❧The Antiquarian Lenormand❧

Extended Little White Book

Mademoiselle Marie Anne Adelaide LeNormand (1772-1843)

divination cards & text
❧Maree Bento❧

Some History About the Lenormand

To get a better idea of what the Lenormand cards are, let's explore first who she, Mademoiselle Lenormand, was.

Marie Anne Adelaide LeNormand (May 27, 1772- June 25, 1843) was born in Alençon, Normandy to cloth merchants. Marie Anne's childhood is unclear, but at about the age of five she was orphaned & sent to be schooled at various convents in the area. At the age of 14, she moved to Paris to live with her relative Madame Louise Gilbert, a fortune-teller that most likely was her teacher.[1] Mlle Lenormand had a long successful career as a diviner & eventually grew to become one of the most famous fortune-tellers of her time, if not all time.

Mlle Lenormand read with standard playing cards onto which she drew symbols & scribbled notes based on her knowledge of astrology & palmistry. This style of fortune telling is called *cartomancy.* She also used other forms of divination, like palmistry, crystals, coffee grounds & tarot— specifically the Etteilla tarot.

She wrote several memoirs later in her life that chronicled her extremely interesting experiences as a clairvoyant, especially during the Napoleonic era— including various times spent in jail for fortune telling. Details she recorded about her life are contradictory & vague. However, she documented her visits with some of the most renowned people in France during her lifetime. Among them were Jean Paul Marat, Louis Antoine de St. Just & Maximilien Robespierre, prominent figures of the French Revolution who were victims of the Reign of Terror— & whose deaths she said she forecasted. Mademoiselle Lenormand became most famous for counseling Josephine de Beauharnais. She foretold that Josephine would become the empress of France & one day marry "Hercules stifling the lion of the Nemean forest",[2] who would turn out to be Napoleon Bonaparte. She would continue to advise the Empress Josephine & ultimately forecast Napoleon's downfall & their eventual divorce. Napoleon, it seems, was not convinced by the "Black Maria's" predictions, as summed up in a quote by him, "Man has need of something wonderful. It is better for him to seek it in religion than in Mademoiselle Lenormand."[3]

There are two deck variations associated with Mlle Lenormand's name. One called the *grand jeu,* which has 54 cards, including an extra male & female querent card that may have resembled a prototype found in her things after her death. The other deck connected to Mlle Lenormand is called the *petit jeu.* The *petit jeu* only has 36 cards— the two through five of each suit are absent. Both decks have playing card inserts & illustrations symbolizing the meaning of each card.

The *Antiquarian Lenormand* is based on the *petit jeu,* which is the modern Lenormand. The petit Lenormand as we know it today was based on an earlier card game called the *Game of Hope* that was created in Germany by Johann Kaspar Hechtel, circa 1800. Instead of one playing card insert, this deck had two at the top— one was a French style, the other German, which accommodated various styles of play. The familiar Lenormand images we see today were the primary pictures. This pack could easily create a spur-of-the-moment board game by laying out the cards, 1–36, in six rows. Dice & tokens were used to move from one card to another. Interestingly, the directions that came with the deck also included instructions for a fortune-telling game that could be laid out in the same way as the traditional Grand Tableau spread. Some cartomancy historians are saying that the *petit jeu* was most likely not used by Mlle Lenormand herself— at least there is no written record of it. This deck was probably renamed for marketing purposes using the famous sibyl's name after her death. The petit Lenormand has since retained her namesake all of these years.

About the Antiquarian Lenormand

I set out to create this deck because I wanted to have a personal reading deck of my own design that had a hand-made antiqued aesthetic. My focus at first was the late 19th & early 20th centuries but I strayed from this at times. The images that I use are all in the public domain, found online & in antique stores. Each of the original cards are handmade 8.5" X 12" collages upon which I applied various techniques to create its distressed appearance. Some of the elements didn't need to be aged, like the missive from the schoolgirl in the Letter card & the circa 1890's playing card inserts themselves. It took seven to eight months to assemble the 36 cards. My objective with this project was to create a scrapbook collage of curious images (well, what would be curious in the 19th century) from one of my favorite eras. More specifically, I wanted it to have an *antiquarian* feel, with an attention to antique portraits & illustrated plates from old books.

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1 http://autorbis.net/marie-anne-adelaide-lenormand
2 Alexandre Dumas, *The Romances of Alexandre Dumas, Les Blancs et Les Bleus* (The Whites and the Blues) *Volume 2,* D'artagnan Edition, Little Brown and Co, 1894. Chapter 29, *Fortune-Telling,* p. 32. Read more about Josephine's first encounter with *la sibylle des salons* on my blog post, *Josephine Meets Mlle Lenormand,* at DivineMuses.net.
3 Barry Edward O'Meara Esquire (Napoleon's surgeon), *Napoleon in exile; or, A voice from St. Helena. The Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon on the Most Important Events on His Life and Government, In His Own Words,* 1822, page 444.

Card Meanings

1. Rider: 9 ♥ – news; movement; activity; new message, person or thing coming; transportation; an athletic man; an actual rider or horse.

A photograph of Man O' War at Saratoga Race Track in New York, 1920.

2. Clover: 6 ♦ – hope; good luck; opportunity; taking a chance; or literally grass or herbs.

A botanical plate of Red Clover from Wayside & Woodland, 1895. A real four leaf clover was added.

3. Ship: 10 ♠ – journey; travel; foreign country; exploration; commerce; long distance; overseas connection; anything nautical or ship related.

An illustration of a dirigible airship from a Science article that I found online, c. 1870s.

4. House: King ♥ – home; family; real estate; property; safety; sanctuary & stability. Can be a father (King ♥).

Architectural design plate of Willis Bristol's residence in New Haven, Conn. *Dwelling Houses,* 19th century.

5. Tree: 7 ♥ – health; growth; lineage; roots; family tree; karmic connection; the slow & steady passage of time; a really long time.

Big Tree, an illustration of a Giant Redwood— height 325 feet, circumference 100 feet. From *Discovery of the Yosemite: And the Indian War of 1851, which Led to that Event* by Lafayette Houghton Bunnell,M.D., p. 318, 1880. Can you see the people on the ground to the left of the Redwood?

6. Clouds: King ♣ – The dark side of the clouds is the negative side— it brings doubt, fear, confusion, depression or stormy/cloudy/hazy weather to the card on the right. The bright side of the clouds is positive— it brings clarity, hope, & good news, which improves the card to its left. Can be an ex (King ♣).

Dark Clouds public domain photograph by C.E. Price.

7. Snake: Queen ♣– a wise woman; a rival; jealousy; deception; lies; betrayal; problems; change of course; or literally something curvy like a snake— such as wiring, hoses, or pipes.

Photo of a snake charmer vaudeville performer, circa 1920.

8. Coffin: 9 ♦ – death; painful ending; loss; illness; emptiness. Can be an actual box.

The discovery of King Tutankhamen's sarcophagus by Archaeologist Howard Carter, 1922.

9. Flowers: Queen ♠ – generous gift; something beautiful; art; wish comes true; a surprise; an invitation; an abundance of love, beauty, pleasure & joy; a sweet & positive person; the Spring time; literally flowers.

Botanical plate of Anemone Chepaticas Anculosa from *Floral World & Garden Guide,* 1878.

10. Scythe: Jack ♦ – a cut, removal or harvest; something happening quickly & unexpectedly; danger, pain or anything sharp— such as words, tools, or weapons. Can be a sharp person (Jack ♦). Autumn time.

Roggenernte (Rye Harvest), photo by Abraham Pisarek, 1945, with permission by Deutsch Fotothek of the Saxon State Library (SLUB) via the Creative Commons License.

11. Whip: Jack ♣ – conflict; fight; discussion; repetitive pattern; rhythm; obsession; passion; addiction; something painful; punishment; abuse. Can be a passionate or combative person (Jack ♣).

Cat-o'-nine-tails public domain drawing by Pearson Scott Foresman.

12. **Birds: 7 ♦** – conversation; communication; interview; messages; phone call; nervous energy; any pair— siblings, friends, an older couple; can mean gossip depending on the surrounding cards; or simply birds.

Engraving plate of a woodpecker pair, by Silvia Striata from *Beitrage Zur Vogelkunde,* 1820.

13. **Child: Jack ♠** – innocent; naïve; young; a beginner; novice; student; child-like; youthful; something new; new beginning; anything small in size. Can literally be a child— someone's son or daughter.

The earliest known photograph of Albert Einstein— age of three, 1882.

14. **Fox: 9 ♣** – a trickster; clever; resourceful; something hidden; something false; a conman; a detective. In some methods— a small job, career, or income. Can literally represent a fox or small animal, like a cat.

A Swedish black fox, *Fauna Nordisk* from *Animal Illustrations of Scandinavian Fauna,* c. 1880s.

15. **Bear: 10 ♣** – strength; powerful person; the boss; manager; authority figure; protective; motherly; financial investment; a high level job, career, or income; diet, weight control. Can be a bear or large animal.

Ursa Major from *Uranographia,* a celestial catalog by Johannes Hevelius, 1690.

16. **Stars: 6 ♥** – the cosmos; metaphysics; hopes & wishes; guidance; clarity; intuition; imagination; networking; fame; reputation; talent; astrology; the evening; or the literal stars.

A star shaped compass rose from 1870s with vintage metal stars & cutout embellishments.

17. **Stork: Queen ♥** – moving; relocating; a birth/pregnancy (especially with the Child card); changes; promotion; new project; an improvement; someone w/long legs (stork). Could be a woman (Queen ♥).

An ornithology plate of an Indian stork from *Observations Made During a Voyage Around the World* by Johann Reinhold Forster, 1790.

18. **Dog: 10 ♥** – companionship; a loyal friend; trustworthy partner; reliable; dependable. A dog or other pet.

A late 19th century portrait of a well-behaved dog.

19. **Tower: 6 ♠** – rules; laws; legal offices; government, school, or hospital; structure & infrastructure; boundaries; walls; independence; solitude; loneliness or isolation; separation or divorce. A building.

Photograph during the construction of the Eiffel Tower, July 1888.

20. **Garden: 8 ♠** – a party, event or convention; meeting place; group; community; the public; any kind of socializing whether in person or online. Literally, a garden or park.

The Topiary Gardens at Levens Hall in Cumbria, England by Walter Fredrick Roofe Tyndale, 1886.

21. **Mountain: 8 ♣** – obstacle; challenge; a difficult uphill process; delay; A literal summit or mountain range.

Heights of the Principal Mountains in the World, a comparative chart from *Geographicus* by artist Samuel Augustus Mitchell, 1853.

22. **Crossroads/Path: Queen ♦** – choices; decisions; our path in life; a turning point; an alternative; a literal pathway or road. Can be an indecisive person or someone who crosses you on your path (Queen ♦).

Fork in a Country Road, 1904-1920, from a real photo postcard. Dated by stamp box mark on the back.

23. **Mice: 7 ♣** – theft; loss; deplete; decrease; damage; sickness; stress & worry; or literally pests.

Three Mice, by Harrison Weir in *The Home Book for Very Little People, Their Brothers and Sisters,*

Their Mothers and Teachers, published by Phillips & Hunt, New York, p. 28, 1887.

24. Heart: Jack ♥ – love; romance; sweetheart or even sweet friendships; compassion; the emotions; or the heart.

A cutting diagram of a heart, Librairie Delagrave Planche d'enseignement (Board of Education) Paris, c.1890s.

25. Ring: Ace ♣ – commitment; contract; bond; proposal; engagement; marriage; an actual ring or jewelry.

Antique diamond ring from a Victorian game found on the Graphics Fairy's blog.

26. Book: 10 ♦ – mystery; secrets; hidden knowledge; the occult; education; studies; writing; publishing; an actual book, diary, or deck of cards.

Illustration of the Domesday Book by William Andrews, from *Historic Byways and Highways of Old England,* 1900.

27. Letter: 7 ♠ – mail; email; text; documents; written correspondence or messages of any kind.

A letter from schoolgirl, Elizabeth Jane Elliott, to her friend/cousin, Rachel White. Dec. 19, 1850.

28. Gentleman: Ace ♥ – the male querent or someone of importance that is male.

Albert Einstein during a lecture in Vienna, 1921. Second Gentleman: Nikola Tesla aged 40, c. 1896.

29. Lady: Ace ♠ – the female querent or someone of importance that is female.

The Nobel Prize portrait of Madame Marie Curie (awarded in chemistry), 1911. Second Lady: Florence Nightingale, 1860.

30. Lily: King ♠ – peace; harmony; healing; purity; satisfaction; maturity; wisdom; an elder, usually male (King ♠); the Winter. Someone who is wise, has experience and probably grey hair.

Botanical plate of the White Asiatic Lily from *Addisonia: Colored Illustrations and Popular descriptions of Plants,* by the New York Botanical Garden, 1922.

31. Sun: Ace ♦ – great luck; joy; success; victory; optimism; enlightenment; energy; exposure; vitality; heat; warmth; daylight; the actual Sun; the Summer.

Engraving from the title page of *Dethermis Andrae Baccii Elpidiani, Vivis Romani* by Andrea Bacci, 1622.

32. Moon: 8 ♥ – honor; recognition; creativity; psychic abilities; intuition; dreams; fantasies; emotions; cycles; the shadows; the nighttime; the actual Moon.

Parital Eclipse of the Moon Plate VII observed on October 24, 1874 by Étienne Léopold Trouvelot from *The Trouvelot Astronomical Drawings,* 1881.

33. Key: 8 ♦ – the Yes card; answer; mystery solved; an idea; a new way in; opening doors; certainty; security; confidence; skills; talents; ability; an expert; triumph; destiny; a literal key.

A skeleton key from an antique card game for children, from the Graphic's Fairy.

34. Fish: King ♦ – money; abundance; wealth & success; luxury; commerce; an entrepreneur.

Fische der Sudsee Plate 128 from *Journal des Museum Godeffroy Heft XV,* 1873.

35. Anchor: 9 ♠ – security; stability; staying put; long-term success; perseverance in career; the work card.

36. Cross: 6 ♣ – burden; suffering; sacrifice; pain; martyr; the cross you bear; sickness & health; challenges; grief; guilt; depression; karma; fate; faith; religion; spirituality; beliefs.

Reading with Lenormand Cards

First, let me begin this section by saying that there are different systems & various ways to read the Lenormand. However, in general they are similar in how they are read semantically. Also, Lenormand is usually read in 3, 5, 9 or 36 card spreads or layouts. The 3 & 5 card spreads are laid out in a linear sequence, side-by-side. The 9-card spread is laid out 3 x 3. The spread that uses all 36 cards, known as the Grand Tableau, is laid down in four rows of nine cards (9 x 4) or four rows of eight cards, plus the four fate cards centered at the bottom (8 x 4 +4).

Lenormand cards are typically read by merging two (or more) card meanings together, which is different from reading a single oracle or tarot card alone. You may, of course, choose to read the individual card meanings, but blending the cards is how you use them in a reading. However, I do suggest studying the individual definitions & then devoting time to learning card combinations.

Examples of blended cards meanings:
Rider + Clover = lucky news/message
Fish + Mice = losing money
Birds + Scythe = hurtful gossip
Scythe + Heart = heart surgery
Ship + Stars = dream vacation

Beginner's Two-Card Blending Exercise
This exercise will get you acquainted with Lenormand card combinations. Shuffle the cards any way you prefer. Cut the deck or pick the top two cards & lay them out side-by-side & face up in front of you.

$$1 + 2$$

–the 1st card reflects the what or the subject (think noun).
–the 2nd card modifies or describes the first card (think adjective).

Let's look at the first example: Rider + Clover = lucky news/message. The Rider card is the subject and the Clover card changes the Rider's tone. The Rider by itself means *news, messages,* or *a visitor.* However, when you add the Clover's meaning, *hope, good luck* or *opportunity,* you see that the Rider is more than just any message or news coming your way; it's lucky news!

A Beginner's Reading Using a Three Card Spread
This reading lays out the cards left to right in a sequence. Shuffle the cards any way you prefer **with a specific query in mind**. Cut the deck or pick the top three cards & lay them out side-by-side & face up in front of you.

$$1 + 2 + 3$$

Read the cards by taking their basic meanings & merging them as you did in the Beginner's Two Card Blending Exercise above. Merge cards 1 + 2 to create a new meaning. Merge 2 + 3 to see what those cards are saying. Lastly blend the meanings of 1 + 3 to see how they are integrating.

You may also read this three-card layout like a sentence:
-the 1st card is the subject or theme
-the 2nd card modifies & describes the 1st
-the 3rd card is what happens as a result (the outcome). You may also use this card to further modify the subject.

For example, I drew:
1 Child + 2 Moon + 3 Garden

The 1st card, Child, is the subject or theme; it's about *a novice*. The 2nd card, the Moon, is making the novice *dreamy & creative*. The 3rd card, Garden, is the result & means they will be in *the public*. You can read this by blending: 1 Child + 2 Moon = a creative novice, & then read the 3rd card as what happens next. *The creative novice will be in the public eye*.

Be open to working with your intuition to *feel* for the correct meanings of the cards. Remember that the surrounding cards in any layout that you use always affect the card meanings.

A Past, Present, Future Reading using a Five Card Spread
In this reading you lay out five cards, left to right in a sequence. Shuffle the cards any way you prefer with a query in mind. Cut the deck or pick the top five cards & lay them out side-by-side & face up in front of you. Blend the meanings of 1+2 & 4+5.

$$1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5$$

-the 1+2 is the past
-the 3 is the present
-the 4+5 is the future

Another option with this five-card spread is to shuffle the cards in your hand with your question in mind. When you stop shuffling, turn the deck face up & begin looking for the card that best represents your question–this is the number 3 *present* card position. For example: if your question is about love, look for the Heart card. If your question is about money, look for the Fish card (see below for more examples). If your question is generally about you, look for the Gentleman or Lady cards. When you find the *present* card, take also the two cards that are in front of it & the two cards that are behind it. The two cards that were behind it are 1 + 2 (the past); the two cards that were in front of it are 4 + 5 (the future).

A Reading Using a Nine Card Spread
This is a wonderful layout because it gives you more detail than a three or five-card linear spread but it's less complex than the Grand Tableau. Pick a card to represent the question.

Examples: if your question is about...
...money, pick the Fish
...love/romance, pick the Heart
...marriage, pick the Ring
...your child, pick the Child
...a friend, pick the Dog
...success or fame, pick the Moon
...health, pick the Tree
...making decisions, pick the Crossroads
...traveling, pick the Ship
...moving, pick the Stork
...your home, pick the House
...your boss, pick the Bear

The card you choose is the *significator* card & will be the focal point of the reading. If it's a general reading for someone, pick either the Gentleman or Lady card to represent the querent. You may also randomly pick the significator anywhere from the deck.

Place your significator (S) card in the center. Shuffle & cut the cards any way you prefer. Then, lay the first three cards from the deck (1-3) in the top row, and then place the next two from the deck (4 & 6) on either side of the S and finally, position the last three cards (7-9) along the bottom to create the 3 x 3 spread.

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1   2   3
4   S   6
7   8   9
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The nine-card reading revolves around the central Significator (S) card. As usual, read the card combinations.

Begin by blending...

-The cross cards surrounding the Significator (4+6) & (2+8).
-The top & bottom two corners (1+3) & (7+9)
-Also read the opposite corners (1+9) & (3+7)

-Eventually, you may even try combining 3 cards. (e.g., Letter + Heart + Book = a secret love letter.)
-You may also read semantically (1+2+3), (4+5+6), (7+8+9) & (1+4+7), (2+5+8), (3+6+9) just like a 3 card spread!

You can use a timeline (past, present & future) to add more nuances to the reading.

1, 4, 7 – the past	or	1, 2, 3 – the past
2, 8 – the present		4, 6 – the present
3, 6, 9 – the future		7 ,8, 9 – the future

An Introduction to the Grand Tableau Spread

This is the queen of the Lenormand spreads. The Grand Tableau (GT) is quite involved using all 36 cards but is ideal for getting a comprehensive picture of a person's life. Be sure you're familiar with card combinations & the Nine Card Spread before exploring the GT because you will eventually use these methods to analyze your reading. Shuffle the cards any way you prefer & lay them all out in 4 Rows with 8 cards in each. The 4 remaining cards are centered beneath–these are called the fate or destiny cards. You may also use the 9 x 4 layout.

8 x 4 +4 GT	9 x 4 GT
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08	01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09
09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27
25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32	28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36
33 34 35 36 ‹= fate cards	

There are many ways to read the GT to get many details from your readings. It's best to first locate the querent's Significator (S) card (Lady or Gentleman) or the S card that best depicts the question. Then find the cards that surround the S & read this box like you would a 9 card spread. These are the immediate & most important cards concerning the querent or question. You can start looking outside of this box for influences that affect the S card & the surrounding cards. You may read cards in pairs, in 3 card spreads & even in 5 card spreads. You can use a timeline–everything to the left of the S is the past, everything to the right is the future, & all the cards in line with the S represents the present. You may read cards horizontally, vertically & diagonally. You may refer to the fate cards, which sometimes help to summarize the entire reading. The four corners, some say, can highlight the reading (01, 08, 25, 32 in the 8x4+4 or 01, 09, 28, 36 in the 9x4). *Have fun exploring all the possible combinations & patterns!* There are fantastic books available now that were not at the time of the first printing of my deck. I highly recommend Rana George's, *The Essential Lenormand, The Complete Lenormand Oracle Handbook,* by Caitlin Matthews, or *Lenormand Thirty-Six Cards* by Andy Boroveshengra.

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