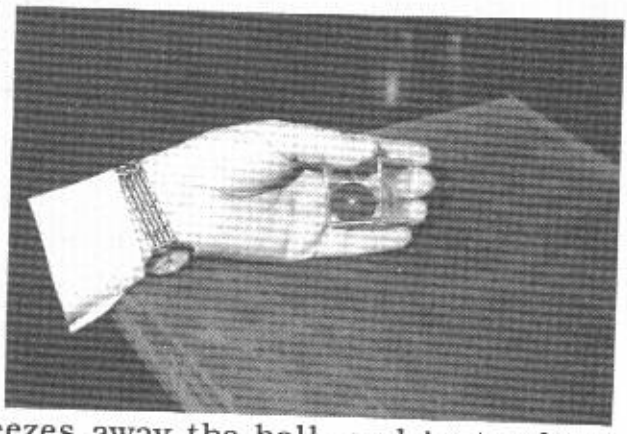


**PHOTO 2-13**

The right hand squeezes away the ball, and instantly, it appears to materialize inside the box: PHOTO 2–14.

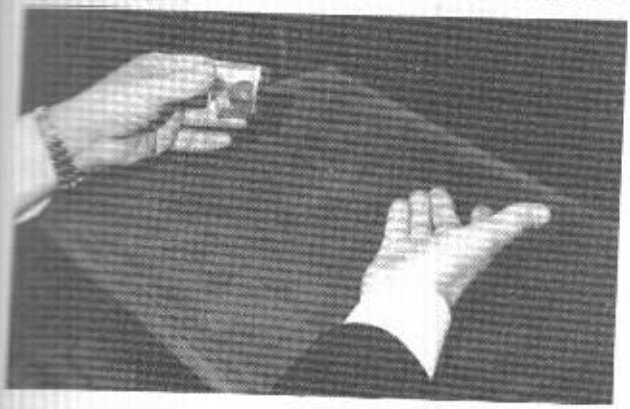


**PHOTO 2-14**

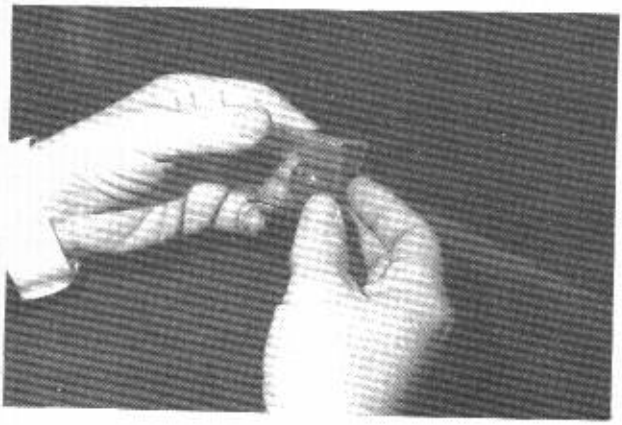


**PHOTO 2-15**

To finish, the right hand grasps the base of the box: PHOTO 2–15. It lowers and twists slightly, allowing the ball to roll out: PHOTO 2–16.

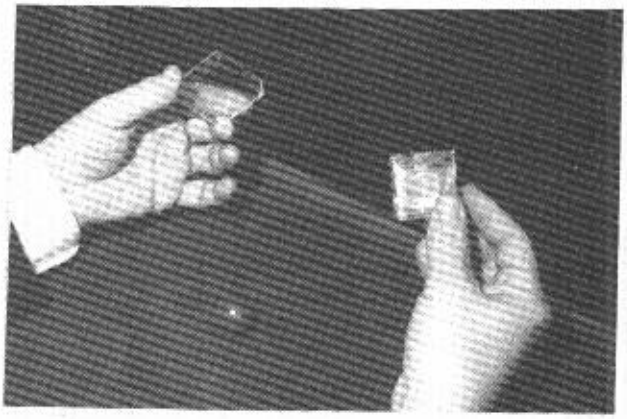


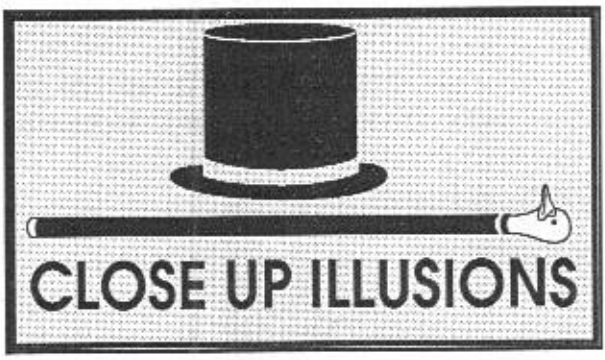
**PHOTO 2-16**

Master the above vanish and, like swimming, it will always serve you, never to be forgotten.

It is accessible to the hardened pro and the nervous neophyte; it will fool the youngest child and the most venerable learned elder.

One last comment. Throughout this book, I shy away from suggested patter unless a phrase is critical to the timing, or else suggests a neat story line. It is very difficult to put words in the mouths of anyone except professional actors. Most magicians reciting packaged patter sound like constipated parrots. If you cannot think of anything compelling to say, say nothing. There is always the chance that your audience may conclude that still waters run deep.






# CHAPTER 3

## FLASHY WONDERS

Imagine this: You wave your empty hands over your Close Up Stage and suddenly a full deck of cards appear. You cut the deck into four piles and an ace is on each pile. Just as suddenly the deck vanishes.

For openers, you could do a lot worse! Even better, use it a little later on in your act when your audience has settled down to appreciate the magic.

### FLASH DECK

It was that genius of the pasteboards, Ken Krenzel, who first suggested an appearing deck of cards, after seeing my *INCREDIBLE VANISHING DECK* first described in **THRESHOLD** (Masters of Magic, Volume I, Number 5). He reminded me that Steranko had published a method (**Steranko On Cards**) that used a handling which resembled my vanishing deck (the deck vanishes as the deck is spread). My thanks to Ken for his idea, and for his assistance in working out the handling.

At the start, the deck is face down on the lap (or under the thigh). By the way, if you are going to follow this with the ace cutting sequence, the four aces should be on top.

Now you have to get the deck into a Tenkai palm in the right hand. PHOTO 3–1 is a close–up view of a deck in Tenkai. There are two ways to get into position:

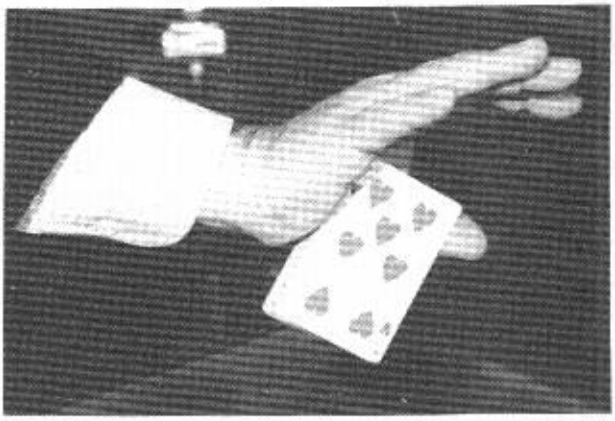


**PHOTO 3-1**

• both hands come down, the deck is placed into Tenkai, and then both hands come up to the position shown in PHOTO 3–2.

**PHOTO 3-2**

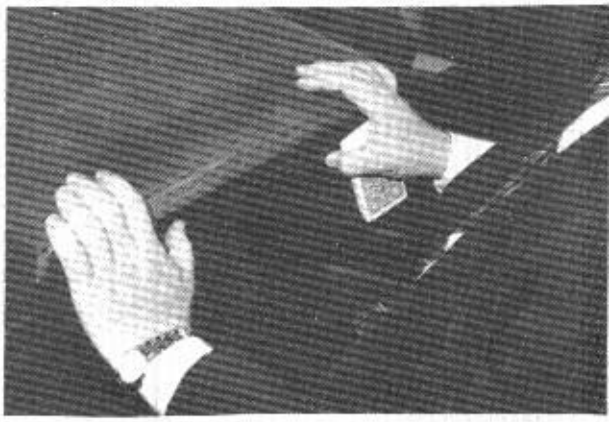




**PHOTO 3-3**

Note that the hand appears empty, because the deck is hanging down over the edge of the table, yet the right hand seems to be on the table.

• only the left hand drops to the lap, and feeds the deck into the right which is already placed at table edge ready to receive the deck in Tenkai: PHOTO 3–3.

Either way, you end up in the Photo 3–2 position.

Pause for a moment, and move your hands along table edge, pretending to adjust the table, or your close-up mat.

Notice that the deck remains hidden, yet the hands appear totally empty.

Now, the hands cross, the left hand going over the right: PHOTO 3–4.

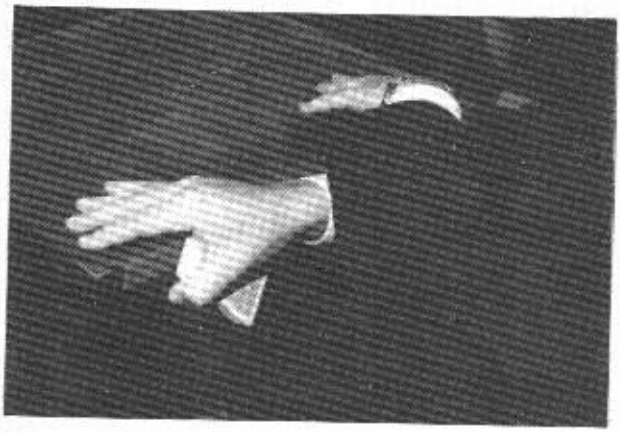


**PHOTO 3-4**

As the hands uncross, both in a circular motion, the right hand hand spreads the deck: PHOTO 3–5.

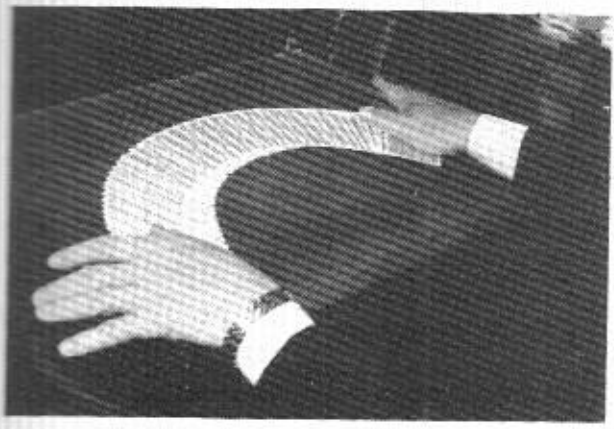


**PHOTO 3-5**

NOTES:

• it will take you a while to get the knack of spreading from Tenka but even if the spread is not perfect, the effect is still terrific.

• the difference between this handling and the Steranko version is precisely the recourse to Tenkai, and its many advantages.

• immediately prior to the appearance, I use my hands to reposition the Close-Up Stage (or close-up pad). It conveys the impression that the hands are empty.

• usually, I will say *Watch!* just before the appearance, otherwise many will miss it!

The appearance is visual, magical and theatrical. Although my business obligations do not permit me to attend and/or perform at all the magic conventions that I would like to, this Flash Appearance has consistently been a winner. Many magicians have asked me how I got the deck out of my sleeve so quickly!

I have used Flash Appearance to open my close-up show **Concerto for Two Hands** for the past ten years.

## Three Second Wonder

This method of cutting aces, inspired by reading Father Cyprian's Swindle Aces, (in **The Elegant Card Magic of Father Cyprian**) has generated much interest and enthusiasm from some of the world's top cardmen. Ken Krenzel, Herb Zarrow and others have all asked to be taught the sequence which – you will be pleased to know – uses no sleights at all.

The concept – using a swindle to make it appear as if four aces, all on the top, really came from four parts of the deck – is not new. Father Cyprian suggested that interested readers might investigate Cross-Over Aces by Al Smith in **The Talon** # 2. Cyp credits Joe Destephano with introducing him to the idea of turning a card over onto another pile. Herb Zarrow mentioned that Frank Thompson had done a lot of work in this field. My contribution to Father Cyprian's idea was to come up with a handling that has each ace turned over onto another pile.

At the start, the deck is face down on the table, long edges towards you, with the four aces on top: PHOTO 3–6. You could execute some false shuffles, or false cuts, as long as you retain the order of the top four cards.

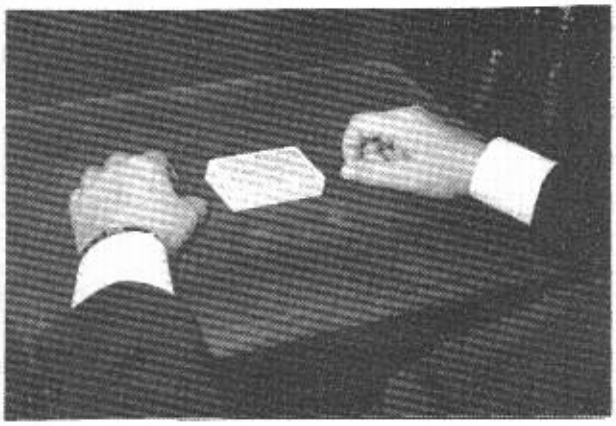


**PHOTO 3-6**

Both hands come onto the deck as shown in PHOTO 3–7: the forefingers are touching the top card, thumbs to the rear and remaining fingers at the front.

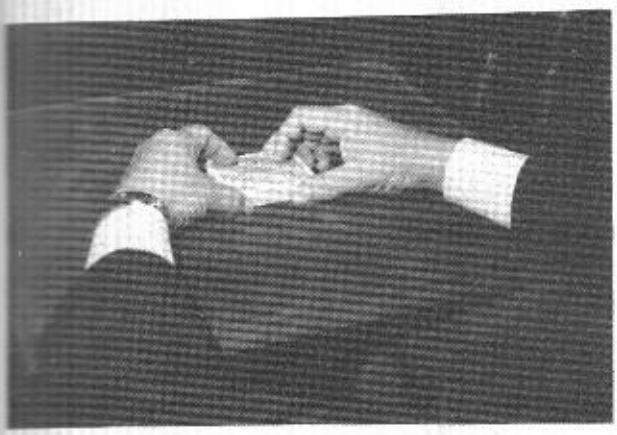


**PHOTO 3-7**

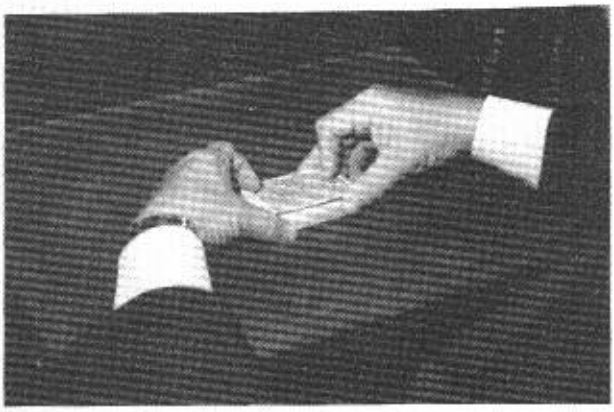


**PHOTO 3-8**

The right thumb secures a rear break under the top two cards: PHOTO 3–8.

Still maintaining the break, the right thumb now breaks the deck at the center: PHOTO 3–9.

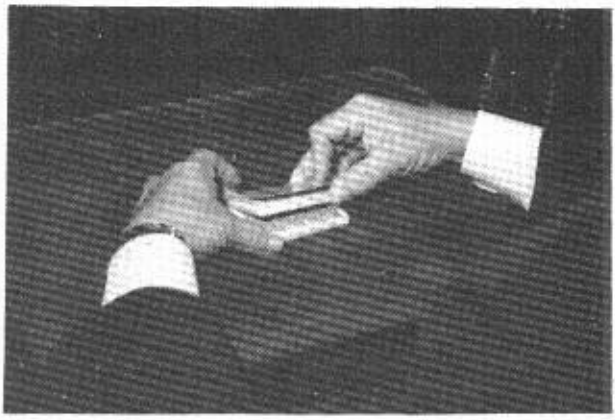
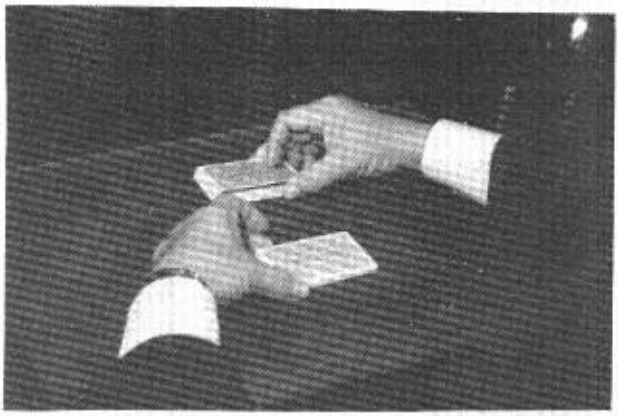


**PHOTO 3-9**

The right hand now moves forward (all the while holding a break under the top two cards) and deposits its pile on the table, in front of the rear half: PHOTO 3–10.

**PHOTO 3-10**



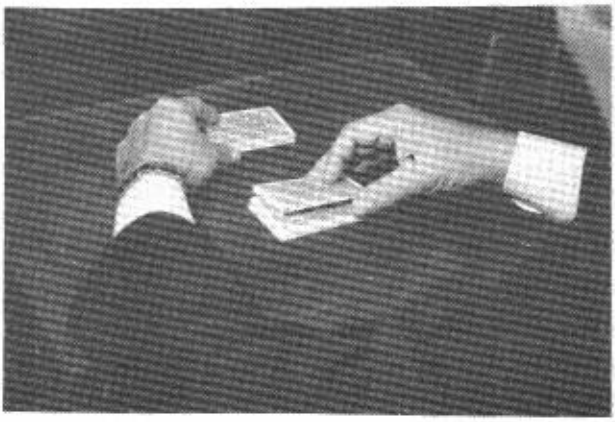


**PHOTO 3-11**

Now, the right hand returns to the rear packet, bringing back the top two cards AND AT THE SAME TIME AS IT MOVES BACK the left hand moves forward coming onto the front packet: PHOTO 3–11.

Both hands cut their packets in half (no more need to hold a break) and then move out to the sides: PHOTO 3–12.

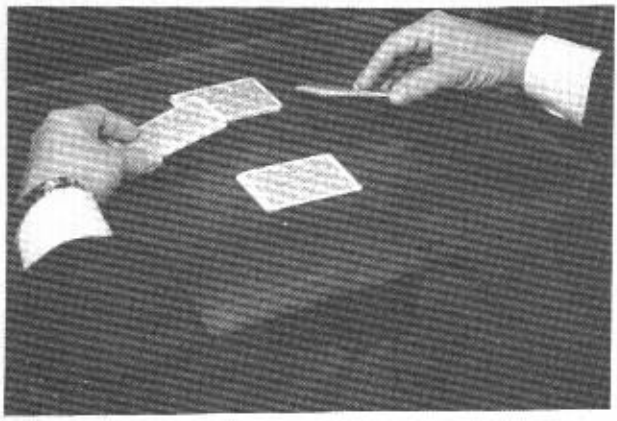


**PHOTO 3-12**

• CHECKPOINT: The right and left piles both have two face down aces on the top of their talons.

The right hand now turns over the top card of its packet BUT TURNS IT OVER ONTO THE FRONT PACKET – and, at the same time, the left hand turns the top card of its packet ONTO the rear packet: PHOTO 3–13.

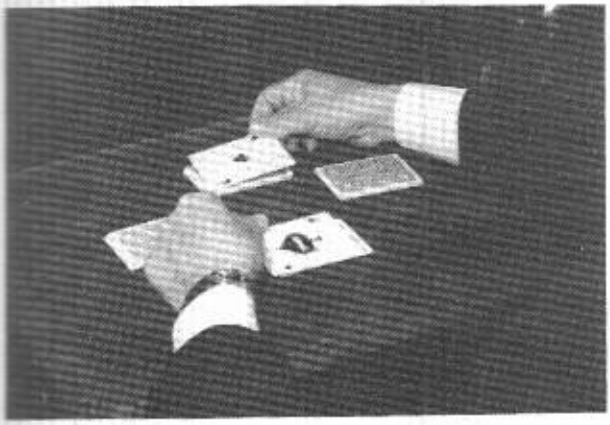


**PHOTO 3-13**

Now, both hands cross, the left going under the right, for the purpose of taking the top cards of the opposite packets: PHOTO 3–14.

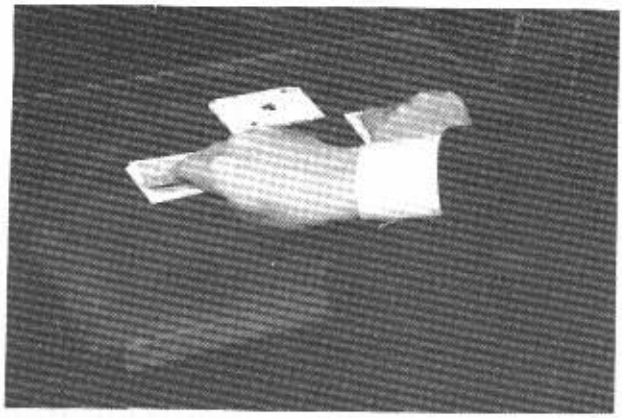
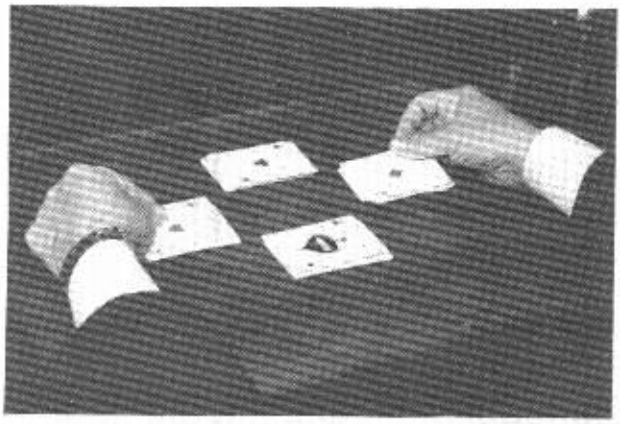


**PHOTO 3-14**

Finally, the hands (each with a card) UNCROSS, turning their cards over in the process, the right bringing its ace onto the right packet and vice-versa: PHOTO 3–15.

**PHOTO 3-15**



NOTES:

• because each card is turned over onto another packet from which it came, THREE SECOND WONDER thus becomes primarily an optical illusion.

• the illusion is greatly strengthened by the crossing and uncrossing of the hands.

Because there is no sleight of hand to master, you can learn this in a few minutes. Show it to a magician and you will have him worried.

# THE DECK VANISH

I use the method taught in **THRESHOLD** under the title *THE INCREDIBLE VANISHING DECK.* I presume that if you bought this, my latest book, you probably own **THRESHOLD.**

I should add, however, that since the publication of **THRESHOLD**, many magicians are performing the torn and restored card effect, but too few believe in the vanishing deck idea. Let me simply say that the vanishing deck is one of my most requested tricks, and one I ALWAYS perform if sitting at a table with a deck of cards. Threshold is a Special Occasion Trick; the Incredible Vanishing Deck is an All The Time Trick!

The vanishing deck idea is also a great way to end a close-up act, especially if it has been an all-cards performance.

I suppose I should deal with the rising howl I can hear already from the anti-lapping lobby. Lapping, they say, is impractical because most magicians perform standing up.

Most magic I perform, including every time I am asked to do a trick for friend Charlie, is performed standing up.

The anti-lappers would have you conclude that if there are some occasions when lapping is ruled out, then lapping should be purged from your entire repertoire, stamped out Inquisition-style never to be considered, just as Ramses banished the name of Moses from Egyptian history.

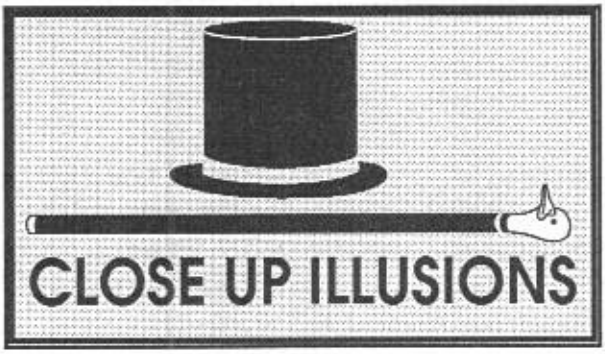
On the whole, these guys are idiots.



## Close-up Hint

Some years ago, Guy Camirand and I developed a hand lotion that was perfect for the close-up magician. It added cling without making your hands sticky. But it must be applied ten minutes at least before showtime. It takes a few minutes to cure on your hands. Guy sold it until the supply ran out. He no longer manufactures this item (too much trouble to package and ship liquids).

Okay, here is the "secret recipe". Combine equal portions of Rose water, rubbing alcohol, and glycerine (all available at your corner drugstore). That's it.




# CHAPTER 4

## DOUBLE TROUBLE

The double lift has changed the very face of card magic, and it is hard to imagine a single more useful sleight.

This chapter details some methods for executing double and multiple lifts, plus some interesting spin-offs. The **Pages of Time** method is easy, and the **Triple Delight** is, I think, a valuable contribution to the literature of multiple lifts, primarily because all the extra thickness weaknesses have been solved.

The **Crook** concept has many uses, some of which shall be described.

The **Windmill Double** is, to say the least, novel.

Let me add that an excellent double lift, the **Angle Pivot Double** is described in a later chapter.

Finally, I should point out I have described still another double lift in ***FINGER ON THE CARD*** (Masters of Magic, Volume 1).

# THE BREAK SYSTEM – PART ONE

For most double lifts, you need a break held by the little finger before commencing the action. Here is the correct way to get such breaks. This is standard stuff.

The deck is held in the left hand and the right hand grips the deck lightly from above, thumb at the rear edge. Note that the forefinger is held in front with the other fingers. Although this will initially seem unnatural, it avoids the counting tip–off seen when the forefinger is curled on top: PHOTO 4–1.

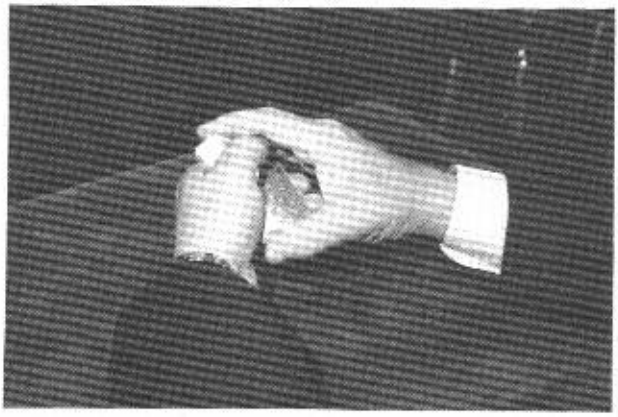
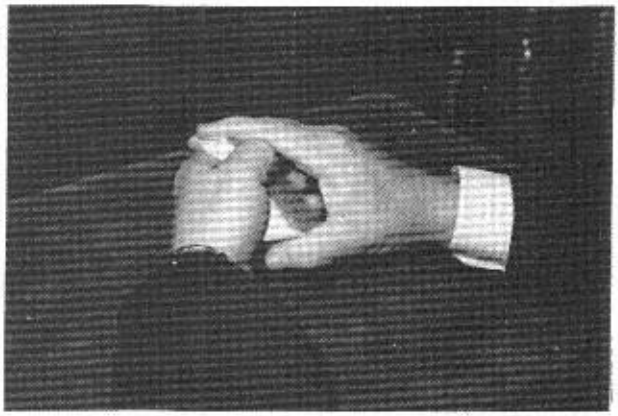


**PHOTO 4-1**

With a slight movement, the right hand bevels the deck backwards: PHOTO 4–2.

This facilitates the counting action.

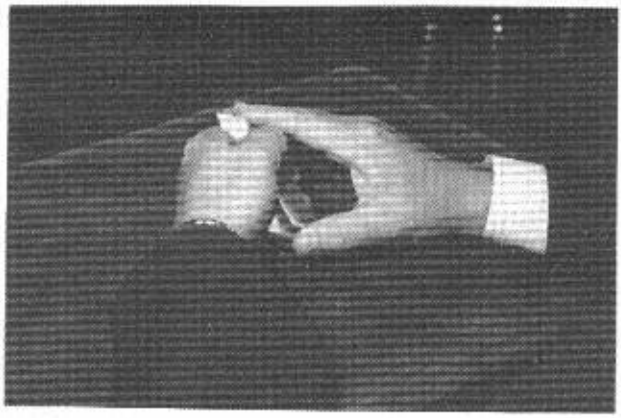
**PHOTO 4-2**



Now, the right thumb will count up two cards – BUT – in fact the left hand will **lower** as the right thumb counts. In other words, rather than have the right hand count up two cards, and although

the movement is the same, the idea is to avoid a spectator seeing the counting procedure. Therefore, the left hand pivots the deck down as the counting takes place, as opposed to the right hand moving up: PHOTO 4–3.

**PHOTO 4-3**



Also note that as much as possible, the top cards should remain FLAT, as opposed to curved. This means that the counting action must use a LIGHT touch.

The moment the break is secured with the right thumb, the left pinky presses against the side of the deck and the right thumb releases the two cards: PHOTO 4–4.

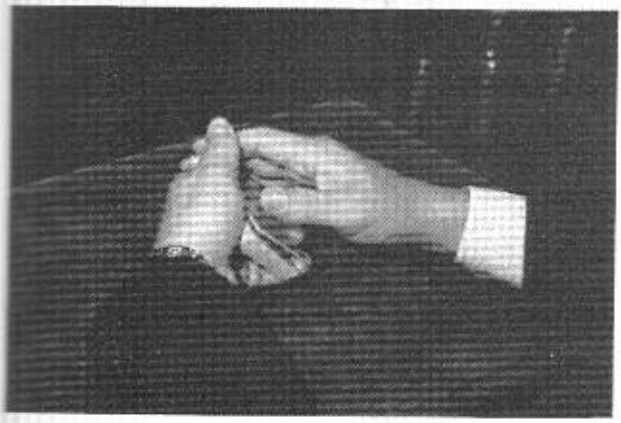


**PHOTO 4-4**

Now the left and right hands square the deck, the left thumb sliding down the left side: PHOTO 4–5.

The entire procedure is the work of a second or two, and deserves practice.

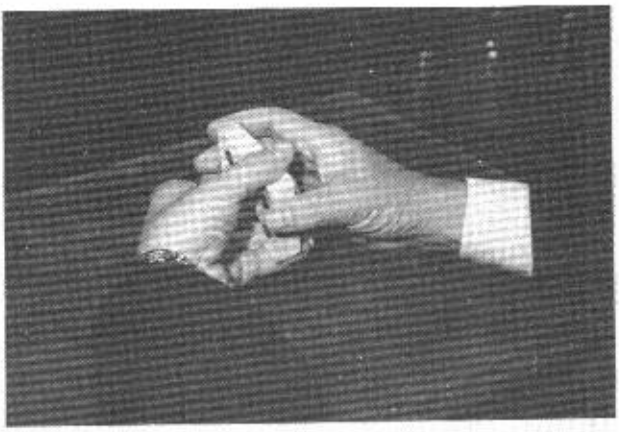


**PHOTO 4-5**

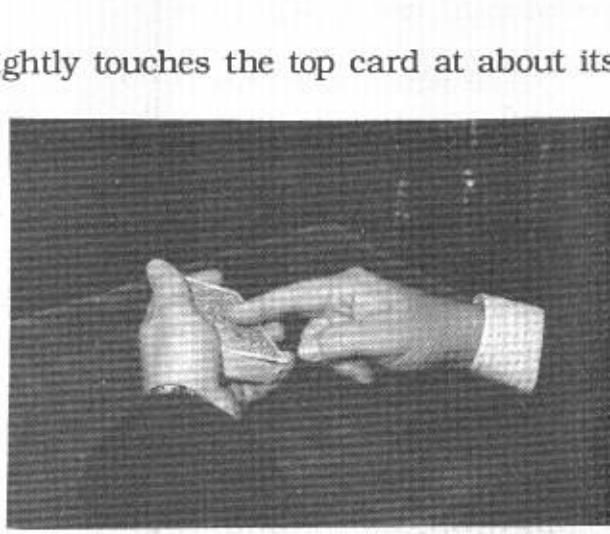
## THE PAGES OF TIME DOUBLE LIFT

This is an application of a Harry Lorayne idea.

The deck is in the left hand with a pinky break below the top two cards.

The right forefinger lightly touches the top card at about its center: PHOTO 4–6.

**PHOTO 4-6**

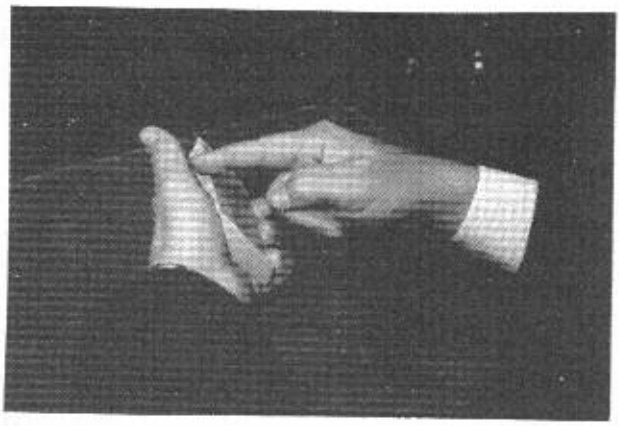


Slide the finger to the left, just over the edge – while at the same time, the left fingers squeeze to the left: PHOTO 4–7.

This results in a double being pushed off. The forefinger can now pull up the double (notice the only the forefinger is involved at this point): PHOTO 4–8.

It is this seemingly gentle, light handling that dispels doubts.

PHOTO 4-7



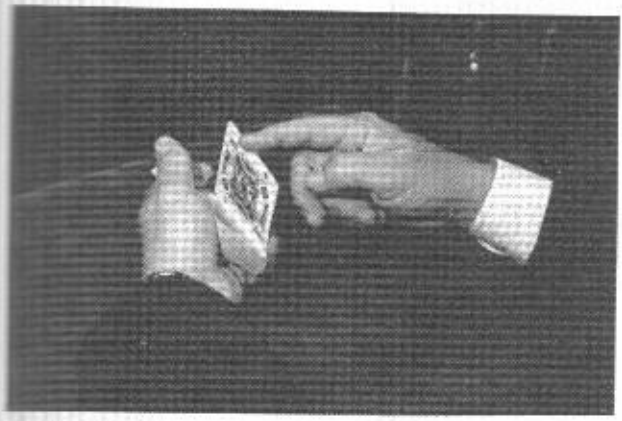
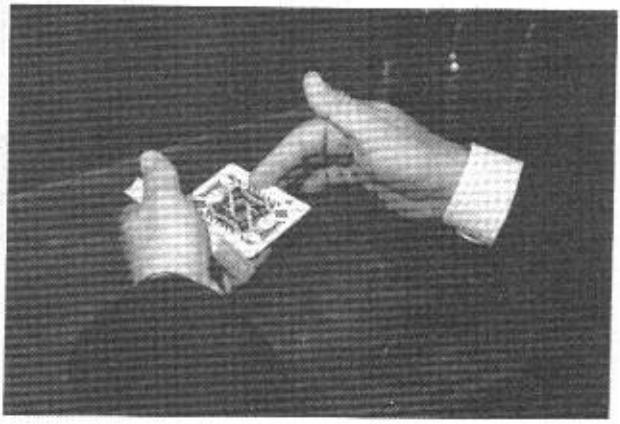


PHOTO 4-8

As the card is turned over, as a page in a book, it comes to rest on the right second finger, and in fact is clipped between these fingers...PHOTO 4–9...

PHOTO 4-9



...before being returned to the deck: PHOTO 4–10.



**PHOTO 4-10**

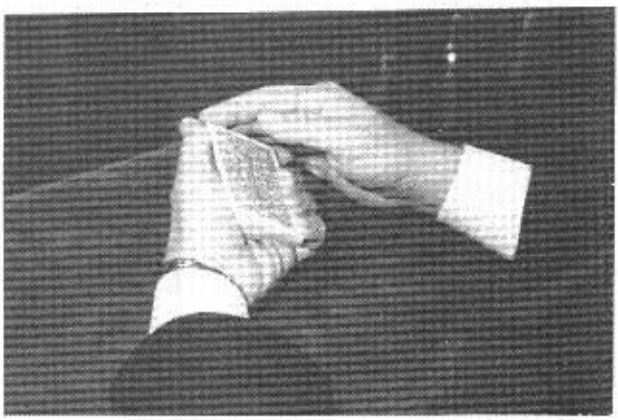
One reason conjuring literature offers so many double lifts (Anneman gave us the term - and usage has made it synonymous not only with lifts but with the double turnover as well) is surely because the move is such a necessary weapon in our arsenal.

## TRIPLE DELIGHT

This multiple lift should be added to your repertoire right away! It uses the same mechanics as the Pages of Time lift, but in a different way.Try this first as a triple lift. The left pinky holds a break below three cards.

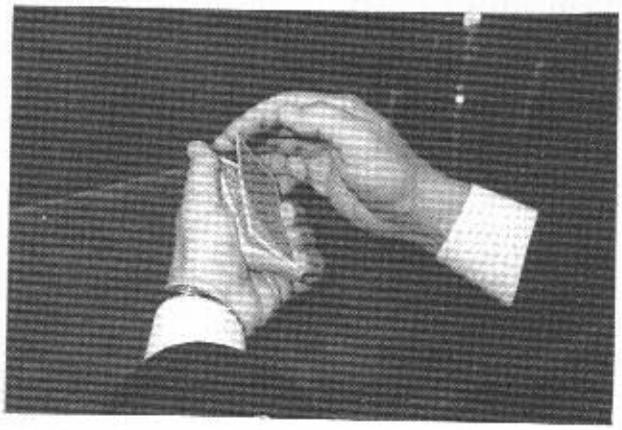
As the right hand comes to the front of the deck, the left fingers squeeze, displacing a block of three cards slightly clockwise off the top: PHOTO 4–11.

**PHOTO 4-11**



Notice particularly, in the photograph, the position of the right forefinger. This right forefinger, near the first joint, picks up the triple at the front very near the corner: PHOTO 4–12.

**PHOTO 4-12**



Note that the fingers of the right hand totally shade the thickness of the three cards.The triple is now turned over by allowing the rear edge of the triple to slide up the surface of the deck....:PHOTO 4–13.

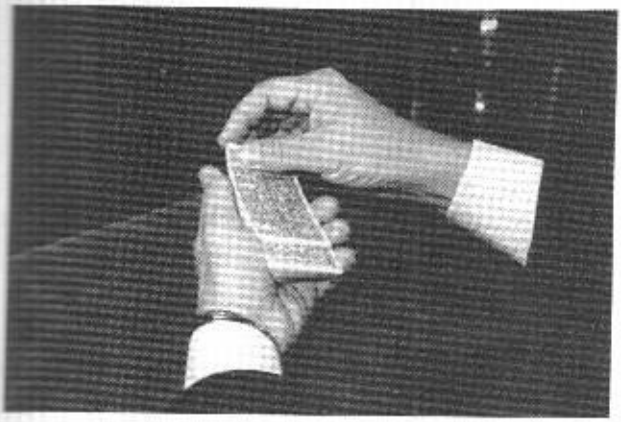
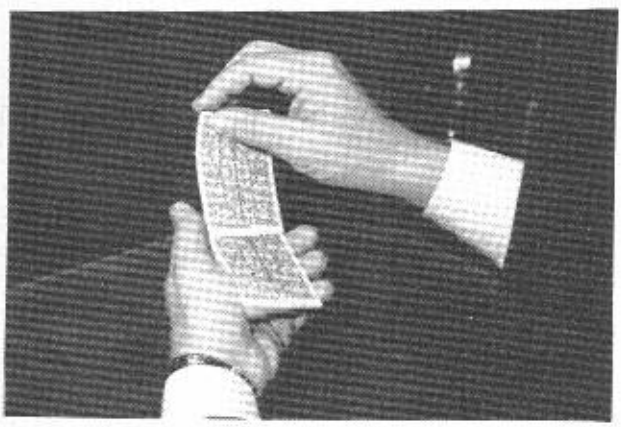


**PHOTO 4-13**

**PHOTO 4-14**



...until it is about half an inch from the front edge... PHOTO 4–14

...at which point it is brought face up onto the deck: PHOTO 4–15

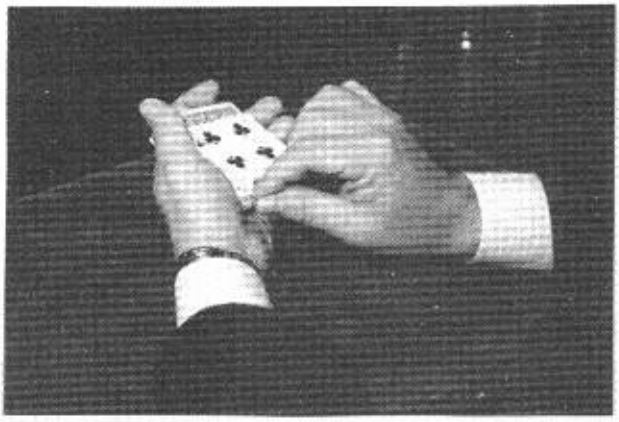


**PHOTO 4-15**

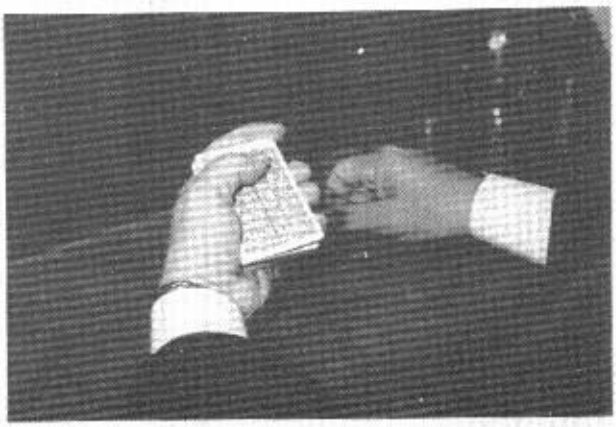
Remember to pick up a break with the left pinky as you lay down the triple, and repeat the turnover to bring the triple face down again.

## The Crook Concept

I am indebted to Gilles Couture for pointing in the right direction on this one by showing me a little mechanical motion that I have christened the Crook move. The beauty of this concept is that it opens the door to a whole series of utility moves, including a double lift or two.

First, the mechanics. The deck is held in the left hand with the usual break under two cards. Note the position of the left forefinger at the front right top corner: PHOTO 4–16.

**PHOTO 4-16**



The left forefinger pulls the double down and to the left: PHOTO 4–17.

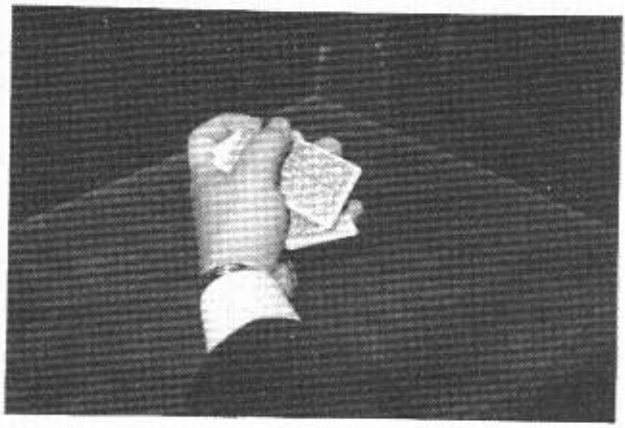


**PHOTO 4-17**

That is the Crook Move. Two cards, in perfect alignment end up in an angled, twisted position. It would not seem as if this strange situation could lead to much. Stand by.

## The Crook Double Lift

Execute the Crook Move. You should be in the position shown in the above photograph.

The right hand grips this double at the back between thumb and second finger, with the forefinger curled on top: PHOTO 4–18

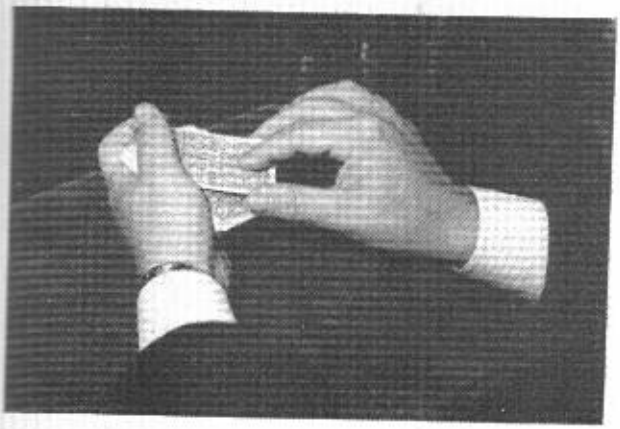


**PHOTO 4-18**

The card is snapped over (by pressing and then releasing the edge held by the second finger): PHOTO 4–19.

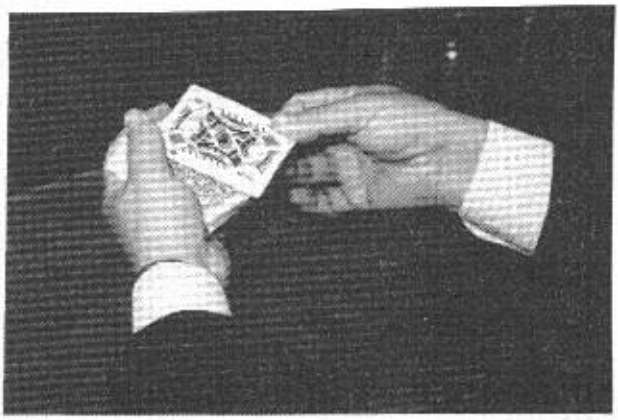


**PHOTO 4-19**

The double is replaced face–up onto the deck.

## THE CROOK SNAP CHANGE

The Crook is also a wonderful way to set up for a snap change. Say a selected card is controlled to the top. Ask a spectator to touch any card. Remove the touched card, and turn it face up onto the deck.

Alas, the touched card is not the selection.

Now get a break under the top two cards, and execute the pick–up as described above. As the right hand moves up and down the left arm, snap the double over, causing an instantaneous change to the selected card. The double is dropped on the deck and a single (face–up) card is thumbed onto the table.

Usually, as executed by even the pros, the snap change is preceed by some ungainly movements to get into position. The Crook (and later the Angle Pivot) enable you to get the double card in the right grip with a minimum of gymnastics.

The snap change, as a concept, is quite visually arresting, and a useful general utility.

# The Crook Palm

The Crook is a neat way to palm multiple cards, and although this application is not a double card concept, it is included here because it uses the Crook mechanics. Suppose you want to palm three cards from the top. A break is held below the three cards. The Crook move is executed as the right hand comes over the deck at an angle: PHOTO 4–20

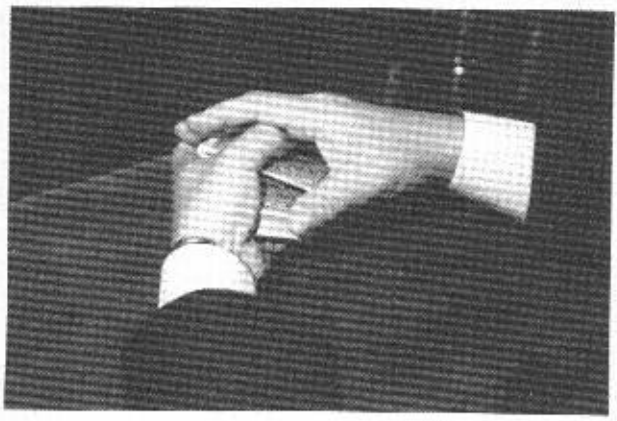


**PHOTO 4-20**

Once the rear left corner contacts the right palm, near the heel of the thumb, the right hand moves forward, as the left forefinger extends, and in fact "pushes" the front right corner of the packet into the right hand to complete the palm. PHOTO 4–21 is an exposed view.

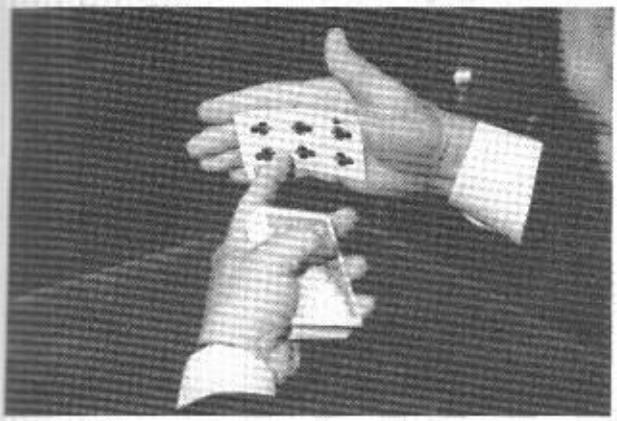


**PHOTO 4-21**

The palm move is quite easy insofar as the left hand does most of the work.

At the end of this chapter, I will detail further uses for this move.

# THE BREAK SYSTEM – PART TWO

What follows is another approach to obtaining a break under two or more cards preparatory to executing a double or multiple lift.

It is, in my opinion, a more sophisticated method.

This is also pretty standard fare, although I am told that it was first originated by Larry Jennings. I got the idea from a Dai Vernon ploy from the old ***Stars of Magic***.

The deck is held in the left hand dealing position, and the left thumb pushes off a few cards: PHOTO 4–22

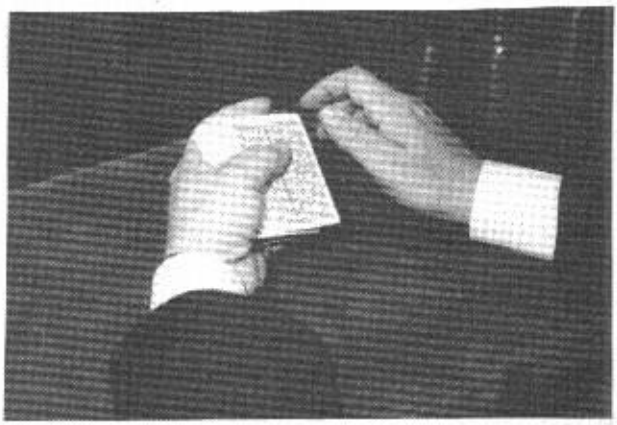


**PHOTO 4-22**

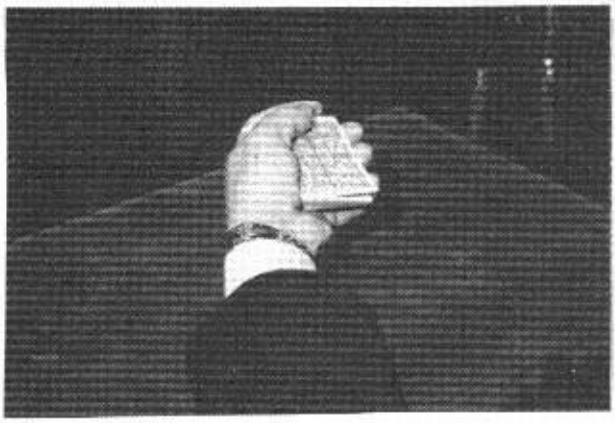
Now you will find it a simple matter to bring the left pinky up under just the right amount of cards. For instance, if you want a double lift, the left pinky is brought up under the top two cards: PHOTO 4–23 is an exposed view. It would have been just as simple to position the pinky under three cards (for a triple lift).

**PHOTO 4-23**



With the left pinky holding the break, the left thumb pulls back the top card and the left second and third fingers stretch out and push in the card (s) under the top cards: PHOTO 4–24

**PHOTO 4-24**



The right hand can assist this last phase by also helping to square up the cards: PHOTO 4–25

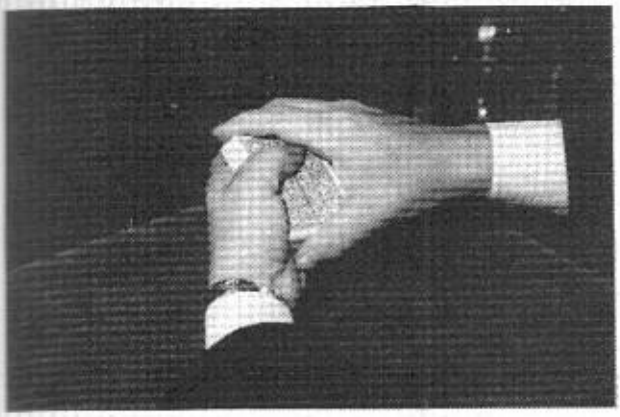


**PHOTO 4-25**

## THE CROOK SECOND

This is a neat way to one–hand second deposit a card on the table. It is not a replacement for a second deal, per se.

Using the Crook Double technique, get to the position shown in Photo 4–17.

At this point the left thumb clamps down the double as shown in PHOTO 4–26.

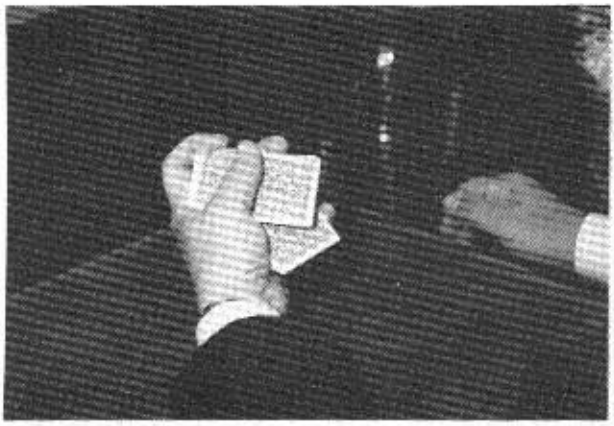
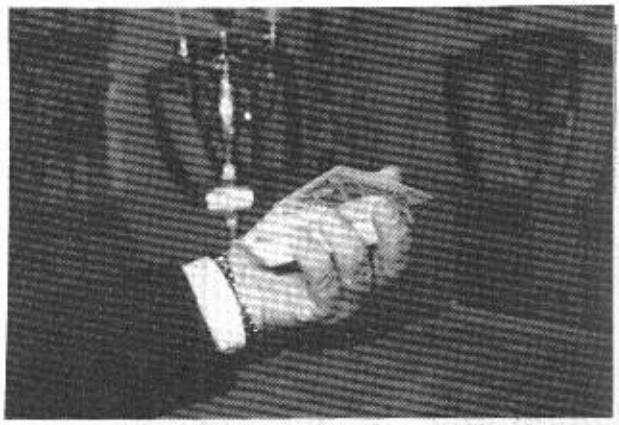


**PHOTO 4-26**

The left forefinger now is inserted between the double and the deck: PHOTO 4–27

**PHOTO 4-27**



As the left hand turns over, the left forefinger extends, pivoting out the second card, as the left thumb draws the top card back flush onto the deck: PHOTO 4–28. The visible card is placed onto the table.

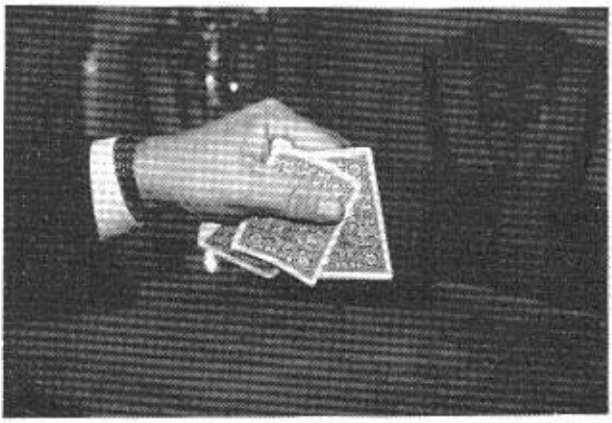


**PHOTO 4-28**

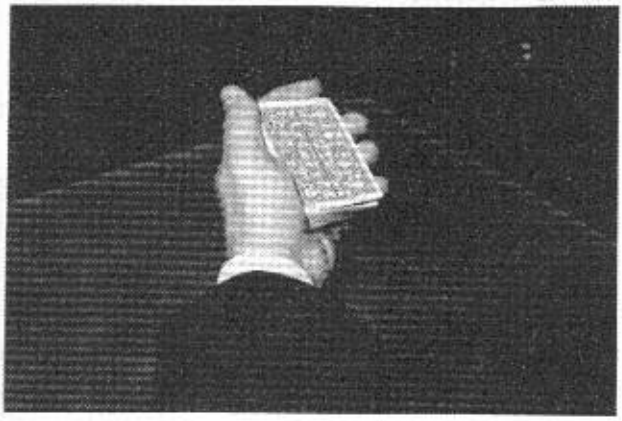
# COUTURE'S WRIST DOUBLE

The novelty in this method by Gilles Couture is the fact that the deck–holding hand also turns over the double.

This move is different from what double lifters are accustomed to perform. You may enjoy it.

As usual, the deck is held in the left hand with a pinky break below two cards: PHOTO 4–29. Note that the tip of the left thumb is on the left front corner of the deck.

**PHOTO 4-29**



The right thumb comes against the rear right corner: PHOTO 4–30.

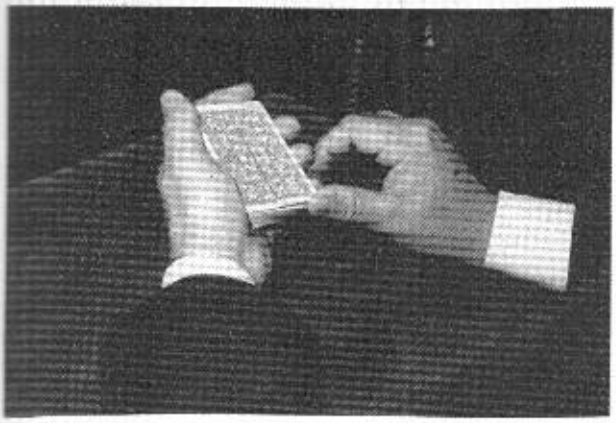


**PHOTO 4-30**

This next sequence will at first seem unnatural and unwieldy. When you get the body memory working, the mechanics just flow along.

The double is now effectively held between the two thumbs. The right thumb swings its corner up (anti-clockwise): PHOTO 4–31.

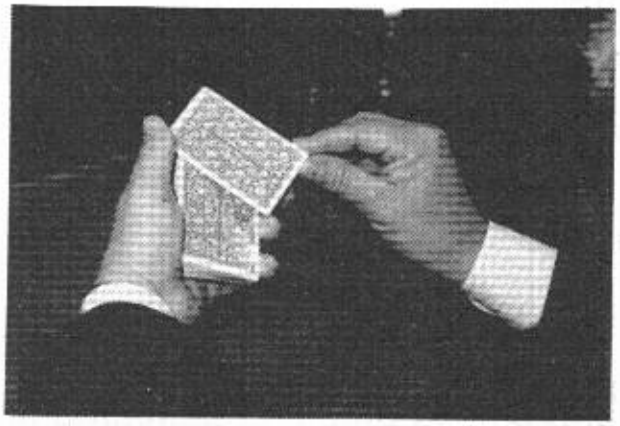
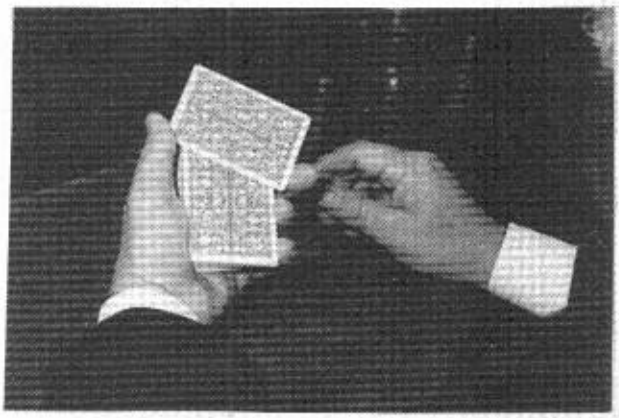


**PHOTO 4-31**

The right hand hold is now taken over by the left second finger: PHOTO 4–32.

**PHOTO 4-32**



The left hand revolves at the wrist, turning over the double: PHOTO 4–33.

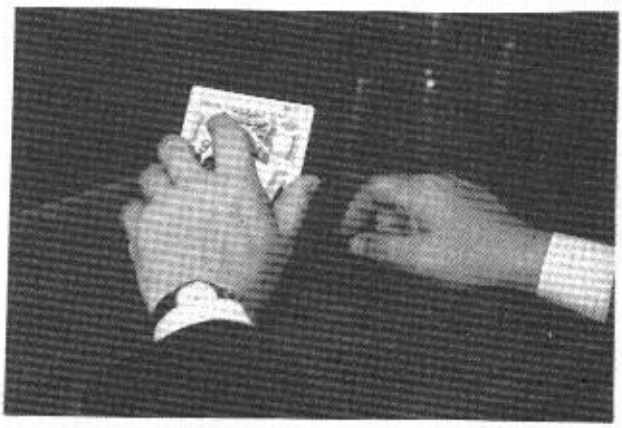


**PHOTO 4-33**

The right hand grasps the face up double by its long right side: PHOTO 4–34.

**PHOTO 4-34**



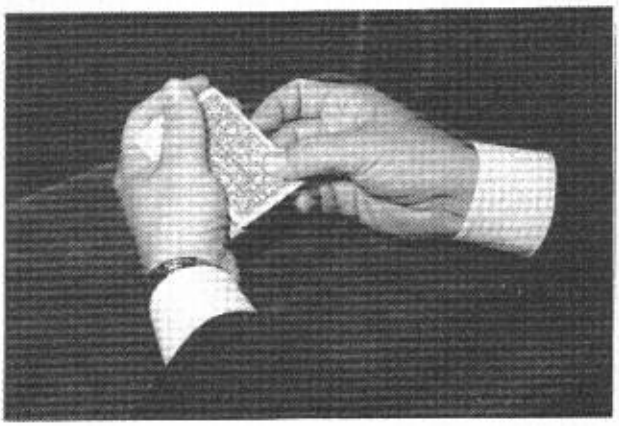
The left hand revolves back so that the deck is in a face down position, and the right hand replaces the double face down onto the deck, in a move similar to closing the back cover of a book.

## The Windmill Double

The starting position is the usual one: the left pinky holds a break below two cards.

The right hand comes over and grips the card, by inserting the right second finger in under the double. Imagine a line going from the center of the deck to the rear right corner: you would grasp the double, second finger below and thumb above, at a point halfway down this imaginary line: PHOTO 4–35.

**PHOTO 4-35**



Bring the face of the double into view, by turning the right wrist: PHOTO 4–36.

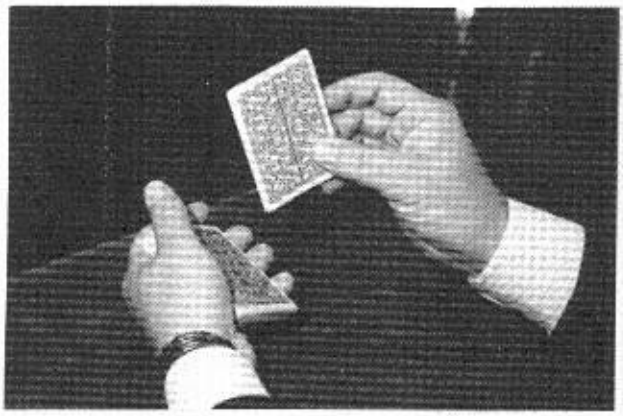
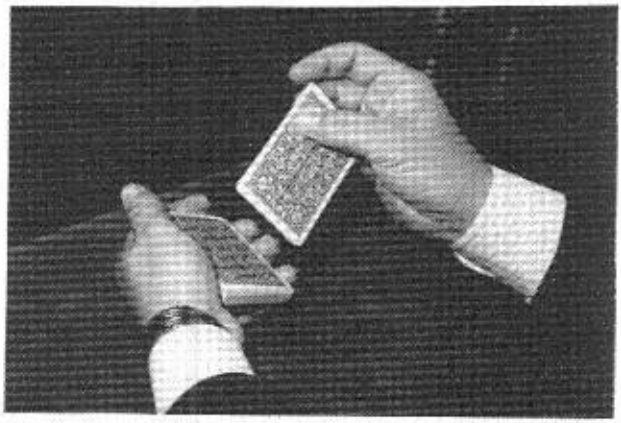


**PHOTO 4-36**

Now, you will relax the grip on the double slightly and then tighten it again. This relaxing/tightening will allow the double to swing down counterclockwise (your view) while staying perfectly aligned: PHOTO 4–37

**PHOTO 4-37**



Place the double, without changing the grip, face down back onto the deck: PHOTO 4–38.

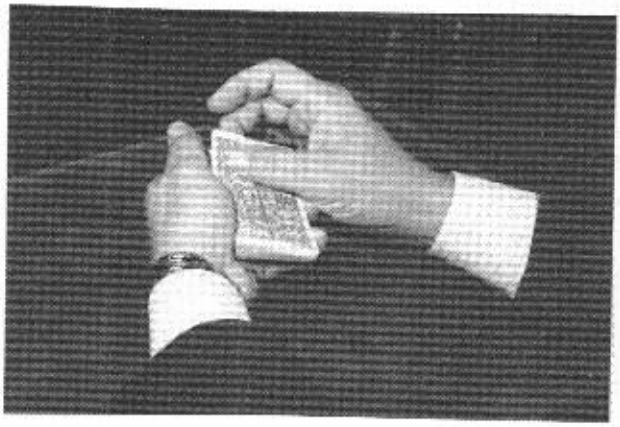


**PHOTO 4-38**

## The Jimminy Cricket Double Lift

This is one of my favorite double lifts. Get to the position shown in Photo 4–17, under the description of the Crook Double. The right thumb comes against the rear left corner of the double: PHOTO 4–39.

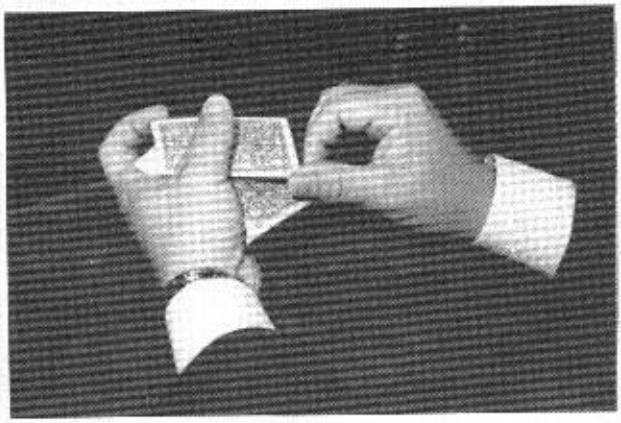


**PHOTO 4-39**

The right forefinger comes above the double, right near the thumb, and pivots the double, held between the left forefinger and right thumb, into a face up position: PHOTO 4–40.

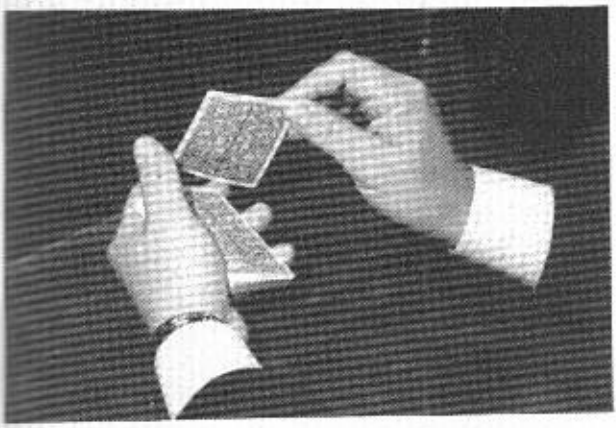


**PHOTO 4-40**

From here, you can simply reverse the procedure to get the card face down again.

Granted, this is a flourishy, as these things go, but at the right time, it can appear as elegant handling of a deck of cards, and the singularity level is quite high.

## THE CROOK COLOR CHANGE

Turn over a double, and get the double, and the left forefinger, into the position depicted earlier under the Crook Second in Photo 4–27 (page 48).

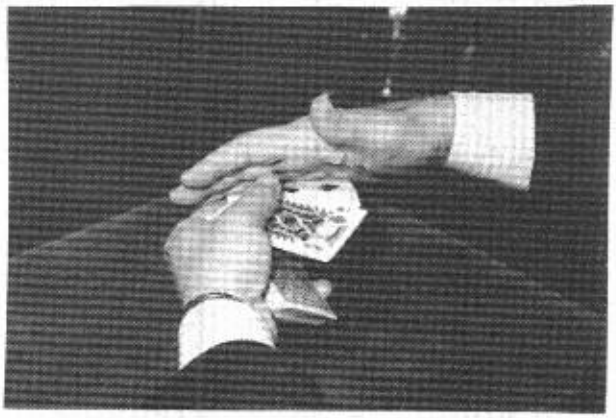
At the same time, the right hand comes over the double card: PHOTO 4–41.



**PHOTO 4-41**

Execute the beginning of the second deal described earlier, but at the same time the right hand travels right, remaining over (and hiding) the bottom card: PHOTO 4–42.

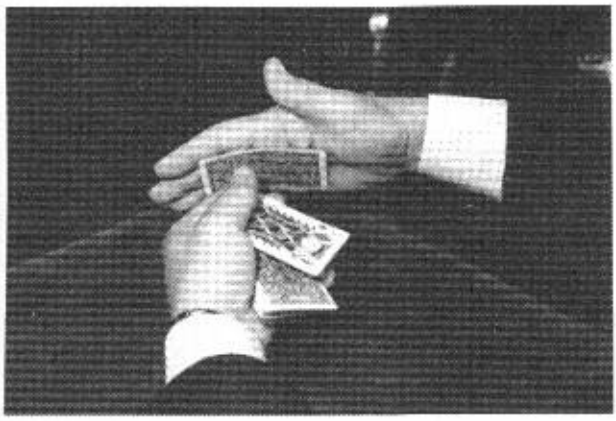
**PHOTO 4-42**



The left forefinger continues its action and effectively brings the second card completely into the right palm: PHOTO 4–43.

Finally, the right hand comes over the visible card, adding its own on top: PHOTO 4–44.

**PHOTO 4-43**



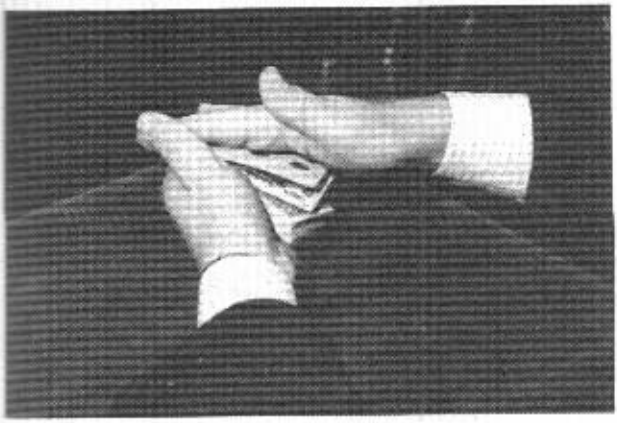
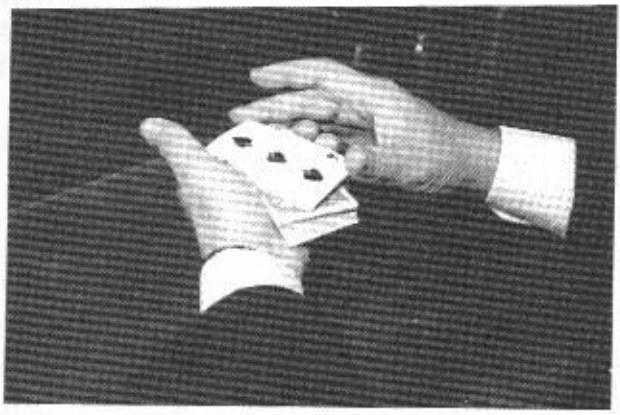


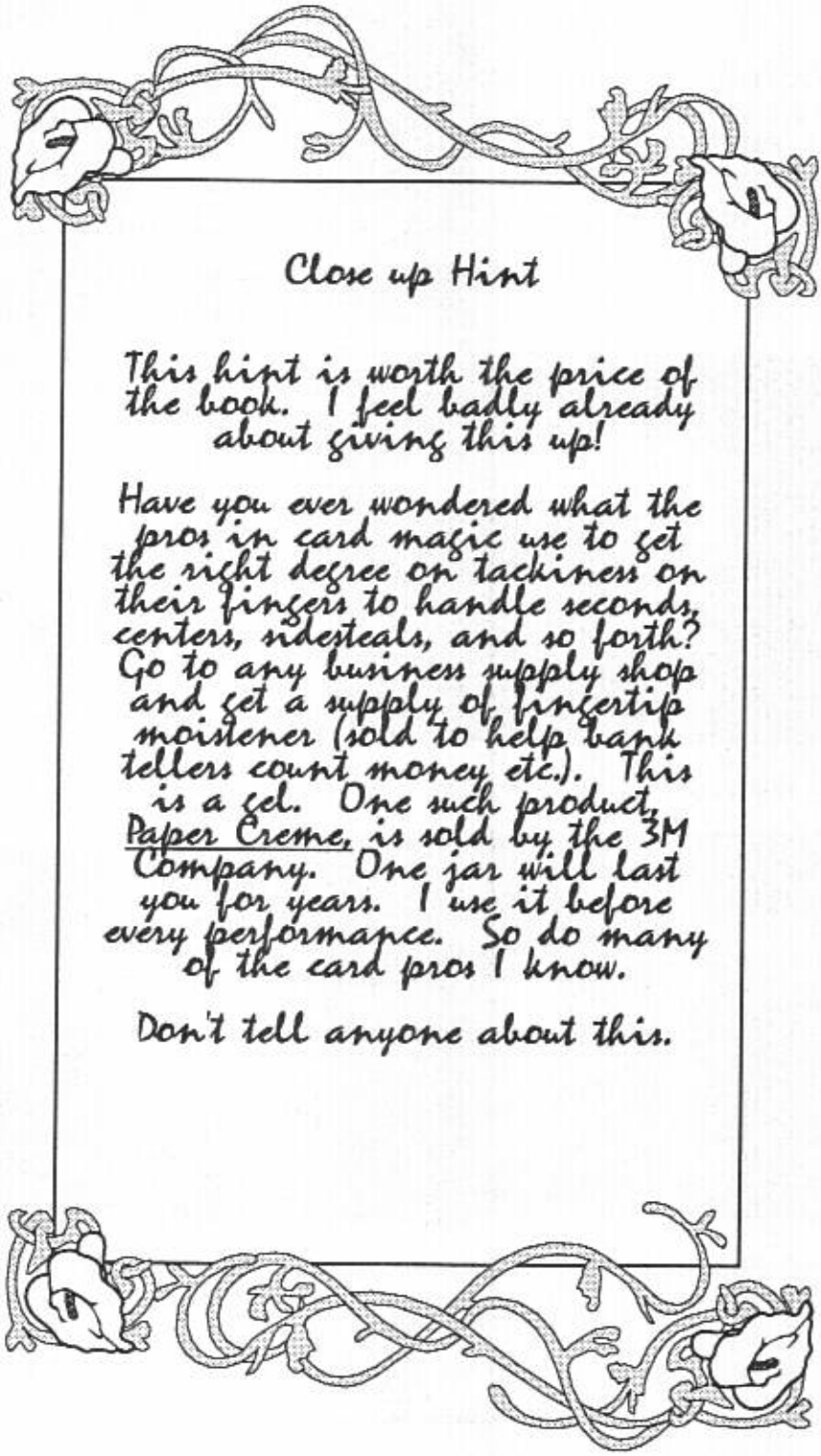
**PHOTO 4-44**

The right hand moves away to reveal the change: PHOTO 4–45.

**PHOTO 4-45**





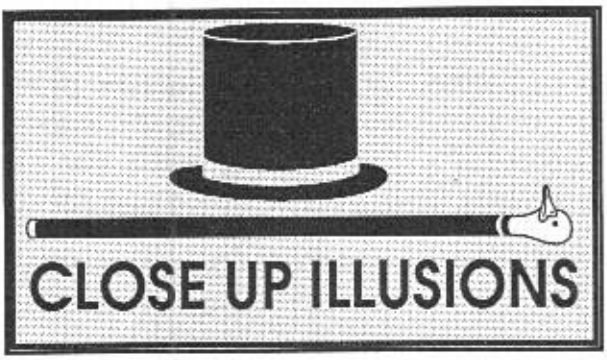


## Close up Hint

This hint is worth the price of the book. I feel badly already about giving this up!

Have you ever wondered what the pros in card magic use to get the right degree on tackiness on their fingers to handle seconds, centers, sidesteals, and so forth? Go to any business supply shop and get a supply of fingertip moistener (sold to help bank tellers count money etc.). This is a gel. One such product, Paper Creme, is sold by the 3M Company. One jar will last you for years. I use it before every performance. So do many of the card pros I know.

Don't tell anyone about this.




# CHAPTER 5

## THE SECRET OF THREE

When Robert Houdin stated that a magician was an actor playing the part of a magician, he meant that the modern conjurer does not really possess the powers of the gods, but portrays convincingly that he does.

This definition, compelling as it is, does not do true justice to the challenge of the close up performer.

I prefer to think that a close up magician is a person playing a normal himself in abnormal circumstances.

When you pretend to pick up a coin with the right hand and place it into the left hand, really retaining it in the right, your body language, your entire being must go along with the lie. It is the total commitment to the lie, the total commitment to normalcy which, added to technique, comprise the close up illusion.

The absence of guilt, the innocent manner, these are the true weapons of the close up magician. These are the sensed messages that sell the deception, that clinch the deal. These are also the

most difficult weapons to acquire. They come with time, with th certainty that accompanies repetition and numerous performances the commitment to body memory of the choreography of actions.

Daryl, perhaps more than any other performer I know embodies the smooth cruising that slays the audience. He float through the most difficult of sleights with the ease of the tota professional, and the ensuing performance is a joy to behold.

An exercise useful in developing this consummate cruising i the toss transfer vanish. A coin is seemingly tossed from the righ hand to the left, really remaining in the right.

## The Toss Transfer Vanish

This vanish reaches its ultimate performance in the hands o Albert Goshman. Even on videotape, the move fools you. Th reason: his utter confidence that he will fool you permits Albert t get the timing just right; and when it is, your eyes play havoc with your mind.

Technically, there is very little involved. The right hand holds a coin. PHOTO 5–1.

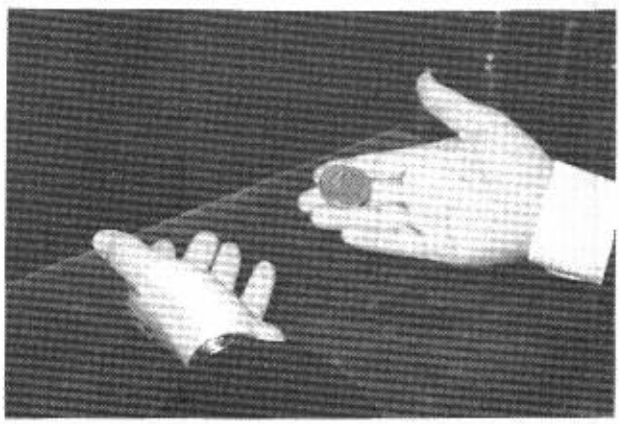
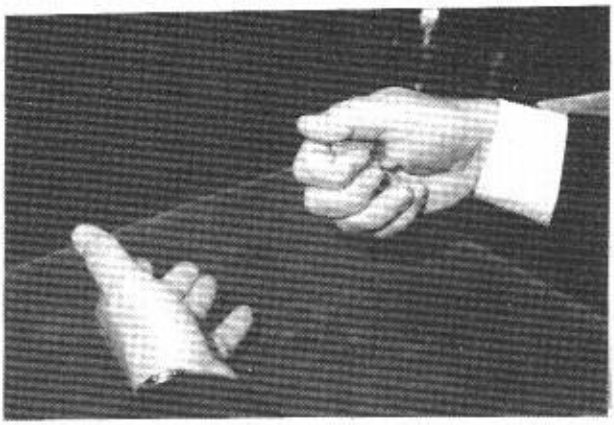


**PHOTO 5-1**

The right hand thumb palms the coin (PHOTOS 5–2 and 5–3 as it makes a tossing motion towards the left hand. The left hand closes – PHOTO 5–4 – and later is opened to show the vanish.

PHOTO 5-2



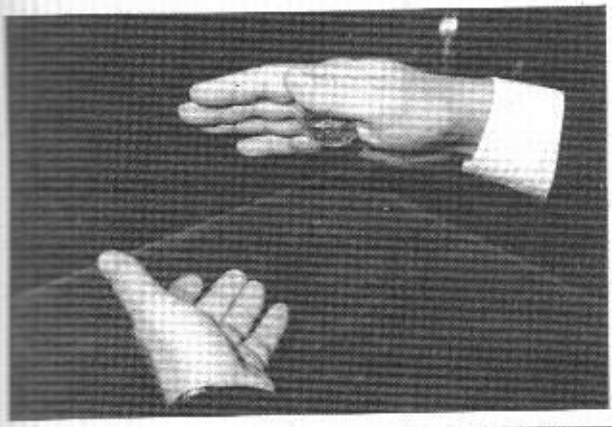
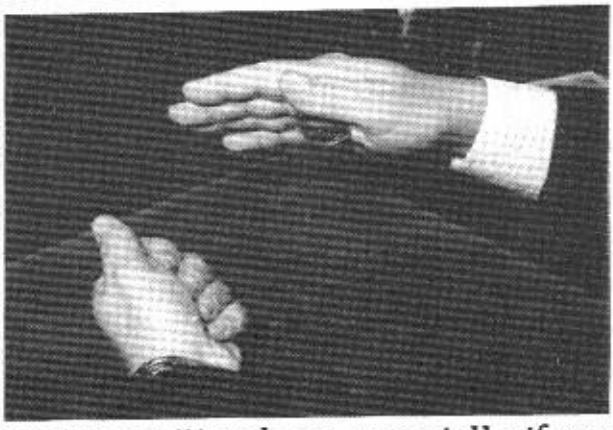


PHOTO 5-3

PHOTO 5-4



As I mentioned, nothing too exciting here, especially if you are just scanning the photographs in this book to search out unique looking moves. This is a description that you can read in any beginner's book.

The move is entirely dependent upon acting and timing. When correctly performed, an argument can be made that this is the finest coin vanished ever invented.

There is a rhythm to be built up, and the easiest way I know to teach it is to get you to speak the words '*One Two Three*'.

On *One* thumb palm the coin.
On *Two* fake the toss.
On *Three* close the left hand.

The secret of the move is the *Three*. Most people do the move on a two count – closing the left hand almost as they do the toss, not allowing the imaginary coin the time it needs to travel through the air, to land in the palm, and to trigger the signal to the brain that it can now close the left fingers.

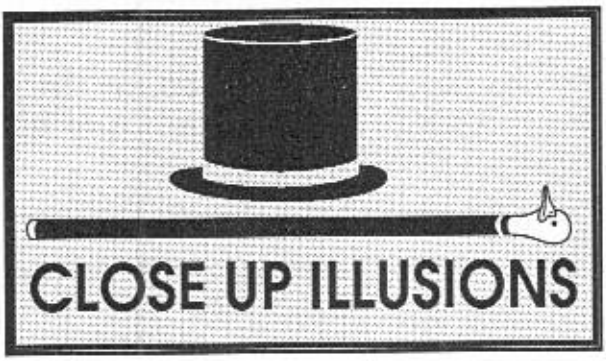
On a two count, the move fails. On a two count, the move fools no one.

But it takes courage to wait for *Three* when the anxiety factor is high, screaming to close the hand quick before they catch on, to wait as nothing happens, as no coin travels through the air, as no coin lands on the left palm, as no coin triggers the reaction to close the hand.

The ability to convey total absence of culpability when, in fact, you are guilty as can be, is the preserve of the consummate actor; the actor playing yourself as you would be if you were free from deceit.

The courage and acting ability are well repaid, as the mind is fooled and overrides the eyes.






# CHAPTER 6

## SPONGE BALL MIRACLES

Sponge balls are a delight to the close up artist. What junior wizard did not get lots of mileage out of the erstwhile Multiplying Rabbits? My initial experience with these props was through reading Audley Walsh's Sponge Ball Magic book. My first sponge balls were crudely cut out of a cheap piece of synthetic sponge which I 'borrowed' out of my mother's sink closet.

Along came professionally manufactured balls which worked so much better. Today, the Goshman balls are standard fare, although the Tenyo balls, if you can find them, are brighter, softer, and more compressible.

All sponge ball magic must rest upon the strength of the basic vanish. Let me teach you my favorite sponge ball move, which I worked out some fifteen years ago at least.

### THE PUSH–PINCH SPONGE BALL VANISH

The artist should always seek to maximize the potential of his medium. The advantage of sponge balls is not only their

**squeezability** in the closed spectator's hand. Also to be considered are the properties of sponge and their adaptability to a vanish maneuver.

Sponge can be pinched, or clipped, at the fingertips. The following vanish builds upon that fact, and adds the retinal impression principle.

The right hand picks up the ball between thumb, forefinger and second finger, and displays the ball by turning palm up. Meanwhile, the left hand is palm open, ready to receive the ball: PHOTO 6–1.

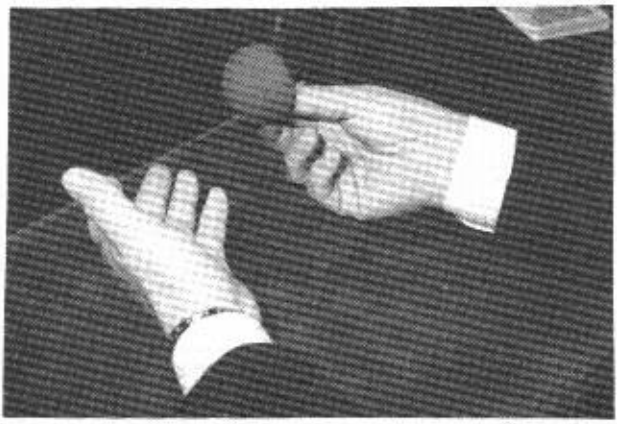
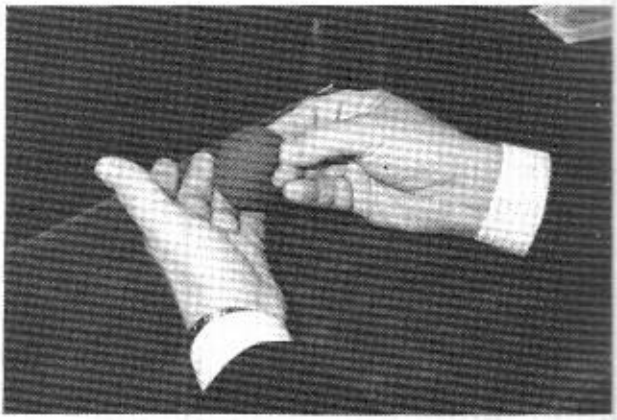


**PHOTO 6-1**

As the right hand moves, turning palm downwards on its way to depositing the ball in the left hand, the right third finger comes up and pinches the ball between itself and the second finger: PHOTO 6–2.

**PHOTO 6-2**



By the time the ball is on the left palm the right forefinger and thumb have not only released the ball, but are open and extended: PHOTO 6–3.

**PHOTO 6-3**



Please note in Photo 6–3 that the ball is placed onto the left palm at the base of the second and third fingers. This is essential for the illusion to follow.

As the left fingers close over the ball, the right second and third fingertips (still clipping the ball) push the ball down, onto the base of the fingers: PHOTO 6–4. Notice the angle of the right hand.

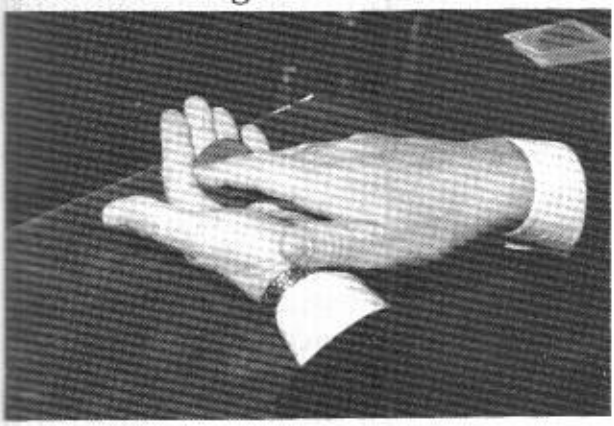


**PHOTO 6-4**

But the moment the ball is out of sight the right second and third fingers curl in, bringing the ball against the right palm, as the left fingers close over the imaginary ball – PHOTO 6–5.

**PHOTO 6-5**



This is a very convincing vanish, and must be practised in front of a mirror to appreciate its effectiveness. It's a fooler. The retention of vision must be seen to be believed.

## Some Reflections on Sponge Ball Routining

The compressibility of sponge balls permits one of the greatest surprise effects of magic: having a spectator holding, say, two balls, but believing there only to be a single ball. When a ball is later vanished and the hand is opened, the shock is considerable.

The magic books are full of routines built around this basic premise. Some use the extra ball principle: two balls are shown and as one is handed to a spectator for safekeeping, a third extra ball is added to the spectator's ball. The second visible ball is vanished and is discovered to have joined its brother.

In other routines, no extra ball is used. The magician's ball is supposedly placed in the magician's hand using a vanish move, and is added to the spectator's ball. In other words, in this scenario, you start with your ball first, which eliminates the need for an extra.

When I use this type of stand-up routine, I start with two visible balls, two balls in the right coat pocket, plus a climax large ball stashed elsewhere. I start without the extra ball principle as explained above. But when the spectator opens his hand, I suggest trying it again, and go to my pocket to get one more ball, really bringing along the fourth ball, and going into the first scenario.

When the spectator opens his hand the second time, I get the climax ball secretly into my left hand. During the commotion caused by the second surprise I gather up the three balls, pretend to now be holding them in my left hand, and throw everybody off by stating: *I am going to try the impossible – to have these balls vanish as you hold them tightly!*

This way, the heat is off the actual nature or number of the contents as I load up the hand. Then, after some cabalistic mutterings, I announce that *This isn't working...* and proceed – depending on whether it is the large ball or some other climactic sponge – into some excuse for the ending.

# THE ODD MAN OUT ROUTINE

I have evolved one routine that I would like to share with you that is sufficiently different from anything else you may have seen to warrant inclusion here. It is a sit-down routine that uses lapping, a novel approach to sponge ball magic. It introduces the Flying Imp Pass move, and a totally bold way to start the trick. Probably, this will not read as good as it should. Some of you may have seen some videotapes I made for Videonics (the very first series) where, in Volume Two of ***Close Up Illusions***, I performed this routine. A Canadian weekly magazine did a piece on magic recently, and interviewed me for the story. I did a number of effects for the interviewers, and finally they chose to illustrate the story with photographs of yours truly performing this routine which shows that, if nothing else, it offers good visuals.

**What You Need**

- Six (6) sponge balls
- Two Sponge Bananas (or any other odd sponge object, preferably of a different color than the balls).

Your close-up suitcase or prop bag should be on a chair to your left as you are sitting at the table (my usual setup at a formal close-up performance). To start have a spectator on your right hold out her hand. Turn left, reach into your close-case, squeeze five balls and one banana into a ball into the right hand, and hold a ball in the left, and come up seemingly holding one ball in both hands: PHOTO 6-6 (keep the banana and most of the other balls out of sight).



**PHOTO 6-6**

The hands are actually in some motion as you explain that you are going to show them something off the beaten track.

Leave the left hand ball on the table.

Now comes the bold move. Turn immediately to the assisting spectator, cram the whole pile into her hand which you close with your left hand – PHOTO 6–7 – and turn her hand over: PHOTO 6–8. *Don't open this hand until I tell you.* Look her in the eye to make certain she understands what she is to do.



**PHOTO 6-7**

**PHOTO 6-8**

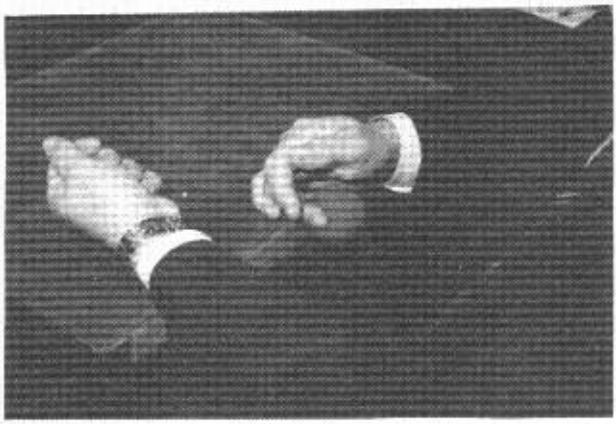


Now the routine starts. The audience thinks she holds one ball but you have not made the singularity of her holdings a challenge point. No one knows what is coming as yet. An argument can be made that the assisting spectator can feel some substantial mound of sponge and therefore knows that the hand contains a lot. While this is undoubtedly true, the ending still comes as a surprise – and this surprise is not lost upon the other members of the audience – which further sells the magic: the audience, seeing the surprise on the face of the assisting spectator, assumes the spectator believed herself to be holding only one ball.

Pick up the tabled visible ball and pretend to place it into the left hand, using the Push–Pinch vanish.

The right hand, with the ball pinched, comes to table edge – PHOTO 6–9 – and laps the ball: PHOTO 6–10.

**PHOTO 6-9**



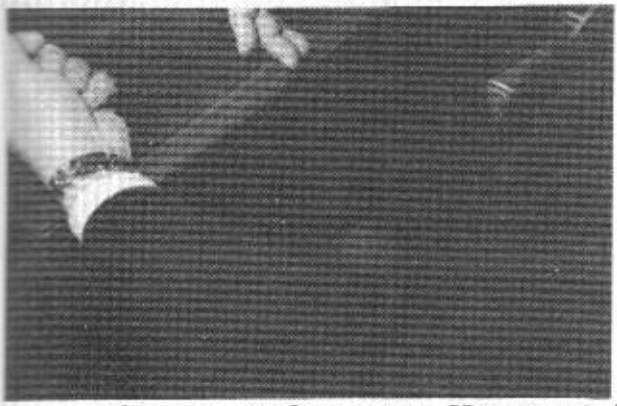


**PHOTO 6-10**

This is not that easy. You must drop the ball so that it lands in the valley between the legs. If it lands anywhere else it will bounce off onto the floor – not a fatal affair, but inelegant.

Squeeze away the ball, and show both hands empty.

Now comes:

## THE FLYING IMP PASS

The right hand reaches over to your close up case to apparently get another sponge ball as the left hand falls into the lap and gets the real ball: PHOTO 6–11.

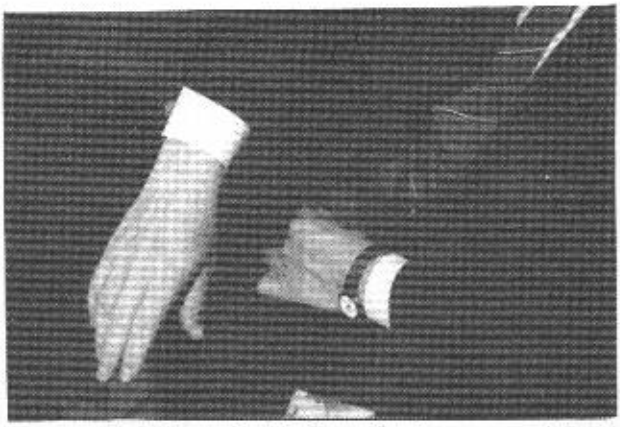
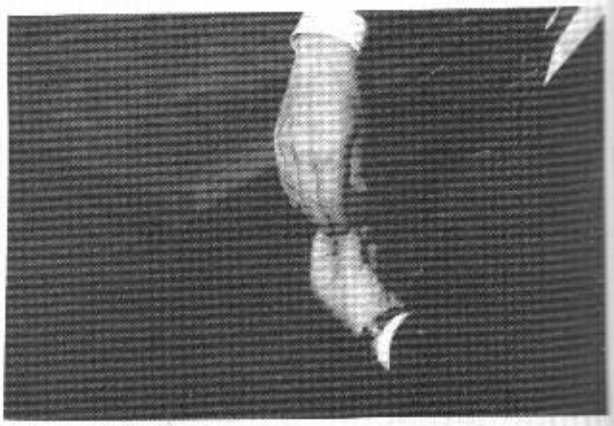


**PHOTO 6-11**

As the right hand, in a continuous motion, travels from the case to table edge, it picks up *en route* the ball from the left hand: PHOTO 6–12. The right hand motion must be without pause. The right hand appears with a ball: PHOTO 6–13.

**PHOTO 6-12**



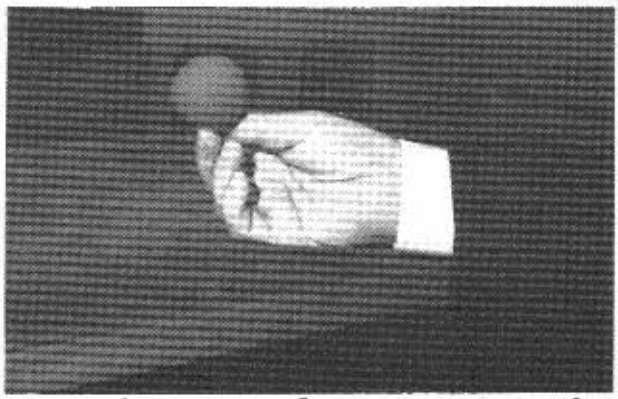


**PHOTO 6-13**

The reason for resorting to the Flying Imp Pass (inspired, obviously, from Sydini's Imp Pass) is to avoid a gathering of balls in the lap. This would push the bounce factor to an impossible level.

Vanish three more balls in the same manner. Now reach over with the right hand, really pick up the banana in your case, and

vanish it the same way. Reach over one last time and via the Flying Imp Pass come up with a sponge ball, which you vanish.

Ask the spectator to open her hand: PHOTO 6–14.

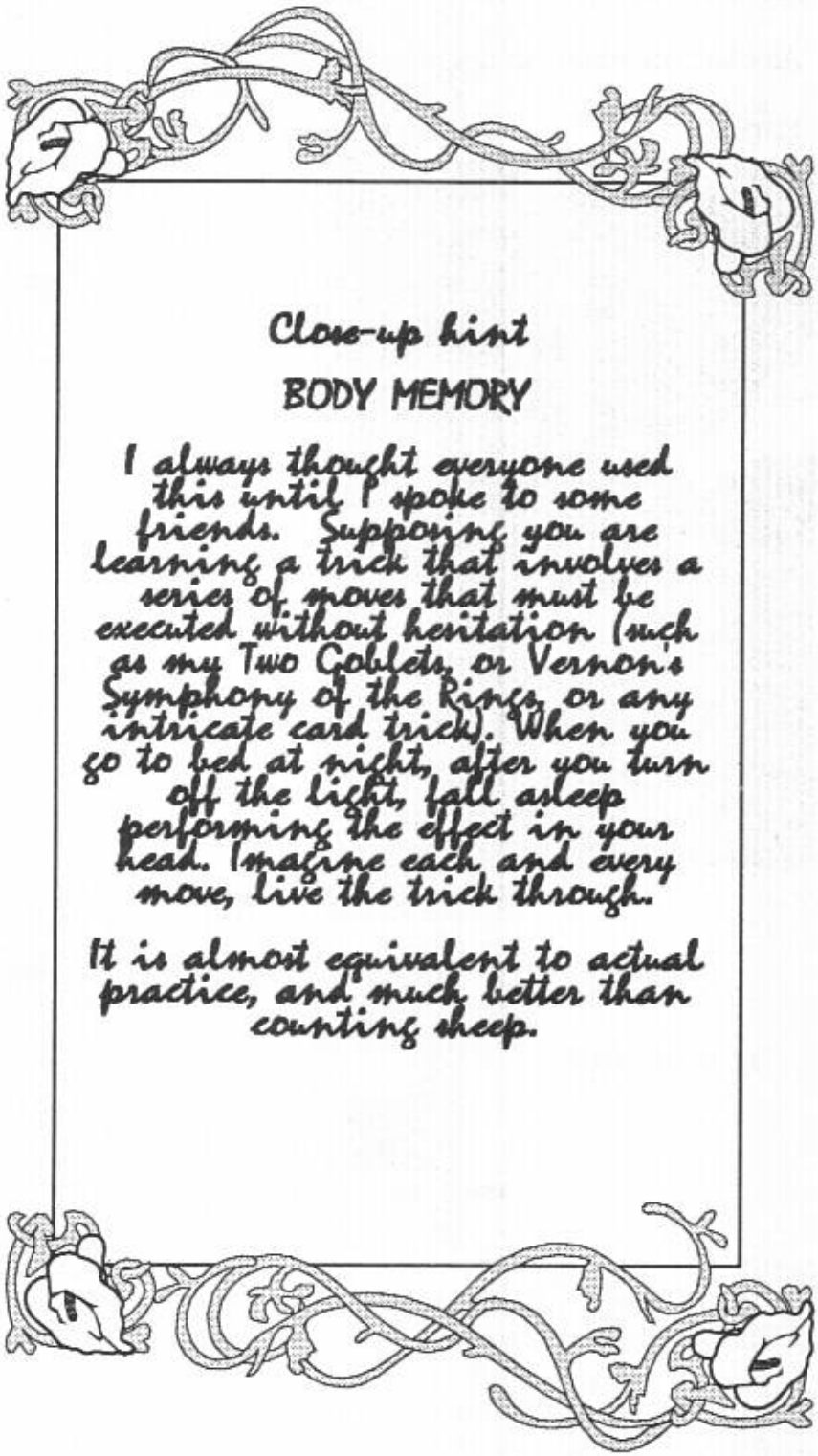
Explosion.



**PHOTO 6-14**

Surprise, and much fun.



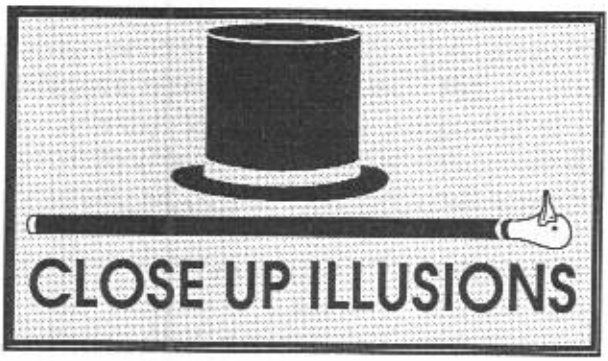


## Close-up hint

### BODY MEMORY

I always thought everyone used this until I spoke to some friends. Supposing you are learning a trick that involves a series of moves that must be executed without hesitation (such as my Two Goblets, or Vernon's Symphony of the Rings, or any intricate card trick). When you go to bed at night, after you turn off the light, fall asleep performing the effect in your head. Imagine each and every move, live the trick through.

It is almost equivalent to actual practice, and much better than counting sheep.




# CHAPTER 7

## THE MAGIC LECTURE

For the most part, magic lectures are fun. We get to meet magicians we have only read or heard about. We see some new angles, new moves, new theories. We hope to be fooled by new tricks. We may even learn an angle or two, a tip on a sleight or a presentation, an idea to file away for a rainy day.

Some of us may even get into the lecture game ourselves. I warn you that the road is fraught with nerve rackers. One year, when I was lecturing on coin moves to a Toronto crowd, I looked up and seated in the front row was Ross Bertram. While working Tannen's Jubilee one September, during the close up shows, I arrived in the Brown Derby room and there, front row center, was Slydini, Frank Garcia, and three or four other persons of the same ilk. Too late to back out!

There may come a point in your career when you decide you have enough original creations, or thoughts on a theme or themes, to give a lecture. The best way to get into the lecture business is to start giving mini-lectures at your own magic club, then perhaps branching out to clubs in nearby cities. If it comes to giving a

major lecture tour, a reputation is almost a prerequisite, either as a performer, an author, a contributor to magazines, or as a national contest winner.

But if you do get into the lecture circuit, you may be interested in some thoughts I have on lecturers. Let me tell you about a few of them I have witnesses, or enjoyed, or suffered. The names of the bad ones have been changed to protect the guilty.

• **John the Superwonder**. John has talent, no doubt about it. But the arrogance, the conceit is such you wonder how he tore himself away from the mirror to make it to the lecture. Try as he may, he just cannot hide the contempt he has for the assembled boors. I patiently sat through an evening with John recently, listening to him drop names (*Michael Ammar just loves my routine with this; Dai Vernon said this was the best thing he ever saw...*) and how great he was. Anyone who did not earn his living from magic alone was not a professional, and was tolerated at best by John. He is the type, at magic conventions, who never hangs around with the common folk (unless you drop to your knees to tell him he is god). John is poorly dressed, undoubtedly because he gets little real work: the laity, God bless them, are not total idiots, and are repulsed by the arrogance too. John is a royal pain in the rump. One of these days, all the members of the magic club will stand up, to a person, and beat him up. I will probably be moved to kick him when he is down. As a matter of fact, I saw John work behind a bar for real people. He did okay at best.

• **Ricky Loop-de-loop**. The magic club received a letter offering Ricky's services. Attached are testimonials that would make Madonna blush. Ricky is hired and gives his lecture. Nice guy. Really nice guy. But every trick stinks. Didn't even fool Slow Joe in the back. Ricky also brought along some dealer items which he demo-ed and sold – totally unrelated to the lecture. This was the best part. The worst part was having to sit through Ricky's explanations for tricks that had fooled no one, and for which no one wanted, or needed, any explanation. Ricky has the dubious distinction of performing a lecture at which not one single set of lecture notes was sold. Ricky's only good trick was getting those testimonials.

• **Jimmy Smartypants**. Jimmy is 19 years old, and a really good magician, technically. For the laity, he is another self-centered wise kid. Still, he could be interesting for magicians who have a

stake in the type of magic addressed by Jimmy's technique and effects. But no: Jimmy announces that he is going to give the real stuff, his philosophy of magic. Now while there is nothing wrong with commenting on the reasons for a particular scenario construction, Jimmy forgets three things:

• Philosophy you can read in a book – what you cannot get out of only the written word is the feel for an effect, the timing of a sleight, the look of a routine. This is the raison d'etre of the live performance.

• When you have put in twenty or more years into magic, then you can start having the impertinence to hold forth, Great Chief Pooh-Bah that you are, on your philosophy. Until then, stick to the magic, kid.

• Basically, people who pay money to go to a lecture, expect to see tricks, not hear self-serving speeches on philosophy, usually preceded by a statement that anyone who has come to see tricks is a low-life jerk; the intelligent ones, says Jimmy, have come to hear about my philosophy and my metaphysical and holistic approach to conjuring as an art form. It just goes to prove that there are no shirts too young to stuff.

Some of the greatest magicians of our time, such as Tom Mullica, or Daryl, or Paul Harris, or Michael Ammar, or Flip, or Martin Nash, or Harry Lorayne, or Ascanio, or David Williamson, or Gary Kurtz, give friendly, magic-packed lectures. Some fool you so badly – such as Dan Garett – that you will always go out of your way to see one of their lectures. Others, such as Tom Craven, can be counted upon to give you solid advice and entertainment. Still others, such as Al Goshman, give a mediocre lecture but a spellbinding performance portion that is more than worth the price of admission.

But as for John and Jimmy, well to heck with them. Let them return to their inner circle friends, sharing gems of wisdom, measuring them with the precision of flea droppings. As for Ricky, he should take up another hobby that will still give him a sense of purpose in life, without inflicting anguish upon unsuspecting magicians.

It is inevitable, I suppose, that among practitioners of the performing arts, which implies a little show-offishness anyway, ego

will be a problem in isolated cases. Trouble is, magic and especially close-up magic has a quality not found in other performing arts, namely audience interaction. And because of this interaction, the real personality of the performer emerges; it cannot totally be hidden by the script.

Frankly, I would rather attend a lecture given by a poor magician but nice guy, than a good magician who is insufferably enamored with himself. Life is too short to give any time to these jerks. And magic has much too many of them. As I write these words, I have just returned home from attending a lecture by a guy who is a mixture of John and Jimmy, a lethal combination. There should be a Magician's Better Business Bureau to warn other clubs against idiots like this guy.

If you get into the lecture game, choose your role model with circumspection. If you cannot write simple clear prose, get someone else to write up your lecture notes.

Be absolutely certain that you have something valuable to offer. Research your subject in depth. Don't, for heaven's sake, start excusing a load of crap with the lame line that *This plays well for laymen.* We know better.

There are lots of subjects available upon which to build a lecture if you are not a creator per se. You can explore a specific subject (dice stacking, the handling of double cards, false shuffles) or a theme (children's magic, billet reading, carnival magic) or indeed a source (the magic of John Ramsay, the magic of **Genii Magazine**, or the magic of **The Precursor**).

If you book lecturers, try to find out where the performer recently lectured, and conduct your own investigation. You may help deflate an overblown balloon.

If you get into the booking agent game, why not have appreciation cards anonymously filled out by club members in attendance and mailed back to the agent (not the performer)? That way, the agent can judge the product and put some lecturers out of their misery.

A better solution would be to have a rating system promoted by one of the magic magazines. At the next meeting following a lecture, the members would be asked to rate the lecture on a scale

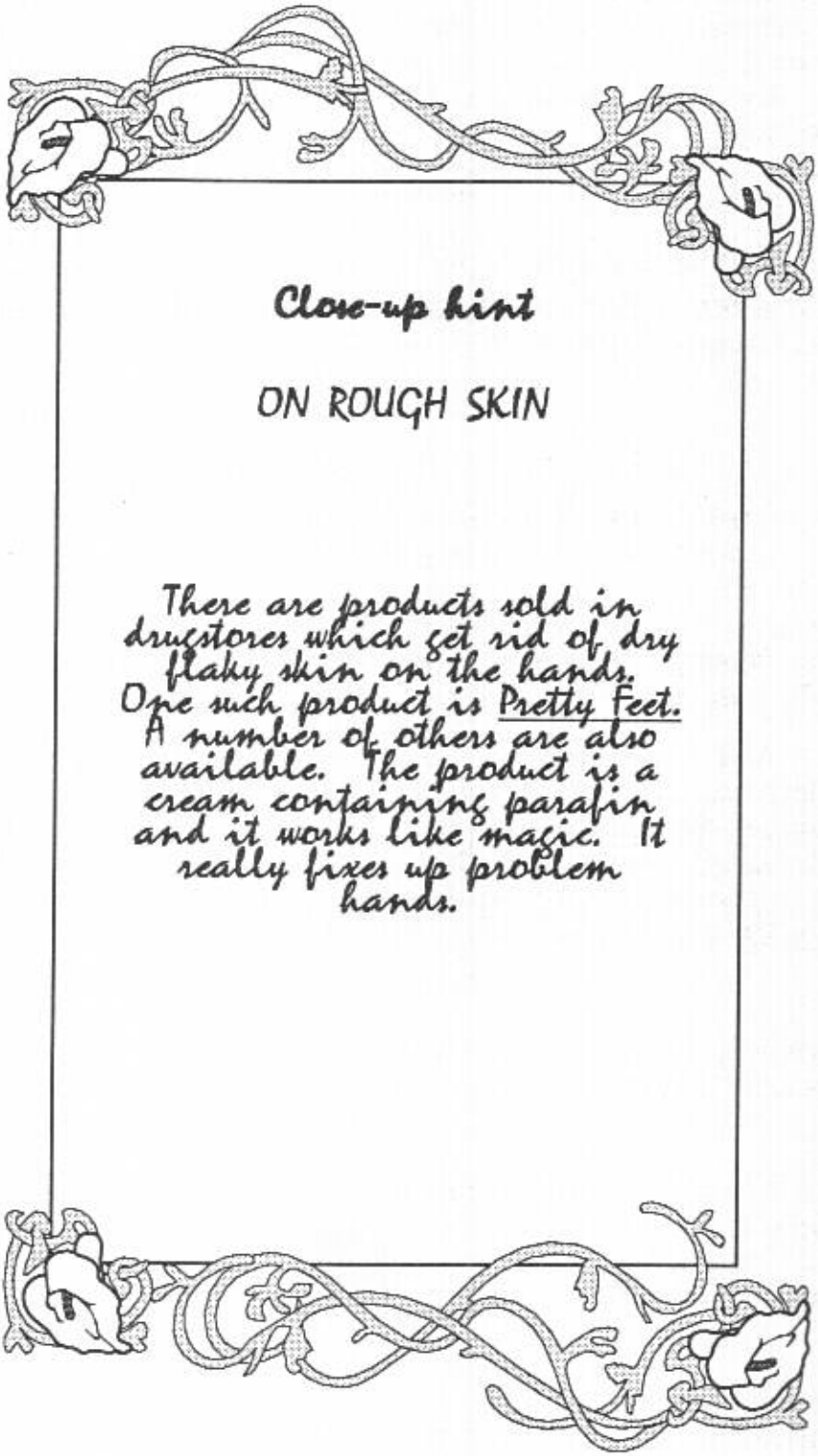
of one to ten. The average, along with a representative shor appreciation would be sent to the mag which would publish them every issue.

By way of example, the rating page could contain the following:

> • **Willie the Wiz**: did five tricks, explained two of them, poor lecture notes, thinks he is great. RATING 3/10
>
> *Ottawa Magic Club 8/88*
>
> • **Dicky Duck**: fooled everybody, specializes in coin magic with great new moves, well illustrated notes. Rating 9/10
>
> *Quebec Magic CLub 9/89*

And remember, you do not have to suffer the egomaniacal performers. Don't book them. If you do book them, don't applaud. If pressed for a reason, tell them flat out. Who knows? Maybe they will change. And even if they don't, tell them anyway. It's like the guy in the dark suit who urinates in his pants. It doesn't really show, but it gives you a warm feeling.

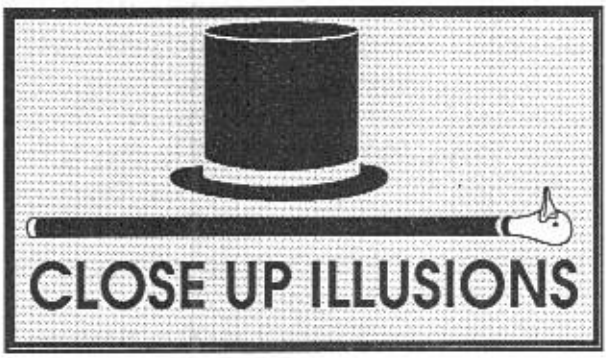




## Close-up hint

### ON ROUGH SKIN

There are products sold in drugstores which get rid of dry flaky skin on the hands. One such product is Pretty Feet. A number of others are also available. The product is a cream containing parafin and it works like magic. It really fixes up problem hands.




# CHAPTER 8

## THE CLASSIC FORCE

There is little doubt that the most natural looking force of all is the Classic Force. It looks just the way you might expect someone to ask you to *take a card, any card.* If it not performed more often, it is probably because it is not sure-fire. Indeed, traditional wisdom taught that you should try to force a card every time a card was selected. If the wrong card was taken, then simply do another trick.

At a recent lecture I performed QUARTERBACK, taught later in this chapter. This trick requires two forces in a row. I used the Classic Force both times, a subject which seemed to intrigue the magicians present. I was asked to keep demonstrating the Classic Force. I eventually went through the hall, and classic forced the same card on everyone present. This was ample enough testimony to underline one of my beliefs, namely that the Classic Force is 99% foolproof.

But the event also made me realize that the Classic Force is rarely used because a great many magicians do not understand fully its inner workings, or are terrified by the sleight.

As you surely know, the Classic Force is simple enough in concept. The left pinky holds a break at the card you want to force, the deck is spread, and you contrive to hand the force card to a spectator as he comes to take one.

Which brings me to my first discovery: the Classic Force is easier to use if the force card is ABOVE the left pink break. I cannot give you reasons for this, merely the fruit of many years of classic forcing. In other words, the card starts at the bottom of the deck, the right hand holds the deck from above and swing cuts half into the left hand, and as the halves are reunited, the left pinky holds a break. Thus the force card is the bottom card of the top half.

A swing cut, if you are unfamiliar with the term, is simply this: the right hand holds the deck from above. The right forefinger lifts up, at the front, half the deck, and then pivots it (off the right thumb at the rear) to the left, where it is taken in the palm-up left hand. The right hand then drops its remaining half on top the the cards in the left, effectively cutting the deck.)

To classic force the card, you start spreading cards from left to right between the hands, and try to time it so that when the spectator reaches out to take one, he ends up getting the right card.

I have developed two methods to help you practice this move. For the first, take a cardboard box, mark an **X** on its side, and sit the box down on the table. Now, try to classic force the card on the X! In other words, bring both hands forward as you are spreading. The hands and deck are moving towards the box. Try to get it so that, while still spreading, the force card (and only the force card) hits the X: PHOTO 8-1.

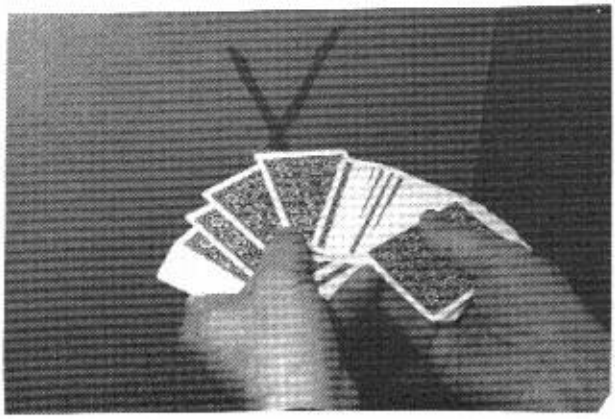


**PHOTO 8-1**

And now for the second exercise.

Place the force card face up at the 26th position. Put another card face up at the 9th position (the first marker card) and another face up at the 18th position (the second marker card).

We are going to practice, still using the cardboard box, with the following sentence:

*Here, I'd like you take any card...any one.*

At the start, the deck is held in the left hand, with a pinky break below the 26th card (the force card).

When you say *Here*, the left thumb pushes off a block of roughly eight cards: you should see Marker #1: PHOTO 8-2



**PHOTO 8-2**

Now you start spreading (and reaching towards the spectator - or the box!" as you say: *...I'd like you to take any card...* When you reach the word "card" you should be at the second Marker card: PHOTO 8-3



**PHOTO 8-3**

When you are three cards above the force card you should be saying ...*any one*...

You must also be watching his hand like a hawk! Just at the moment he is about to make physical contact, you feed him the right card: PHOTO 8-4.

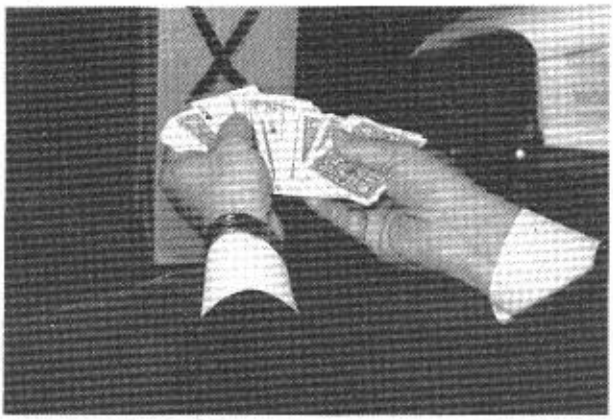


**PHOTO 8-4**

Practice speaking this line as you feed the card into the X on the box.

Soon you will not need the marker cards.

Remember that a spectator is not as passive as a cardboard box, and you may have to compensate for a spectator that moves quickly, or even slowly.

Properly executed, even a master magician cannot tell if he has been the victim of a Classic Force or not. It is a deadly weapon, and greatest secret of all is the fact that it is relatively easy to accomplish. Most magicians think it is some kind of high risk, difficult technique. I am quite confident that I can use this method to successfully force a card ninety nine times out of a hundred, which is good enough for me. I have used the Classic Force on television, where I had to force a card, and where time constraints did not permit any 'outs, precautions or challenges'.

## QUARTERBACK

This is a trick I have used for twenty five years with success. This is a trick that always, repeat always, is a hit. I rate this along with my LIPS (a Tony Binarelli based item from the Camirand Academy) as guaranteed crowd pleasers.

Similar ideas have since seen the light of day, such as a 3 1/2 card. Quarterback is a better trick, and an improvement upon the 3 1/2 card. I am surely not the only one to have thought of this but I have been doing it a quarter of a century. I have seen people use a half dollar, but a quarter is even more elegant.

• **Set-up**:

Have any nine as the bottom card of the deck, and any two spot as the card just above the nine. Have a quarter in your lap, or left jacket pocket.

• **Performance**:

Swing cut half the deck into the left hand and complete the cut, retaining a break below the nine. Classic force the nine. Say: *If you took a court card, tell me, because the trick won't work - it must be a number card....* This just "disproves" that a force was used.

As the card is selected, retain a break (below the two). Cut the top half to the table, have the spectator's card replaced, and drop the half in your hand on top. (The two is now the bottom card). Say: *Remember your card, and just touch another....* Classic force the deuce - but the card is only touched and then placed face down on the table without showing its face to anyone.

Lean back and say this:

*Now I want you to forget about the suit, only remember the number of the card you took. Take that number and divide it in half, OK? Now divide it in half again, OK?*

Meanwhile, you have obtained the quarter from your lap or pocket into a left finger palm position.

*Believe it or not, I have here the* ***exact*** *number you are thinking of, right?*

Don't forget to say *exact.*

Meanwhile, you have turned over the tabled face-down card, a two spot, onto your left hand and covering the hidden quarter. The right hand now picks up the card, thumb above and fingers

below. The second finger also pinches the quarter. The card, with coin underneath, is deposited face up onto the table (you must use a soft surface, otherwise the coin will talk as it is laid down).

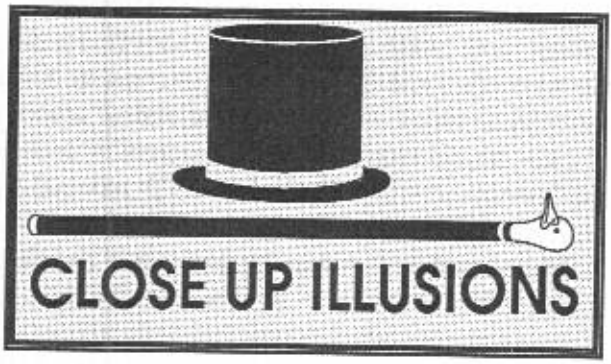
Sit back and wait. The spectator will say: *Yes, well almost, two and a quarter.*

Whereupon you say:

*Look, that's what I have, two and a QUARTER!*

As you deliver the line, slide aside the card to reveal the coin.






# CHAPTER 9

## EUREKA!

Laying claim to originality is, in today's magical environment, a foolhardy act. The moment you do, especially in card magic, be prepared for the worst. There are two reasons: first, the sheer amount of published material, lecture notes, magazines, books, videotaped material, and underground stuff; second, the chilly lack of humanity displayed by certain fans.

Unintentional plagiarism happens all the time. There are hundreds of thousands of card effects and moves alone in print in almost every language; no one is aware of them all. There is no central registry of tricks, no all-inclusive library where well-intentioned inventors can double-check their claims to originality. When you invent a new move, one of your options is to start showing it around to everybody and ask if it seems original. But then, of course, it is only a matter of time to when your own move starts travelling on its own speed and your own contribution gets lost. Rush into print too soon, however, and you may regret your haste.

The Watchdogs are something else again.

When I first published **Threshold**, I learned all about the system. The book included something called the *Ouellet Switch* (a mistake to name anything after yourself) which was - is - one of the best card switches you will ever find. Mechanically, the move is related to Marlo's propelled lapping - just as a *Chateau Lafite* is related to a *Vosne Romanee* - but it substitutes a dumping move for the forefinger flick. In retrospect I now think the move is definitely an improvement because the flick is NOT invisible, whereas the dump goes unnoticed In any event, I offer it to you today as my opinion - but in **Threshold,** I contented myself to offer the switch to the fraternity. I called attention to the relationship to Marlo's move.

Out of the woodwork came the Keepers of the Holy Grail. How dare I steal Marlo's move? I received letters (never from Marlo) from the Keepers, accusing me of theft, of dishonesty, and other dire crimes. These were from people I had never met. Some writers, such as Jon Rachambauer, for whom I have much respect, were actually quite pleasant and most civil. But the rest? We are talking industrial-strength psychosis here.

To be honest, I was quite upset at the time. And so I started replying to these turkeys, pointing out the differences between the moves, pointing out that I did refer to Marlo's concept, regretting that some took offense, and even suggesting they view a copy of **Close-Up Illusions # 3** Videotape from Videonics where my move was demonstrated and explained. Might as well have tried to teach the value of free trade to a communist, or the pleasures of foie gras to a vegetarian.

With time, I have come to accept that magic is full of super egos and I have no more time to waste with these characters. A supposedly "big name" in magic lectured at the Ottawa Magic Club lately. I had never actually met the guy previous to his appearance. When I arrived at the club, one of the members took me aside. *Why doesn't this fellow like you?*, I was asked. *I have no idea*, I said; *I have never met him. He says*, my friend reported, *that you once stole someone else's idea. He says he hates your guts.* He had a way with words.

My initial reaction was to sue the low-life for defamation of character; but as a lawyer myself, I realize that it does little good to seek judicial remedies if the offender doesn't have a nickel to his name. And this guy, the inflated purveyor of so-so magic with the vitriolic tongue, looks like he cannot afford a new hat.

I considered the charge. I have published a limited amount of material. In the **Masters of Magic** series, I gave credit every time I thought it was due; in reprints, I corrected earlier errors, if any. I am always grateful for information pointing out the existence of a similar or related concept in print; Harry Lorayne once correctly pointed out one such instance, and I later added the reference. I credited Tony Binarelli with the idea for Lips and Hirata with his move, and the De Camp and Yedid books were about their own creations, and I claimed absolutely no credit for anything. Likewise for Tenyo, of course. I will often call up friends like Ken Krenzel, or Bob Farmer, or others and ask if a concept seems original to them. I have unintentionally sinned and I have atoned.

I will usually wait a few years before the concept even makes it into print. I recommend that all authors do the same: check it out with knowledgeable colleagues, and dally for some time before releasing it. After that, if it turns out you re-invented something, well, accept that these things happen. You have followed a perfectly acceptable process. Yet no matter the safeguards you may adopt, be prepared for the loonies.

When you find out that some idiot is dirtying your name, try to assess the damage to your reputation. If the jerk has a bank account, consult a lawyer; sue if you have to. I admit, however, that the initiation of legal procedures is costly and disagreeable, and that many a magician just could never be bothered (ask Herb Zarrow).

On the other hand, if you simply go out and knowingly steal someone else's idea, then you deserve a comeuppance. Piracy of ideas - intellectual theft - is still theft.

In magic, there is limited protection for creators. The actual wording (such as this paragraph) is protected under copyright law and international agreements. If you copy this wording without permission you can be sued for plagiarism.

Suppose I invent a new trick using a piece of thread in a deck as a card control gimmick. I call the concept **Strings Attached.** I put the trick on the market or otherwise publish the idea: ***Ouellet's Strings Attached - Only $5.00.*** My actual instructions, the words I use in the **Strings Attached** manuscript are protected but the idea is not, and as long as you write your own instructions, you could market the same trick today: **Long John**

**Silver's Invisible Hand** - only $3.50. As to mechanical props, they can sometimes be protected by patents or trade design legislation, but most times they cannot and, in any event, the cost of patent registration is enormous compared to the average sales of an effect or a book in magic. Bob Farmer has been exploring the concept of protection under the idea of a choreography of the hands, where the actual sequence might be protected if all possible hand movements can be organized and cataloged, and I am anxious to learn of Bob's conclusions.

Meantime, the only real protection is the scorn and judgement of your peers against you if you resort to piracy of someone else's concept.

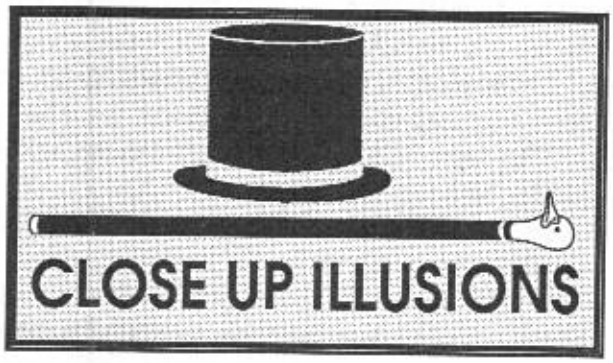
That is why one must be very careful before accusing a magician of theft.

I know that when this book is published I will learn that some ideas can be traced back to some source - however obscure; the Keepers of the Holy Grail will be heard from (do not get me wrong: I am a fan of Marlo's and I think his contribution has been heroic; it is the Keepers who, in His name, go off the deep end).

The fact that these small little people are most often promoters, even popularizers, of bad magic does not seem to have broken their stride.

It goes with the territory.






# CHAPTER 10

## THE PARADISE COUNT

There have been many published methods describing various techniques used by cardmen to execute the different false counts, so necessary in this age where packet tricks are a staple of the magic dealer's trade.

Many ingenious effects are possible through the judicious use of the Elmsley and Jordan counts, to name only two. Phil Goldstein is a genius at concocting small gems that are both tightly constructed and miraculous . My friend Bob Farmer is another with a mind that can work out impossible effects based on the mathematics of Elmsley and Jordan.

Alas, my mind cannot compete in that sphere. But I do have an offering in the technical area that might encourage you to use some of that solid gold.

Pretty early on in magic, through the good graces of Emerson and West and Nick Trost, we are introduced to the Elmsley count. Traditionally, the count involves pushing a block (of two or more

cards) off the remaining bottom card by "squeezing away" the cards. The standard grip holds the packet by its edges (either short or long) between the thumb and forefinger.

Over the years, dissatisfaction or boredom with the traditional handling inspired a great many variations in the grip or in the counting action. The "squeezing" premise, however, remained, until the publication of the Veeser Concept.

In January, 1984, I was invited to the Club Med at Paradise Island to perform magic for two weeks. My hosts were Club Med resident magicians Jean-Pierre Garnier and Bruno Bazzuchi.

While there, Jean-Pierre introduced me to two new counts (both based upon the Veeser Concept): the Jacques Cherer count, and Jean-Jacques Sanvert's count. Jean-Pierre preferred the Sanvert Count, a version of which was published in **Apocalypse**.

In the Veeser Concept, a basic format is followed which marks an important departure from the traditional handling and which eliminates the need for the squeezing action so essential to the standard descriptions. Basically, rather than squeeze out the block to be transferred, the concept involves displacing the bottom card of the packet, thus leaving the block out in the open where it can simply be taken by the counting hand.

In Sanvert's version the displacement is caused by bending back the third finger of the holding hand, using a move identical to an earlier Father Cyprian ploy. In Cherer's handling, the packet is held in a modified Ovette-Kelly grip and the displacement is close to an angled side-glide. In the traditional Veeser Concept handling the card is slipped out directly to the right, pushed by the left finger-tips, as the packet is held in a Biddle Grip.

Both the Sanvert and Cherer counts, however, end up having the displaced card pivoting at an angle which makes the block pick-up awkward at best. In fact, for ease of handling, the card is best pivoted at the opposite angle.

It was while working on this problem that I created The Paradise Count.

As of this writing, very few magicians have seen the Paradise Count, but the few who have have waxed enthusiastic. Indeed, it was all I could do to convince Guy Camirand to keep this chapter in the book. Guy thought the material so revolutionary as to warrant a separate publication.

The count has many applications, and I will describe the Paradise Elmsley Count, the Paradise Jordan Count, the Paradise Ascanio Spread, the Paradise Hammon Count, and other ideas.

How many Elmsley counts do you know which can cleanly hide eight face-up cards?

One other field, which may in fact represent the greatest opportunity, relates to double card table deposits.

A word of warning.

If you read the text attentively, you will enjoy almost immediate success.

Then, in a few minutes or a few days, the Count will no longer work.

You will have forgotten some minor detail in the description. I personally lived the experience many times during the development of the handling. Whenever I stopped to analyze the error, I realized that I had forgotten some aspect that I had spent hours discovering previously.

Most errors will arise from improper attention being paid to the right and left hand grips, and the sequence of actions related to the commencement of the counts.

Reread this chapter several times. No detail is superfluous.

To teach the moves, I must start with certain descriptions that you will no doubt consider arid.

Because the handling dictates some easy but unfamiliar motions and positions, I am going to commence with a description of actions that will eventually form part of a smooth flowing handling. Do not let the details throw you off. They are included for a good reason.

## • NOMENCLATURE

Before learning any of the Paradise counts, you will need to familiarize yourself with the following:

- The Paradise Grip
- The Starting Position
- The Top Pull-Up
- The Bottom Push-Down
- The Bottom Pull-Down

Don't let all the verbiage scare you. All the moves are easy and inter-related. However, depending upon the actual count used, different techniques are necessary.

## • THE PARADISE GRIP

In all of the counts, the right hand holds the packet and the left hand does the actual counting. In the Paradise method, the right hand remains absolutely motionless during the entire count, giving a strong impression of fairness. However, the method of holding the packet is the basis of the Paradise principle.

Hold a packet of, say, four cards in the right hand. The position is similar to the Biddle position except that the packet is held by the right thumb and second finger only, at the right top and bottom corners. For an exposed view, see PHOTO 10-1.

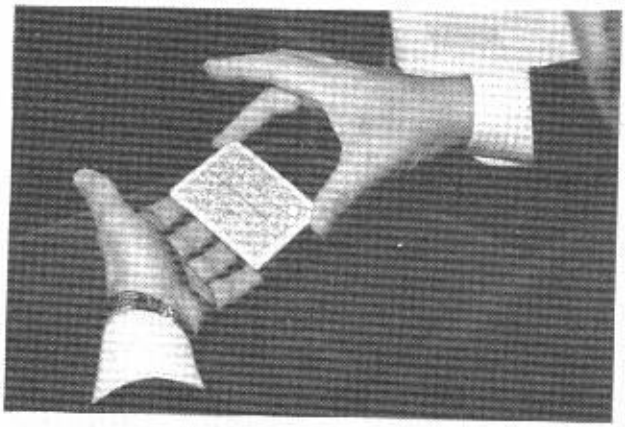


**PHOTO 10-1**

Notice that the pads of the thumb and second finger are directly on the corners, thus gripping the packet and holding all the cards in perfect alignment.

## • THE STARTING POSITION

With the packet held by the right hand in the PARADISE GRIP the left thumb comes onto the top card at a point exactly one-quarter way down from the top and midpoint between the two long edges: PHOTO 10-2.

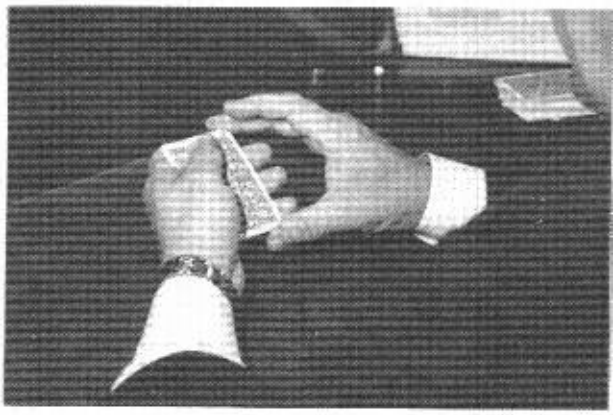


**PHOTO 10-2**

Notice how the packet is well seated in the left hand. This makes the count very natural in appearance.

The left forefinger, unlike the other fingers of the left hand, is pulled back slightly so that it touches the face of the bottom card: PHOTO 10-3 is an exposed view.



**PHOTO 10-3**

Note that the left thumb and forefinger do not pinch the packet tightly: rather, they lightly touch the top and bottom cards.

Reread this section with cards in hand several times.

The remaining three moves all involve the principle of "popping out of grip".

If a packet of cards is held in standard Biddle grip (ie. from above, by the short edges) and the left hand counts off cards by dragging the topmost card off with the left thumb, it will happen (often or occasionally, depending upon your skill or luck) that more than one card will be displaced. This can depend upon the condition of the cards, or the pressure of the left thumb. In all cases, it is disastrous if you are trying to hide, say, a face-down card.

The Paradise grip avoids this if coupled with the "popping out of grip" principle. Cards are not dragged off squarely to the left, but instead are first freed from the right hand grip by being pivoted off the right thumb or forefinger. In this way only one card breaks loose, leaving the remainder of the packet evenly squared.

As you will see, more than one card can be freed at once if desired, using different angles and different fulcrums, but always the remainder stays secure and aligned.

**• The Top Pull-Up**

Hold a packet of cards in Starting Position as explained above.

The left thumb - WITH LIGHT PRESSURE ONLY - moves (very slightly) up and to the left. This causes the top card to "pop" free of the grip, pivoting on the right second finger: PHOTO 10-4.

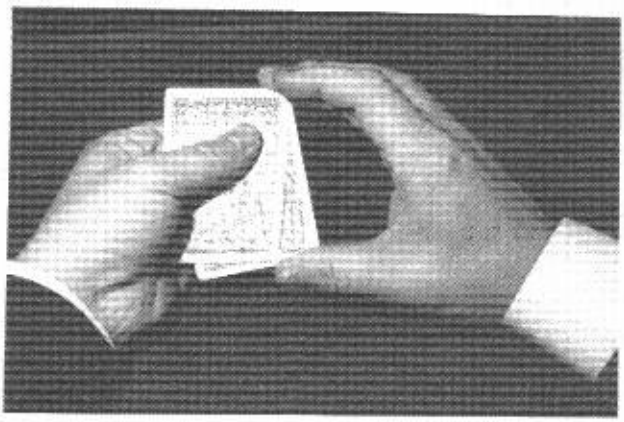


**PHOTO 10-4**

Easy, right?

(The forefinger, by the way, has not moved.)

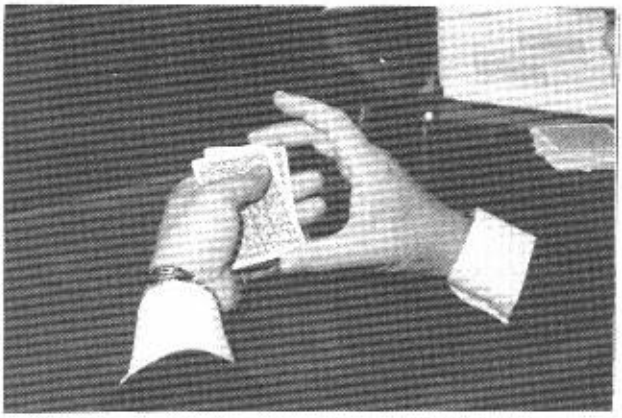
**• THE BOTTOM PUSH-DOWN**

Hold a packet of cards in Starting Position.

With the left forefinger (in the Starting Position), push the bottom card to the right and slightly downwards.

The bottom card pivots against the right thumb, breaks free of grip and ends up angled slightly as shown in PHOTO 10-5.

**PHOTO 10-5**



**• THE BOTTOM PULL-DOWN**

This is the last technique. Again, hold the cards in Starting Position.The left forefinger pulls the bottom card down and left. The card pivots against the right thumb and breaks free of the packet: PHOTO 10-6.

Now, that wasn't so bad, was it?

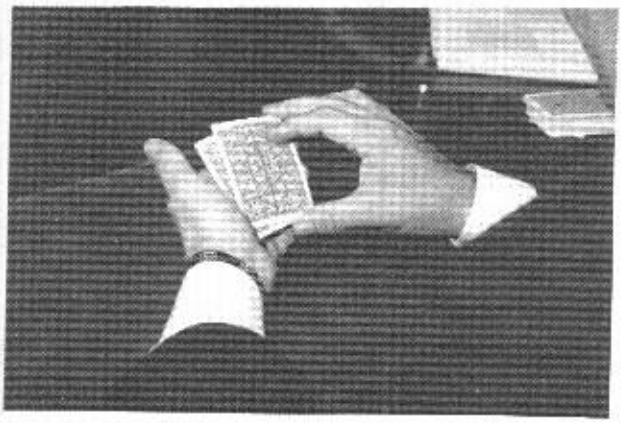


**PHOTO 10-6**

# THE PARADISE ELMSLEY COUNT

Now it is time to appreciate what you have learned, and the Elmsley count is a good place to start. This is the count most called for in packet tricks, and is perhaps the best count to appreciate the possibilities of the Paradise technique.

Let us start with a traditional Elmsley set-up : hold a packet of four cards in the right hand (in Paradise Grip); the third card down is face up. The idea is to appear to count four face-down cards.

Assume the Starting Position.

You are going to count the first card off with the left hand.

First, execute the Top Pull-Up to free the top card and to start it on its way.

Now you STOP - but just for an instant. Execute the Bottom Push-Down to free the bottom card.

PHOTO 10-7 shows an exposed view of the situation at this point.

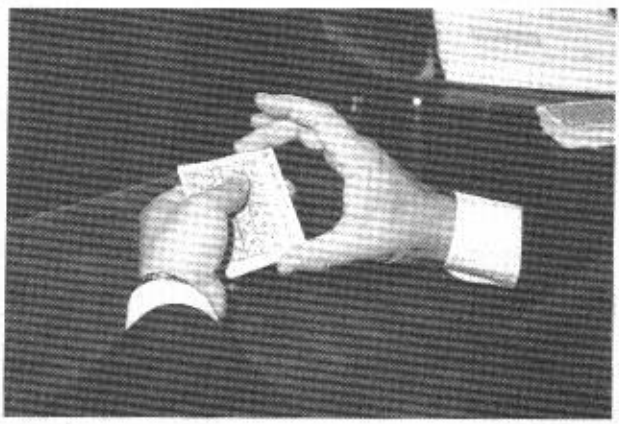


**PHOTO 10-7**

• note that the top card is angled clockwise off the packet to the left;

• note that the center portion of two cards remains perfectly aligned IN PARADISE GRIP;

• note that the bottom card is angled counter-clockwise off the

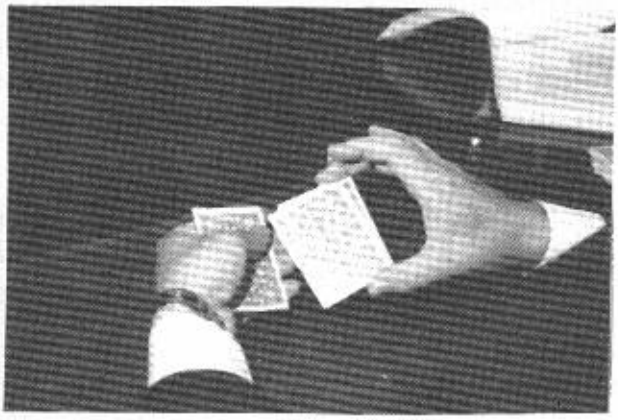
packet to the right; this is the essence of the Paradise concept, and the mechanical basis for the smooth transfer.

• note that the top and bottom cards are no longer in Paradise Grip;

• finally note that the top card and the bottom card are parallel to each other - THIS IS IMPORTANT TO THE TRANSFER TO COME.

Now, the left hand removes the top card to the count of *One:* PHOTO 10-8.

**PHOTO 10-8**



• note that the card in the left hand is well seated, in a "one card mechanics grip". A common error is to carry the card away only on the left fingers: this makes the later switch clumsy at best.

• another common error is to try to carry out the Top Pull-Up and the Bottom Push-Down at the same time. It just will not work. However, even by executing them ONE AT A TIME both moves and the ensuing count off can appear to be one single motion of counting off a card. Both moves are the work of a fraction of a second as long as you remember to execute them in sequence.

And now, the switch. This will be much easier to follow if you have cards in hand.

As the left hand comes over, purportedly to count off the next card, the left hand card comes directly under the bottom card of the packet. The fact that both top and bottom cards were parallel (ie. on the same plane) makes this automatic: PHOTO 10-9.

Notice that the top block of two cards extends to the left, the top left corner of the block under the left thumb and free of the

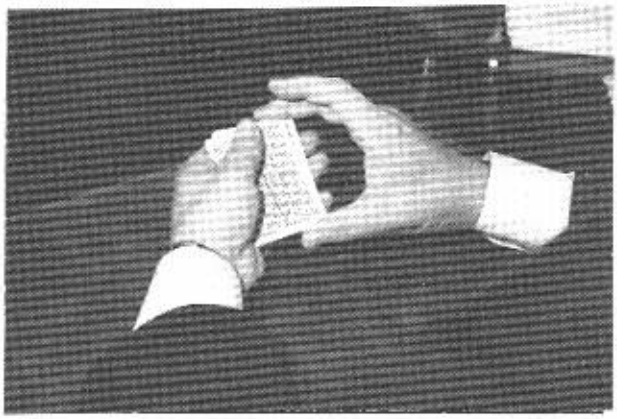
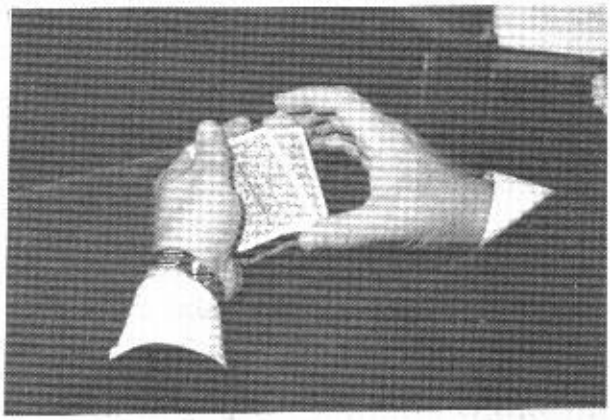


**PHOTO 10-9**

(new) block below. (This is what distinguishes the Paradise Count from the Sanvert Count.) Almost automatically, the left hand counts off the block (and leaving the first card) to the count of *Two*: PHOTO 10-10.

**PHOTO 10-10**



• When making the switch, do NOT stretch the left thumb over to the right edge. This is not necessary. The block will move easily with only slight downwards pressure of the left thumb.

The left hand now comes over and counts off *Three* and *Four*.

At the end, the left hand holds a packet of four cards. The bottom card is face-up. The spectators have seen four face-down cards.

This count can be executed very slowly. The right hand, remember, does not move nor participate in any trickery.

Once you have mastered the above, try this. Instead of one face up card, place eight face up cards under the top two face down cards, with one face down card on the bottom. Execute the

Paradise Elmsley Count! Because there is no squeezing away of a block, the count appears clean and the block remains aligned.

If you only learn this one count out of all the material in this book, I feel you will have received value for your purchase.

## The Paradise Jordan Count

As you may know, a Jordan Count accomplishes much the same goals as the Elmsley, except that the card to be hidden is in the fourth or bottom position.

For a while, the Jordan count had me stumped and I thought that the Paradise techniques could not be applied to the position. Perhaps the solution was too obvious. As you will see, the Paradise Jordan Count is exceptionally clean.

Hold a packet of four cards in the Starting Position. The bottom card is face-up.

Use the Top Pull-Up to free the top card, and count it into the left hand. Repeat the procedure for the second card.

At this point, the left forefinger should be slightly bent, so as to touch the face of the bottom card. PHOTO 10-11 is an exposed view.

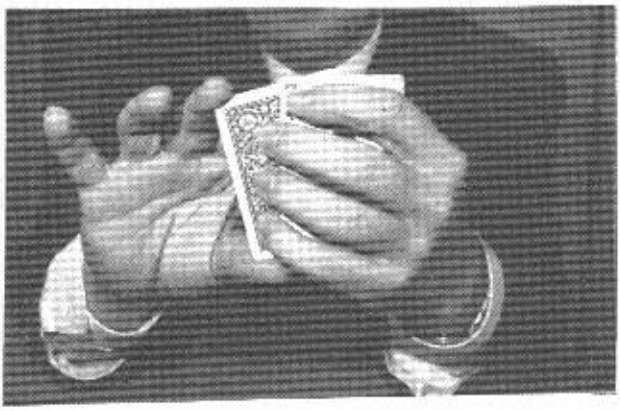


**PHOTO 10-11**

As you come to count the third card, there is an instant when all cards become aligned in one packet: PHOTO 10-12.

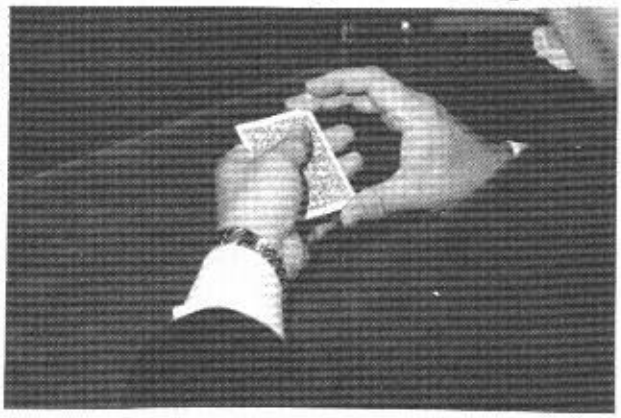
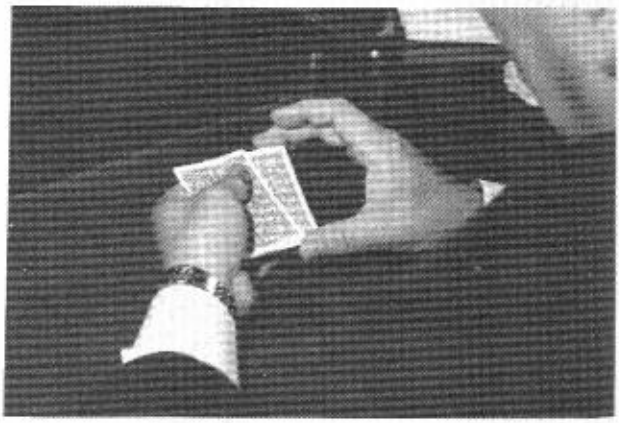


**PHOTO 10-12**

At this precise instant, perform the Bottom Push-Down, and the left hand moves away with the top block of three cards as you count *Three* : PHOTO 10-13.

**PHOTO 10-13**



Finally come back and count the last card as *Four.*

Like the Paradise Elsmley Count you can substitute many face-up cards for the single card when doing the Paradise Jordan and you still will have a clean count, due to the fact that you have eliminated any block bevelling problems associated with the squeezing action in the traditional handling.

An argument can be made that the Jordan Count, whether the Paradise Jordan or the traditional Jordan, is the false count that is the most difficult to spot. I remember John Mendoza during a lecture executing a Jordan slowly, card by card, and still taking in most of the magicians.

## The Paradise 2/4 Count

Hold a packet of four cards in Starting Position. The two top cards are face down and the two bottom cards are face up. The goal is to appear to count four face down cards.

With the Top Pull-Up, free the top card and count it as one. As you come back for the second, all cards are squared up together for an instant and you execute the Bottom Push-Down, taking off the block of three on the count of *Two*. This entire sequence is repeated again to count *Three* and *Four*.

## The Paradise Acanio Spread

You are holding a packet of five cards in the Starting Position. The third card is face up and is to be hidden as you supposedly spread the "four" cards.

The left forefinger executes a Bottom Pull-Down: PHOTO 10-14 Now, the left second finger executes a Bottom Pull-Down as well: PHOTO 10-15.

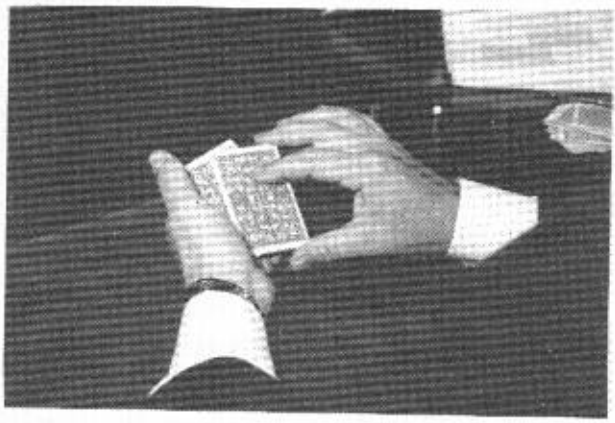


**PHOTO 10-14**

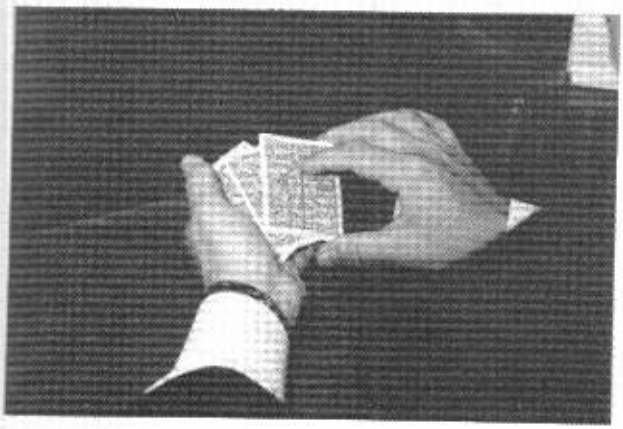


**PHOTO 10-15**

Now the left thumb will execute a Top Pull-Up - BUT - rather than have the left thumb move, instead pivot the right hand counterclockwise so that the top card breaks free: PHOTO 10-16.

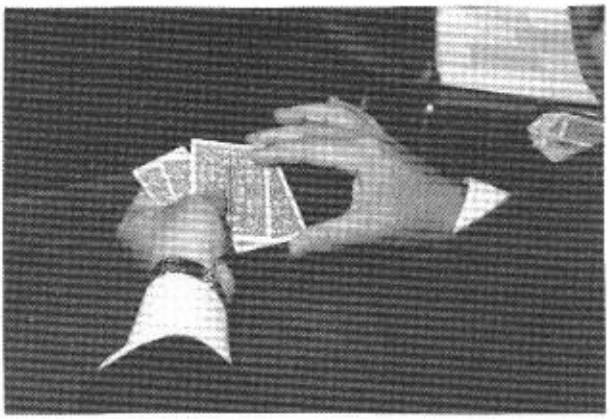
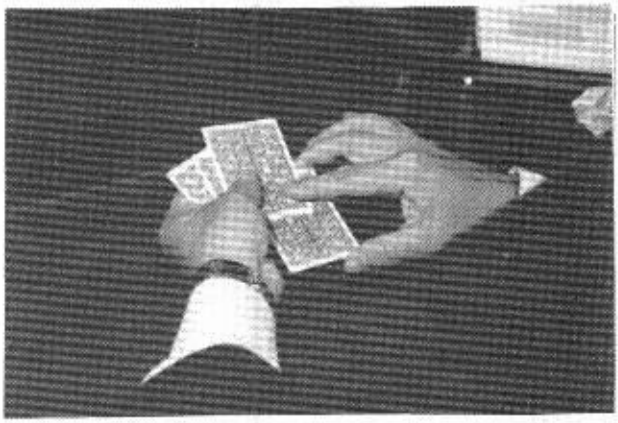


**PHOTO 10-16**

The right hand (holding the block of two) slides back and the right forefinger presses down on the top card: PHOTO 10-17.

**PHOTO 10-17**



This "two card" display is moved to the right and back under the left hand cards, as the left thumb slides the top card of its packet forward, making a pretty display: PHOTO 10-18.

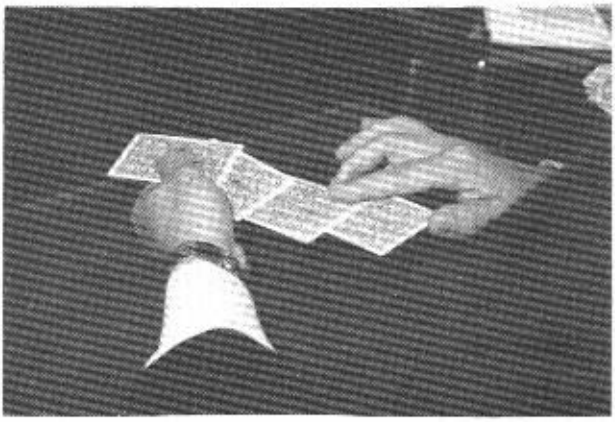


**PHOTO 10-18**

Reverse the sequence to get back to the beginning.

The secret of the Paradise Ascanio is to carry out the sequence at a relatively rapid pace. Obviously, more than one card can be hidden. As you may know, Ascanio spreads are useful in certain card effects such as Cannibal Cards. Additional handling on the count, as well as my handling of the Cannibal Cards, is detailed in Chapter 28.

## The Paradise Hammon Count

This count is also widely used in packet effects. Let us imagine that you have a packet of nine cards. The bottom four are face up and must be hidden, such as in Wild Card.

To commence, you must double cut one card from the top to the bottom of the packet.

Next, assume the Starting Position.

Commence the count in the same way as you commenced the Elmsley: that is, by executing first a Top Pull-Up, then a Bottom Push-Down, as you count off the first card.

Count the second and third cards (using a Top Pull-Up to free the cards) into the left hand.

On *Four*, execute a block transfer, just as with Elmsley.

Count the fifth card into the left hand, but hold a break with the left pinky beneath this card and the remainder of the left hand portion.

As you count the sixth card, the right hand steals back the fifth card onto the bottom of its portion.

Now count off cards seven, eight and nine.

You end in the standard position, ie. where you started.

What is important is the ease with which you execute that block transfer, made possible by the Paradise technique.

This ends the section on the Paradise Counts. What follows is just as important and should be of great utility to cardicians.

## DOUBLE DEPOSITS

Hold three face up cards in the Starting Position. Execute the Bottom Push-Down. You now hold three cards in the right hand: a block of two followed by an angled single card.

You will find it very easy to lay down the double card as one by letting its left long edge touch the table surface -PHOTO 10-19 - and then sliding the single card out to the right - PHOTO 10-20 - leaving a double on the table (that to all appearances looks like a single card): PHOTO 10-21.

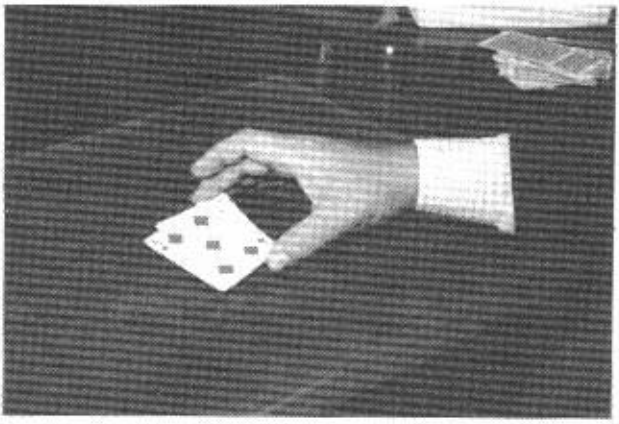
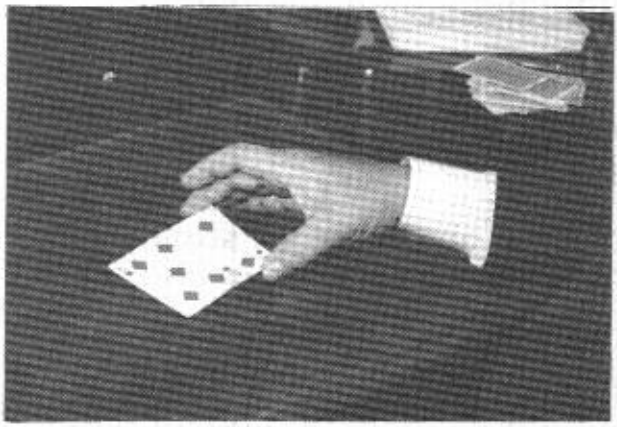


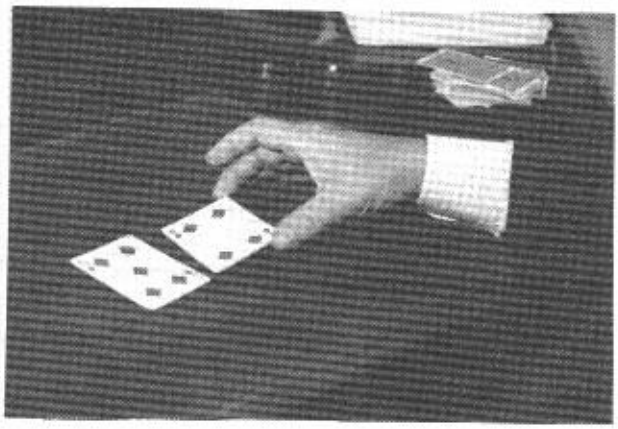
**PHOTO 10-19**

**PHOTO 10-20**



There have been a number of table changes (Marlo and Sanvert have published some beauties) based upon being able to convincingly deposit a double.

**PHOTO 10-21**



While waiting, you can drop the single onto the double - PHOTO 10-22 - to provide additional cover.

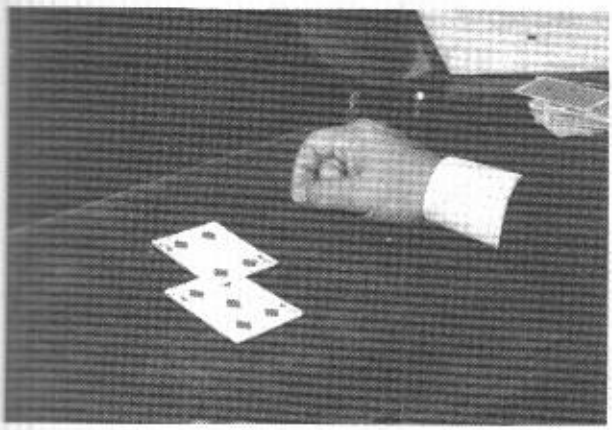
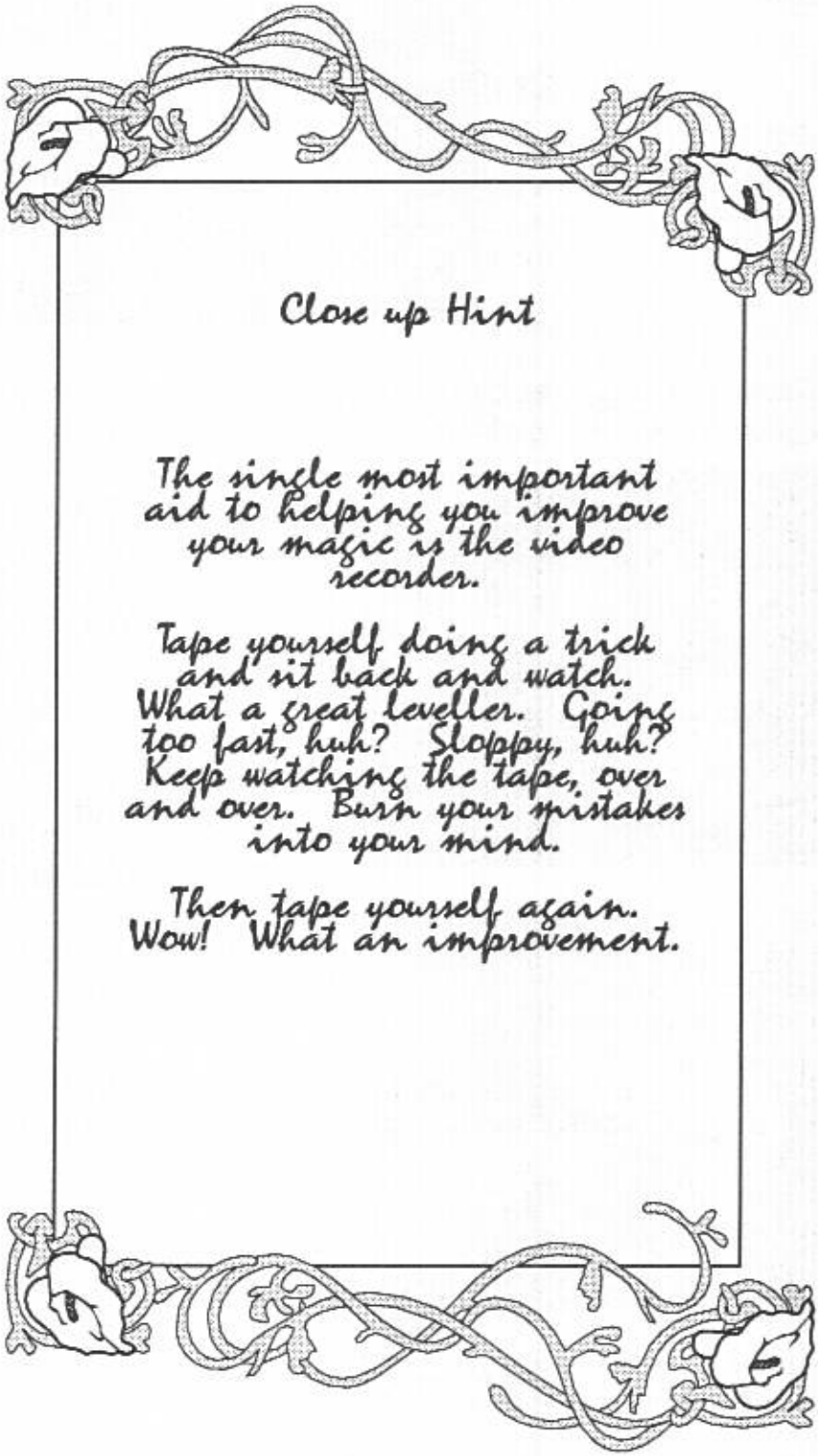


**PHOTO 10-22**

I have given you the basics of the Paradise technique which can surely be adapted to other counts (such as Daryl's Combo Count).

The Paradise Counts can be learned in a few hours and mastered in a few weeks, and I commend them to your attention.



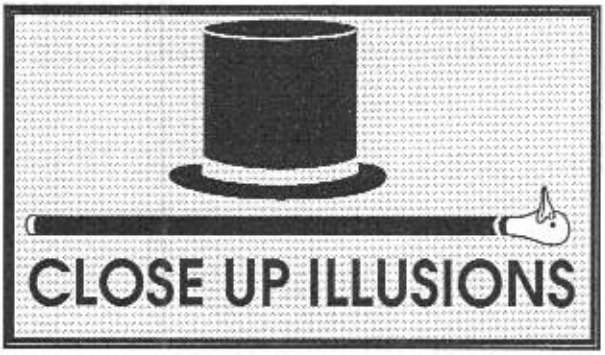


## Close up Hint

The single most important aid to helping you improve your magic is the video recorder.

Tape yourself doing a trick and sit back and watch. What a great leveller. Going too fast, huh? Sloppy, huh? Keep watching the tape, over and over. Burn your mistakes into your mind.

Then tape yourself again. Wow! What an improvement.




# CHAPTER 11

## THE FINAL COIN FLIGHT

If I were writing an ad for this I might feel moved to claim to the magical fraternity:

*A BREATHTAKINGLY CLEAN PENETRATION FOR THE FINAL COIN IN ANY COINS THRU TABLE ROUTINE • PLUS A GENERAL UTILITY COIN GIMMICK!*

The penetration of the last coin in any coin-thru-table effect is, by necessity, the climax and as such, must be clean, amazing and fool-proof.

In **THE SILVER PASSAGE** (Masters of Magic Series, Volume I, Number 3) I described the Hirata Master Move, which is simply the finest sleight of hand method I have ever seen for this effect.

This handling describes a non-sleight of hand alternative using a gimmick.

The use of pulls is almost as old as magic itself. We use pulls to vanish bird cages and lit cigarettes, not to mention silks, balls and even water! However, a coin pull is rarely encountered. I hope to change this state of neglect. This handling might interest you, I hope, because:

- the set-up is very quick;

- the use of the pull is based upon normal actions that would be carried out in any event (which is, in my opinion, the beauty of the handling);

- the result is all that could be hoped for.

## The Gimmick

Simply attach a length of nylon fishing line to a coin. One way is to drill a small hole near the edge of a coin and tie the line through the hole. Another way is to first make a small knot in the end of the line. Next, drop a small bit of clear epoxy glue on the face of the coin near its edge. Rest the knot in the drop of epoxy and allow the whole thing to dry. Next, hold the coin between the right thumb and forefinger. Stretch the right hand out to your side. With the left hand, stretch the line across your chest and mark the spot at which the line arrives at the tip of your left shoulder: PHOTO 11-1 (Note that cord has been substituted for fishing line in the interests of photographic clarity).



**PHOTO 11-1**

Tie a loop at the spot that you marked.

Trim away excess line. The gimmick is ready.

• **SET-UP**

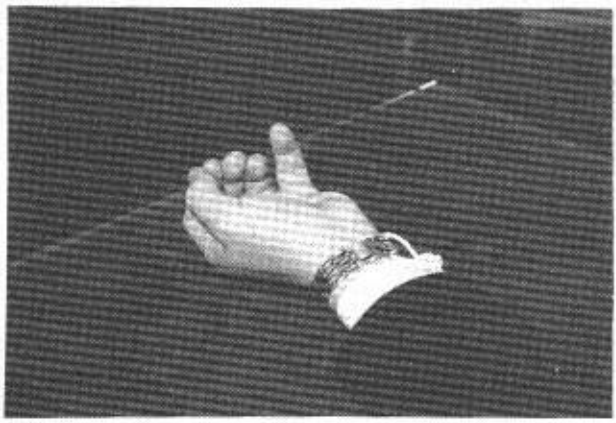
The set-up is simple:

• unfasten your watch;

• slip the loop through your watch band;

• replace your watch on your left wrist: PHOTO 11-2;

**PHOTO 11-2**



• put on your jacket with the line going up your left arm, across your back, and down your right sleeve. The coin should hang just out of sight.

## PERFORMANCE

Here is a natural scenario for using the gimmick.

You are performing coins through the table and have arrived at the passage of the third coin. The right hand is below the table with three coins and the left hand, on the table covers one coin.

Now, leave one regular coin on the lap. The right hand, under the table, secretly gets hold of the gimmicked coin. This is easy: by simply leaning forward, the coin will drop into the right hand.

Lift up the left hand to show one coin on the table (the spectators thought there were two coins).

Bring up the right hand from under the table and fan display three coins: PHOTO 11-3.

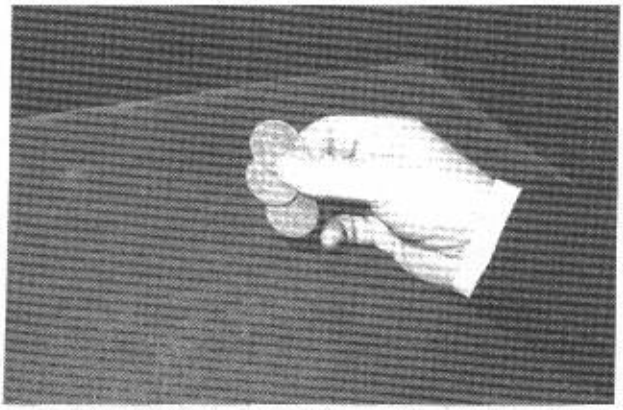
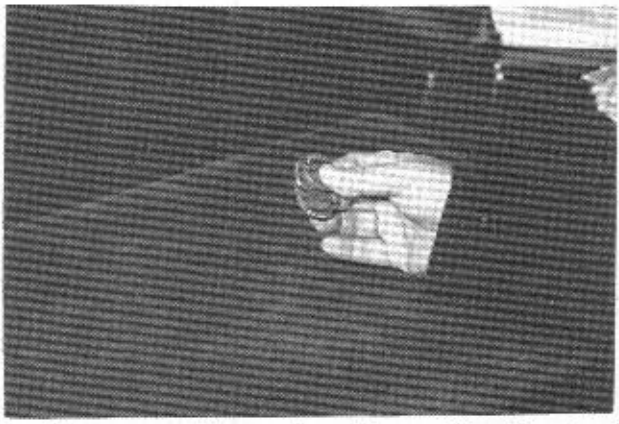


**PHOTO 11-3**

Note that the gimmick is closest to the body. Add the tabled coin to the front of the others as you say *Watch closely, this is the last coin!* PHOTO 11-4.

**PHOTO 11-4**



The left hand takes the three regular coins from the front of the stack, goes below table level and immediately picks up the lapped coin while the right hand places the gimmicked coin onto the table: PHOTO 11-5.

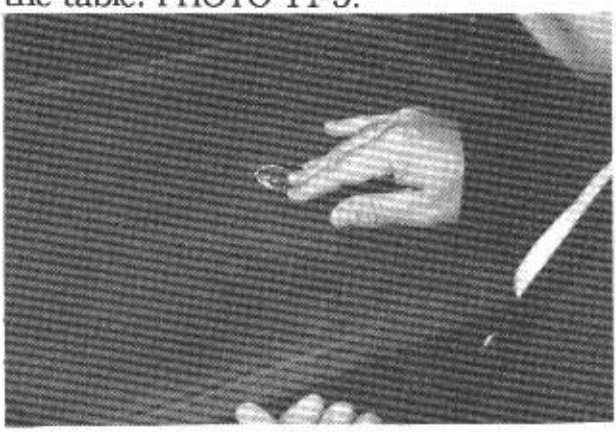


**PHOTO 11-5**

Note that the line is hidden by the right second finger.

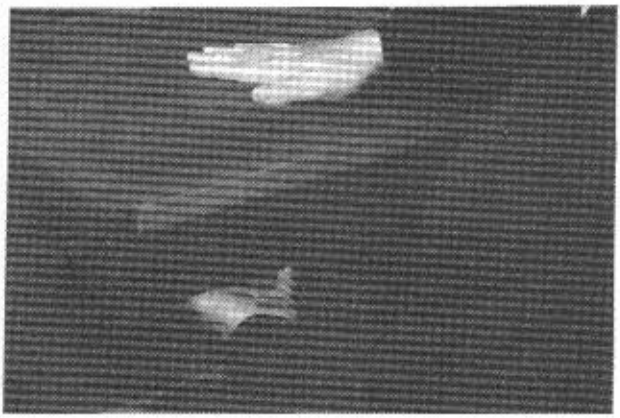
Now comes the beautiful part of the handling which brings about an automatic vanish.

Two movements are carried out at once:

•The right hand slides over the coin, and

• the left hand is extended under the table to below the spot where the coin would "penetrate": PHOTO 11-6

**PHOTO 11-6**



The extension of the left arm automatically whips the coin up the right sleeve. Lift the right hand to show that the coin has left, and bring forth the left hand with the four coins.

**• A Utility Prop**

The gimmick can be used for other purposes and some clean vanishes are possible.

For instance, with a silk handkerchief in your breast pocket, the simple act of bending the left arm up to take the silk will deliver the coin into your right hand. Show the coin at right fingertips, cover the coin with the silk, and pretend to take away the coin under the silk. The act of moving the left hand forward disposes of the coin! The now empty right hand grabs the end of the silk and the coin is shown to have vanished.

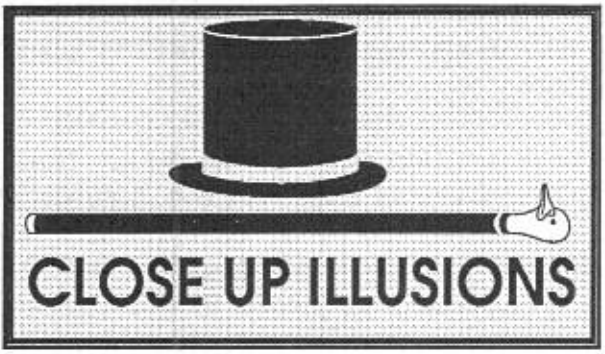
Many other ideas will occur to you.

Obviously, when the gimmick is not required, it can be carried inside your right inner jacket pocket, and dropped down the sleeve prior to performing a trick that calls for the gimmick.

The bottom line is this: the handling is easy and a fooler. The gimmick takes very little effort to prepare.

I have described a very simple pull arrangement which serves the purpose; however, a Dick Zimmerman type *Super-Pull* or other pulley type setups can make the working even more sophisticated.






# CHAPTER 12

## THE INFIDEL CHANGE

When **THE SILVER PASSAGE** first appeared (in the *Masters of Magic Series* published by the Camirand Academy of Magic), there were many who read the description of the Hirata Master Move and thought: "*Is he kidding?*"!

A number of years have passed and the Hirata Master Move has been seen by enough magicians to silence the infidels. But another controversy may have arrived. The INFIDEL CHANGE - based on the Hirata Master Move - adds another dimension to an already impossible-in-print looking move. The theory is this: that **if two objects are falling, one behind the other, the eye is attracted to the near object and the far object - although in sight - becomes invisible to the onlooker's brain.**

The result is a rather startling move. A coin, say, held at the fingertips, is openly dropped on the table. IN FULL VIEW IT CHANGES INTO ANOTHER OBJECT AS IT FALLS! At the end, you are clean.

The move is useful in a number of scenarios. In a

Spellbound routine, a copper coin visibly changes into a silver coin. The change also permits scripting continuity into your act. At the end of a coin routine, for example, you drop the coin onto the table and it changes into a sponge ball, permitting you to cruise right into your next effect.

I may as well mention here at the outset that the move uses lapping, and if you are one of those with a hate-on for lapping, you should move on to another trick. If, on the other hand, you accept the value of lapping within defined parameters, The Infidel Change will be, I hope, a welcome addition to the literature of lapping technique and a new weapon in your arsenal.

## HANDLING

For the sake of this description, assume that you seek to change a silver dollar into a Chinese coin.

At the outset, the Chinese coin is fingerpalmed in the right hand and the silver dollar is held by the thumb and middle finger of the same hand: PHOTO 12-1.

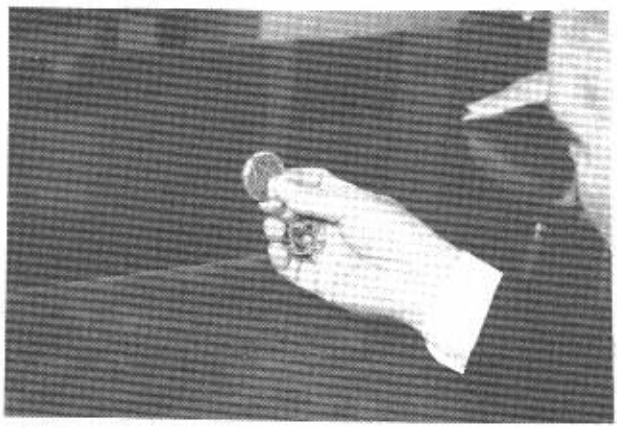


**PHOTO 12-1**

**CHECKPOINTS:**

• notice that the dollar is held by its edge, keeping the coin in almost full view;

• even if you are a competent classic palmer, use the finger palm here, otherwise the coins will fall in misalignment.

Before continuing, it might be well to preview what will happen:

• The silver dollar is going into your lap.

• The Chinese coin will fall straight down onto the table.

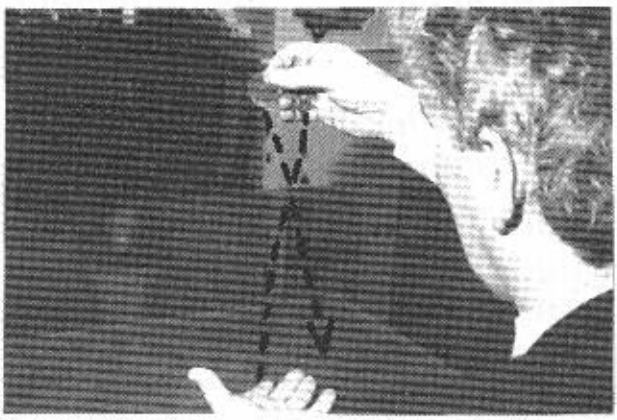
And all of this will take place out in the open!

Let's concentrate, for learning purposes, on the silver dollar. The right hand will raise to about forehead level, and then start coming straight down, aiming for a point on the table right in front of you, about four inches from your table edge. I say *aiming* because the hand will never actually come down to the table.

The downswing is preceeded by a short upswing.

On the downward movement, the right thumb will release the silver dollar. Now if nothing else were to happen, and the hand kept moving at the same speed as gravity, the dollar and the hand would continue to move downwards together. But, as the coin is released by the right thumb, the right second finger pushes the coin back towards you. It does not take much of a push to alter the flight of the dollar, just enough to permit the dollar to clear the edge of the table and fall into your lap. All of this takes place when the right hand has descended to about the level of your nose: PHOTO 12-2.

**PHOTO 12-2**



**CHECKPOINTS:**

• if you are snapping the coin back, or are arcing the hand back, you are not performing the Infidel Change;

• simply release with the thumb once the downswing has begun, and then push gently with the second finger.

Now, at the same time as the dollar is pushed backwards, the Chinese coin is released, by relaxing the finger-palm grip. The instant the Chinese coin is released, the right hand freezes (now at about chin level).

The result is obvious: the silver dollar, on an altered course, falls into the lap. But as it falls, a Chinese coin is also falling a few inches in front of it (ie. between the dollar and your audience).

Somehow, the audience follows the chinese coin and is oblivious to the dollar behind.

The Chinese coin falls to the table and the dollar falls to the lap: PHOTO 12-3.



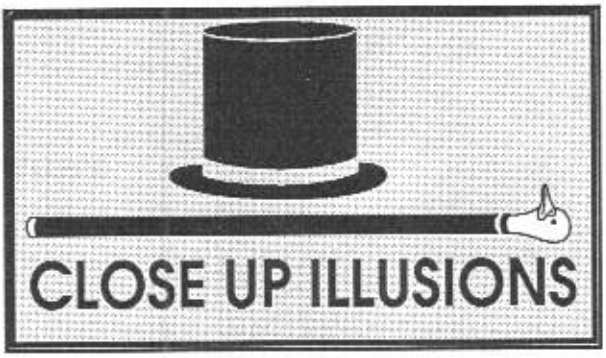
**PHOTO 12-3**

The effect is that a silver dollar changes into a Chinese coin as your audience is looking at it.

The effect is even more magical if two different objects are used: a sugar cube changes into a packet of sugar. A silver coin changes into silver glitter. A ball changes into a die.

Put aside your incredulity, learn the move, and become a believer!






# CHAPTER 13

## COIN DROPS

There is hardly a magic book aimed at teaching sleight of hand to beginners that does not include a description of the Tourniquet, or French Drop. It is considered the most basic of basic moves, and many pros use and recommend it. To what should be our collective chagrin, it is in fact continually in use.

And yet, for all its notoriety, the French Drop, as usually taught and performed, is a ghastly move, which rarely fools.

I have been playing with the French Drop since childhood and I have concluded that **the French Drop should never be used to vanish anything except a coin**. When I see the French Drop used in a cups and balls routine, I shudder. The move simply doesn't work.

Furthermore, the move, even with coins, is usually a disaster.

Perhaps the best way to teach the move is to first concentrate on the standard and, in my opinion, incorrect approach.

Look at PHOTO 13-1.

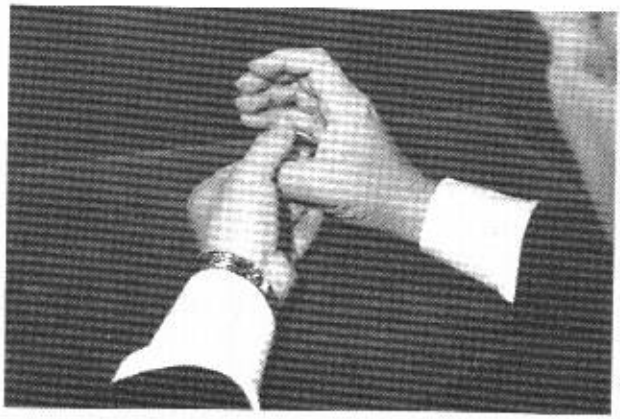


**PHOTO 13-1**

This is the manner in which the move is generally taught, with the thumb leading the way, followed by a monster-like finger curling action. I include the photograph to underline the WRONG way to do the move.

Some thoughts:

• Generally, I prefer to avoid the "spellbound position" (left thumb on top and fingers pointing towards the spectators). Rather, having the thumb on the left side and the fingers pointing to the right usually means a finer illusion. What is important is to give the audience a view of the flat side of the coin just prior to the "take".

• The right hand (the taking hand) must not move like a torpedo with the thumb leading the way. The thumb must never come through the circle.

• The taking action should be a sideways wrist action.

• The right fingers should not bend. Rather it should appear as if the coin is brought against the inside of the right fingers and held there with the right thumb.

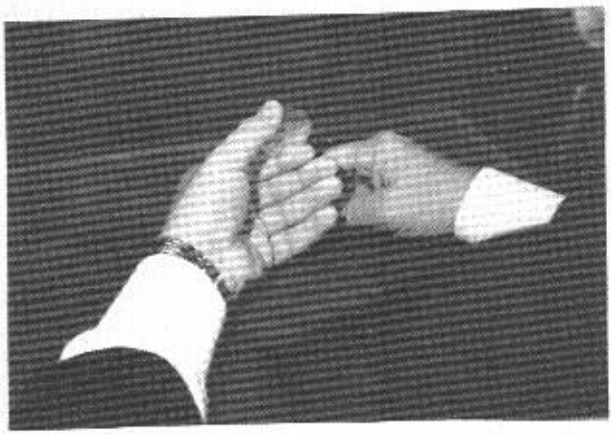
I was influenced in developing this handling by a gadget sold to vanish coins in a trick called **Copenetro**. It was a little stand, with a slot along the top, which held the coins upright. When the taking hand pretended to pick up a coin, the coin simply fell back onto a little ledge. There was no finger bending, no thumb leading.

# THE FRENCH CANADIAN DROP

Look at PHOTO 13-2. This photograph depicts the most effective position to present the French Drop.

Compare this photograph with Photo 13-1.

**PHOTO 13-2**



Notice how the coin is held perfectly flat towards the audience. Notice that the fingers point to the right. Finally notice the right hand. By simply swinging the right hand up in a wrist action, the right fingers will completely cover the coin.

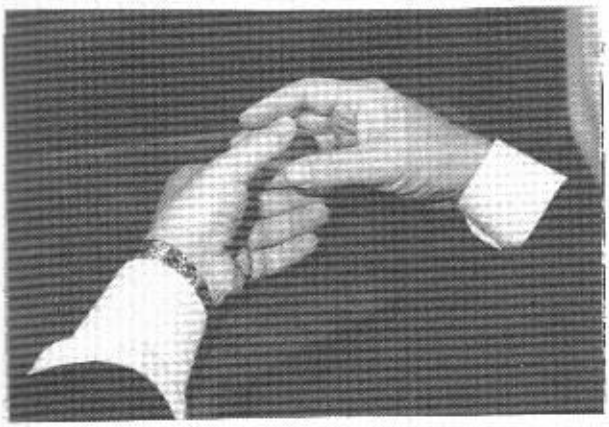


**PHOTO 13-3**

PHOTO 13-3 shows the right hand turning at the wrist. The moment the fingers cover the coin, the left thumb (with no perceptible movement, please) allows the coin to fall onto the fingers: PHOTO 13-4.

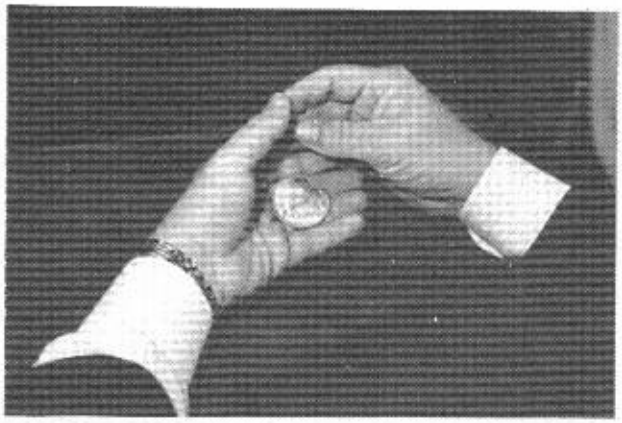
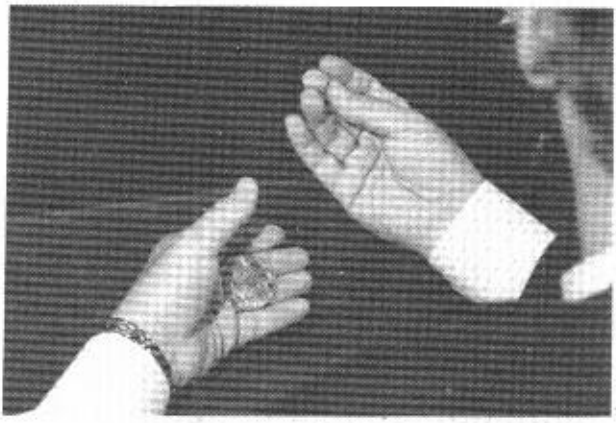


**PHOTO 13-4**

At this point, I actually bring my right thumb against the right second finger.

**PHOTO 13-5**



Now the right hand pivots up: PHOTO 13-5. DO NOT MOVE THAT LEFT HAND YET.

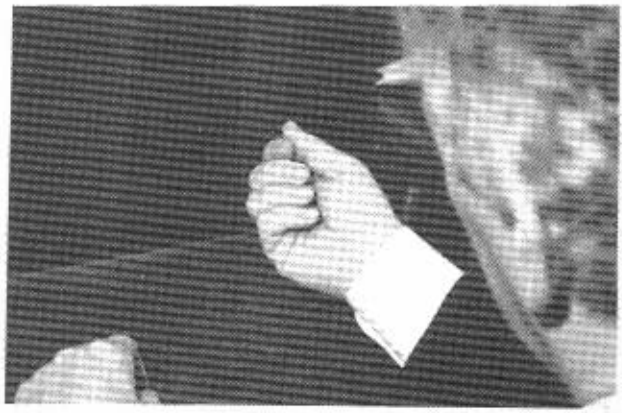


**PHOTO 13-6**

Now act out allowing the coin to drop into the right palm and shutting the fingers. If you really had a coin, the right hand would drop a half inch as this took place. At the same time you should

allow the left hand to fall DEAD, onto the table or, if standing, to your side: PHOTO 13-6.

You have just performed the French Canadian Drop. Squeeze away the coin, making it look magical if you can.

The left hand, needless to say, must be relaxed.

The secret of the illusion is the ABSENCE OF ANY PAUSE when the false pick-up is made.

## THE REVOLVER

This is a variation on the above which you may find interesting. Many magicians have told me that they preferred this approach.

From the position shown in Photo 13-2, bring the right forefinger against the side of the coin: PHOTO 13-7.

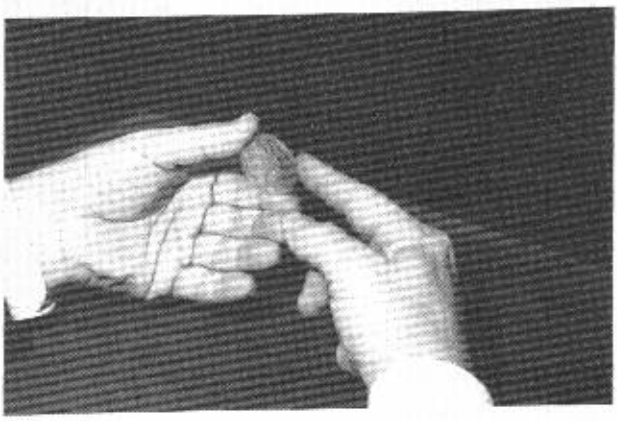


**PHOTO 13-7**

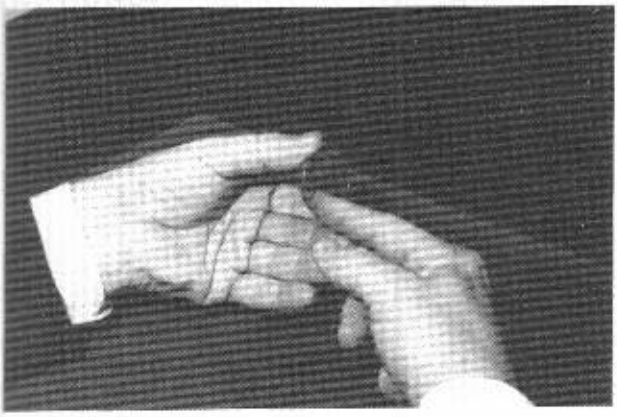


**PHOTO 13-8**

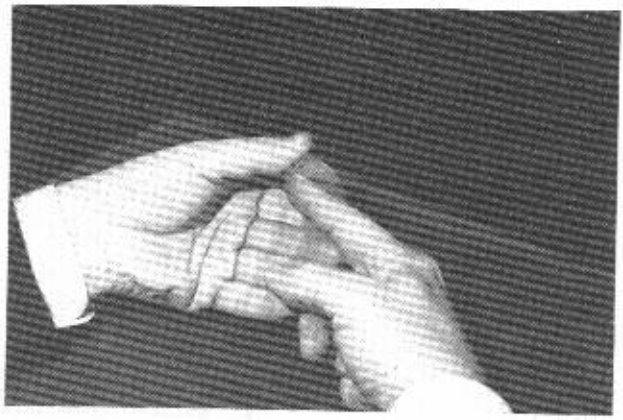
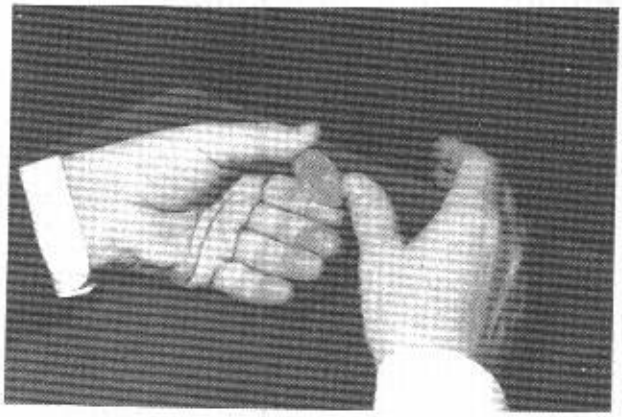


**PHOTO 13-9**

Rotate or pivot the coin to show the other side: PHOTOS 13-8 and 13-9.

Now you are going to repeat the pivoting action but using the right thumb instead of the forefinger: PHOTO 13-10

**PHOTO 13-10**



Once the coin has pivoted you are in the position shown in PHOTO 13-11. Without pausing, go directly into a French Drop as explained above.

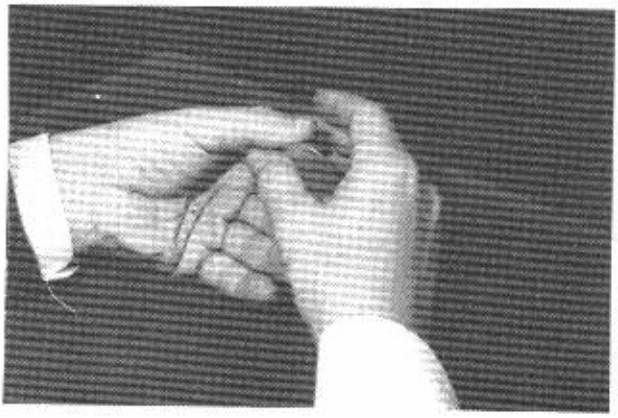


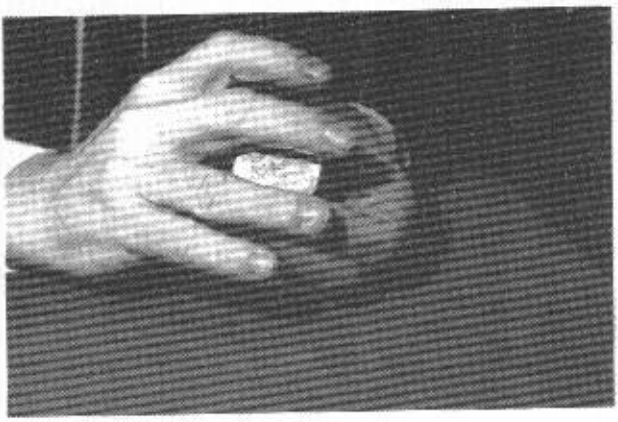
**PHOTO 13-11**

## The Schneider Retention Drop

This is Al Schneider's brilliant approach to the French Drop which was published in a private newsletter and which Al has kindly granted permission to explain here. This kind of thinking clearly demonstrates why Al is so highly regarded among the experts.

Here is the idea. The right hand comes to take the coin with the fingers spread lightly, allowing a view of the coin through the fingers. PHOTO 13-12 is a front view. Just at the "take" the fingers close, the coin drops, and so forth. An amazing retention of vision illusion is created which is unbelievable to witness.

**PHOTO 13-12**



## The Michael Gallo Drop

Mike, known for his Gallo Pitch, which he developed with his father Lou (published in **Richard's Almanac** and performed beautifully by Michael Ammar among others) has broken all the rules for the French drop and come up with an idea that improves the illusion 100%.

The first time I saw Michael perfrom this was at Obie's FFFF convention at the Forks in Buffalo, late one night after OD'ing on close-up for about fourteen straight hours.

I was dicussing the many variants of the French Drop when Michael, on his way out the front door, stopped and said: *Here is how I sometimes do it.*

The effect was stunning.

Here is Mike's idea. The right hand, the taking hand, remains still - it does not move at all: PHOTO 13-13. The left hand is the hand that moves: it brings the coin up behind the right fingers - PHOTO 13-14 - and then moves back - PHOTO 13-15.

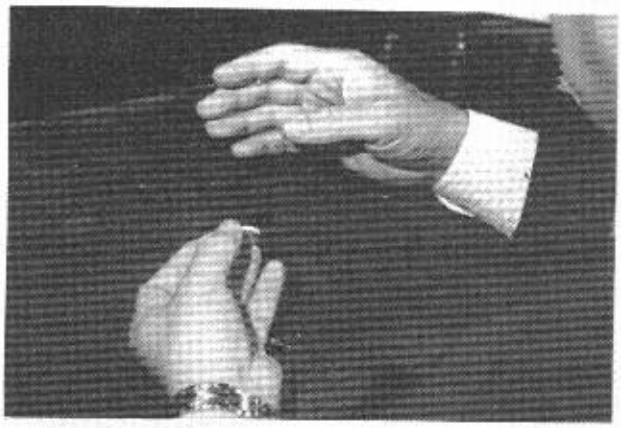
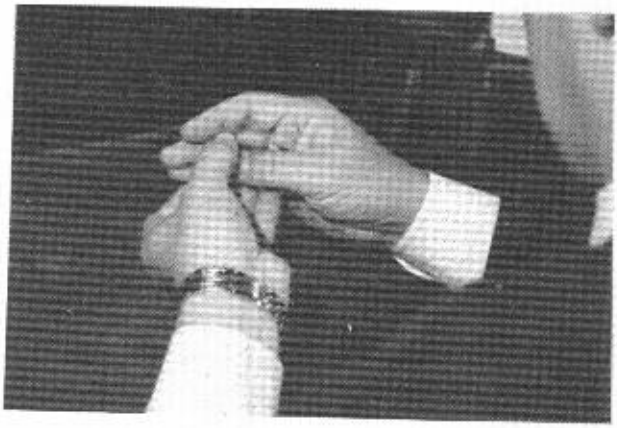


**PHOTO 13-13**

**PHOTO 13-14**



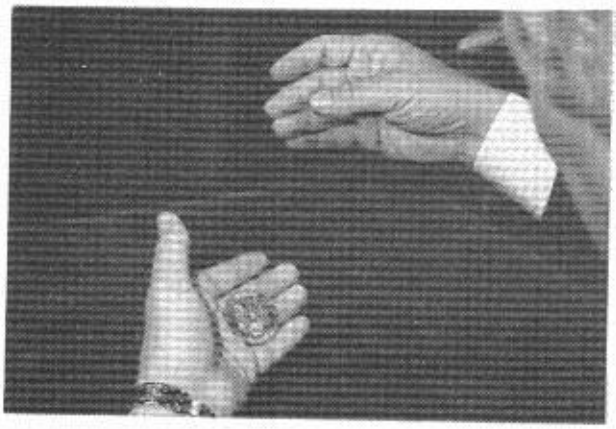


**PHOTO 13-15**

# THE ULTIMATE FRENCH DROP

I have taken my ideas (The French Canadian Drop), and added them to Al's retention idea, and Mike's steady right hand idea, and come up with what is surely the ultimate French Drop.

Look at PHOTO 13-16.

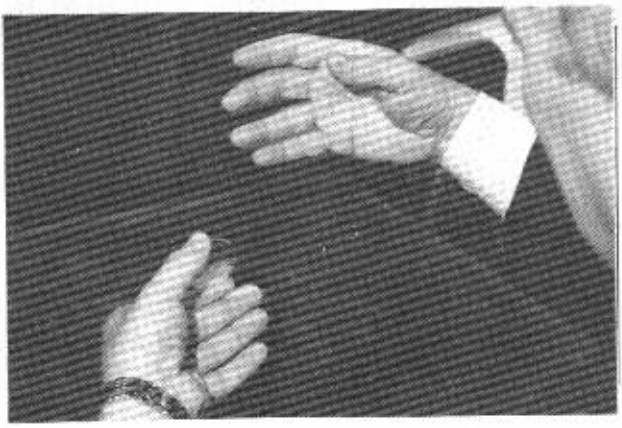


**PHOTO 13-16**

The coin is held in the "French Canadian position" in the left hand. The right hand is held in space, fingers slightly spread, awaiting the coin.

The left hand brings the coin up behind the right fingers (the audience sees the coin through the fingers) PHOTO 13-17. When the coin is behind the fingers, the fingers snap shut (hiding the coin), the coin drops onto the left fingers (and don't forget to bring the right thumb against the right second finger) and then the left hand moves back down: PHOTO 13-18.



**PHOTO 13-17**

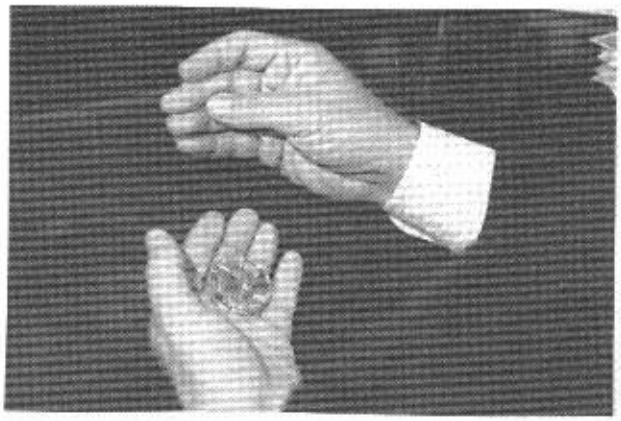
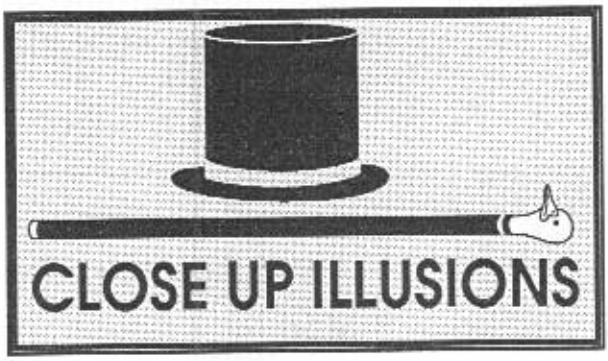


**PHOTO 13-18**

Go try this in front of a mirror right now! You will fool yourself.

BUT - the best part is that the Ultimate French Drop can be performed slowly, deliberately, and even be more deceptive.






# CHAPTER 14

## THE SILVERDUST ROUTINE

Every sleight of hand magician aspires to develop one coin routine which is beautiful to look at, graceful in its movements, and all the while deceptive. Slydini and David Roth have both published one coin routines which are known far and wide. Albert Goshman's **Spellbound** handling is legendary. My entry is the **Silverdust routine**.

It has the following features:

- It introduces an interesting prop, the Silverdust shaker.
- The initial appearance is a fooler, as well as the final vanish.
- The Spellbound interlude, and especially the Toss Change, are worthy of your attention.

**EFFECT**

The magician introduces a shaker full of Silverdust. Some is poured into an unmistakably empty left hand. When the Silverdust

is squeezed, it melds into a real silver dollar. The dollar jumps magically from hand to hand, and even more magically through the table. It then changes to a Chinese coin and then, even more surprisingly, back to a dollar. The dollar is squeezed back into Silverdust. At the end, the hands are empty.

---

This routine uses lapping, and must be performed seated. It also uses the following sleights:

1) The Silverdust Load (taught herein).
2) The Ultimate French Drop (see page 123)
3) The Hirata Master Move (taught in **The Silver Passage**, Masters of Magic Series - if you don't own this book, you are missing something).
4) Spellbound - a handling is taught herein.
5) The Toss-Change (taught herein)
6) Cross-over lapping (taught herein).

You will also need a salt shaker filled with silver glitter (available at any hobby store). This is a delightfully magical looking prop and I am convinced you will find other uses for this idea.

Finally you will need a silver dollar with a dollar-sized Chinese coin. You could use half dollar size coins, although I prefe the larger size.

You could also use an English penny instead of the Chinese coin, although (with respect to my friend Michael Ammar who suggests Spellbound be performed using two identical coins of different color, such as a regular half dollar and a gold plated hal dollar) I am convinced that Spellbound is MUCH MORE MAGICAL using a silver coin and a Chinese coin. The change is more startling.

At the start, the dollar is finger palmed in the right hand. The Chinese coin is on the lap, close to the knees (sound management is an issue here).

## PHASE ONE: THE SILVERDUST LOAD

The right hand picks up the shaker - PHOTO 14-1 and pours some glitter into the open left palm: PHOTO 14-2. Notice the way the shaker is held for the pour, effectively hiding the fingerpalmed coin.

**PHOTO 14-1**

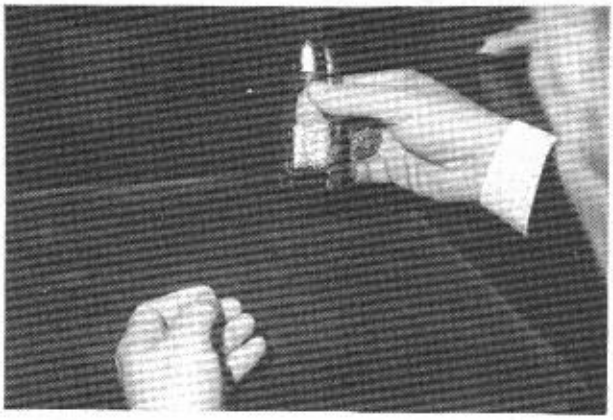
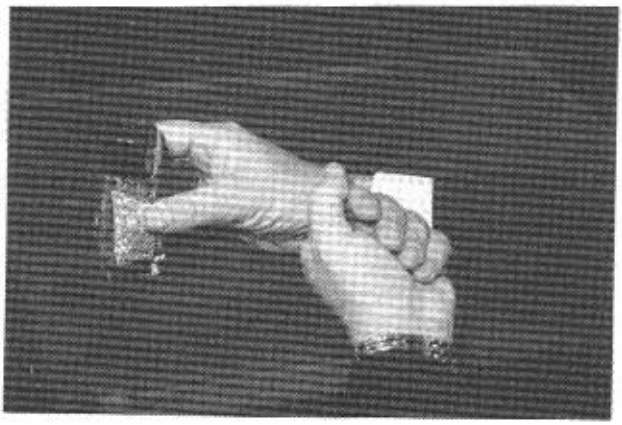




**PHOTO 14-2**

The shaker is placed to the left of the close-up mat: PHOTO 14-3

**PHOTO 14-3**



Some glitter is picked up by the right thumb and first and second fingers: PHOTO 14-4. At this precise instant, the coin is allowed to fall onto the left fingers.

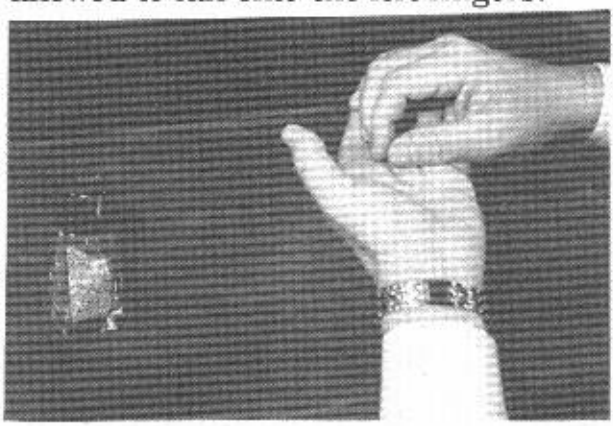
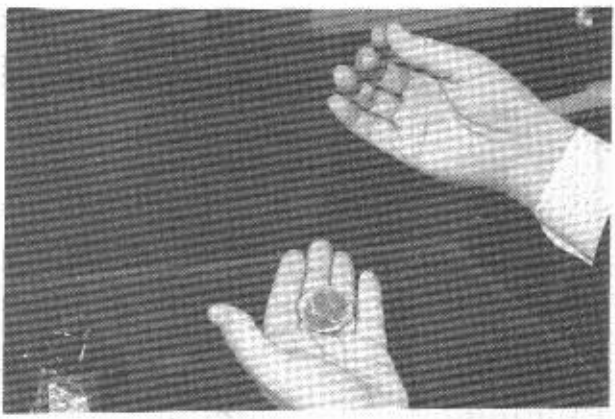


**PHOTO 14-4**

As the right hand comes away with the glitter, keep the left hand opened flat but point the fingers slightly upwards, which hides the coin in a very subtle fashion: PHOTO 14-5

**PHOTO 14-5**



Drop some glitter into the left hand - PHOTO 14-6 - and close the left hand: PHOTO 14-7

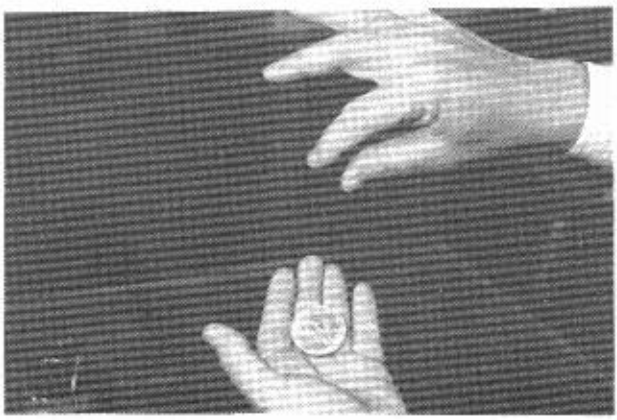
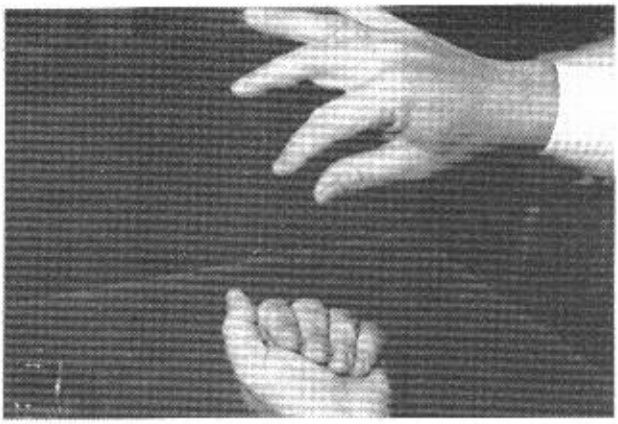


**PHOTO 14-6**

**PHOTO 14-7**



After a magic wave, open the left hand and display the coin: PHOTO 14-8

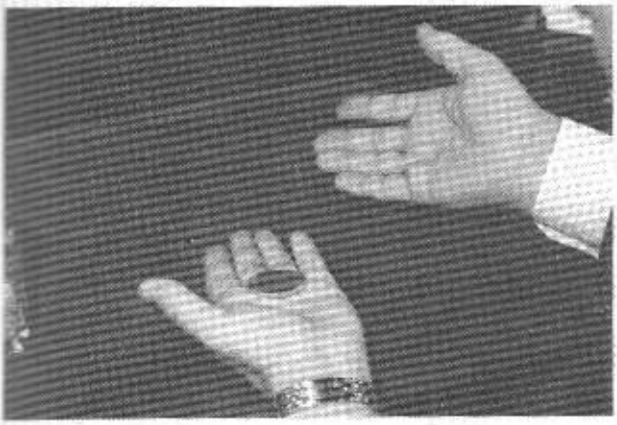


**PHOTO 14-8**

Notes: This production has fooled the experts. And it is so easy!

**Phase Two: THE ULTIMATE FRENCH DROP**

Refer to the preceding chapter. The fact that the Ultimate French Drop can be performed slowly allows this move to blend in beautifully in this routine.

**Phase Three: The HIRATA MASTER MOVE**

This incredible sleight was taught in **THE SILVER PASSAGE**. It remains absolutely the finest method of passing a coin through a table.

In the context of this routine, keep the left hand above the table as you execute the move. Then, bring an obviously empty right hand below the table, place the Chinese coin in fingerpalm

position, and come up with the dollar held at the fingertips: PHOTO 14-9.

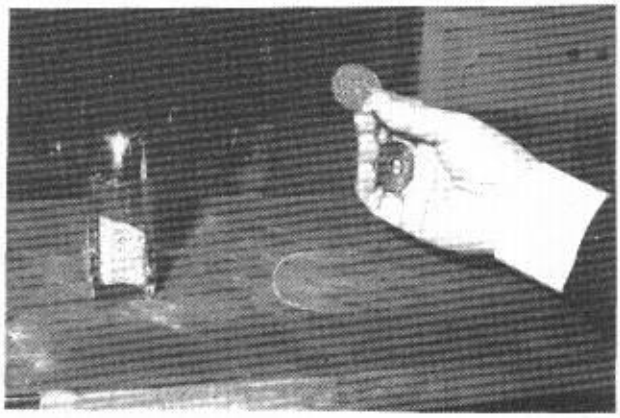


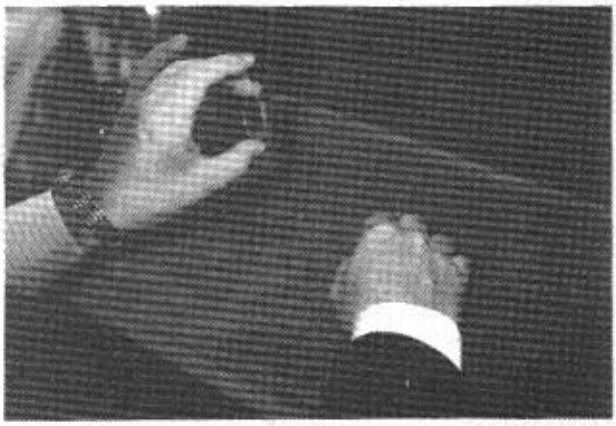
**PHOTO 14-9**

## PHASE FOUR: SPELLBOUND

I wonder if Dai Vernon realizes the influence he has had on future magic. For centuries to come, magicians will perform Spellbound. In the Vernon method, the Purse Palm is used. My fingers are not structured to perform a good purse palm, so I have substituted the "thumb hold" which works just as well and is much easier to execute. Al Schneider is the inspiration for this easier method.

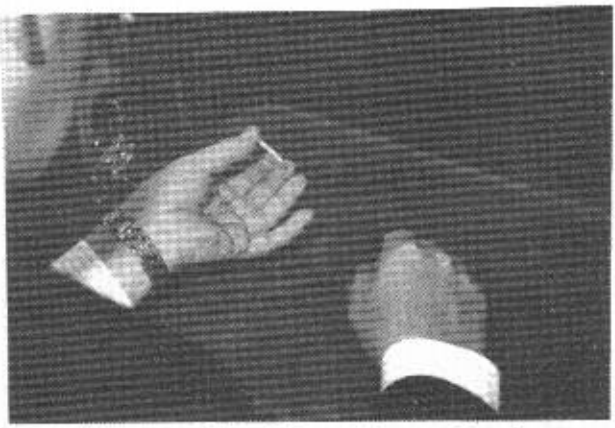
The coin is taken by the left hand, thumb below and second fingers above, with the other fingers slightly spread: PHOTO 14-10

**PHOTO 14-10**



The left hand now turns counterclockwise, bringing the thumb uppermost: PHOTO 14-11. Notice that the left fingers are still slightly spread.

**PHOTO 14-11**



Now the right hand comes over to the left. The right fingers straighten as the right thumb comes to hold the Chinese coin against the fingers: PHOTO 14-12

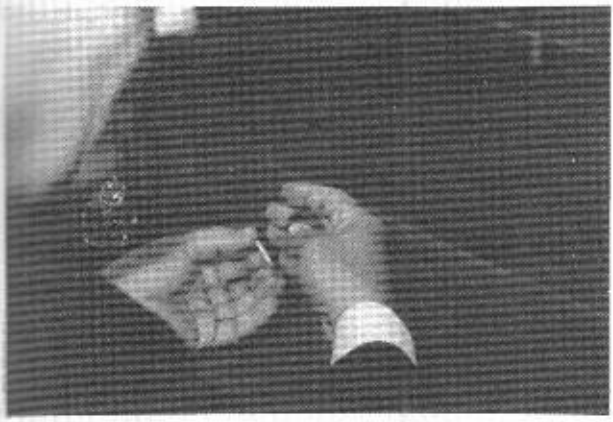


**PHOTO 14-12**

As the Chinese coin comes to the silver coin, the left fingers come together: PHOTO 14-13

**PHOTO 14-13**



At the same time, the left thumb allows the silver coin to simply fall back onto the left fingers, and then immediately takes

the Chinese coin into the same position: PHOTO 14-14

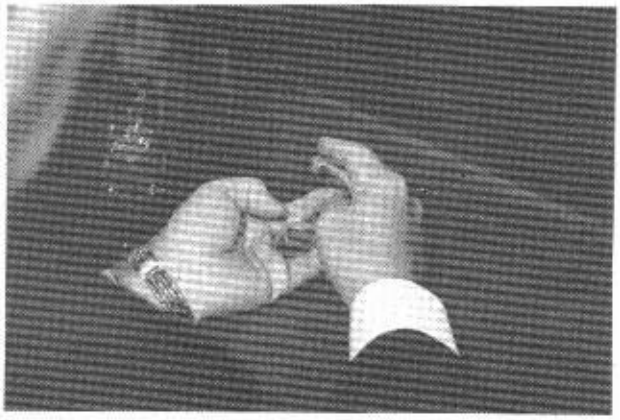
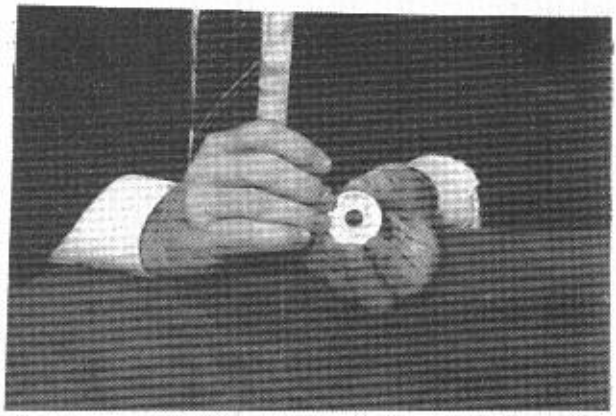


**PHOTO 14-14**

IMMEDIATELY, the right fingers bend back displaying the change: PHOTO 14-15 is a spectator view.

**PHOTO 14-15**



ALSO WITHOUT PAUSE, and with the silver coin held in a left hand finger palm, the left hand turns clockwise as the right hand opens palm towards audience: PHOTO 14-16 is a spectator view. (Thanks, Dan Garrett)

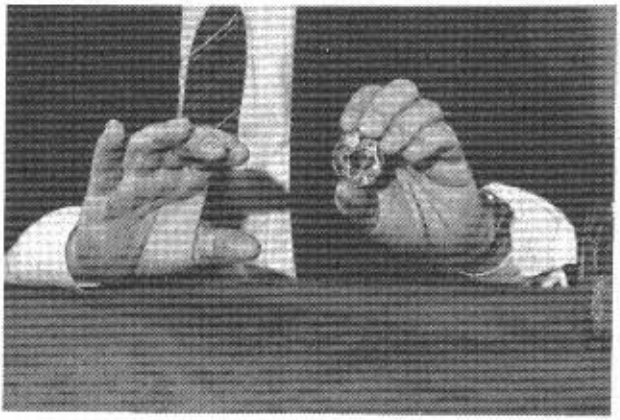
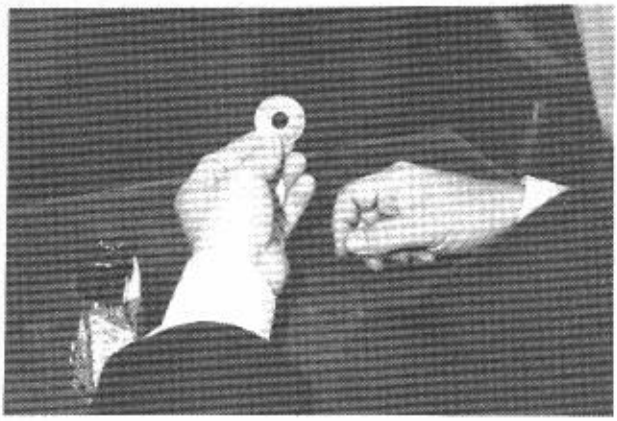


**PHOTO 14-16**

This little sequence is a beautiful thing to see.

The left hand returns to a palm up position and the left thumb sort of pinches off the top edge, so that the Chinese coin is now gripped by its bottom edge between thumb and second finger: PHOTO 14-17.

**PHOTO 14-17**



The left hand turns over (still with the silver dollar finger palmed) and tosses the coin onto the right fingers: PHOTO 14-18

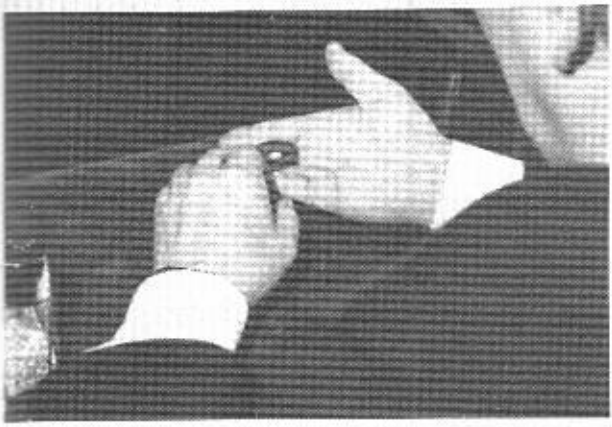


**PHOTO 14-18**

## PHASE FIVE: THE TOSS CHANGE

I am not certain if I will succeed in explaining this move. I could start by telling you that it is one of the most startling changes you will ever see. I should also mention that it is quite easy once you get the idea. Having said that, however, I have said nothing, because I know, from trying to teach it, that it seems hard to get the right idea. Harry Lorayne, who loved it, published it in **Apocalypse,** and called it the **There and Back Again** move.

Let me try to teach it to you by stating what seems to happen: the right hand (displaying the Chinese coin on its outstretched fingers), with a wrist action only, makes a little back and forth motion. When the motion is over, the Chinese coin has changed back to a silver coin.

The silver coin, in other words, ends up exactly where the Chinese coin was laying on the right fingers.

In theory, what happens is this: (and it all takes place during the little back and forth wrist motion of the right hand) - when the right hand moves back, it simply tosses (ie. propels) the Chinese coin onto the lap. On its return movement, the left hand comes over the right hand and drops the silver coin onto the right fingers.

Perhaps if you understand what is supposed to happen, these instructions will seem clearer.

The starting position is exactly where we left off (Photo 14-18).

I am explaining an action that takes perhaps one half of one second to execute.

From the position shown in Photo 14-18, the right hand, with a wrist action, starts to toss the coin back onto the lap: PHOTO 14-19. At this position, the hand stops and reverses its motion, but inertia keeps the coin sailing back off the hand and into your lap.

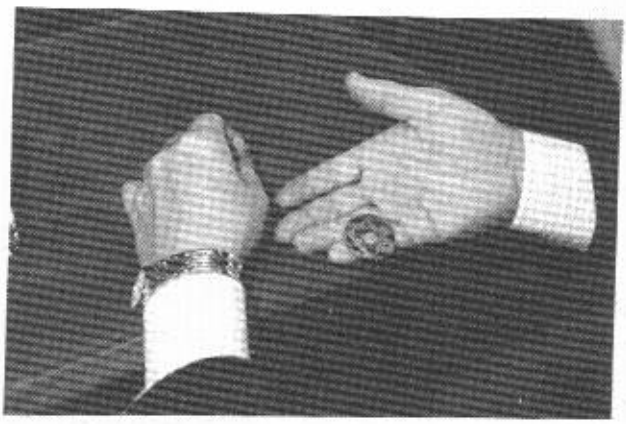
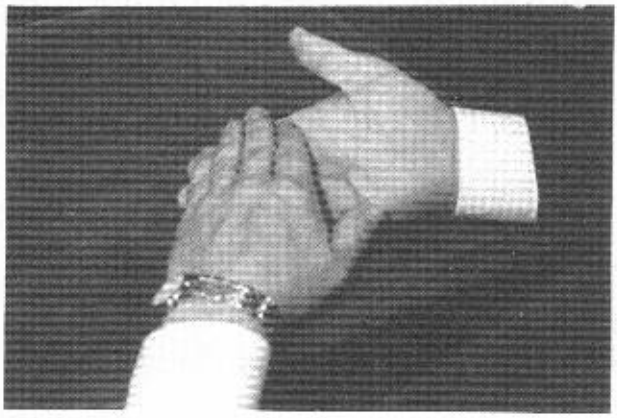


**PHOTO 14-19**

On its return voyage, the left hand moves right a bit so that the right hand travels under the left: PHOTO 14-20 is a stop action shot. At this precise instant, the silver coin is released by the left hand.

**PHOTO 14-20**



A split second later the right hand appears with the silver coin in view: PHOTO 14-21

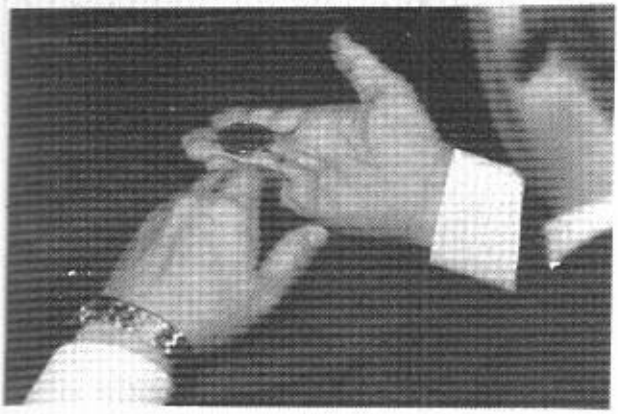


**PHOTO 14-21**

I realize that reading this will not convince you that the move works. It is time for another act of faith!

## Phase Six: The Silverdust Vanish

The principle behind this effect is the Crossover Lap which I originally introduced in The Silver Passage for the passing of the second coin.

Do not equate the facility of execution of this with lack of deceptiveness. This move fools because it allows a cover for a lapping drop which is totally natural and therefore disarming. It fools even those who are looking for a lapping move.

The coin is openly placed into the left hand, which closes around the coin. The hand is held right above the lap: PHOTO 14-22.

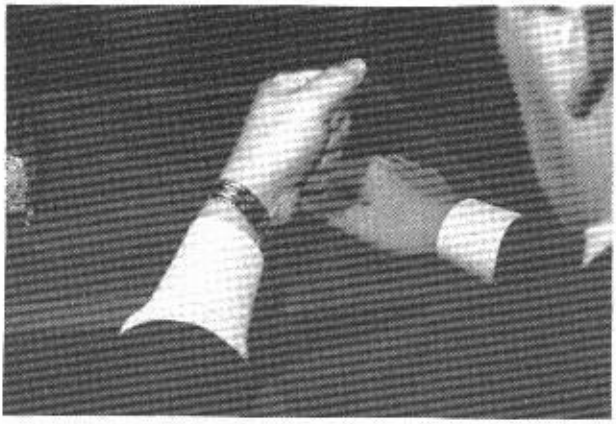
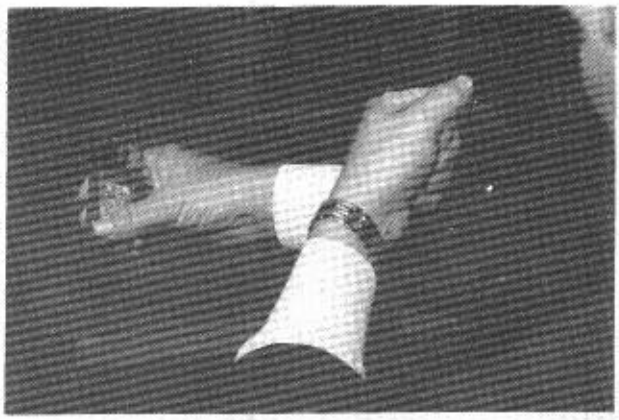


**PHOTO 14-22**

The right hand picks up the shaker: PHOTO 14-23.

**PHOTO 14-23**



You will note that at this precise instant, the right arm effectively covers the space between the bottom of the left fist and the edge of the table. The left hand drops the coin into the lap!

It does not seem necessary to point out that the act of picking up the shaker should be smooth and without pause.

The right hand now pours some glitter into the top of the left fist, and the fist slowly opens to show that the coin has melted away. End of routine.

**NOTES:**

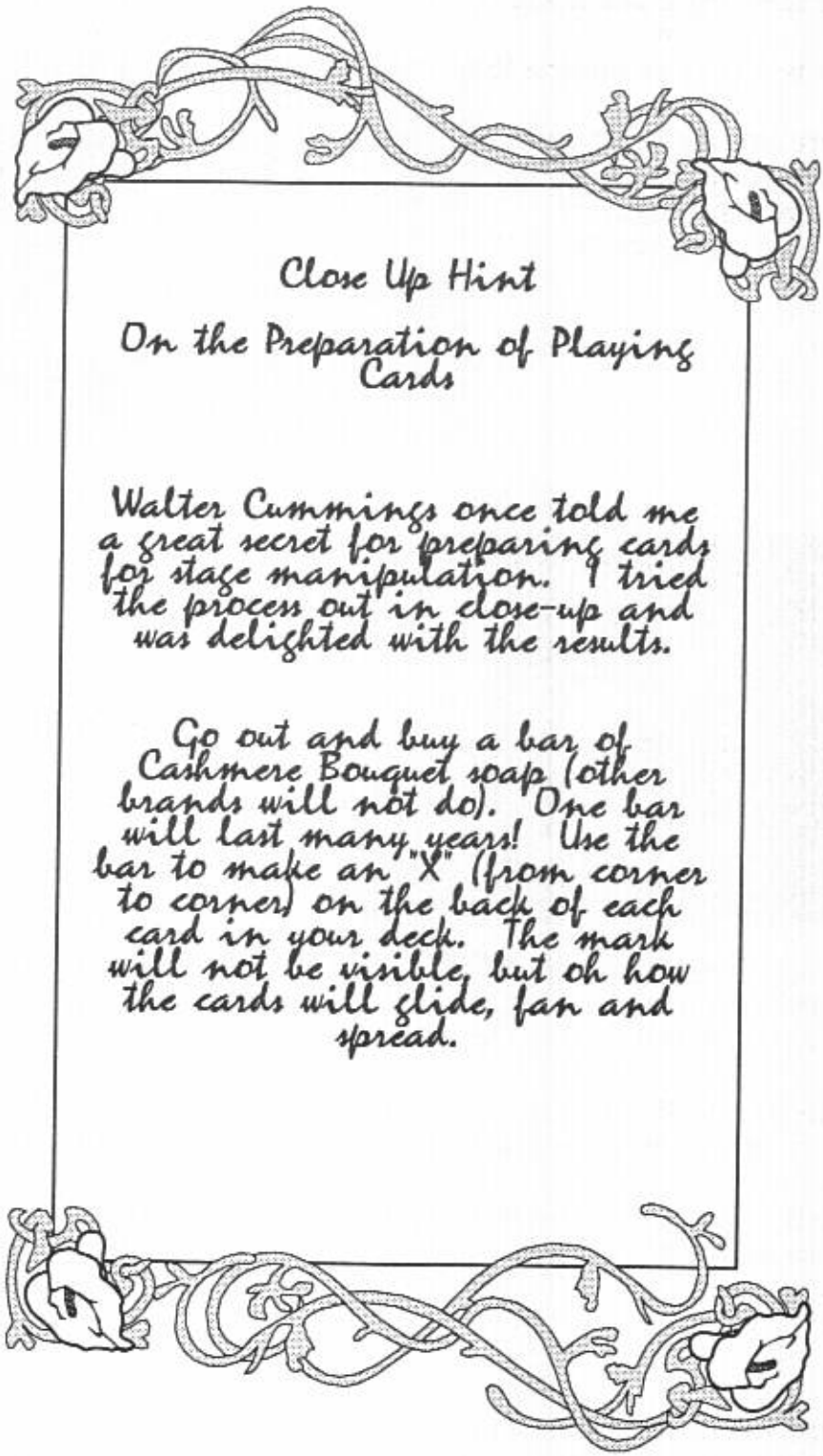
• Obviously, try to avoid having the coins hit each other during the final lapping sequence. I have found that the Toss Change sends

the coin back in the lap, whereas the cross-over lapping sends the coin to the center of the lap.

- This is a perfect routine to perform to music.

- There are no weak spots in this routine. Each phase represents state-of-the-art magical technique and yet, the routine is accessible to the average magician.



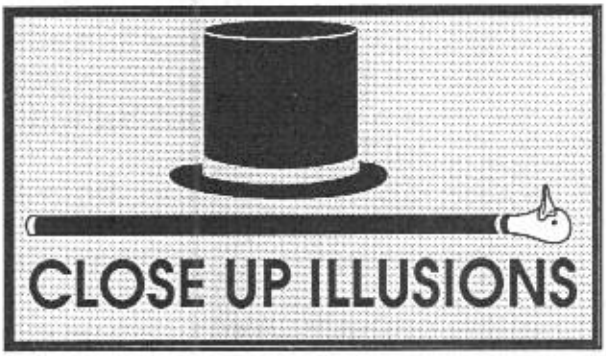


## Close Up Hint

### On the Preparation of Playing Cards

Walter Cummings once told me a great secret for preparing cards for stage manipulation. I tried the process out in close-up and was delighted with the results.

Go out and buy a bar of Cashmere Bouquet soap (other brands will not do). One bar will last many years! Use the bar to make an "X" (from corner to corner) on the back of each card in your deck. The mark will not be visible, but oh how the cards will glide, fan and spread.




# CHAPTER 15

## PASTEBOARD PAGEANT

Under the slightly pretentious title of this chapter, I hope to pass on some concepts which you will use right away. A useful sleight entitled **Not on the Bottom, Not on the Top** should be mastered immediately - you will use it often. Two card controls are included here; one, the **Paradox Control** is easier than it looks. The second, **Convincingly Versatile** is my handling of a wonderful move of Ed Marlo's. Four full effects are also included; my handling of the erstwhile **Equivoque** approach, still another version of the collectors which I have called **Migration**, and another approach to a Michael Powers effect, and a triumph type trick. But first, allow me to intrigue you with:

### THE SMALL PACKET PRINCIPLE

Here is a new idea and an application.

If you spread a full deck of cards for a selection, a spectator might choose a card anywhere in the deck. But if you hold only a

small packet of thirteen or so cards (a quarter of a deck) a spectator will tend to take a card in the first four or five cards.

That's the new idea!

So, imagine you have a crimped card halfway down the deck.

Cut the deck into four packets (either from out of the hands or from a tabled position) in such a way as to bring the crimped card to the bottom of packet number 2: PHOTO 15-1.

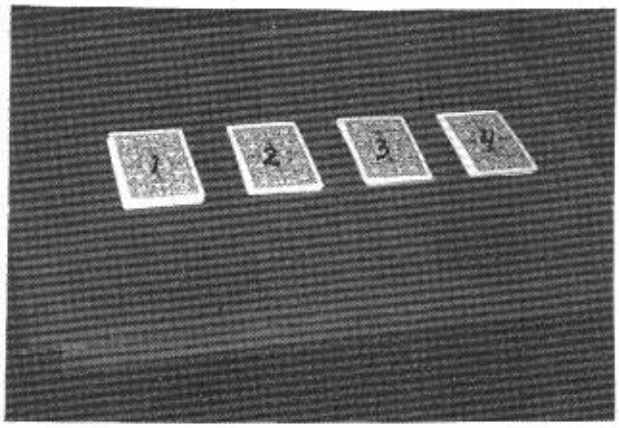


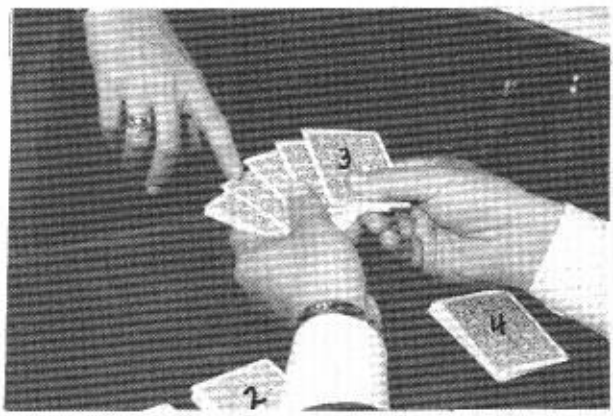

**PHOTO 15-1**

Offer a free choice of any packet.

Suppose the spectator chooses packet 1, 3 or 4.

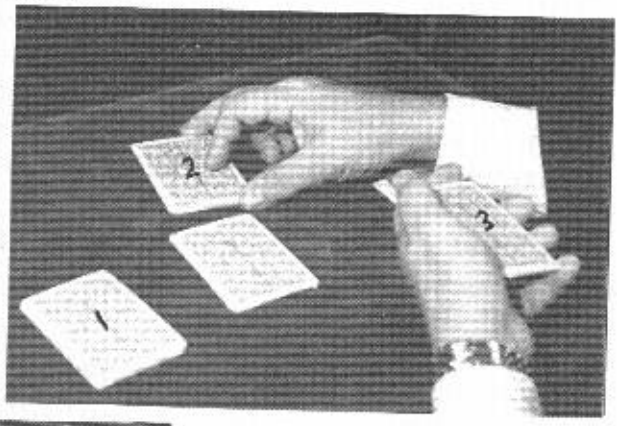
Shuffle the packet and ask spectator to choose "any card". Timing is important, as practice will show. Say the third pile is selected. Spectator will take one of the top cards: PHOTO 15-2.

**PHOTO 15-2**



Suppose card number 4 (from the top) is taken. Hold the spot where the card was taken and have it looked at and then replaced in the same position. Leaving the packet in the left hand, the right hand now cuts the top half of packet #2 - PHOTO 15-3, drops the packet it is holding onto the top half just cut - PHOTO 15-4 - and completes the cut - PHOTO 15-5.

**PHOTO 15-3**



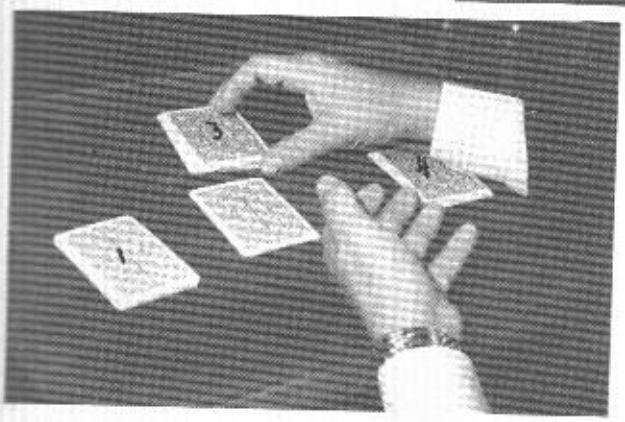
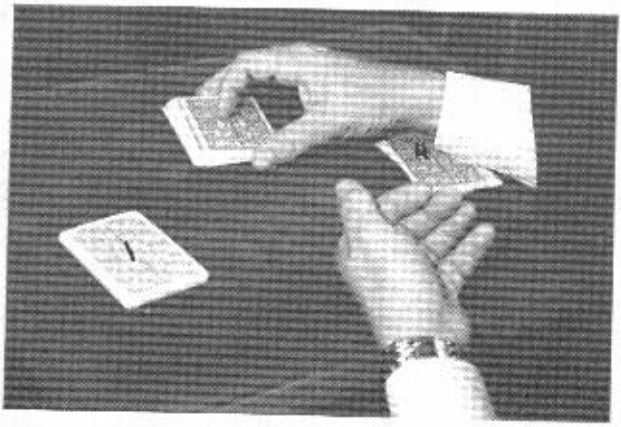




**PHOTO 15-4**

**PHOTO 15-5**




This brings the crimped card onto the packet containing the selection. Cut another packet, and drop the larger packet onto the cut top portion, and complete the cut, and continue in the same

way with the last packet. Finally, cut at the crimp. The selection is now four cards down from the top. Double undercut three cards from top to bottom and the selection is on top.

If packet #2 is chosen, have the selection returned to the top and "lose it" with one cut. Continue the procedure outlined above. When you cut to the crimped card, the selection is on top.

Combine this idea with my **ProControl** (by the Camirand Academy) and you have a killer, one I love to use to fool the boys a the magic club meetings.

In other words, substitute **ProControl** for the crimp, and show them where to build the altar!

## Touch Three Cards

This is my handling approach to a Michael Powers effect.

**EFFECT**

A first spectator is asked to touch any card. The break is made at that point and the touched card is shown to the selecting spectator (no force). This procedure is repeated with a second spectator. Finally, a third spectator touches a card and that card is turned face up. Now the cards on either side of the face-up card are shown, and it transpires that these two cards are the first two selections!

What distinguishes this version of the effect is the handling on the three selections. All three selection handlings appear identical although three different actions take place.

Basically, card number one is controlled to the bottom; card number two is controlled to the top without disturbing card number one, and when card number three is chosen, the deck is secretly cut onto the third selection, sandwiching it between the original top and bottom cards.

The sleights you know already or are about to learn!

1) Spread the cards face down between the hands and request a spectator to touch any card. This card is shown and controlled t the bottom using my **CONVINCINGLY VERSATILE** contro explained at the end of this chapter.

2) Spread again for another touch by another spectator. Show thi card ala Convincing Control but keep a break above the selection as you return the top half to the deck, and control it to the top using Gilles Couture's **Swivel Cut** control taught in this book in the Chapter entitled **FINGER ON THE CARD REVISITED** (page 230). Note that this leaves the first selection on the bottom.

3) You finish using Bill Simon's business card move, to wit: spread for a third touch, but do not show the selection immediately Rather, jog it forward on the left hand's packet: PHOTO 15-6.

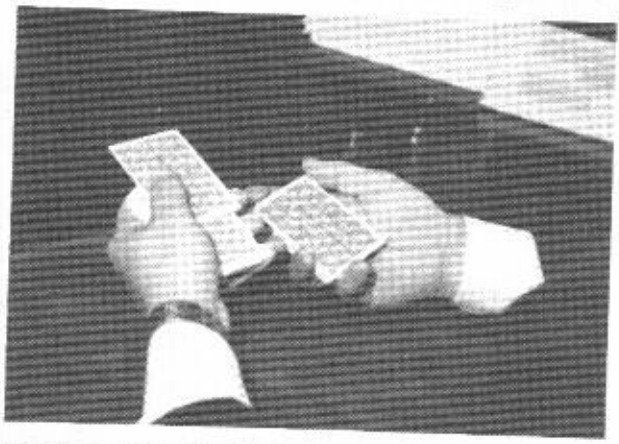


**PHOTO 15-6**

The right hand, holding roughly half the deck turns palm down and picks up the outjogged card - PHOTO 15-7 - and turns over again, bringing this third selection face up on the (face down) right hand packet: PHOTO 15-8.



**PHOTO 15-7**

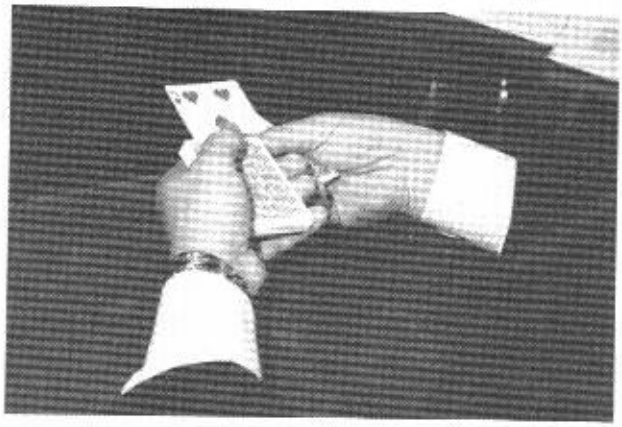
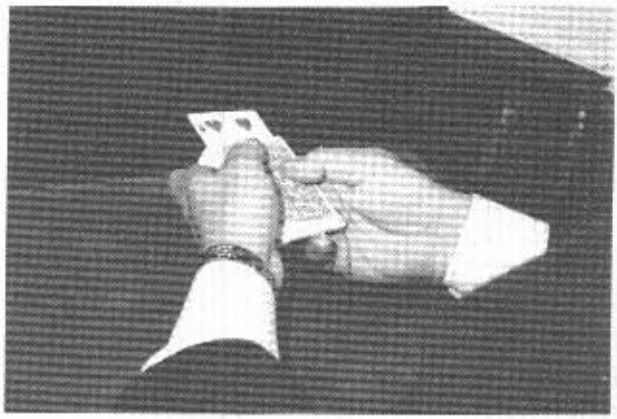


**PHOTO 15-8**

The left hand packet is thrown on top of all: PHOTO 15-9. The cards are now spread and the face up card, as well as the card on either side, are removed - PHOTO 15-10 - and turned over - PHOTO 15-11.

**PHOTO 15-9**



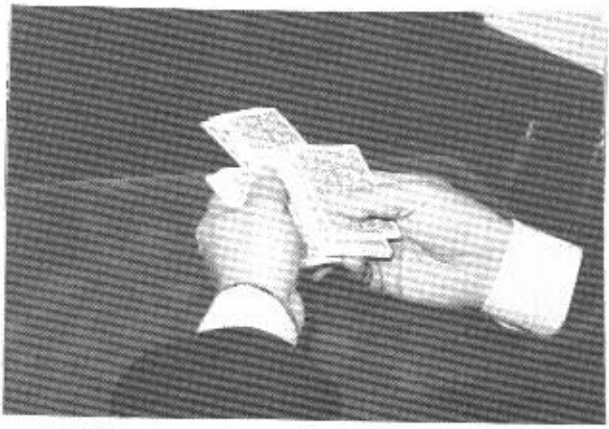
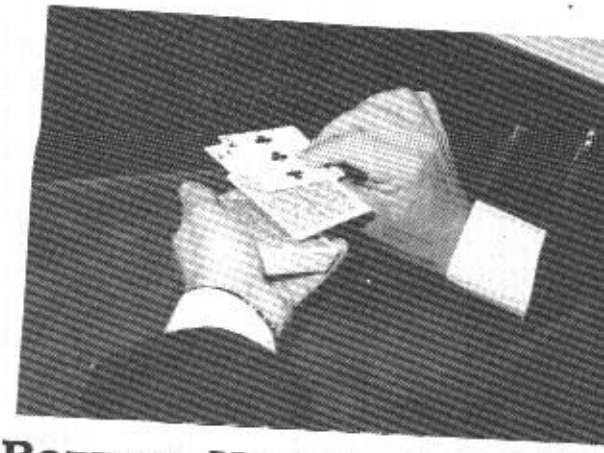


**PHOTO 15-10**

It appears the face up card has found the other two selections.

PHOTO 15-11



## NOT ON THE BOTTOM, NOT ON TOP

Arguably one of the most useful little sleights you will eve learn. How often do you have a card selected, controlled to the top and then, in an effort to disguise any control, you double lift to show that the selected card is not on top? This is my handling of a Marlo ploy. A selection has been returned to the top. The left pinky secretly holds a break under the top two cards.The left thumb moves to below the deck - PHOTO 15-12 - and pushes the deck face up to the fingertips - PHOTO 15-13 shows the turnover at mid-

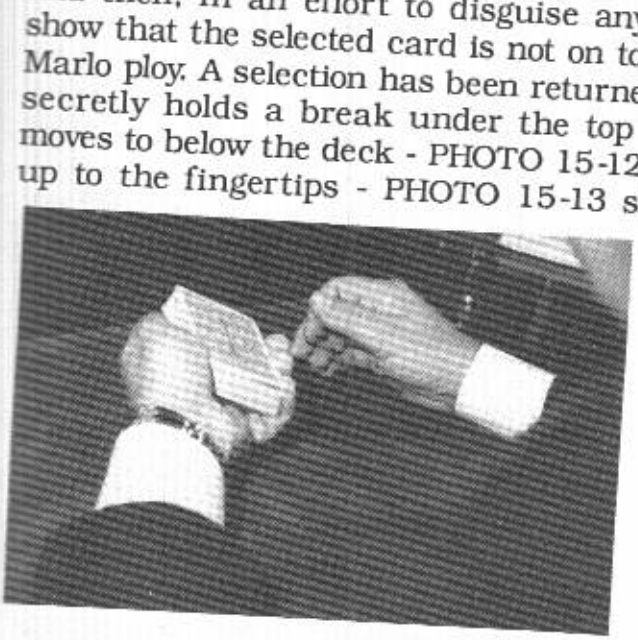
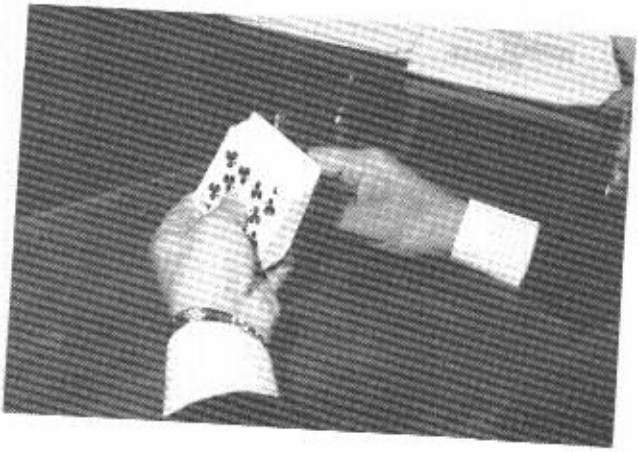


PHOTO 15-12

PHOTO 15-13



point. In practice, the move is smooth and fluid, and in fact, quite easy to execute. At this point, you should have a slightly bevelled right edge with, at the left edge of the deck, two cards aligned as one: PHOTO 15-14. The right thumb and fingers grip this double - PHOTO 15-15 -and use it to flip the deck back -PHOTO 15-16 - face down into the left hand - PHOTO 15-17, finally flipping the double face down on top of all.

The patter, obviously, is *Your card is not on the bottom, and it's not on top.*

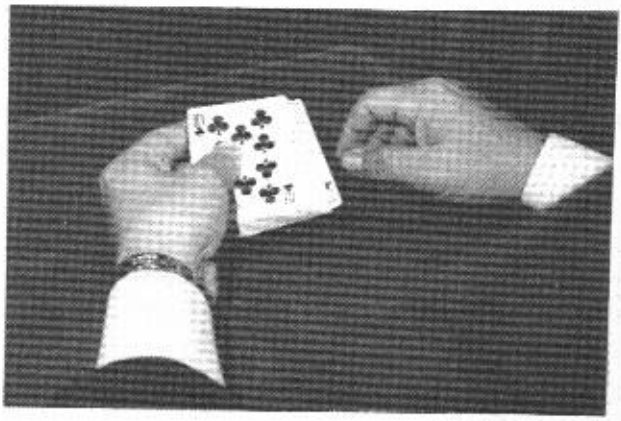


**PHOTO 15-14**

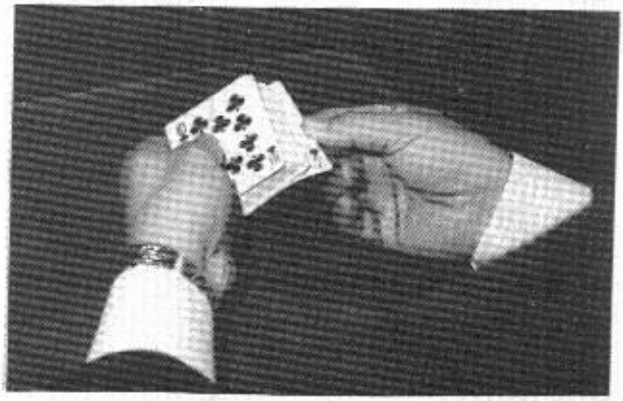


**PHOTO 15-15**

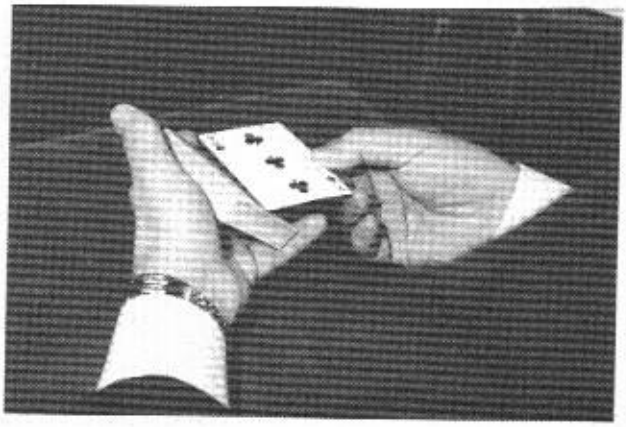


**PHOTO 15-16**

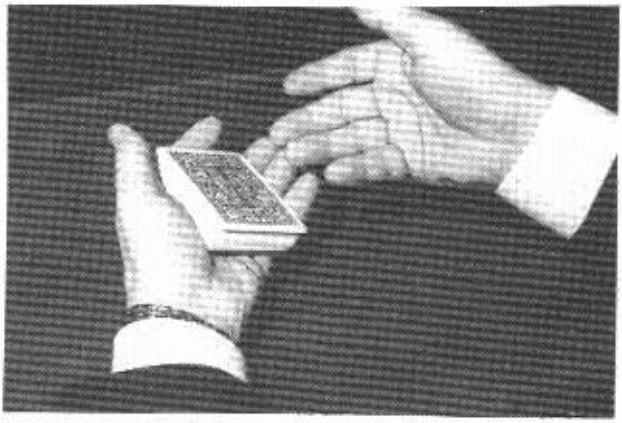


**PHOTO 15-17**

If you do not like this move, you must hate this book!

## THREE TRIUMPHANT CUTS

This is an EASY revelation of a selection. The selection is secretly controlled to the top. Use the **Not on the Bottom** ploy explained above to convince your audience that the card is somewhere in the deck. Explain that you hope to cut to the card, using topsy turvy cuts, and expect to get the selection on the THIRD cut.

The right hand comes over and flips about one third of the deck face up onto the remainder, like turning the pages of a book. But just before the first cut, the left thumb slides the top card (selection) back about one half inch off the rear of the deck (ie. backjogged): PHOTO 15-18.

PHOTOS 15-19 and 15-20 show the top third being flipped face up.

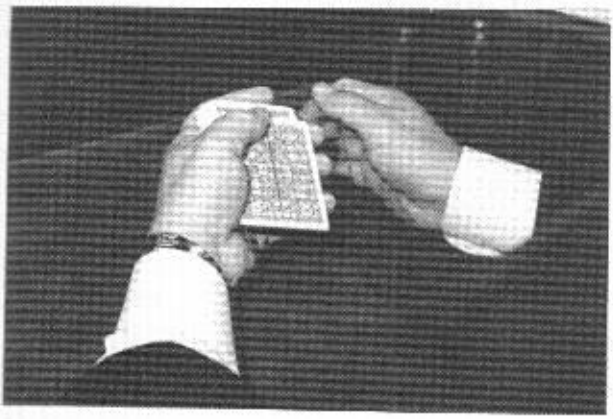


**PHOTO 15-18**

Next, the right hand flips over the top two-thirds of the deck: PHOTO 15-21.

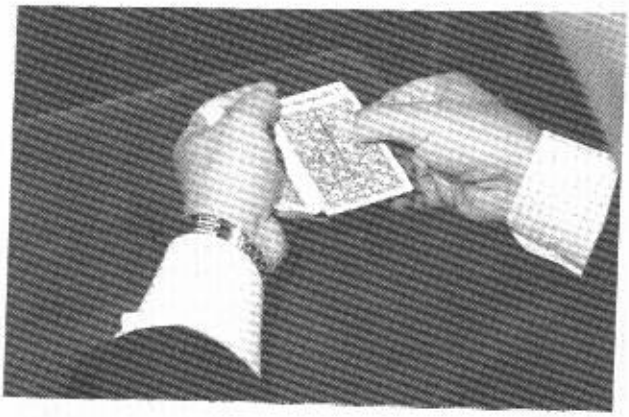


**PHOTO 15-19**

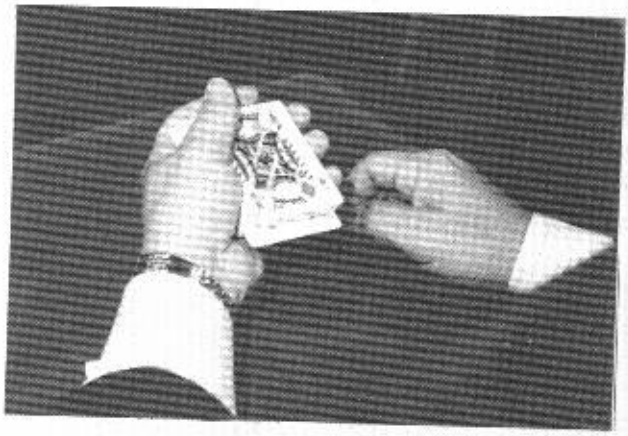


**PHOTO 15-20**

Finally, on the third and final cut, flip over all cards up to and including the rear jogged card. This is done by having the right third finger in back of the deck pick up the break: PHOTOS 15-22 and 15-23 .

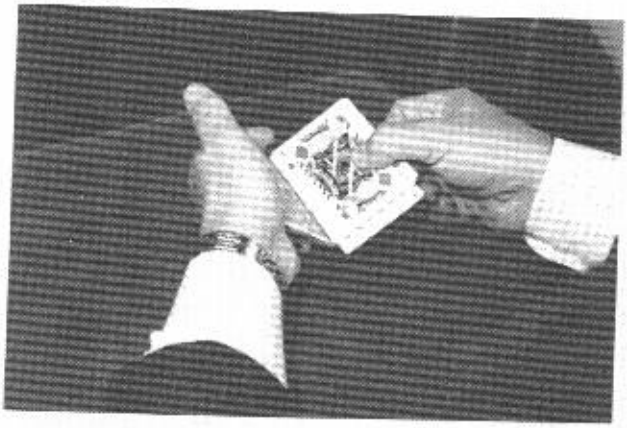


**PHOTO 15-21**

This brings the selection face up into view. And if you spread the remainder, all of the deck is face down: PHOTO 15-24!

Easy stuff.



**PHOTO 15-22**

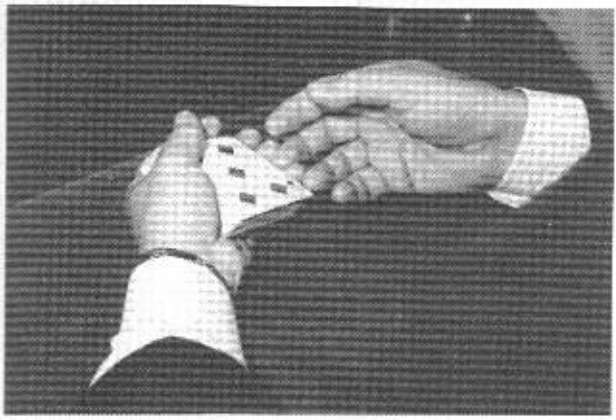


**PHOTO 15-23**

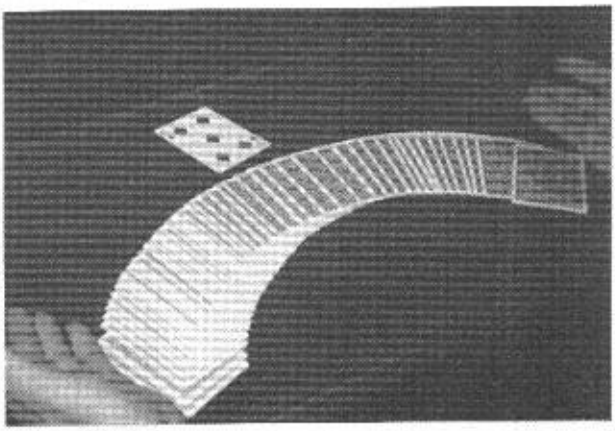


**PHOTO 15-24**

# MIGRATION

Ron Scharf was a dedicated and most talented member of the Ottawa Ring. His specialty was cards, and he fooled me badly with Migration, Ron's version of the Collectors plot. He later kindly gave me permission to publish it, but died before he could see it in print. The Ottawa Club, I know, greatly misses Ron.

The part that really fools even magicians is the steal of a group of cards from one packet to another. No one seems to remember how or when it could have been accomplished.

Pick up a deck. Fanning the cards towards yourself, upjog the four aces. Also note the top card of deck (let us say it is the 3S: PHOTO 15-25.

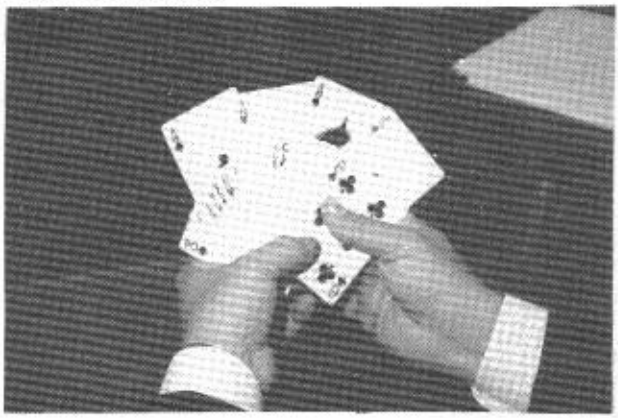


**PHOTO 15-25**

Strip out the aces, and place the ace packet face up onto the face down deck held in the left hand. Pick up the ace packet from above in the right hand in a biddle grip -PHOTO 15-26 -(thumb in back, fingers in front), and steal away the 3S underneath the packet. The left hand tables the remainder of the deck.

**PHOTO 15-26**



The right thumb should hold a break between the four face up aces and the bottom face down 3S: PHOTO 15-27.

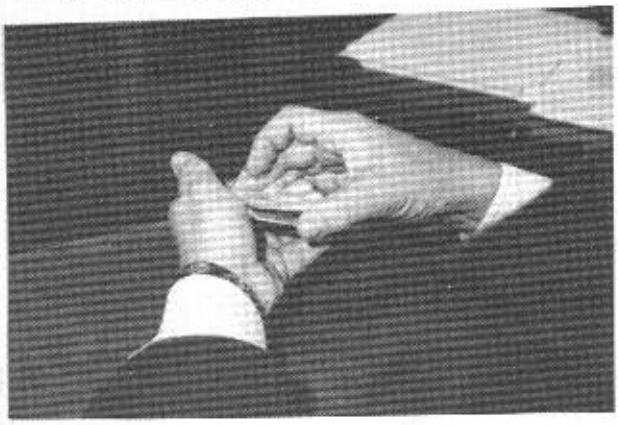


**PHOTO 15-27**

The left thumb slides off the top ace into the left palm: PHOTO 15-28.

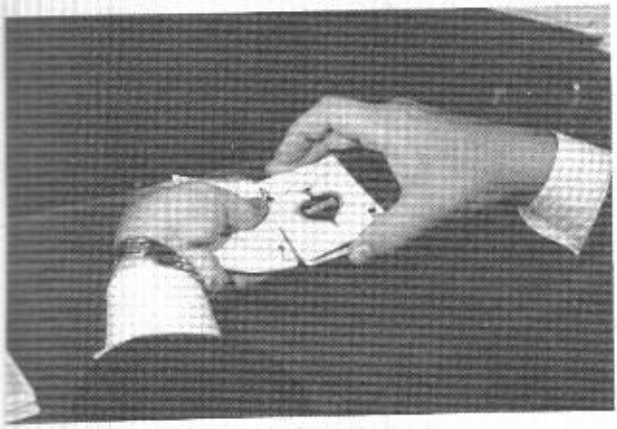


**PHOTO 15-28**

It then slides off the next ace but the left pinky steals the 3S at the same time: PHOTO 15-29 is an exposed view.

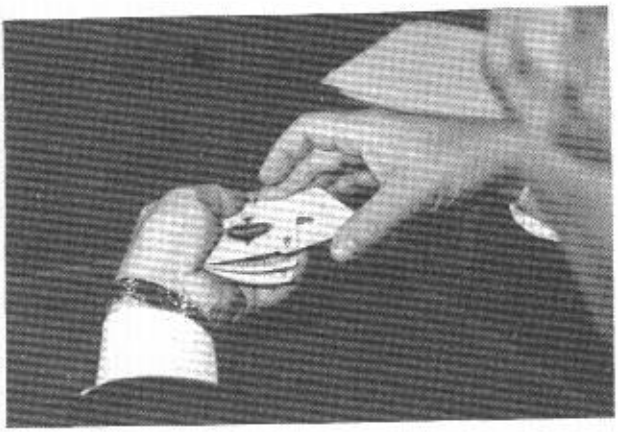


**PHOTO 15-29**

The left hand continues with aces 3 and 4. Table this packet face up to the right: PHOTO 15-30. Thus this packet of 4 face up aces also has a face down 3 in the fourth position from the top.

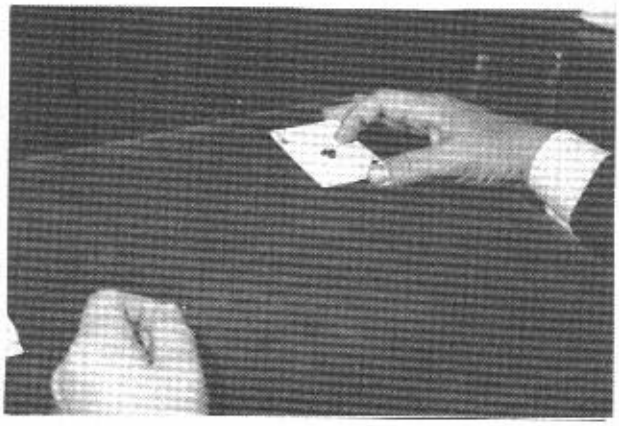
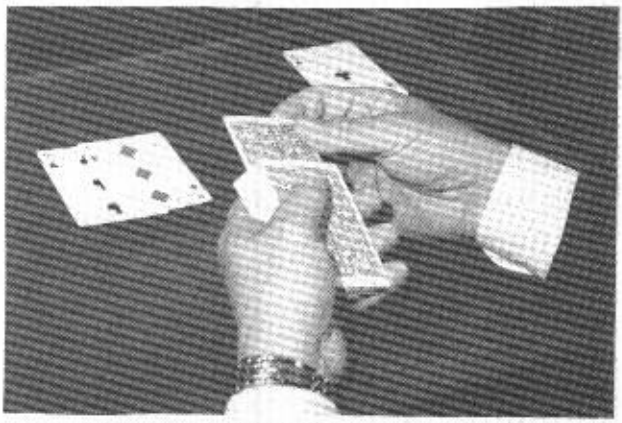


**PHOTO 15-30**

Next, pick up the deck and state that you need three cards, '*The threes usually work well ...*' or whatever is the value that corresponds to the stranger card in the ace packet, i.e. the original top card of the deck. Throw the threes out face up on the table.

Ask a spectator to name a favorite card of the three of a kind on the table. Suppose he says the 3H. Insert this card face down, outjogged for half it length, in the center of the deck: PHOTO 15-31.

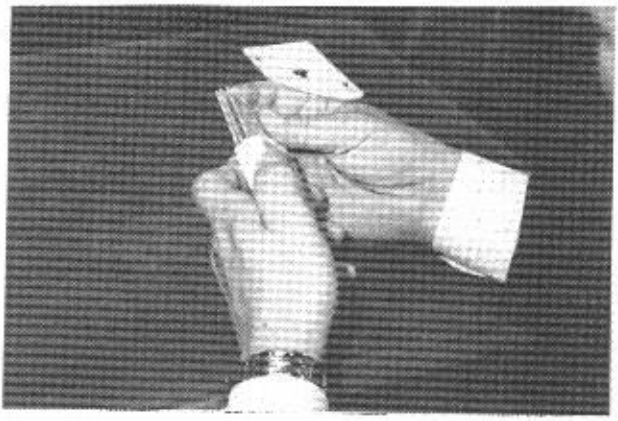
**PHOTO 15-31**



Insert the remaining two 3's BELOW the 3H, but separated by several cards: PHOTO 15-32.

Now tip the left hand forward, which causes the block above the 3H to slide down forward until stopped by the left forefinger: PHOTO 15-33.

**PHOTO 15-32**



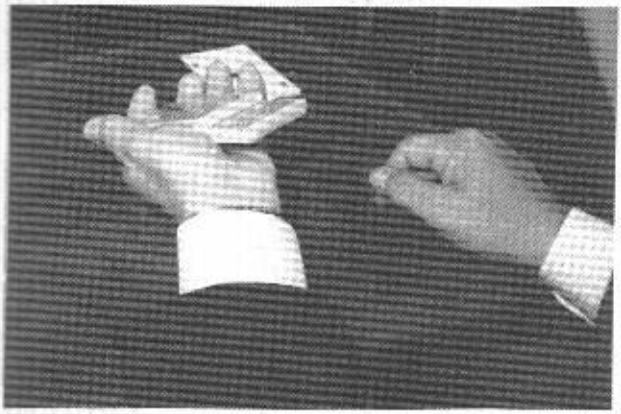
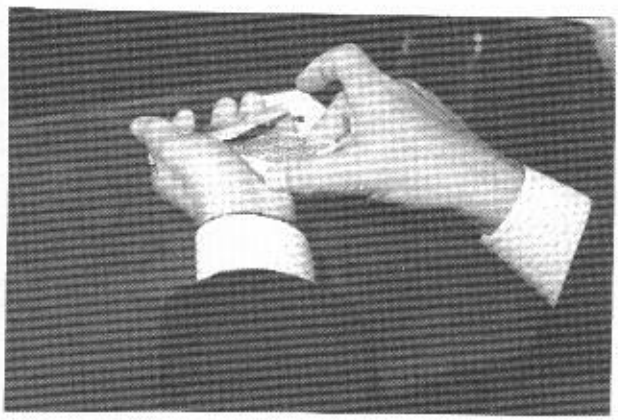


**PHOTO 15-33**

The right hand grasps the rear bottom portion - PHOTO 15-34 - and strips it out, BUT BEFORE IT IS STRIPPED OUT, THE RIGHT HAND PRESSES DOWN AND THE LEFT PINKY PREPARES TO PICK UP A BREAK. PHOTO 15-35 (next page) shows the pressing down of the rear portion, PHOTO 15-36 shows the strip out, and PHOTO 15-37 shows the state of the situation after the

**PHOTO 15-34**



strip out, namely, with the left pinky holding a break above the bottom two cards. This is automatic because pressing down creates the break. The left pinky just makes certain to hold the break after the strip out occurs. So, after the strip out the pinky holds a break between the 3H and the remaining two 3's at the bottom of the deck. The right hand cards are hindu shuffled onto the left hand cards.

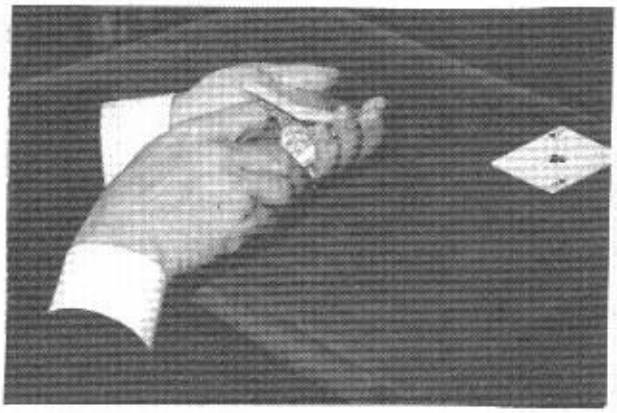


**PHOTO 15-35**

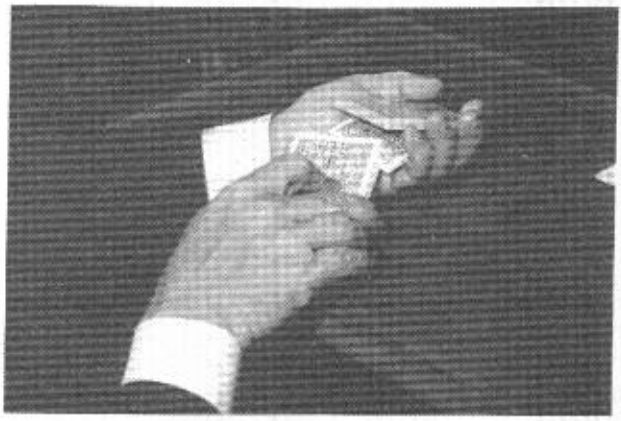


**PHOTO 15-36**

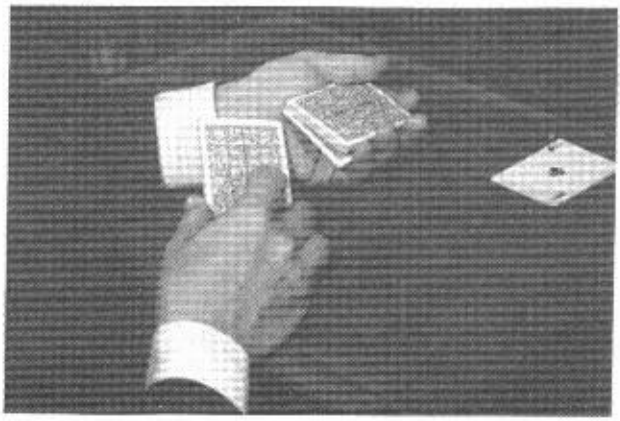


**PHOTO 15-37**

The right hand squares up and places the deck on the table and the left hand cops away the two bottom 3's. The squaring motion is a backwards and forwards squaring motion. The left pinky maintains a break on the backward motion:PHOTO 15-38 ...

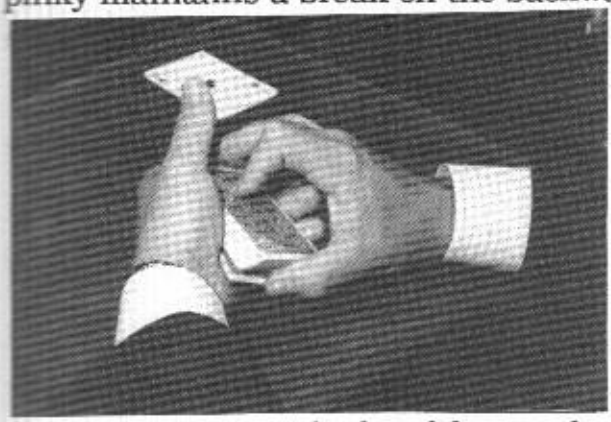
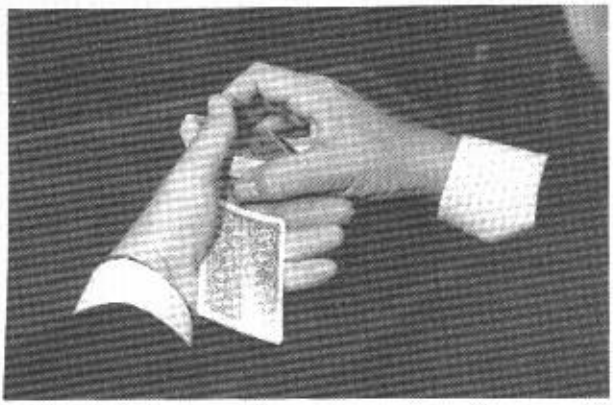


**PHOTO 15-38**

...and the right hand leaves the bottom two cards in a rear left hand cop as it does the forward motion: PHOTO 15-39.

**PHOTO 15-39**



The forward motion continues without pause as the right hand places the deck onto the table, directly in front of the spectator: PHOTO 15-40.

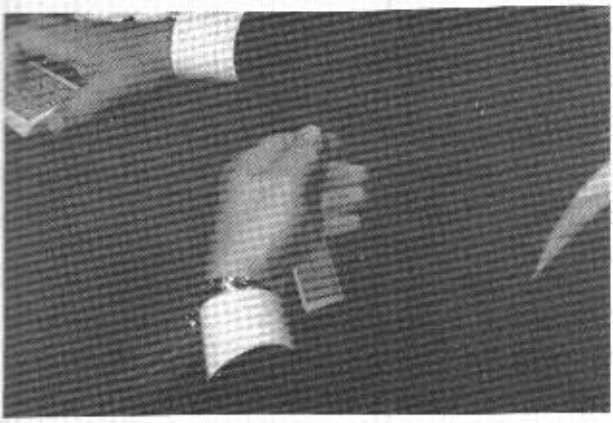


**PHOTO 15-40**

The handling is made even stronger by the misdirection of saying - indeed almost commanding - with conviction *Turn this deck over!*. When the spectator does so, his choice (3H) is staring him in the face.

First surprise!

Don't be nervous about the two copped cards. Everyone is looking at the deck.

Meanwhile, the right hand has picked up the ace packet and dropped it onto the two copped cards: PHOTO 15-41.

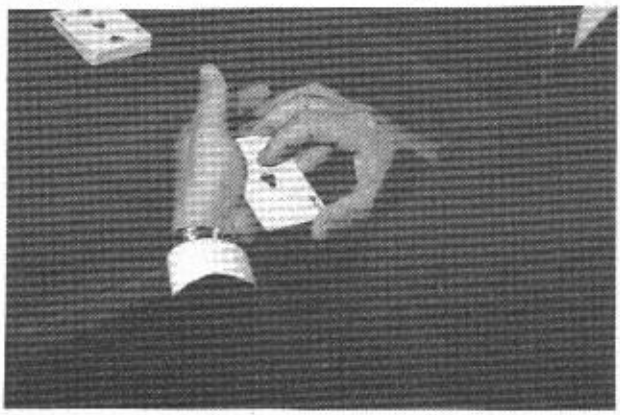


**PHOTO 15-41**

The left hand again "counts" two aces into the left hand, but also steals one of the bottom cards under the second ace (as explained in the beginning of this routine). After counting two cards (and stealing a card from the bottom onto the second) the right hand packet is dropped onto the packet in the left hand: PHOTO 15-42.

**PHOTO 15-42**



A magic wave and if you spread the ace packet, a face down card will be between every face up ace: PHOTO 15-43. These are the three threes.

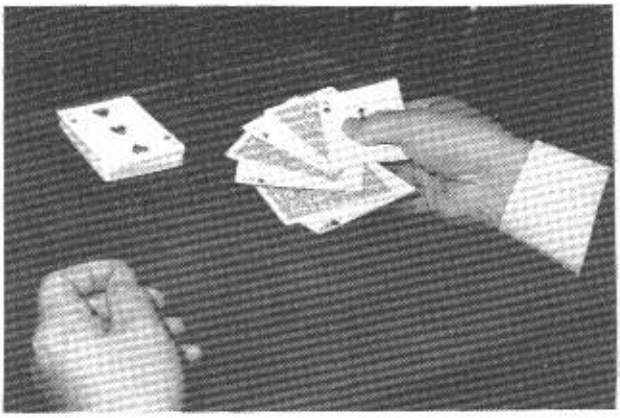


**PHOTO 15-43**

What fools everyone is Ron's strip out cop steal move.

## THE PARADOX CONTROL

All right.

I used to publish this in my lecture notes, and perform it at lectures with the following opening caveat: *I know no one here will ever take the trouble to learn this. I will show it to you anyway.* I then went on to other things. Not that I thought it was that difficult. But it *looks* difficult, mostly because it includes that ridiculous looking thing, **Marlo's Longitudinal Palm,** among other things. In a way, the move is a modest triumph of mechanical physics. In any event, to my genuine surprise, at every lecture where this was demonstrated, some magicians present actually came up to me after for additional instruction on the move.

So there.

And when you read this, if it scares you, remember that you have been warned.

Of course, if you were to see me do it...

This is a card control handling that contains a paradox.

From the front, it looks as if a card is placed in the center of the deck and squared up. That is it: a simple motion. In reality, the card goes all over the place! I never could have come up with the finished package had it not been for Cy Enfield, Bill Simon, Roy Cottee, and especially, Gilles Couture, who all have had a part in supplying inspiration.

Take the selected card with the right hand hand - PHOTO 15-44 - and insert it into the deck, held in the left hand, from the left side: PHOTO 15-45. Push it in at an angle: PHOTO 15-46.

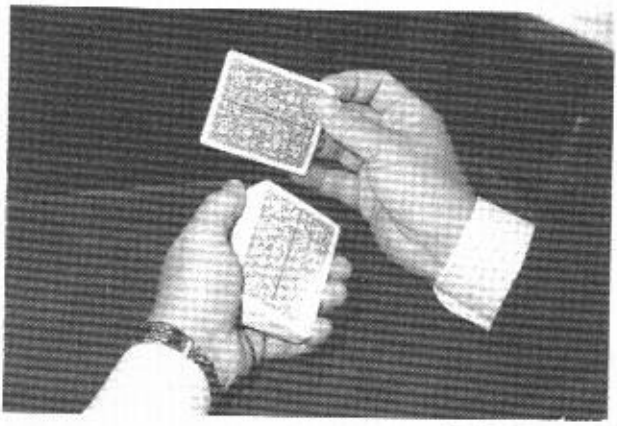


**PHOTO 15-44**



**PHOTO 15-45**

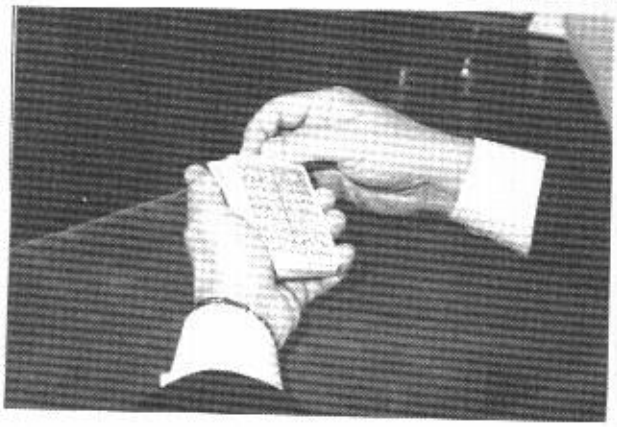
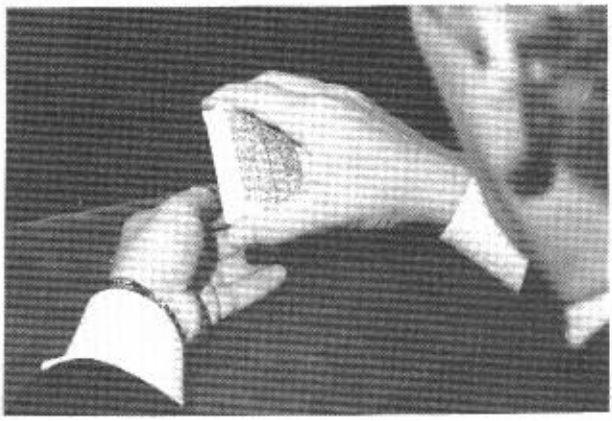


**PHOTO 15-46**

Before pushing the selection in flush, hold the deck from above with the right hand: PHOTO 15-47. Note that the deck is held mainly at the front and back LEFT edge by the right thumb and forefinger.

**PHOTO 15-47**



Now, the left thumb will push the selection into the deck by moving along the left edge of the deck, from rear to front and then back again. When the left thumb moves up - PHOTOS 15-48 and 15-49 - the card moves into the deck BUT also ends up jogged at the front right corner.

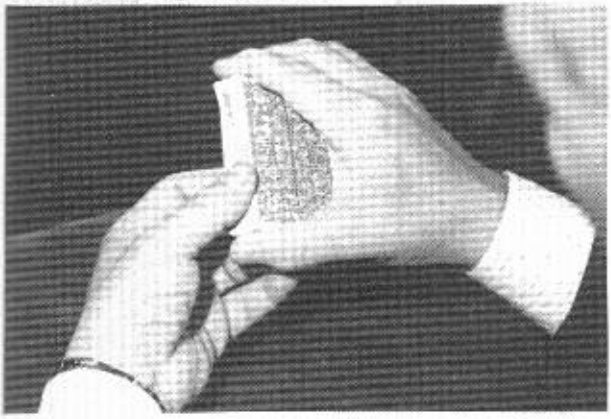


**PHOTO 15-48**

**PHOTO 15-49**

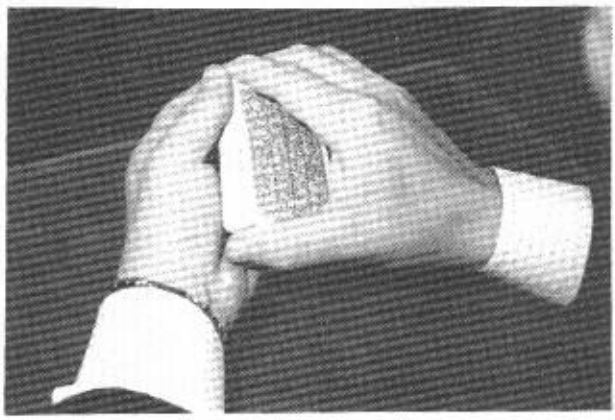


PHOTO 15-50 is an exposed view of the deck at this stage with the right hand removed.

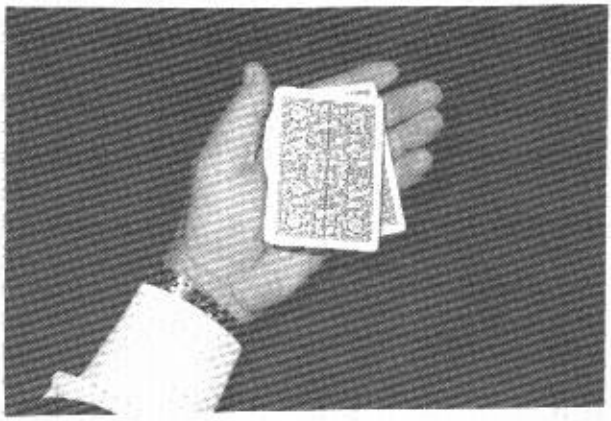
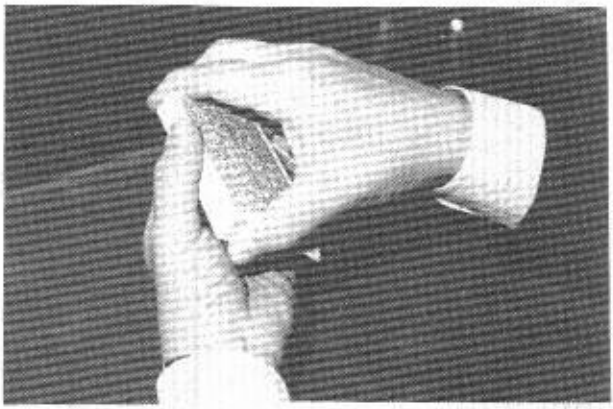


**PHOTO 15-50**

Now when the left thumb slides back down the side of the deck - PHOTO 15-51, the left pinky catches this corner of the selection - PHOTO 15-52 is an exposed view - and swings the front edge of the selection down to the right in a clockwise movement: PHOTO 15-53 is a view from the bottom looking up!

**PHOTO 15-51**



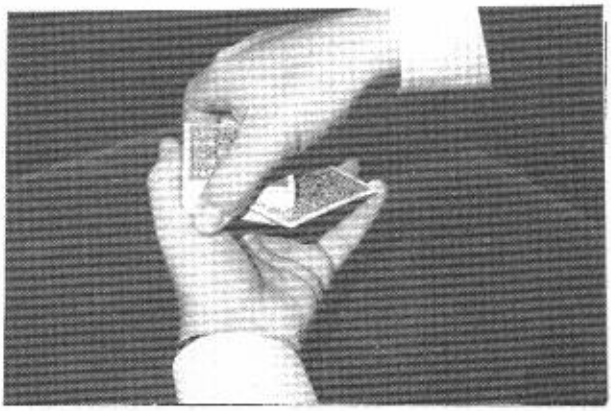
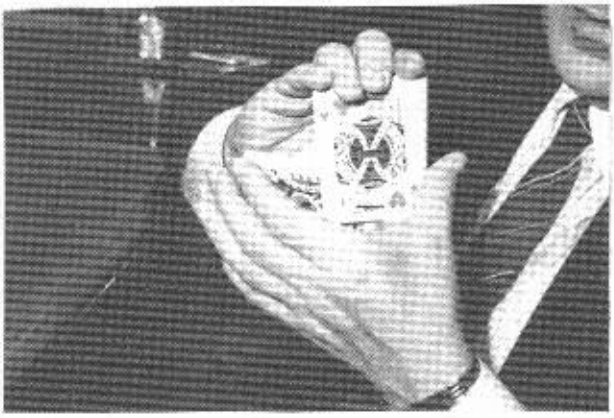


**PHOTO 15-52**

**PHOTO 15-53**



The card in now perfectly positioned to be gripped by the right hand in Marlo's Longitudinal Palm (between right thumb tip and heel of hand): PHOTO 15-54.

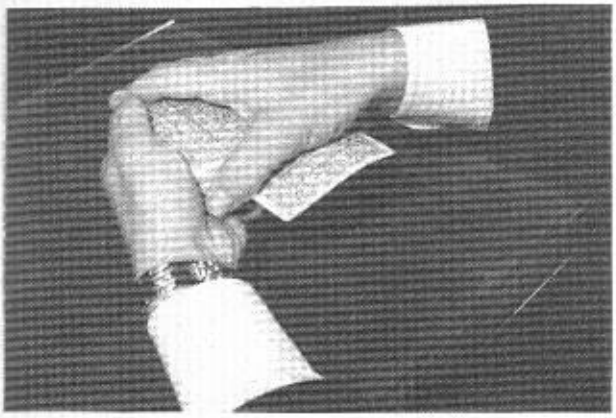
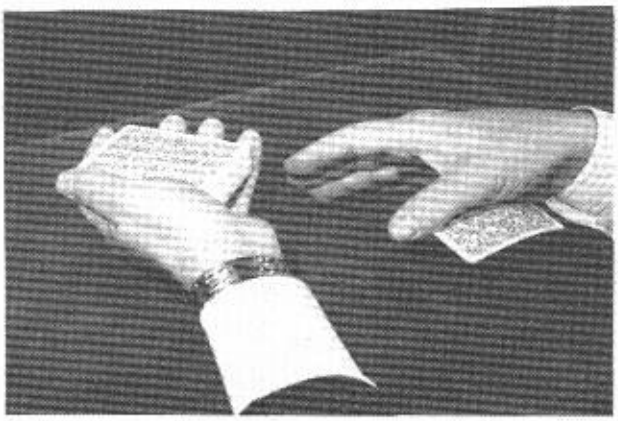


**PHOTO 15-54**

As the right hand palms the card the left hand moves to the left with the deck, just a short way, to allow the remainder of the selected card to come free of the deck: PHOTO 15-55.

**PHOTO 15-55**



The right hand now comes onto the deck as if to grip it near (but not at) the upper right corner: PHOTO 15-56. Note in the exposed PHOTO 15-57 (right hand removed for clarity) how the selection comes ONTO the deck at cross angles.

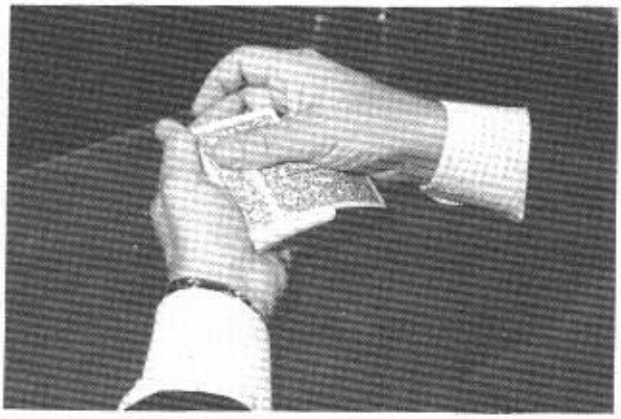
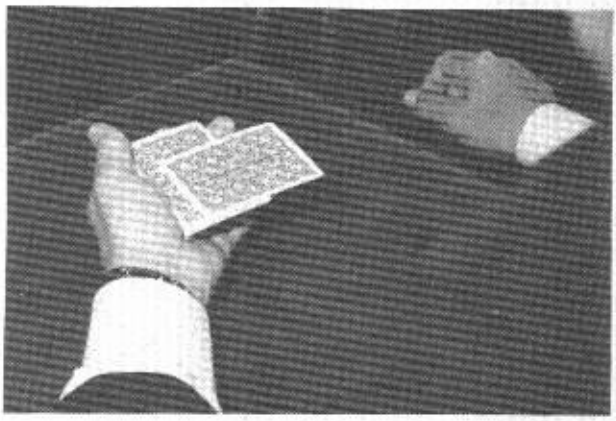


**PHOTO 15-56**

**PHOTO 15-57**



Now the right thumb presses on the palmed card with its first joint, as shown in Photo 15-56 and slides up to the front right corner of the deck: PHOTO 15-58. This causes the selection to pivot against the left second finger and thus the selection comes square onto the top of the deck.

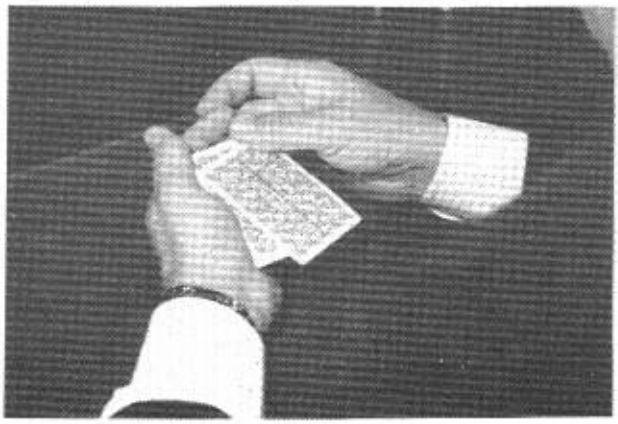
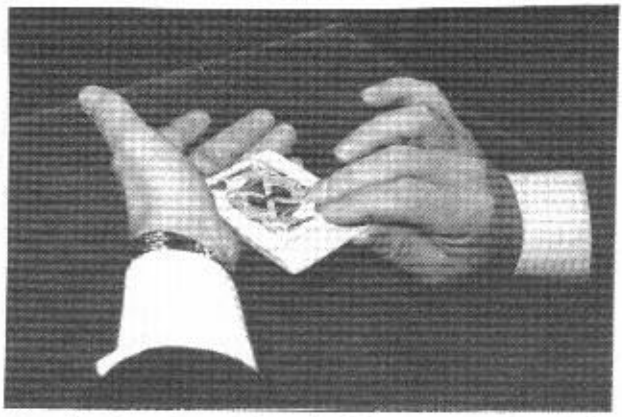


**PHOTO 15-58**

**PHOTO 15-59**



The right hand continues by turning the deck over in the left hand - PHOTO 15-59 -, and then face down again.

You have controlled the selection to the top. Sit down and have a rest!

I repeat again that the description appears monumental in print, but is considerably friendlier in execution. You certainly will feel great once you master this thing; you will be tempted to expose it at the next magic club meeting just to floor the guys!

It is best used standing, in a parlour type scenario, where you seek to appear to fairly insert the card into the center with deliberation, so that all can appreciate the challenge of recovery you are preparing for yourself.

As to the angles on this, it is best if you start the move facing slightly right, and end facing slightly left. I explain this movement away with the following patter:

*LOOK, I'LL PLACE YOUR CARD HERE - OH, TWENTY THREE CARDS DOWN* (you are facing slightly right, showing the card in the deck at an angle)... *WHICH MAKES IT*...(during this pause, you have already stolen the card out and the left hand moves away with the deck pulling it free of the palmed card as you are supposedly calculating...) ...*OH...TWENTY NINE CARDS FROM THE BOTTOM* (your cue to replace and turn the deck over, showing the bottom).

There are times when one is inordinately fascinated by a little something without feeling really being able to explain it all to someone else. I feel that way about the Paradox Control!

# EQUIVOQUE

This is a trick based upon the old Hobson's Choice principle - not giving your spectator a true choice even though it appears as if you could not be fairer. This is my particular handling of this trick - and I can tell you that I still always use this.

Some interesting work has been carried out by magicians on the Equivoque principle, notably by Phil Goldstein and Phantini.

You probably know this trick well, and wonder why I include it in this book. It is the old chestnut of having a card selected and controlled, and having it among sixteen cards. You keep giving supposedly free choices to the spectator which involve discarding cards until you get down to the last card which turns out to be the selection.

The trick is accomplished by discarding all the wrong cards, giving whatever interpretation to the spectator's answers that suits your discarding purpose.

The whole secret of this effect is the scripting of the handling of the choices: well done, this is a total, unexplainable miracle. At a four day fishing trip recently, at which I performed a half hour's worth of card tricks per day for my fellow guests, this is the one they still talk about.

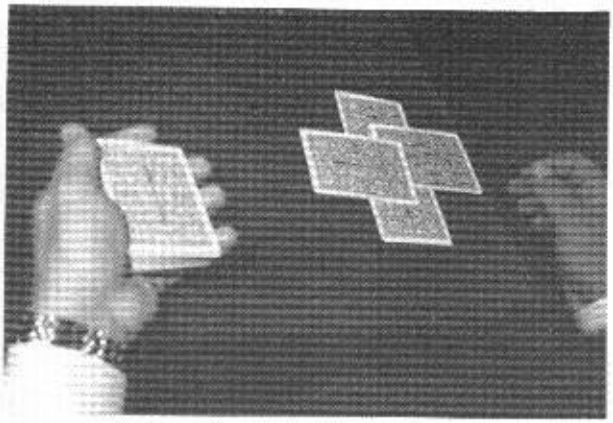
What you may find of interest here is the particular sequence of choices which I finally settled upon. I consider this simple effect very powerful spectator magic and I perform it often.

Have a card selected and control it to the top using any system of card control. Deal four cards off the top, face down, into a pile at your right (Pile 1), into a star: PHOTO 15-60. The selection is the card on the bottom of this pile.

Deal a second pile of four cards to the left of the first pile (Pile 2). Deal a third pile of four in front of the second pile, and a last pile of four in front of the first pile: PHOTO 15-61.

Assume the spectator is male, for the sake of the explanation.

**PHOTO 15-60**



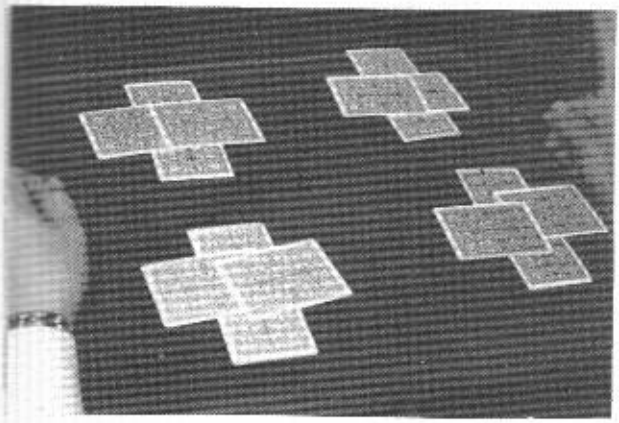


**PHOTO 15-61**

*I am going to ask you to help me in a little experiment. But I have to deal with your inner self. So when I ask you a question - just answer the first thing that comes into your mind. Don't think too much about it - just go with your inner reflexes. For instance, here I have four piles, and I am going to take away two. Now relax and tell me - front or back? Front or back?*

WHATEVER HE ANSWERS - repeat what he says - *Front!* - and remove piles 3 and 4 and put them aside. If he had answered Back you would have said without hesitation *Back!* and discarded piles 3 and 4. You never specified which two piles were in the front - and whether you were referring to his front or your front - or whether you were going to keep or discard the piles he chose. Ask briskly with confidence.

Don't give him any time to think. Ask him to cover each pile with a hand.

*Now relax - and raise one of your hands - any hand - NOW!*

If he exposes pile 2, pick it up and discard it. *That leaves us with only one pile.*

If he exposes pile 1 say You choose these four cards - *Okay, let's get rid of those other cards.*

Either way, you are now left with pile number 1. Take the top card and use it to scoop up the remainder of the cards: PHOTO 15-62. Fan the packet. The selection is now third from the top.

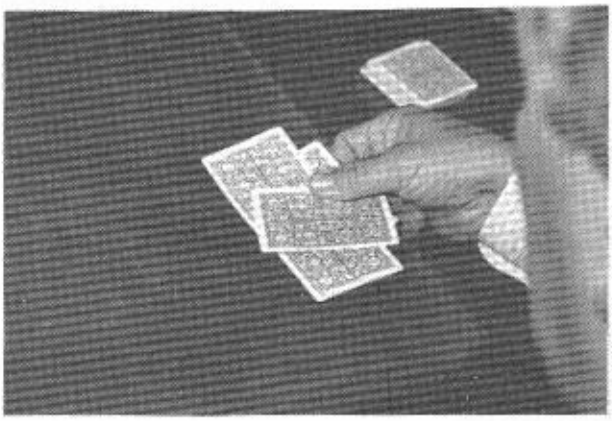


**PHOTO 15-62**

*Take your right first finger and touch any card ...*

Eight times out of ten he will touch the selection. Slowly drop it on the table, discard the remainder, and build it up for all it's worth before turning it over. If he does not touch the selection keep right on talking ...

*and with the first finger of the left hand touch any other card ...*

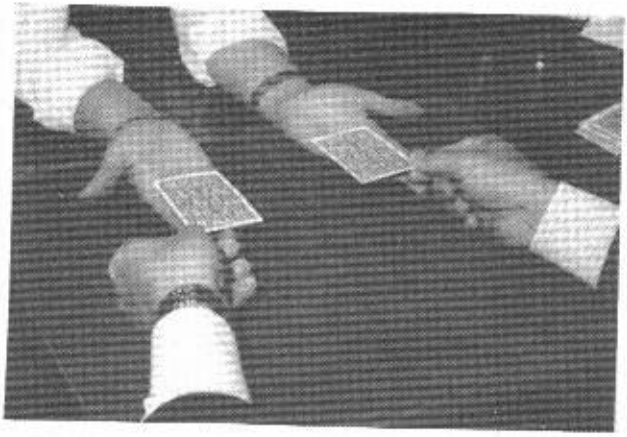
If the selection is being touched, slowly allow the touched cards to comes onto the table and discard the two remaining cards. If the selection is not touched say

*...and take these cards and throw them away.*

Either way, you now have two cards left, one of which is the selection.

Ask the spectator to hold both hands out palms upward. Lay a card face down on each palm: PHOTO 15-63.

**PHOTO 15-63**



*Now this is a vital decision - don't be nervous. Relax. Hand me one of these cards...do you want to change your mind? ...*

and then either

*...are you sure that you want this card? ...*

or

*...are you sure you want to get rid of this card? ...*

Either way you have a miracle on your hands.

The trick is all salesmanship (salespersonship? Do we say Personhole cover rather than manhole cover? Bovine person rather than cowboy and cowgirl?).

## Convincingly Versatile Control

Ed Marlo invented the **Convincing Control**, and Daryl is its grand master. The control has been explained in Marlo and Ackerman publications, in Frank Simon's book, and even in my **Meir Yedid's Incredible Close-Up Magic.**

Why another version? Because for me, (although not necessarily for you) the pinky addition makes my life easier.

It enables the positioning of the selection to the bottom to be a more angle-proof and sure-fire thing.

Spread the cards from left to right: Photo 15-64. Ask a spectator to touch a card: PHOTO 15-65.

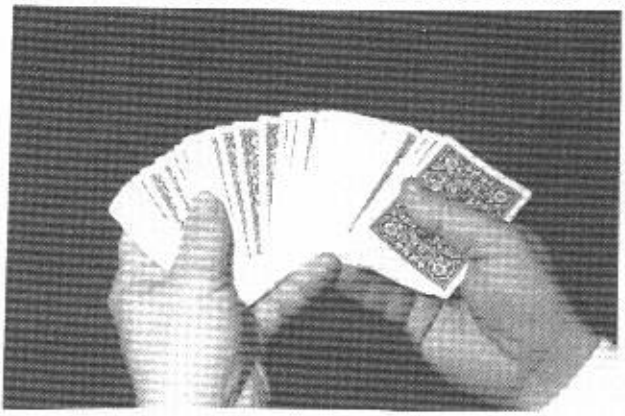


**PHOTO 15-64**

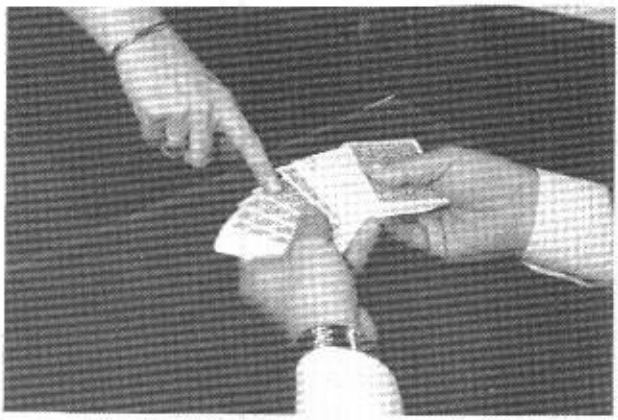


**PHOTO 15-65**

Break the spread at this point; the touched card should be the leftmost card in the right hand spread: PHOTO 15-66. The touched card is barely held in place by the tip of the right third finger.

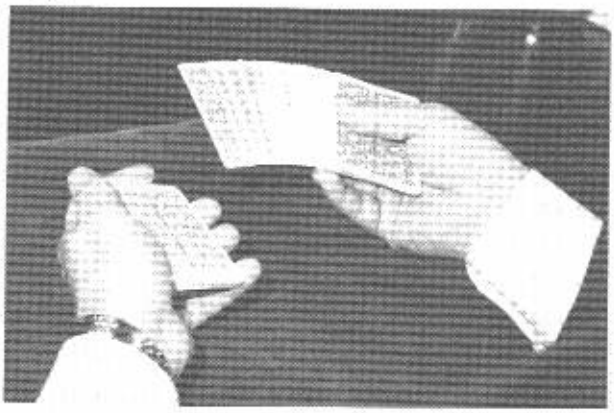
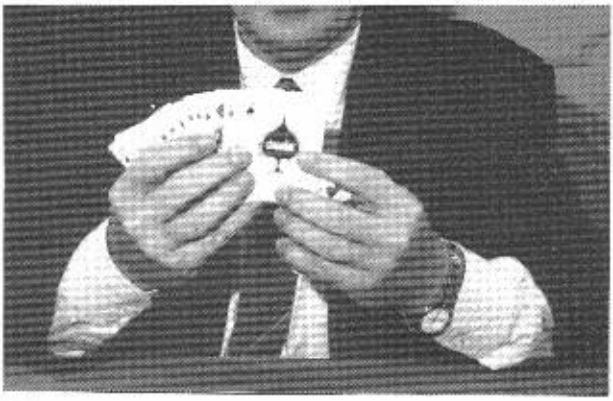


**PHOTO 15-66**

The right hand now brings its fan up to allow the spectator to see the chosen card. The left forefinger now comes (the left hand still holding the lower half) and touches the face of the selection:

PHOTO 15-67 shows an audience view. But the left thumb also comes onto the back of the card just above the selection. PHOTO 15-68 shows your view of this action. NOTE THE POSITION OF THE RIGHT LITTLE FINGER.

**PHOTO 15-67**



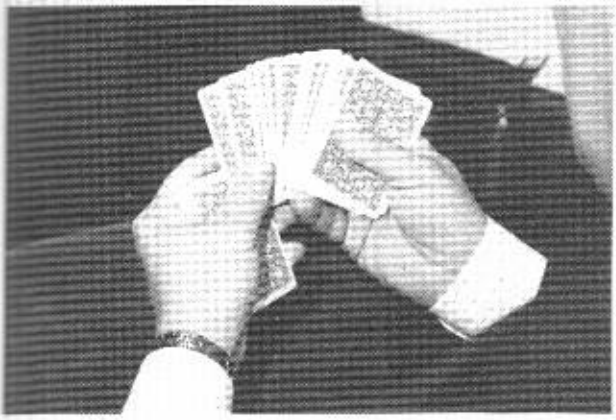


**PHOTO 15-68**

As the hands return the cards to a face down position the left fingertips hold the selected card stationary while the right hand and the left thumb shift all the cards above the selection a half inch to the left. The selection is hidden just below the fan but the audience believes the selection to be the card upon which the left thumb is resting.

The exact moment to execute the shift as the hands swing down, as Frank Simon has noted, is when the edge of the deck is pointing at the spectator's nose!

As a result, the shifting of the top block is totally invisible and unsuspected. At the end of the movement, another card - the decoy card - is believed to be the selection.

The left thumb moves the decoy card forward, as the right pinky pulls down on the hidden selection: PHOTO 15-69. This card is fed under the deck as the deck is squared up: PHOTO 15-70. Finally the center out-jogged card is pushed flush. This sequence has secretly brought the selection to the bottom.

**PHOTO 15-69**



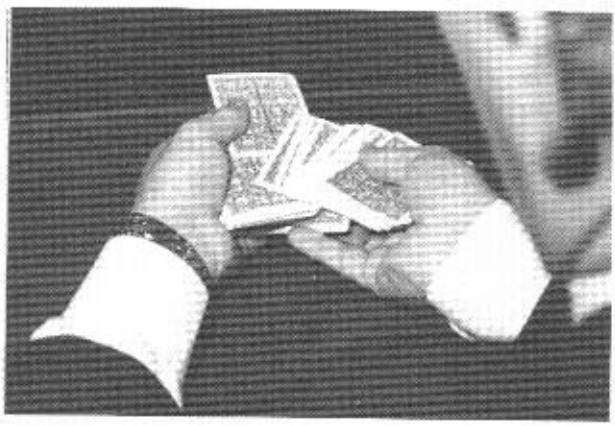
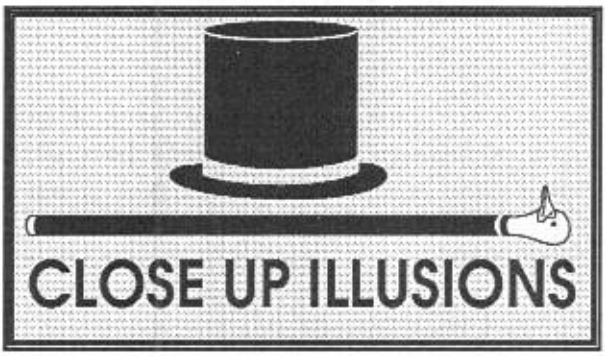


**PHOTO 15-70**

The Convincing Control concept is a wonderful weapon, and I trust that my pinky pull-down addition will help those of you who may have been struggling with the move.






# CHAPTER 16

## THE TOUCH FORCE

Sitting in a car a number of years ago, on the way to the New York Symposium, with Guy Camirand driving, I ended up, in the ongoing Change the driver/musical chairs game attendant to any long car ride, in the back seat with Montreal magician Paul Belanger (whose **Cigarette through Coin** is one of Camirand's best-sellers). Paul and I were doing magic tricks to each other when he showed me an idea for a force. Paul's move was, in a sense, the conceptual opposite of what is to follow, but it was the launching pad for what I developed over the following fifty miles and what I submit is quite a nice little force. (My English teacher used to hate the word *nice - Doesn't really mean anything*, he would say.) Although it is a variant of the Peek Force, it is by all standards an important improvement thereupon, because it introduces a retinal impression factor into the magical equation. If I were writing an ad for this item, I would surely stress its ease of execution, and the very high fool-factor.

The setup is simple. The force card is somewhere in the middle of the deck with a little finger break held BELOW the force card.

The easy way to get into this is to have the force card on the bottom; swing-cut half the deck into the left hand, complete the cut while holding a little finger break.

**PERFORMANCE**

Start to spread the cards from left to right, as you ask a spectator to *Touch any card - just* ***touch*** *a card.*: PHOTO 16-1. Requested in this manner, a spectator will not reach in and pull out a card.

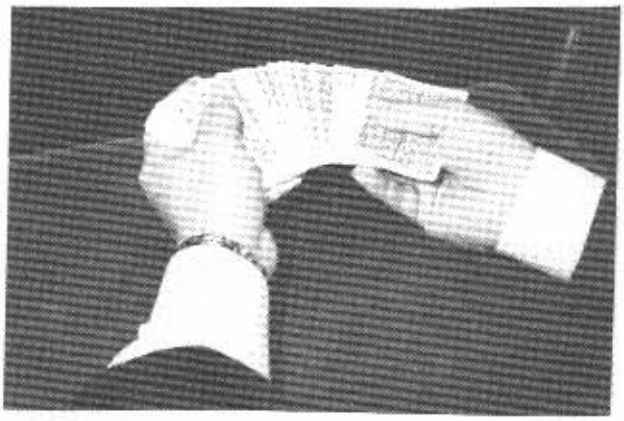
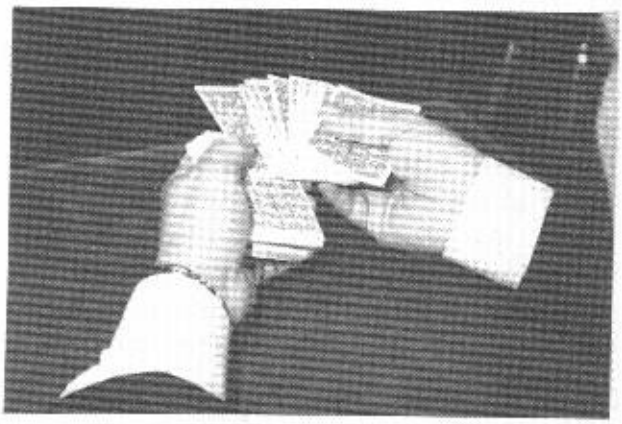


**PHOTO 16-1**

For the moment, assume that the spectator touches a card ABOVE the card to be forced. I will discuss the other alternative later.

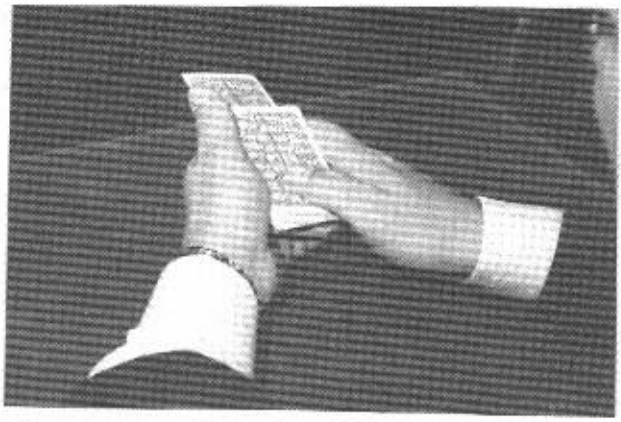
The touched card is slowly and cleanly stepped forward: PHOTO 16-2.

**PHOTO 16-2**



The spread is closed to the left, in fact squaring up the deck into the left hand except for the card stepped forward: PHOTO 16-3.

**PHOTO 16-3**



Here comes the move! Remember that the left little finger all the while has held a break BELOW the card to be forced. The right hand comes above the deck, thumb at the rear, forefinger bent lightly on top, and second finger extended to the front edge of the single stepped card, in a motion to bring the stepped card back into the deck: PHOTO 16-4.

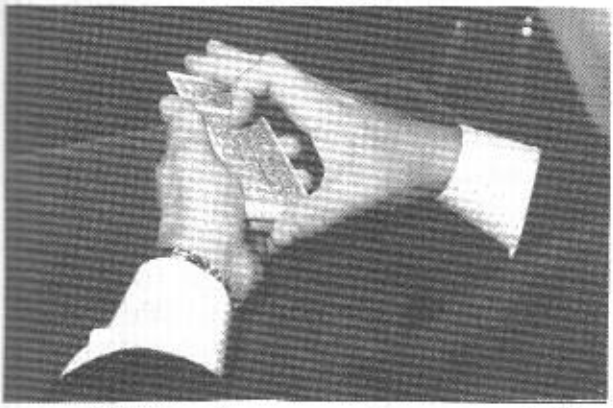
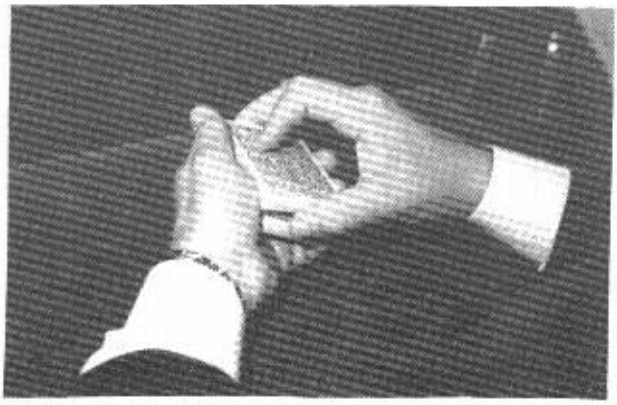


**PHOTO 16-4**

Without pause, the second finger brings the stepped card flush into the deck - PHOTO 16-5 - BUT THE MOMENT IT IS FLUSH the right hand lifts all the cards ABOVE THE BREAK

**PHOTO 16-5**



bringing the face of this packet towards spectators: PHOTO 16-6 - as you say *Remember your card..*



**PHOTO 16-6**

The illusion is perfect: it appears as if the right hand simply pulls the card into the deck and lifts it up so that the spectator can identify the touched card. When I mention the retinal impression effect, I refer to the fact that the touched card never seems to leave the view of your audience.

Now what happens if the touched card is BELOW the break? Exactly the same thing! As you continue to spread past the break the right second finger under the spread marks the spot (by basically pressing against the force card so as not to lose it) until a card is touched. The touched card is stepped forward, the break is returned to left little finger control, and the pickup of the top packet is carried out in exactly the same way. The identical illusion is created.

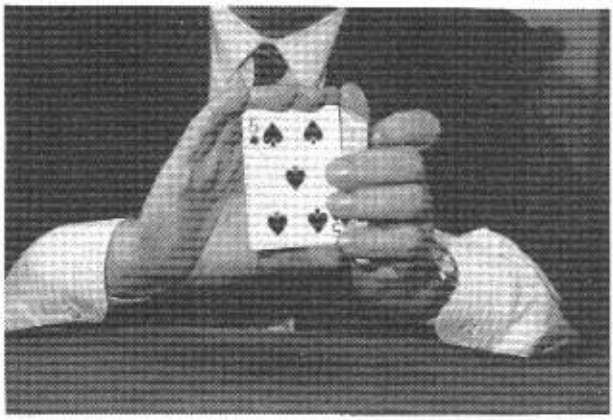
Please use this.

## THE SPILL VARIATION

I first saw Steve Spill (Spillman at the time) years ago at a Tannen's Jubilee. He fooled me, and everyone else, with a sponge ball and a thumb tip. His current videotape on comedy bits is a great buy: you will roar. His cousin, Judy Ney, is the wife to the U.S. Ambassador to Canada, and I am proud to count Judy and Ed among my friends.

When Steve saw this he suggested that once the card is pushed flushed the hands open the deck sideways: PHOTO 16-7. This is a different yet just as deceptive approach.

**PHOTO 16-7**



## THE KRENZEL COLOR APPROACH

I had the good fortune to participate in the Videonics magic video series with Ken Krenzel. Ken is a gentleman who has given a staggering amount of thought to card magic. His advice is always valuable. This is his contribution to my Touch Force.

If a red backed card was, say, one third down a blue backed deck, and you wanted to show it as being the Ace of Spades (half way down the deck) you could proceed as follows. The left pinky holds the required break below the Ace.

Spread the cards until you get to the red backed card and outjog it. You now proceed as in the standard touch force excep that when you push the card flush the right fingers keep a break above the red card as you lift to show the forced ace: PHOTO 16-8.

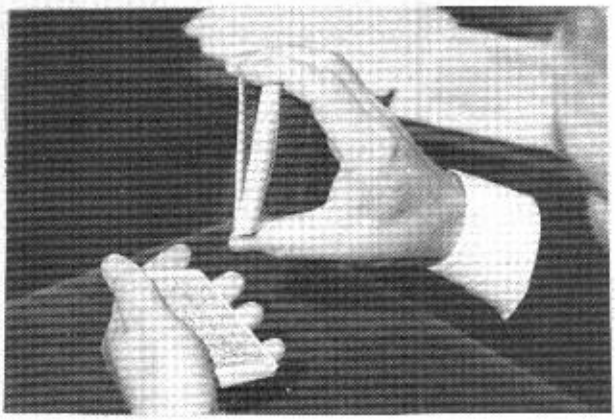


**PHOTO 16-8**

After showing the ace, bring the right hand down to the deck, release all the cards below the fingertip break and thumb off the red card: PHOTO 16-9. You have convincingly shown a card to be other than it is.

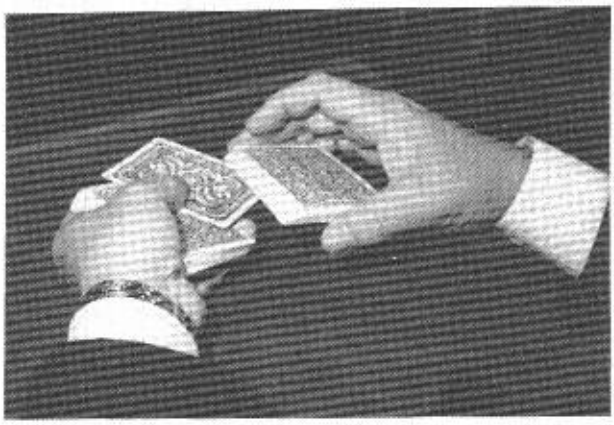


**PHOTO 16-9**

## THE OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

This is, in a sense, a wacky playlet, or even what could be called a *routine* - a much overused term in magic today, I am afraid, and frequently (and erroneously) considered a synonym for quality magic. A routine is something beyond a quick trick - often involving several tricks linked together, but not always so.

This is more importantly an EASY and FUN little interlude that changes the pace, and disguises the ending, making spectator anticipation difficult if not impossible.

You play the role of a referee at a sports event. The idea seems to be centered around a competition between two spectators each trying to get a higher score. As referee you have a whistle, score-marking pens, and a running commentary. IN FACT, the entire scenario is a setup for a SIGNATURE TRANSPOSITION that comes as a complete surprise. The magic is quite baffling and best of all, the execution is almost painless. The routine uses the TOUCH FORCE in a rather sneaky manner.

**WHAT YOU NEED**

- A red backed deck of cards

- A blue backed deck of cards
- A whistle, preferably professional looking, and preferably on a loop of string
- A red marker and a blue marker.

**SETUP**

Have the blue-backed five of diamonds on the bottom of the RED deck, and the red-backed five of diamonds on the bottom of the BLUE deck. That's it!

The actual card used could be any number card.

The whistle is around your neck.

**PERFORMANCE**

Blow your whistle! (This whistle stuff adds a mood change to be sure, but requires a strong commitment to moderation!)

*Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to the Magical Olympics! You have heard of the Summer Games, and the Winter Games. You will now witness the Card Games!*

*Here on my left is one of our contestants - the fearless leader of the BLUE BOMBERS! And on my right, the intrepid chief of the RED DEVILS!*

*I will ask the leader of the BLUE team to hold this BLUE marker - to help keep score later - and the leader of the RED team to hold this RED marker.*

*And now, let the games begin!*

Blow your whistle.

Spread the blue deck between your hands, quietly showing all blue backs without calling attention to this fact. You could hav started, in fact, by spreading both decks face down on your close-up mat, being careful not to spread the two bottom cards. Take the blue deck in your hands, swing cut half the deck into your left hand and complete the cut holding a little finger break.

Explain that whichever card is touched by the BLUE leader, the value of that card will count as points on the Blue team's score.

Start to spread the cards, and in fact execute the TOUCH FORCE. Note that in this case, you must force the spectator to touch a card in the top half BEFORE YOU GET TO THE RED CARD (otherwise the magic becomes obscure to put it mildly).

You "show" the five of diamonds (which is really the red-backed five). You immediately turn the right packet face up - PHOTO 16-10 - and using the left thumb you slide it, still face upwards, onto the left hand packet: PHOTO 16-11.

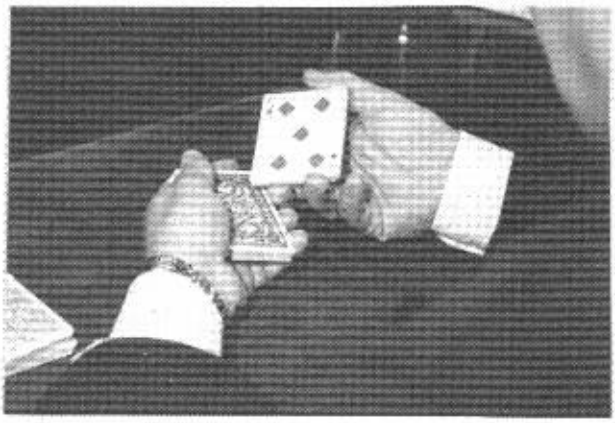


**PHOTO 16-10**

**PHOTO 16-11**



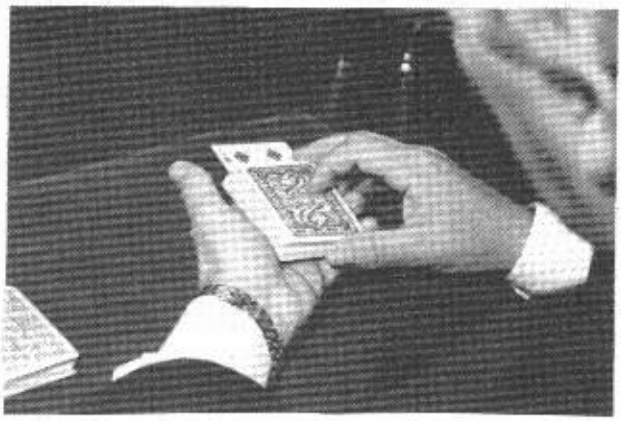
Leaving it extended for most of its length, you drop the right hand packet on top: PHOTO 16-12. Leave this arrangement on the table to you left.

*Five-zero for the Blue Bombers!*

(Used in this manner, the Touch Force not only forces the desired card, but hides the back color from view. However, the

spectator has just touched a blue-backed card so absolutely no reason to doubt can exist!)

**PHOTO 16-12**



Have the spectator "keep score" by signing his name on the face up five. Keep the five in the deck. Hold the deck in the left hand which you extend to the spectator, as the right forefinger points "sign here": PHOTO 16-13. In this way, you keep control over the card and prevent the spectator from pulling the card out of the deck and accidentally turning it over.

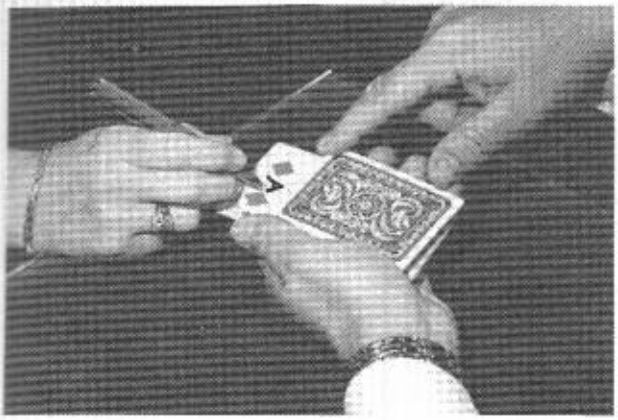


**PHOTO 16-13**

Repeat the same procedure with the Red leader. *Oho!*, you cry, *we have a tie game!* as the five is exposed. Table the red deck to the right.

At the end of this sequence, you have two signed five of diamonds extending from two tabled decks.

Reach over with both hands and hold both cards as shown in PHOTO 16-14. (next page)

*What do we do when we have a tie?*

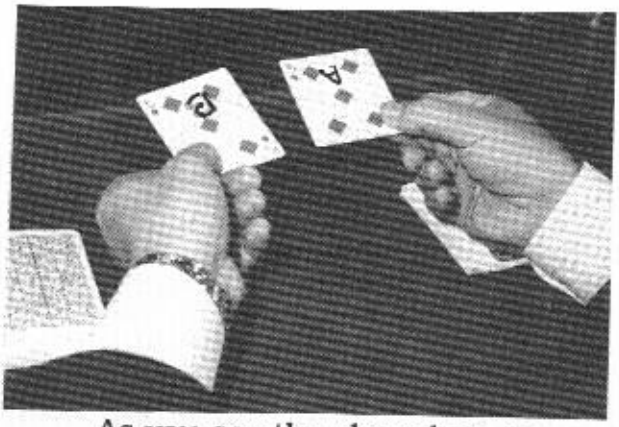


**PHOTO 16-14**

As you say the above line, you carry out a switch of the cards as you seemingly turn them over to show their backs. The right hand card is brought under the left hand card: PHOTO 16-15 Now both hands revolve inward as both hands move away with the card previously held by the other hand: PHOTO 16-16.

**PHOTO 16-15**

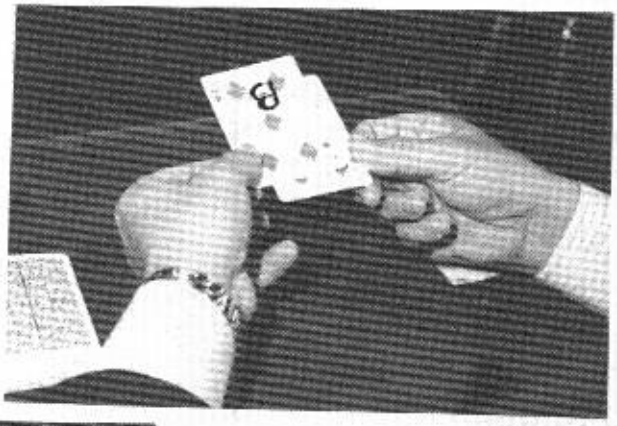




**PHOTO 16-16**

This, by the way, is a simple maneuver.

BUT NOTICE THAT ALL APPEARS PERFECTLY NORMAL: THE LEFT HAND IS HOLDING THE BLUE CARD, THE RIGHT

HAND IS HOLDING THE RED CARD. THE MOVE IS INVISIBLE AND FURTHERMORE NO MOVE IS SUSPECTED BECAUSE EVERYTHING LOOKS THE WAY IT SHOULD.

And yet the trick is all over!

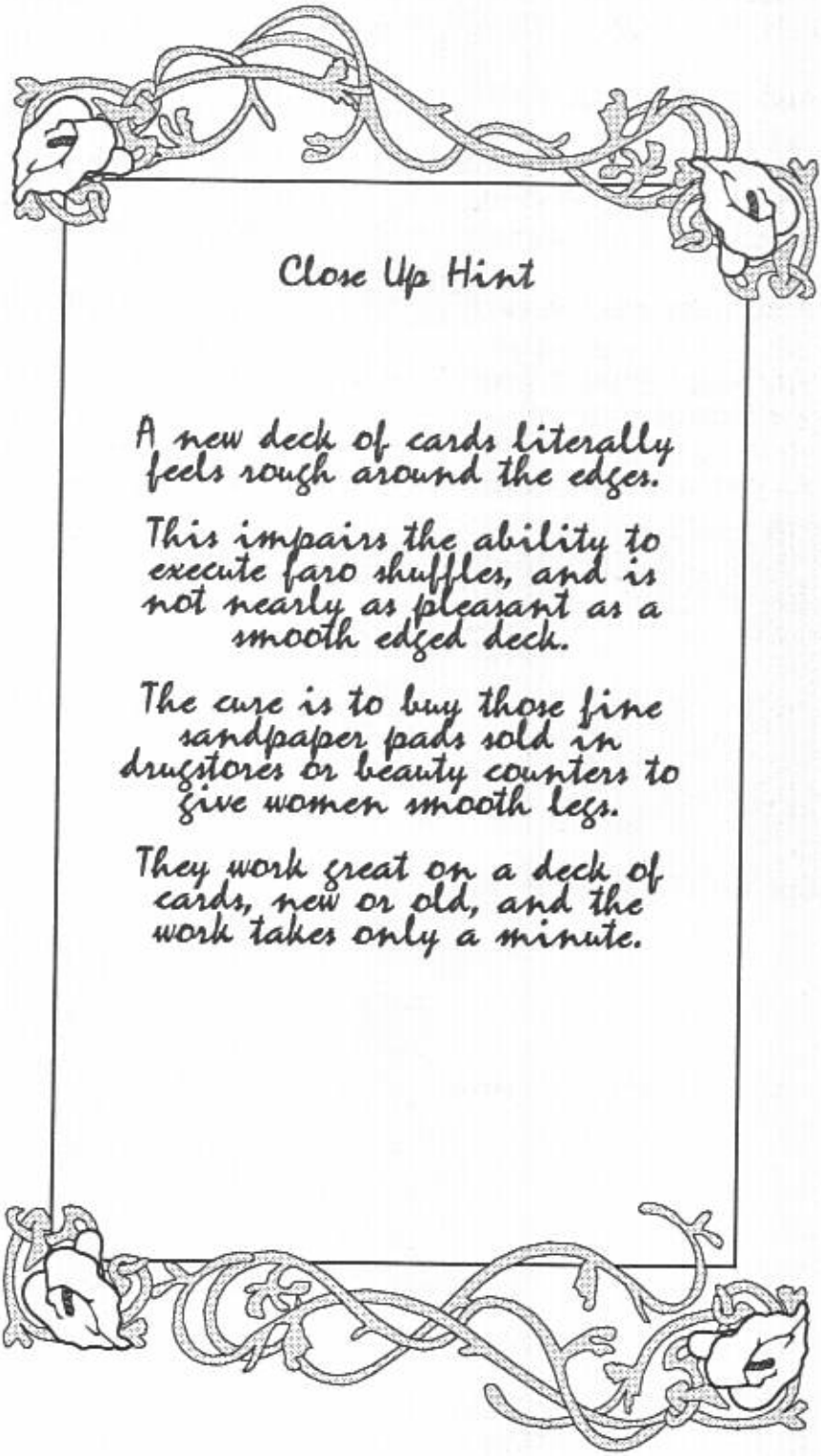
*When we have a tie, the rule book says, the referee must do a magic trick! Why don't I take your signature and have it jump to his card, and take his signature and have it jump to your card?!*

Aha! Turn over the cards. Shock city.

*The only thing I haven't figured out is: in case of a tie, who gets to sing the national anthem?*

As you take your deepest bow, blow your whistle!





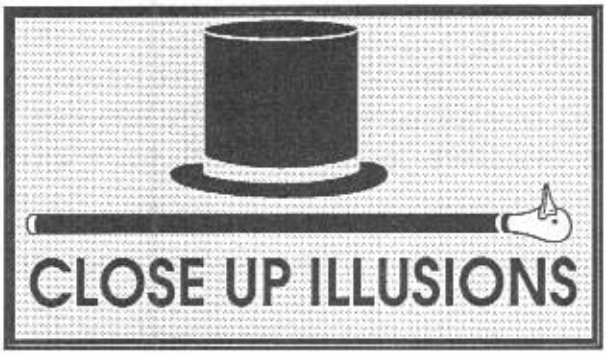
## Close Up Hint

A new deck of cards literally feels rough around the edges.

This impairs the ability to execute faro shuffles, and is not nearly as pleasant as a smooth edged deck.

The cure is to buy those fine sandpaper pads sold in drugstores or beauty counters to give women smooth legs.

They work great on a deck of cards, new or old, and the work takes only a minute.




# CHAPTER 17

## THE AMBITIOUS CARD

A compelling argument can be made for resorting to the Ambitious Card as the trick of choice when you are doing only one. As card tricks go, it has the visual shock not usually associated with card tricks, but more often found in, say, coin magic, where a coin plainly held in the hand suddenly melts away. The same sort of reaction is observable on a spectator's facial physiognomy when you turn over the top card and there she is, back again!

The trick also is Slydini-esque: the repetition of the same basic effect seems to strengthen the magic. As the challenges increase, and the handling becomes ever more convincing, the mystery deepens. This is the sort of effect that evokes screams and pandemonium in the right circumstances.

Hardly anyone who performs even rudimentary card magic does not have a personal rendition of this classic. I would like to share some thoughts on the trick I have performed more often than any other. I must presume that you are familiar with the effect and common methodology including the Double Lift (lots of versions are

taught in this book) , and Tilt technique, invented by either Marlo, or Vernon, or both.

**Have the card signed.**

Some magicians resist using crimps because they *damage* a card; for them, needless to say, writing on a card is out of the question.

But signing the selected card improves the effect remarkably; in fact, it makes all the difference. As I type this manuscript, I haul my deck out of my jacket pocket to discover that no less than 28 cards have writing on their face!

Most importantly, remember that signing the card removes the only possible explanation in a spectator's mind: the use of duplicates.

**For Starters**

Generally, I will start by having a card selected and signed, lost in the deck, and then produced using a startling revelation, such as Piet Forton's Pop-Out Move. Then I get the card secretly into second position (the spectator thinks the trick is over anyway), turn it over, show it one last time, turn the double face down and bury the top card, and off you go into the ambitious card.

Another way, to start right into the trick, is to use the center double technique, have the face up double on the deck as you extend the deck for a signature. In other words, the card is signed ON THE DECK. Turn over the double and go into the trick.

**Middle Game**

You will all have your own favorite moves and ploys to insert here: tilt moves, K-M moves, and so forth. I have two sequences for your approval, following these ramblings.

I do want to stress, however, that this middle part of the program is made to order for the Top Change. I will ALWAYS get at least two top changes in at this stage. I use my Slider change taught in a later chapter. The more you progress in the trick, the more general pandemonium is created. After each revelation of the return of the card, there is nothing easier than to top change the

held signed card for the top card of the deck. When calm returns, make a big too-do about fairly placing it into the center and WHAMMO, she's back on top once more!

One more sleight that I use extensively is the **Juxtaposition** move taught at the end of this chapter. This enables you to avoid having to use a Tilt move to get the card back into second position.

The move is easy and should form part of your Ambitious repertoire.

Another alternative to Tilt is the **K-M Move** (or Kardyro-Marlo move, taught in a booklet of the same name put out by Kardyro.)

**End Game**

There are a number of ways to satisfactorily end this trick.

When seated, I use the *Capricorn Card* move from my book **Threshold** where the entire deck vanishes except for the signed card.

When standing, you can use a particularly powerful sequence, such as the bent card ploy, or, even better, palm off the card and hand the deck out for examination as you execute a Card-to-Wallet ending. The Ambitious Challenge explained below is also quite powerful.

And now for the two sequences I promised:

## On the Count of Three!

This sequence presumes the signed card is second from the top. This can follow a Tilt sequence (or, in Vernon's terminology, a Depth Illusion sequence).

The double is turned over and displayed, and finally turned face down. The spectators believe the card is on the top.

*This time the card will rise on the count of three!*

Take the top card and insert it in the bottom third of the deck, leaving it front outjogged for half its length: PHOTO 17-1.

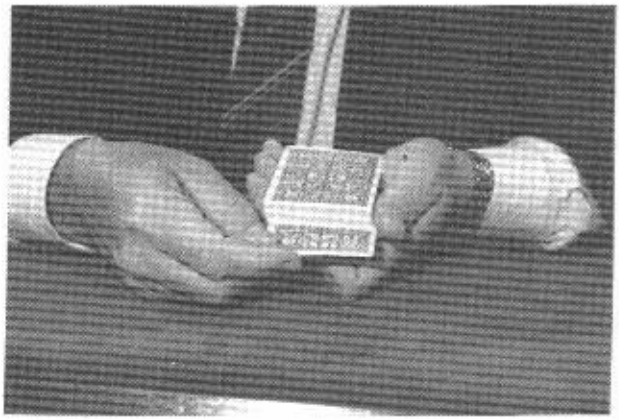
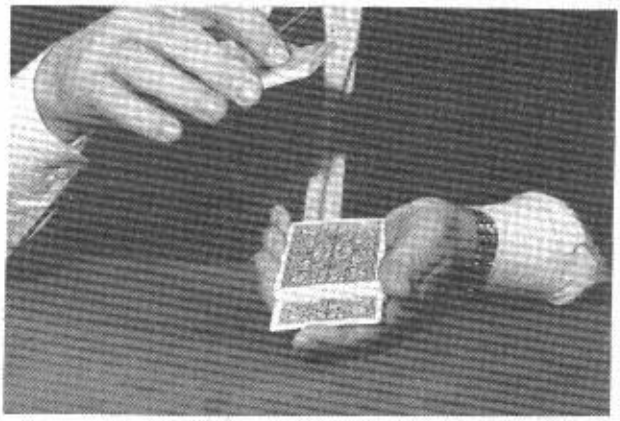


**PHOTO 17-1**

The right hand, from above, lifts up the top half of the deck: PHOTO 17-2.

**PHOTO 17-2**



***ONE!*** The left forefinger pulls the jogged card flush into the deck. PHOTO 17-3.

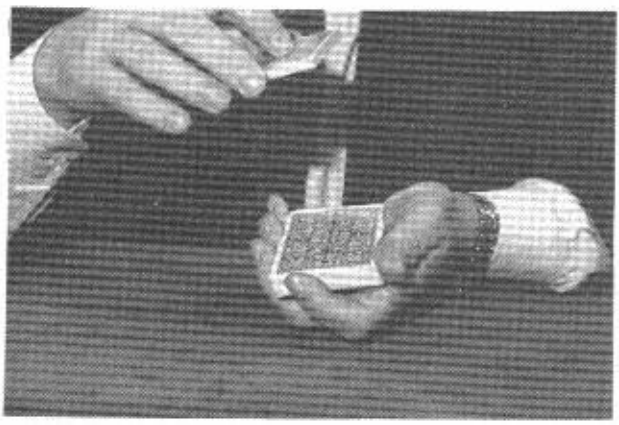
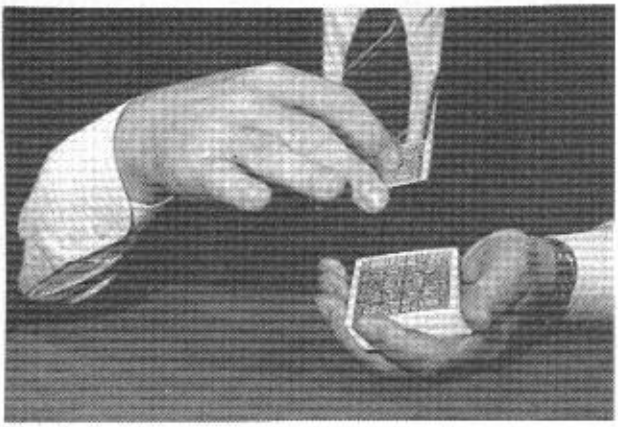


**PHOTO 17-3**

***TWO!*** The right hand drops its packet onto the left hand packet, retaining the top card. PHOTO 17-4. This is easy and almost automatic.

**PHOTO 17-4**



***THREE!*** Snap the single card over: PHOTO 17-5.

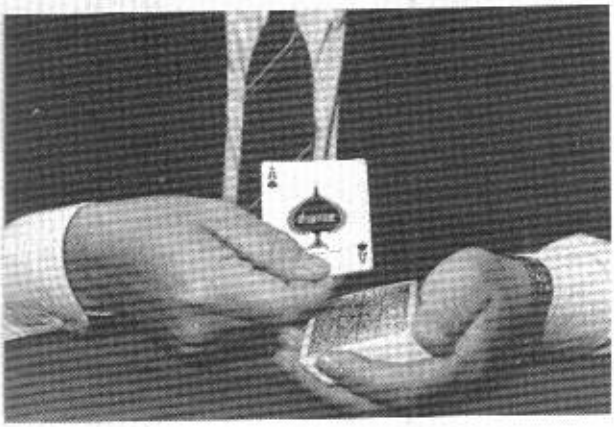


**PHOTO 17-5**

## AMBITIOUS CHALLENGE

There is a little get ready involved here. You need one card partly outjogged from the back of the deck at about center. Here is how I get into this position.

I toss out the signed card, face up, as I offer the spectator the opportunity to sign it again if he likes, if he thinks there is something wrong with the card. Most times, the offer is declined, but this little break in the action gives me more than enough time to carry out the following move.

With the left little finger pull down on the bottom card of the deck: PHOTO 17-6.

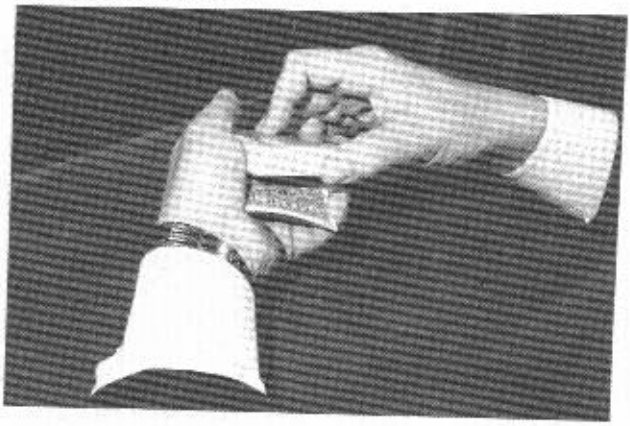
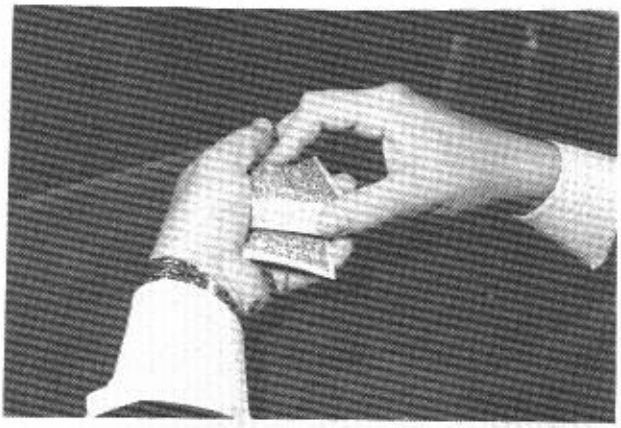


**PHOTO 17-6**

The right hand advances the deck in the left hand except for the bottom card which stays behind: PHOTO 17-7.

**PHOTO 17-7**



Without pausing, the right hand cuts off the top half of the deck and replaces it below the packet in the left hand: PHOTO 17-8.

You are now in the proper position: PHOTO 17-9.

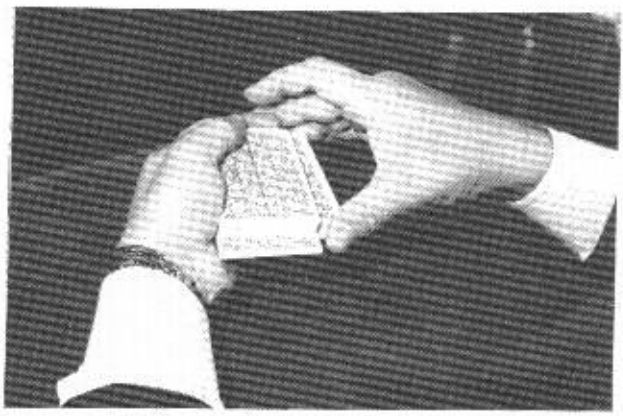


**PHOTO 17-9**

**PHOTO 17-9**



*The reason you cannot catch me is that all the backs are the same - and you cannot see exactly when your card arrives back on top...*

As you say the above, the right hand picks up the signed card off the table and holds it face down, and the left thumb moves the top card of the deck it is holding back (enough to hide the jogged card) as it tilts the deck towards the audience: PHOTO 17-10.

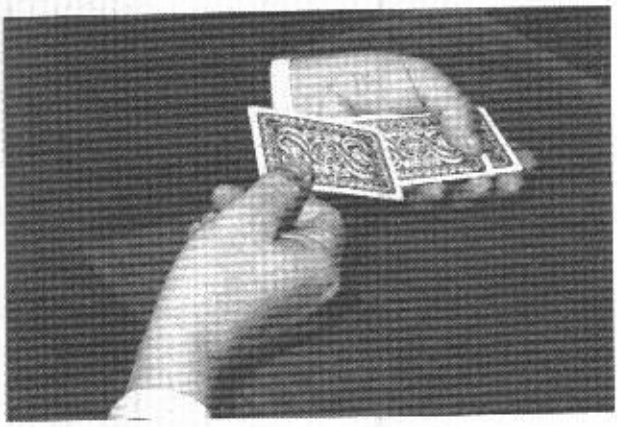


**PHOTO 17-10**

Drop the signed card back onto the table.

*But if I turn over the top card and if I put your card into the middle of the deck face up, why you would see the instant it arrived...!*

Actually, at this point, it would seem that you are setting down impossible conditions.

A number of things take place as you say the above line.

First, you turn the top card face up onto the deck but place it directly into Tilt position: PHOTO 17-11. In other words, the left little finger holds a small break at the rear (a common mistake in Tilt handling is to hold too large a break); note that the break extends across the entire back end of the card.

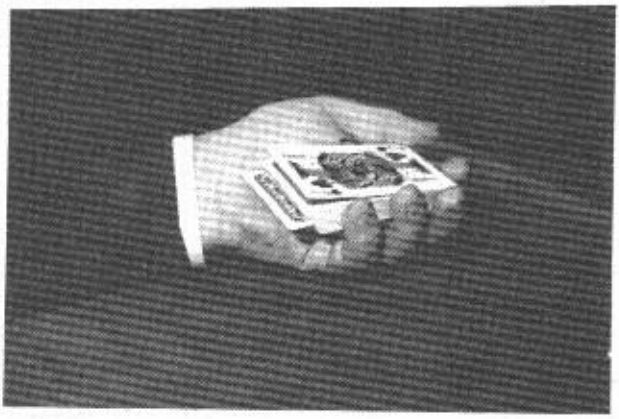
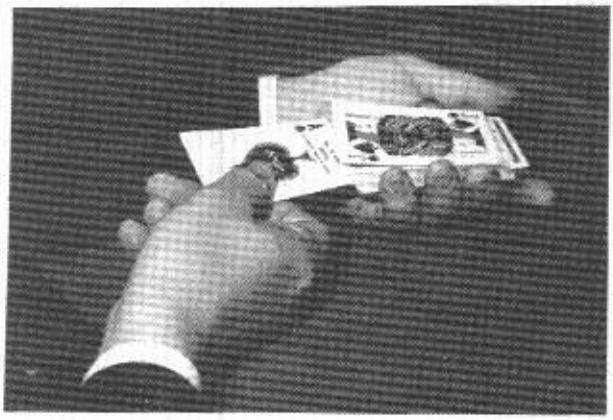


**PHOTO 17-11**

The right hand picks up the signed card, holding it face up, and using the top right corner, pokes a few cards in the back center, causing the card(s) to emerge from the front of the deck: PHOTO 17-12. This is just a ploy to help convince spectators that the card will really be inserted into the center, "establishing the move", as Vernon would say.

**PHOTO 17-12**



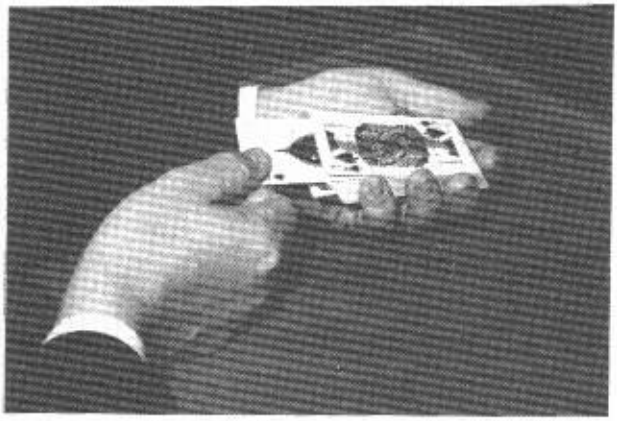
Square up the front of the deck with the left first finger.

Now insert the card below the top tilted card, level with the second card: PHOTO 17-13.

Use the back of the right forefinger to start pushing the signed card into the deck: PHOTO 17-14. From the front, it

appears as if the card is really going into the center. But the real convincer is coming now!

**PHOTO 17-13**



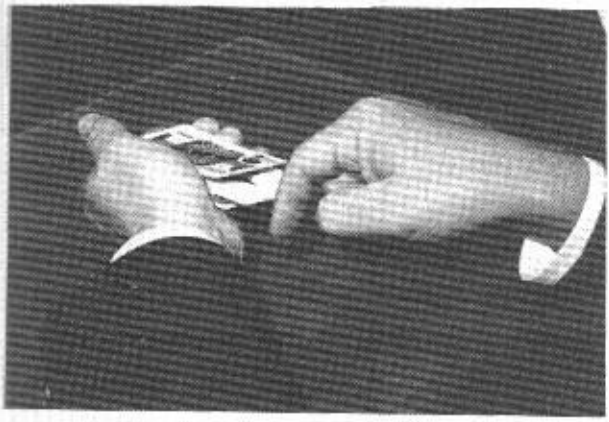
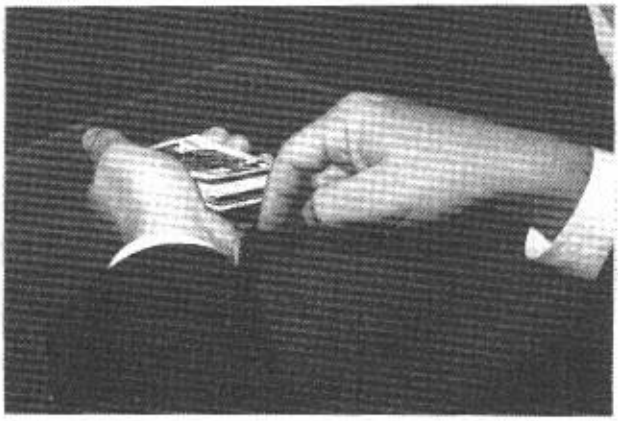


**PHOTO 17-14**

When your forefinger hits the center outjogged card, pause for a second and say Watch!: PHOTO 17-15.

**PHOTO 17-15**



For this to work, the left thumb must squeeze lightly against the front of the deck. In one motion, the right forefinger pushes BOTH cards flush BUT A CARD OR CARDS WILL EMERGE FROM

THE FRONT CENTER OF THE DECK: PHOTO 17-16. This really sells the illusion that the card is going into the center.



**PHOTO 17-16**

But the best is yet to come!

Cleanly turn over the double on top of the deck, and extend the deck towards the spectator as you ask him to remove the top card himself and look at it. The spectator removes the top card which is the signed card!

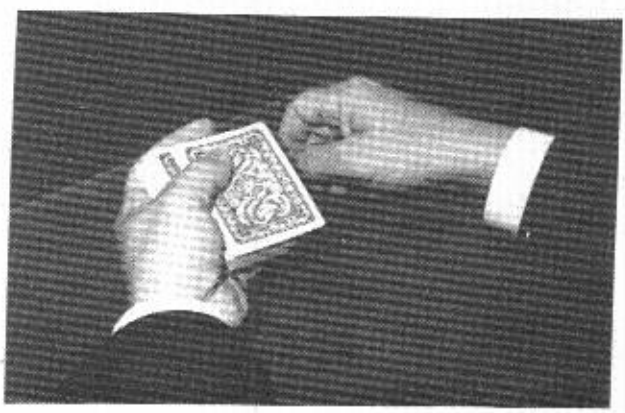
Miracle stuff. Tell them to mark the spot on the floor so they will know where to build the temple.

## JUXTAPOSITION

This is a general utility sleight that I use extensively in Ambitious Card routines. I cannot believe that this does not exist elsewhere so I will claim no originality.

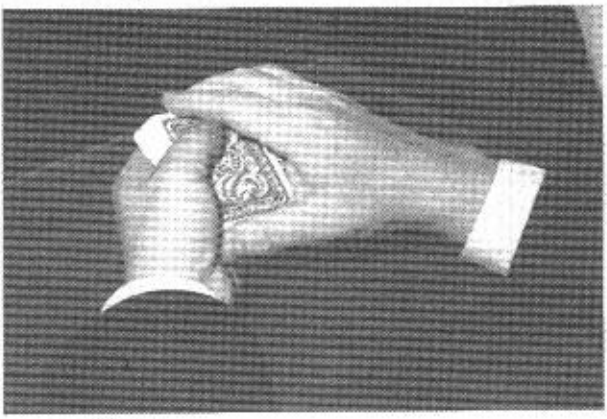
The left hand holds the deck. The thumb pushes over the top card with a little pressure so that the second card rides over a bit as well: PHOTO 17-17.

**PHOTO 17-17**



This can be an open move as you talk about this amazing card that keeps rising to the top. Now the left thumb pulls the top card back flush while at the same moment, the right hand comes over the deck. PHOTO 17-18 shows the position while PHOTO 17-19 shows an exposed view with the right hand removed.

**PHOTO 17-18**



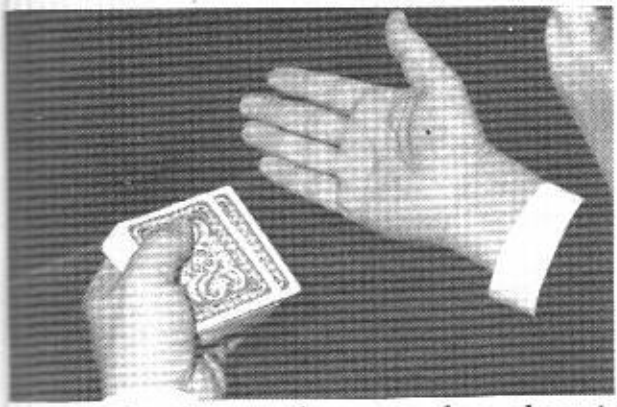
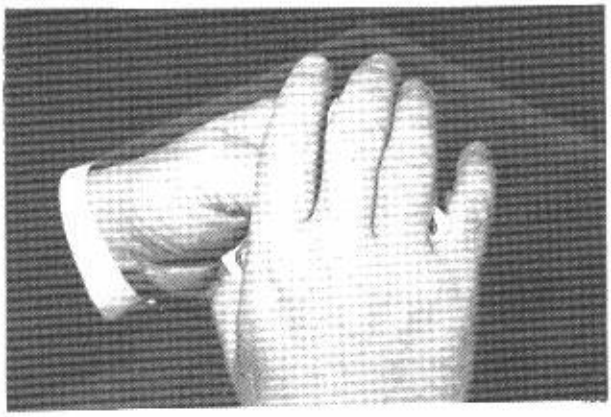


**PHOTO 17-19**

This leaves the second card projecting to the right. The right hand now makes a squaring motion, by moving to the left and then back to the right - as if squaring the ends of the deck. However, on the initial motion to the left, the far right corner of the projecting card is "hit" by the base of the right fourth finger: PHOTO 17-20 shows an exposed view.

**PHOTO 17-20**



As a result, the near left corner will be pushed into the pad of right thumb. Now as the right hand moves back to the right, the second card is brought out at the same time, gripped between the right thumb and base of the fourth finger: PHOTO 17-21.

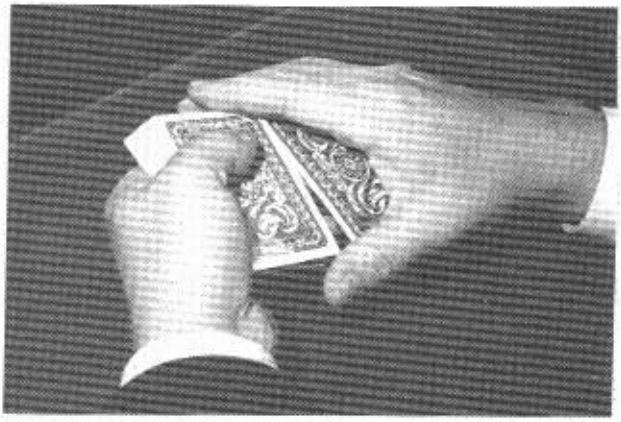
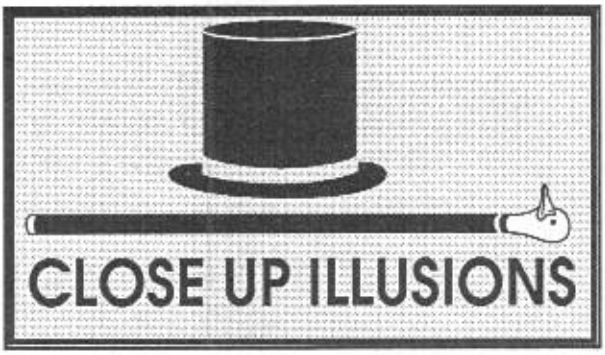


**PHOTO 17-21**

In one more squaring motion, the card is brought back onto the top of the deck. Try this in front of a mirror. It is quite deceptive. In an Ambitious Card routine, you can keep bringing the selected card to the second position - then showing it immediately via a double lift, then supposedly burying it and having it rise to the top, then starting the sequence all over again!

Finally, check out the **Pirouette Center Double** on page 329 and a most deceptive Ambitious Card sequence called **Peregrination** on page 333.






# CHAPTER 18

## THE SILVER SEQUEL

Shortly after I released **The Silver Passage**, I added a kicker ending. If you do not know about the Silver Passage, it is a coins through the table routine published in the **Masters of Magic Series.** The scenario is that four coins individually penetrate through a mirror.

After the last coin had penetrated, I picked up all four coins, held them in my left hand, and opened the left hand over the mirror. Shock: no coins. I then opened a little coin box from whence came the coins at the start: all four coins had returned home!

I have closed my close up act with this for the last ten years. This is, as the man says, the big finish.

The effect is produced using eight coins. The original empty box is switched for a full box. The original four coins are vanished using the Gossamer Dissolve move.

How else?

# The Grand Trunk Funk and Banana Railway Switch

The crowned heads of Europe will tremble. Men of power will lower their voices. Here comes the secret of the switch that has fooled the mighty and the meek. It gives one pause, it surely does.

Fact is, there is no move to this darn thing, but it has fooled everybody. It is all acting and construction, and especially, get the switch in early.

All through my close up act I get my close up props from little golden boxes. My **Homing ring** and rope come out of a box. My **Supershells** come out of a little gold and glass box. My **Two Goblets** come out of a burgundy leather carrying case. Part of the theater of it all. I buy these little boxes in gift shops.

I have two little screw lid boxes that just hold four silver dollars. One is in my close up case on my left, usually on a chair pulled close to me. The second, also full of coins, is itself in a larger gift box with a lid. Underneath the large box is the mirror (I now use a Meir Yedid silver disk with a hole in the center, made of glitter plastic, instead of the mirror, which broke so often!). I bring out the large box: PHOTO 18-1.

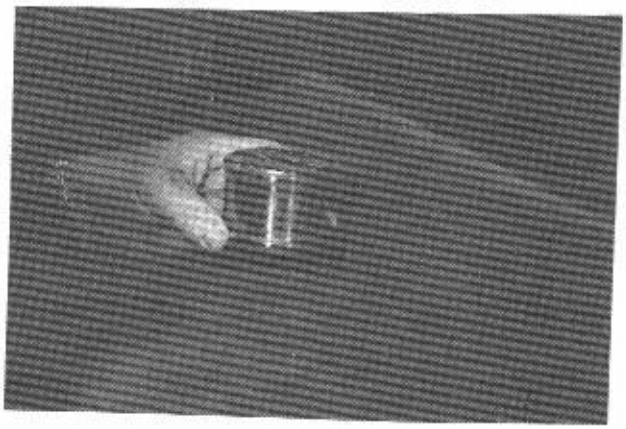


**PHOTO 18-1**

I open the box, take out the smaller box and unscrew it: PHOTO 18-2

The coins are dumped out onto the table. I screw back the cover on the small box. I take up the large box in the right hand and the little box in the left hand: PHOTO 18-3. I turn to the left

and bring down the left hand, drop the empty small box and pick up the full small box. Meanwhile, the mirror has just come into view (it was underneath the large box) and this arrests attention.

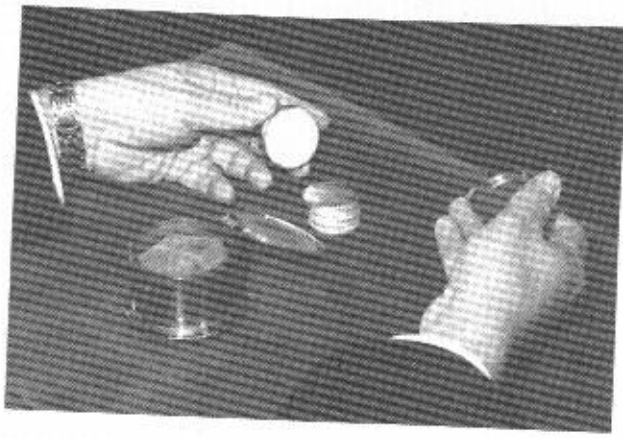


**PHOTO 18-2**

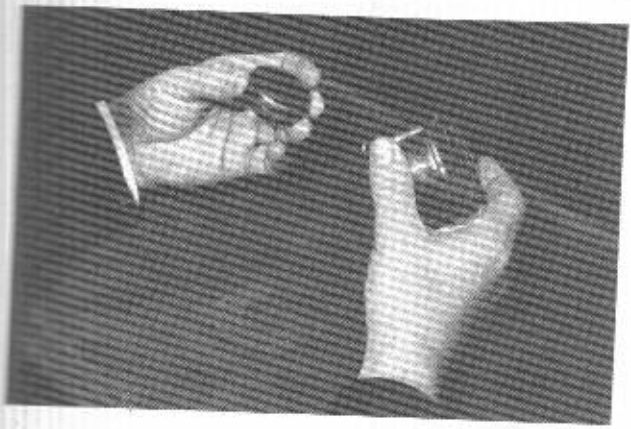


**PHOTO 18-3**

I come back facing front and look to the right as if I might place the boxes to my right: PHOTO 18-4.



**PHOTO 18-4**

I finally place the small box to the left of the close-up stage, and the large box to the left of the stage itself: PHOTO 18-5.



**PHOTO 18-5**

You see, nothing has happened yet. I have not even started the trick: just getting ready. And yet the reappearance at the end is now set up. You were expecting some mechanically ingenious new move, I suppose?

## THE JAMARY COIN CLIP

I have tried the Slydini And Ammar clips and while they work for the effects for which they were designed, the Jamary Clip has them beat for the move to come. I came up with this only because it seemed the simplest approach. And the good news is this: it costs pennies to make.

Go to your nearest hardware store and pick up a little angle iron: my one is 3/4": PHOTO 18-6.

Using a vise and a hammer, or using pliers and great



**PHOTO 18-6**

strength (the first idea is better, isn't it?) bend one side as shown in PHOTO 18-7.

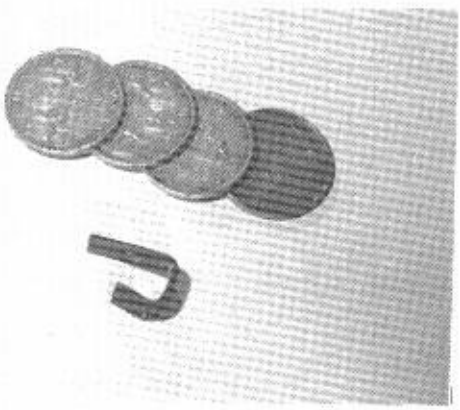


**PHOTO 18-7**

The clip will have no spring, no give. You want to wedge, or jam in the four coins, and they will be held securely: PHOTO 18-8. Once you have the clip the right size for the four coins you will use, you are done!

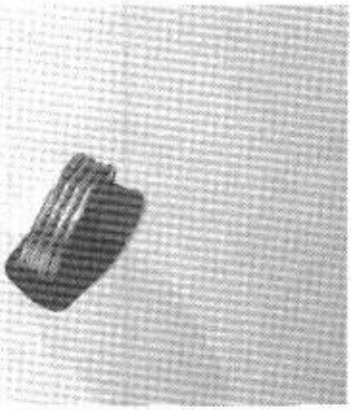


**PHOTO 18-8**

## THE GOSSAMER DISSOLVE

The coin clip is on your lap or under your knee. You have just finished the penetration of the last coin. The boxes were switched long ago. The mirror is to the left of your surface.

Lean back. Smile. The trick is over. Applause. Look bashful.

You have all the time in the world to get the clip into your left hand. I have my whole act choreographed to music and at this stage, the music is playing going home type sounds, the bring-em-

back-for-a-bow-type-music, which is full of applause cues. Get the clip in a finger palm position in the left hand: PHOTO 18-9.

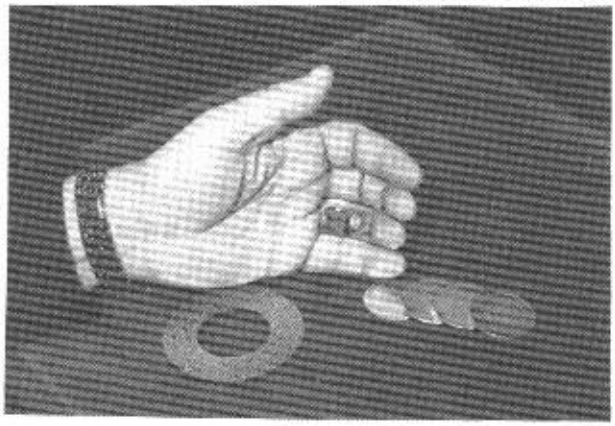
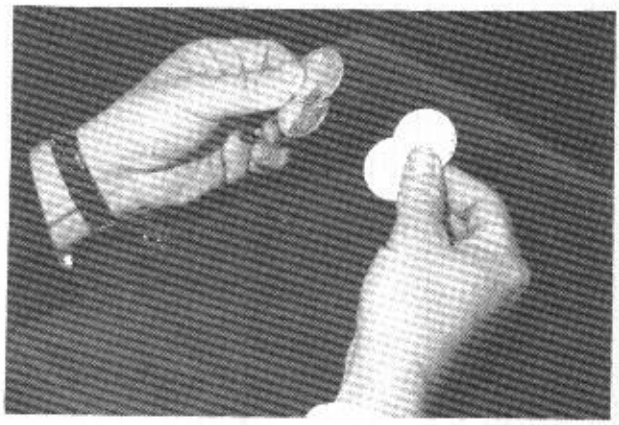


**PHOTO 18-9**

They are so nice you decide to show them one more thing.

Pick up two coins in each hand and show them, each pair in a slightly fanned position: PHOTO 18-10.

**PHOTO 18-10**



Place the left hand coins into the right hand, which holds all four coins in a fan: PHOTO 18-11.

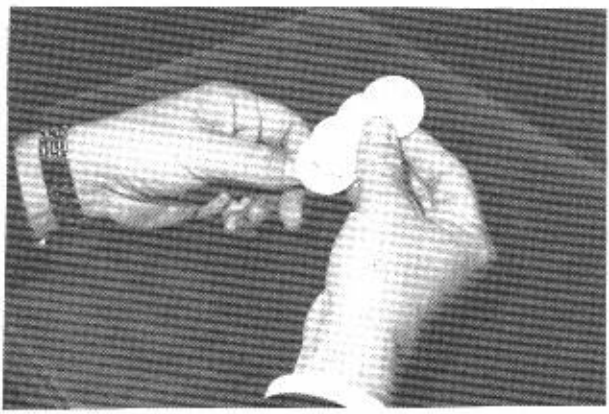


**PHOTO 18-11**

With the coins in a splayed or staggered formation, the right hand feeds them into the coin clip in the left hand: PHOTO 18-12.

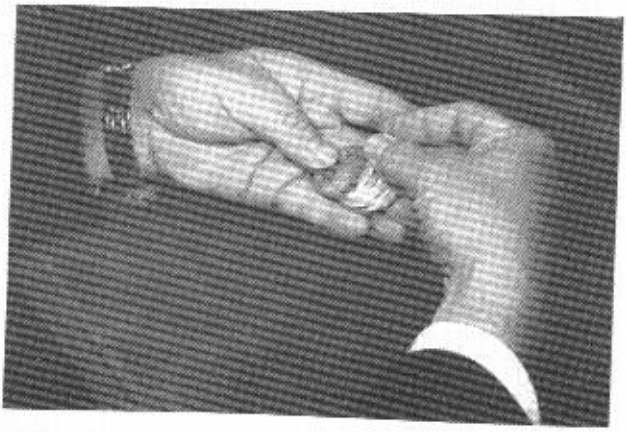


**PHOTO 18-12**

Once they are all in, the left second and third fingertips come up against the edge of the stack...PHOTO 18-13.

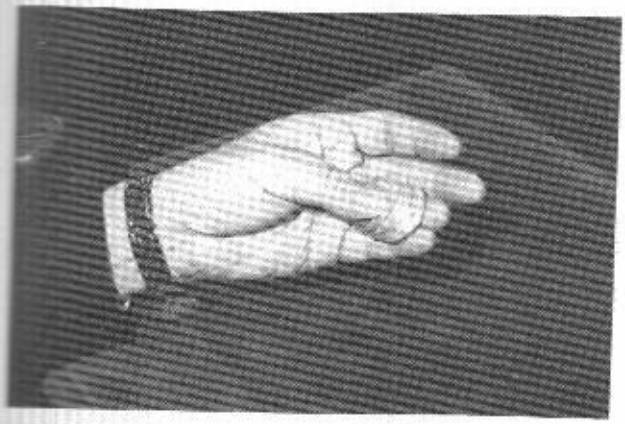


**PHOTO 18-13**

And pushes the stack firmly into the clip: PHOTO 18-14.

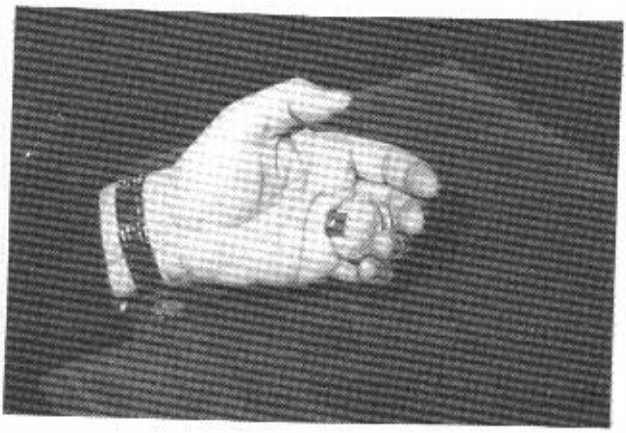


**PHOTO 18-14**

The left thumb now comes onto the short arm of the clip and the hand turns to show the four coins: PHOTO 18-15. Notice how the Jamary Clip permits a clean and open display.

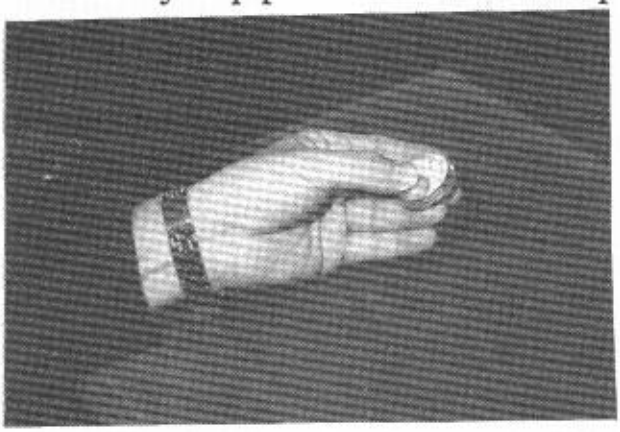
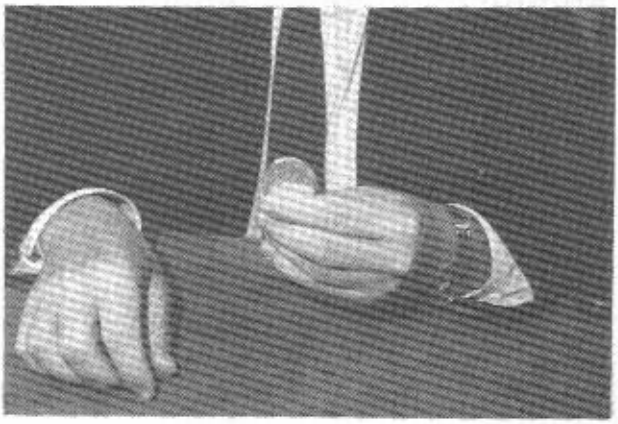


**PHOTO 18-15**

The right hand turns the stack over and up so that it extends above the left hand: PHOTO 18-16 shows the audience view and PHOTO 18-17 shows your view. Again note the open display.

**PHOTO 18-16**



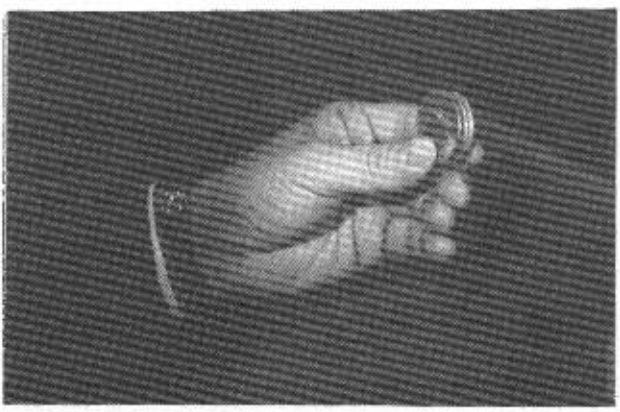


**PHOTO 18-17**

The right hand thumb and forefinger now hold the stack and lower it into the left fist: PHOTO 18-18. The reason for this is that were you to let the stack simply slip into the hand your audience would wonder why they hear no clinking.

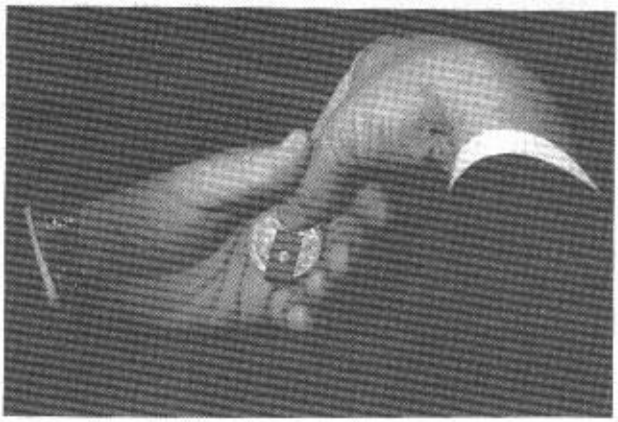


**PHOTO 18-18**

Note that the left hand is held right above the lap, a few inches above table level: PHOTO 18-19.

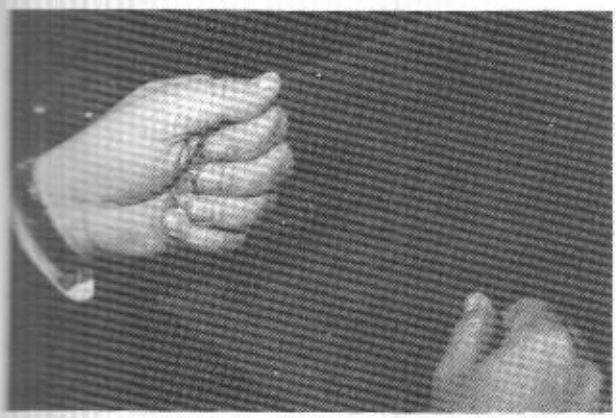


**PHOTO 18-19**

The right hand picks up the mirror: PHOTO 18-20.

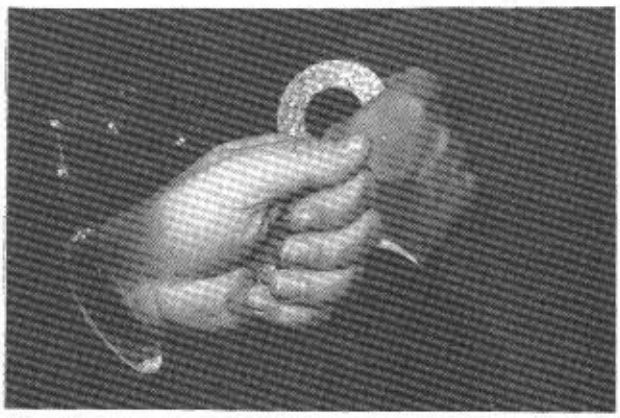


**PHOTO 18-20**

At this precise instant drop the stack into the lap (Yes, it is my Crossover Lap in yet another role). Immediately place the mirror on top of the fist, and slide the small coin box to below the left hand: PHOTO 18-21.

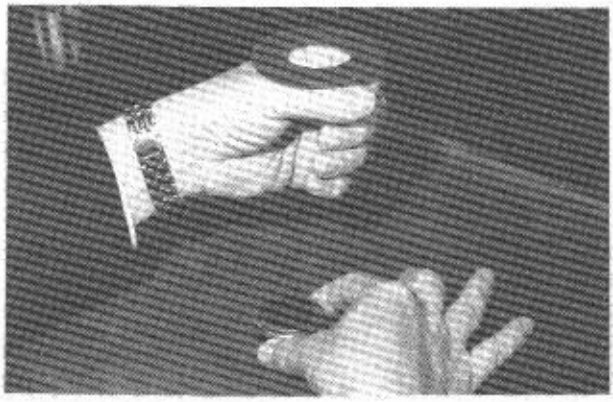
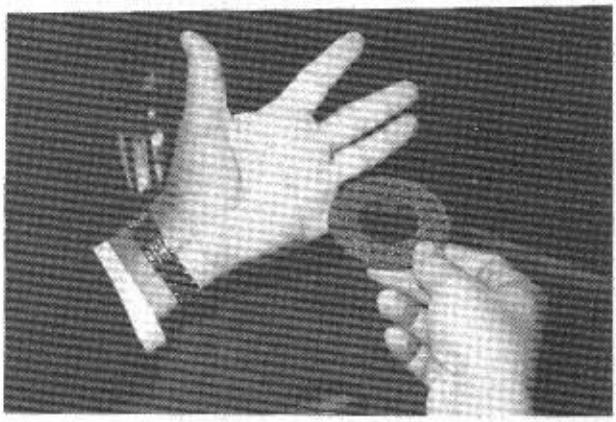


**PHOTO 18-21**

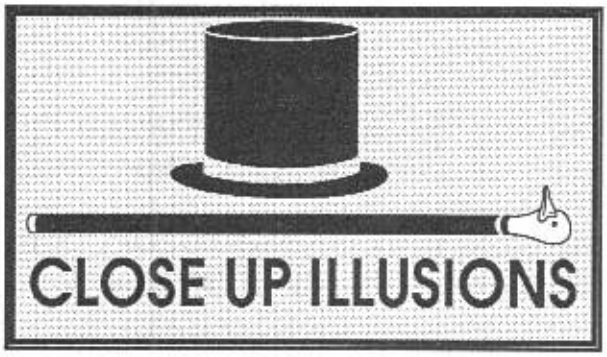
Make a gesture to signify that something important is to happen. Take the mirror in the right hand, hold it below the left fist, and squeeze the coins into nothingness: PHOTO 18-22.

**PHOTO 18-22**



Slowly pick up the small coin box, unscrew the cover, and dump out the coins.






# CHAPTER 19

## THE AFTER DINNER SPEECH

It is the nature of my work - I am a lawyer by profession, specializing in government relations - that my avocation is a source of much curiosity among my business peers, and I often get invitations to address service clubs, professional groups, and other associations, on the subject of magic.

I sat down and wrote a speech which included the performance of a few tricks. I thought that many readers will find themselves in similar situations: so simply adapt the speech and make it your own.

I can say that it has served me well.

I think there may be a real market here that goes beyond the magic show. Service clubs have an endless appetite for after dinner speakers, and finding one who can interest a bored group of business people is an increasing challenge. An entire career could be built around Kiwanis, and Rotary, not to mention the Moose, and the Elks, and other wildlife.

*Magic, conjuring, prestidigitation, grand illusion, close-up wizardry, hypnotism and mind reading. Heady stuff!*

*Magic is as timeless as an entertainment form can be in this age of volubility, sophistication, and critical boredom.*

*When I say magician, the average person conjures up an image of a tall mysterious man who pulls rabbits out of a hat; yet after a spending all my life from the age of six onwards committed to an ongoing interest in magic, I have yet to see, or indeed hear of, any magician who ever pulled a rabbit out of any hat. How strong an image can be!*

*How do we do our tricks? Is it wires and mirrors? Is the hand quicker than the eye, are we mere jugglers ? - or is it the mind, not the eye, which is fooled? Tonight you will learn one trick at least - how to make something vanish. You will learn the secret, although the execution is something else again. But more about that later.*

*The wonder of it all is that magicians can still instill wonder - a childhood sense of wonder - in the most knowledgeable and sophisticated and indeed bored of adults, to say nothing of children, in this world where the true magic is to be found in micro chip technology, space age materials and artificial intelligence.*

*And yet Uncle Charlie can do a card trick, or make a coin disappear, and all of us, from brain surgeons to nuclear physicists, pause for just a second, realizing that we have just witnessed the impossible.*

*Well, not really the impossible.*

*Let me illustrate something right now.*

(Here I perform the cut and restored rope trick. Any version is probably quite good as long as you can execute it well. I use a Jean Merlin routine.)

*You know and I know that I took a piece of rope, cut it in half, tied the two ends together and magically, the rope was restored into one single piece, made whole again.*

*Integrity, as it were, was restored to the rope. You and I know as well that you cannot cut an ordinary rope in two, and then make it whole again.*

*The impossibility of it all is what makes it magical.*

*Either:*

*1) I didn't really cut it (but you saw me cut it)*
*Or*
*2) I didn't really put it together again (but you saw and felt it whole)*
*Or*
*3) I switched the two cut pieces for one whole piece (When?)*
*Or*
*4) This really is a magical new self-mending fiber (but you have the rope in your hands and it's just old cotton rope)*
*Or*
*5) ... it's magic!*

*The initial reaction is DO IT AGAIN.*

*Which brings me to the first great rule in magic, taught to the beginner magician before he learns his first trick, and that is: NEVER DO IT AGAIN!*

*If I do it again, you will know what to look for - you will anticipate, and therefore be harder to fool. So I won't do it again! Or if I do, I won't use the same method (because, you see, there are at least twenty methods that I know of to accomplish what you have just witnessed).*

*And if I were to tell you how I did it, you would probably feel let down, cheated, mad at yourself to have been fooled by such a - in your estimation - simple thing. On the other hand, if you were a magician, you would probably be totally delighted by the boldness of the method.*

*The second great rule of magic is thus: DON'T TELL THEM HOW IT'S DONE. UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. EVER.*

*Magic is a performing art, just like singing, acting and playing piano. Incredibly, there have been more books published on magic than on any other performing art.*

*In the United States alone, there are over 40,000 magicians.*

*Where are they all? - many have only heard of David Copperfield, and Doug Henning, and maybe Siegfried and Roy.*

*Well, the answer is that most of them are part-time magicians, or close-up magicians, or serious hobbyists, or children's magicians, or club magicians, or any of the myriad other types of magicians that you do not see regularly on television, simply because of the nature of their craft.*

*And many of the greatest magicians are known only to other magicians.*

*In music, you have composers, and lyricists, and arrangers, and musicians and singers.*

*And equally so in magic: you have the inventors, the creative geniuses behind the dark secrets, the composers, and you have the performers, the singers, who wear the cloak of Merlin on the public stage.*

*And some are both creators and performers and teachers.*

*And yet they are all the descendants of Merlin, and Houdini and Blackstone and Thurston, and all the others who have elevated the performance of trickery to a credible art form.*

*Magic is, at heart, the entertaining presentation of what must remain a trick. Magic is a stagecrafted puzzle. Whether it be Uncle Charlie's card trick, or David Copperfield's Lear Jet Vanish, it's just a trick. But tricks can be entertaining, captivating, infuriating, hilarious or just plain compelling.*

*Let me show you something else:*

(I now perform the Fred Kaps handling of Sidewalk Shuffle, but any trick with a strong surprise ending will do nicely)

That is known as a surprise ending. In show business terms, it has a kicker.

A crucial part of magic is surprise. And so the third great rule of magic is: DON'T TELL THEM WHAT'S COMING!

That would be almost as bad as repeating a trick. When you don't know what's coming, it's hard to anticipate.

These three great rules apply to every magician: the old master and the sorcerer's apprentice.

For me, magic has been a hobby (although I did work my way through law school by producing doves in a Quebec City nightclub after classes). I have been madly in love with magic for most of my life.

When I was a boy, my mother gave me a magic set - the type children get every Christmas - but rather than play with it for a few days and then discard it, the magic set opened up a vast new appetite. I wanted more - and began to search libraries for books on magic.

For my next birthday, my mother hired a local magician - and it was the nicest present a young budding wizard could hope for. I sat entranced through the whole show - he made balls multiply and silk handkerchiefs vanish - and water change to wine - or at least it looked like wine - and finally a rabbit appear (not out of a hat!).

I was lost. I discovered magic shops - there are at least three good ones in Canada that cater to magicians, one of which is in Montreal, on Van Horne: Phil Matlin's Perfect Magic (you can mention the closest magic shop to the venue). I also discovered Magician's Conventions - there are many every year across North America. They look like most conventions - there are seminars, and dealer exhibitions, where manufacturer's show off their latest trick or illusion, or publishers show off the latest book of secrets - and there are shows, and lectures, and late night meetings where the real secrets - the real inside stuff - is traded between the masters.

The more I got into magic, the more I became fascinated.

It took me about twenty years to notice something.

*Have you ever seen a woman magician?*

*Men saw women in half and stick swords through them and make them float - but what about women doing magic? Is this a sexist field? In every other performing art, there are an equal number from both sexes. BUT NO WOMEN MAGICIANS!*

*Well, that's not exactly true - there are some, but so very very few!*

*To answer this, surely one of magic's greatest mysteries, you have to understand how people become magicians in the first place.*

*And I think the main reason we do is a desire to show off. To be able to do something no one else can do. And little boys are show-offs, and little girls are not.*

*Oh there are other subsidiary attractions: I was curious, and wanted to know how tricks were done.*

*And magic is a great therapeutic tool to help the overly-shy kid (which I was), or the socially uncomfortable child (which I wasn't!).*

*But the initial attraction is the great opportunity it gives a little kid to show-off to the world, or at least to the other guys, and especially to the girls, his wonderful POWERS - the magic in his hands - his ability to do something that cannot be done - or at least something that his buddies cannot do.*

*With time, the initial attraction is slowly replaced by a passion for magic as an art form.*

*We are chefs who cannot reveal our recipes. The better we are, the less it must show - for instance, great sleight of hand must be invisible. Our greatest talents must remain unsung - except, of course, among fellow magicians - and we must settle for the wonder we instill. Our methods, finally, are of no significance - in music, it doesn't matter if the musician is using a cheap or expensive synthesizer - all that counts is the final sound.*

*The Great Richiardi - a South American who died recently, used to end his show by sawing a woman in half using a buzz-*

*saw. It was all blood and gore - as the blade ripped through the assistants belly, blood and guts would spill out - it was, well, different.*

*And then Richiardi, blood all over his suit and face - would come to the front and say something like:*

*"Ladies and Gentlemen, I heard one lady say 'It's a trick'. Well, let me assure that lady that she is right. I cannot afford to kill one assistant every night. It is a trick. But all that really counts is - Was the trick well done?"*

*And the curtain would fall.*

*I am not going to do anything like that tonight - after such a lovely dinner - but the message of Richiardi is pertinent. When you look at a magician, all that really counts is: are the tricks well done?*

*The French Magician Robert Houdin, from whom Houdini took his name - used to say that a magician is an actor playing the part of a magician. What he meant is that we don't really have magical powers, but it must appear as if we do - and somewhere in the succession of events between beginning the performance of the trick and the miracle, a secret method - whether it be sleight of hand, or a secret gimmick or plain boldness - must enter the scene and quietly depart - unnoticed because if something is even suspected, let alone detected, well then, there is no magic.*

*For instance -*
(I take a billiard ball and make it vanish.)

*Did I use a new gimmick, or was it sleight of hand, or was it body language?*

(I now perform the Excelsior (or Multiplying) Billiard Ball Trick)

*I don't give anything away by telling you what you suspect - sleight of hand was being used here. But that does not explain anything really, does it? What is sleight of hand - are there trap door or mirrors built into the hand? or does the magician - as Robert Houdin suggested - act out VERY WELL, with all the proper body*

*language - one action while secretly carrying out another? This is great acting - as a matter of fact, it must be perfect acting, otherwise it fails totally! If it doesn't fool, it's not magic.*

*A magician is the only performer who is never permitted to be less than perfect. If a singer forgets a word, if a musician plays a bad note, he or she continues, the moment passes. If a magician misses his trick, he is no good. There is no recovery: he has blown it. It is a high risk profession, with great potential for failure. I - like every other magician - learned through mistakes. Two of my most notable disasters revolved around doves - those beautiful white birds that magicians produce out of thin air.*

*When I was around ten years old, I put an ad in the newspaper: Magician Available for Children's Birthday Parties - One Hour Show - $5.00.*

*I would end the show by producing a dove. (I was just starting out and I only owned one bird - so I kept her for last). Well, this was my first five dollar show - and after an hour of fighting with these little monsters, not much younger than I was, as I recall, I produced Cynthia, my dove. To my horror, I heard a deep, dark growl, and this monster of dog appeared out of nowhere, leaped over the kids, and ate Cynthia. I had failed to notice my employer's pet. It was quite an ending. The kids cried. I didn't get any references.*

*Years later, when I was in law school, I would play nights at a Quebec City Night club called La Porte St Jean - at the time, a well known night spot.*

*The stage was special - it was out in the open, with the curtain at the back. Behind the curtain was a swinging door which led to the dressing rooms.*

*At this point, I had graduated to twelve doves, most of which were hidden at various spots in my suit of tails. My mother had sewn in all these secret pockets, and dry cleaners we patronized thought we were a weird family. Just before me on the billing was a stripper. The routine was this: after sweetheart had removed her last shred of dignity, and a few seconds before we all got arrested, the lights would go out, honey would pick up her G-strings and other such bits, as I stood behind the door behind the curtain. I was holding my table, high hat and cane. The stripper would duck*

*through the curtain and the door, holding it open as I walked out, set down the table, and struck a pose. The lights would come up, the music (Begin the Beguine) would start, and my pantomime act was on its way. At the time, I thought it was a pretty classy affair. One night sweetheart must have been anxious to meet her boyfriend, because she let the swinging door go early. It whacked me in the back and - as it turned out - crushed a bird to death. Not any bird - the first bird to be produced. The music played - the classy kid struck a pose, and proceeded to gross out the paying customers by producing a bloody dead bird.*

*As I said, this is a high risk sport.*

*A word about the different kinds of magicians. Although the sheer shock of being fooled causes us to laugh, there are magicians who specialize in comedy magic. The requirements are onerous, for it demands that the performer be both a magician and a clown, two relatively difficult fields.*

*Another field of interest is that of illusion. The term illusionist is usually reserved to mean big magic - people or animals vanish or appear or float or are cut in half. The two most successful illusionists in the world today are the magical team of Siegfried and Roy. Two Europeans, they met while working the same cruise ship. Siegfried, the blond, was a magician, and Roy, the dark haired fellow, was an animal trainer. They joined forces and have produced a show that is nothing short of spectacular. They are the most successful show in Las Vegas - beating Frank Sinatra, Wayne Newton, and all the rest. They have been playing there, steady, for over twenty years. Their show, Beyond Belief, is considered by all to be the best show in Vegas, the one you must see.*

*Mentalism is a very specialized form of magic entertainment: the apparent reading of minds, or demonstrations of ESP, or precognition. Many magicians have abandoned the legitimate theater route to claim, or to imply, that they have special powers. The Amazing Kreskin, for example, even writes a book about his supposedly amazing life, and makes claims which are baloney. Everything Kreskin does is nothing more and nothing less than a conjurer's trick. Another bunko artist was a mediocre and struggling Israeli magician who had trouble getting bookings. He tried a new trick: bending spoons and pretending it was caused by mind power, and Uri Geller went on to temporary fame and fortune,*

*before being exposed by magicians as a total con man. Even today, there are some who still believe.*

*There will always be people willing to believe in these powers. Sometimes, people who should know better, such as magicians, even fall for the con men, and I note that Canadian magician Doug Henning has gone off to India to study under Maharishi who promises to teach Henning how to levitate.*

*Most magicians in the mentalism field are happy to present it, tongue in cheek, as a form of magical entertainment.*

*One area that in my opinion is the poetry of magic is that form of the art that has monopolized my interest, Close-up magic, the intimate presentation of magic at close quarters. Close up magic can appear totally impossible to the onlooker - let me give you an example.*

(I here perform Slydini's Paper Balls over the Head)

*But first, to answer a question I am often asked - WHAT IS THE BEST TRICK YOU HAVE EVER SEEN - it was performed by the greatest stage magician of this or any other day, David Copperfield on a television special of a few years ago.*

*David received much publicity for making the statue of liberty vanish, and walking through the Great Wall of China and vanishing in the Bermuda Triangle, and escaping from Alcatraz, yet in my opinion he has never surpassed his earlier feat of vanishing a Lear Jet. When I first saw this, I was not only fooled, I was demolished.*

*But especially interesting was David's presentation. This was no longer a mere trick - this was a major television event. There was drama. Susan Anton and others were at the scene, interviewing spectators, interviewing airport managers, and plane owners. There was a musical score, there was the magician as heroic figure. And then, after a successful conclusion, there was the triumphant return of our hero to the theater to accept his applause. This was surely grand theater. This was also one heck of a good magic trick. There were no camera tricks here; if you had been there you would have seen the same thing.*

*From the newest and most razzle dazzle type of magic, let me now take you back to China, for a mystery many centuries old,*

*the puzzle of the steel rings, performed by magicians all over the world. Here is my version of the oldest known magic trick.*

(I now perform the Linking Rings)

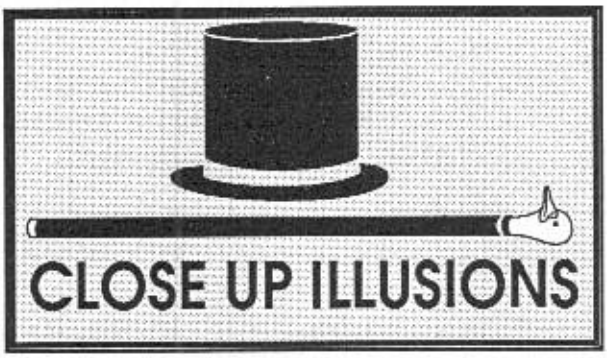
*Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you have had as much fun as I have had. If I can leave you with a wish, it is this: "may our children never lose their sense of wonder; may they grow old without getting bored; may they find magic in nature and in the heavens and in the world around them. And may some of their wonder rub off on us."*

*Thank you, and may all your days be magical.*





Gary Ouellet, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, President Ronald Reagan And Nancy Reagan




# CHAPTER 20

## THE SLIDER

There is, in magicdom, a great wrong to be righted, and an injustice begging to be corrected. I am speaking of the wholesale neglect that has been visited upon the top change.

While undoubtedly true that the top change is not unknown as a concept among any group of intermediate card magicians, very few, IF ANY, use the sleight when they work for real people. Even the masters do not use the artifice when working in front of the paying customers.

Well, MOST experts.

Here and there, however, come reports of a select few - the trade show kings - who earn their living with this one sleight! (and, perhaps, the classic force).

There are magicians whose entire trade show act consists in having a spectator choose a card, have the card put aside, and have someone else choose the same card. The card is switched via the top change and forced again via the classic force!

The change I am about to teach you was created to circumvent one mechanical problem I could never get used to: a fumbling when one card was changed to another.

By the way, this top change has another thing going for it: it can just as easily change a block of cards for another block of cards as it can change one card for another single card.

## THE SLIDER TOP CHANGE

I will teach you this in parts. First, let's consider the switched in card. This card is on the top of the deck held in the left hand dealing position, with a pinky break below the top card: PHOTO 20-1.

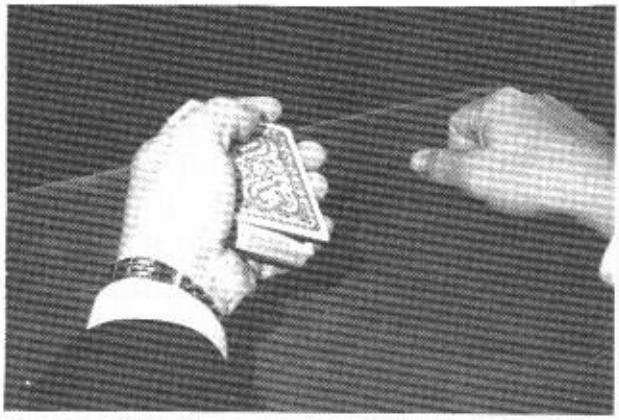


**PHOTO 20-1**

Note how the hand is held at an angle. With no effort, you can release the top card (by releasing pressure with the left thumb) and the card will slide down and away from the deck.

If the right hand were held in the right position, namely just to the right and slightly down from the deck, the card would slide

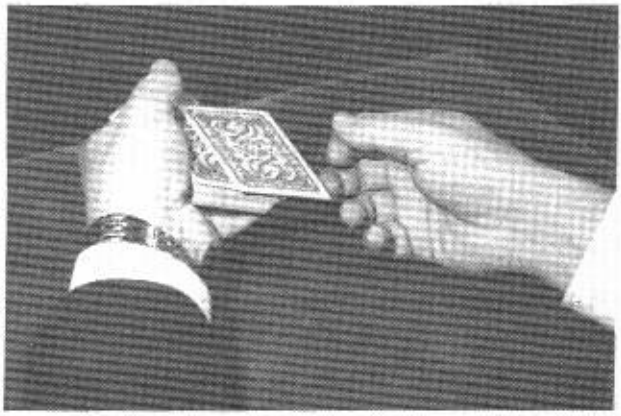


**PHOTO 20-2**

right into the waiting right hand. Practice having the card slide into a space between the right forefinger and second finger: PHOTO 20-2 and PHOTO 20-3.

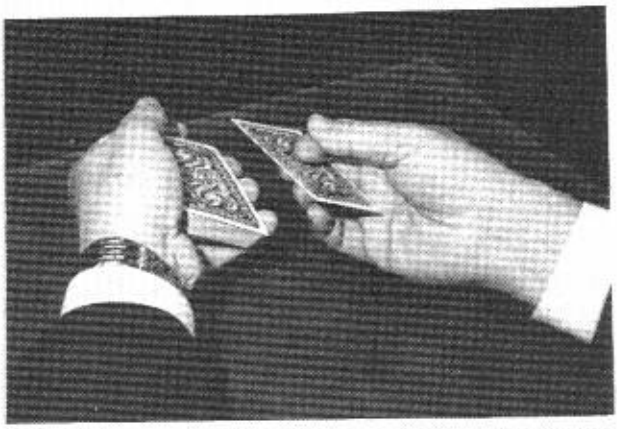


**PHOTO 20-3**

NOW if the right hand had been holding a card by its right edge - PHOTO 20-4 - and if the left hand (holding the deck) went to get this right hand card, with the intention of taking it onto the deck - the very action of the left "opening up" to take the right hand card AUTOMATICALLY releases the top card of the deck which AUTOMATICALLY slides down into the position between the right forefinger and second finger. The left hand now moves away: PHOTO 20-5.

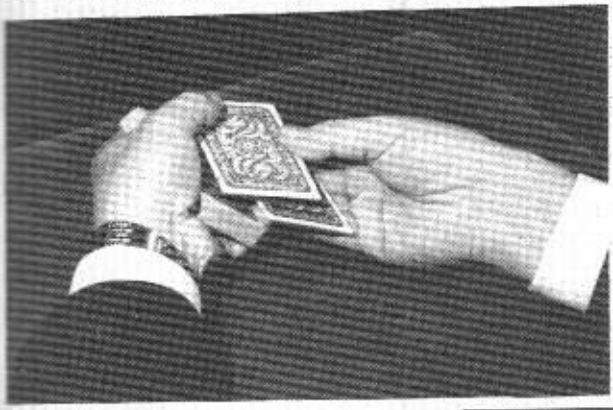


**PHOTO 20-4**

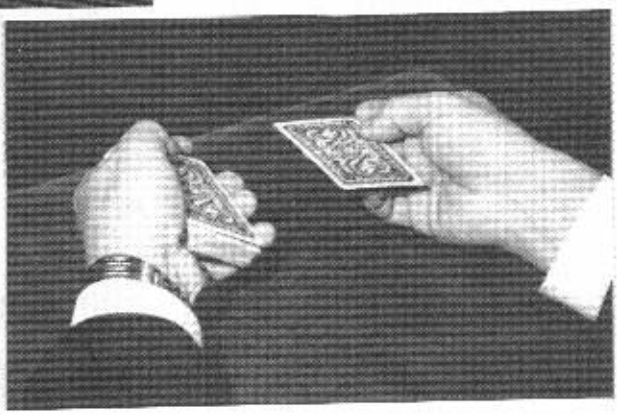


**PHOTO 20-5**

That's it.

The Slider top change (as all top changes) is best executed at a moment when heat is off the deck, or better yet, with the hands slightly turned to the right.

You will note that the motive force is gravity: releasing the top card allows it to slide down and away.

However, there are two variations on this change which substitute inertia for gravity (although the mechanics are otherwise virtually identical).

**• FIRST VARIATION: THE INERTIA CHANGE**

In the first variation, the deck (and card in the right hand) are held level. However, the left hand moves sharply to the right and abruptly stops as it takes the right hand card on top of the deck. At the same moment, the left hand releases its top card. The sudden halt in the movement "propels" the top card into the waiting right hand finger grip. PHOTOS 20-6 and 20-7.

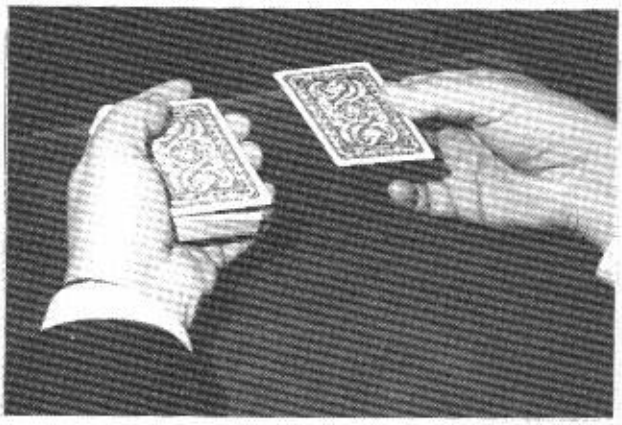


**PHOTO 20-6**

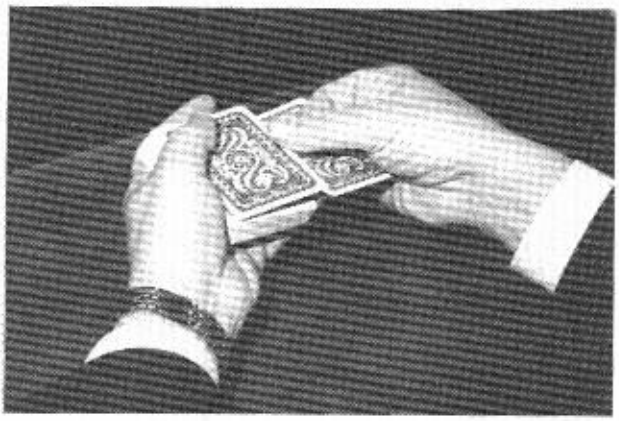


**PHOTO 20-7**

• **SECOND VARIATION: THE WRIST SNAP CHANGE**

PHOTOS 20-8, 20-9 and 20-10 show the Wrist Snap Change: here, a sharp and snappy wrist movement of the left hand up and down propels the top card into the right hand.

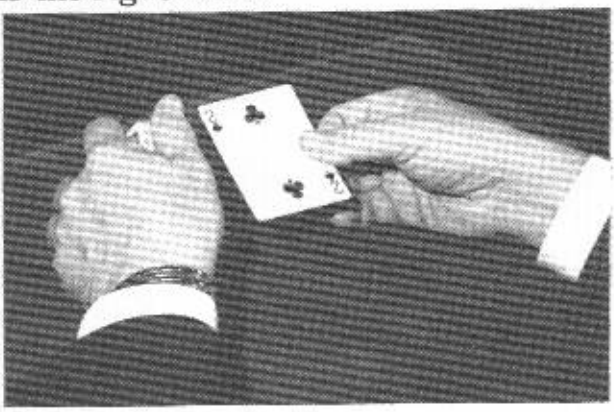


**PHOTO 20-8**

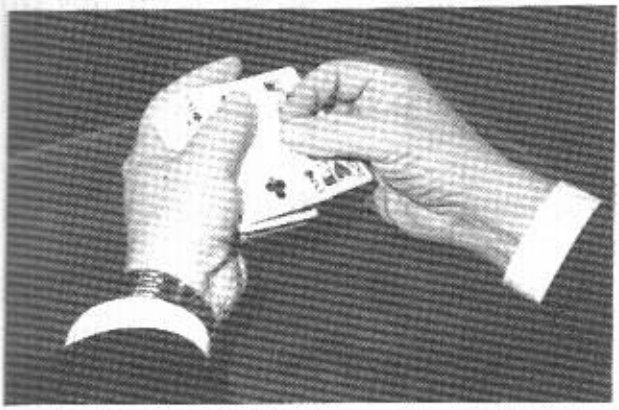


**PHOTO 20-9**

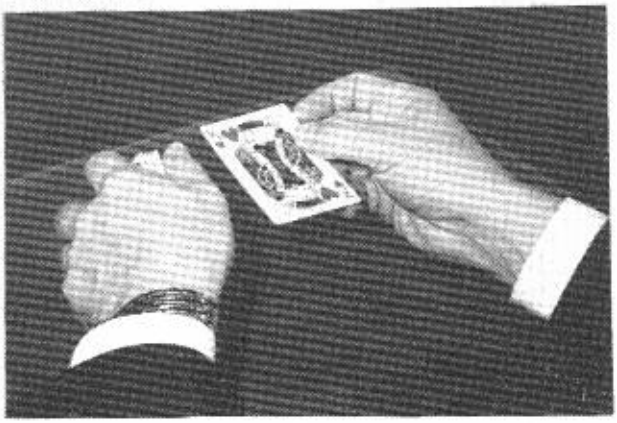


**PHOTO 20-10**

I have found that when this move is carried out at top speed, the change is so startling that if the move is carried out with face up cards, a visual instant transformation seems to take place, and makes for a pretty revelation of a selected card.

As promised, the change will work equally well with a block of cards. This feature, not found in almost all other top changes, make the Slider a most versatile and powerful weapon.

## The Slider Switch

This is what it looks like: the right hand holds a card face down at its edge. The left hand (holding the deck) comes over, takes the card from the right hand, and turns it face up onto the table.

In the action of turning the card face up, the card is switched for another.

The move is based upon the same mechanics as the Slider Top Change, and accomplishes the same goals as, say, the Curry Turnover Change, or the Kardyro Change, BUT contrary to the Curry change, this move can be carried out with a BLOCK of cards.

Here is the action for switching one card for another. The work is exactly the same as for the Top Change up to the point shown in PHOTO 20-11.

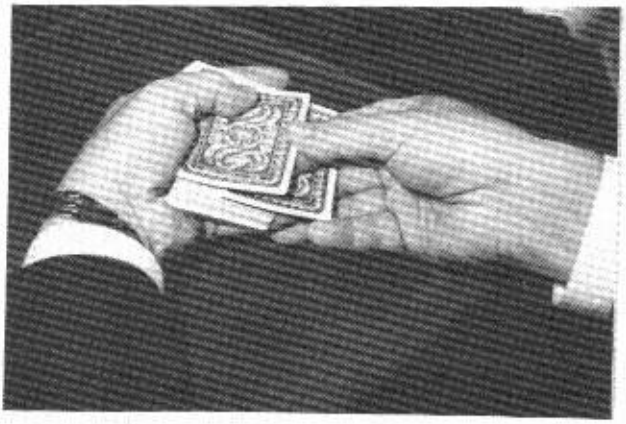
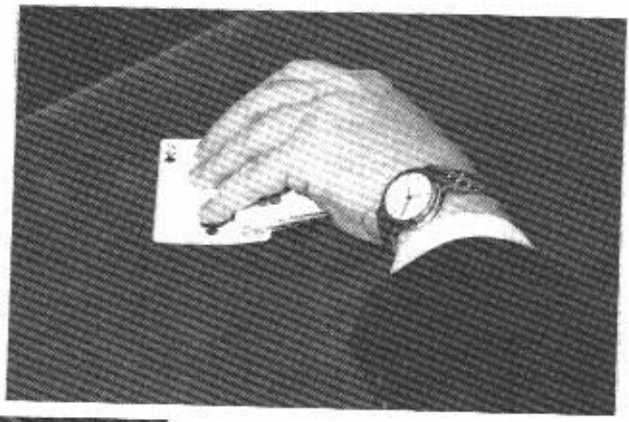


**PHOTO 20-11**

However, the right hand does NOT take away the card between its finger!

Instead the left hand revolves - PHOTO 20-12 - with the former top card partly sandwiched between the deck and the new top card, and lays the card face up onto the table: PHOTO 20-13.

**PHOTO 20-12**



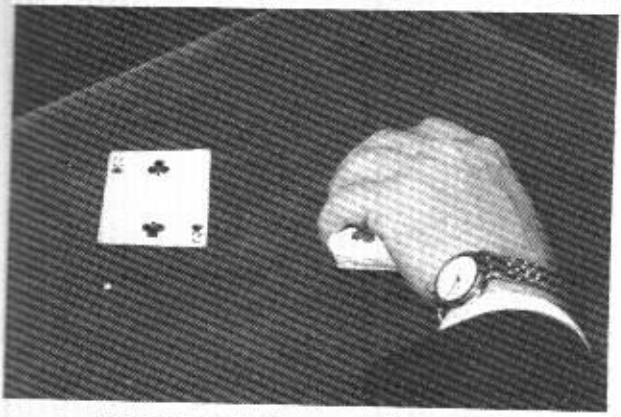
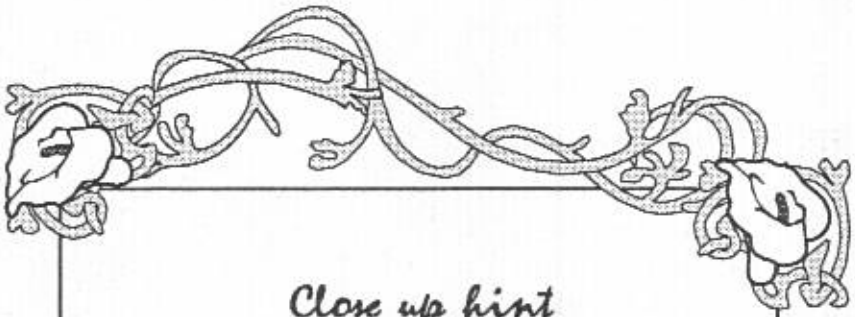


**PHOTO 20-13**

Try it out: it's easy! And then, try it out with a block of cards (switch, say, four kings for four aces). Just as easy!



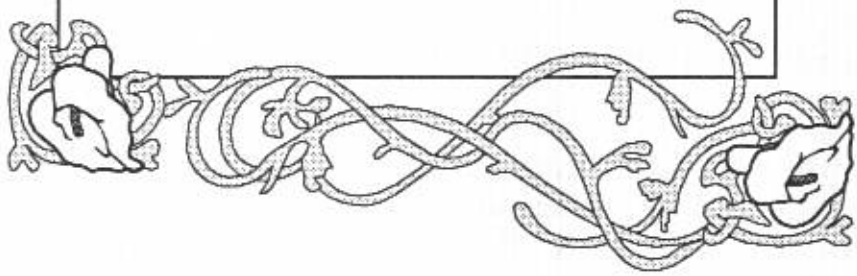


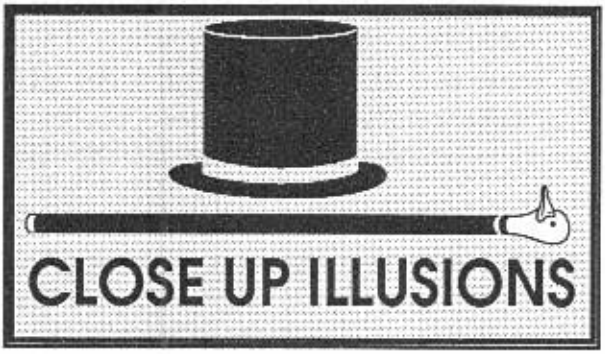
## Close up hint

Stay away from sucker effects. By their very nature, they seek to make a fool out of one or more spectators.

While a Magician-In-Trouble scenario is perfectly acceptable because it does not laugh at your audience, a sucker effect is exactly what the name implies: you try to make some poor polite and probably well meaning spectator into a sucker and an object of ridicule.

Magic is already saddled with the challenging psychological scenario of trying to make yourself likeable to people you are fooling. Don't add to that challenge.






# CHAPTER 21

## THE CHALLENGE FACTOR

Recently, I witnessed a magician struggle through a performance: every time he executed a vanish, someone would literally grab his other hand. When he turned a card over and deposited it on the table, saying *Here is the Ace of spades*, someone would turn it over. When the end came, it was a relief!

When part of this book was written, I was over at Guy Camirand's one night discussing other projects. There were young boys in the house and Guy asked me to perform a few tricks. The boys were at the magically difficult (8 to 13 years old) age, yet they enjoyed the tricks. They did not grab for my hand, or my props. When the mini-show was over, Guy asked: *Why is it you are never challenged ?*

The question is a good one, and deserves an answer. Firstly, the assumed premise is incorrect. Sometimes I will run into someone so rude that I do get challenged. There are people who react to being fooled as if it were a personal defeat, as if being fooled was to be ridiculed, and who feel they must belittle the performer. Usually, it is a sign of immaturity or ignorance or insecurity. I take

comfort in the fact that it happens to all of us. Once, Albert Goshman was challenged by the host of a television special. Albert, of course, made the host look like a fool for trying.

Generally, however, it is rare that I get challenged. Some performers are always challenged. Why? When I was younger, I was challenged more often than I am today. What am I doing differently?

If you have ever been challenged during a performance, you know how unpleasant it is. Even if you somehow turn the tables on the challenger, it will often break your stride, rattle your nerves, dampen your resolve, and weaken the flow of your performance. Here are my thoughts on avoiding the problem.

• Be competent: Easier said than done, to be sure. But the better you are, the more you fool them. If you are a master, the spectator will know he is dealing with a master and, in a sense, that he or she is privileged. You are more tempted to challenge a bungler than a master. A bungler should not have the effrontery to perform - to demand the attention of others. If the bungler persists in foisting himself on others, he runs the risk that others will retaliate by pointing out that he is fooling no one.

• Be a nice guy: I remember reading, in a magic book, the following words: *Be natural, be yourself. That way, people will like you.* But, I thought, what if you are not a nice guy? Magicians are like any other group. There are some not nice people floating around. When they are natural, they are not likeable! If you make an effort to appear to be a nice person, someone who is performing to entertain them, then by just being nice, most spectators will be hesitant to ridicule you.

• Don't take yourself too seriously: There is nothing worse than the performer who acts as if he is a star, even if he is a star. Close-up magic is not the theater stage - the intimacy of close-up increases the challenge temptation.

• Don't be a wise guy: Seriously, is there anything worse than the performer who cracks jokes at the expense of his audience - and who acts as a far superior being? This is absolutely without pardon in young magicians - yet they are generally the worst offenders. At a large magic convention, sit in on a close-up contest. I guarantee you will see a number of these fresh kids who recite all

the smart lines. They are offensive - and turn you off immediately. Other young performers, who are polite, respectful, and likable, have an incredible advantage: because of their manners and their youth, they endear themselves to you immediately.

Of course, this has been written time and time again. Somehow, the offenders never read this advice, or somehow think it does not apply to them. Shame.

• Make your performance an event: When I perform, I use my close-up stage, my background music, my smoke, my little boxes, and so forth. It is obvious that I have gone to some trouble to entertain my audience. I am, I would certainly hope, entertaining them. This fact encourages courtesy.

• Be in control: While being pleasant, I still conduct a performance as if I were controlling the sequence of events. I am on my stage - it is my show.

• Select your effects: If your first effect is a sucker effect, expect challenges during the rest of your act. Personally, I dislike sucker effects, period.

• Do not look at your spectator at the precise moment of fooling him: This is a remarkable bit of advice that comes from Al Schneider. Give your spectator a moment of privacy when he experiences the moment of wonder. Look at your hands, or our props.

• Don't gloat over your success: Avoid lines like *This is the Ace of Spades, right? Wrong?!*

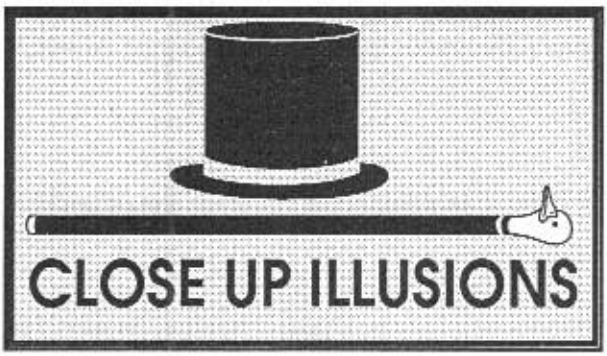
• Don't openly challenge spectators: That way, they will not be tempted to openly challenge you.

Some performers can break some of these rules and still get away with it. Slydini continually challenges his audience, but because he is so good, and such a character, he uses his incessant challenges to totally unnerve his onlookers. He has developed a persona that has often been copied, always unsuccessfully.

But on the whole, if you follow the above rules, you should cut down on the challenges. Whatever you do, do not rush out and buy a book on one-line put-downs, the so called heckler-squelchers.

These lines are best left to politicians who are not seeking re-election. They are almost all offensive. The last thing you need is to get into a shouting contest with a drunk, a jerk, or someone bigger and meaner than you.






# CHAPTER 22

## FINGER ON THE CARD REVISITED

Some magic tricks, like good wines, age well. Others tend to go bad rather quickly. I think the jury has decided that ***FINGER ON THE CARD***, volume one in the **MASTERS OF MAGIC SERIES**, was one of the lucky ones. On the whole it met with good reviews, good customer acceptance, and easy entry into existing repertories. (And a second printing - Ed)

With time, even the classics get dusted off. The last time I was with Dai Vernon he was performing such ineffable routines as **Symphony of the Rings** and his Cups and Balls using new sequences, new moves, new timings.

So is it with **Finger**.

Now, I no longer perform it exactly as originally described. The double-cut, while fine, has been replaced by Gilles Couture's Swivel Cut Control, a dilly of a move if there ever was one.

Also, the false cut as described has had a few changes.

I will describe these new sleights, but hasten to add that they are worthy of your attention even if you do not own a copy of **FINGER ON THE CARD.** The Swivel Cut Control, as a matter or fact, is needed for routines described in this book, namely, **Touch Three Cards** on page 142.

## The Swivel Cut Control

This move has an interesting history. When he was very new to magic, Gilles Couture witnessed a performance by a Montreal magician. At one point, Gilles seemed to recall the magician having a card selected, holding a break, and then bringing the card to the top using some kind of fancy cut.

When Gilles returned home, he worked out the fancy cut control.

When I first saw Gilles performing this, I could not duplicate the move (unless a magician knows exactly what you are doing, he will not be able to recreate the move, simple as it may be). Finally Gilles taught it to me, and I have used it ever since, as a substitute for the pass, double-cut, and other like moves.

I asked Gilles if I could publish it and was informed that it was not his move.

Then, a year or so later, Gilles saw the Montreal magician perform again, and realized that the moves were in no way related. Gilles, in trying to recreate a move he had seen once, had in fact created an entirely new move. *You can publish it,* said Gilles.

I first wrote it up for Gilles' lecture notes, and later explained it on one of the videotapes I recorded for Videonics. Still later, I described it in my second lecture notes.

But the move deserves an even wider audience. It is not supposed to look invisible. It looks like a fancy cut - BUT it also does NOT look as if the card, placed in the middle of the deck, is being brought to the top. That may read like a paradox, but it is true. It looks like the card is being buried even deeper!

The move is easy, but should be practiced until it can be performed snappily, sharply, cleanly and quickly.

Imagine that a pinky break is held in the center of the deck above a selected card. This move will bring the card to the top. In FINGER you do not even need the pinky break because, as you start the move, you transfer the break to the right thumb. In FINGER, the break is created by the right thumb, so you can go right into the Swivel Cut sequence.

To recap, suppose you are holding a pinky break above a selection: PHOTO 22-1.

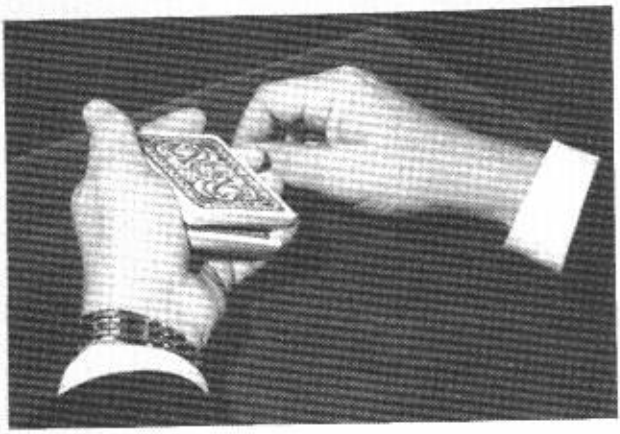


**PHOTO 22-1**

The right hand comes over the deck and the right thumb picks up the break: PHOTO 22-2 (In FINGER, here is where you start the move, as shown in Photo 16 in that book).

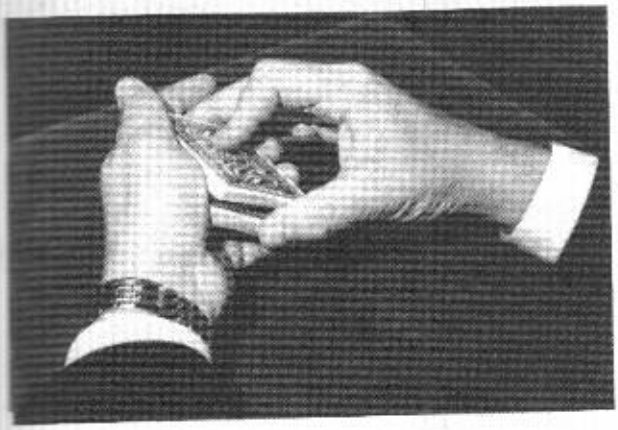


**PHOTO -22-2**

If you do not have the book, just imagine you are holding a break over a selected card and are getting ready to control it to the top of the deck.

You must also, with the right thumb tip lift up half the bottom portion: PHOTO 22-3, while maintaining the first break.

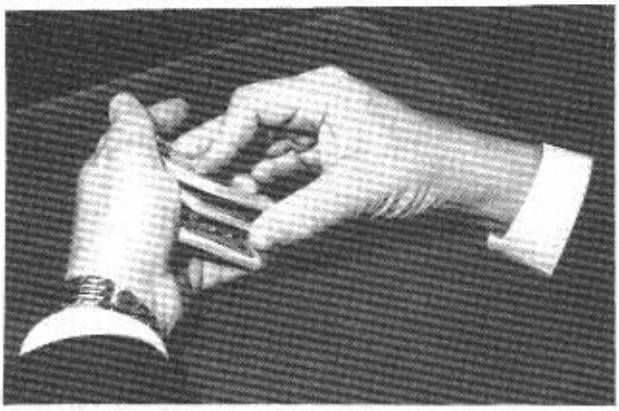
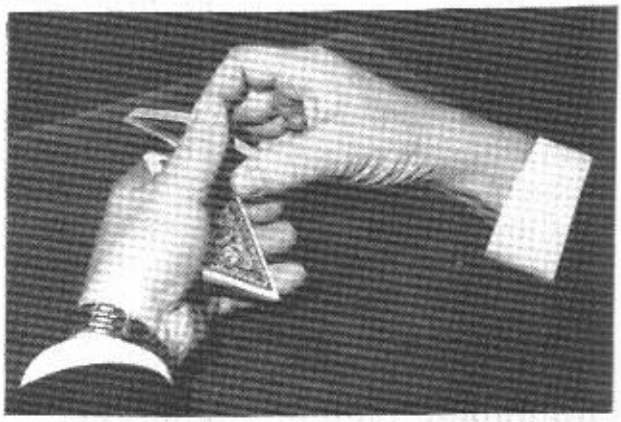


**PHOTO 22-3**

The right hand (holding roughly three quarters of the deck and still holding a thumb break above the selection) moves forward until the rear left corner of the uppermost packet comes to the tip of the left thumb: PHOTO 22-4.

**PHOTO 22-4**



The left thumb presses against this corner as the right hand now moves back: PHOTO 22-5. Notice that the uppermost packet (that part of the deck above the selected card) swivels clockwise between the left thumb and the right middle finger.

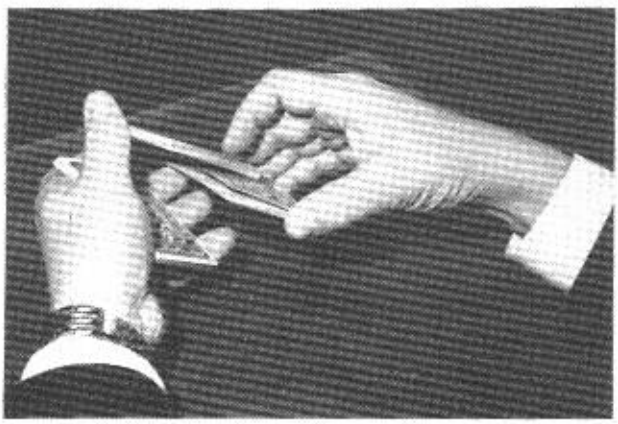


**PHOTO 22-5**

When the right hand is back behind the left hand cards, the former top portion falls free onto the left hand cards: PHOTO 22-6.

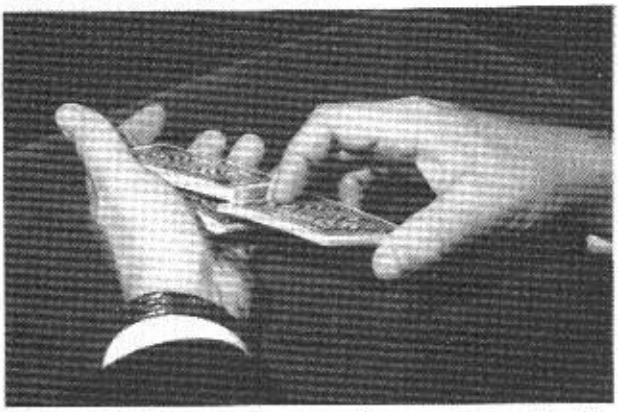


**PHOTO 22-6**

The right hand advances and drops its cards on top of all: PHOTO 22-7.

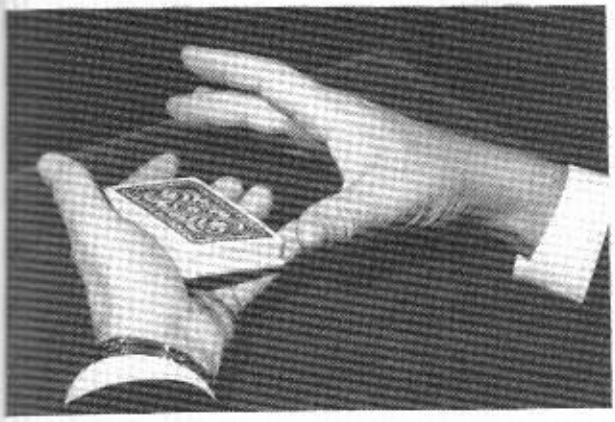


**PHOTO 22-7**

The selected card is on top.

To repeat, the success of this move depends on smoothness. No pause can be permitted.

The Swivel Cut Control is not a total substitute for a double cut or a pass. The deck does not remain in the same order.

During the move, the bottom portion remains unchanged, while the top two portions interchange. But this is an advantage in some tricks, such as Touch Three Cards, where precisely that bottom stock must remain untouched.

This is a move to be cherished and loved.

# Butt Cutt

Two things happened to my Drop (False) Cut described in **Finger on the Card**. First, I started using a butting action to further sell the move. Then, more recently, I started using the hinge opening which is a Tony Mulle idea out of Harry Lorayne's **Rim Shots** (see page 48). In the Butt Cutt, the retention of vision idea is carried one step further by allowing the top half to continue all the way down to the palm. All these little elements make for a much finer version of what I feel was already a good false cut.

At the start, the deck is held face down at the fingertips (ie. not in a dealing position) in the left hand: PHOTO 22-8.

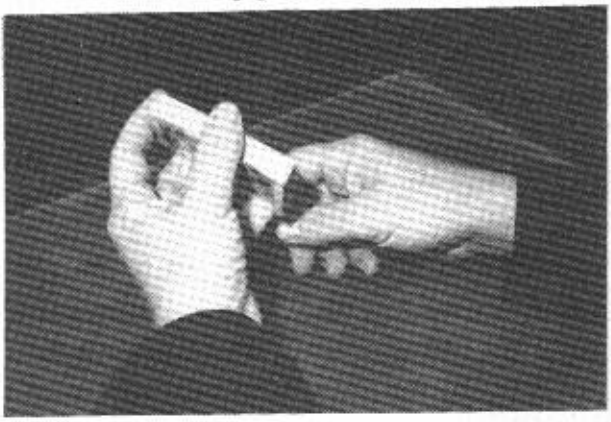
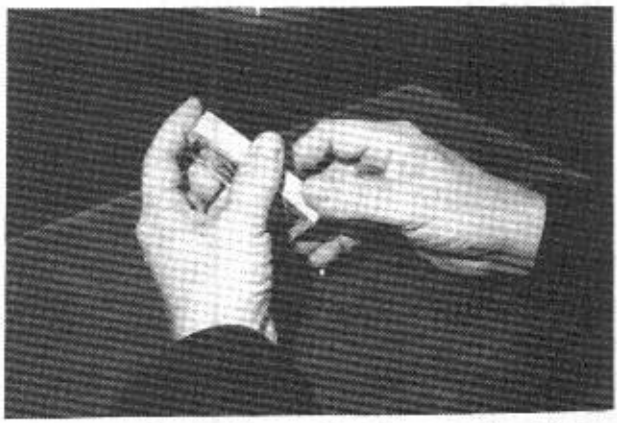


**PHOTO 22-8**

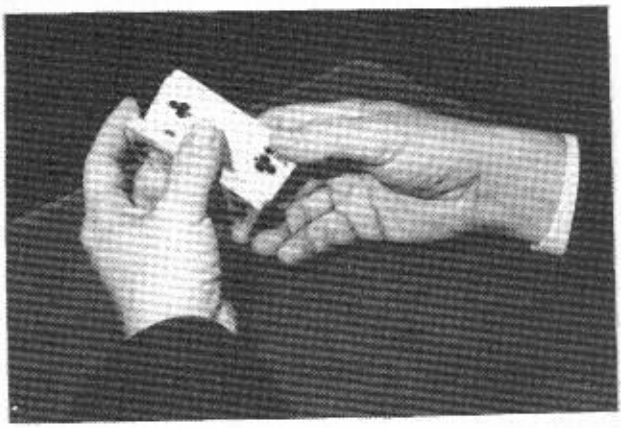
The right hand comes over and holds the deck from above: PHOTO 22-9. Notice the position of the right thumb and forefinger.

**PHOTO 22-9**



Now imagine there is a hinge along the right long side of the deck. The right thumb breaks up half the deck by opening up the left side of the deck: PHOTO 22-10.

**PHOTO 22-10**



No sooner is it opened up, but the deck is closed again - well almost. The right hand lowers or "closes" the deck but as it does, the right thumb comes down and is transferred onto the left side of the BOTTOM portion, while the left thumb holds (or stops, really) the TOP portion: PHOTO 22-11.

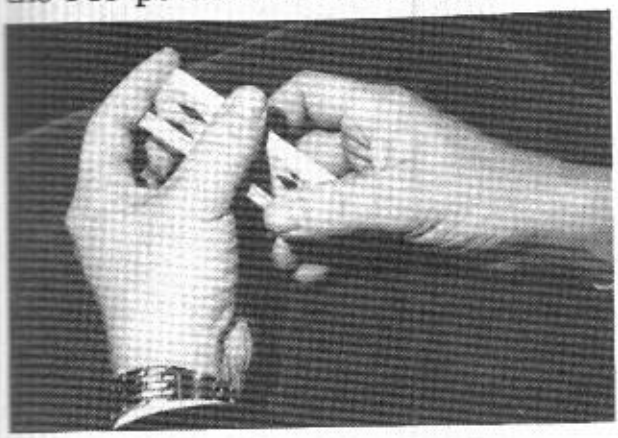


**PHOTO 22-11**

This move sort of just happens. Look at the photographs and you will see that the thumb transfer, which really keeps the two halves separate after all, just happens if you want it to happen. As the top half "closes" down onto the bottom half, the left thumb stops it but the right thumb continues moving down onto the bottom half. And of course, all this happens without pause.

The first time you try this you will probably find yourself in an awkward position.

But in no time at all, the thumb transfer should move gracefully and automatically, as if it were the most normal movement in the world.

Immediately, the right hand strips out the bottom portion by using a wrist turning action, bringing the bottom portion back: PHOTO 22-12 while at the same time, the top portion is allowed to drop into the left palm: PHOTO 22-13.

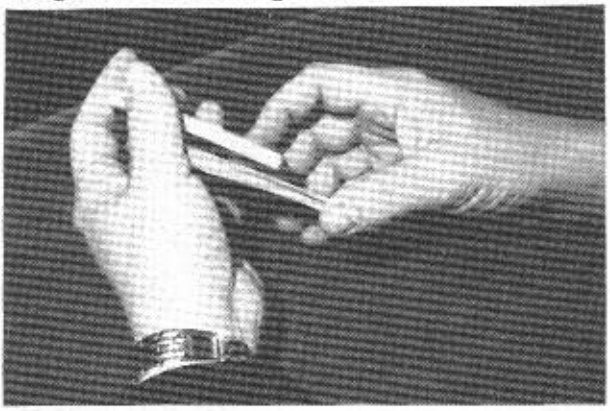


**PHOTO 22-12**

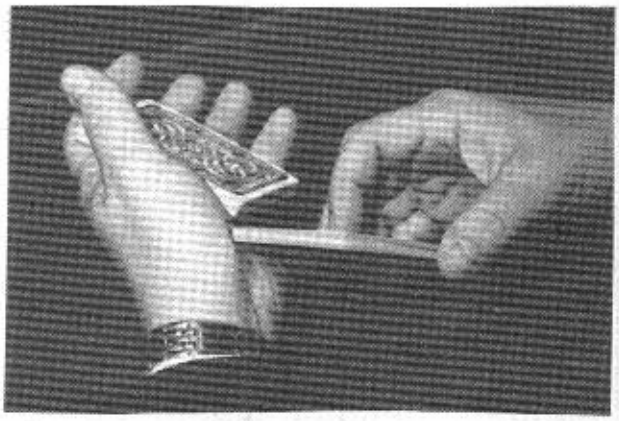


**PHOTO 22-13**

Now, the right hand butts the ends of its half against the cards in the left hand: PHOTO 22-14 (Two or three taps are enough - the idea is to look like you want to even up the cards).

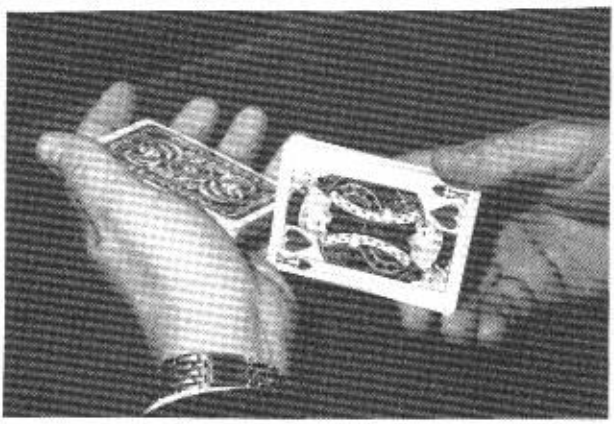
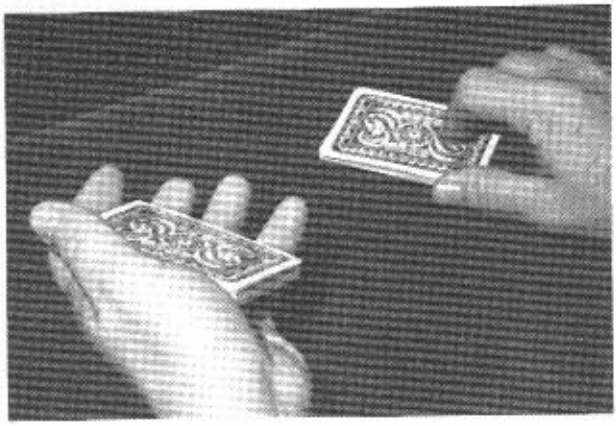


**PHOTO 22-14**

But still without pause, the right hand moves (almost slaps) its half down on the table: PHOTO 22-15. This is a straight ahead and down movement. The right hand cards do NOT go in a circular ferris wheel up and down type motion. The packet is brought back, butted, and placed down.

**PHOTO 22-15**



The right hand now comes back to the left to get the remaining half, and the left hand twists to permit the right hand to grip the front part of the cards: PHOTO 22-16. The right hand smartly slaps this half onto the tabled cards: PHOTO 22-17.

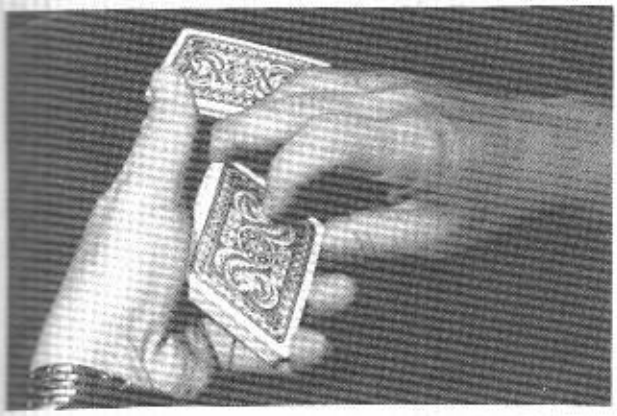
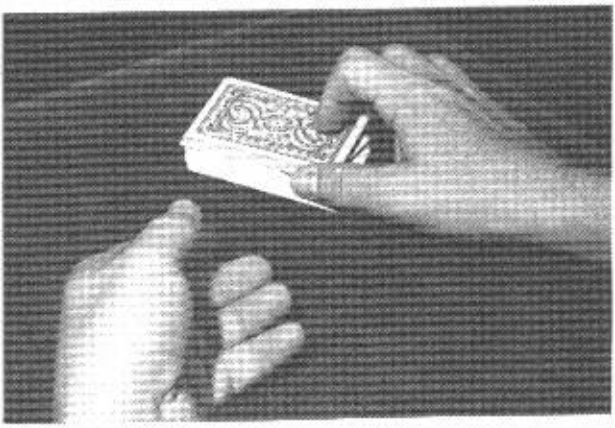


**PHOTO 22-16**

**PHOTO 22-17**

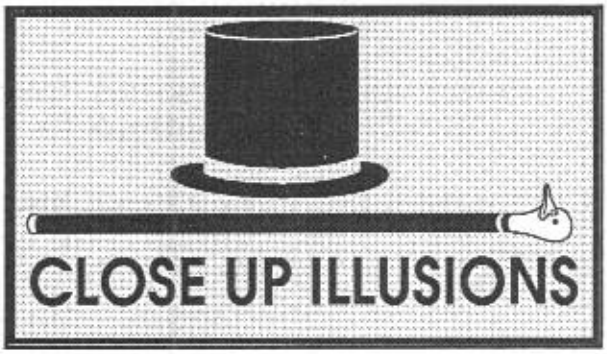


The order of the deck remains unchanged.

The entire move takes about two and one half seconds to execute. It can be thrown in a routine anytime. The move is a fooler.

By the way, during the butting action, you can easily glimpse the bottom card. You therefore use this false cut in any trick where you must ascertain the identity of the bottom card without it appearing obvious.






# CHAPTER 23

## SHOWCASE

This chapter will teach you some of my favorite things: the Invisible Switch, the Uppercuts, and Showcase, a complete card act which will call for some practice, but is a perfect trick to do for a group. Four spectators get involved right from the start and the ending is a strong kicker. It is the type of routine that gets people talking about your amazing ability to control cards.

## THE INVISIBLE SWITCH

Vacations do something positive for my magical mind. On my 1987 vacation with my wife and children, to Paradise Island's Club Med (my third trip to that particular Club Med - I'm a fan, as you can guess) I once again had the chance to magish with Jean-Pierre Garnier, a Club Med Zone Director and a fine, fine magician (he is, above all else, an intelligent magician).

While Renée and the kids were watching the Club Med show every evening, Jean-Pierre and I would sneak away and work on moves and concepts.

One night, we were working on card switches - changing one block of cards for another - when I came up with the Invisible Switch.

The title is less pretentious than it seems - the move is based upon Harry Lorayne's **Invisible Pass Routine.**

Now if you have not seen Harry execute his 'invisible pass' you will not truly appreciate the description of the Invisible Switch. Harry's move is not a pass at all, but he presents it as such and drives magicians wild. It is invisible, however, from all angles, even underneath. Buy Harry's book, or his videotape, and learn the routine.

The Invisible Switch uses the same concept but not the same actions nor scenario. Harry's move is NOT in any way a switch. I am mentioning his move to credit Harry with the mechanical actions that I have constructed into a switch. You see, I had the advantage of having Harry execute his move over and over again in my den in Quebec - while our wives (both named Renée) patiently waited for us to take them out to dinner!

I will teach you a routine later in this chapter but first the work on the switch.

Imagine that there are four kings on the table. The left hand holds the deck, face down, in dealing position. The four aces are on top of the deck. You hold a break under the four aces by the flesh at the base of the thumb: PHOTO 23-1.

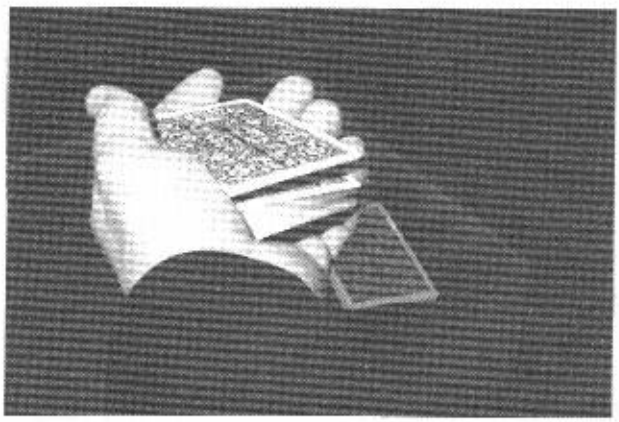


**PHOTO 23-1**

The right hand picks up the four kings and holds them face down, from above, in Biddle position: PHOTO 23-2.

**PHOTO 23-2**



The left hand approaches the right, and the left thumb pulls away the top king onto the deck: PHOTO 23-3.

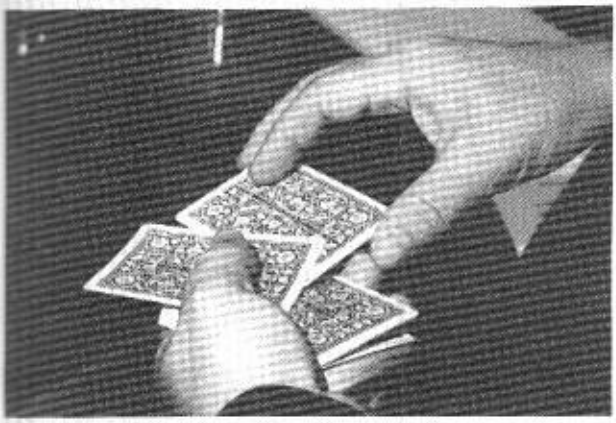
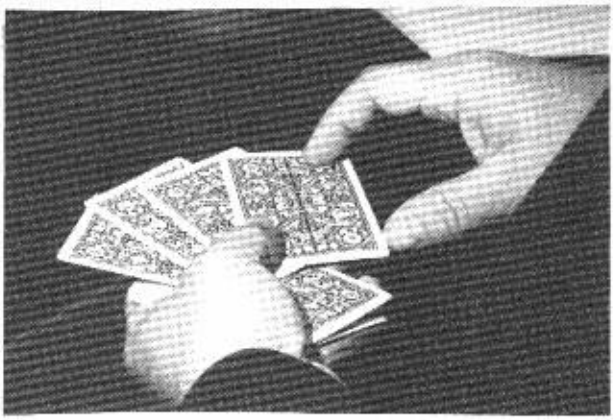


**PHOTO 23-3**

This is repeated three more times until the four kings are held on the deck, spread and outjogged: PHOTO 23-4.

**PHOTO 23-4**



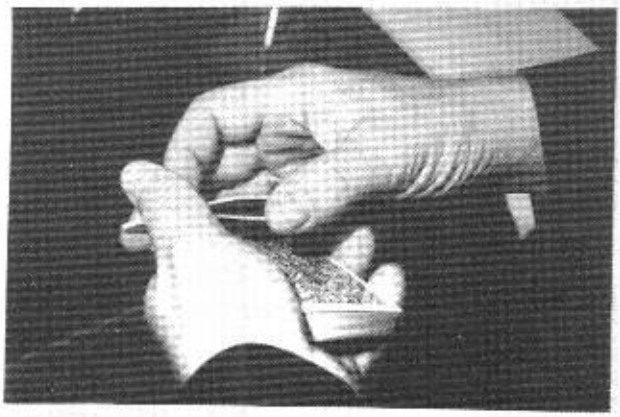
This packet is squared by the right thumb and fingers, assisted by the left thumb and second finger: PHOTO 23-5 (the break is held below the aces throughout).



**PHOTO 23-5**

In a continuation of the squaring action, the right hand slides the packet of kings back and forward off the deck, and in so doing, picks up (with the right thumb) the packet of four aces below the kings: PHOTO 23-6 NOTICE THAT THE RIGHT THUMB HOLDS A BREAK BETWEEN THE TWO PACKETS.

**PHOTO 23-6**



Now comes the actual switch and I doubt I can duly explain it in print. Basically, it must look as if the right hand drops (throws) its packet of four (!) cards onto the table. In fact, the BOTTOM packet is allowed to fall to the table and the TOP packet is brought right back to the top of the deck.

PHOTOS 23-7 shows the audience view of the start of the move and PHOTO 23-8 shows the end of the move.

The act of returning a packet of cards to the deck with the right hand is INVISIBLE; not almost, but in fact totally invisible, IF

EXECUTED PROPERLY. Perhaps you should buy Harry's book and see how he describes it.

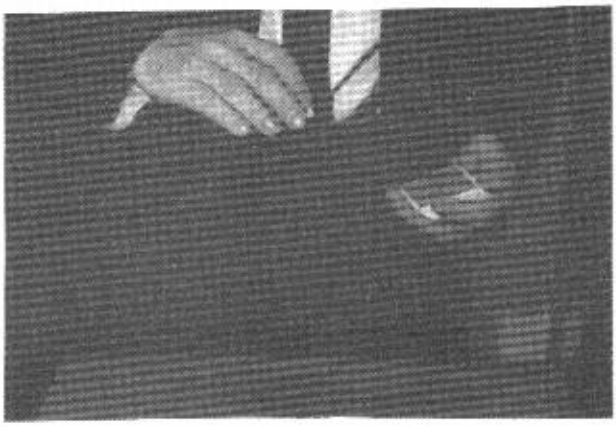


**PHOTO 23-7**

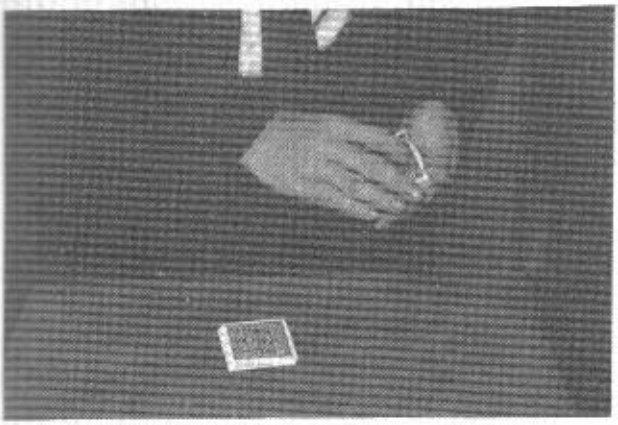


**PHOTO 23-8**

It will NOT be invisible if you make TWO movements out of it. The initial temptation is to first drop the king packet, and then move the right hand over to the deck. This is wrong. From the 23-7 position, the right hand moves directly to the DECK! The right hand makes ONE movement, not TWO! As it is moving to the deck the ace packet is dropping (propelled by the right hand as well) to the table. Here is the easiest way to check if you are doing the move correctly: the right hand arrives at the deck at THE EXACT SAME INSTANT as the ace packet arrives on the table. You should hear one sound, not two. The left hand, holding the deck, can move slightly up towards the right hand during this action.

From the Photo 23-8 position, the right hand takes the deck and places it on the table to the right (the ostensible excuse for the right hand going to the deck in the first place was, obviously, to take the deck).

Practice this: it's a goodie.

# SHOWCASE

I was once requested to perform card tricks during a charity casino evening in Quebec city. The organizers set up a blackjack type table for me, and hung a sign above the Table: Close-Up Magic. The idea was that people would gather naturally, I would perform for ten minutes, and then the onlookers would move on to the gaming tables. After a few minutes I would start again.

I developed the following routine for that event. It plays about ten minutes, and contains some pretty good card magic. This routine presupposes expertise; accordingly, I will depart from my usual detailed descriptions and give only the general lines of the performance.

To perform this card routine you must be able to execute nine moves :

**1. A key card system** (either a crimped card, a thick card or - excuse me for saying it but the best of all -my **ProControl** card system explained in the book sold by the Camirand Academy.

I will presume that we are using the ProControl card. Substitute your other key card system if you choose.

**2. The Invisible Switch** taught above.
**3. A Half-pass or the Reverse Uppercut** taught later in this chapter
**4. A Pass** (I use the Spread Pass)
**5. The Slider Multiple Top Change** (taught earlier)
**6. A Multiple Control**
**7. The Forton Pop-Out Move** or variations thereupon
**8. The Double Undercut**
**9. A Turnover Pass**

To prepare, have the ProControl Card on the bottom and the four aces on top. You can obviously cut and false shuffle, cutting to the ProControl card when it is time to bring you to this position.

Spread the deck and have four different spectators each make a selection.

Have each selection returned individually and controlled via one of the two ProControl sequences. In other words, the first selection goes onto the top ace, the next selection goes onto the first selection, etc. ProControl is so strong that the selections should be individually "lost in the deck". Sell this part.

At the end of this phase, the four selections are on top of the deck followed by the four aces. The ProControl card is on the bottom. Double cut the top four cards to the bottom.

Get a break above the bottom four cards (easy with the Procontrol Card - just lift it up!) and execute a half pass or the Reverse Uppercut.

Cut the deck in the center and complete the cut.

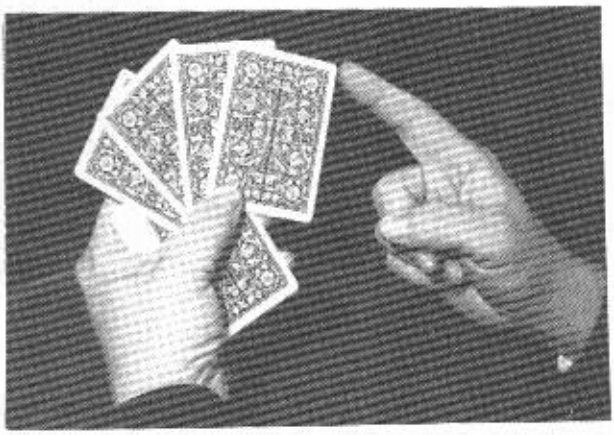
Spread the deck face down on the table: the four selections are face up in the center! (Note that the Aces are just below the selections).

Cut the deck at the selections, remove the four face up cards and reassemble the deck with the aces coming to the top.

Spectators will presume the trick is over. Get a break below the aces and hold it with the flesh at the base of the left thumb.

Turn over the selections, and count them onto the deck as you start the Invisible Switch. You can raise the left hand at this point to call attention to the selections: PHOTO 23-9.

**PHOTO 23-9**



Execute the switch. Slowly turn over the four aces.

Cut the deck in half bringing the ProControl card to the center. Turn the deck face up, and cut bringing the ProControl card to the bottom of the face-up deck. Turn the deck face down. At this point the top face down card is the ProControl card followed by the four selections. The aces are still on the table.

Insert the aces face up in the deck and use a multiple shift to control the aces to the bottom. However, as the right hand strips out the bottom half the left pinky keeps a break between the deck and the top half which is Hindu-shuffled onto the deck. With the left thumb swing cut the top portion above the break into the left hand PHOTO 23-10 and the with the right forefinger swing cut the top half of the right hand packet onto the left hand cards - PHOTO 23-11, and drop the remaining portion in the right hand on top of all.

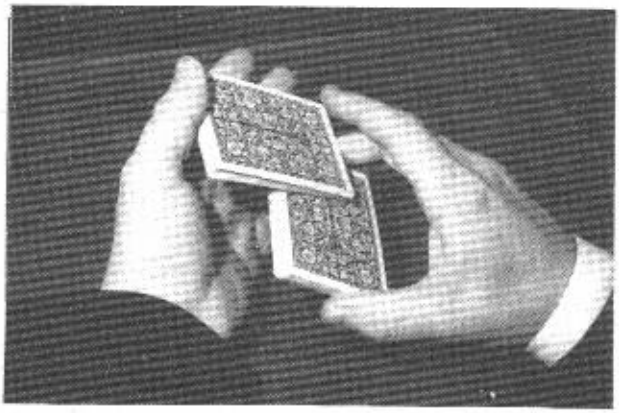


**PHOTO 23-10**

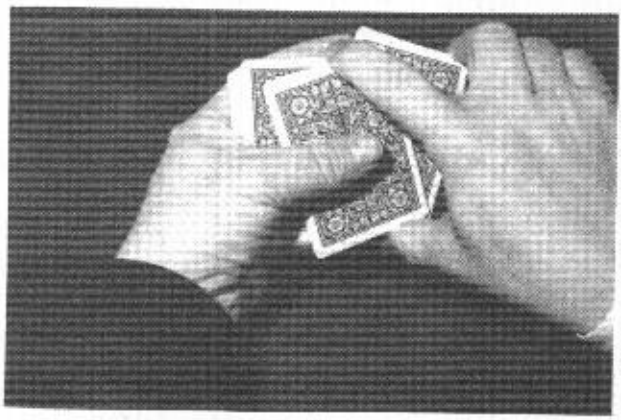


**PHOTO 23-11**

Turn the deck face up.

Get a break below the ProControl card, and execute a Turnover pass as you place the deck onto the table.

At this point the situation, from the top down, is:

FACE DOWN:
The ProControl card
The Four Selections
The deck
and then FACE UP
the four aces.

Use the Pop-Out move to magically produce the four Aces.

After they are produced, double cut the top card (the ProControl Card) to the bottom. Pick up the Aces, execute the Slider Switch, as you explain that the aces were all an illusion.

## THE UPPERCUT

There are many variations on the Double Undercut, that old workhorse that we use to bring cards from the top to the bottom of the deck. When we seek to move cards from the bottom of the deck to the top matters are not so clear.

The advantage of this technique is that it is easy and disguises the bottom to top transfer in the guise of a fancy cut, much as the double undercut disguises a transfer under the actions of two cuts.

**Execution:**

The right hand holds the deck from above, in Biddle grip. The right thumb holds a break above the bottom card: PHOTO 23-12.

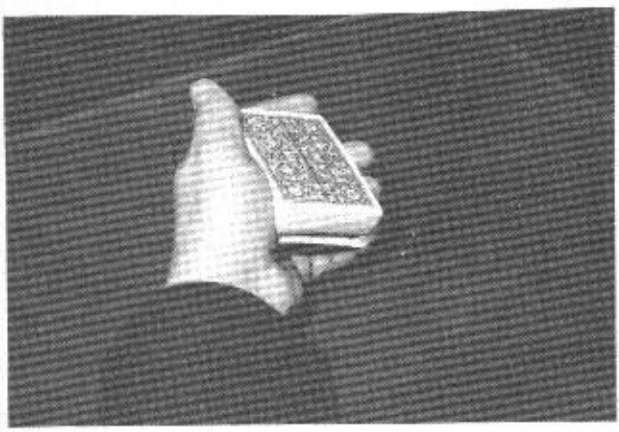


**PHOTO 23-12**

The right forefinger swing-cuts half the deck into the left hand: PHOTO 23-13.

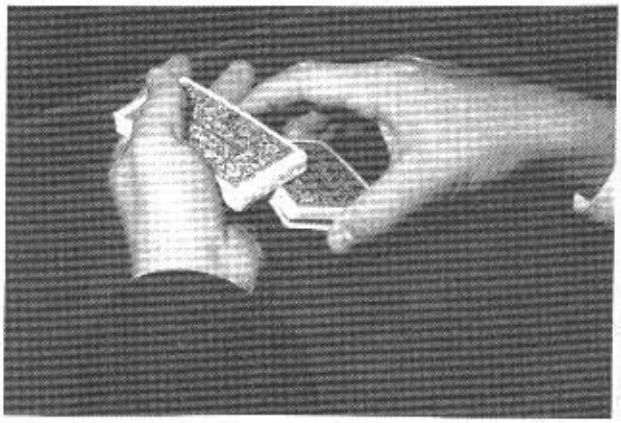
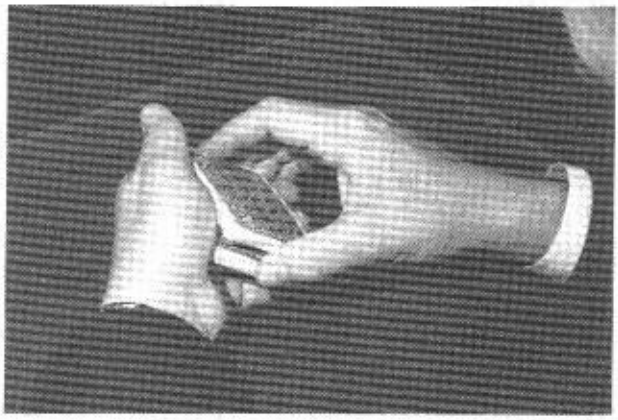


**PHOTO 23-13**

The left hand brings the left hand packet from below onto the right hand packet, allowing them to "kiss", at the same time transferring the card to the bottom packet - PHOTO 23-14 - and then two movements take place simultaneously.

**PHOTO 23-14**



The left forefinger turns its bottom packet over from left to right: PHOTO 23-15 - while the right first and second fingers,

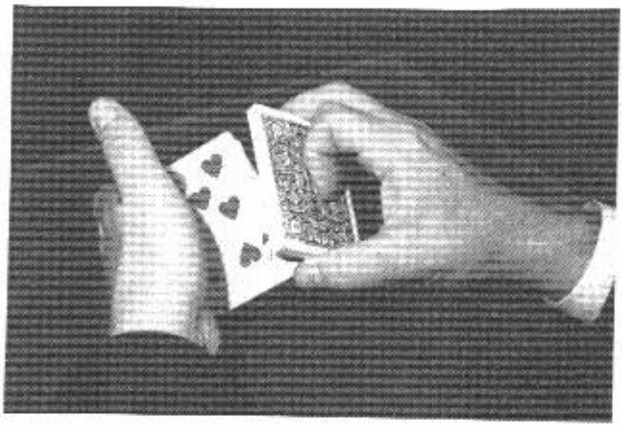
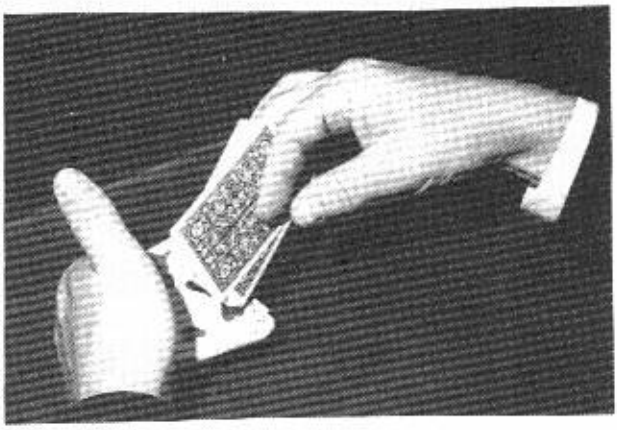


**PHOTO 23-15**

grasping their top portion from the front, turns it over from back to front: PHOTO 23-16. The end of this maneuver is shown in PHOTO 23-17.

**PHOTO 23-16**



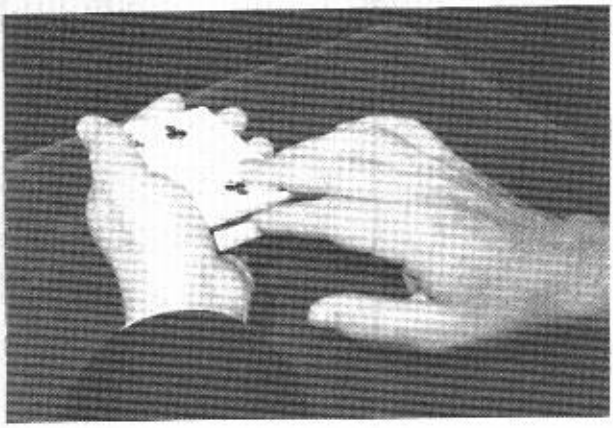


**PHOTO 23-17**

Turn the deck face up. The original bottom card is now on the top. The move looks like a fancy cut.

## The Reverse Uppercut

The handling is similar to the Uppercut. This move reverses the bottom card(s) instead of bringing it (them) to the top.

Start as shown in Photo 23-12. But as you swing cut the top half into the left hand, use the left edge of the remaining portion in the right hand to flip the top half face up: PHOTO 23-18, and PHOTO 23-19 (next page).

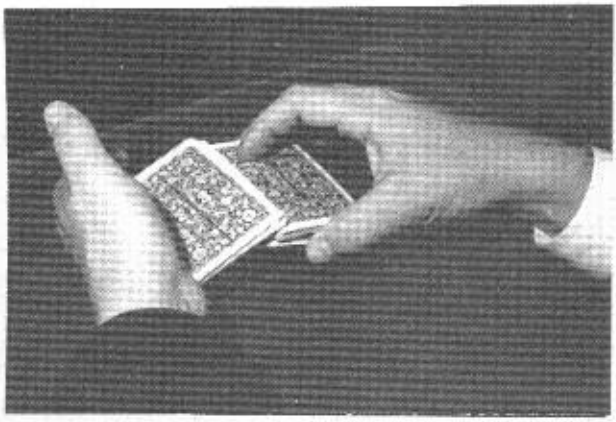


**PHOTO 23-18**

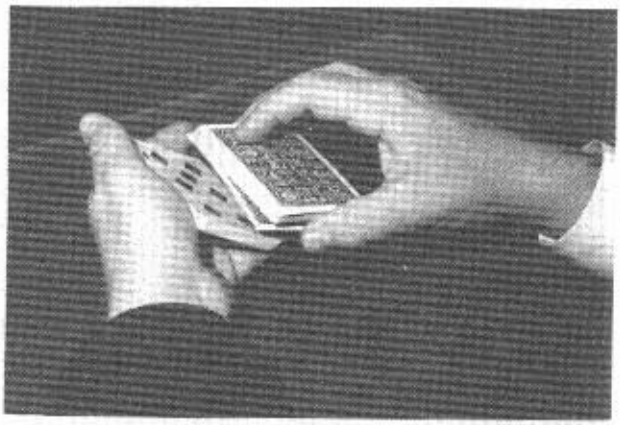


**PHOTO 23-19**

Use the kiss to transfer the card below the break to the bottom face up portion, and then execute the two simultaneous movements to turn over both packets. The right hand portion is place onto the left hand portion, but jogged back: PHOTO 23-20. The left hand holds this assembly - PHOTO 23-21 - and the right hand turns over the top rear-jogged face up portion: PHOTO 23-22.

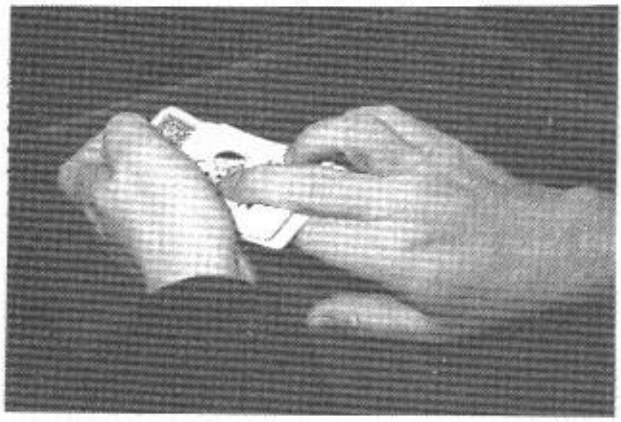
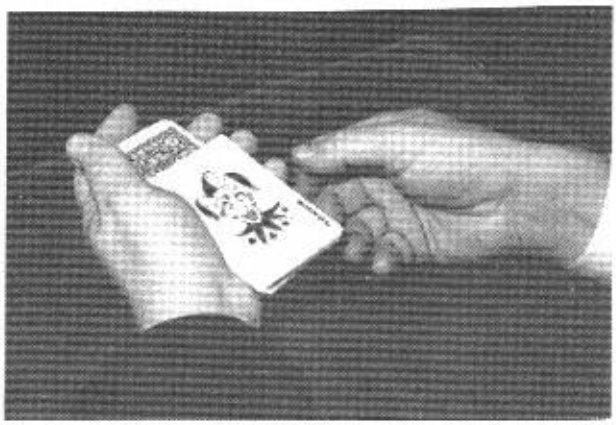


**PHOTO 23-20**

PHOTO 23-21



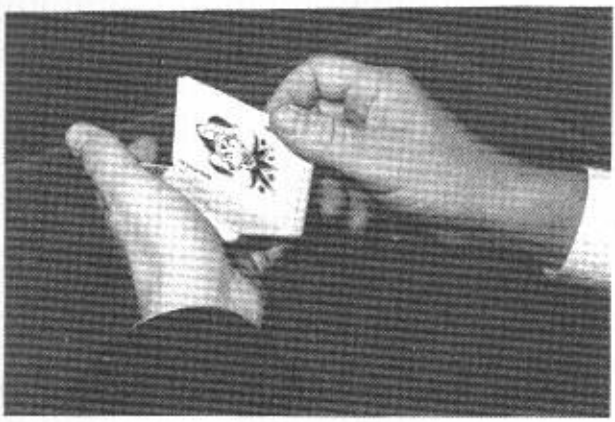
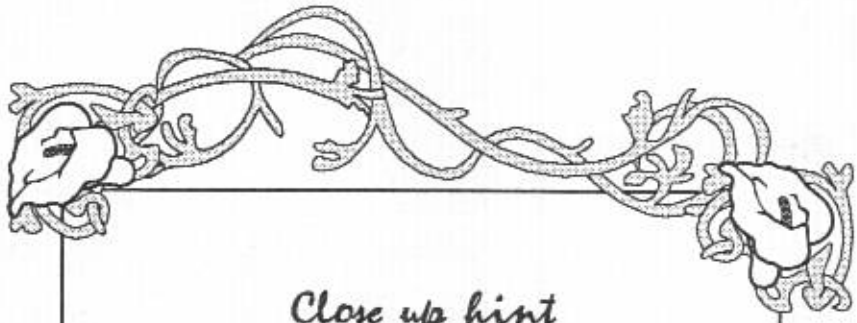


PHOTO 23-22

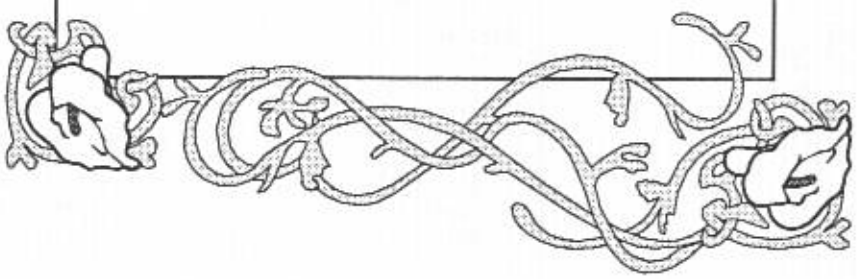
Again, this looks like a fancy cut but will reverse any cards below the break at the bottom of the deck.

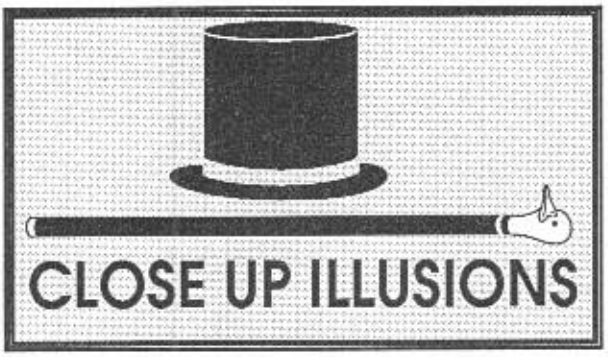




## Close up hint

Music scored to your act, whether close up or stage, is a great feature. Original music, written especially for you, using made-to-measure timing and mood changes, was formerly a thing reserved to the well-to-do professional. But with the advances in multi-track recording technology, synthesizers, sound treatment and midi sequencing software, a musician friend can probably prepare you a very respectable effort, which will avoid copyright problems for you when you do TV appearances, as well as give your act a personal signature.






# CHAPTER 24

## ROCK AND ROLL DICE STACKING

I remember the way I first learned to stack dice. I had heard about it, but did not yet own any books on the subject. In fact, I purchased Walsh's **Dice Dexterity** and Senator Crandall's books on dice stacking after I had mastered the technique.

Dice stacking looks terrific. You must learn it.

Today, I know that a cup with sides that go straight up are needed. At the time, I practised with a drinking glass that had slanted sides, and lost many an hour. I would sit at the kitchen table, with five dime-store dice, and keep knocking them off the onto the floor, to the great chagrin of my family. Finally, I caught the knack.

There is a technique - and, like swimming - you suddenly catch on. Over the years, I have developed a teaching method that I have never seen in print.

First, the grip on the cup. This is a learning grip. Later, when you know how, I will teach you the performing grip. The

learning grip is less elegant, but allows for inertia to help move the cup, and makes learning easier.

Photo 24-1 shows the performers view and

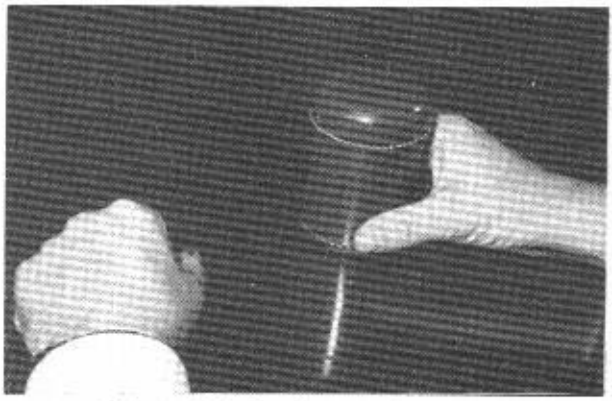
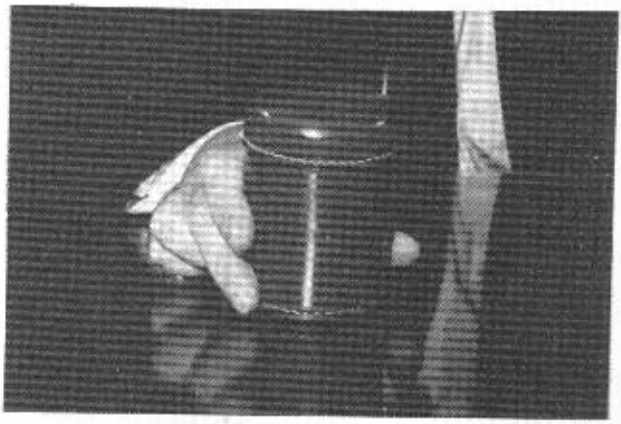


**PHOTO 24-1**

Photo 24-2 shows the spectator view.

**PHOTO 24-2**



The cup is grasped by the right hand, thumb on the leftmost point of the circumference and second finger directly opposite the thumb on the rightmost point. The forefinger is positioned above the second finger.

## The G Spot

Imagine an imaginary grab spot on the table, about ten inches in from the edge of the table. This is where the cup will grab the dice. Hold the cup on this spot in the learning grip.

## THE ROCKING ACTION

This is the wrist action only (without any arm movement). The wrist action is a rocking action. The arm action, which you will learn later, is a rolling action.

The rear of the cup, still held in the learning grip, is lightly raised: PHOTO 24-3. This means the frontmost point of the bottom rim touches the table, and only this point.

**PHOTO 24-3**



Now if you bring the top of the cup to the left (without moving the base) the contact point between the rim and the table top will move from the frontmost point to the leftmost point: PHOTO 24-4.

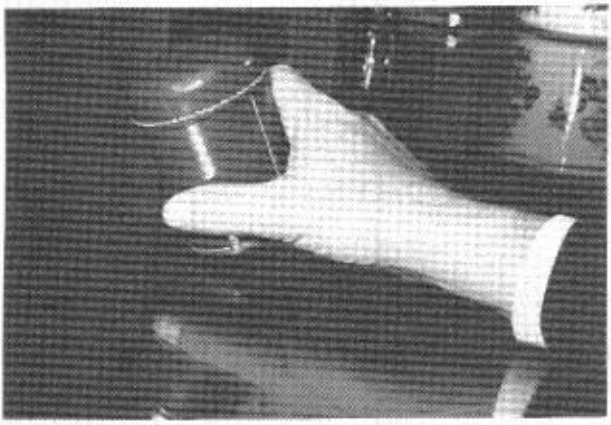


**PHOTO 24-4**

In essence, I am describing an action which involves a quarter of the rim of the cup; looking down from the top, it involves that part of the rim from the 12 oclock position to the 9 oclock position. If you now bring the top of the cup to the right, the contact point between the rim and the table top, will travel from the

leftmost point to the frontmost point to the rightmost point: PHOTO 24-5.

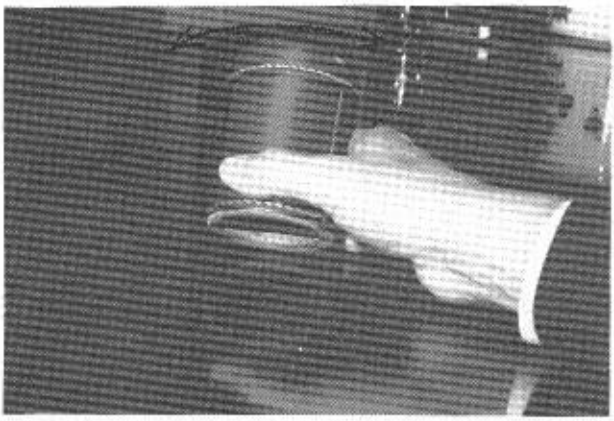


**PHOTO 24-5**

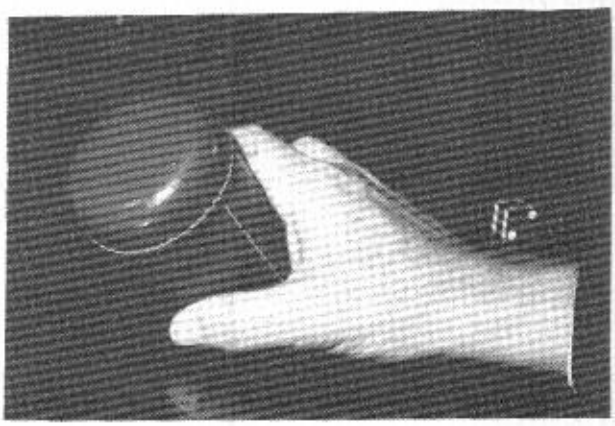
Now, if you rock the cup over the Grab spot notice that the rear half of the bottom rim never touches the table. All the rocking takes place on the front half of the rim.

This rocking action is the basis of dice stacking. Notice that the rocking - that is, the movement from the left edge of the rim to the right, and vice versa, always takes place directly over the G spot (later you will learn that the G spot is any place upon which rests a die you wish to pick up).

## The Rolling Action

You must now learn to add an arm movement to the wrist action. The rocking movement itself does not change. However, as the top of the cup swings to the left, the arm slides the base of the cup to the left of the action spot - PHOTO 24-6 -and when the

**PHOTO 24-6**



rocking movement brings the top of the cup to the right the hand slides the base of the cup to the right.

The Rolling action must be smooth: left-right-left-right, without pauses. At the same time the rocking action must be smooth: left-right-left-right. Notice that when, in the rocking movement, the frontmost point on the bottom rim touches the table, the cup should be over the G spot.

The Rocking Movement, plus the Rolling Action creates the Stacking Movement.

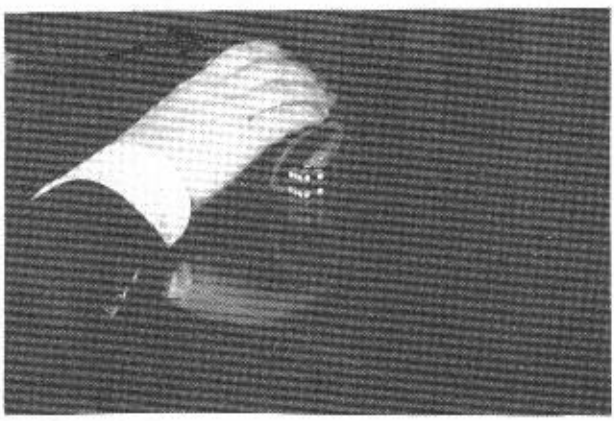
## THE PICK-UP

This is the move that picks up a die on the table and throws it into the cup. Once inside the cup the die rides up to the top. The stacking movement keeps the die at the top by centrifugal force.

Place a die on the G spot. Commence the left-right stacking movement (the wrist movement plus the arm action) just behind the die. When you have picked up the rhythm, bring the cup slightly forward on a left-right movement, over the action spot.

What happens is this. The turnover (from left to right) takes place directly over the die. But because there is also a left-right swinging action, the left inside portion of the cup hits the die as the wrist movement takes place: PHOTO 24-7. This throws the die to the right.

**PHOTO 24-7**



But before the die can fly off the table, the wrist movement has brought the cup around so that the mouth is facing left. Thus the die flies into the cup: PHOTO 24-8. In other words, the die is hit and caught in the same movement:

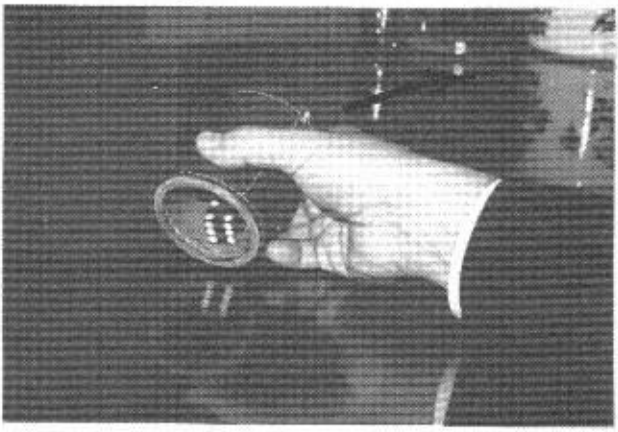


**PHOTO 24-8**

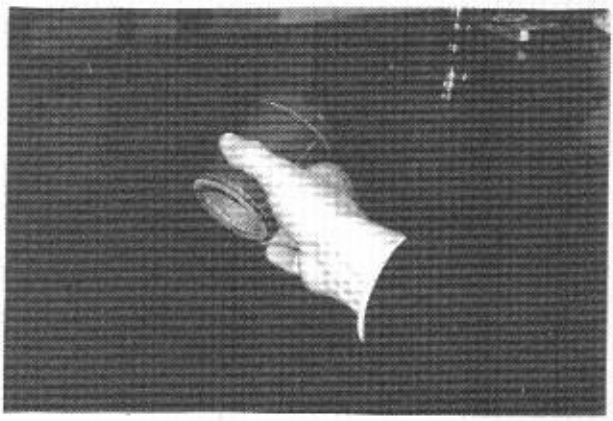
Once you learn the pick-up, practise doing it the other way, ie, on a right-left swing.

## THE LIFT-OFF

Once the stacking movement is mastered, it can be performed in midair. With one or more dice in the cup, keep swinging back and forth above the table and the dice will not fall out: PHOTO 24-9. Lower the cup on a left-right swing to pickup and continue the lift-off.

When I was a child, I used to take one of my mother's pots, drop some stones in, and swing the pot upside down keeping in the stones. It was all centrifugal motion - and it is the rocking action which keeps the dice inside the cup.

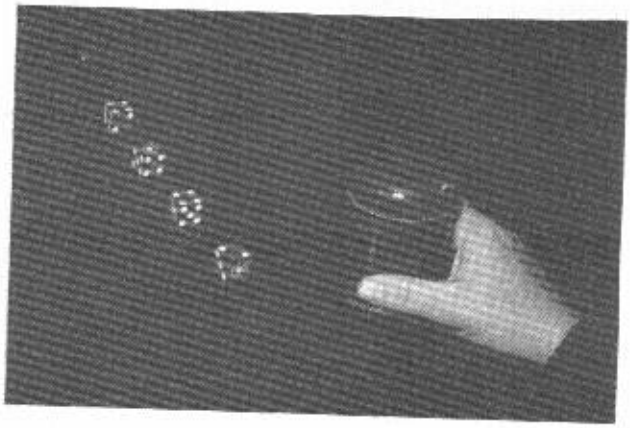
**PHOTO 24-9**



• **Several Dice:**

Lay several dice out on the table, each one about two inches in front of the other (away from you): PHOTO 24-10.

**PHOTO 24-10**



Start the stacking movement, pickup the first die, advance the swing and pickup the second on the next left-right swing, and so forth until you have picked them all off.

Next practice, picking up one on a left-right swing, the next on the return right-left swing, and so forth.

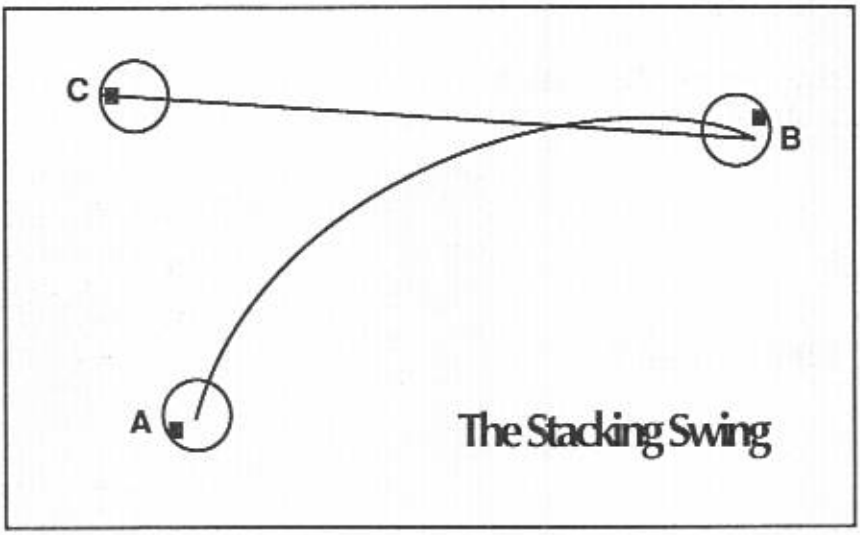
## THE STACK

This is the most difficult part to explain.

You have picked up four dice, say, and are swinging them back and forth in the cup. In fact, the dice are stacked inside the cup. The trick is to bring the cup to a halt and keep the stack intact.

You must bring the cup to a controlled halt at the end of one of your swings:

It must slide to a stop as the cup straightens out. It cannot be abrupt. Look at the diagram. A is the leftmost point of a swing in the stacking movement. B is the rightmost point. At C the cup has grinded to a halt. From B to C, the dice have ridden from the right inside part of the cup to the left inside part (see diagram).




Remember that as you are swinging the cup back and forth, the dice are in fact stacked in the cup. The trick is to bring the cup to a halt without the dice tumbling down. As the cup moves from right to left on the final swing the right wrist bends backwards: PHOTO 24-11. This brings the mouth of the cup flat down against the table (which necessitates the change in the final arc). This takes place during the swing and not at the last moment.

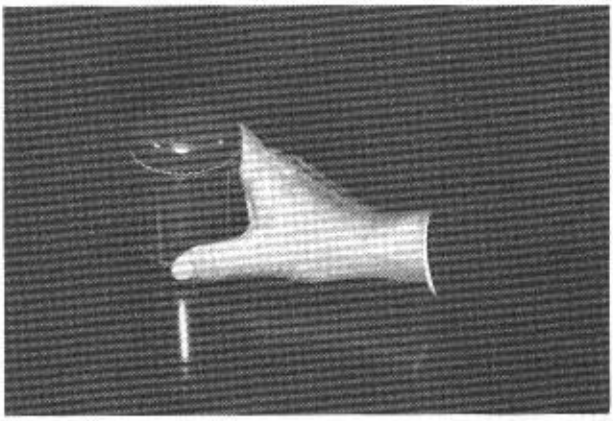
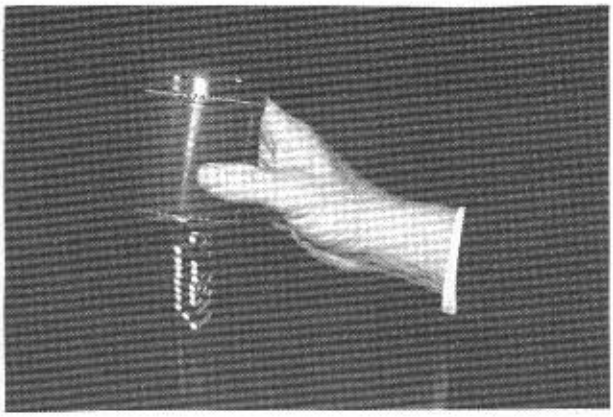


**PHOTO 24-11**

Also, to get the beat of the stacking movement, count: one thousand one, one thousand two, etc. ( old way to count seconds), doing one back and forth swing on each count (ie, one left-right swing takes half of a second).

Finally, when you stop, you will know by feel if the dice are stacked: PHOTO 24-12. If you feel (or hear) them tumble, don't lift the cup but instead commence again the stacking movement and try again.

**PHOTO 24-12**



Before lifting, remember the dice are lined up against the inside left wall.

To avoid knocking them over, move the cup to the left before lifting the cup, bringing the dice to the center.

Finally, once you know how to stack dice, you might prefer the Performing Grip as seen in PHOTO 24-13.

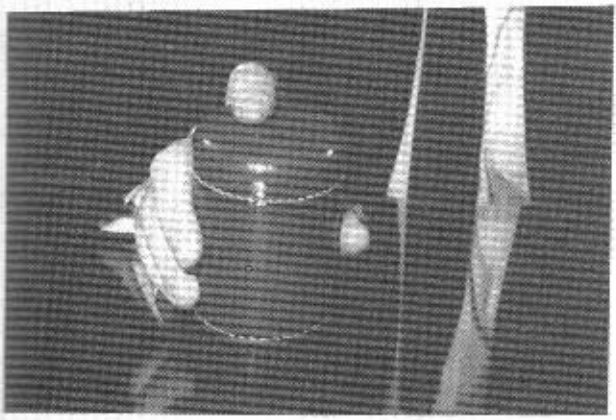


**PHOTO 24-13**

## A Routine

Here is the routine I invariably use.

I lay out four dice and have the cup examined. I then proceed to my first stack, using a lot of in the air swings.

I next do a fast 1-2-3-4 pick up and stack.

Then I pick up the dice two by two.

I lay the dice in a horizontal row - PHOTO 24-14 -and pick them up in one swing.

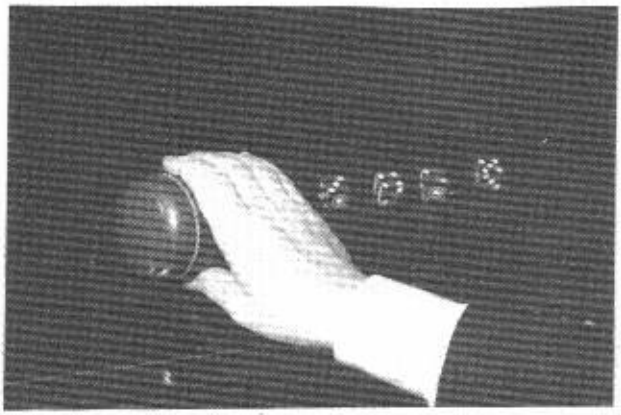


**PHOTO 24-14**

I then lay them out in a vertical row for one last stack. After picking up the first die, I pause to supposedly readjust the furthest die. Meanwhile I glimpse in the cup and note the number on the die: PHOTO 24-15. Suppose it is 3. I know that 4 will be the top number on the stack. I announce: 4 on top!.

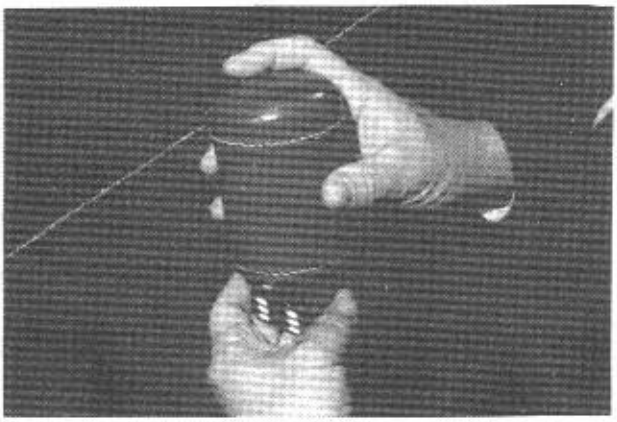
**PHOTO 24-15**



As I finish the stack my left hand goes to my lap and picks up a large load die. Much as in a cups and balls routine, I pick up the cup with the right hand and bring it over the table ledge onto the large die: PHOTO 24-16. Remember that everyone is watching the stack to see if my prediction was correct.

The right hand, with the third finger holding in the die, deposits the loaded cup on the table. To avoid the sound of the large die giving you away, the left forefinger knocks over the stack at the same moment: PHOTO 24-17.

PHOTO 24-16



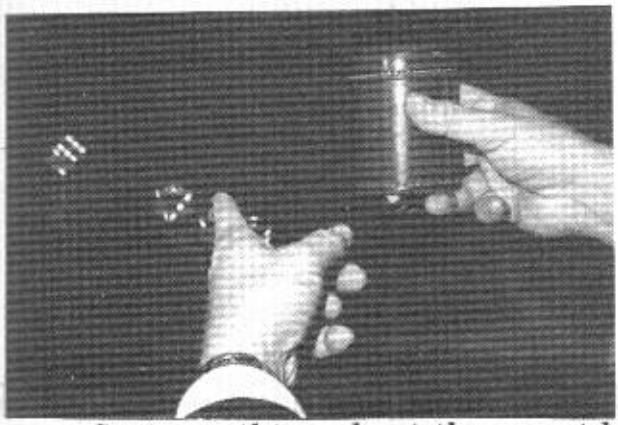
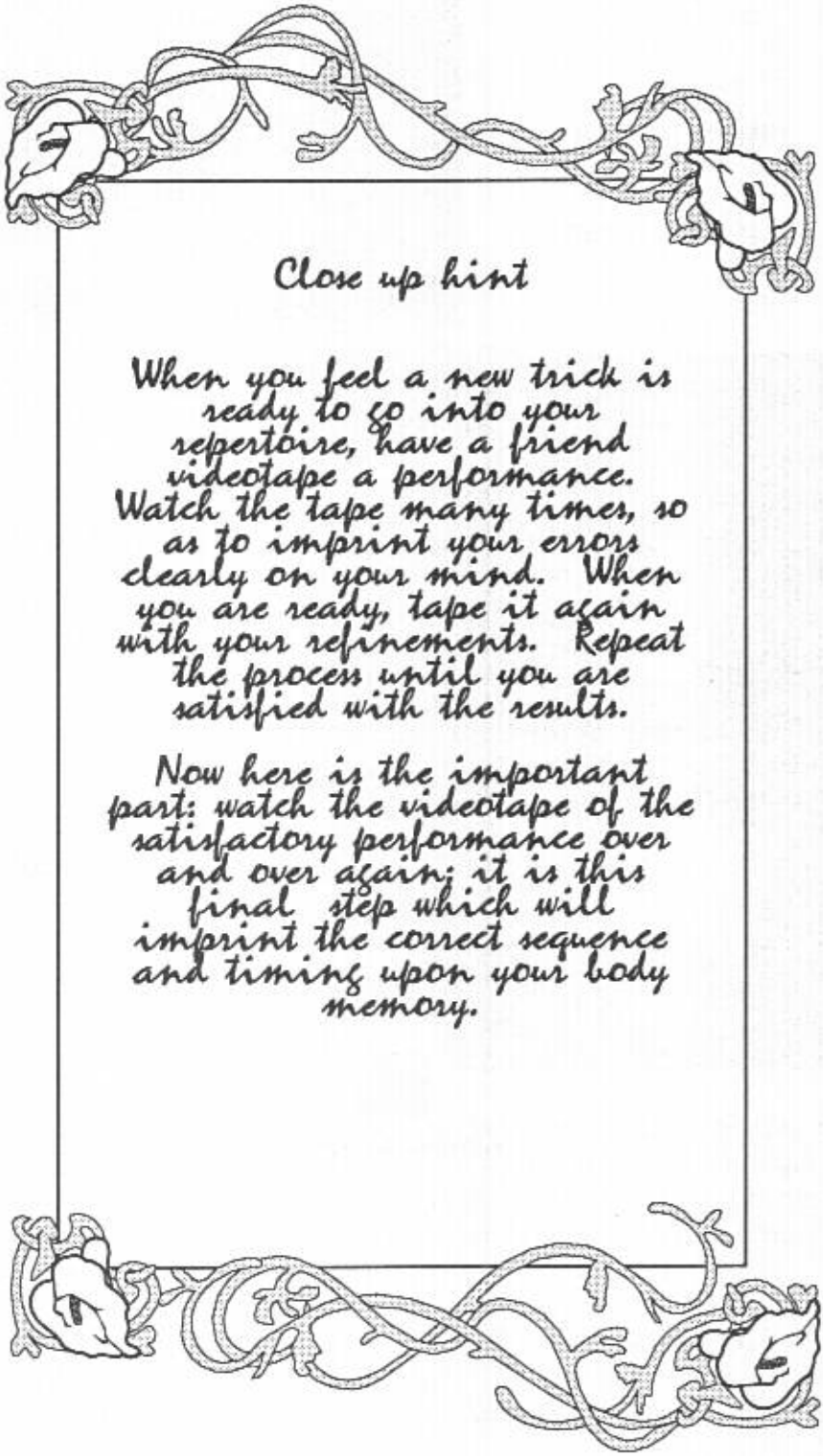


PHOTO 24-17

Say something about the secret being in the use of an extra die, and lift the cup for a climax.

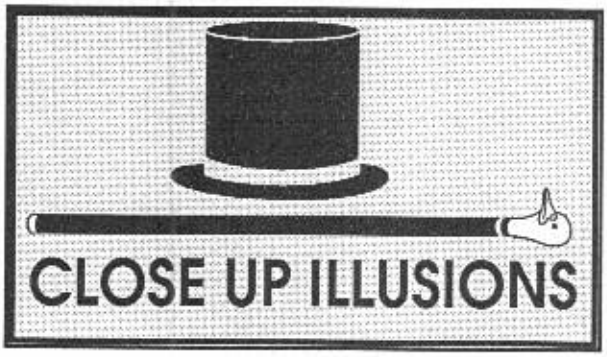




## Close up hint

When you feel a new trick is ready to go into your repertoire, have a friend videotape a performance. Watch the tape many times, so as to imprint your errors clearly on your mind. When you are ready, tape it again with your refinements. Repeat the process until you are satisfied with the results.

Now here is the important part: watch the videotape of the satisfactory performance over and over again; it is this final step which will imprint the correct sequence and timing upon your body memory.




# CHAPTER 25

## THE MIRACLE SIGNED CARD TO PURSE

This is an item that I hesitated to include in this book. The trick itself was part of my close-up act for three years. I have included a summary description in my lecture notes in the past. For many spectators that have seen my act, this was the strongest item. The ending always comes as a total surprise.

However, neither the effect nor the method is original with me. I have borrowed Albert Goshman's effect, added a Rick Johnsson steal, and a handling of a switch by Slydini. I have modified the handling in all these moves, and none of these moves have been used in the past in this particular effect. That is my only contribution to this trick.

The card in the purse effect was popularized by Albert Goshman in his manuscript. Briefly, the Goshman method uses a one hand top palm and a scoop change to bring about the desired results. I never felt comfortable with the handling (although I must admit that Albert Goshman performs this effect beautifully) and eventually worked out the handling that follows. It is not necessarily offered to you as an improvement.

**What you need:**

- One pack of cards.
- One small pencil.
- Two identical small purses.(In the photographs we have used different colored purses for clarity).

The props are shown in Photo 25-1.

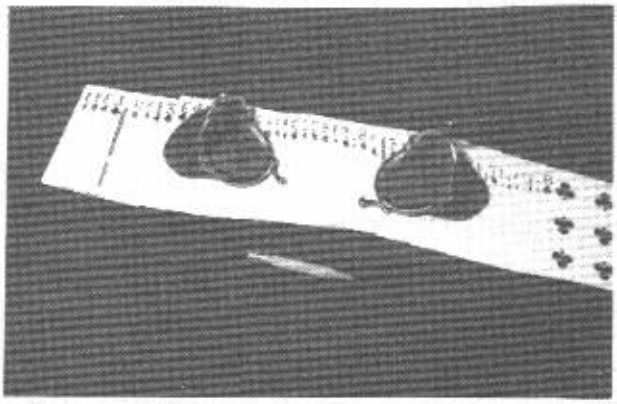


**PHOTO 25-1**

**Preparation**

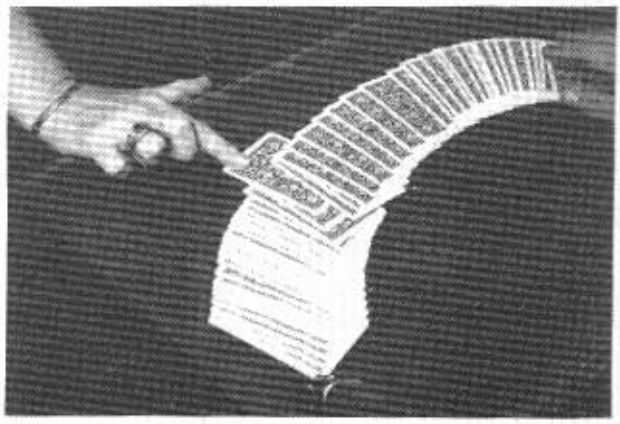
Have one of the purses open in your lap.

Have the pencil in the other purse which is on your close up stage to the left. The deck of cards is on the table.

**Performance**

Spread the cards across the table and have a spectator select one. PHOTO 25-2. Once he has selected a card square the deck and place it face down, to the left of center, and angled slightly as shown in PHOTO 25-3.

**PHOTO 25-2**



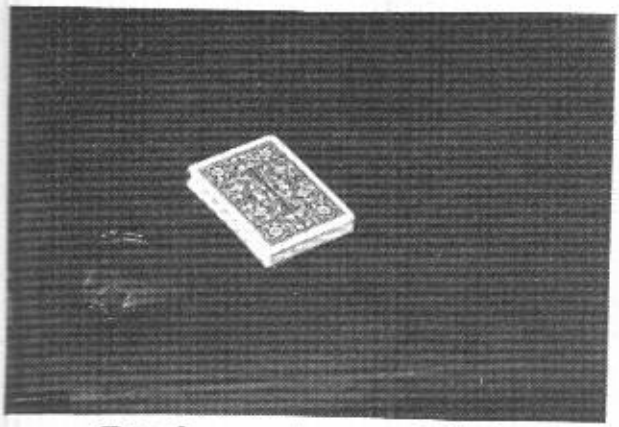
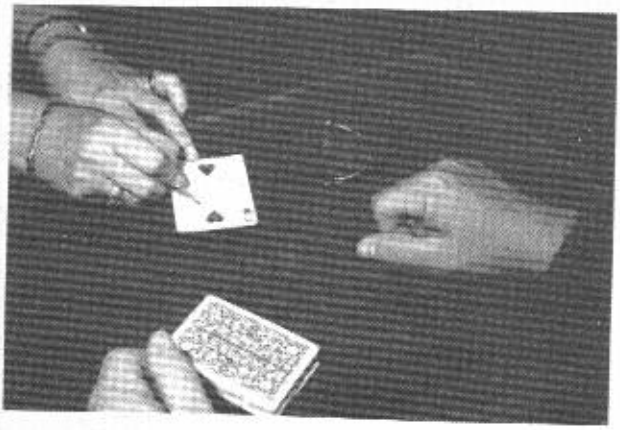


**PHOTO 25-3**

Reach over to your left, bring out the small purse, open it and drop the pencil out onto the table as you ask the spectator to sign the face of the card. PHOTO 25-4.

**PHOTO 25-4**



Now what you are going to do is to steal and lap the selected under pretext of placing it into the deck. If you know a good way to accomplish this, use your own method. Obviously the method must be clean to avoid any suspicion whatsoever that the card is not in the deck. I personally have opted for the late and great Rick Johnsson's move entitlted *Cardus Interruptus* to be found in his excellent book on the Tenkai palm entitled **Practical Impossibilities**, and which is now, sadly, out of print.

Rick Johnsson published parts of his work in The **Linking Ring Magazine**, including the IBGTH Switch (which I suspect stands for *I'll Be Go To Hell* Switch).

But surely some publisher will see the need to reprint **Practical Impossibilities**, both for the high quality of magic contained therein, and for the creative thinking Rick has brought to the Tenkai palm in a close-up environment.

First you must learn to Tenkai palm a card. Hold a card face away from you by the upper right hand corner between the right thumb on the rear and first and second fingers on the front: PHOTO 25-5.

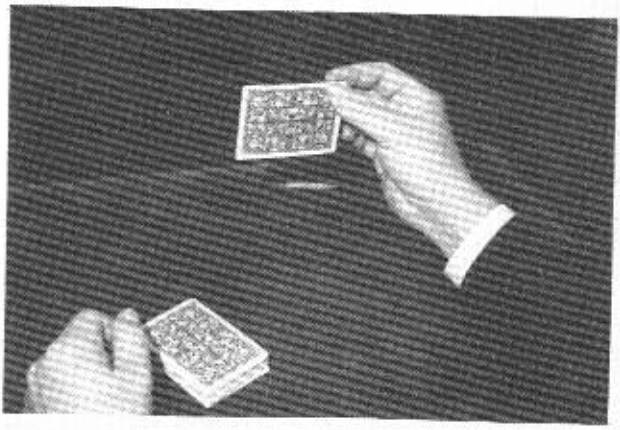
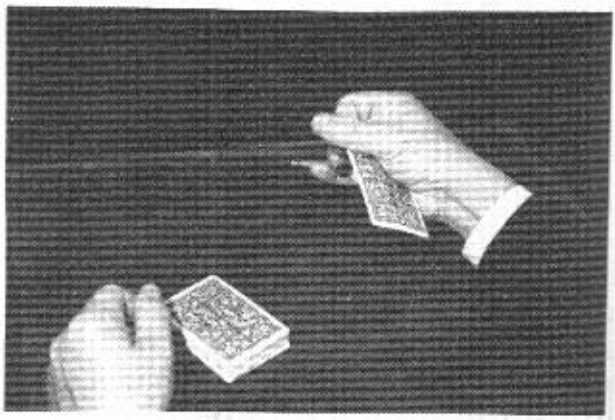


**PHOTO 25-5**

Now by simply pushing back with the two first fingers of the right hand, the card is pushed back towards the base of the hand: PHOTO 25-6.

**PHOTO 25-6**



You will now find that by releasing your fingers the card is palmed in what is known among magicians as the Tenkai palm named after its inventor, the great Japanese magician. The move is used by many stage magicians, and reached its finest hour in the hands of Fred Kaps.

Now that you know the Tenkai palm I will teach you how to use this move to undetectably steal and lap the selected card.

Getting back to the effect, you reach forward and pick up the signed selected card which you hold by the upper right hand corner. This is the pre-Tenkai palm position. But please note that

your excuse for holding this card in this way is supposedly to show all your spectators the signature that is now on the face of the card: PHOTO 25-7.

**PHOTO 25-7**



The left hand now lifts up the top half of the deck of cards that is on the table PHOTO 25-8. Note that the thumb is at the rear and the front portion of the deck is held by the fingers of the left hand. In fact, you are opening up the front portion of the deck as if you were opening up a hinged box top.

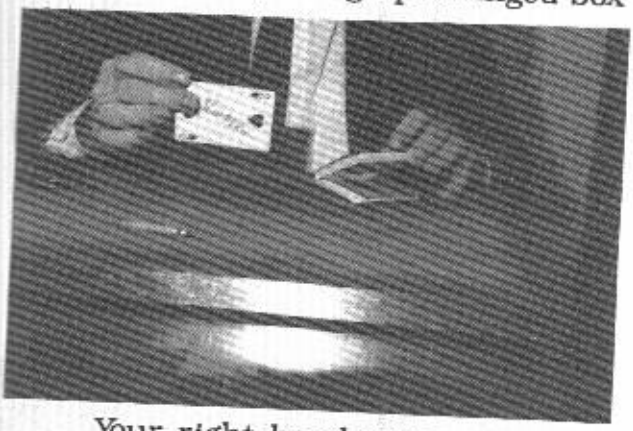
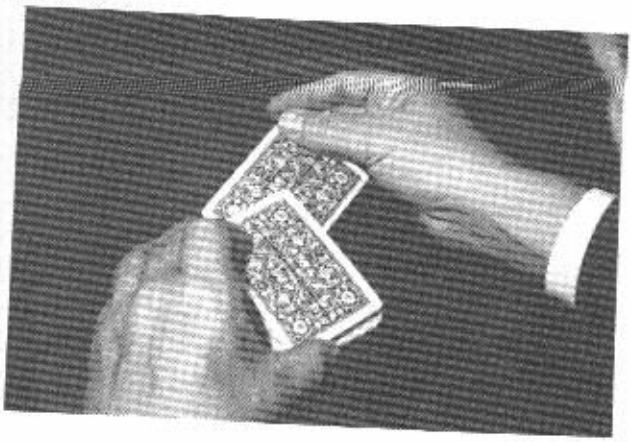


**PHOTO 25-8**

Your right hand now comes as if to place the card into the center of the deck: PHOTO 25-9.

**PHOTO 25-9**



Without pause you simply perform the Tenkai palm move as explained above: PHOTO 25-10. This, seen from the front, is totally undetectible. But also note that as you are performing the Tenkai palm move you allow the selected card to brush against the top card of the lower half. This will cause that card to be outjogged slightly to the right from the table deck.

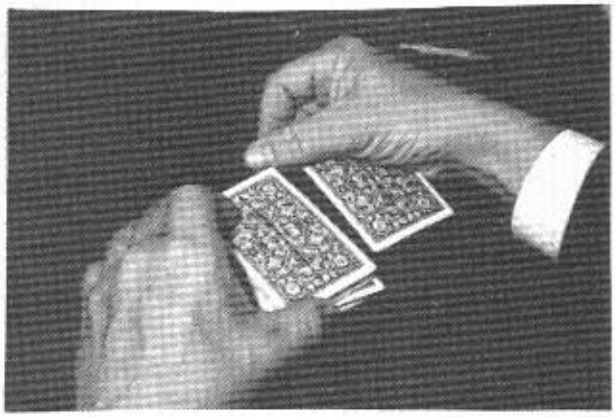
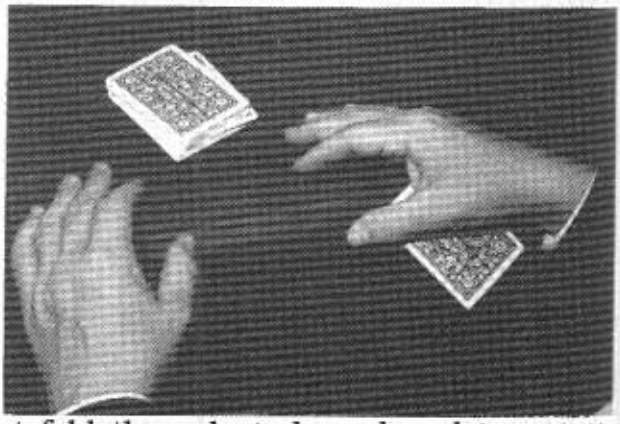


**PHOTO 25-10**

Immediately after having performed the Tenkai palm, the left hand closes its portion of the deck and both hands are brought back slightly. The outjogged card appears to the spectator to be the selected card. If you ever doubt the effectiveness of this move perform it in front of a mirror and you will fool yourself.

With the right hand brought closer to table edge and the card in Tenkai palm position you will find by slightly relaxing pressure on the right thumb the card will automatically fall into your lap: PHOTO 25-11.

**PHOTO 25-11**



At this stage you must fold the selected card and insert it into the purse. To make it easy to perform I now state the following to the spectator: *I want you to cut the pack into three piles,*

*rearrange them into a different order, and then turn the deck of cards face up. While you do this, I won't look.*

As you say the last words, and to prove that you will not look you turn to the left and hide the right side of your face with the right hand. PHOTO 25-12 shows a spectator view of this ploy.

**PHOTO 25-12**



By seemingly making this cutting important, you are really giving yourself all the cover you need to fold up the selected card in your lap and insert it into the purse. You simply hold the card in the hand, fold it in half and then half again: PHOTO 25-13, insert it into the purse and close the purse.

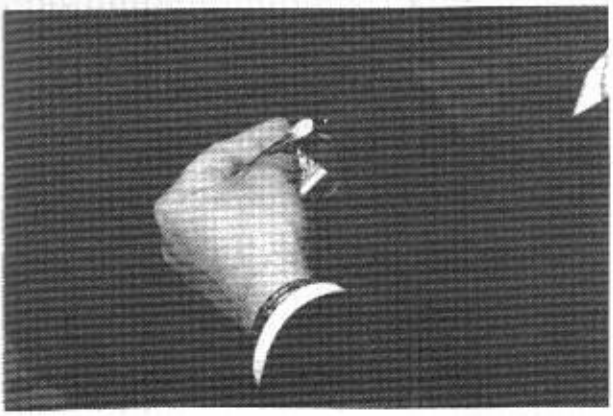


**PHOTO 25-13**

As scams go, this one is pretty bold! Most importantly, it works, time after time.

You now turn towards the spectator, after he has told you that he has accomplished your instructions, and spread the deck of cards face out onto the table. Please note that the purse that is on the table was left purposely by you in the center towards the right

side of your surface. Thus by spreading out the cards you accidently run into the purse: PHOTO 25-14.

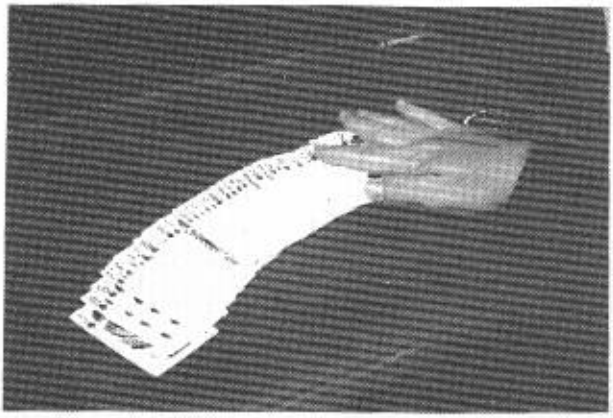
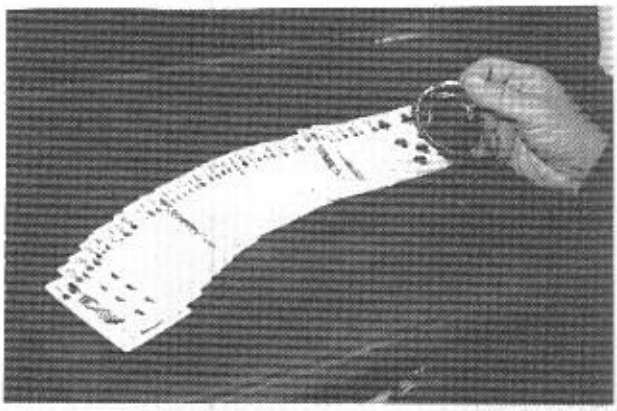


**PHOTO 25-14**

This gives you a natural excuse for the right hand to pick up the purse: PHOTO 25-15. At the same time the left hand has fallen into your lap and has picked up the loaded purse which it holds just before table level: PHOTO 25-16.

**PHOTO 25-15**



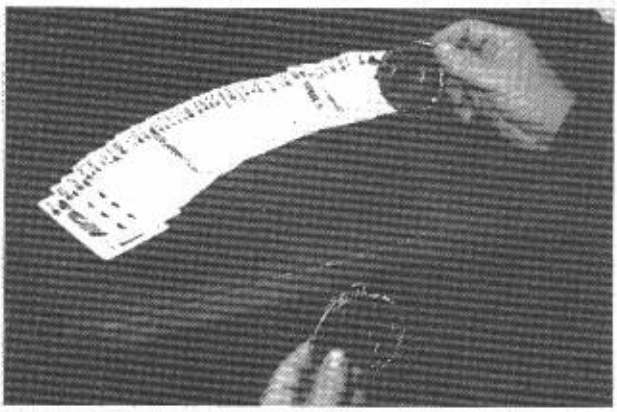


**PHOTO 25-16**

You are now going to perform a variation of the **Slydini Switch** to switch purses. This will be done in full view of the spectators. Even when you know a magician is going to perform it

the handling on this switch is such that a switch is to all practical intents invisible. However the exact motion of the right hand just before the switch is important so I ask you to attentively study the photographs. Please note that this is all done in one continuing motion. It is also done as you say to the spectator *I want you to look through this spread and take out the selected card.*

As this being said, the right hand holding the purse uses the purse to help spread a few cards: PHOTO 25-17. The right hand then make a slight upward gesture, PHOTO 25-18, and then immediately comes down bringing the purse below table level right in back of the purse held by the left hand: PHOTO 25-19.

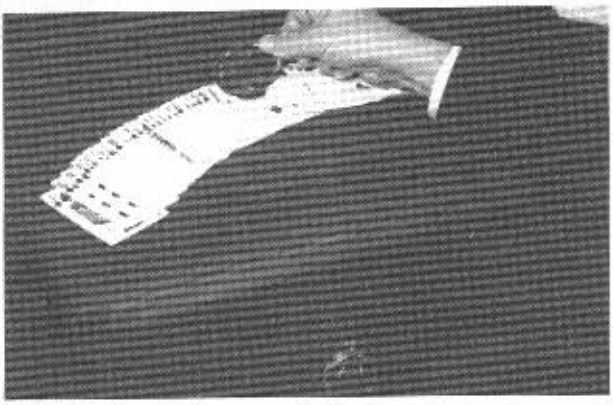


**PHOTO 25-17**

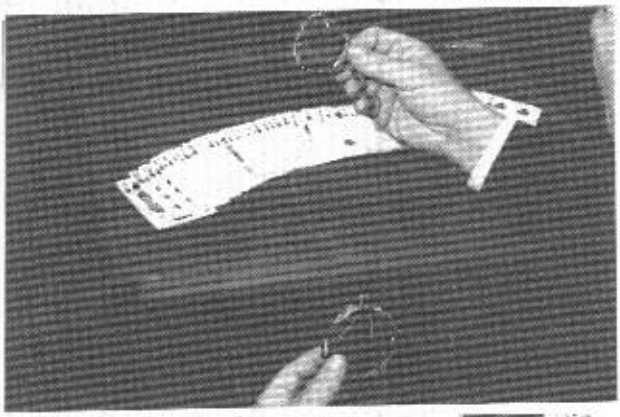


**PHOTO 25-18**

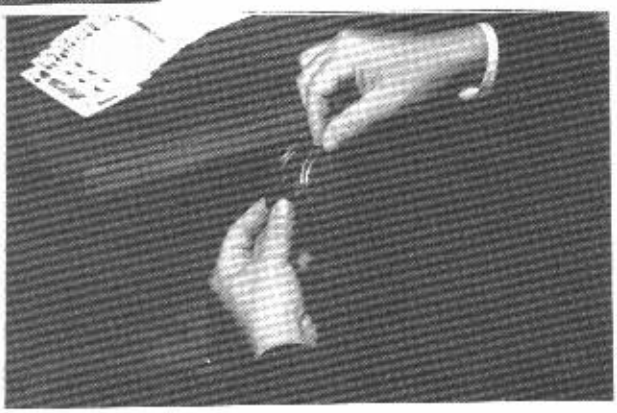


**PHOTO 25-19**

At this stage the right hand simply takes the left hand purse: PHOTO 25-20.

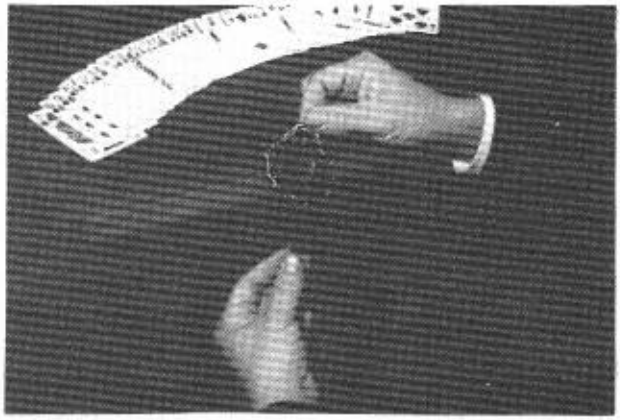
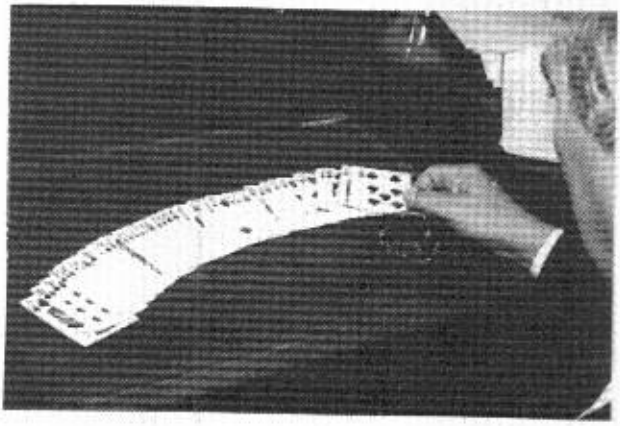


**PHOTO 25-20**

You will notice that the act of taking the other purse requires you to open the left thumb and fingers which automatically laps the empty purse. But it is important not to worry about dropping the empty purse. By simply concentrating on picking up the loaded purse the lapping will be automatic.

Still in a continuing gesture, the right hand comes back up above table level with a loaded purse which it places to the right of the close up surface: PHOTO 25-21.

**PHOTO 25-21**



The above series of movements as I mentioned are done in one continuing flow, and in fact the purse is hidden for only a fraction of a second while the switch takes place.

Lean back in your chair and wait for the spectator. He cannot find the chosen card.

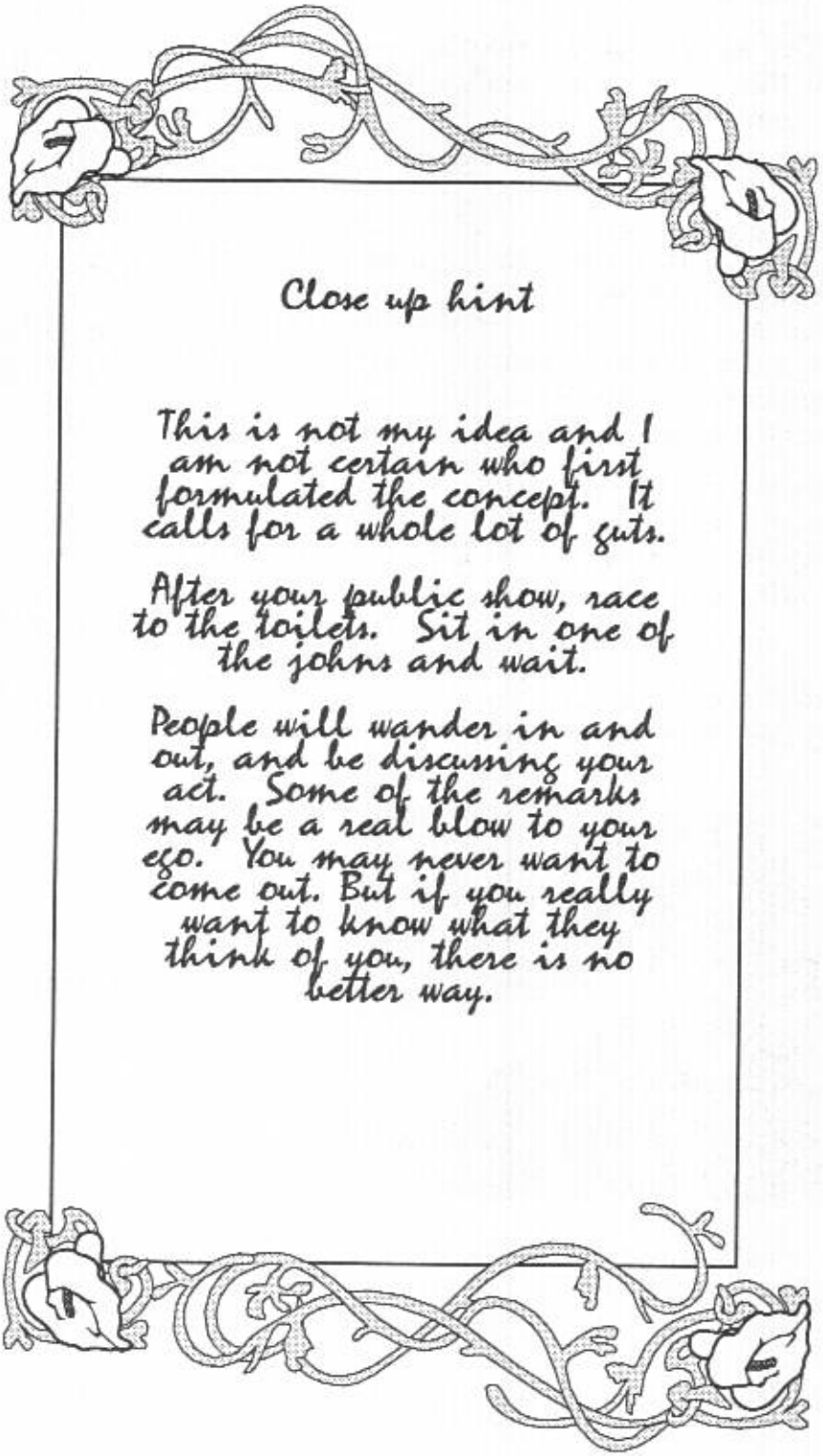
Then say to him: *Are you ready for this? Open the purse!.*

The spectator opens the purse, takes out the card and verifies that it is his signed card. At the end simply replace the pencil into the now empty purse and place the purse aside.

**Notes.**

This trick in my opinion is one of the gems of this book. It may seem formidable when you study the workings, but in fact both the steal and the switch are quite easy to do. This is been one of the main parts of my lecture for many years, and this routine was also included in the **Videonics** lectures. I commend it to your sincere attention.



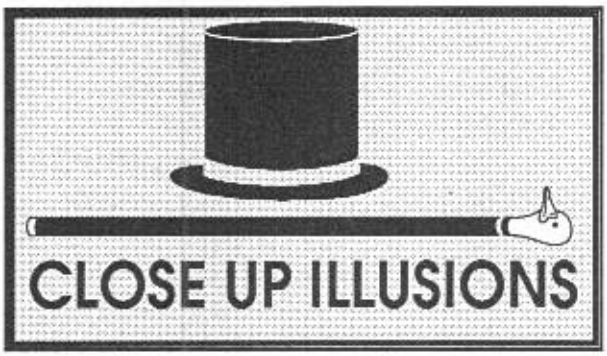


## Close up hint

This is not my idea and I am not certain who first formulated the concept. It calls for a whole lot of guts.

After your public show, race to the toilets. Sit in one of the johns and wait.

People will wander in and out, and be discussing your act. Some of the remarks may be a real blow to your ego. You may never want to come out. But if you really want to know what they think of you, there is no better way.




# CHAPTER 26

## SOME WORDS TO A BEGINNER

Young magicians get a whole lot of bad advice.

For some reason, when a magic neophyte approaches an experienced magician for advice on learning the craft, the experienced magician falls back on what is perceived to be the conventional wisdom, and recommends the so-called classics.

Read Erdnase, the youngster is admonished. Read Magic by Misdirection. Read Showmanship for Magicians. Read The Unmasking of Robert Houdin. Read Hofzinser.

Learn the glide. Learn the French Drop. Practice back and front palming. Work on the classic pass.

With advice like this, it is a wonder any of them persevere.

The glide is probably the worst sleight in magic. All the kids are doing it. They think they are fooling everyone. The French Drop I discuss in a separate chapter but wonder why anyone feels compelled to recommend the move to an unsuspecting young

person. The classic pass! I have been working on the classical type pass for ten years (progress in these matters is measured in ever diminishing increments) - a sort of modified half jiggle pass, in case you were wondering, which I may eventually publish - but the sleight is decidedly not a beginner's move.

As for books, the old books lacked sufficient illustration, and sufficient narrative to hook the average reader. The venerables, such as Erdnase, may well be pithy, as the Professor is quick to point out; but they are pretty dry and dull reading. Better to earn your spurs with the likes of a Harry Lorayne, who gets your enthusiasm up enough to at least try the darn thing once. Erdnase is for the committed post-graduate student of magic.

I have some advice for magicians starting out:

## Moves to Learn

You need to learn a card control, a force, and a double lift. With these three sleights mastered, then go one to learn the rest, but the three mentioned can get you through most effects. I would be less than honest if I did not recommend ProControl (a card control system sold separately by Guy Camirand), the classic force, and the Angle Pivot Double Lift (both latter concepts taught herein).

As for coin or ball moves, one good vanish is all you need to start. The Basic Vanish, or the Toss Vanish, both taught in this book, are sufficient.

That's it: four sleights to learn. Master these, and you can earn a living in close up magic. Add a top change and a good sponge ball vanish and you can hold your own in fast company. Trouble is, we rush of to learn hundreds of moves, never really mastering any one single sleight, and struggle to rise above mediocrity.

As for a recommended reading list, here are my entries:

1. The bound volume of the original **Stars of Magic**. This volume delivers more bang for the buck than any book I know. Here were introduced to magicdom such greats as Spellbound, Triumph, the Ambitious Card, Slydini's cigarette miracle, and so much more. Hard to find one bad trick in the book.

2. Harry Lorayne's **Close Up Card Magic**. Harry's style makes you want to learn the darn tricks, he knows how to teach, and he knows good magic.

3. Any Paul Harris Book. Great thinking, revolutionary approaches, wonderful magic.

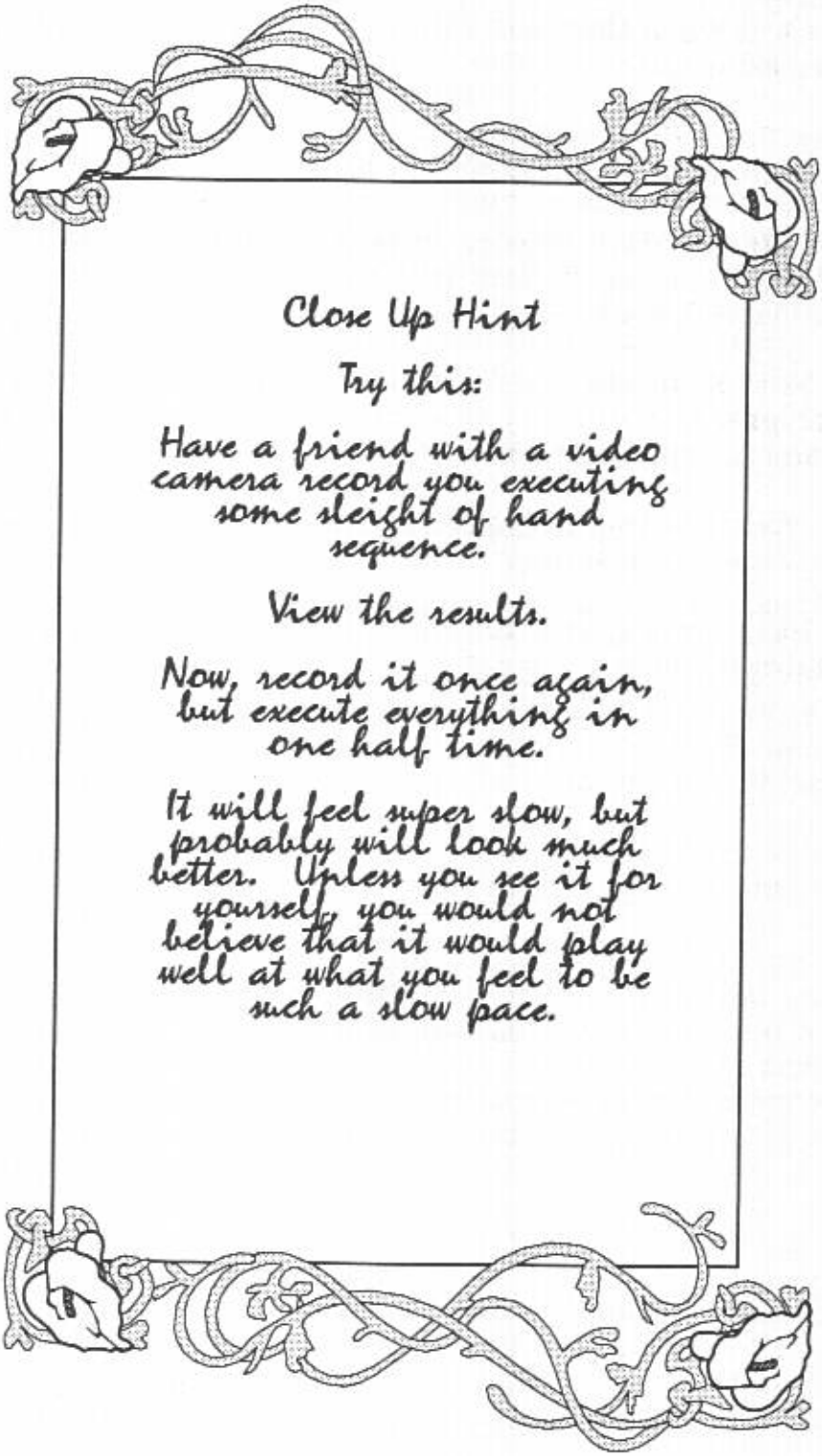
4. **The Mark Wilson Course in Magic** is now available at a very low price, and contains stuff that will fool the experts, who never bother to check it out.

You probably will want to subscribe to **Genii** and **Apocalypse,** and will look forward every month to getting magical news and Harry's latest finds.

When you look at magicians perform, look at the spectators too: how are they reacting? Why?

Pick out one trick you like and resolve to perform it better than anyone else in the world.





## Close Up Hint

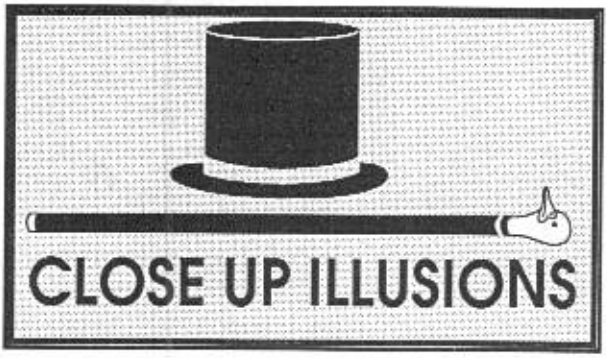
Try this:

Have a friend with a video camera record you executing some sleight of hand sequence.

View the results.

Now, record it once again, but execute everything in one half time.

It will feel super slow, but probably will look much better. Unless you see it for yourself, you would not believe that it would play well at what you feel to be such a slow pace.




# CHAPTER 27

## JAPANESE JEWELS

In February 1987, I had the pleasure of receiving a visit from Hideo Kato, one of the Tenyo creative staff. Tenyo was coming out with its professional close-up line of products and Hideo and I worked on the instructions.

During the breaks, Hideo entertained me with his fine magic. He has invented hundreds of tricks, moves and routines, almost none of which have ever been published. I look forward to such a book in the future. Meantime, here are a few gems to whet your appetite.

### THE KATO KOUNT

What a trick this is! I guarantee that if you do not know the secret, I can fool you with this, no matter who you are. Don't read the explanation and sell this short before trying it out. When Hideo did it for me I had no idea what was going on.

## EFFECT

The magician takes a few cards out of the deck and puts them in his pocket. He then spreads the cards and has spectator touch any one. The touched card is jogged up and the deck raised to let the spectator see the card. The card is then pushed flush and the deck placed on the table without any funny moves. The cards are removed from the pocket and their values totaled. Suppose the total is eighteen. Spectator is told to count down to the eighteenth card, and it is, amazingly, the selection!

## SECRET

Don't turn the page !

The secret is: you count cards as you spread using Kato's special count. When a card is touched you know exactly what rank it occupies. You then remove cards from your pocket to equal this number.

### The Count:

The deck is held in the normal dealing position in the left hand and the cards, assisted by the left thumb which pushes to the right, are spread into the right hand. However, every time Kato pushes cards to the right, the left thumb always pushes FOUR cards and four cards only. This is easy: try it and see. Now the four cards are not pushed as a solid little block. This would be too obvious. Instead, the spreading appears even, but every time the left thumb pushes off four cards. PHOTO 27-1 shows the initial four, and PHOTO 27-2 shows the next four.

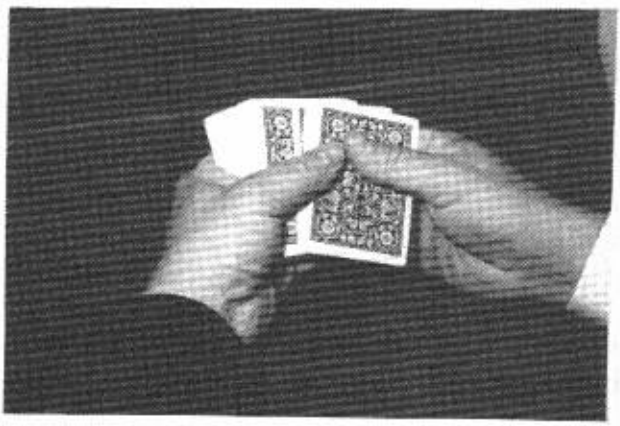
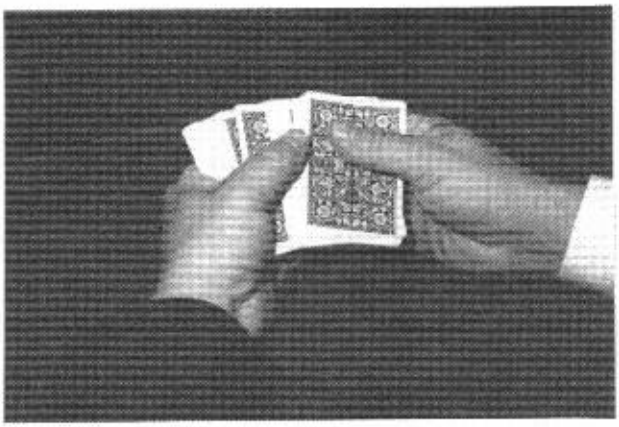


**PHOTO 27-1**

**PHOTO 27-2**



**The Number cards:**

If you know the binary system, you know that with the numbers 1,2,4 and 8, you can form any number up to 15:

1 = 1
2 = 2
3 = 1 + 2
4 = 4
5 = 4 + 1
6 = 4 + 2
7 = 4 + 2 + 1
8 = 8
9 = 8 + 1
10 = 8 + 2
11 = 8 + 2 + 1
12 = 8 + 4
13 = 8 + 4 + 1
14 = 8 + 4 + 2
15 = 8 + 4 + 2 + 1

The cards you secretly remove (don't let spectators see which cards you remove, nor how many) are a King, ace, deuce, four spot and eight spot.

The King counts for thirteen.

This permits you to form any number from 1 to 25.

As you will see, the routine is set up so that the selection will always be 13 or higher. So when you know the number (for

example, eighteen) subtract 13 (for the King) and use the correct cards from among the A, 2, 4 and 8 to make up the difference.

For example, I want to make 18. I would think: 18-13 (the King)=5. I make 5 by adding 4+1. So to get 18, I bring out the King, the four and the Ace (13+4+1=18).

**THE PRESENTATION**

Borrow a deck or use your own. Remove the five cards without calling attention to the fact and place them in any pocket in K,8,4,2,1 order.

Start to spread the cards, using the Kato Kount, as you say "*I am going to spread the cards like this...*"

When you have pushed off 12 cards (three push-offs) square the spread back in the left hand BUT RETAINING A BREAK BELOW THE 12 CARDS as you continue to say "*and I want you to touch any card.*"

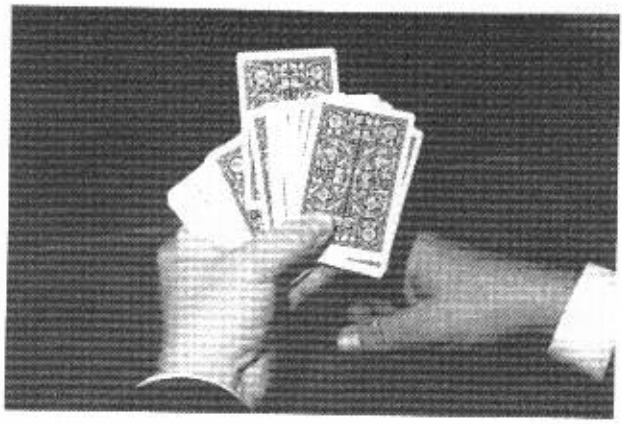
These are the preliminary instructions. You start to spread as you explain, and then stop, square up, and prepare to start over again. The spectator nods that he understands what he is to do. You secretly have a break below the top 12 cards.

Now start to spread but commence by pushing off the top block of 12 cards as one rough block, and continuing by Kato Kounting (as you say to yourself one, two,...etc as each block is moved to the right). When a card is touched, remember its position in the block presently being counted.

For example, suppose you had secretly counted two blocks and the card touched was the third card in the next block. You would then count 12 (the original block) plus 8 (the two blocks you then counted) plus 3 (the third card touched) for a total of 23. You would then jog the card forward (PHOTO 27-3), lift the fan to show the selection, square up all and leave the deck on the table. You would also have figured out that you will be taking out the King (13), eight and two (13+8+2=23) from your pocket.

You reach in your pocket and smoothly, with as little fumbling as possible, remove the cards you need. Ask a spectator to total the cards and count down to the number.

PHOTO 27-3



This will fool anyone who is not clinically dead. Should the spectator go beyond twenty five (this has never happened to me) - for example, thirty, you can announce that the selection is 23 cards up from the bottom (subtract the number from 52 and add 1).

## The Amazing Dream Glass

This is a most puzzling impromptu effect. A drinking glass seems to cling to the back of the fingers.

A clever secret and smooth routining produce a sterling effect.

What you need: a drinking glass (empty). Some experimentation may be called for. To learn the effect, take a plastic glass. Later you will graduate to a glass prop.

Take a glass and hold it between the backs of the fingers of both hands as shown in Photo 27-4.

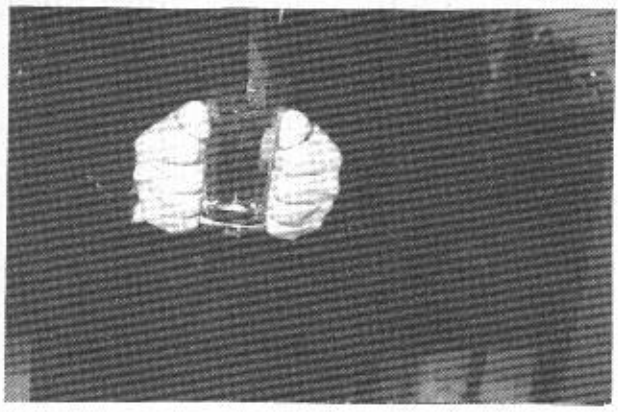


PHOTO 27-4

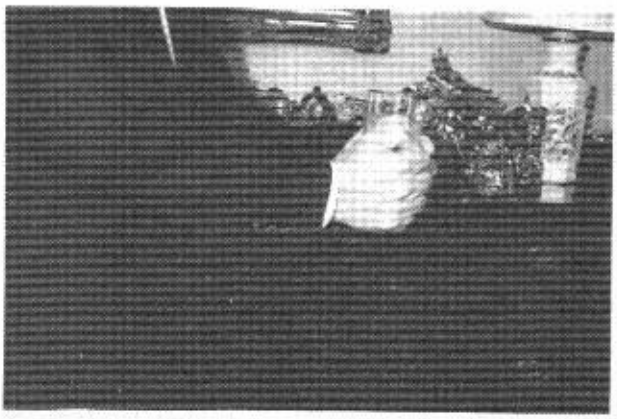
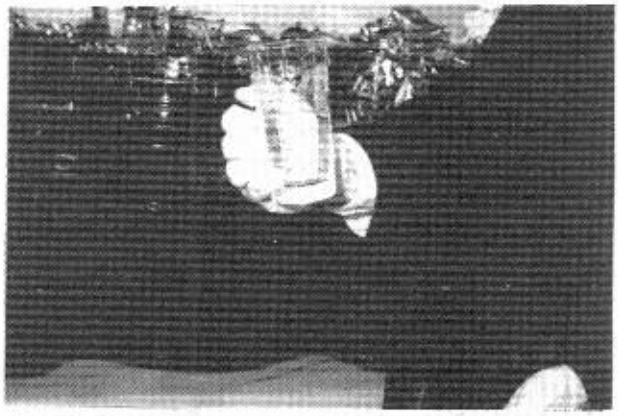


**PHOTO 27-5**

Swing to your left: PHOTO 27-5.

As you do, the right little finger quickly and secretly comes out and holds the glass: PHOTO 27-6 is an exposed rear view.

**PHOTO 27-6**

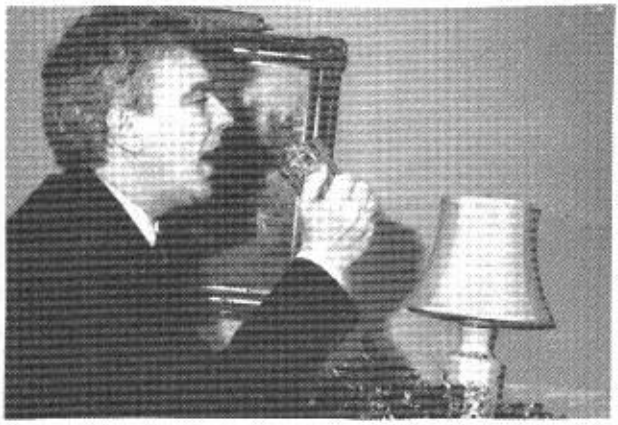


Remove and raise the left hand: PHOTO 27-7. The glass clings mysteriously to the right hand.



**PHOTO 27-7**

**PHOTO 27-8**



Raise the glass up to the mouth as if drinking: PHOTO 27-8.

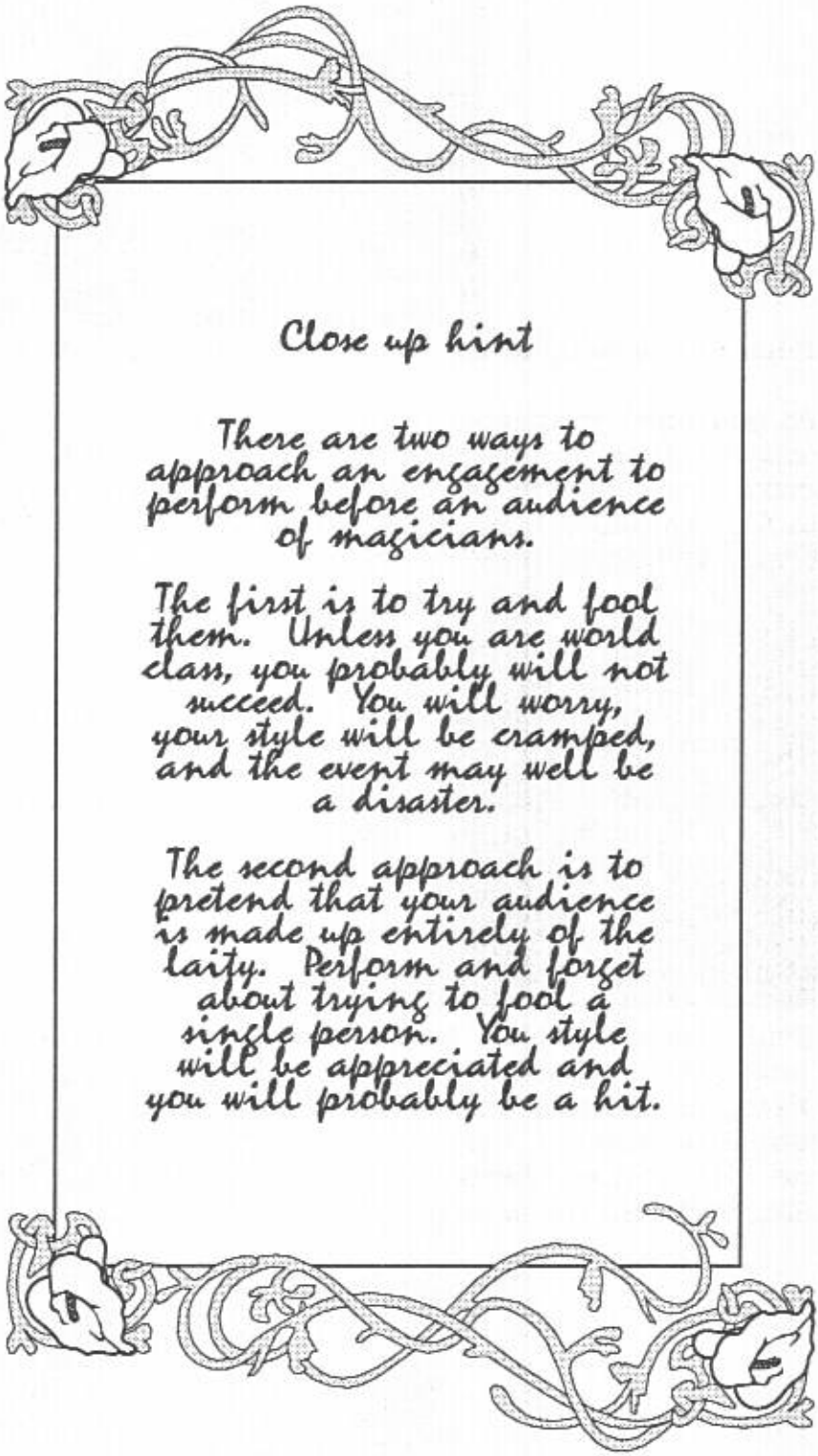
As you open your mouth to supposedly drink, your teeth come onto the glass and grip the rim, holding the glass in place. This permits you to release the little finger grip as you slowly swing back to face the audience. They can seemingly see the glass clinging to your fingers: PHOTO 27-9.



**PHOTO 27-9**

Swing back to the left. Re-grip the glass with the right little finger and lower the glass as it continues to appear to cling to the hand. Bring the left closed fist back onto the glass, and withdraw the right little finger. Again, slowly turn back to face your audience. You can end here, or swing to the right and have the glass cling to the left fist as well.



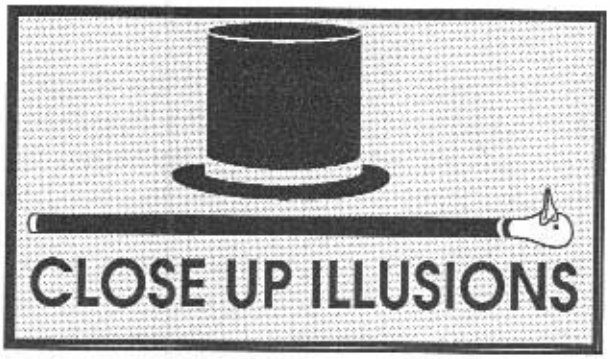


## Close up hint

There are two ways to approach an engagement to perform before an audience of magicians.

The first is to try and fool them. Unless you are world class, you probably will not succeed. You will worry, your style will be cramped, and the event may well be a disaster.

The second approach is to pretend that your audience is made up entirely of the laity. Perform and forget about trying to fool a single person. You style will be appreciated and you will probably be a hit.




# CHAPTER 28

## FOR ASCANIO

Fechter's Finger Flinging Frolics, billed as the Original Close Up Convention, is held every year at the Forks Hotel in Buffalo, New York. It is an act of love, started in May 1971 by the late Eddie Fechter, Obie Obrien and Bill Okal, and now continued by Obie, a nice man, good magical thinker and even better friend, and a crack team of Buffalo magicians. Attendance at FFFF is by invitation only. The event takes place in a small little "hotel" (really a restaurant and tavern) – where a world class collection of magicians literally live with each other for three days. Regular guests come to the bar and restaurant and any magician is free to try out his latest conceit on the laity; the upstairs room is for the shows (Obie conscripts the talent on the spot) and the special lectures – again, often extemporaneous. Every year there is a guest of honour; just as there is a special guest lecturer. Ray Mertz and Howie Schwartzman set up small dealer booths in adjoining rooms, but anyone can sell their new products anytime they like. Daryl, Larry Jennings, Richard Kaufman, Jay Marshall, Meir Yedid, Bob Farmer, David Williamson, Jay Sankey, Paul Gertner, Jerry Andrus, Tom Mullica, Herb Zarrow and Frank Garcia are just some of the regulars. The late Sid Lorraine was also a familiar face.

In 1989, Obie conferred on me the great compliment of making me the Guest of Honour (altogether undeserved). The guest lecturer was Arturo Ascanio, of Ascanio Spread fame.

Ascanio is one of the most marvellous magicians I have ever encountered. His patter and delivery (in Spanish – I was sitting with Jean–Pierre Garnier who speaks the language and who gave me a running translation) is poetry itself. He has a face full of expression; his plots are compelling, his execution breathtaking, his magic vivid. He breaks into great smiles which spread like a contagious fever. He is a consummate performer, and a whole lot of fun to watch. If he ever gives one of his rare lectures outside his country near you, cancel everything and go.

His handling of double cards is a joy to behold. I only hope that a serious book, which gives graphic detail to the fine points of Ascanio's magic, or even a videotape series, is one day released to the fraternity. I dedicate these little ideas to The Master of Double Card Handling who, like me, is a lawyer involved in the business sphere. There is a French expression that, roughly translated, means "*The law leads to everything*". I am not certain that the originator of the addage had conjuring in mind!

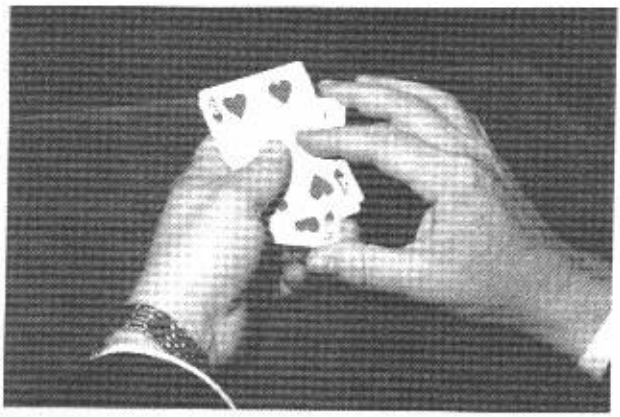
I have already detailed my handling of his spread (**The Ascanio Paradise Spread**) in Chapter 10. I would now like to give you an added ploy which I have called the Angle Spread, and a routine which uses the sleight.

## The Angle Spread

This handling is added to the Paradise Ascanio Spread: the effect is that the cards are spread (Ascanio Paradise), displayed, and then spread into a fan – all the while hiding the original center card of a group of five. To get to the Angle Spread I also use, as a connector, another ploy of Mr. Ascanio which he explained to the FFFF'ers.

Refer back to Chapter 10. Assume that you have five face up cards and seek to hide the centermost card. Execute the Paradise Ascanio Spread. Once you reach the position shown in Photo 10–18, the right hand places it cards back on top of the left hand cards: PHOTO 28–1. Note that the double is back jogged at an angle and is held securely against the left heel by the left third

PHOTO 28-1



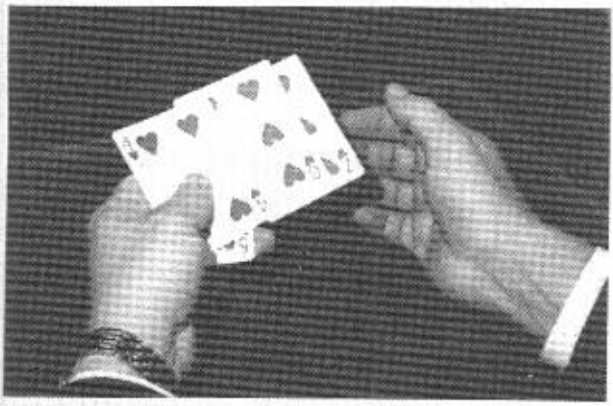
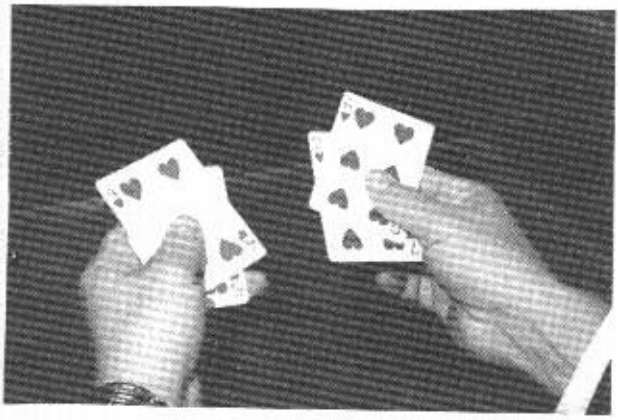


PHOTO 28-2

finger. The right hand moves away and immediately the left first and second finger push (scoot) the bottom two cards out to the right – PHOTO 28–2 – where they are taken by the right hand: PHOTO 28–3. This is a brilliant manoeuvre by Ascanio, a totally disarming little thing.

PHOTO 28-3



The thumbs of each hand can now slide the top card of each packet back and forth, turning the hand over and back, as if you were looking for the missing card, checking the singularity of the cards. Ascanio, when he performs this, looks puzzled and amused.

Now comes the Angle Spread, based upon the Angle Pivot move taught earlier.

The right hand top card should be rear jogged and the right hand replaces both cards back onto the left hand cards as shown in PHOTO 28–4. Note that the double card, on the bottom, still is rear–jogged for about half an inch. Flip the packet over maintaining this jogged position. This allows you to automatically pick up a break under the double with the right thumb as the right hand squares up the cards: PHOTO 28–5.

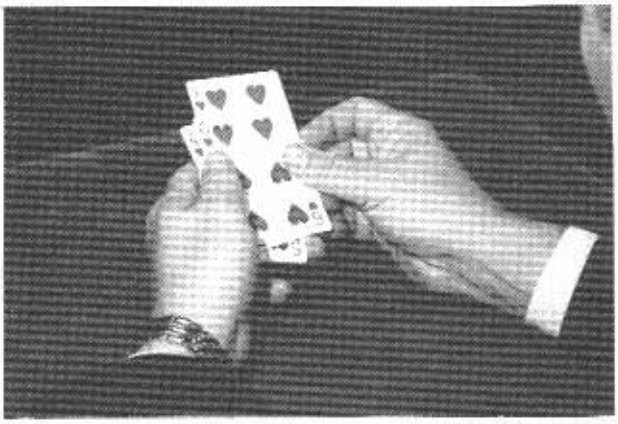


**PHOTO 28-4**

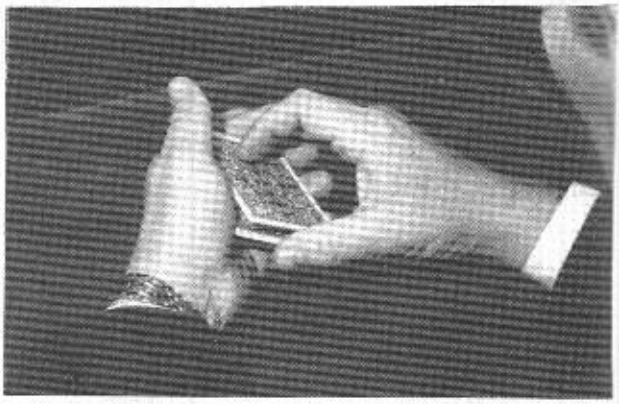


**PHOTO 28-5**

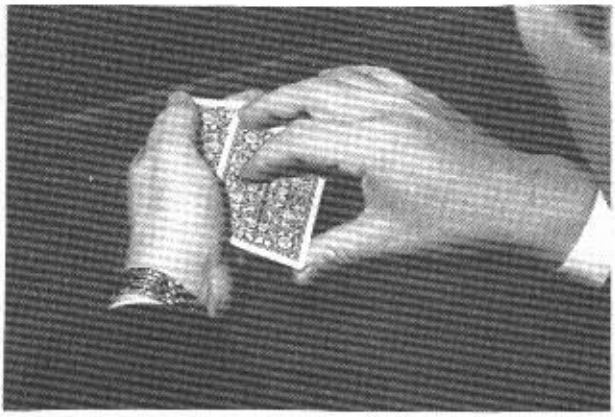


**PHOTO 28-6**

Without pause, the right thumb angle–pivots (as taught earlier) the top two cards: PHOTO 28–6 shows the move underway. Almost simultaneously, the left thumb spreads the bottom three cards: PHOTO 28–7.

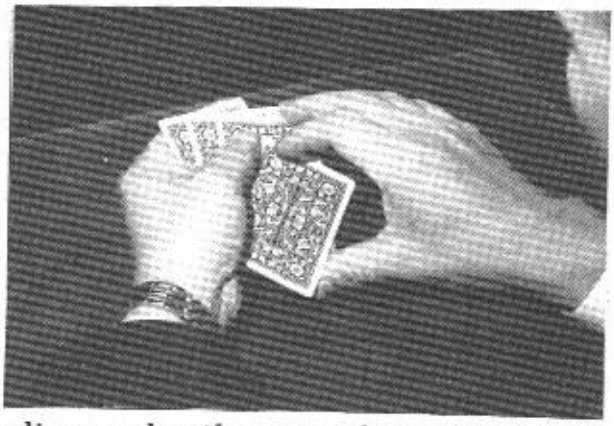


**PHOTO 28-7**

The right thumb now dips under the spread until it comes under the cards at about the center of the spread and the right hand now turns the spread over: PHOTO 28–8.

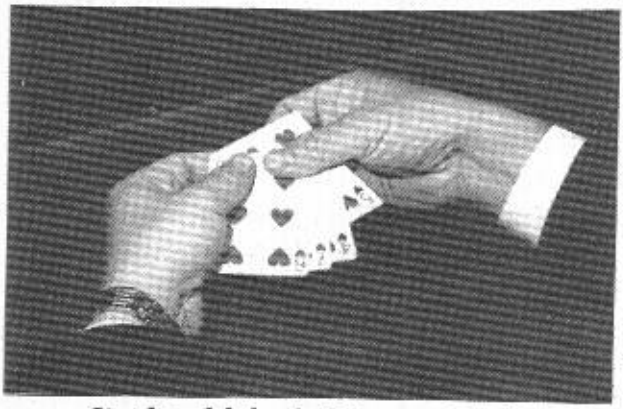


**PHOTO 28-8**

It should look like a simple spreading of the cards, yet the hidden card remains hidden. Lay the face up spread onto the left fingers — PHOTO 28–9 — and flip the cards face down onto the left palm.

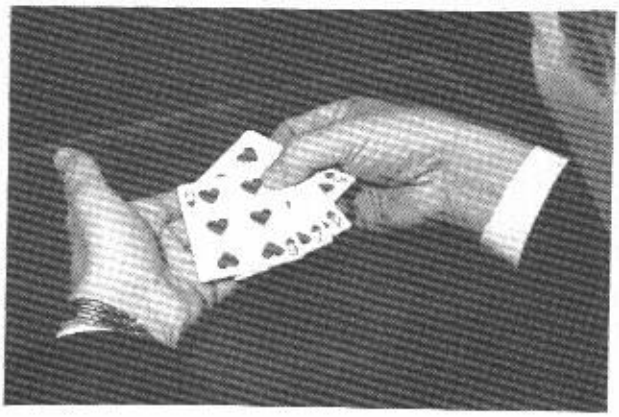


**PHOTO 28-9**

# MANEATER

**HAMMAN – ASCANIO – GARNIER – OUELLET**

In 1983, in **Richard's Almanac**, there appeared a brilliant card plot by Brother John Hamman under the unassuming title The Signed Card. In Richard Kaufman's **The Secrets of Brother John Hamman**, on page 47, he gives the instructions for Brother Hamman's new version. The effect is quite amazing: a card is placed aside and throughout the trick the magician keeps pointing out that he never touches that card. Meanwhile, another card is selected, signed and it vanishes, only to be in fact the card that has been on the table all along. In a way, the effect is a variation on the Curry Open Prediction. Brother Hamman's methods are totally impromptu, and I invite you to consult Richie's book.

I found not only the plot but the basic approach most clever, especially the final sleight .

So did my friend Jean–Pierre Garnier – but the Hamman method involves showing three aces as four. On two different occasions, sharp eyed spectators noticed that the same card reappeared during the count. One day, Jean–Pierre called from Nassau to say that he had tried using the effect with the help of an extra duplicate card, and used the Ascanio count in the context of a Cannibal Card presentation to effectuate the vanish.

Thus was born the marriage of the Cannibal concept to Brother Hamman's plot. The result, in my opinion, is a short, effective, and very puzzling version of the Cannibal Cards. Purists will surely find criticism with the marriage, but I say to them: it works. I think my witch doctor presentation helps the make a logical connection between the two effects.

I have added the Angle Spread sequence described above.

You will need one extra King. I know this is some bother, but the effect is well worth the small effort..

Suppose the extra card is the King of Clubs. From the top of the deck down, have three Kings followed by the two duplicates. That's it for preparation.

Pick up the deck, spread the four top cards, and flip them face up. You can now embellish the presentation by explaining that the four cards are cannibals, pointing out that the black Kings are sword bearers, the King of Diamonds wields an axe, and that the King of Hearts is violently insane, even given to sticking his sword through his own head. The deck, you explain, is an African Village.

At this point you can, if you like, perform a false cut or two, or indeed a shuffle that does not disturb the top card. It is not essential in any event.

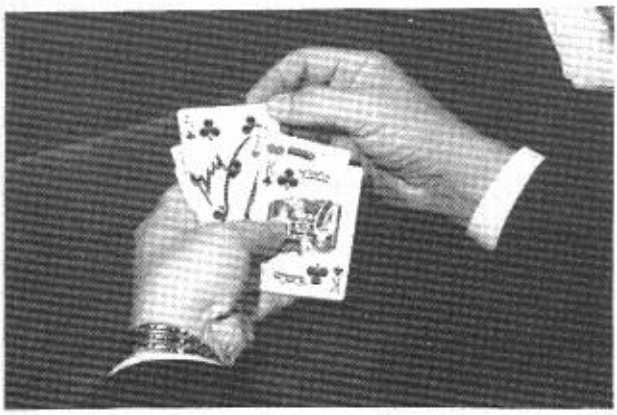
Take the top card (the duplicate King) and without showing its face place it aside on the table with the admonition: "*Keep your eyes on this card. I will not touch it again! This is the tribal magician, the witch doctor, the ineffable one, the untouchable*".

Spread the deck, have a card selected and signed, which you explain to be the volunteer missionary, occasionally reminding your audience that "*I didn't touch the witch doctor, right?*".

Hold the four Kings face up and slide the face up selection into the center of the Kings so that it ends up third from the face: PHOTO 28–10.

You can now squeeze and unsqueeze the packet – PHOTO 28–11 (next page) – as you say "*Gobble, gobble*", explaining that the cannibals are eating up the signed missionary (all standard stuff but nonetheless entertaining"). You can buckle the cards to make them "burp" and any other cannibal bits you may know.

**PHOTO 28-10**



Point to the face down card on the table and say "*I didn't touch that witch doctor, right?*".

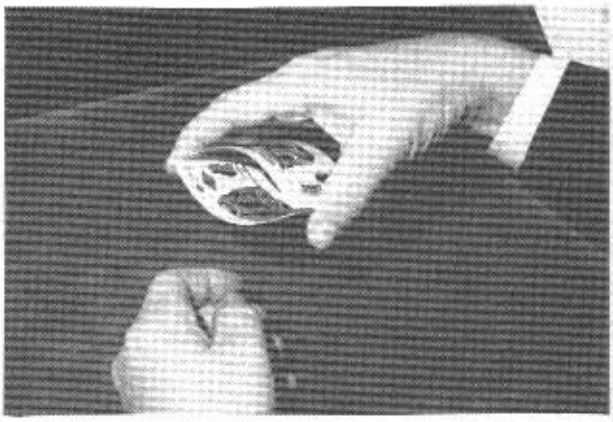


**PHOTO 28-11**

Now perform the Paradise Ascanio plus the Angle spread to show that the signed card has vanished. *"That is fast digestion!"*

Lots of oppotunities for bits of business here.

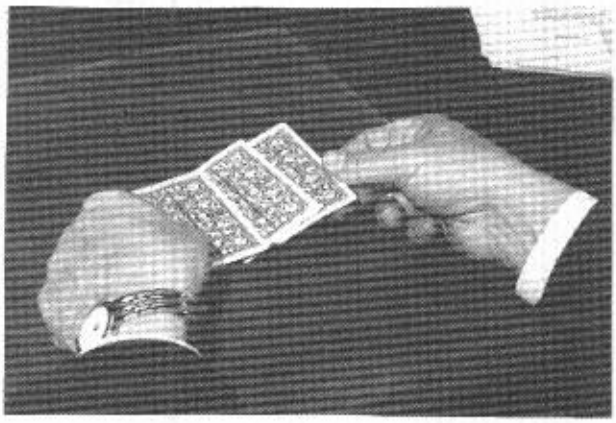
At the end of the sequence the packet is face down in the left hand with the selection on top. The left thumb pushes off the top two cards into the right hand and then replaces the remaining three cards (the audience thinks there are only two) back onto the deck.

*"I haven't touched that witch doctor, right? I still won't touch it – I will use these cards to pick it up".*

Now come Hamman's clean up.

The top (selected card) stays in the left hand. The right hand takes the second card (King) and both cards are used to pick up the tabled card: PHOTO 28–12. Note that the signed selection in going onto the top of the packet.

**PHOTO 28-12**



Immediately, the left fingers draw out the bottom card to the left– PHOTO 28–13 – turning it face up onto the packet. The right fingers now draw out the new bottom card to the right: PHOTO 28–14 – turning it face up and replacing it back onto the bottom: PHOTO 28–15.

Extend the small fan towards the spectator, asking him to turn over the card you never touched. It is the signed selection.

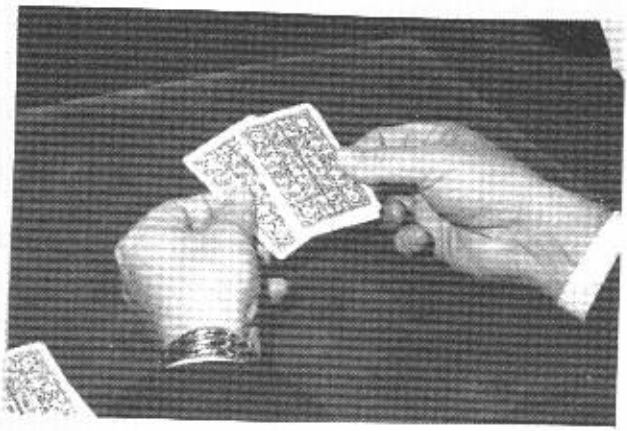


**PHOTO 28-13**

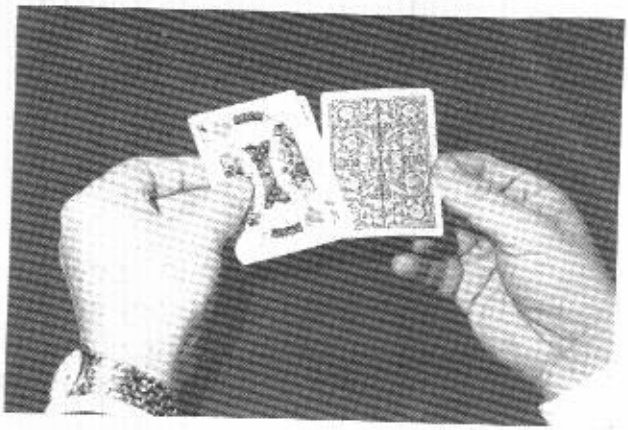


**PHOTO 28-14**

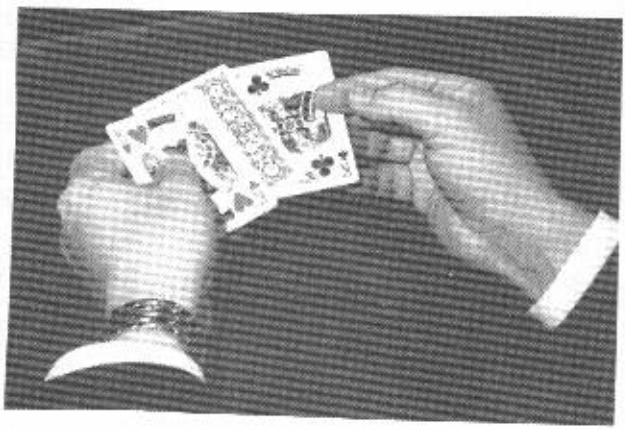


**PHOTO 28-15**

# IMPECCADILLO

In Cliff Green's **Professional Card Magic** there appears a Howie Schwartzman move, the *Impeccable Double*, which is Howie's method of throwing a double card on the table. It truly looks like a single card and I urge you to check it out. Ascanio simply picks up a double from the top of the pack, holding it by the narrow ends, and places it onto the table. He acts as if the table were a hot stovetop, and drops the double the instant his fingertips touch the table. The method is most deceptive.

Howie then gave a routine for his move, which is basically the trick I will now describe; I use Ascanio's drop, and a new sleight for the ending which I hope you adopt.

What appears to happen is this: the magician tosses out a card face down onto the table. The spectator also selects any other card (free choice). When both cards are turned over, they are mates.

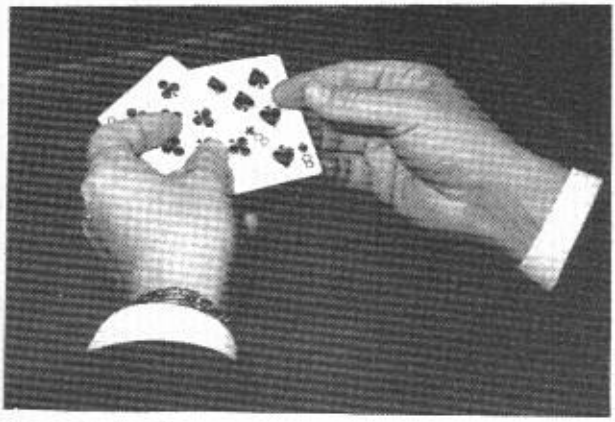
Have any pair of mates on top of the deck; say the two black eights. Drop or throw the double (as a single card) face down on the table, using the Schwartzman or Ascanio moves, or indeed one of Marlo's methods.

Spread the deck and have any card simply touched. Drop the selection onto the double and scoop up all three where they end up face down in your left hand. Remember that your audience believes that you are holding only two cards, your prediction and their selection.

With your left pinky, pull down on the bottom card.

The right hand comes over the packet and executes the Angle Pivot Double Lift taught earlier. But just as the double is coming to a face up position, the left forefinger curls under the bottom card and flips it face up to the right where it comes above the double: PHOTO 28–16. Both cards come into view at the same time. The instant they are both face up the cards are held by only the left fingers: PHOTO 28–17.

PHOTO 28-16



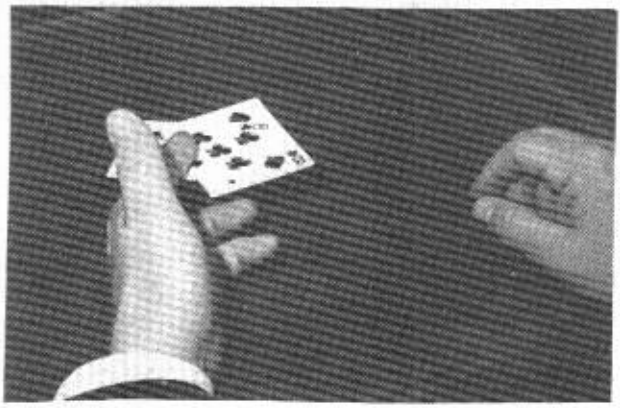


PHOTO 28-17

The move looks fair and generates no suspicion. It appears as if the spectator has chosen the mate of your prediction.

## The Crook Spread

The following is another way of ending the Ascanio Spread sequence, and is used in place of the Angle Pivot Spread taught at the start of this chapter. Of the two, I prefer this move. I presume you know the Crook move taught earlier.

You are in the position shown in Photo 28-5. As the right thumb pushes the double forward, keep pushing until it moves slightly in front of the deck, at which point the left forefinger executes the Crook move: PHOTO28-18.

The right hand turns over and with thumb on top and fingers below spreads the bottom three cards backwards: PHOTO 28-19.

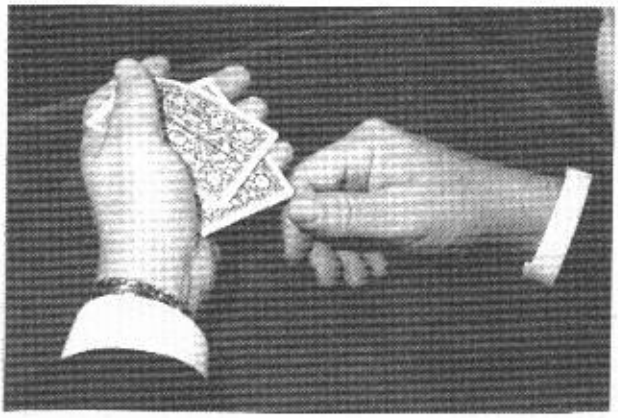


**PHOTO 28-18**

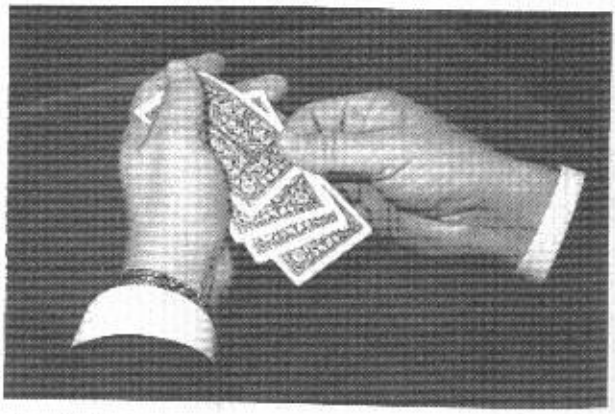


**PHOTO 28-19**

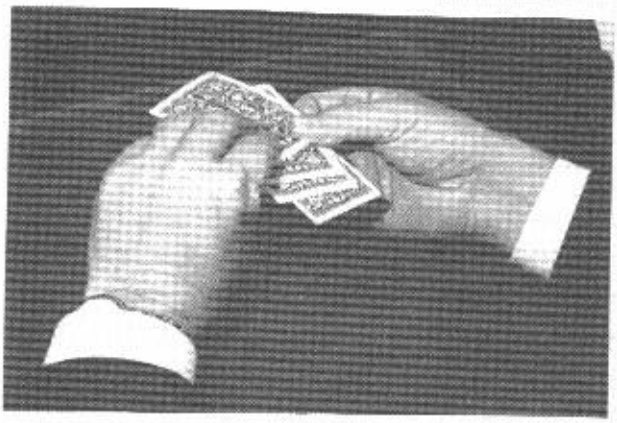


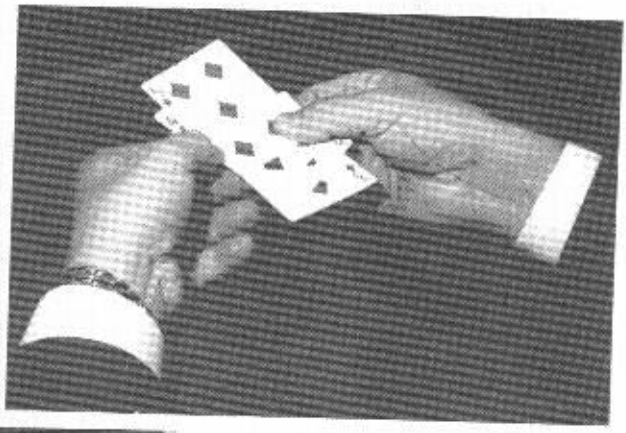
**PHOTO 28-20**

The right hand holds the spread packet as the left hand turns palm down and grasps the spread: PHOTO 28-20.

The left hand now turns the spread over and the right hand again holds the spread which is now face up: PHOTO 28-21

The left thumb can now "flip" the three forward cards, which are slightly spread, to further sell the idea that one card has indeed vanished: PHOTO 28-22.

**PHOTO 28-21**



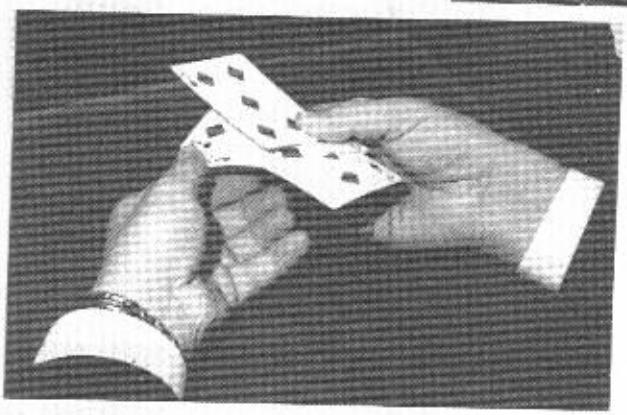


**PHOTO 28-22**

Don't pass this up.



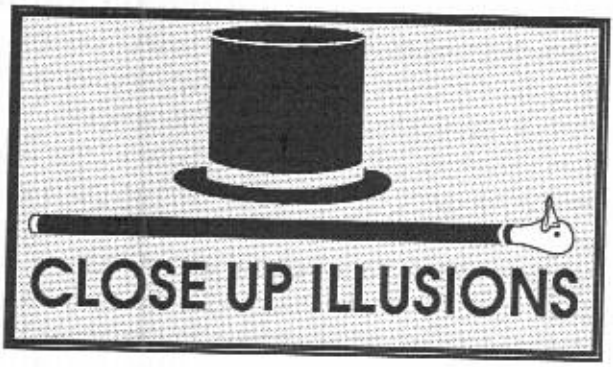


**Obie Obrien - Gary Ouellet - Ascanio**



**Magic in Paradise**

Jean-Pierre Garnier (standing) and Gary Ouellet just prior to a formal close up show at the Club Med in Paradise Island, Nassau. Note how the backscreen and potted palms were used to control audience viewing angles.




# CHAPTER 29

## HINT HEAVEN

Steve Burton is the Sysop for the Magic Forum in Compuserve. If you own a computer and a modem, you are in for a treat. Join Compuserve. From any prompt, type GO BP FORUM. Section 15 is the magic group, and Steve is the brains behind the idea. Every Tuesday night, at 11 PM (10:30 for mentalists) there is a magic meeting where all kinds of nice people, some famous and some like the rest of us, chat about things magical. There is also a section where you can download files on your hobby.

The Online Magic Conference, to give it its true name, has completed three years of magic teleconferencing.

Some of the people you will meet online include Jeff Busby, Brian Flora, Penn Jilette, Martin Lewis, Max Maven, Mike Maxwell, Bill Palmer, Peter Samelson, Howard Schwartzman, Teller, and many others of equal fame, plus some you may not have heard about - yet! Not to forget Steve Burton, host extraordinaire.

Steve came up with a list of tips that he uploaded one day, and that are absolutely terrific, and I am glad he allowed me to

bring you these gems. Some seem so obvious once stated, and yet others will be revelations. They are not all close-up oriented but they are all useful; and in any event, many of us also stand in front of the footlights from time to time.

☆ Always carry a spare effect in case of emergencies.

☆ In a warm environment, don't depend on magicians wax.

☆ When trooping with a glass, put the glass inside an old sock. The sock prevents the glass from becoming scratched and if the glass breaks, the pieces will remain in the sock and not get mixed in with your other equipment.

☆ Letter size envelope boxes, cut to size, hold sponge balls nicely for packing.

☆ Have a back-up of your entire show in case of loss or theft.

☆ If you buy a deck of cards that has been misprinted, return the deck to the U.S. Playing Card Co. for a brand new pack.

☆ When having a dollar bill signed for an effect, use a pencil instead of a pen. Defacing government property is a crime and pencil marks can be erased.

☆ A quick fix for spots on a black coat is a black marker; for a white shirt use chalk.

☆ When working tableside, don't back up suddenly or you could be wearing a tray of drinks.

☆ Appearing metal canes should be treated with caution-do not carry one in your shirt pocket, it may open in your face.

☆ When using a candle onstage, light your candle and let it burn a bit before the show. A new wick is very hard to light.

☆ If the card on the ceiling fails-try to spot the card with the wax on its back-step on it so it sticks to your shoe-say *"I need to run through the cards a bit"*-run around on cards and lift shoe to reveal selection.

☆ Never borrow a waiter's pen for a trick-he needs it to make his living.

☆ To find the separation in a stage curtain-look at the top.

☆ Liquid graphite squeezed into a Devano style rising card will smooth out the mechanism. For the sticky part use toupee tape (Bill Palmer).

☆ Feedback from mike is generally caused by the mike being aimed at a speaker, amplifier or another mike. Point the mike in another direction to stop it.

☆ When running a spotlight, follow the performer's feet not head.

☆ When gossiping backstage remember that a curtain blocks light not sound.

☆ Polish your mike stand and chrome tables, it is surprising how fingerprints show up at a distance on these articles.

☆ A thorough reading of Emily Post or Amy Vanderbilt will help you immeasurably in your social entertainments.

☆ It is best not to join your clients for their banquet dinner. A single slip and you will have to perform with an unsightly stain on your costume and besides the food is usually awful.

☆ A towel wetted with soda water works well to remove perspiration and oil from props used in a long session (knives, coins, wand etc.)

☆ Regardless of how good the directions given to you over the telephone it is good to check on a map as well.

☆ When working busy restaurants and clubs always pass waiters and waitresses on the right.

☆ Throw flashpaper down toward the floor after lighting-never up.

☆ When working the Broom Suspension place your hand on gimmick through the costume and pull back on release with your thumb-raise her into the position and slowly release the catch. Don't raise her from the feet, no matter how loud the music or great the distance those disturbing "clicks" can be heard.

☆ Some foreign coins are thinner than American coins and are better for matrix effects where the distance of the card from surface can tip the effect.

☆ A little stage make-up to eliminate a shiny nose and cheeks never hurt anyone.

☆ The major problem with working outdoors is the wind.

☆ When doing a watch steal-beware of plastic watches-they break.

☆ The bottom of a dove pan and the load chamber become very hot when set afire-don't submit your animals to this torture-a layer of cork on bottom of load chamber helps.

☆ Making eye contact with everyone watching is one of the real secrets of effective close-up performance.

☆ White cards and white rope cannot be seen against a white shirt; raise or lower the prop to achieve contrast.

☆ Check your music levels from the audience-what may not sound loud enough from the stage is often plenty loud from the audience.

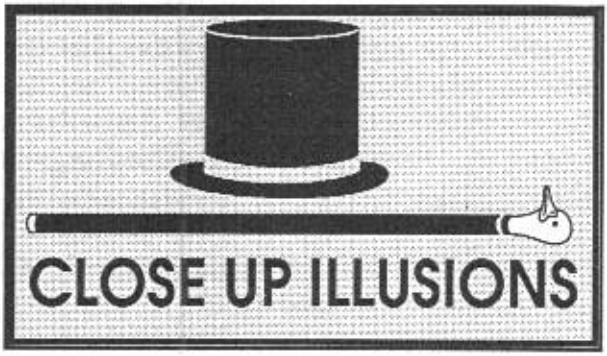
☆ Don't succumb to the customer's offer to show you a trick. It makes it appear that anyone can do your job and 9 times out of 10 they will screw it up anyway.

☆ A tiny hole placed in the end of your thumb tip eliminates awkward vacuum and facilitates insertion and removal. Use a red hot needle for Vernet type tips.

☆ When using several pieces of music on cassette tapes, have each piece on its own cassette and don't depend on tech to rewind or fast forward. This also helps if tech forgets to stop the tape and inadvertantly plays the next tune during your talking segment.

☆ Have fun when you work; nothing is more contagious than a good time.






# CHAPTER 30

## NETHERWORLD

Paul Curry achieved, in his lifetime, something very few others can boast. If he is remembered for nothing else, his staggering effect, Out of This World, assures him magical immortality.

Netherworld is my version of Curry's effect, using the same essential key to the eventual conclusion, but with different handling. Because of the classical status of Curry's effect, and by association, of Curry's method, it becomes delicate to explain why I felt it necessary to seek out a new handling without criticizing the Curry approach. Indeed, one of the things I sought to eliminate was the spectator handling the deck, a feature which many others have praised.

Furthermore, because there is a possibility that Curry's Out of This World is still being sold by dealers (although I have never seen it actually in a magic shop offered for sale) and may still be in catalogs, I will refrain from discussing his method, convinced nonetheless that almost every reader will be very familiar with the Curry approach.

Instead, let me tell you what I suspect my handling has to offer. The version herein is impromptu. No setup is required. You pick up any deck at any time and do the trick. This requires that the magician handles the deck, at least for the first half. But I often had a problem, when doing the Curry method, of having a spectator deal face up, or otherwise get more involved with the cards than was healthy. In Netherworld, the magician controls the effect at all times. Only at the end does the spectator get to actually touch the cards, and for a good reason: the trick is all done, and the spectator himself will provide the misdirection at the precisely perfect moment. The fact that the magician handles the cards does not deter from the effect one iota.

Secondly, there are some psychological touches that keep the audience off guard until the end.

Thirdly, there is a reason why, at mid point, you start two new piles.

Finally, in the Curry method, the heat was greatest at the precise moment when a relatively challenging sleight had to be executed. In Netherworld, there is no sleight, only a simple handling, and because of the presentation, no one is burning the scene of the action at that time.

I have being performing this effect for twenty years. The method is very simple, and thus I hesitate to claim originality for something that may well have occurred to others.

And yet, I would be hard pressed to name a stronger piece of card magic. It is not something for every performance. The trick, by its nature, takes a few minutes to perform. It is a closer, of course - and perhaps should be considered as the encore to end encores, the last final trick, when they are hopefully already dazzled and rapt with attention.

Assuming the moment is right, run through the deck and remove the Ace of Spades and the Ace of Hearts. The black ace is placed face up on the table to the left and the red ace is placed to the right. A spectator is asked to volunteer for a little something special.

*I am going to play a little game with you. I am going to select cards and try to guess whether or not you will say black or red. If*

*you say black, I will place the card on the black ace, and if you say red I will place it on the red ace. If I am better than 50 percent right, then maybe I am a pretty good judge of people. If I hit 75 percent, then you will have to agree that it was not all luck. Try to vary your choices. If you always say black, for example, then for certain I will not succeed. Ready?*

Hold the deck face towards your body. Spread the cards until you come to a black card. Any red cards go from the face to the back of the deck. Remove the black card and hold it face down on the table, somewhere at a midpoint between the two face up cards: PHOTO 30-1.

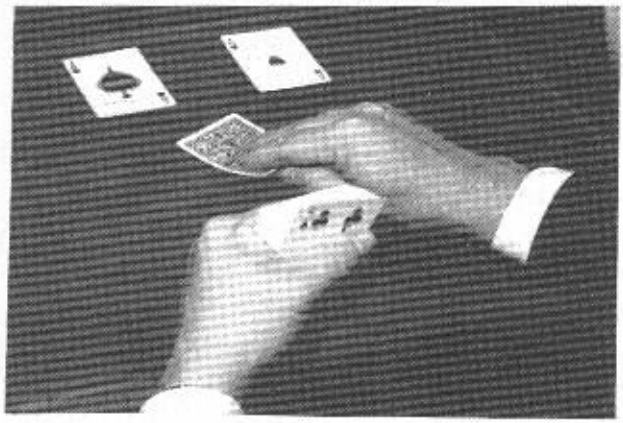


**PHOTO 30-1**

*So, let's start. Always wait until I hold a card in my hand - make me commit myself before telling me your choice. Otherwise, it would be too easy. Okay, let's go. Red or black?*

Whatever the reply, place the card face down onto the ace of his choice, leaving roughly half of the face up ace in view: PHOTO 30-2.

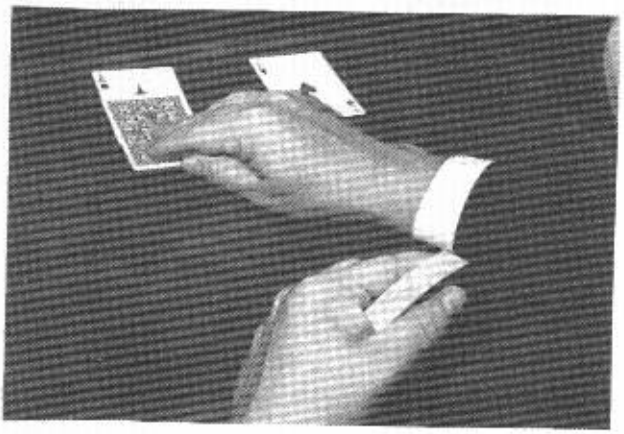


**PHOTO 30-2**

Return to the deck, move any red cards you see on the face to the back of the deck, take the next black card and bring it down to the table and continue, slowly building up the two piles. If you come to the remaining black ace, do not use it, but transfer it to the top of the deck as well. At least once during this procedure, remove two black cards as you say: *Here are two of the same color: red or black?* Place both onto the pile of the named color.

Continue until all the black cards, except for the remaining Ace of Clubs, have been placed onto the table. Stop.

*To show you the difference between my system and simple random choices, for the next while, I will not select the cards, but simply take them as they come. Here, I left the two other aces in the deck.*

As you say the above patter, square up each of the two face down piles into two neat piles, one on top of each ace, and remove the two remaining aces. Place a red ace on the black pile and a black ace on the red pile: PHOTO 30-3. No one, in twenty years, has questioned the juxtapositioning of the colors at this point.

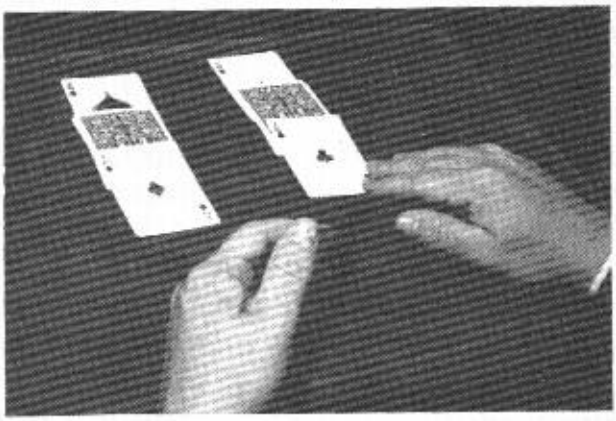


**PHOTO 30-3**

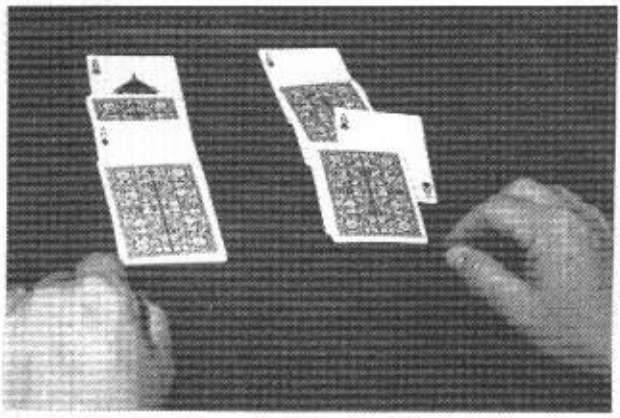
Give the deck a quick shuffle, being very careful not to flash the faces (you are holding only red cards).

*Okay, red or black?*

Ask the spectator to keep naming colors as you now deal face down cards from the top of the deck as per his instructions. At the end of the dealing, square up the two new piles, which are resting on the two new face up aces, which are in turn resting on the piles below them. Note that in so doing, you position the Ace of Clubs

slightly right-jogged out of alignment: PHOTO 30-4. This will facilitate the "move" to come later.

**PHOTO 30-4**



You will realize that at this point, the piles on the left are exactly correct: the Ace of Spades is covered by a pile of black cards, and the Ace of Diamonds is covered by a pile of red cards. Conversely, the piles on the right are all wrong.

Reach over, slide the Ace of Diamonds with its pile towards yourself, freeing up the Ace of Spades pile: PHOTO 30-5.

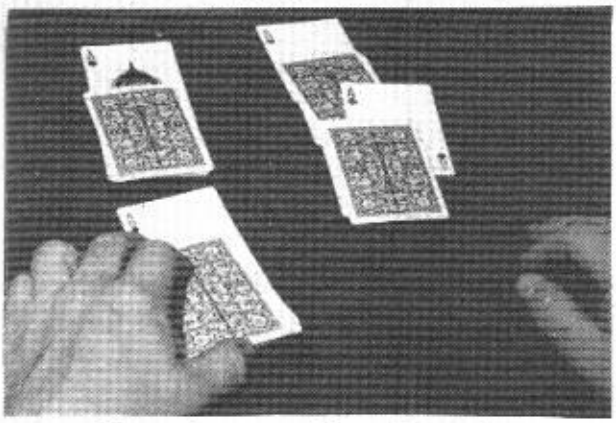


**PHOTO 30-5**

*Here is one pile where I was using my system. Let's see how I did.*

Pick up the pile above the Ace of Spades, and start dealing the cards off, one by one, face up onto the Ace of Spades: PHOTO 30-6. (next page)

The miracle is taking place, and shock waves are starting to reverberate in the room. After you have dealt out the pile, pick up the pile above the Ace of Diamonds, hand it to the spectator as you say:

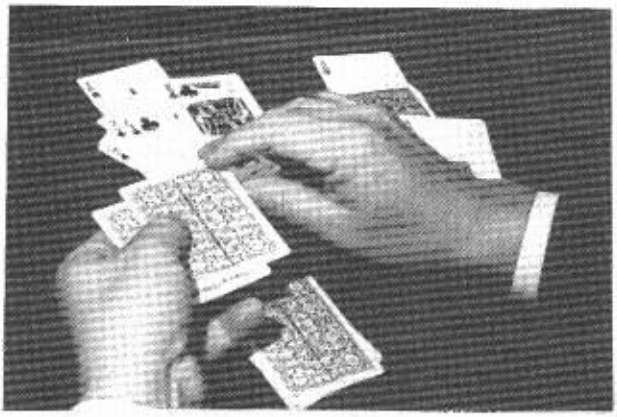


**PHOTO 30-6**

*Now, here is a pile decided by totally random means. Deal the cards, one at a time, face up on the table, and let's see what happened.*

It is as the spectator is dealing out the cards, one by one, that you do the only "move" in the whole routine. At this moment, the shock is growing, and the impossibility of what is happening increases with every card dealt. The moment the red cards start appearing, and everybody is riveted to the unfolding impossibility, simply carry out the following:

The right hand slides the Ace of Clubs and the Ace of Hearts out to the right onto the table: PHOTO 30-7. The top pile is still leaning against the bottom pile. The right hand now scoops up both piles - PHOTO 30-8 - and spreads them face up in a long ribbon: PHOTO 30-9. Notice how the black cards end up on top next to the black ace and the red cards next to the red ace. Without any pause, as you seemingly spread them out even more to make sure no wrong colors are among them, break the line of the ribbon as you push the black cards around the Ace of Clubs so that at the end there will be four distinct piles.

**PHOTO 30-7**

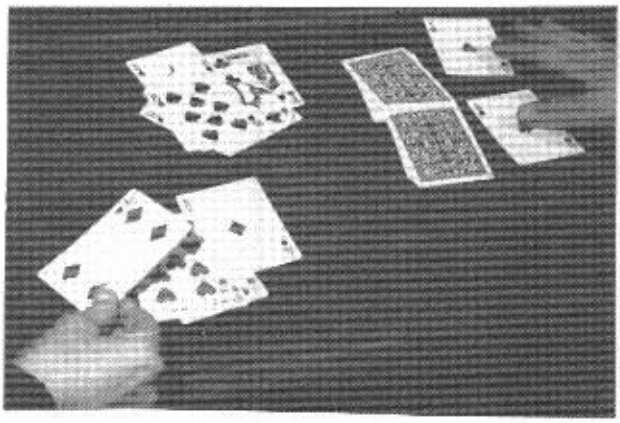
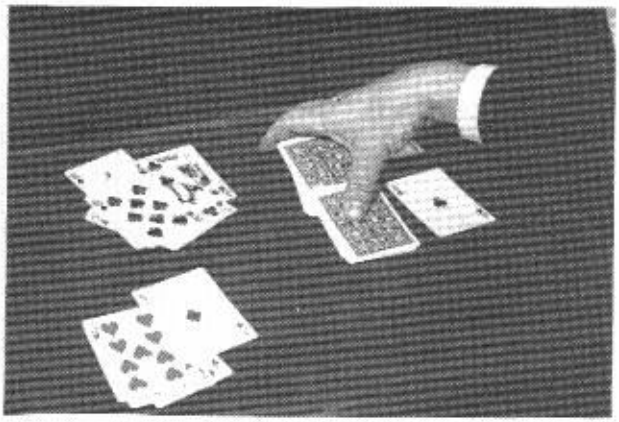


**PHOTO 30-8**



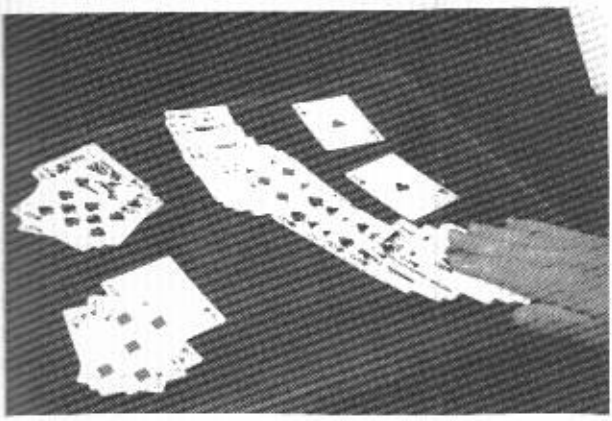


**PHOTO 30-9**

The handling is a scam, of course. Whatever you do, do not act as if you are hiding anything. Just do it.

You will be finished at roughly the same time as the spectator has finished dealing. Earthquake shock waves are setting in. The final picture offers no clue.

Although it would be too far to go to postulate that Out Of This World had fallen out of favour, it is not a trick I can ever remember seeing any other magician perform. Yet Curry himself, a number of years ago, published a book of methods and variations on his trick, and variations keep appearing elsewhere, the most notable of which is Harry Lorayne's Out of this Universe. John Kennedy has a version of the trick which is every bit as much a killer as any other.

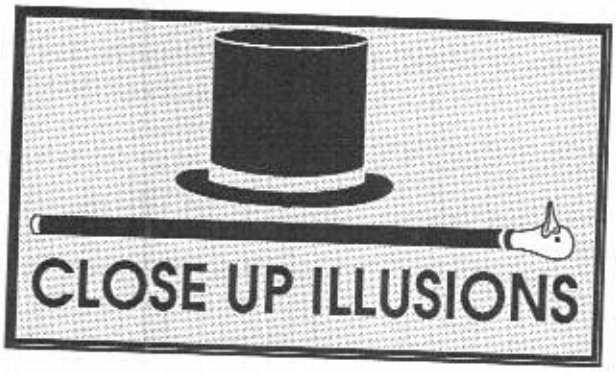
Back when they used to do this sort of thing, Out of This World was regularly voted as "The Best Card Trick Ever" and similar awards.

Perhaps because the trick fools the laity, but is generally well known to magicians, Out of This World is never done in magic clubs and so I presume erroneously that magicians have forgotten it.

But with time, and new generations of magicians appearing it would be a shame to have this gem relegated to the history books.

Netherworld is easy to do. Do me a favour and try it once.






# CHAPTER 31

## THE ANXIETY FACTOR

Has this ever happened to you? You open the instructions that came with the new coin trick. A quick scan and you realize that the performance of the effect calls for you to switch in a gimmicked coin for a borrowed coin, and keep one coin palmed throughout the trick. Putting down the instructions, you ponder your fate. You recall that past experience has taught you how keeping an object secretly palmed throughout an effect brings on an attack of the rash, causes unexplained speech impediments, transforms your knees into castanets, and triggers a trembling that would have made Parkinson proud. There is, of course, Fat Freddie at the magic club. Freddie always has objects palmed and never seems nervous. Of course, Freddie is always flashing, and fools no one. Perhaps you should be like Freddie who, in essence, is a contented man because Freddie thinks he fools everyone. But then there is the other matter of switching a coin. Pressure city. And then switch the gimmick back out at the end of the routine. Enough is enough. Into the drawer with the gimmick.

But even Tenyo's clever little tricks occasionally call for some move or other. You cannot very well give up magic. And then, at a

magic convention, you see someone else perform the trick and blow everybody away. And he did it just like the instructions advised.

The solution is attacking the anxiety factor head on. Wha are the parts of the trick that worry you? Can they be addressed?

To return to the coin gimmick, the Camirand Academy of Magic marketed (and markets) something called **The Paul Belanger Cigarette Through Quarter.** The gimmick is simply a quarter with a hole, the exact size of a cigarette, machine punched out of the middle. Although it appears at first blush to be a poor cousin to the trap-door Johnson variety coin, the gimmick permits some nice moments and in fact many magicians prefer this version.

But the anxiety factors are there: switching the gimmick and so forth (the same problems attend the use of the Johnson style gimmick - it is just that the beauty of the gadget overwhelms our fear). When I wrote the instructions for Guy, I faithfully recorded the Belanger handling, and Paul does do a beautiful job. But there were moments of anxiety. I am indebted to John Blake (who, as demonstrator at Tannen's, sold a ton of these things), for inspired handling which removed the anxiety factors. John simplified the handling and introduced structural misdirection; I added an idea or two, and the result is submitted as an improvement. If you own the Belanger gimmick, try this approach. If you do not own one, the low price of the gimmick plus this handling may convince you to buy one - it is almost impossible to make yourself - the hole must be smooth and perfectly sized.. Let's analyze the anxieties.

**Step One**: At the start, the gimmicked coin is finger palmed in the left hand. The hand hangs freely at you side. No one knows anything is even going to happen yet. No anxiety factor.

**Step Two:** Ask to borrow a quarter. Receive it on the outstretched right palm. No anxiety factor yet.

**Step Three:** Ask to borrow a cigarette. The always focuses attention on the audience. Without fail. Once you ask "*Can someone lend me a cigarette?*", to no one in particular, there are a few seconds of (very mild) uncertainty. Now is when you switch quarters. The right thumb merely holds the quarter against the right fingers as you pretend to drop it into the left hand which now comes up to supposedly receive it: **PHOTO 31-1**. This is being done to "liberate" the right hand which will in a moment receive the

**Step Five**: Remove the right hand and the cigarette sticks to the coin: **PHOTO 31-4.** Everyone is looking at the left hand.

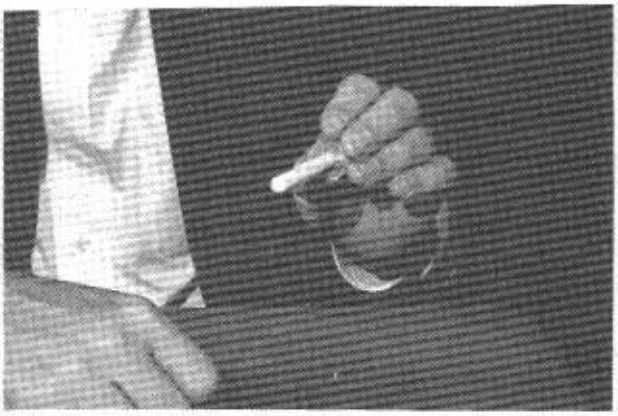
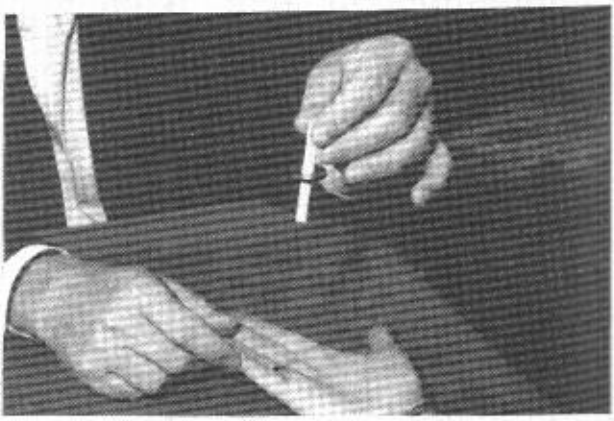


**PHOTO 31-4**

**Step Six**: With the right hand, push the cigarette half way through: **PHOTO 31-5**. Now they are really staring.

**PHOTO 31-5**



**Step Seven**: Have a spectator hold out her hand, palm up, and gently lay the coin and cigarette on the palm: **PHOTO 31-6**. As you do so, say "*Now watch!*". The entire sequence is worry free.

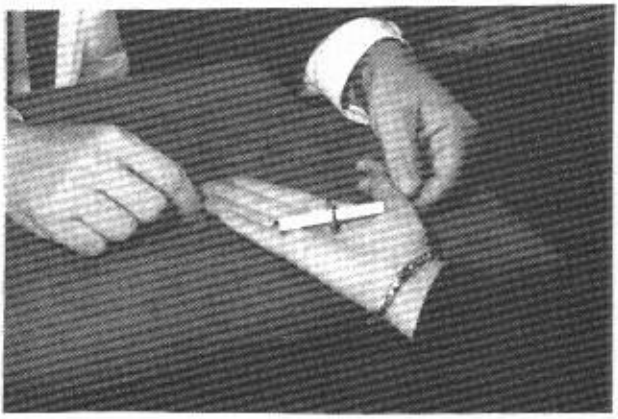


**PHOTO 31-6**

Because of the nature of the gimmick, the audience can look at the coin from all angles. The only risk might have been the case where a spectator picks up the gimmick to play with it, but your words *Now watch!* have frozen him into position. Sure you have a coin palmed but everyone, yourself included, has forgotten about everything except the illusion of a cigarette going right through the center of a borrowed coin.

**Step Eight**: After a silent count of three, pick up the cigarette, and hold it vertically with the left hand above the spectator's palm: **PHOTO 31-7**. With your right thumb and forefinger, slide the coin down the cigarette until it is about one half inch from the bottom end: **PHOTO 31-8.**

**PHOTO 31-7**





**PHOTO 31-8**

Now comes the switch out: The right hand comes and takes the coin directly in Downs Palm. **PHOTO 31-9** is an exposed view.

Move the right hand straight down and the instant the gimmick is free of the cigarette, allow the fingerpalmed coin to drop into the spectator's hand: **PHOTO 31-10.** This is a beautiful illusion.

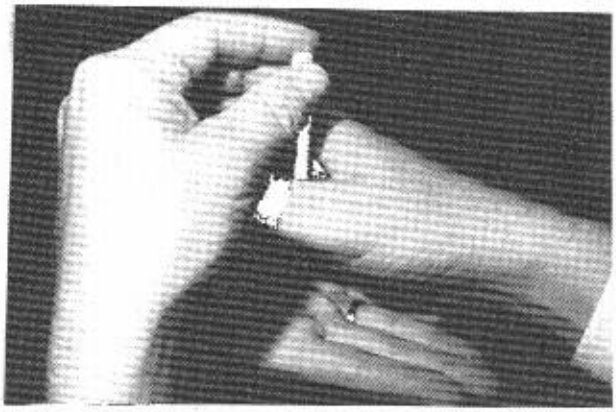
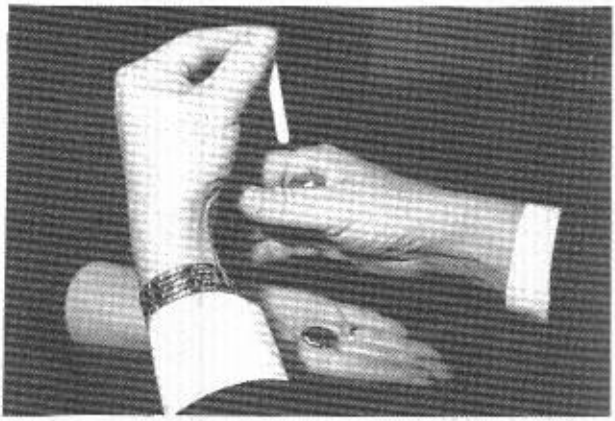


**PHOTO 31-9**

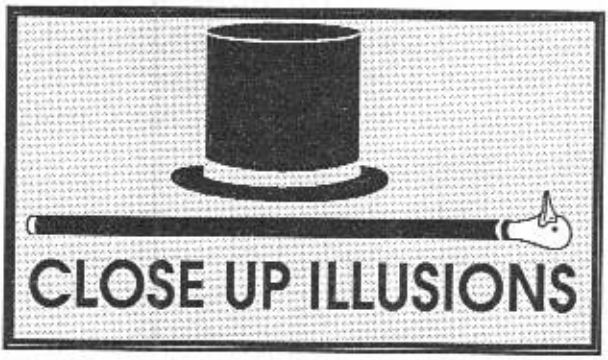
**PHOTO 31-10**



Before anyone has the chance to think about anything, drop the cigarette into her hand as well. No, that was a lie. Release the cigarette so that it hits the spectator's hand and then drops to the floor. In other words, drop it off center. Oops. Sorry. In any event, the trick was over. Everyone looks at the cigarette fall, even you. Your right hand, of course, ditches the gimmick in a pocket, in the lap, in a topit, or anywhere else convenient. Anxiety-free magic!

Fear of failure is understandable in our field. A singer can forget a lyric and muddle through. Blow a trick and you are a bum. Magic is an unforgiving performing art. But over-worrying is a hindrance as well. So somehow, Fat Freddie had part of the answer. At one point, you have to just do your best and not fret about the outcome. Couple that with a dedication to practice the trick until you master it, until you can perform it by Pavlovian rote, and you have the jitters beat.






# CHAPTER 32

## NORTHERN SLEIGHTS

I am indebted to my friend Bob Farmer for the title of this chapter. It contains a grab bag to be sure, but not any grab bag, for herein are some of my most prized and cherished little ideas.

## THE AMAZING COIN VANISH

**EFFECT**

A coin is tossed from the left fingers UP into the right hand, where it promptly vanishes.

**BACKGROUND**

After giving a lecture one night in London, Ontario, I spent some time magishing with The Amazing Barkin, one of the more active London magicians, and a coin man. Around three in the

morning, Barkin tossed a coin up into a waiting hand, and let it drop back down. My mind, however, was fooled, and thought the coin was still in the upper hand. Here was a concept worth developing. Some two hours later, I had worked out what follows Were you to see this in person, you would immediately share my enthusiasm. If you are a collector of unique moves, the **Amazing Coin Vanish** is for you.

**TECHNIQUE**

The vanish creates an illusion; as such, it finds communality with other "retention of vision" vanishes.

The starting position is shown in PHOTO 32-1. A coin, the larger the better, lies on the outstretched left fingers. The right hand, palm down, is held above the left hand.

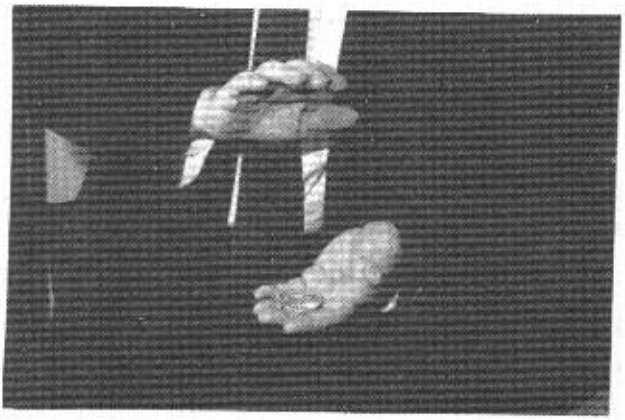


**PHOTO 32-1**

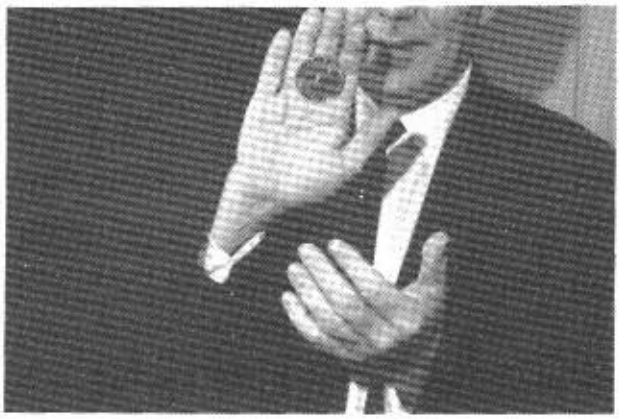
Now both hands move in unison. BOTH HANDS SWING UPWARDS BRINGING EACH HAND TO A POSITION WHERE THE FINGERS ALMOST POINT STRAIGHT UPWARDS: PHOTO 32-2.

**PHOTO 32-2**



At this point, the left hand has tossed the coin up to the right hand, in such a way that the coin arrives up against the palm of the right hand, broad side towards spectators, in order to give the greatest possible "burn" or "flash". This is what ensures the retinal impression. PHOTO 32-3 shows an audience view of this moment in time.

**PHOTO 32-3**



The right hand never actually holds the coin. The coin goes up until gravity takes over, at which point it falls straight back down again!

The right hand acts as a curved cover (the sort of semi-circular covers they have over roast beef carts!) and from the Photo 32-3 position the right hand revolves forward, in a sense bringing the curtain down over the coin, which helps hide the fact that it is falling back down again. PHOTO 32-4 is another side view showing the end of the rotating movement of the right hand.

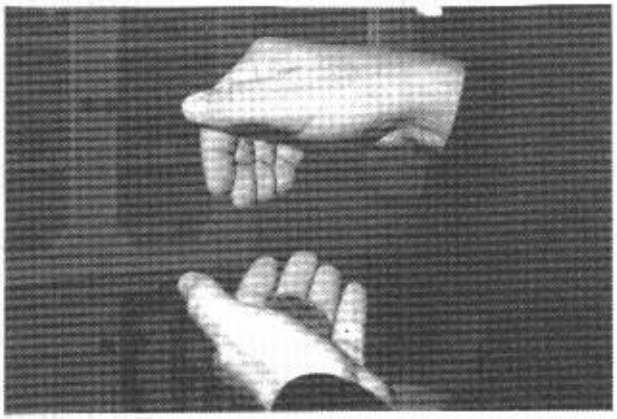


**PHOTO 32-4**

From this last position, the left hand falls dead, limply to the table if sitting or lifeless to your side if standing, as the right hand closes around the imaginary coin.

With some grace and elegance, squeeze it away into nothingness.

The fact of the matter is that the falling coin is not completely hidden but for some reason goes unnoticed.

This is quite a surprising item. Furthermore, because of the boldness of it all, there is some considerable satisfaction to be had when fooling someone with plain old gravity!

## Lapping Plus Technique

This is an idea I want to share, which you may have forgotten; no earthshaking revelation, just a memory jogger.

There are two general methods of vanishing an object.

First, there are a great many false transfer moves that are excellent. An object is seemingly taken in one hand and placed into the other. The object vanishes. Secret: the object was never really transferred.

Second, lapping is a strong tool for the close-up worker. To vanish an object using, say, the Slydini Technique, the performer would:

1) pick up the object;

2) at a moment of strong misdirection (Slydini does it on the offbeat, or moment of relaxation) the object is dropped into lap and

3) the object is seemingly placed into other hand and shown to have vanished.

Method one is based on sleight of hand; method two is based on handling and acting. Both are excellent. I suggest combining both methods, i.e. use a false transfer, and then lap the object. This makes the vanish truly unbelievable, and the lapping is easy because attention is on the other hand. An audience will thus secretly reason as follows:

1) *I see the coin in his left hand;*
2) *I see him take the coin in his right hand;*
3) *It has vanished from his right hand!*
4) *Ah Ah ! Must be in his left hand.*
5) *It's not in his left either!*
6) *Gadzooks!*

**EXAMPLE:**

Take the **French Canadian Drop**. Let us say you have just performed it, and are apparently holding the coin in your right hand. As you bring your right hand to the right, the left comes over to the table edge. Immediately lap the coin, and then move the body forward, which brings both hands over the table. Show that the coin has vanished from the right hand. Show both hands empty.

Note: The principle has many applications. The coin lap above is merely an example. What I am saying is this: every time you do a false transfer (if your goal is to vanish an object and if you are sitting at a table) combine the sleight with lapping technique. This strengthens both moves, and removes the weaknesses in each.

## The Impossible Thimble Vanish

I have always included this item in my lectures. I usually explain the move first, do it in slow motion, and only then do it real time. The explanation sounds totally ridiculous: only when you see the move performed does it make sense. Like many other thimble vanishes, it makes use of the thumb palm. First, learn the move as a stand-up sleight. The body is turned slightly to the left. The thimble, on the right forefinger is placed deliberately onto the open left palm: PHOTO 32-5.

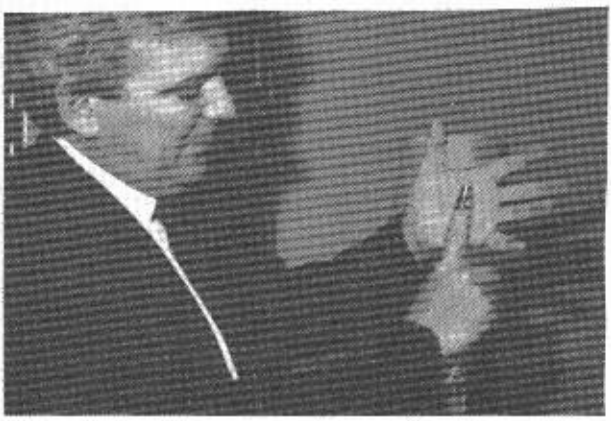


**PHOTO 32-5**

The left fingers slowly close over the thimble: PHOTO 32-6.

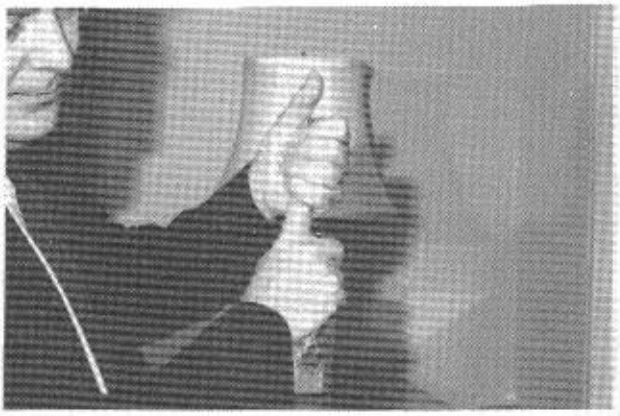


**PHOTO 32-6**

Now, contrary to other vanishes where the right hand rises to hide the thimble in the act of being thumb palmed, the right hand moves straight down about a foot...PHOTO 32-7...with the thimble still on the forefinger. Only at this point does the right forefinger bend inwards...PHOTO 32-8 ...and the thimble is thumb-palmed: PHOTO 32-9.

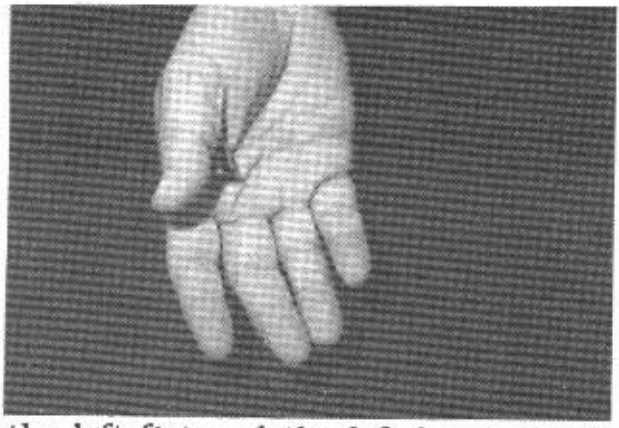
**PHOTO 32-7**





**PHOTO 32-8**

**PHOTO 32-9**



A wave is made over the left fist and the left hand slowly opens to show the vanish. Amazingly, no one will have seen the thimble emerge from the left hand. That is what is impossible about this vanish! The move can also be executed from the close-up stance: PHOTO 32-10.The right hand, in this case, moves directly back towards the chest, at which point the thimble is finger palmed: PHOTO 32-11.



**PHOTO 32-10**

**PHOTO 32-11**



Try it and see.

## THE NEW WAVE THIMBLE VANISH

This move is entirely structured around the close up stance. The thimble is on the right forefinger. Both hand are back upwards, with the fingers pointing at a slight angle towards each other: PHOTO 32-12.

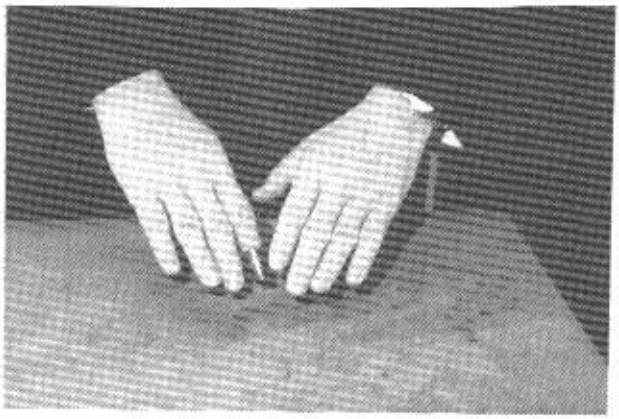
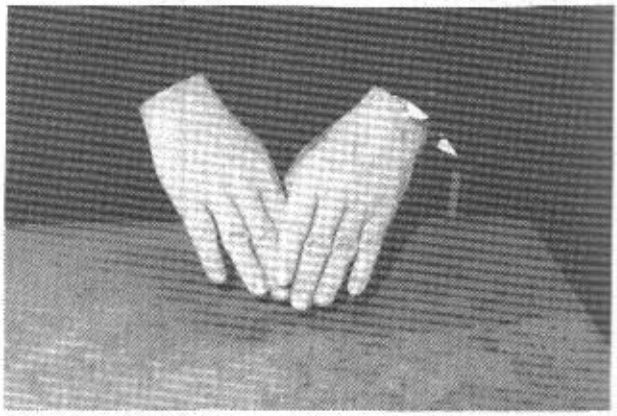


**PHOTO 32-12**

Now by slightly moving the right hand under the left, as in PHOTO 32-13, the right forefinger is covered up to the knuckle by the left forefinger. At this moment, the thimble is thumb-palmed.

**PHOTO 32-13**

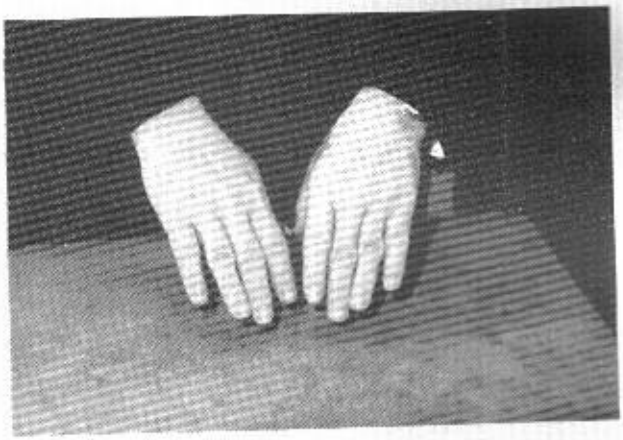


By moving the hands slightly apart, the thimble has vanished: PHOTO 32-14.

This must appear as a slow series of gentle movements. The thimble is there and suddenly it vanishes. Reverse the moves to have the thimble reappear.

An entire routine could be constructed by adapting existing thimble moves to this new positional approach.

**PHOTO 32-14**



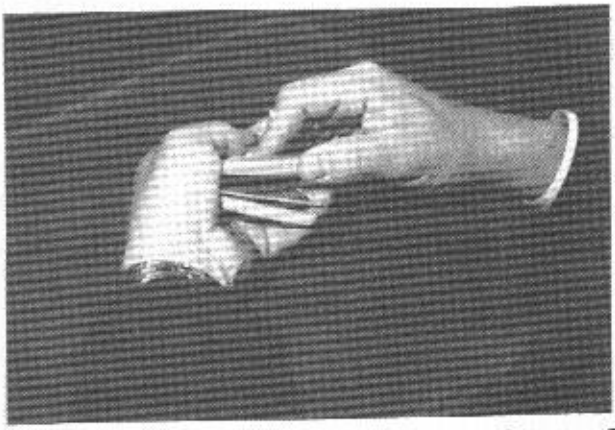
## PIROUETTE CENTER DOUBLE

For a while, creating new center doubles became a hobby. Of them all, this is my favorite. The center double is an excellent way of commencing an Ambitious Card routine. The center double is brought face up onto the deck, the face card is signed, and the double turned over. You are now one step ahead.

Okay, here is the work. This is a whole lot easier than it looks, and it will give you great satisfaction to master.

The deck is held face down in the left hand dealing position. The right hand holds the deck from above, and the right thumb riffles down until roughly half the deck is past. At this point, the left pinky comes up against the side, and two cards are allowed to riffle onto it: PHOTO 32-15.

**PHOTO 32-15**



The right hand, still holding the top half swings the front of the deck in a clockwise action to the right, until the right second finger clears the upper right corner on the bottom half: PHOTO 32-16. (next page)

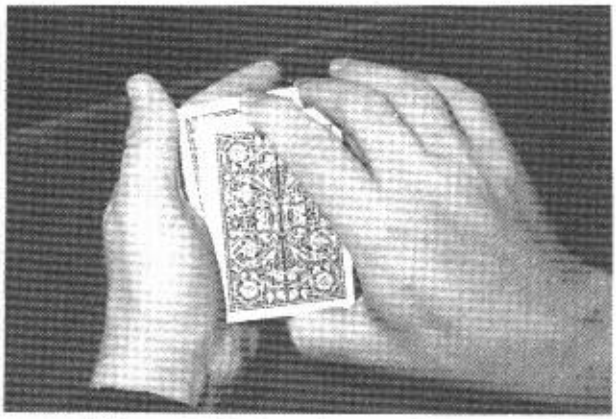


**PHOTO 32-16**

The right hand now brings the top back onto the deck BUT the right second finger contacts the right upper edge of the double cards, and swings them to the left in a counterclockwise action: PHOTO 32-17.

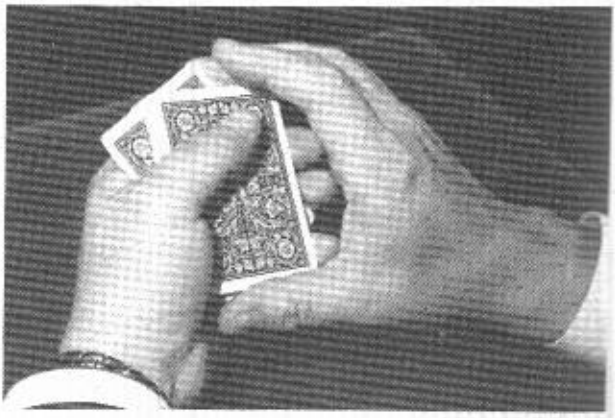


**PHOTO 32-17**

The right hand releases its grip on the upper half, and moves to the left so that the right side of the right third finger comes up against the left side of the double card. PHOTO 32-18 is an exposed view.

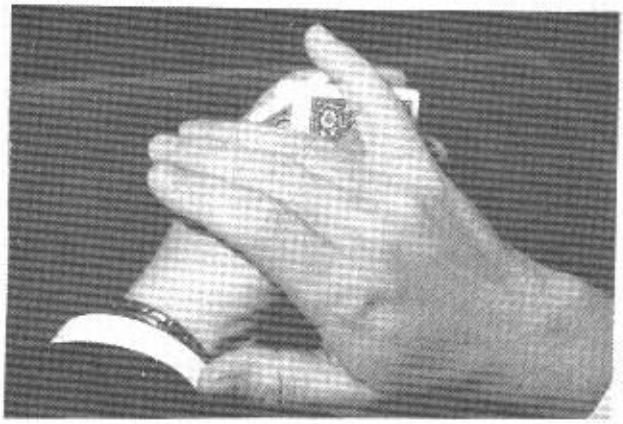


**PHOTO 32-18**

The left forefinger should be stretched out (ie. out of the way of the next action).

The right hand moves to the right, and swings the double clockwise - the double card pivots against the left second finger: PHOTO 32-19 is an exposed view.

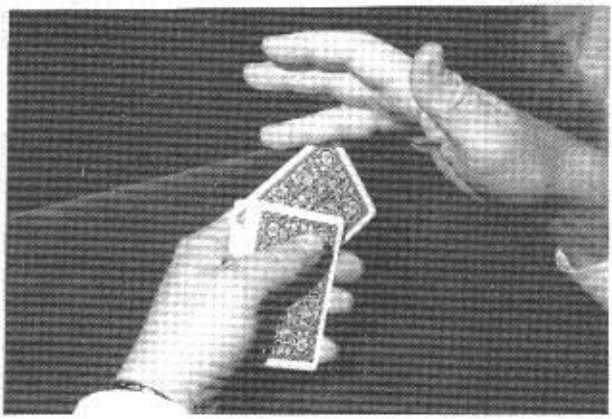


**PHOTO 32-19**

As the double card is about to come free of the deck, the right hand bears down slightly, and the left forefinger presses the double against the right hand: PHOTO 32-20 is an exposed view.

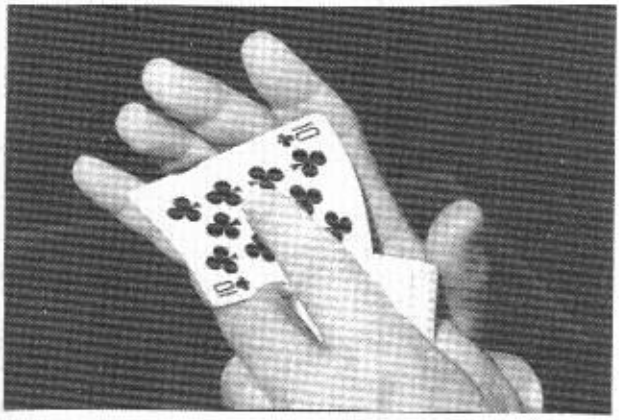


**PHOTO 32-20**

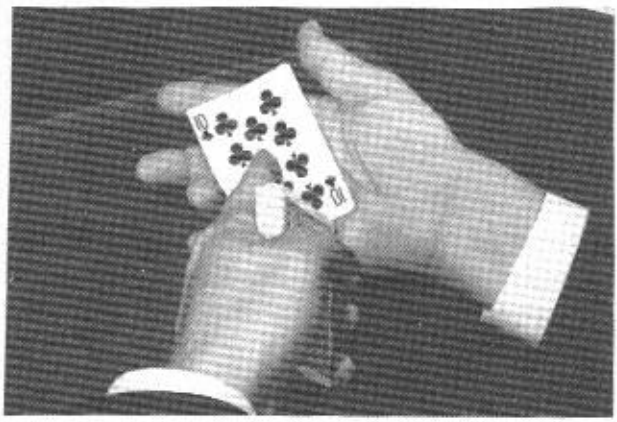


**PHOTO 32-21**

The right forefinger maintains its pressure as the right hand turns face up: PHOTO 32-21. Once the card is face up the left forefinger is withdrawn.

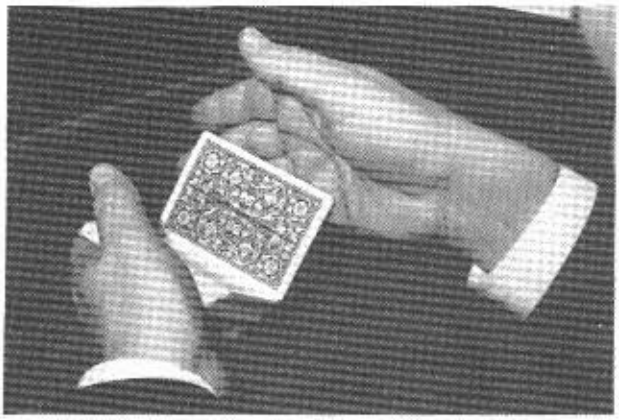
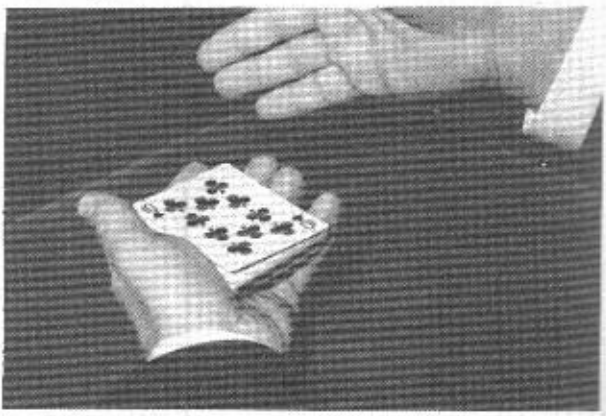


**PHOTO 32-22**

The right hand now turns at the wrist and allows the double to flip over onto the tips of the left fingers...PHOTO 32-22... and continues until the card(s) fall face up onto the deck: PHOTO 32-23. Notice however, the the heel of the left hand holds a flesh break below the double, allowing the right hand to turn the double face down without counting or fumbling.

**PHOTO 32-23**



This is the first time I have ever explained this handling. When I tried it for other magicians, the reaction was to the effect that the the move looked great, but obviously called for too much practice.

Yet I am convinced that the handling can be picked up by an intermediate magician in about half an hour. While agreeing with gentlemen critics who assert that center doubles are not in hot demand, there are a few occasions when they fit into a routine quite nicely.

## PEREGRINATION

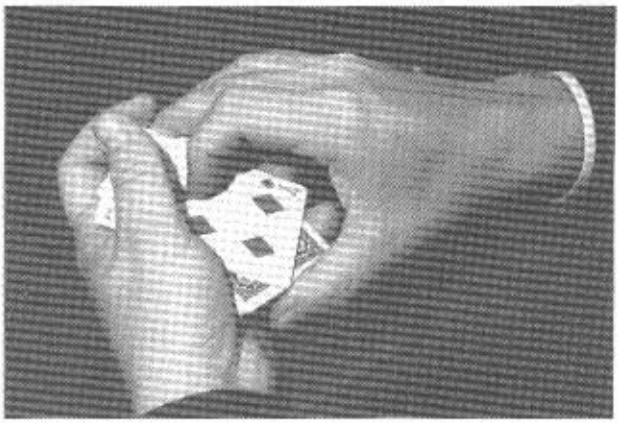
This is yet another sequence for an ambitious card routine. It uses the Crook move and looks great.

The ambitious card is second from the top (use the Juxtaposition move to achieve this if necessary). The double is flipped face up onto the deck.

The effect should only be introduced once the ambitious card has risen to the top at least twice, and preferably three or four times.

*You are paying too much attention to this card, and not enough attention to the deck.*

**PHOTO 32-24**



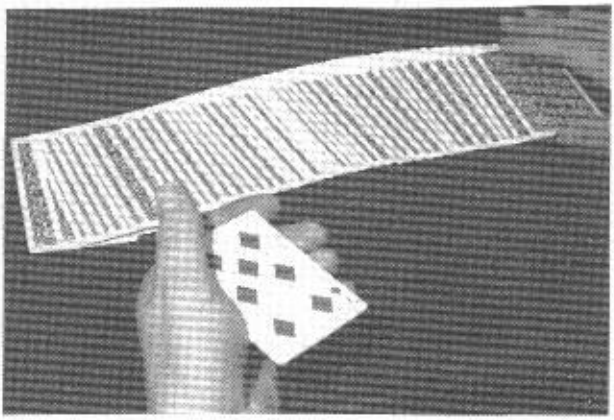


**PHOTO 32-25**

As you say the above patter, the left forefinger executes the crook move on the top double card as the right hand takes the deck: PHOTO 32-24. The right hand spreads the deck on the table from left to right: PHOTO 32-25.

The right hand now picks up the face up double by its long edges - PHOTO 32-26 - snaps it face down - PHOTO 32-27 , and lays down the double on top of the card at the right end of the spread: PHOTO 32-28.

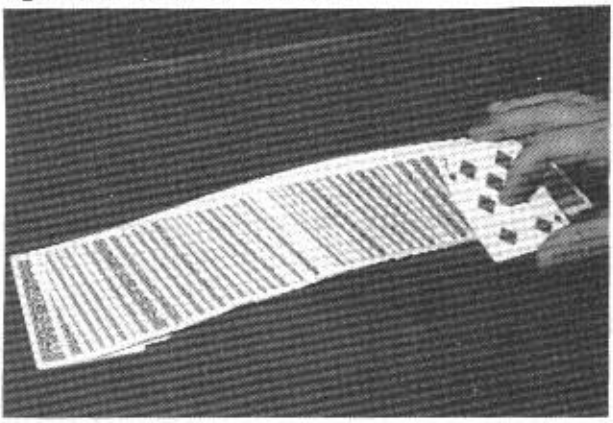
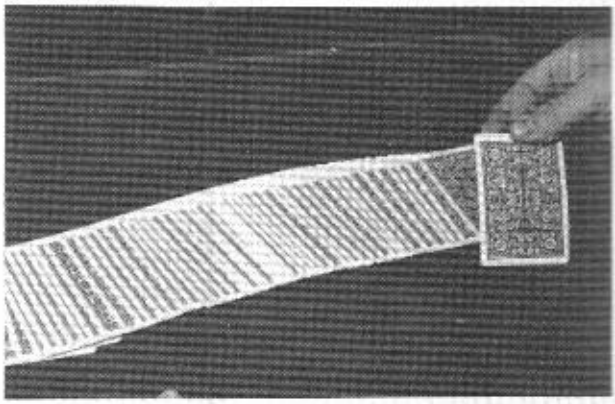


**PHOTO 32-26**

**PHOTO 32-27**



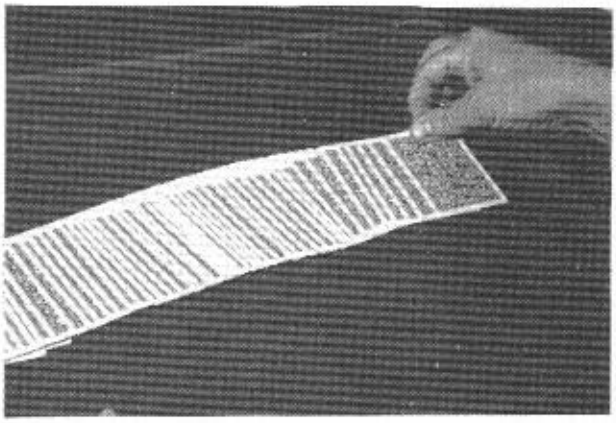


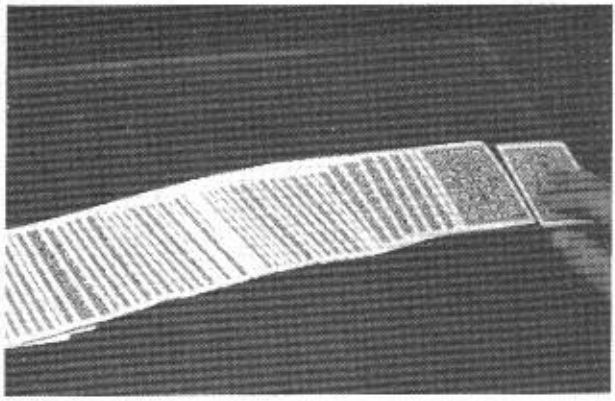
**PHOTO 32-28**

*This time, watch the card and watch the deck!*

The right hand slides the top card off the deck - PHOTO 32-29 and slides it along the table to the left and under the card on the left end of the spread: PHOTO 32-30. The finger now traces a

mysterious movement up the spread, comes to the card at the right end and turns it face up - it is the same card! Instead of moving up, this time the card moved "sideways".

**PHOTO 32-29**



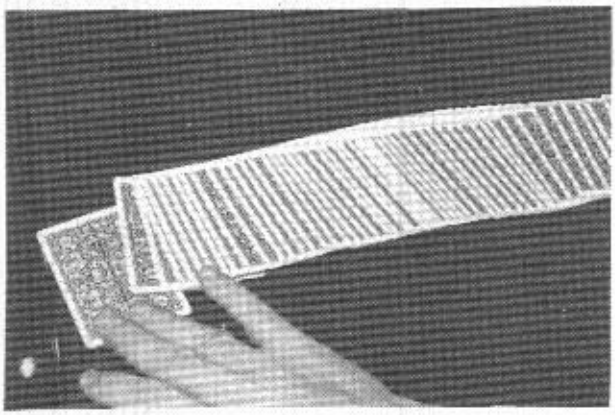


**PHOTO 32-30**

## STAB FORCE

Another hobby was finding new ways to use a knife in order to force a card. This was consistently the best fooler. It uses the Kelly Displacement or Ovette Master move.

What it looks like: the magician holds out the deck to the spectator who is weilding a knife. The spectator stabs the knife into the deck, the cards are divided at that point, and the top card of the face down portion is handed out to the spectator.

The move is a refined variety of the slip force, although it will fool magicians well versed in the slip repertoire. The Stab Force uses a different technique, and the card is not exactly slipped - the rest of the deck is removed.

The card to be forced is on top of the deck.

The deck is held in the left hand in a vertical position, faces toward the palm, as shown in Photo 32-31. A knife, or preferably, an exciting looking letter opener (a thin blade is an asset - a hunting dagger would not work well) is handed to a spectator with the request that she stick it in anywhere in the deck: PHOTO 32-32. Once the knife is inserted, the left hand turns palm down and the right hand comes to take the handle of the knife, thumb on top, and fingers going below the deck: PHOTO 32-33.

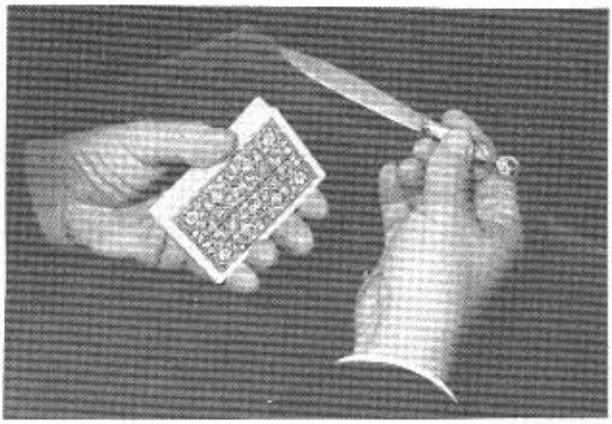
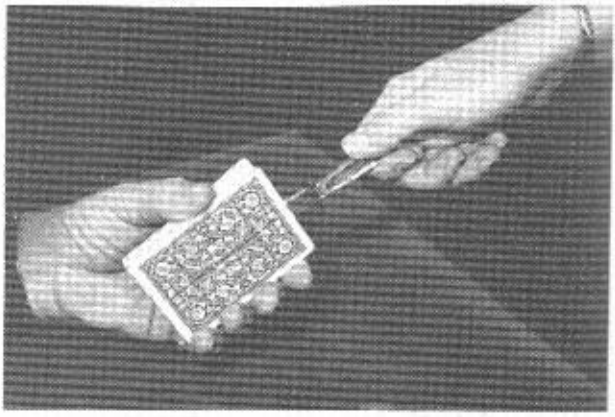


**PHOTO 32-31**

**PHOTO 32-32**



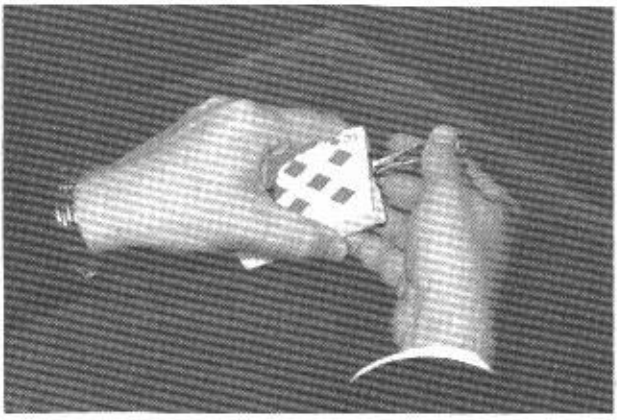
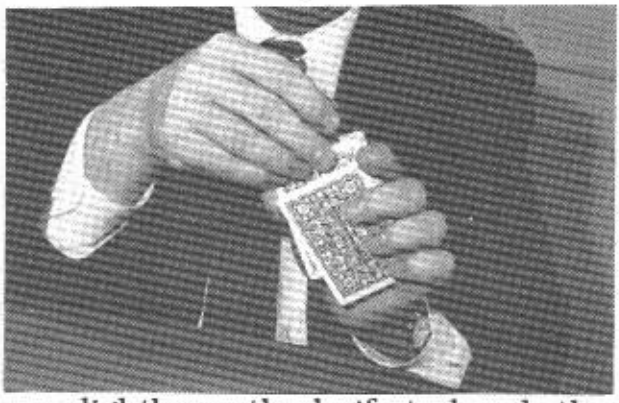


**PHOTO 32-33**

At the same time, the left second, third, and fourth fingers pivot the card to the left: PHOTO 32-34 is an exposed view.

**PHOTO 32-34**



The thumb pushes down slightly on the knife to break the deck open and moves away carrying the knife and the bottom portion, minus the top card which stays below the top portion in the left hand: PHOTO 32-35.

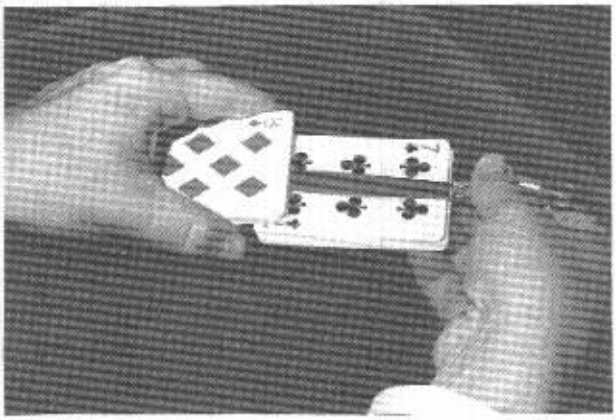
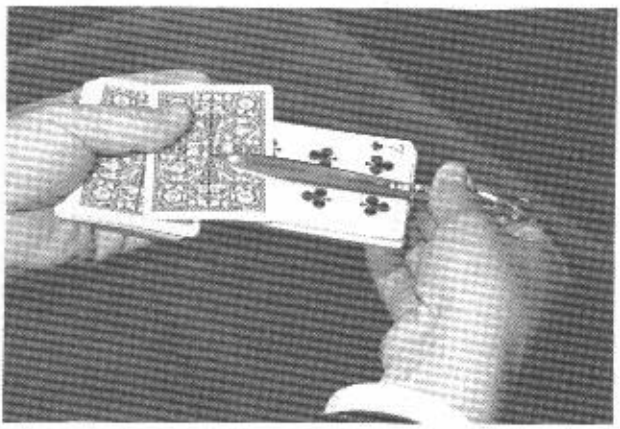


**PHOTO 32-35**

The left hand turns over and thumbs off the top card onto the right hand cards, just underneath the blade of the knife: PHOTO 32-36.

**PHOTO 32-36**



The right hand extends towards the spectator, in effect handing her the "selected" card: PHOTO 32-37.

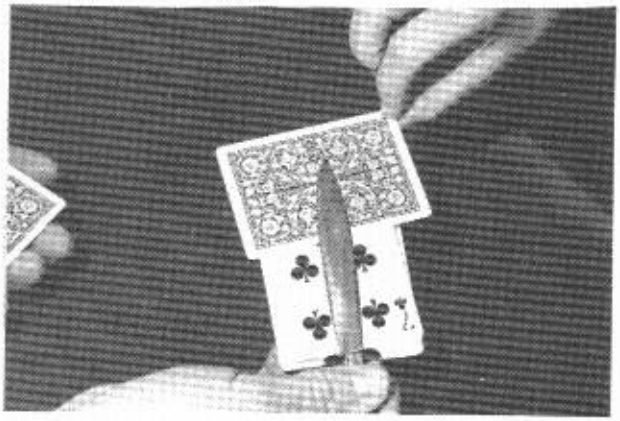


**PHOTO 32-37**

## Sound Effect

This is a short interlude in which two coins vanish. The sound effects are what sell the move. I was working on ways of lapping a number of coins in sequence, without having them hit each other with a giveaway clang, when it occurred to me that perhaps good use could be made of coins actually hitting each other.

Have two coins on the table. With the right hand, pick up a coin and pretend to place it in the left hand, actually retaining it in the right. This book contains a whole number of such sleights (you could use the Gallo Slide taught next).

The right hand comes to table edge and laps the coin.

The right hand now takes the coin, and comes to rest at table edge as you say *Watch!*. PHOTO 32-38.

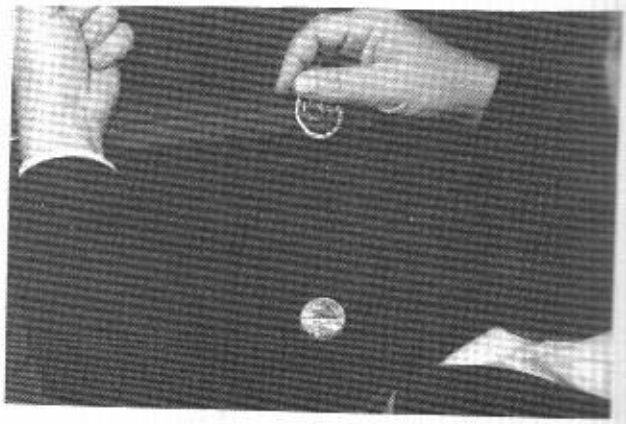


**PHOTO 32-38**

Two things happen at once. The right hand drops the coin and pretends to place it into the left hand. The imaginary coin arrives in the left hand (which only opens slightly) at the same time as the falling coin hits the coin already in the lap. It sounds as if there are definitely two coins in the left hand.

Slowly open the left hand.

## THE GALLO SLIDE

This move, by a very clever magician, Mike Gallo, is both easy and extremely deceptive. It is a stand-up vanish. Erik DeCamp uses this as one of the vanishes when he performs **The Coin Connection** in the Masters of Magic Series, and I have featured the move in one of my videotapes for Videonics.

A coin is on the left palm, closer to the heel than the base of the fingers, and the right hand is held loosely, palm down: PHOTO 32-39. The left hand allows the coin to slide down to the fingertips where it stops once it hits the right palm: PHOTO 32-40.

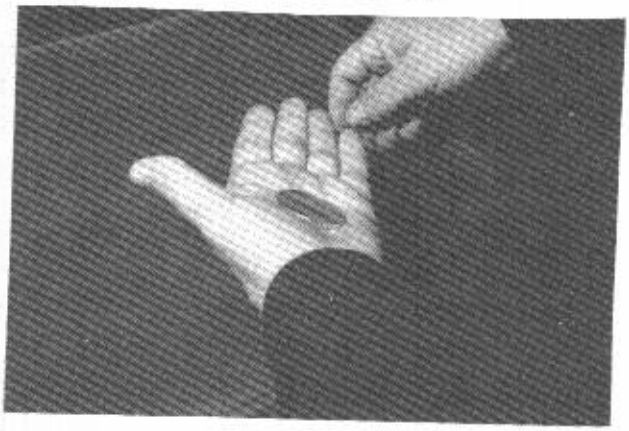


**PHOTO 32-39**

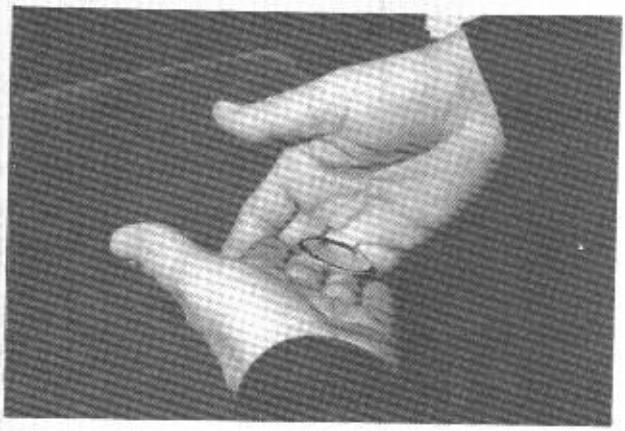


**PHOTO 32-40**

Now the left hand simply falls limply to the side. Do not try to palm the coin, or hide the coin. Meanwhile, the right hand, fingers closed, has turned palm up: PHOTO 32-41.

Squeeze away the coin.

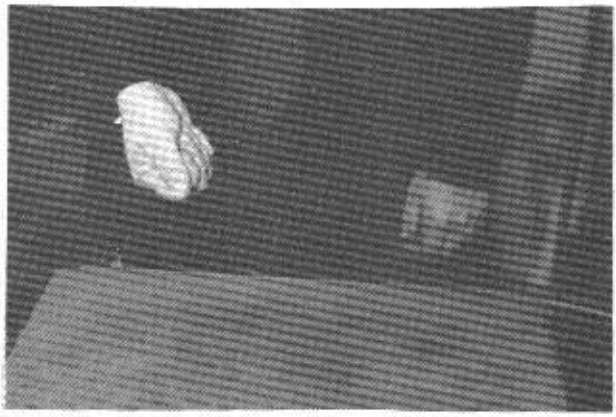


**PHOTO 32-41**

## Modified Kosky Illusion

### A Handling on the Kosky Switch

This is the last "trick" in the book, and it is one of my favorites. Basically, you switch one card for another while everyone is staring at the deck. It can be used on its own, or routined into another sequence. If you have bothered to learn Maneater in the Ascanio chapter, the modified Kosky Switch is a natural follow up to produce a second hapless missionary who has been "lost in the village".

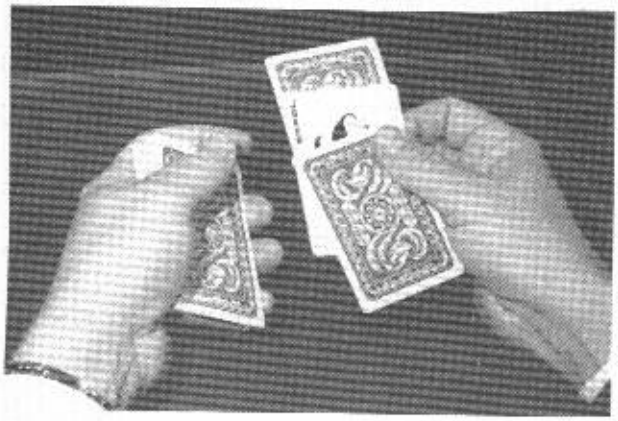
Frank Garcia informs me that Kosky marketed his switch in the 40's. He sold it as an explanation of one single sleight. It has since appeared in a number of books, including **The Magic of Gerald Kosky**. It was first shown to me by Denis St-Jean who learned it from a colleague at an FFFF event. I had read a description in one of Frank's books, but never realized how powerful a move this was until I saw Denis perform the sleight. I have come up with some technical variations (four, to be precise). Although one hesitates to claim improvements, this is one case when I dare to do so. The handling to be described adds a retention of vision illusion to an already great move, plus some extra finesses that make a great concept even greater.

On the table, have any face up card (say, the joker) between two other face down cards (say, the black kings).

The face down deck is held in the left hand. The card to be switched in (a selection, or in Maneater, the second missionary) is secretly on top. The left pinky holds a break below this top card.

The right hand picks up the three cards on the table, and spreads them by pulling the top card back: PHOTO 32-42.

**PHOTO 32-42**



The spread of three cards is flipped over onto the deck so that the end cards of the spread extend over the front and back edges: PHOTO 32-43.

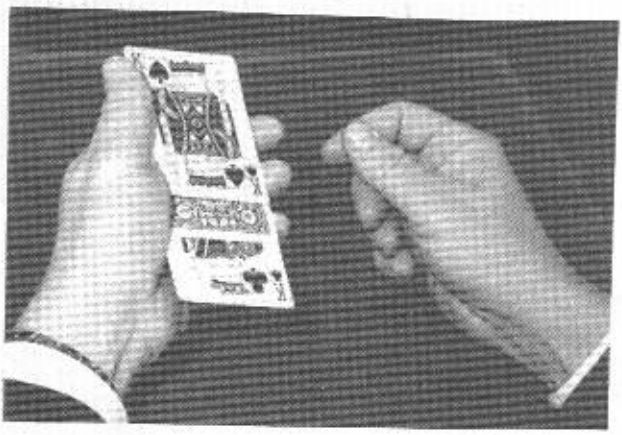


**PHOTO 32-43**

The right fingers and thumb, from above, square up the three cards and also pick up the top card from the deck (above the pinky break): PHOTO 32-44. (next page)

The left thumb now drags the top (face up king) card from the right hand packet back onto the deck, but extending forward about one inch and a half: PHOTO 32-45. (next page)

The second (face down joker) card is now similarly dragged onto the deck, slightly rear-jogged. The back of the right forefinger

now aligns the card flush with the deck: PHOTO 32-46. By having the card slightly to the rear, and then aligning it, you are certain that it is squarely positioned on the deck, which is crucial for what comes next.

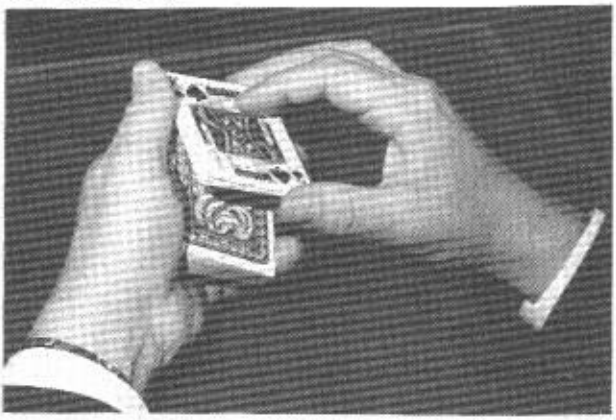


**PHOTO 32-44**

**PHOTO 32-45**

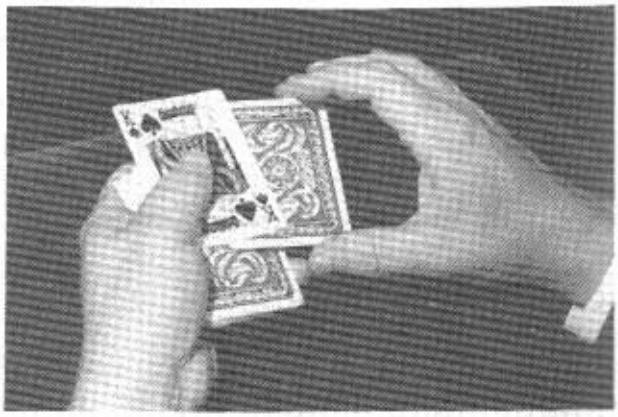




**PHOTO 32-46**

The right hand now holds a double: a face up king, with the face down selection secretly below it. This double is placed onto the deck, rear-jogged for about an inch: PHOTO 32-47. However, as it is being put down onto the deck, the left pinky secretly clamps

down on the joker. This is much like holding s secret break below the top two cards, but the purpose is quite different. You do not want the joker to move at all during the next sequence.

**PHOTO 32-47**



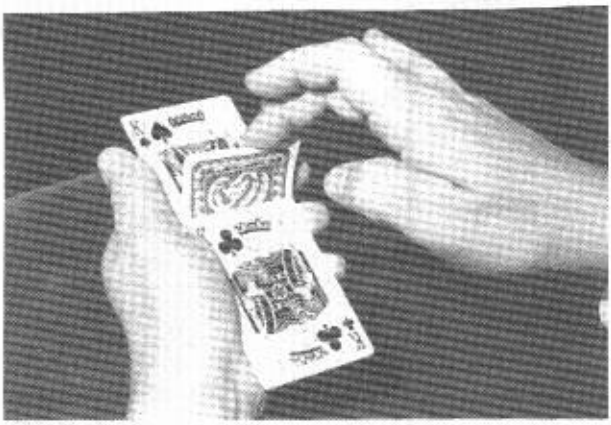


**PHOTO 32-48**

Pause. Lift up the front edge of the joker to let them have another look: PHOTO 32-48. All appears as it should.

The right hand now grasps the rear edge of the double card, thumb below and first and second fingers on top: PHOTO 32-49.

**PHOTO 32-49**

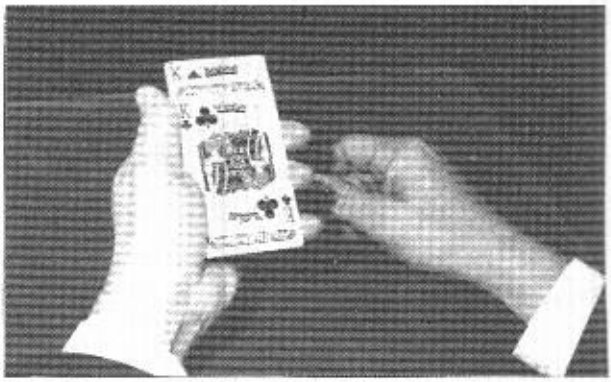


You now slide the double card forward. As the double passes the face down joker, the right thumb suddenly pushes the bottom of the two cards it is holding so that it extends below the top face up king: PHOTO 32-50. Stop at this point, when a "sandwich" is clearly visible, and release your grip on the two cards with the right hand. The left hand holds all securely: PHOTO 32-51. Note that the top face down king should be slightly forward of the deck proper.



**PHOTO 32-50**

**PHOTO 32-51**



The right hand grips the three cards, thumb on top, second finger below, at a point just forward of the front right edge of the deck: PHOTO 32-52.

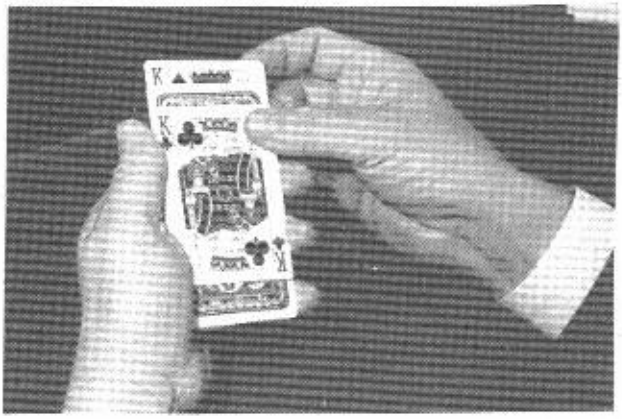
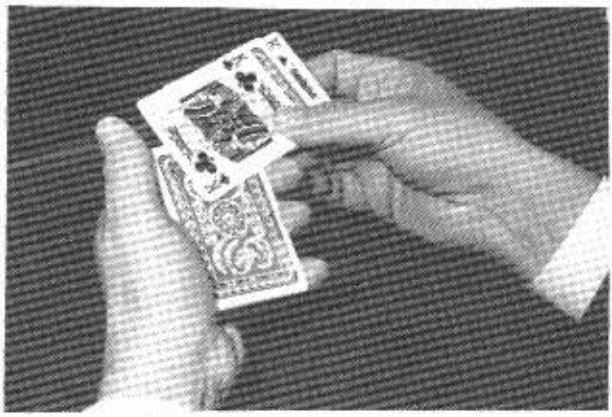


**PHOTO 32-52**

By pulling to the right, the three cards pivot off the left second finger: PHOTO 32-53. This secretly strips out the joker which remains on top of the deck.

**PHOTO 32-53**



The right thumb now pushes up to the right, which fans the three cards: PHOTO 32-54.

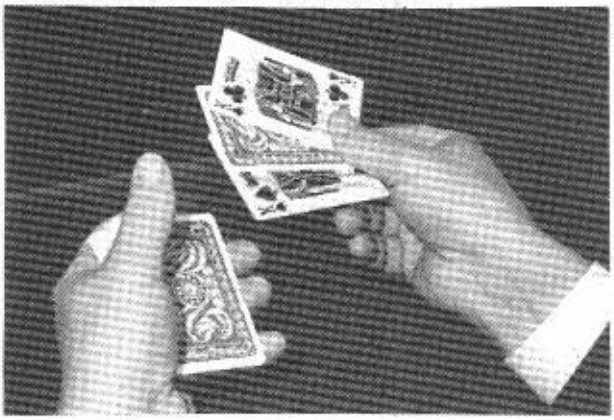
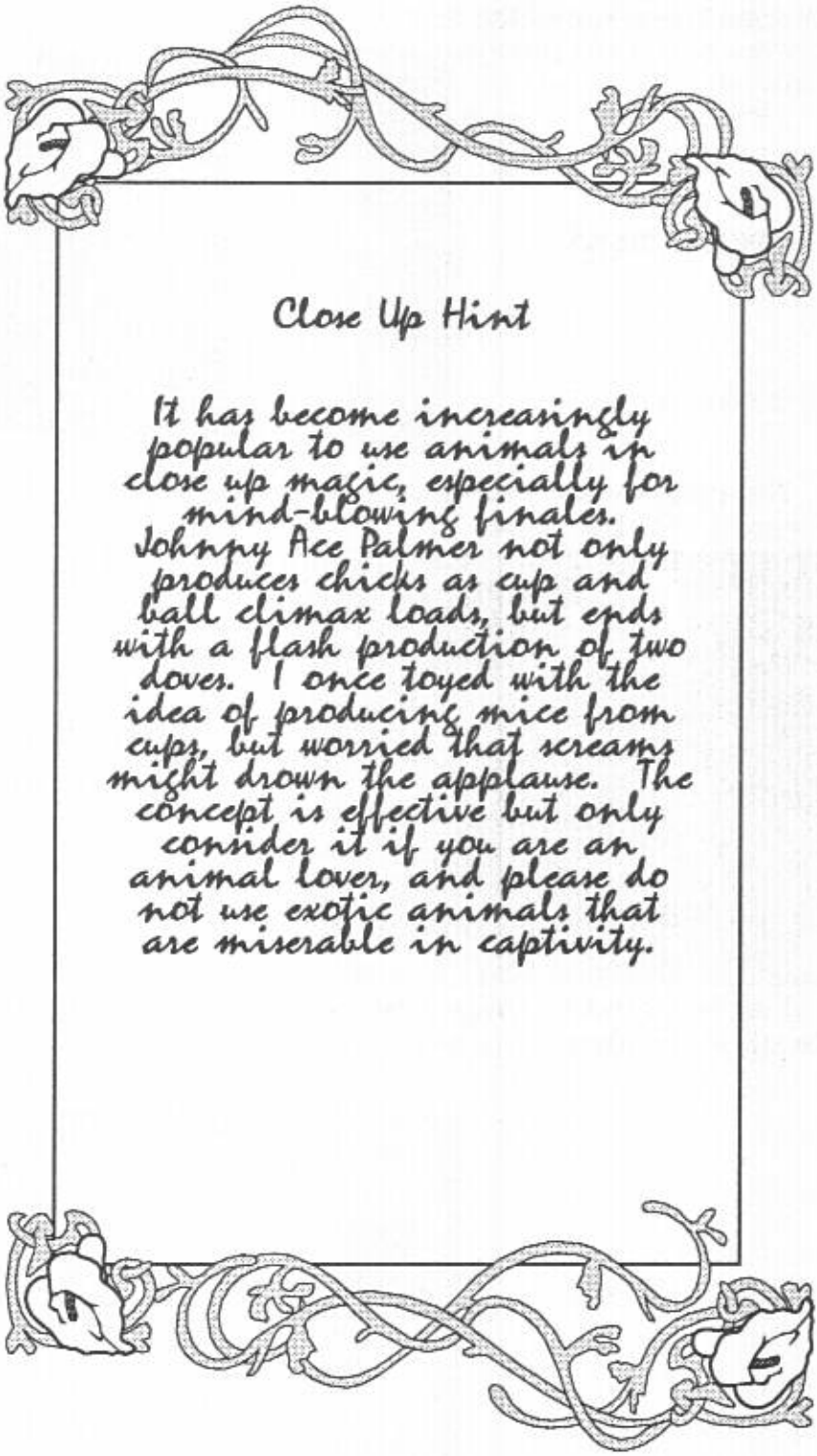


**PHOTO 32-54**

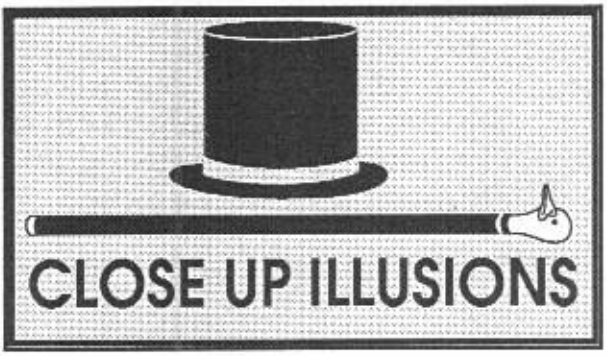
You have indetectably switched one card in the center of a sandwich for another.





## Close Up Hint

It has become increasingly popular to use animals in close up magic, especially for mind-blowing finales. Johnny Ace Palmer not only produces chicks as cup and ball climax loads, but ends with a flash production of two doves. I once toyed with the idea of producing mice from cups, but worried that screams might drown the applause. The concept is effective but only consider it if you are an animal lover, and please do not use exotic animals that are miserable in captivity.




# CHAPTER 33

## ENIGMAS FOR POSTERITY

*Finishing a book is just like you took a child out in the back yard and shot it.*
Truman Capote

While watching **The Elephant Man** (the film, not the play), I was reminded of the limitations of magic as an art form. For two hours I viewed an intense story of love, beautifully written, acted, filmed, directed and edited. The medium is so powerful, and can leave the most cynical emotionally drained.

There is just so much you can do with magic. You can instill wonder and surprise, you can thrill and entertain, you can excite and amuse. But can you profoundly move the viewer?

While not making viewers weep, magic can be, should be, must be, a moving experience. It can be profoundly exciting, profoundly mystifying, profoundly entertaining. To achieve the goal, one must first achieve mastery of the craft: the technique, the presentation, the theater, the judgement to select appropriate material.

We dabble at our beloved magic; we learn a trick, a move, a ploy; all the while we dream of becoming master magicians. We acquire the latest packet tricks and electronic gizmos; we attend lectures seeking firstly to be fooled and entertained, and to satisfy our endless appetite for new secrets. We perform often enough: for friends and associates, picking up a booking or two. Still, the master magician of our young dreams eludes us.

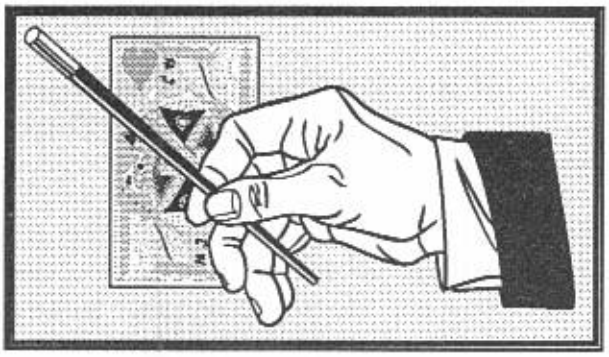
But grass grows through the crack in the asphalt, and with every renewed commitment to focus on improvement, we progress.

I sit at my Mac computer, proofing the pages, and viewing with alarm huge folders of material that remain to be transcribed, envelopes of solicited contributions from friends which were to have been between these covers, reams of notes to be deciphered; already I am designing in my mind the next volume which must house them.

Like an armchair quarterback, I reread the table of contents for the book you are now reading, wistfully wishing I had done better. Like Druon, I am reminded of Paul Valery who spoke of that most difficult of moments when an artist completes his work - after so many long hours of rewriting and retouching - and discovers that it still falls far short of his hopes - and yet abandons it nonetheless, feeling that he could not have done any better.

And in a moment of fantasy, I dream that some might find in **Close Up Illusions** an attempt to transcend what Max Maven has called "the frantic quest for self-referential novelty and/or variant finger positioning". I imagine someone, somewhere, who agrees with me that my sleight is a better sleight, that one of my simple routines is a worthy routine. And as I let myself get carried away by the headiness of it all, I think that perhaps this offering might assist some in their quest to fulfill the promise of their magical youth, and that this modest volume may be a small reply to Pablo Picasso's mistress when she suggested: *"Let us create enigmas for posterity".*





# Special Bonus Section

## The Angle Pivot Principle

In one of my last videotapes for the Videonics company of Newfoundland, I first presented the idea of Gilles Couture's Angle Pivot move, which has many uses, which shall surely appear in one of my next books, where it shall receive the space it deserves. It first appeared in print in my third lecture notes.

Meantime, for those of you who have not seen the videotape, and because it has already been referred to in the Angle Spread in this book, allow me to describe the basic idea, and it's application to a double lift. Guy insisted that I both give you a sneak preview of this wonderful concept and a working knowledge of the mechanics involved. As you read this, remember that the sleight mimics the actions that a card player would use as he handled the cards.

Hold a deck of cards in the left hand dealing position. You are going to turn over the top card, stud fashion. In other words, with the right hand palm down, the right fingers come onto the top card and slide (pull) it off to the right, as the right thumb comes up (from below) onto the face, gripping the card. The right hand

now turns palm up, bringing the card face up. In stud poker this is the action you would use to deal a card face up onto the table. It is also a perfectly natural way of turning the top card over.

The Angle Pivot move permits you to seemingly duplicate these actions while in reality an entirely different mechanical action takes place.

Hold a break with the left pinky under the top two cards, as you would in preparation of any normal double lift. The right fingertips come onto the top card and appear to begin to slide/pull the top card off to the right. In fact, the right fingertips only graze the surface of the top card and never pull it at all. It is the right thumb (the side of the thumb just next to the nail) which (hidden behind the right hand) presses against the right side of the double, near the inner edge, and pushes this corner to the left. This causes the double card to pivot (perfectly aligned) clockwise against the heel (at the base of the left thumb) of the left hand. As the card moves, the right fingertips just go along for the ride. As the double comes off the deck the right fingertips slide to the right edge of the double in order to grasp the edge, pinching it between the fingertips above and the thumb below as the card is lightly snapped face up.

The card is then flipped back face down onto the deck.




GmK
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