



Joy Vernon, CPTR

Denver, Colorado ☺ 303-564-0022 ☺ Joy@JoyVernon.com



On My Way to the East: The Star in the Tarot

Day of the Week _____ Date _____ Time _____

Moon Phase _____ Deck _____ Spread On My Way to the East

Question: _____

“The Japanese term for birth is U-MU, consisting of the kototama U, ‘Being’ and MU, ‘Nothingness.’ That is, life springs forth when Form and Emptiness are in perfect balance.”

— Morihei Ueshiba, Aikido Founder



4
Hermit
Descend-
ing alone

7
Temperance
Perfect
Balance

	1 Devil Duality	
2 Inanna Form		3 Ereshkigal Emptiness
5 Relation- ship btw Inanna & Ereshkigal		

8
Star
New Life
that Springs
Forth

6
Tower
Divine assis-
tance: water
of life and
food of life

On My Way to the East: Tarot Spread Instructions

For this spread, all cards are randomly drawn.

Card 1: Devil, Duality. In Joseph Campbell's monomyth, the chapter that corresponds to the Devil card is the Ultimate Boon, which represents the incorruptible body and the possibility of immortality. The duality expressed by the Devil is the mistaken conflation of the ephemeral god with the abiding grace of the imperishable miraculous energy-substance. For us, it is the mistake of choosing the temporal, immortality, rather than the eternal gift, illumination. In the story of Inanna, she descends to the underworld to attend the funeral of Erishkigal's husband, but doesn't realize how she will be received by her sister.

This position is why you are embarking on this journey--it is the wrong reason, but you do not see that it is wrong.

Card 2: Inanna, Form. Inanna is the Queen of Heaven, the planet Venus, the evening star of love and the morning star of war. Her descent is the transition from one to the other, during her temporary absence from the sky when she is overpowered by the sun. In the story, Inanna's form changes, from lover to warrior.

This position asks us, what form do I take, what am I presenting to the world?

Card 3: Ereshkigal, Emptiness. Ereshkigal is Inanna's sister, the Queen of the Underworld, also in some ways the blinding sun that blots out Venus from view periodically. Ereshkigal just lost her husband. She is cruel and dominating to Inanna, who visits to attend the funeral. She pronounces a death sentence on Inanna. Later, she is "moaning with the cries of a woman about to give birth" right before Inanna is rescued.

This position is emptiness, what you have lost, or what cancels you out.

Card 4: Hermit, Descending alone. In Joseph Campbell, the Hermit is The Belly of the Whale, in which the hero is swallowed and appears to have died, a symbol of rebirth from the world womb. Destroying the sense of self or attachment to ego through such devices as being swallowed by the beast or being dismembered and scattered, requires "self" to be replaced with unity with the Divine, "for his passing and returning demonstrate that through all the contraries of phenomenality the Uncreate-Imperishable remains, and there is nothing to fear." In the story, Inanna takes this journey alone, without her servant, sons, husband, or any help.

This position gives you insight into what part of this journey is yours alone to achieve, what you must do without help.

Card 5: Relationship between Inanna and Ereshkigal. Inanna enters Ereshkigal's throne room naked and bowed low, and then is killed by her sister. We see from the quote that life springs forth when form and emptiness are in perfect balance--but this balance is not always present. What is the relationship, or the degree of balance, between Inanna/Form and Ereshkigal/Emptiness, or between your own form/understanding of yourself on this journey and that which cancels you out?

This position gives us clues as to which may be stronger: the form you are presenting or the forces that are trying to eclipse you.

Card 6: Tower, Divine assistance in the form of water of life and food of life. Joseph Campbell calls this the refusal of the return. It is the identification with the self rather than the realization that the return can renew the whole community. When Inanna doesn't come back by the appointed time, her faithful servant Ninshubur goes looking for help. Father Enki, the God of Wisdom, is greatly grieved that Inanna has not returned, and forms two beings of clay to enter the underworld and bring the water of life and the food of life to Inanna's corpse to release her. Although the Tower card is normally associated with destruction, when the hero of the story is already dead, the Tower can represent the electric jolt of resurrection--like a defibrillator, or, more cosmically, like the electric spark that triggers the beginning of life in the primordial ooze.

This position tells you where help will come from, or what you need—or why you need—to continue your journey.

Card 7: Temperance: Perfect balance. In Campbell, Apotheosis. This is one of the four initiations and means being deified or immortalized. It is the recognition of unity with the Divine and within all things; the union of all opposites; this unity with the Divine is the rebirth resulting from the death and dismemberment of the Belly of the Whale. The symbolism of pouring liquid from one cup to another, as illustrated in the Temperance card, is a metaphor for reincarnation: the translation of the soul from one body to the next. The resurrected Inanna is forbidden from ascending from the underworld unless she can provide someone to take her place. Inanna offers her husband Dumuzi to take her place because he did not go into mourning for her while she was gone.

This position indicates the unique and eternal quality that will pervade this and every journey you embark upon.

Card 8: Star: New life that springs forth. In the Hero's Journey, the Magic Flight, symbolic of return from beyond the veil of death. "If the monomyth is to fulfill its promise, not human failure or superhuman success but human success is what we shall have to be shown. That is the problem of the crisis of the threshold of the return." Although this is the end of the story of Inanna's descent, it is not the end of the story--Dumuzi escapes the demons from the underworld. Meanwhile, Inanna and his little sister Geshtinanna weep bitterly and search everywhere for him as he flees from the pursuing demons. Eventually Inanna and his sister find him. Geshtinanna agrees to split the time in the underworld with her brother--Dumuzi will be there half the year, and she will take the other half the year.

This is the final outcome position, the new situation, now free from the veil of failure, that is brought about as a result of your successful negotiation of the events of this journey.