

Cards of Cairo

A Journey Through the Past, Present and Future

Here is a piece of apparent fortune-telling that is easy to do and completely baffles any audience!

Effect: The faces of three over-sized cards are shown to the audience. You explain that everyone will take a mystical journey from the past, through the present and into the future. The trip began in the past when you wrote three predictions about a spectator and sealed them under plastic to the backs of each card.



A spectator chooses a face-up card. The card is turned around and the prediction says, "YOU WILL CHOOSE THIS CARD FIRST!". It even goes on to say something about the spectator's future. Everyone thinks it's a joke, all the predictions must say the same thing. But, when the second card is chosen the prediction states that, "THIS CARD WILL BE PICKED SECOND!"

The final card's prediction prognosticates that it will be the last choice of the spectator! All three predictions are 100% correct!

The predictions are correct about the order the cards were chosen, and the additional information about the spectator's fate ends the journey somewhere in the near future.

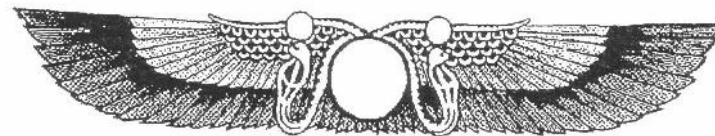
If you've ever wanted to add a bit of mystical fortune-telling to your show, this trick will have people believing you can see into their future!

Cards of Cairo
has these important features:

- ♦ Everything is entirely self contained
- ♦ Nothing is switched
- ♦ The predictions are actually sealed to the cards
- ♦ The predictions were written before the show
- ♦ The prediction NEVER leaves the back of the card
- ♦ There is absolutely NO FORCING - Every choice is completely free
- ♦ The spectator can examine a card if she wishes
- ♦ So easy, you'll do it in your next show!



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Cards of Cairo

Docc Hilford

An amazing journey through time,
where the past, present and future are revealed.

Stage size, easy to do and self contained.



EFFECT: You are about to take your audience on a mental excursion from the past, through the present and into the future.

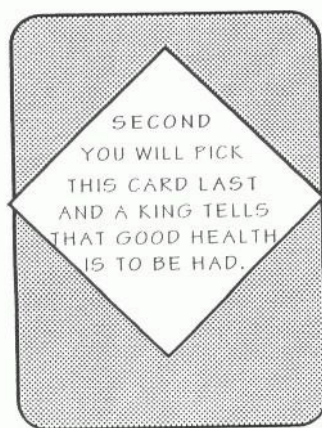
Select a volunteer from the gathered crowd. Here, a young woman will be the subject. Three over-sized playing cards are displayed on a table leaning against glasses. They are the Three of Clubs, the King of Spades and the Six of Hearts. Each card is standing face-out against a glass. You explain that when the journey began several days ago, you selected three particular cards for the subject. You have written three predictions on separate pieces of paper and sealed it under a plastic film on the back of each card. This way the predictions of the past cannot be changed.

Tell your audience that everyone is already a third of the way through the cerebral trip. Now, in the present, the subject will make particular choices regarding the cards. The voyage will conclude in the future because each card will reveal something yet to happen for the subject. Past, present and future. The woman is instructed to look over the cards and openly indicate one of them. She selects the King of Spades. The card is handed to her and she reads what is written on the back of the card. "You will choose this card," it reads. "And a King tells that good health is sure to be had."

The audience, as well as the subject get the joke. All three cards must have the same thing written on them. But, you continue with the demonstration. The subject indicates a second choice. This time she chooses the Six of Diamonds. On the back of the card is written, "Second, you will select this card... and Diamonds means there is more money on its way." The subject is both surprised and happy about the prediction. The final card is turned around and read. "You will pick this card last... and the Three of Clubs shows a new joy of life will be yours."

METHOD: The messages on the backs of each postcard are designed to appear unique, however they all say essentially the same thing. Part of each ambiguous message is written in permanent ink and sealed under the plastic film. Two select words of the

message are written in dry erasable marker on the film. By erasing one or both of the gimmick words from the message with your thumb as you turn the cards around, the content is altered.



On three pieces of paper, with a felt-tipped pen, write: "(BLANK), you will choose this card (BLANK)". Start another line with: "and..." (each of the messages above). Put the papers on the backs of each matching card and seal it with the plastic.

The words *Second* and *last* will fit in the blanks at the beginning and end of the first line and be written in erasable marker. In performance, by erasing both words you have a statement that reflects the first choice. This card is clean of any preparation and can be examined minutely.

By erasing the word *last* and leaving the word *Second*, the message reflects the second choice. This card cannot be safely handled by the spectator, but because the first one was handled there is nothing suspicious in you holding the postcard for her to read. Erase the word *Second* and leave the word *last* on the final card. This indicates the card that would be chosen last. This card is also not safe to hand out. This is how to make

any card fit the position it was selected.

NOTES: There are some subtle, yet strong points in the presentation. First, the plastic film is on the back of the card so the erasable marker will, in fact, erase. You sell it as a bonus, a way to keep the message from being altered! It also makes certain that the prediction paper could not be switched around for a different card. It is affixed to a particular card. Although, in the light of reason it makes little sense, this is a strong point in the minds of the audience.

The way the prediction is worded does two very important things. It breaks up the structure of the sentence so the altering words don't appear at the beginning or end of the sentence, and it makes it seem as if the added information is part of the prediction! You'll get credit for writing a detailed prediction, when actually the added information is NOT part of the prediction. The linking word "and" combines the prediction of the choice with the prediction about the subject's future. This is VERY strong as well as convincing. Naming the card in the prediction suggests to the subject's subconscious that any card could have been chosen and the prediction was written before the three cards were taken from the large deck. Having the prediction written on a separate piece of paper and sealed to the card's back says that the predictions were written first and the card gotten to match the predictions! This psychological ploy sells the trick much harder than if

The verb in each message is different also. "Choose", "select" and "pick" imply that each statement is unique and cannot be altered. However, they all mean, of course, the same thing. The way the cards are named in the prediction is important too. In one prediction, only the suit is named. In another, only the value is revealed. In the third prediction both the suit and value are named.

There is also a built in theatrical pace in this trick. The first prediction seems comical to the audience. They think they've figured out the method (if it can be called a method at this point). Yet, when the second prediction is read, the pace quickens until the finale. **Cards of Cairo** has built in comedy, drama and suspense, plus an easy to follow plot as well as large (packable) props. What more could one desire in a quick trick?

JOHNNY TODD'S TIP: A young, up-and-coming performer, Johnny Todd, suggests varying the position of the key words. He has two cards start with the key word "Second", and one card begin with the key word "Last". Of course this change has no effect on the first card chosen, but it creates a strange variation in the second and final choices. For example, the cards may now read: "Second you will pick the..." And "Last you will select the..." Johnny feels this really proves the predictions are all different and can't be altered. Clever.

CARE: Because erasable ink can eventually dye the plastic film if left on too long, it is advisable to clean off the cards after every performance, and re-write the words *Second* and *last* before each show. Other than that these cards should last a lifetime. The pen can be replaced with any standard erasable pens.

Enjoy