



HERMIT'S MIRROR

Querent/Client: {Anonymous}
Type of Reading: Golden Dawn | Career

Dear {Anonymous},

I'm glad that I've gotten the chance to do this reading for you as there are some recurrent themes, and in this particular type of reading we get to dig a bit deeper into how some of those tendencies might play out in regards to your future career prospects.

As you well know by now, you will find a photo of the cards that I drew in response to your request for a career-related Golden Dawn reading. I've also listed the cards that I drew for each position in case you find it difficult to read their names from the image. After that is an overview of the spread since it's a little more complicated than a typical tarot spread. Then comes my interpretation of what the cards mean in terms of the basic context of the situation you described to me and that I know from our previous conversations and readings.

After you've had a chance to read through my interpretation, please let me know if you have any questions or if you need any explanation or clarification. I know you will. And I'll know you'll tell me what ideas in the reading resonate with you. The bigger question for me is what you plan to do with the information you read here.

I'll check back with you in a week to see how things have landed, and we can continue the conversation with a little three-card follow-up. I know this is just the start of some deeper digging.

Again, thank you for choosing this reading and to work with me on such an important part of your life, both on the surface and deeper down. We'll talk soon.

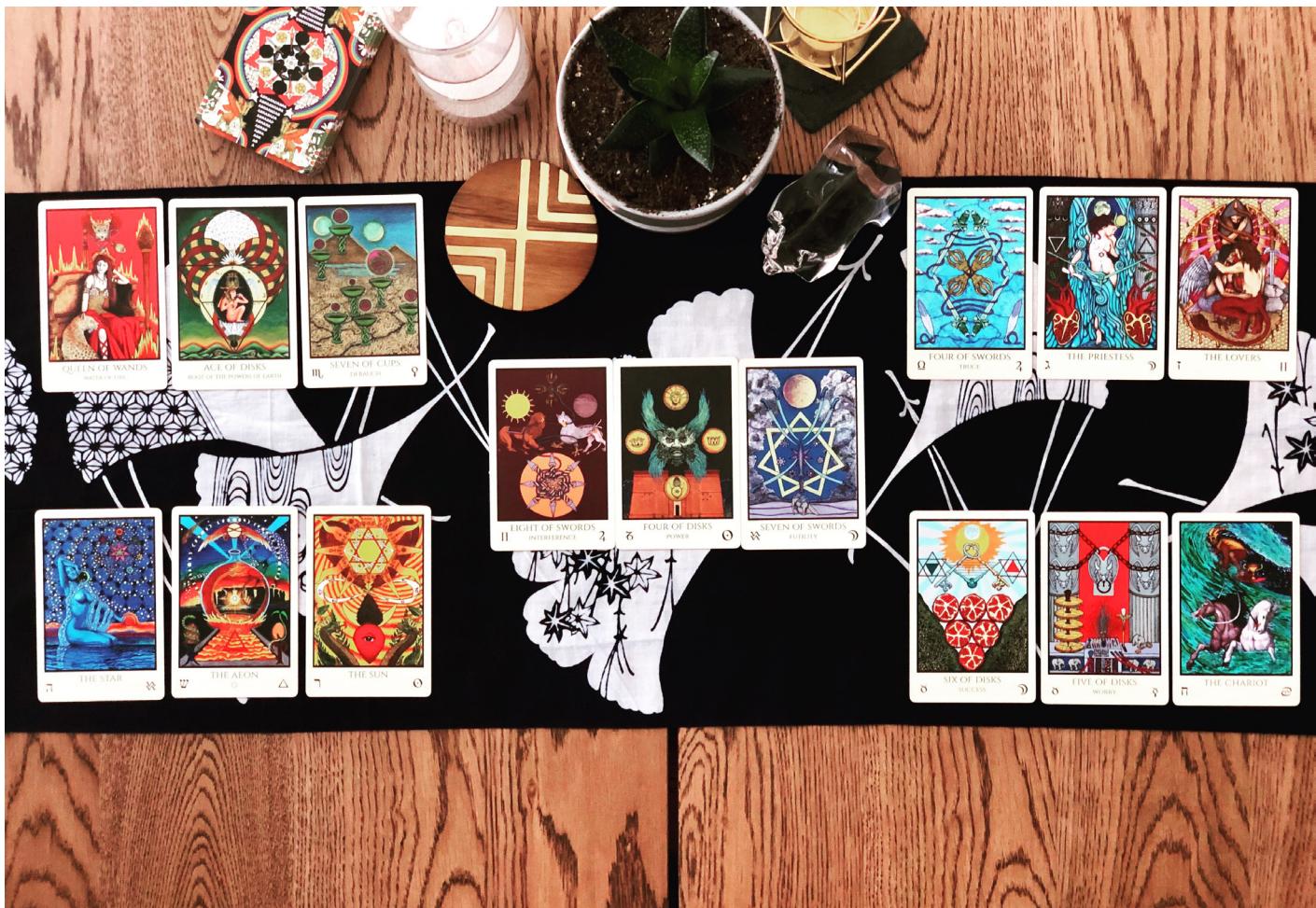
Cheers,

Thomas of the
Hermit's Mirror



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YOUR CARDS from the Tabula Mundi Tarot



Central Triad (Querent at Present)

8 of Swords | Interference – 4 of Disks | Power – 7 of Swords | Futility

Second Triad (Current Trajectory)

4 of Swords | Truce – The Priestess – The Lovers

Third Triad (Alternative Path)

Queen of Wands | Water of Fire – Ace of Disks – Seven of Cups | Debauch

Fourth Triad (Internal Factors)

The Star – The Aeon – The Sun

Fifth Triad (External Factors)

6 of Disks | Success – 5 of Disks | Worry – The Chariot



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STRUCTURE OF THE SPREAD

The Golden Dawn spread comprises five triads of cards: each represents a different aspect of the reading, and each has a central main card that is influenced by its neighboring cards. This neighboring influence is primarily a mechanical effect (“dignity”) based on the cards’ element(s), either enhancing the importance and power of the card’s message or diminishing it (or in the case of court cards, altering it). However, I also consider the specifics of those neighboring cards, even though they’re not the main card to be interpreted. Those other cards are still there, after all, so I consider what specifics they can bring to the table beyond just their element. It may be just a visual clue to understanding the main card, but it can be more involved; it’s based on intuition.

The order for dealing the cards and the spread itself spiral outwards, so it begins with the central triad, which represents the querent and their present situation. The next triad is the current trajectory of events in the top right, followed by the third triad in the top left. This third triad can represent one of two things, either the development of the situation in the second triad or an alternative path. I find it hard to determine when the third triad should be read as a continued development rather than an alternative, so I typically set the intention while shuffling. In this case, I set the intention as an alternative path. The fourth triad is in the bottom left, and that represents internal factors, such as psychological pre-dispositions, while the final triad, the bottom right, represents external factors, such as karmic influences or other events outside of the querent’s control.

YOUR READING

Looking at the five triads and the layout as a whole, it seems clear from this reading that there is significant weight placed on the internal factors: the fourth triad is all major arcana. Furthermore, in the system of elemental dignity used by the Golden Dawn, the central card of the fourth triad, the Aeon, is a fire card (the card of elemental fire actually) and thus greatly enhanced (well dignified) by its neighbors, which are air and fire cards (the Star and the Sun, respectively). You’ll note that the fifth triad also shows a central card that is also well dignified by its neighbors, but two of those cards are minor arcana. That triad will also be quite important given the minor arcana involved, but it is trumped by the major arcana in the fourth triad.

For that reason, I will start by explaining the present situation and your current trajectory before turning to the internal factors that are at play. I will then turn to the external factors since that main card is also well dignified (not necessarily a good thing with a challenging card such as the Five of Disks). And only after exploring that will I turn to the alternative path. Normally I would go in the same order as I dealt the cards, with the third triad third, but it’s quite different from the other triads, a true alternative, as it were. I’ve organized the rest of this interpretation by individual triads, but they interact, so the divisions should be taken as a shift in focus and convenient place to take a break in reading, rather than clear delineations of distinct ideas.

There’s a central theme to this whole reading, and it makes me ask one main question of you: What do you think is your relationship to the archetypal struggle between change and stasis? It’s a question you should ask yourself as you read through the individual triads and consider those messages in light of this fundamental question.



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YOUR READING (continued)

Central Triad (Querent at Present)

With your current career and side hustles and your aspirations for what could emerge from them, there seems to be a fundamental tension between a desire for stability—security and steady building of authority and power—and a desire for intellectual expansion and freedom to constantly shift. These are uneasy partners. The airy intellectual desires, as seen in the Eight and Seven of Swords, erode the sturdy foundation of the Four of Disks that you seem to want (or want to want), as surely as wind can chip away at a mountain. That doesn't mean that you can't form a strong foundation with your current direction, but you need to accept that the further out you expand, the less sure your defenses will be because you have to put resources into shoring up greater and greater tracts of your dominion. Yes, over time, you can slowly build those up, devoting lots of time and energy and resources, but before that happens, you may be leaving yourself vulnerable, and you're certainly limiting the ability to build upward or dig deeper: it's the familiar struggle between developing broadly and developing deeply.

Given what I already know about you, there's a tendency to build ever outward, rather than focusing on a small slice of perfection. There's nothing wrong with that. In fact, it's wonderful that you're able to continue stretching outward: not everyone has the resources or talents to do it, and you have reason to be grateful about this "good" problem of yours. But this inner conflict does raise some important questions. Do you truly even want stability? Or do you simply think that you're supposed to want it? There's a surprising difference between the two, and the presence of the two Swords on either side of that central card (and Swords elsewhere) suggests an internal, mental conflict about the whole situation. With the Seven of Swords as a card showing the failure to plan for all contingencies and the Eight of Swords as an expansion of options (Jupiter in Gemini), there are simply too many variables at play to really find that sturdy base as hoped for with the Four of Disks.

Thinking back to the range of desirable outcomes you suggested for an ideal job, we can see a challenging list of potentially contradictory aspects. You can certainly strive for all of them, but it's worth recognizing that some are quite hard to marry together, and you may want to prioritize them for now. What's more important: the ability to work remotely and travel or the ability to put more money into your savings? What's more important: the status and power that comes with reaching the next rung on the corporate ladder or having sufficient free time to regularly pursue hobbies and side hustles? What are you willing to give up in order to have what you really want? You may not have to give it up, but you need to be prepared to make that decision when the time comes.

Second Triad (Current Trajectory)

Looking to the future, we can see that your current path is actually leading to a point of balance and inner peace and deeper meaning, where you are able to make the combination work and stay on top of things, but there's no clear sense that you've taken your career to the next level or that you're any more satisfied with it than you currently are. It's probably more likely that you've turned inward and found balance and peace with the other aspects of your life, such as in your tarot practice or coaching. The ability of water to adapt to its container pairs with the intuitive powers and secret study of the Priestess helps me see a future where you go with the flow and make the most out of your situation in which you balance your public pursuits (career) and your private pursuits (hobbies and other opportunities). As with the present circumstances, the main card (the Priestess) is surrounded by airy cards, but these are able to complement the Priestess's watery nature and blend reason with emotion.



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YOUR READING (continued)

All in all, this future would satisfy most people. The Priestess is a card of fluctuation and consistent cycles, and without fire to burn away her power, this is a positive outcome. And with the Four of Swords showing the stability of one's mind and the Lovers suggesting the merging of two contrasting ideas, there's the definite ability to find a proper status quo and build slowly toward what you want to achieve. But what complicates this is the deeper meanings of the two Swords cards. The Four of Swords is called Truce, but it requires the war to be put on temporary hold. There is no decisive victor with a truce, and as we'll see in the cards tied to your psychological factors, that may not be a solution that sits well with you, even if it is objectively a decent outcome. Similarly, the Lovers is not just a card of merging but of separating as well. The swords show that union requires the initial separation of two things, and while they may be united "as one," they are still two distinct things. They marry, but they do not lose their distinctive qualities. As we see in the Priestess, we have opposing elements (fire and water, sun and moon) that the Priestess balances for greater strength, but they remain as two separate pillars.

This continuation of the present situation where things are in a bit of constant flux is reaffirmed by the relationship between the astrological aspects of the two triads. The present situation shows the Four of Disks, the Sun in Capricorn, surrounded by Jupiter in Gemini (Eight of Swords) and the Moon in Aquarius (Seven of Swords). As I mentioned at the outset, these airy aspects provide you with internal, mental conflict, and those astrological aspects remain in the future: We still have the Moon (the Priestess), Gemini (the Lovers), and Jupiter (this time in Libra thanks to the Four of Swords). And if we look to your psychological factors, we can see the Sun (in the Sun) and Aquarius (in the Star) as major influences. Since your psychological factors trio has all major arcana, it's hardly surprising that it would have the biggest influence on this situation. But then with those astrological aspects showing up as part of the conflict in your present situation, it really doubles-down that high-level impression that your internal psychology plays a primary influence.

Fourth Triad (Internal/Psychological Factors)

Shifting into the fourth triad, I'll focus on the psychological or internal factors that are influencing this current situation. As I mentioned at the outset, it's quite a powerful trio of cards, all majors and all strengthening each other through elemental dignity. The central card here, the Aeon, is the main card for this aspect of your situation, and it helps make sense of this desire for some definitive outcome despite wide-ranging and potentially contradictory desires. The Aeon is the card of elemental fire and spirit, and it's a sign that there's something powerful burning within you, which can be quite motivating. It's also a card of clear decision-making and revelation, of needing to (or wanting to) make a major decision that could reshape you who are. You seem to want significant change, which is why you may be conflicted about the seemingly good outcome represented by the balanced Priestess. The Aeon is a card that I've seen for you in terms of career and potential before, and I know that it excites you—as a card of spiritual awakening and true vocation, it represents all the passion in the world that you seek—so I think we both know why it so enhanced in this spread. It is then greatly influenced by the Star, a sign of hope but also of navigating in the dark, and the Sun, a sign of complete and honest self-expression. It's hard to imagine cards that better blend to become the Aeon than the Star and the Sun: star-spectacled woman, serpents, eggs, a bed of fire, a lemniscate, and the sun, moon, and stars all appear on the Aeon and one of the other two majors. There's something internal that feels contained like the ouroboros in the alchemical retort, just waiting to explode outward.



YOUR READING (continued)

Of course, if you don't feel as though your current career and its balance with other opportunities is not your true calling, it makes sense that you would feel conflicted about even a relatively successful and stable situation in your present situation. Those Swords in the central triad are a sign of the psychological factors that can't be set aside, even as you rationalize the objectively good position (from an outside perspective) in which you find yourself. Do you feel bad about not being content with having a satisfactory situation? Although it's early in the evolution of Disks, the Four is the final decan of Capricorn—king of status—and thus quite relevant to your natal chart, so why do you think you are conflicted about being in that position? Do you want greater status and more wealth? What would that look like? You have stability and you can build success from that, but if it doesn't provide you with the passion you seek, then you will continue looking elsewhere. In comparison to the Aeon, the Four of Disks can seem a petty, mundane form of success and power, even if it is the culmination of Capricornian ambition. You don't have to apologize for a desire to expand and discover new passions. You may always keep seeking, even if you find your next passion. Accepting that could help put your mind at ease as you ask the fundamental question that returns again and again: is there something you would rather be doing?

That last line provides a great segue to look at what else you could start doing, but the fifth triad is too well-dignified (in terms of importance) not to address it next. Then, with all the pieces of the current puzzle in place, we can turn to what you may find along an alternative path.

Fifth Triad (External/Karmic Factors)

The fifth triad centers around the Five of Disks, also called Worry, and it is enhanced in terms of importance by the earthiness of the Six of Disks and the water of the Chariot. This enhancement and status as "well-dignified" means that it is made stronger, not better, so with a card that can be read as negative, such as the Five of Disks, it's important to heed the card's warnings without feeling despondent about it, especially when it's our focus for external or karmic factors. Since the Five and Six of Disks are decanic minors of Taurus, and you're a Taurus, it would be easy to assume that this triad shows a primary karmic influence from astrology. While that fits with the central card (also a Disk that's part of your natal chart), it could be more than that. Perhaps there are familial or domestic reasons you worry about finances despite seeming to be in a stable position. If you've always been the primary income or you've always been the one in your family who's responsible with money, then taking risks where finances are concerned might seem totally out of the question for you. There could even be some illness (already known) or a sick relative that requires you to be more cautious than your suppressed inner passions would prefer. The Five could represent any of these sorts of external factors holding you back, but, let's be honest, the astrological associations built into this deck and the cards we have here make it hard to ignore.

This deck's Five of Disks shows a broken turntable sabotaged by the symbol for Mercury while the Magician who presided over the table has flown off to do something else. Given the presence of cards related to Gemini (ruled by Mercury) in the first two triads, there's a way to see this card's conflicted energy as driven by mental anxiety about your physical needs: it's the fear that you'll never feel secure or have enough, so you take the conservative route and play it safe. Or perhaps you fear that you'll fall sick or grow old and feeble before you're ready, so you try to do everything in order to fit as much into this lifetime as you can. Do you often find yourself worrying about finances or your health? Are you dissatisfied with the money you make or the physical toll that your work takes on you? Because we have Mercury here, there could also be a restlessness in direct contrast to the nature of the Bull, and



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YOUR READING (continued)

in that version of the card, the material “worry” is less a worry over finances than it is a worry over the permanence of your current position as exemplified by the image of a fortress, which here becomes a gilded cage. Given the tension between security and expansion elsewhere in this reading, it’s possible to want and fear both that security and that expansion. In this card, the Magician has willingly left his DJ booth, after all. What is he hoping to find? Did he leave because the station was broken, or did he sabotage it himself with his own symbol?

As an aside, your karmic/external factors seem to have strong ties to your personal psychology, much as your psychological factors seem determined by the big karmic lessons represented in the major arcana. I don’t know how important that is in any generic sense—after all, if your karmic lessons didn’t have a psychological effect on you, how would you ever know they were there?—but it certainly fits with this reading’s theme of confusion (or conflict) between inner and outer goals. (I blame Mercury.)

The card’s imagery of winged bulls, while tied to the Prince of Disks, actually reminds me of the Devil card since the bulls are horned and shackled before a red backdrop. The card also recalls the Priestess with her two columns. On the surface, the two archetypes (Devil and Priestess) seem quite different, but they are both symbols of divinity outside of the mainstream. They both derive their power from unsanctioned or unconventional means in contrast to the Hierophant and, to a lesser extent, the Magician, the major arcana on which the 5 of Disks actually draws as the decan of Mercury in Taurus. It reminds me that the “worry” of this card stems from an insecurity about one’s standing outside of a comfortable middle position. This card of Worry could result from your fear of stepping outside the boundaries of normal everyday life (the fortress of the Four of Disks) as much as about falling short of actual need. That fear might be built into you by no choice of your own. If we stick with the astrological factors, you might find that there are a number of karmic lesson features tied to earthy signs or houses in your chart (beyond your sun sign in Taurus), but that’s something you would have to explore with a professional astrologer, not in this one tarot reading.

Since there’s more to life than astrology, it may also help if you can start to identify areas of your life that feel outside of your control and determine whether any of those could be affecting how you feel about your career and its future potential. Examples of relevant areas outside of your control could include your partner’s expectations, any obligations you have to your family or dependents, and even something as remote as the current sociopolitical environment if you worry about, say, another recession. You might think that you can chalk up these fears to being a human with basic survival needs, but unless you’re literally struggling to make ends meet, then you probably have the need for security covered, at least in terms of Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs.” And that rush to claim basic survival needs is your first opportunity to unpack some of your fears about “surviving.” The crux of this card seems to be the persistent impression of material instability, regardless of the reality. If some external factor makes you think that what you have or how you exist in the material world is insufficient, then that (or they) could be a major influence here. (But, seriously, you should also consider what’s going on with that natal chart of yours: there are solutions there, not just problems.)

Third Triad (Alternative Path)

Now that you have a better understanding as to where you are now, where you’re headed, and why, it’s time to consider the alternative path. In any moment, we have countless options for ways to act that



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YOUR READING (continued)

may shift everything in our lives or nothing, but realistically speaking, this spread can really only look at one, one that is likely to have a big impact on the way your future unfolds. In this case, that triad centers on the Ace of Disks, a card of new creation and the seed of growth. It's warmed by fire on one side with the Queen of Wands and watered on the other by the Seven of Cups, so the two elements cancel each other out for no special importance, leaving the Ace as what it is, a promising start with no guarantee of follow-through or development. Let me be clear here: the Aces are all gifts from the universe, and seeing the Ace of Disks here in a career reading is very exciting. But the Ace is just the promise of the start, so where things go from there, whether back to the Four or the Five or out to the later Disks, is up to you and whatever the future holds.

As for what that alternative path could be, I get the sense of creative works and limitless dreams, the sort of passion projects that so many people say they want to do but which most people do not dare actually start. The Ace of Disks is a seed of potential, the birth of a birth, and that birth could be seen a "child of the mind" as readily as a concrete thing. Perhaps it's a novel or a series of paintings that requires more attention than you can give in your spare time, or it could be the start of (or increased investment in) your own business. Paired with the creative, passionate, and magical Queen of Wands and the dreamy, intoxicating Seven of Cups, I see this as something outside of mundane reality, so if it's a business, it's probably not one that makes immediate, stable financial sense. To really make the most of that Aeon and not fight against that Five of Disks, it's probably something that fulfills your spiritually and creatively rather than financially. Remember that it's in contrast to the Four of Disks, which is the pinnacle of realistic, mundane achievements. Thanks to the aid of the charismatic Queen, this path of the Ace can also be seen as a contrast to the Priestess with her world of secrets. There's something exciting and daring about this alternative path, but it holds none of the security of the current path.

I should caution you that it's also possible that the Ace represents the ever-present new start, the next thing on the horizon as you continue to seek out new opportunities and career adventures. Is it possible to explore the Ace without committing fully to it? Is doing so falling into the trap of seeking both stability and expansion without fully achieving either? The Seven of Cups provides support for this inability to stick to one course for long, always looking for new options. While this is a card of Cups, there's a sphere, or disk, floating above every single one. And there's something serpentine about the chalice stems that parallels the weird reptilian face emerging from the ground just beneath the giant disk in the Ace. There's the potential for wisdom, but there's also the potential to be bitten or even swallowed whole by new opportunities. The Ace of Disks and the symbols on this card create a wormhole that may signal the continuous search for options that prevents the true start of anything: everything remains that seed of potential.

Final Thoughts

Still, if you have specific limited options that you're already considering and want to think through them because that fire of new rebirth burns inside you, I have some guidance from the Threads of Fate. It's not pictured here because it's something to reflect on rather than part of the Golden Dawn spread tarot reading, but I drew the Revolutionary. The Revolutionary is an archetype that is willing to boldly go ahead where others dare not. It's not an easy road, and not everyone (or even most people) are likely to understand the choices the Revolutionary makes. Is the Revolutionary's path one that scares you or excites you? If both, does one outweigh the other? Don't decide now, but instead think about whether



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YOUR READING *(continued)*

you want to take the path of the Revolutionary as an alternative to your current path. Its fire would work well with the fire of the Aeon so powerfully present in your psychology. It might also get you out of the current stagnation you seem to be feeling in a more traditional path. Just remember that your next choice may not satisfy that inner fire of the Aeon for long, so you could very well continue to search for new options again and again.

If you're unwilling to settle for the path of the Four of Disks and you feel an inexplicable pull to abandon your current station, as in the Five of Disks, try to keep your eye on your spiritual evolution rather than just rebirth. We've seen the Prince of Wands—the phoenix—together before, and with the factors you have in play here, it could be very easy for you to just change for the sake of changing. You will often find some satisfaction if you do, but it is unlikely to last long because it's just another "fix" of transformation. When you feel antsy and prompted to make a drastic shift, really interrogate what you're feeling and ask yourself whether your proposed solutions will really address that burning Aeon inside. Changing from one job to another similar job, or moving from one city to another similar environment are unlikely to bring the true changes you want. Reflect, as the Priestess would, and act with the wisdom you have acquired over all these years.



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