



Hello and welcome to The Sinking Wasteland Tarot, a deck I created between 2014 and 2016. It saw a first print run over the summer of 2016 and just cleared funding for a second in the fall of 2017. It was originally conceived as a practice exercise to learn the tarot. I had decided that the most fun way to learn the 78 cards of the standard Rider-Waite deck would be to research and illustrate each of them, one by one.

The major arcana are all fully colored, with extra layers of lighting. The minor arcana are in linework with shading, and the royalty are colored but lacking more of the fine detail that the majors have. Each suit is tinted a slightly different shade according to their associated elements. The entire deck is meant to have a post-apocalyptic gothic western theme, set in a dying world seemingly devoid of a future. Which is how the name came about.

Originally it was only meant to be a working name but I just never really found a better description for it. The world was meant to be one of deserts, impossible magicks, toxic rising black waters, and wandering survivors looking for something. The art style involves some heavy linework and cell shading which is my normal style, developed from years of working on comics beforehand. I tried to keep a grungy sephia tone to things and added in flat blacks with gold linework on top. The end result is hopefully something that is elegant, rustic, weathered, and stylized.

As I worked on each card I wrote very abbreviated descriptions for their meanings. In October of 2017 I wrote a more detailed blurb for each of the major arcana, one per day, until all were complete. This document collects all of those. All blurbs and descriptions are meant to be guidelines but I stress that whatever my interpretation is of the cards, your own is more valuable. I am writing this document as a starting point for this deck but your own interpretations are the end point and I encourage you to develop your own relationships with the cards and characters within. Without further ado, let's meet the major arcana!

The Major Arcana

0 - The Fool -

"I must learn to love the fool in me - the one who feels too much, talks too much, takes too many chances, wins sometimes and loses often, lacks self-control, loves and hates, hurts and gets hurt, promises and breaks promises, laughs and cries." -Theodore Isaac Rubin

Upright: The Fool represents new beginnings and potential. It encourages you to have faith in yourself and follow your heart. You may be ready to start on a new journey or project. Now is the time to begin!

Inverted: The inverted fool suggests that you are not aware of or considering the consequences of your actions. You need to take a step back and plan your route forward, as you may be acting recklessly or getting in over your head.

I - The Magician -

"For me, there is very little difference between magic and art. To me, the ultimate act of magic is to create something from nothing." -Alan Moore

Upright: The Magician suggests that you may have a new goal, and that your skills are appropriately matched to take it on. Success follows your skill and optimism in this new endeavor. Channel your focus, talent, and creativity into this project.

Inverted: The inverted magician indicates greed, deceit, and manipulation. You may have many skills that are not currently being utilized. You may be out of touch with reality. It is also possible that you are not living up to your potential. Be wary of untrustworthy people and cloudy judgement.

II - The High Priestess -

*"We have forgotten that we were born
of celestial cataclysm.
We have forgotten how to dance
bare-footed on the earth to the cadence
of our souls. We have forgotten the ritual
fires and the acrid tang of holy smoke
on our tongues."-Beth Morey*

Upright: The High Priestess represents a link to the subconscious. She is wise, understanding, and calm. This card encourages you to pay attention to your inner voice and intuition.

Inverted: You may not be listening to your intuition. Try to take some time to yourself and clear a path for your subconscious to express itself to you. You may be distracted by outside issues or repressing feelings, or looking to the opinions of others. What you need to focus on instead is your own inner voice.

III - The Empress -

"You philosophers are lucky men. You write on paper and paper is patient. Unfortunate Empress that I am, I write on the susceptible skins of living beings." -Catherine the Great

Upright: The Empress expresses a motherly and traditional view of femininity. Sensuality, a nurturing nature, pregnancy, and beauty. This card encourages you to get in touch with your sensuality, express yourself creatively, and take on a more connected and caring role with others.

Inverted: You may be losing some of yourself by neglecting your needs in favor of nurturing someone else. You may be having trouble connecting with others or expressing yourself creatively.

IV - The Emperor -

"It has always been the prerogative of children and half-wits to point out that the emperor has no clothes. But the half-wit remains a half-wit, and the emperor remains an emperor." -Neil Gaiman

Upright: The Emperor is a father figure who provides and protects. He is a wise, giving, and stable authority figure. He is organized, structured, and ordered.

Inverted: An inverted emperor can signify troubles with authority. There may be an abusive and controlling authority in your life that requires you to stand up to authority or to try to wrest control of the situation. It is also possible you'll need to avoid this overbearing authority entirely and focus yourself elsewhere.

V - The Hierophant -

"Where fall the footsteps of the Master, the ears of those ready for his Teaching open wide."-The Kybalion

Upright: This card encourages you to follow the status quo, be orthodox, and work with the existing establishment. This is a time to adhere to an institution's best practices and rituals.

Inverted: You may be constrained by rules, regulations, and structures. You may need to challenge an established orthodoxy or status quo. Now is a time to break the rules and step outside of tradition.

VI - The Lovers -

"The minute I heard my first love story, I started looking for you, not knowing how blind that was. Lovers don't finally meet somewhere. They're in each other all along." -Rumi

Upright: The Lovers represent harmony, love, desire, and intimacy. This card encourages you to consider carefully the current choices you are making, as they are going to be significant ones. You should be very mindful of the long term consequences of your decisions because deciding poorly could take you down a negative road.

Inverted: You may have made a rushed decision, considering only the short term, and are now avoiding responsibility for the consequences. You may be having a strong inner conflict. It's possible you have disharmony in a close relationship, or that a relationship is one-sided. You are encouraged to make amends and restore the balance that you once had.

VII - The Chariot -

"On both his wings, one black, the other white, bears greatest names in his wild airy flight." -John Milton

Upright: The Chariot is a dynamic and victorious card. It represents determination, hard work, conquest, and willpower. You are encouraged to pursue or continue a project. You must be driven and determined, but you can attain your goal.

Inverted: You may feel as though you've lost control of your life. You may be focusing on things you cannot control, and instead need to re-concentrate your energy on things that you can control. Don't be demoralized, you have a mind of your own and can take charge of your own life and decisions. Now is the time to orient your life in the direction you want.

VIII - Strength -

"The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places." -Ernest Hemingway

Upright: This card represents inner strength and the power to overcome any challenge. You are in charge of your own emotions, compassion, and tolerance, and are able to overcome obstacles through self control and confidence.

Inverted: You may be encountering a roadblock or questioning yourself. You could be doubting yourself and experiencing a lack of confidence and self-worth as a result. You need to look within and find your inner source of strength, tame your emotions and feelings of inadequacy, and regain your calm inner core.

IX - The Hermit -

"The mind can weave itself warmly in the cocoon of its own thoughts, and dwell a hermit anywhere."

-James Russell Lowell

Upright: You are at a period of self-reflection and inner examination. You may be re-aligning your goals or world view to a more centered or helpful place. You are on a private journey of soul-searching where you will discover what truly matters in your life.

Inverted: You may be getting lost in self-reflection, not surfacing to engage with the real world while you spend all of your time navel-gazing. You could also be lacking in self-examination, not taking any time to connect with yourself on what your values and priorities actually are. You may be too distracted with daily life to step back and focus on yourself.

X - Wheel of Fortune -

"Luck is not chance, it's toil; fortune's expensive smile is earned." -Emily Dickinson

Upright: This is a card of cycles and change. Good and bad times both come and go, and everything changes. Don't be discouraged if you are blocked, as everyone experiences problems. The important thing is to eventually move past them. You may be experiencing dramatic change but do not be alarmed. Concentrate on yourself as the anchored center point around which events in your life churn.

Inverted: You have likely experienced some bad luck recently. You may be in the middle of setbacks that were beyond your control. Try to concentrate on positive change that you do have control over in order to learn from recent circumstances. Be cautious and do not take any risks at the moment.

XI - Justice -

"We know what the birth of a revolution looks like: A student stands before a tank. A fruit seller sets himself on fire. A line of monks link arms in a human chain. Crowds surge, soldiers fire, gusts of rage pull down the monuments of tyrants, and maybe, sometimes, justice rises from the flames." -Nancy Gibbs

Upright: This card represents law, order, fairness, and truth. You are encouraged to be fair and even with others, to avoid playing favorites, and be objective. Your present and future circumstances are determined by your decisions and actions.

Inverted: The inverted justice card represents dishonesty directed both inwards and outwards. You may not be being honest with yourself or you may be keeping yourself from examining important self-truths. You are encouraged to take a long introspective look at yourself and your situation and begin dealing with circumstances as they are and not as you think they should be.

XII - The Hanged Man -

*"The prophet and the martyr do not see the hooting throng. Their eyes are fixed on the eternities."
-Benjamin Cardozo*

Upright: You may need to stop or pause what you are currently engaged in. Now is a time to suspend activity and stall in order to take time to reflect on your circumstances from another point of view. If you are able to take a moment, you will likely find a better course to proceed upon.

Inverted: You may be feeling like you've been a martyr, sacrificing everything and getting nothing in return. You may be putting off a decision, hoping that a better option will present itself, but in reality you may just be stalling because you're comfortable waiting around. You may need to make a decision and take charge of your life again.

XIII - Death -

*"The timing of death, like the ending of a story, gives a changed meaning to what preceded it." -Mary
Catherine Bateson*

Upright: This card represents the ending of a major part of your life. You may have completed a large project or attained a goal, or it may be time to set a goal aside for good and let go. Something new is waiting to begin. One door closes and another opens. You are encouraged to let go of outdated and unhealthy parts of your life in order to make room for a better future.

Inverted: You may be resisting a major and necessary change in your life. You could be holding on to unhealthy and harmful baggage that you need to let go of in order to live a healthier and more fulfilling life. You are encouraged to resolve what you need to and move forward free of past aspects that are harmful to you.

XIV - Temperance -

"Harmony makes small things grow, lack of it makes great things decay." -Sallust

Upright: This card represents patience, moderation, and calm balance. You are calm and balanced even in stressful times, able to make your way through chaotic situations through a place of inner harmony and peace. You are able to work well with others. You are encouraged to be patient and take time to self-evaluate so as to bring about a stronger peace within yourself.

Inverted: Something in your life is lacking harmony and causing conflict, or you may be facing a situation in which you could create disharmony. You may be lacking purpose in life or find that you have no long-term goals. You are encouraged to maintain a sense of calm while you

evaluate what you want out of life and where you want to be. In situations with others, you should be careful to resolve conflicts so that more positive work can proceed.

XV - The Devil -

"I was not content to believe in a personal devil and serve him, in the ordinary sense of the word. I wanted to get hold of him personally and become his chief of staff." -Aleister Crowley

Upright: The Devil represents constraints that bind you despite your ability to be free of them should you wish. This card reflects addictions and mental blocks that cause you to focus too much on one area of your life while neglecting others. You are so involved with one thing that you've become a slave to it at the expense of your own happiness or fulfillment.

Inverted: You may be increasingly aware of your dependence on unhealthy things in your life and may be seeking to free yourself of them. You are looking to move past your personal temptations and will need to battle your own inner devil that tries to keep you bound to them. Your long term betterment depends on your victory against what constrains you.

XVI - The Tower -

"We all wish to live. We all seek a world in which men are freed of the burdens of ignorance, poverty, hunger and disease. And we shall all be hard-pressed to escape the deadly rain of nuclear fall-out should catastrophe overtake us." -Haile Selassie

Upright: The Tower symbolizes sudden, dramatic, unexpected change in one's life. This can be very painful but it is often an awakening and release from something that has been binding you. This may be a necessary experience that will strengthen you and leave you better on the other side.

Inverted: You may be avoiding or stalling a very painful transition that will be necessary in your life. By putting it off, you could be sticking yourself in a kind of limbo or making the impending change all the more painful of a transition to go through.

XVII - The Star -

"One must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star." -Friedrich Nietzsche

Upright: The Star is a card of faith, courage, and transformation. You've gone through a difficult process but have come out stronger and better on the other side. Life has good things in store for you ahead, you just need to be open to experience and change and have faith that things will work out.

Inverted: You may be feeling discouraged, disengaged, or bored with life. You could be overwhelmed. You are encouraged to reflect on what is causing your current troubles and work on getting past it. You are only momentarily blocked. You have a bright future ahead but need to move past your current state.

XVIII - The Moon -

"There are nights when the wolves are silent and only the moon howls." -George Carlin

Upright: The Moon represents doubt, illusion, anxiety and fear. You may be projecting insecurities and irrationalities onto others. You could be doubting your current course of action, or feeling as though you've lost your way. You are encouraged to confront your own inner shadow and deal with your past memories and insecurities. The more you try to repress or ignore them, the stronger they will become.

Inverted: You may have been dealing with some difficult emotional issues recently, or an unhappiness, but you are beginning to work beyond them. Your anxiety is beginning to dissipate and as you're able to work on your inner self, you can move past some of your deeper emotional troubles. Don't be confused and know that you have the strength to overcome your inner fears.

XIX - The Sun -

"My candle burns at both ends; it will not last the night; but ah, my foes, and oh, my friends - it gives a lovely light!" -Edna St. Vincent Millay

Upright: This is a card of warmth and success. You are ready to take on the world with a smile, and can move forward with optimism and joy. You are encouraged to move forward and enjoy the simple things, knowing that everything is only going to get better from here.

Inverted: You could be reluctant, sad, or having trouble enjoying things. Regardless, you are only temporarily set back and can easily overcome the obstacles that are now present.

XX - Judgement -

"Now the valley cried with anger, 'Mount your horses draw your sword.' And they killed the mountain people, so they won their just reward. Now they stood beside the treasure, on the mountain dark and red. Turned the stone and looked beneath it. 'Peace on earth' was all it said. Go ahead and hate your neighbor, go ahead and cheat a friend. Do it in the name of heaven, you can justify it in the end. There won't be any trumpets blowing come the judgment day. On the bloody morning after one tin soldier rides away." -Dennis Lambert

Upright: You may need a moment of self-examination, quiet reflection, or meditation. You are ready to awaken a new theme in your life and move forward with it. It is time to leave your past behind you for good and choose to move forward with your new and better self. You've had something waiting inside of you for this moment and you are now finally putting everything in place.

Inverted: You may be deliberating too much, or doubting yourself, or being too harsh with your judgements. Reflect on everything you've learned so far in your life and prepare yourself to make your own decisions and move forward with confidence.

XXI - The World -

"The world is full of magical things patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper." -Bertrand Russell

Upright: This is a card of achievement, completion, and closure. You have finished something major or attained a life goal. You've encountered setbacks or problems but have learned from them along the way and have only become stronger from your journey. Now is a time to celebrate all you've achieved.

Inverted: You should be close to closing in on a major life goal or project but could be having trouble seeing yourself over the finish line. You could be lacking in closure or achievement. You are encouraged to re-center yourself, collect your energy, and keep on moving forward. Persistence will pay off and you can see things through to completion.

XXII - The Fool -

"I still believe that peace and plenty and happiness can be worked out some way. I am a fool."
-Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

Upright: Attainment, a bridge between cycles, beginning, eternity, purgatory. This card signifies both the end of a major journey and the start of a new one. It is the space between completion and beginning. An exhale and regathering of will. Looking back on a recently finished project as you start to prepare for a new one.

Inverted: Stalling, idling between projects, becoming complacent or stuck. Inverted, this card can signify that you are staying in a comfortable space, or are resting on your laurels. It can indicate that you are hesitating to embark on new journeys because you are still dwelling on past ones. You need to accept and learn from the past but continue on into the future.

The Minor Arcana

I - Ace of Pentacles -

"Prosperity tries the fortunate, adversity the great." -Rose Kennedy

Upright: You are at the start of a new investment or business opportunity. You have an opportunity for wealth, not just in terms of money but a wealth of spirit.

Inverted: Be mindful of your finances at the moment, and be careful not to spend more than you should. A financial opportunity you took on may fall through. Be careful not to be exploitative or opportunistic with others in your monetary goals.

II - Two of Pentacles -

"A human being should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, conn a ship, design a building, write a sonnet, balance accounts, build a wall, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, cooperate, act alone, solve equations, analyze a new problem, pitch manure, program a computer, cook a tasty meal, fight efficiently, die gallantly. Specialization is for insects." -Robert A. Heinlein

Upright: You need to find balance between two opposing desires. At this time in your life, you need to be clear on what your priorities are and choose your actions accordingly.

Inverted: You may need to plan your commitments and time more wisely. You are overburdened with everything you're trying to do and having trouble keeping up. You may be struggling to keep up with bills and finances. You may need to balance work and life better. Now is not the time to commit but rather the time to plan.

III - Three of Pentacles -

*"No man is an island,
Entire of itself,
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less.
As well as if a promontory were.
As well as if a manor of thy friend's
Or of thine own were:
Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind,*

*And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
It tolls for thee.” -John Donne*

Upright: Your work or plan is well under way and if you are not deterred by setbacks, you should be victorious in its completion. You may be experiencing a minor victory or completion of a small goal on the path to success.

Inverted: There is disharmony in a coworking environment that you're involved with. It's possible your skills are underutilized, that there is disharmony in the group, or that there is a lack of group planning. It may be best to find a new group or work environment to achieve your goals.

IV - Four of Pentacles -

*“You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them.”
-Maya Angelou*

Upright: You may be playing things too safely. You've likely found stability or security but at a cost of becoming possessive, greedy, or controlling. You may be focusing too much on material wealth and not enough on spiritual growth, companionship, and happiness. It may be time to reflect on what you are prioritizing in life and whether or not what you've surrounded yourself with is making a positive difference.

Inverted: You are focusing too much on money and material wealth. You have become controlling, greedy, and defensive. Your personal development requires you to let go of your stability and grow outside of your comfort zone.

V - Five of Pentacles -

“I said it's a cold universe and I don't mean that metaphorically. If you go out into space, it's cold. It's really cold and we don't know what's up there. We happen to be in this little pocket where there's a sun. What have we got except love and each other to guard against all that isolation and loneliness?” -David Chase

Upright: This is a time of poverty and adversity. Learning what you can from the circumstances that led up to this will make you stronger in the long run. In the meantime, look to others for help. There is always a way out.

Inverted: Now is a time of hope after recent losses, especially relating to money or a job. Your difficult times are at an end and you have a way to move forward again.

VI - Six of Pentacles -

“It takes generosity to discover the whole through others. If you realize you are only a violin, you can open yourself up to the world by playing your role in the concert.” -Jacques Yves Cousteau

Upright: You are at a point of harmony with your wealth. You may be receiving help after hard times with money, or you may be finding yourself in a position where you are able to share your wealth with others. In the former case, it is important not to become dependent and to use this opportunity as a way to become self-sufficient. In the latter case, it may be helpful to reflect on past times when you needed a hand and someone helped you out.

Inverted: There is an imbalance of charity happening. If you are lending money, be careful about who you give it to during this time, as it may not come back. If you are receiving money, you may be getting into debts that are over your head and you cannot repay. If you have already lent money, it is probably lost and best to consider it so.

VII - Seven of Pentacles -

"In the realm of ideas everything depends on enthusiasm... in the real world all rests on perseverance."

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Upright: Slow and steady wins the race. You are keeping your eye on the long-term benefit of your actions. You are focused on sustainability and the long-term. Stay the course, and your investment will pay off.

Inverted: Your long-term plans may not be viable. It's possible that you've had a scattered or incomplete view, or are trying to take on too much at once. You should take the time to reflect and prioritize on these investments and don't be afraid to cut out the ones that are not likely to give you the results you expected.

VIII - Eight of Pentacles -

"On the mountains of truth you can never climb in vain: either you will reach a point higher up today, or you will be training your powers so that you will be able to climb higher tomorrow." -Friedrich Nietzsche

Upright: You are embarking on a new apprenticeship of sorts. You are fully invested in learning new skills and are focusing all of your energy and effort into mastering your new chosen path.

Inverted: You may be focusing too much on fine details and missing the bigger picture. Your perfectionism is getting in the way of your success. You are spending too much time on minute details and need to examine where your effort and time would be better spent.

IX - Nine of Pentacles -

"Strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle." -Napoleon Hill

Upright: You've worked hard to get to your current point in life and you deserve to relax and enjoy the fruits of your labor. Treat yourself and celebrate all that you've earned so far.

Inverted: You may be working too much or having financial difficulties. You may want to reconsider the luxuries you think you need in life, as it could be time to cut back and focus on what you really need.

X - Ten of Pentacles -

"If a man is proud of his wealth, he should not be praised until it is known how he employs it." -Socrates

Upright: You are in a place of attainment, comfort, and completion. Your situation is stable and secure and success follows you. You've created a lasting foundation for wealth and success for you and your loved ones. Take some time to relax and enjoy.

Inverted: Something is interrupting the stability and financial security of you and your relationships. You may be under monetary strain or in a situation where you are blocked from securing your finances.

XI - Page of Pentacles -

"I am not an educated man. I never had an opportunity to learn anything except how to fight." -Pancho Villa

Upright: You are encouraged to start working on making your dreams and goals into reality. You are ready to start on the initial steps of a new project and your practical approach to doing so will result in success in the long run.

Inverted: You are having difficulty getting a new project going. You may be spending too much time daydreaming, or you could need to circle back and reconsider constraints that you hadn't thought of before. You might be thinking too short-term when you need to focus on the long-term. Return to your goal and consider whether you still want to achieve it or not.

XII - Knight of Pentacles -

"My mind rebels at stagnation. Give me problems, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram, or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. But I abhor the dull routine of existence. I crave for mental exaltation." -Arthur Conan Doyle

Upright: Concentrate on being reliable, methodical, and patient. You may need to focus on a meticulous approach to complete a project. It is likely time for you to take charge and commit. There will be a lot of routine but you can see the goal through to the end.

Inverted: You may be feeling bored with your routine or restless with life. There may be too much focus on the mundane and not enough spontaneity to keep life exciting.

XIII - Queen of Pentacles -

"Sing me a new song; the world is transfigured; all the Heavens are rejoicing." -Friedrich Nietzsche

Upright: The Queen of Pentacles is a mentor, mother, caretaker, and businesswoman. She exudes calm and compassion. In a reading, she indicates that you've worked hard to reach your current prosperity and security and you may now calmly and lovingly be generous with your loved ones.

Inverted: You may be having trouble balancing your home and work lives and your close relationships could be suffering for it. You may need to make some choices and prioritize. One person cannot always do everything.

XIV - King of Pentacles -

"The only way to predict the future is to have power to shape the future." -Eric Hoffer

Upright: The King of Pentacles is methodical, fatherly, wealthy, generous, and stable. This card indicates achievement of power, support, and wealth. His richness is not just financial but spiritual as well.

Inverted: The Inverted King of Pentacles is someone who is overly invested in material wealth. He will do anything for money. He is obsessed with status and position and as a result is dismissive of those without.

I - Ace of Cups -

"I can only note that the past is beautiful because one never realises an emotion at the time. It expands later, and thus we don't have complete emotions about the present, only about the past." -Virginia Woolf

Upright: You are at the beginning of a new road to fulfillment. You are starting a new and exciting relationship. If you open yourself up to it and let it blossom, you may find yourself on the road to happiness.

Inverted: You are at a point where holding back your emotions may be the best thing to do. You may find yourself wanting to give in to an emotional state, but you would be better suited in the long run by being somewhat stoic. Alternatively, if you have been holding back your emotions for some time, the reversed Ace of Cups may be calling for you to stop safeguarding yourself and let them loose.

II - Two of Cups -

"For small creatures such as we the vastness is bearable only through love." -Carl Sagan

Upright: A new relationship is deepening. You may encounter a new and happy commitment in this growing relationship.

Inverted: You may be struggling with trust and emotional vulnerability in new relationships. There is a lack of trust and understanding and it is affecting new partnerships.

III - Three of Cups -

"Love is blind; friendship closes its eyes." -Friedrich Nietzsche

Upright: Now is a time for friendship, companionship, and celebration. You are giving yourself to others and they are giving themselves to you. Everyone is working together for a common goal that benefits all parties.

Inverted: You may be feeling isolated or alienated from a group. You could be stifled in favor of a group's decision. There is a group dynamic happening that is not working out in your favor or in everyone's best interest.

IV - Four of Cups -

"Soon silence will have passed into legend. Man has turned his back on silence. Day after day he invents machines and devices that increase noise and distract humanity from the essence of life, contemplation, meditation." -Jean Arp

Upright: You may be feeling disengaged, flat, or bored. Now is a time for self-reflection, to find your own meaning. Be careful of defensiveness or too much navel gazing, as you may miss out on opportunities.

Inverted: You may be too isolated and lost in your own thoughts to see opportunities right under your nose. Now is a good time to reconnect with the world and release your focus on yourself.

V - Five of Cups -

"We never understand how little we need in this world until we know the loss of it." -James M. Barrie

Upright: You are feeling distraught or disappointed over a recent situation that didn't turn out as you expected. You may be having trouble getting over what was lost. Now is a time to find silver linings and re-examine your expectations.

Inverted: You are ready for a new beginning. Although your recent past still lingers as a time of suffering and regret, you are moving past it with lessons learned.

VI - Six of Cups -

"Every act of rebellion expresses a nostalgia for innocence and an appeal to the essence of being." -Albert Camus

Upright: It is a time of nostalgia and happiness. You may be taking a stroll down memory lane, but be sure that you aren't avoiding your current situation by getting lost there. Take a breather by remembering better times but be sure not to dwell.

Inverted: You may be having troubles with childhood, possibly with children in your present time or with spending too much time dwelling on the past. Revisiting cherished memories is important but you might be spending too much time there. It's also possible that you have an unrealistically happy memory of past times.

VII - Seven of Cups -

"We live in a fantasy world, a world of illusion. The great task in life is to find reality." -Iris Murdoch

Upright: You could be caught up in a world of fantasy or illusion. You could be spending too much of your time on wishful thinking, daydreaming, or illusions. Having dreams is fine, but if you aren't living in and dealing with reality, your dreams will never transition to the real world and you may find your reality becoming harsher over time as you neglect its presence. Be careful of having your head in the clouds and giving in to temptations that would damage your real life.

Inverted: You are spending your time pursuing escape rather than dealing with self-reflection and reality. You are living in your fantasies to the point where you are unwilling to deal with the realities of day-to-day life. In chasing illusion, you are refusing self-examination and are avoiding things that would make you truly happy rather than simply distracted.

VIII - Eight of Cups -

"I am not so different in my history of abandonment from anyone else after all. We have all been split away from the earth, each other, ourselves." -Susan Griffin

Upright: You are at a point of re-evaluating your life, desires, and situation. You are ready to let go and start anew. You are ready for more fulfilling times ahead and are starting on a journey to bring more happiness and satisfaction to your life.

Inverted: You may be feeling aimless or confused. You feel conflicted about leaving behind a bad situation and could be concerned about new situations not being a better option. You are drifting and likely need to commit to a course of action.

IX- Nine of Cups -

"To be able to look back upon one's life in satisfaction, is to live twice." -Khalil Gibran

Upright: It is a time of satisfaction and fulfillment. You should count your blessings, appreciate what you have, and bask in your current good fortune. Overall, contentment is the theme.

Inverted: You may be feeling that you're missing something deep down. You could be disappointed that your wishes are not coming to fruition. You may be indulging yourself. It is important to work on your empathy and consider how your actions and words may impact others.

X - Ten of Cups -

"The trials on the road to world harmony are no greater than the courage of those who accept the challenge." -Carl Lewis

Upright: The Ten of Cups is a card of attainment, fulfillment, and family. Bask in the contentment of your current situation and try to enjoy the harmony of your current relationships. Follow your heart and intuitions.

Inverted: Your happy family and relationships are currently experiencing disharmony. It is time to try to treat each other with respect, love, and compassion to try to get back to a happy and fulfilling place.

XI - Page of Cups -

"The creative act lasts but a brief moment, a lightning instant of give-and-take, just long enough for you to level the camera and to trap the fleeting prey in your little box." -Henri Cartier-Bresson

Upright: You have a creative energy ready to burst forth. Give in to your inspiration and see where it goes. Don't be afraid to dream a little, as your unconscious may be trying to send you a message.

Inverted: The Inverted Page of Cups represents someone who is running away from reality, through drugs or by living too much in their fantasy. This person is immature, insecure, and insincere. Be very wary of drugs and escapism and watch out for abusive personalities.

XII - Knight of Cups -

"The most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire." -Ferdinand Foch

Upright: You should move forward with your dreams, but be sure to keep the constraints of realizing them firmly in mind. Be ready to embark on the passion or journey you've always wanted to, but be sure to balance out your ideas and thoughts with actual, realistic actions.

Inverted: You may have had an unrealistic idea of a journey you set out on. Be wary of someone being emotional to the point where they find themselves getting nowhere and excluding all logic.

XIII - Queen of Cups -

"Make no judgements where you have no compassion." -Anne McCaffrey

Upright: The Queen of Cups is calm, compassionate, and intuitive. She is focused on empathy, the subconscious, and the well-being of others. She is receptive and creative. When she appears in a reading, you are encouraged to focus on the support and care of others.

Inverted: You may be feeling out of touch with your emotions or allowing them to overwhelm you. You could be dissatisfied and giving in to fantasy. Your troubles are becoming draining on those around you and you should spend some thought on the needs and wants of those close to you as well as your own well-being.

XIV - King of Cups -

"Night, the beloved. Night, when words fade and things come alive. When the destructive analysis of day is done, and all that is truly important becomes whole and sound again. When man reassembles his fragmentary self and grows with the calm of a tree." -Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Upright: You feel very emotionally balanced and compassionate. You are in control of your emotions without stifling them. You have a deep connection to the emotional realm that you can tap into when needed. Be kind, loving, considerate, calm and caring.

Inverted: The Inverted King of Cups represents someone who is either losing control over their emotions, or intentionally manipulating and controlling the emotions of others. Be wary of this person, for they seek to make you think of yourself as the problem and will emotionally blackmail and harm.

I - Ace of Wands -

"When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful." -Malala Yousafzai

Upright: This is a card of movement and encouragement. You are fired up and ready to move ahead with your endeavors. You have a new idea, project, or prospect to get started on, this is the perfect time to go forward with it.

Inverted: You are feeling bogged down, delayed, or simply lack motivation. Your life is lacking direction and you may find yourself wanting something else without being able to define anything specific.

II - Two of Wands -

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." -Marcel Proust

Upright: You have started on a journey and now need to scout and plan the route forward. It's time to step outside of your comfort zone and begin to find your way in new and uncharted territory. Keep your thoughts on your goal and keep moving towards it.

Inverted: You may be hitting a roadblock with your plans, or you may have overlooked some crucial part of planning. You need to step back and evaluate what is important to you and re-align your actions towards meeting your goals.

III - Three of Wands -

"Success depends upon previous preparation, and without such preparation there is sure to be failure." -Confucius

Upright: It is time to grow and expand. There may be more opportunities available than you realize so be sure to look around at what's out there. Your plans and potential are in progress and this is a perfect time to expand your horizons and think big.

Inverted: You may be experiencing delays, failure, or blockage on the road to your goals. You've set out to accomplish something and are being held up. You may be feeling like you've wasted your time and you may be frustrated. It's time to re-examine your goal and perhaps find a new road forward.

IV - Four of Wands -

"A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person." -Mignon McLaughlin

Upright: There is an important milestone in your life that is a cause for celebration. Now is a great time to mend old conflicts with loved ones, gather with friends or family, and celebrate accomplishments.

Inverted: There is disharmony in your family or friends. Your relationships may be in a state of turmoil and you may be lacking stability. You are likely in a state of transition. Although things may be rough right now, they will not always be.

V - Five of Wands -

"Change means movement. Movement means friction. Only in the frictionless vacuum of a nonexistent abstract world can movement or change occur without that abrasive friction of conflict." -Saul Alinsky

Upright: Your situation is rife with conflict and competition. There is likely a group setting where everyone is trying to lead and no one will follow. It is time to find mediation and work cooperatively to achieve a goal that has been held up by the current conflict.

Inverted: A recent struggle is at an end and you may find yourself relieved. It may be prudent to consider if, in avoiding conflict, you've let your own wants or needs be set aside. Not all conflict is bad.

VI - Six of Wands -

"Invincibility lies in the defence; the possibility of victory in the attack." -Sun Tzu

Upright: You have succeeded in recent endeavors and either have received or deserve to receive public recognition for your efforts. Don't be afraid to be acknowledged for what you've accomplished, but remember to be humble.

Inverted: You may have been admonished or you could be lacking confidence in your abilities. You may be feeling like you've failed. It may be better to move on from a bad project than to try to fix it if it's too broken. Recognize that everyone has failures and getting past them is an important step in having success.

VII - Seven of Wands -

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." -Martin Luther King, Jr.

Upright: You need persistence and strength to maintain your course of action. You may be defending your position, do not compromise yourself. Draw a line in the sand and make your stand.

Inverted: You may be overly defensive and it is possible you've taken on too much. Don't be avoidant about your beliefs but do be careful about being too aggressive and being unable to see the larger situation. You need to focus on building your self-esteem and having faith that you can achieve your goal.

VIII - Eight of Wands -

"The spread of civilisation may be likened to a fire; first, a feeble spark, next a flickering flame, then a mighty blaze, ever increasing in speed and power." -Nikola Tesla

Upright: A recent block or obstacle has moved aside and you are ready to move toward your goal with new enthusiasm and focus. Now is the perfect time to energetically busy yourself with your task.

Inverted: Despite being full of energy and focus, you are encountering obstacles in your path. You may need to examine different steps forward or try to find new ways around what is blocking your progress.

IX - Nine of Wands -

“Permanence, perseverance and persistence in spite of all obstacles, discouragements, and impossibilities: It is this, that in all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak.” -Thomas Carlyle

Upright: You've encountered one last obstacle at the last stretch of your current task. It may seem insurmountable, but you have everything you need to overcome this challenge.

Inverted: You may be feeling defensive or overwhelmed. You could be having trouble committing and may even be feeling like you're constantly being watched or judged. Now might be a good time to step back, take a break, and try to re-center yourself.

X - Ten of Wands -

“Do not free a camel of the burden of his hump; you may be freeing him from being a camel.” -Gilbert K. Chesterton

Upright: You have completed a major project after a lot of long and hard work, but you may now be realizing that maintaining things is going to be a lot of work going forward. Be careful that you do not take on too much. Delegating responsibility is important.

Inverted: You may be carrying more of a burden than you can handle on your own. Look to others to take on responsibility and try to find a way to share your task.

XI - Page of Wands -

“We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.” -T. S. Eliot

Upright: It is time to be open minded and adventurous. Start out on your new beginning and be ready to try new things. You may not need a solid plan to get started this time so set out on the road and see where it takes you.

Inverted: You have had difficulties starting new projects. You've likely not made it too far into them before some setback got in the way and made you abandon the goal. But, all is not wasted, as long as you learned from the obstacles along the way. Be mindful not to be too immature or helpless, and try not to become aggressive or uncooperative after repeated difficulties.

XII - Knight of Wands -

“Adventure is worthwhile in itself.” -Amelia Earhart

Upright: You are ready to take on the world! Confidence and ambition keep you moving ahead with your goal firmly in your sight. Be careful, however, that you are not too impulsive, as you may end up acting impatiently, without thinking through the consequences.

Inverted: Be careful of being so impatient that you pursue your own interests without thinking through the consequences. You may be feeling frustrated with delays and obstructions and it could be making you doubt yourself. Realize that sometimes things take time and try to consider that some words cannot be unsaid.

XIII - Queen of Wands -

“Success means having the courage, the determination, and the will to become the person you believe you were meant to be.” -George A. Sheehan

Upright: You are independent and capable, easily attaining your goals even when they encounter problems. Be bold, be courageous, and do not waver in your actions.

Inverted: Someone is behaving in a petty, controlling, and manipulative manner. They are feeling hurt, angry, jealous, and may need to take some time to self-reflect.

XIV - King of Wands -

“I love the name of honor, more than I fear death.” -Julius Caesar

Upright: The King of Wands is charismatic, capable, and visionary. He is goal-oriented and enjoys solving problems to the betterment of all. He is direct and forceful in his pursuit of a goal, possibly to the point of seeming arrogant or rash.

Inverted: The Inverted King of Wands represents someone who is rash, careless, and domineering. He is single-minded in pursuit of a goal to the point of causing conflict or harm. He is ruthless and selfish and impulsive.

I - Ace of Swords -

“If it is nothingness that awaits us, let us make an injustice of it; let us fight against destiny, even though without hope of victory.” -Miguel de Unamuno

Upright: You are prepared for the situation ahead with clarity of mind and purpose. You may move forward into a new situation with great purpose and power.

Inverted: You are lacking understanding on the finer points of your goal. Your judgement may be clouded or your situation may have changed from one you once understood.

II - Two of Swords -

"In this life, we have to make many choices. Some are very important choices. Some are not. Many of our choices are between good and evil. The choices we make, however, determine to a large extent our happiness or our unhappiness, because we have to live with the consequences of our choices." -James E. Faust

Faust

Upright: There is a difficult decision to be made that you may be trying to put off. Despite your best efforts, this decision will not go away on its own and requires you to turn and face it. You may not have all the information you need to make the right decision so it may be time to investigate your options.

Inverted: You are caught between a rock and a hard place. You might be having incredible difficulty making a decision, or you could be overwhelmed with information or stuck in the middle of two competing sides. Now is the time to weigh your options and try to gain enough clarity to make this important decision.

III - Three of Swords -

"There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love." -Washington Irving

Upright: The Three of Swords represents pain, sorrow, and rejection. It is possible that this card has come up before a great schism and acts as a warning sign, but it may also already be too late. In the case of the latter, this card challenges you to recognize pain as a useful obstacle to overcome and a tool to learn from. Allow yourself to be sad, but do not lose sight of yourself or your goals in the process

Inverted: You are recovering from a recent loss or difficult path. You may still be suffering from recent hard times but it is important to not become stuck in grief and to let it go. Things are still difficult but day by day your road will brighten.

IV - Four of Swords -

"Art is contemplation. It is the pleasure of the mind which searches into nature and which there divines the spirit of which nature herself is animated." -Auguste Rodin

Upright: You need to take time to recover after a trying time. Seek calm and mental clarity and know that when you are ready, you will rise once again to new challenges.

Inverted: You may be taking on too much at once during a time when you need to recover. It is possible that you are trying to busy yourself in an effort to avoid dealing with painful recent

events. It is time to seek calm and clarity by turning your attention inwards and allowing yourself time to rest.

V - Five of Swords -

"The harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph." -Thomas Paine

Upright: You may be thinking of yourself as a victor in a recent conflict, but you have burned bridges or hurt feelings of others along the way. It is important to consider whether or not coming out ahead is worth damaging relationships. Being ambitious is valuable, but considering the cost of victory is more so.

Inverted: Now is a good time to make amends with those you've had conflict with. Putting away harsh feelings and finding a way for everyone to win will work out better than continuing on a path where everyone loses.

VI - Six of Swords -

"Time is a sort of river of passing events, and strong is its current; no sooner is a thing brought to sight than it is swept by and another takes its place, and this too will be swept away." -Marcus Aurelius

Upright: You are in a period of transition that may involve leaving something behind. Your loss will feel regretful but after the transitory period it will all be for the better. Don't be afraid to let go of the past and move towards the future.

Inverted: You may be trying to transition to a better future but find yourself being haunted by a past you tried to let go. Perhaps you cannot let go of the past or perhaps it keeps catching up with you. Either way, you are feeling stuck, but you must keep moving towards the future you desire.

VII - Seven of Swords -

"Now I believe I can hear the philosophers protesting that it can only be misery to live in folly, illusion, deception and ignorance, but it isn't -it's human." -Desiderius Erasmus

Upright: Deceit or subterfuge is abound. Be mindful about harming others when using deception or trying to be sly, and be careful of others using it on you. Keep your values in mind as you decide on a course of action and watch out for situations where your morality may be compromised. The easy path forward may not be the best path, and you may have to examine if you should deal with your situation head on

Inverted: You may need a new direction that involves doing things differently than you think you can. Your past ways of dealing with situations may be hindering you from starting something new and you may need to try an approach you hadn't considered before.

VIII - Eight of Swords -

"In this cry of pain the inner consciousness of the people seems to lay itself bare for an instant, and to reveal the mood of beings who feel their isolation in the face of a universe that wars on them with winds and seas." -John Millington Synge

Upright: You may be feeling trapped or bound. Your perspective has been obscured and you're unable to see a way forward or out. You need to find clarity to see the situation for what it is and see that you are not as stuck as you think and there is indeed a way out. You are not powerless in your situation, you have options available even if they are not ones you would prefer.

Inverted: You have had some difficulty but have re-oriented yourself and see a new way forward. You have a new perspective and have found a way forward.

IX - Nine of Swords -

"I realize that I live on the bubble of insanity. I feel the weight of human suffering, loneliness and despair on me all the time. It's not getting easier; if anything, it's always right on the edge of my skin." -Erwin McManus

Upright: The Nine of Swords is a card of nightmares, of fear of figments in your mind, and of excessive worry. It's possible that your reaction to a situation is making the situation worse than it really is. Try to step back and look at things more objectively.

Inverted: You are excessively worried and despairing over situations that, if you could see them objectively, would not seem nearly as bad. Try not to spiral into anxiety and fear over your thoughts and concerns regarding the current state of things, as you are likely thinking that things are worse than they actually are.

X - Ten of Swords -

"You are going to break your promise. I understand. And I hold my hands over the ears of my heart, so that I will not hate you." -Catherynne M. Valente

Upright: You may have experienced a sudden and unforeseen disaster or betrayal. Although you may be suffering greatly now, it is darkest before dawn. If you can let go and find a way past your current pain, you will find a new beginning on the other side of this merciless end.

Inverted: You are experiencing a dramatic and painful ending beyond your control. Nonetheless, you must learn from your situation and grow beyond it. You have suffered a massive loss but on the other side of this problem is a new start.

XI - Page of Swords -

“Look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious.” -Stephen Hawking

Upright: You are bursting with excitement and enthusiasm around a new project. You are ready to dive in with everything you've got and to learn along the way. You are able to play it by ear and by staying deft and flexible, you can attain your goals.

Inverted: Be careful not to take on more than you can actually handle. You may not be thinking things through properly before starting on them, which will lead to failure down the road. You may be talking the talk without any walk to back it up.

XII - Knight of Swords -

“Action is the foundational key to all success.” -Pablo Picasso

Upright: The Knight of Swords is all action and energy. He moves forward without consideration of danger or consequence. He can be too single-minded in his focus on attaining a goal or finishing a project. Great ambition and determination are associated with this card.

Inverted: Inverted, the Knight of Swords is an impulsive whirlwind of energy and hype. They are full of ideas and action but have very little preparation or follow-through. They are likely to act without regard for consequence and as a result failure follows the many exciting projects they are involved with.

XIII - Queen of Swords -

*“Luck is of little moment to the great general, for it is under the control of his intellect and his judgment.”
-Livy*

Upright: You should lean on your logic, intellect, and clear judgement. Be sure to think with your head and not with your heart, as emotion could sway the level-headedness of your perceptions.

Inverted: Your perception of a certain situation is being distorted by emotions. You need to try to be more objective and look at things more rationally. Your relationships with others may be interfering with the facts that you should be considering.

XIV - King of Swords -

“Don't leave home without your sword - your intellect.” -Alan Moore

Upright: The King of Swords is logical, fair, just, and stern. He is detached and objective, holding law to the highest regard and as such is incorruptible. His appearance in a reading

suggests that you remain emotionally detached so that you may make the most of your logic and intellect.

Inverted: Be wary of the Inverted King of Swords, for he represents someone who is misusing his power. He is cold and calculating, although he may appear as charismatic and knowledgeable. His only real goal is his own self-interest and he does not care what harm he does to others.

That's it for the arcana. Thanks for reading through. If you've enjoyed this booklet and would like to keep up with what I'm doing, there are a few places you can do so.

-The Home of The Sinking Wasteland Tarot - www.sinkingwastelandtarot.com

-My Instagram - www.instagram.com/PixelOccult

-My Etsy Shop - <https://www.etsy.com/shop/PixelOccult>

-My Twitter - www.twitter.com/PixelOccult

-My Medium - <https://medium.com/@pixeloccult>

-Contact me by email - James.Brothwell@tuta.io