

Prophetic Tribal Visions

By Carla Higdon

In Steve Postman's *Cosmic Tribe Tarot*, The Fool's journey becomes a fantastic and unruly romp through imaginary vistas where naked nymphs and mermaids become Queens and Princesses, nubile young men are Knights and Princes, and a youthful but wily satyr cavorts as *The Devil* himself. Indeed, in this tarot deck almost none of the figures emerge clothed or over the age of thirty. There is even a cross-dresser in the mix. Nipple rings, body paint, tattoos, and wings adorn his images, disembodied eyes peek out from unexpected places, and sinewy serpents wind their ways around muscular torsos. The *Cosmic Tribe Tarot* has a decidedly lusty lean to it and all "leanings" can be found there. Postman includes three variations on *The Lovers*, so that the querant may select the depiction of his/her own personal preference: girl with girl, boy with boy, or just plain old (yawn) boy with girl. This deck is a fairyland frolic through the landscape of the soul, at once frightening and portentous, enchanting and alluring.

As a tool for divination these cards provide endless possibilities for the intuitive reader to draw upon but for those who would like help, there is an illustrated guidebook complete with each divinatory meaning. With little variation from the traditional names, all the Major Arcana, Court Cards, and Minor Arcana are represented in rich technicolor. Limitations of time and space make it impossible to visit each of them with the attention they deserve, so for purposes of these pages we will focus on but a few. The interpretations that follow are my own impressions and in no way reflect the meanings from the text of Eric Ganter, provided in Postman's guidebook. In any case, the deck is shuffled so let us choose some cards...

The Ace of Disks: Rising in a serpent-trail of energy from the forest floor, like an ayahuasca vision, two hands form the center of a giant cosmic flower that has been endowed with the gift of sight. They reach with longing toward a benevolent earth that gazes forward with an air of wise detachment. With *The Ace of Disks*, we are reminded of the vast universe of plant wisdom that is available to us if we choose to seek it out. The beginning of prosperity (also heralded by *The Ace of Disks*) comes with our ability to appreciate the richness already present in our lives. The proportions of our gratitude will determine the dimensions of our wealth.

#18 The Moon: She reaches to enfold us in her arms like a lover beckoning us to join her in a dance. Though her head is surrounded by prisms of light, there is something eerily macabre and ghostly in her allure. Wearing an old fashioned ball gown she hovers just above the waters of the unconscious, inviting us to swim the depths

beneath her radiance if we dare. *The Moon* invites us to explore our feelings, record our dreams for hidden messages, and unearth buried emotions. She represents the cyclical nature of life, wants to hear our tears and laughter, and has within her the power to drive men to madness. When she appears in the spread, take note: special attention is required. Go inside, spend meditative time and journey to other realms. It can be important to keep a dream journal at this time for this card can indicate the beginning of psychic unfoldment, especially within the realm of sleep.

#17 The Star: A young maiden stretches toward the sky as if awakening from a slumber. She is surrounded by a multitude of stars and her feet walk through a grassy field. Though she does not appear to notice, a large and magical flower, captured in a ray of light from the heavens, drifts along behind her. This card can indicate that it is time to count one's blessings. It signifies the protection of strong spiritual forces, that times of darkness and duress have fallen away to pave the way for a period of vitality, activity, and accomplishment. With *The Star* in the spread, the time is ripe to make the needed changes and reach for our goals. Get busy!

#9 The Hermit: A figure stands in a portal partially crossing the barrier between the inner world of the spirit and outer world of the physical realm. This man stands mostly inside the doorway. Beyond him is a dark and featureless void, yet he contains a glimpse of the beauty he has found within himself, his silhouette containing a sunny landscape. Though he depends not on things of this world, his hand stretches forth holding a lantern to illuminate our way, should we decide to follow him. The Hermit comes with a message that it is time to take some space from the daily routines in order to nurture and replenish one's soul—to visit a quiet and peaceful place removed from the crowds. He cautions us to keep a heart of gratefulness and not to rely too much on the pleasures of the material world for happiness. A time of personal growth and maturation is indicated by *The Hermit*.

#21 The Universe (traditionally called *The World*): A seated youth looks toward the heavens in an attitude of peace, fulfillment and joy. Below him a serpent curves toward the seat of his spine symbolizing the pure kundalini energy of life. Around him the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water are represented, and above him floats the lemniscate which in mathematics symbolizes infinity and in the tarot is used to depict cosmic consciousness. This card acknowledges an advanced soul, one who is free to go in any direction. Having learned karmic lessons they are now in a position to help others. *The*



Universe is a portent of completion and success in all undertakings.

#2 *The Priestess*: A strong and beautiful woman stands atop a crescent moon being lifted toward the heavens by a whirling pool of energy. She appears to be receiving a message of inspiration from above as she dances in celebration. Around her are prisms of light representing the proximity of another dimension. *The Priestess* invites us to own our power and magnificence for she rests complete in herself, needing nothing and no one. When she appears, the possession and guardianship of esoteric knowledge is indicated. A position of leadership may be required and the querant may be called upon to mentor others. Hers can be a solitary life for the breadth of her beauty and charge of her wisdom can create a boundary that sets her apart from the milieu. She may indicate a woman who remains happily single in life for it is a rare (though not unheard of) man who can hold and reflect the brilliance and authority of a Priestess.

#15 *The Devil*: A green satyr, sporting a red mohawk, nipple rings and purple horns dances through the forest. On his face is an expression of gleeful abandon. He leaps over strangely phallic shaped rocks and seems unaware of

the serpent that is entwined about his waist. With the arrival of *The Devil*, a time of celebratory revelry and indulgence is heralded. While these cycles of earthly pleasure are not in themselves negative influences, there is still caution inherent in *The Devil's* appearance for he can also signify alcoholism or other types of dependency. He invites us to examine our lives for areas of excess and unhealthy habits, to make the necessary adjustments lest our behavior lead us down a pathway of destruction.

While this concludes our current cast of unwitting characters, Postman's deck holds seventy-one more in store for those of you who wish to dabble in the mysteries therein. With these cards he has taken a solemn and timeless tradition and imbued it with an irreverent dash of counter-culture spice. Yet this is no frivolous accomplishment: among the other decks I have encountered, Postman's images stand unparalleled in their ability to tease the imagination and cast a glamour of enchantment for the reader. •

Carla Higdon, MAPS Director of Community Relations
carla@maps.org