

Becoming Hummingbird

Charting Your Life Journey the Shaman's Way

Jane Galer



The Lovers

The Card

The Lovers falls in the placement of card 6 in the Major Arcana. It is a card of beginnings, connections, value beyond simple material gain. Love is promise. Love is blind. Love is union, the union of male and female but also of passion and compassion. Passion and Compassion: inner desire and its worldly counterpart. Both words have as their root the late Latin word for suffering. In the word compassion, suffering becomes sympathy because it is our recognition of the state of suffering in someone else. When we think of the word *passion* we conjure up rapid heart rates, exploring the limits of our ability to feel and communicate extremes. But what do you think about when you hear the word *compassion*? Gentleness? Kindness, tolerance, restraint of passion, even? There's an element of something else as well, isn't there? I'm compassionate because *I* know better and I can be forgiving this time, or in the Buddhist way, I am compassionate in the face of provocation because I have attained a higher level of knowledge.

The Lovers tarot card is the first moment in the tarot Hero's journey that he is being asked to turn his self-loving quest outward, he is being advised that love brings compassion, because compassion is a higher goal. Love is out of our control, it is blind, accidental, but it brings

us the taste, the opportunity for transformation. Physical love shows us the power inherent in love with a capital L.

The Lovers card often depicts four figures: two women, one man, and cupid. Some later cards show Adam and Eve, an angel/cupid, and a snake. In the cards with two women the question is: will you choose Sensuality or Virtue? In other words, will you remain at the level of your own inward drawn base nature, satisfying sexual desire but not looking for connection, or will you move from passion to compassion? This movement to compassion is the unity of the opposites: of the feminine and the masculine in balance. The male and female together are offered Choice. At last! A chance to be in control of Fate! On the surface, The Lovers implies our heart's desire: love. But the extended opportunity is the integration of our masculine and feminine natures, reunite them in order to have the choice to decide for ourselves how to love. Compassion is the manifestation of that choice.

Astrologically, The Lovers is understandably ruled by Gemini, the twins, the masculine and the feminine. They work together to challenge our decision-making abilities, and rightly so. Decisions about love should not be made lightly. We can also gain from Gemini the insight that there is an inner world and an outer world of love. The indiscriminate nature of Cupid and her effect on our inner, personal world of love shakes us to our core. We can overcome that instability with, the card says, stability, perhaps marriage, with choice. In the outer world manifestation, compassion, the Gemini nature of the card, allows us to be flexible and work in both the feminine and the masculine worlds. The card is about relationship, your personal one and the relationship between you and the universe, and whether you rely on Fate to bring love to your world, or whether you make love a conscious choice.

The Jungian Prostitute

Aristophanes, discoursing in Plato's *Symposium*, tells the story of how man and women were first created. In the beginning, he says, humans were tri-sexual and self contained; the male part came from the Sun, the female came from the Earth, while the third, and completing component, came from the Moon and contained both male and female. Being so complete these creatures became prideful and challenged the gods authority over them. Zeus, angered by their overreaching behavior, pondered what to do — kill them with lightning, banish them? These options, though tempting to a God so volatile seemed contrary to his pur-

poses. In the end, Zeus decided to sever the human form as it was then into two parts and with some basic body adjustments, tying them off at the navel and moving their genitals into better placement. Zeus was satisfied that he had reduced the human to his proper state. From that time forward, men and women would forever and ultimately be seeking their other half, seeking completion. As a result, Love reigns supreme. There is nothing we would not do for Love, no way to stop ourselves searching for the perfect other half. It is in our DNA to search for it, long for it, abandon our “self” for it.

Along the way, the gods allowed us a Fate, usually known as Cupid, whose capricious intervention can create Love where none was before, no matter what we might do ourselves. (The lifeblood of the romance novel, right?) This idea that we have no control over the very thing we most desire is unsettling, isn't it? Yet it seems to be true. Those of us who have experienced love at first sight can attest to the lightning bolt accidental nature of love. There's something about this emotion that is uncontrollable. You cannot manifest it, you cannot call it forth. It doesn't seem fair, does it? The most important aspect of our human countenance is something that Tinkerbell can sprinkle over us, but we can't manifest out of our own desire. Not romantic love anyway, not the partnering kind of relationship love. But perhaps there is a love we can call up.

Our prostitute shadow archetype wants to trade for love, right? We learned to do this back in elementary school, trying to make and keep friends. I'll give you part of my sandwich if you'll play with me this afternoon. Notice me, mark me as special because of your favor. How far were you willing to go for that childish period of grace? Were you willing to dishonor someone else? Children are vicious at the game of love, perfect little prostitutes tasting power for the first time within the circle of their peers.

As adults, we often find ourselves manifesting the Prostitute archetype within relationships in order to get what we want. Sacrificing one part of ourselves for something we value more highly. Sometimes this is perfectly all right. It's how we determine roles and obligations that make society, whether in the larger frame of community or in our own marriages or relationships, run smoothly. When the Prostitute really runs afoul is when it is all too often a part of survival, literally selling one's body to survive.

Think back to your childhood. Can you think of an instance where you called up your Prostitute in order to gain attention? Can you

recall a time where your Prostitute's success depended upon the downfall of one of your peers? This is maybe the only good use of a class reunion. Next time you have a chance to attend, go! Find that person you singled out to suffer, and apologize.

Now think about today. Where in your life do you have absolutely no choice but to act from the basis of Prostitute? Can you feel the link between this archetype and your third chakra? Each time you call upon the shadow Prostitute archetype you diminish your self esteem. You can feel your gut clench, can't you? If you have any choice at all, you should ignore the option, but there are truly times for some of us when there is no choice. Think about the word *self-effacing*. Sometimes in our lives we are required to be self-effacing in order to blend in, to attract positive attention. But when does this word take on the mantle of Prostitute? When in your life have you adopted a self-effacing stance when you didn't really feel that way inside? Deconstruct the word, *self effacing*, do you notice how your definition can go from *modest* or *humble* to erasing one's face?

If The Lovers card is ultimately about relationships, about your relationship to the universe, can you now look at your path and see where you have chosen wisely and where you have faltered? Are there moments when, in retrospect, you have stepped off the path in order to satisfy desire? Or where you might be seen to have been walking the path backwards? Blindfolded? Blinded by Cupid? Where along the path have you fallen into the curse of Narcissus? Another form of love, completely self involved. If you begin to live from the base of loving all things, from compassion, how many compromise agreements that you made from your shadow Prostitute will disintegrate? I'm wondering if Cupid is blindfolded because his grace will not fall upon us until we are no longer searching. Give up the search, live from the core of your heart with compassion to all creatures, all life, all universe, and in the moment of your forgetting, love will come.

Exercise:

Draw your own version of The Lovers tarot card. By now I hope you're really into this, and extending the process to include drawing other important cards for yourself. Place the images of the lovers in a context relevant for you. How will you depict the concept of choice? Of randomness? What does compassion look like?

The Sensual and the Spiritual

We want to be awake, fully awake. Rumi tells us, “Love has come to rule and transform, stay awake, my heart, stay awake.” This is the transformative nature of love. Of course, Rumi is talking about the kind of love we are working toward, the love of the greater, of the magnificent, of the universal. The linking into *One* kind of love. When we achieve the ecstatic, we have brought about the union of the sensual and the spiritual. It is a love that brings us to our knees. And it is available to us within the hours of each day of our journey. This is what we mean by tasting the sweet nectar, the gifts brought with life. Each moment of joy that brings you to your knees is the transformation of love. Love is the connective tissue of the universe. If we lose the ability to see it, and to honor it, we lose not only ourselves, but the collective destiny of the global community. This love is altruistic, and because it is given freely it is, in the way of the Wicca, returned to us threefold.

The Lovers’ Altar

All of your altar work has been of the most intimate nature, but this altar is perhaps the most reflective of your core. You want to assemble an altar that reflects your transformed self, where compassion reigns supreme. This is the altar where you wear your heart on your sleeve, for all to see and to partake of your compassionate love.

Prepare yourself before your altar with a ritual bath, beginning with your own body. Accept, pamper, preen, love the body you have, and love the fact of your body. Your body makes this journey so much easier. Treat it gently, ease into the bath, luxuriate in it. Banish all negative thoughts. The sensual and the sexual are the first step. Indulge in them here, for, like this time before your meditation, they are only acts preparing the field, furrowing the desire, readying your self for the transformative power of love. Awaken all of your body and mind’s sensual and spiritual awareness and feel how alike they are. We can see now why Rumi’s poetry is so seductive, so ecstatic. Bridge the gap between body and spirit. Fly.

The Lovers Meditation

You are Aphrodite and Eros,
Cupid and Psyche. Masculine,
and Feminine Divine.
You are Gemini and Venus, star-crossed
and planetary.
Seeker and sought, you are lover and loved:
Beloved. Stay awake.

You are Etain and Ailill,
Gráinne and Diarmuid,
desperate and emboldened by love.
You are Deirdre and Naisi
you are Tristan and Isolde,
star crossed and destined.
You are Cybele and Attis,
Samson and Delilah,
Adam and Eve you are.

Choice is yours. Stay awake, beloved,
transformation is near.
You are passionate fusion,
union divine, all hope and certainty is yours.
It is not who you love,
but that you love,
not how you love, but will you love?

It is the coming of grace
the sweet blanket of compassion
wrap yourself tightly, be generous,
there is room for all.
Stay awake, beloved. Stay awake dear heart,
Stay awake.

The Mythology of The Lovers

Star crossed lovers, pick a pair and read their stories: Arthur and Guinevere, Tristan and Isolde, Romeo and Juliet. Some of them are classic tales told from real lives, others are myths. They all have one primary theme: the lead actors follow their hearts, even to the point of death. It's love. We will do anything for love. Joan of Arc gave her life for the love of her God. Plenty of others would give their lives rather than sacrifice their love. This is the strongest emotional bond we can make.

And then there's Narcissus. What an extraordinary predicament! Echo loves him, and she is blind, she cannot see his beauty, the thing he's famous for. Their curse (have you noticed there's always a curse involved?) is that she can only echo the last word he says. It might make an interesting game to try and formulate a conversation between Narcissus and Echo that actually goes someplace based on that rule. In any case, Narcissus represents the worst, most shallow kind of love, self-love. It makes us squirm, doesn't it? It's movie star time. It's everything we are certain we are not. Let's take a serious look at ourselves and see if we catch a glimpse of Narcissus' shadow lurking in the background, holding us, keeping us from reaching that state of compassion we need to be in on our journey. Where does Narcissus surface for you? Do you see him in the mirror in the classic way of the myth? Or is it more subtle? I confess I see him, just a shadow here and there, creeping into a sentence or two of the writing of this book. I'm a naturally shy person, and often I find myself in a trap between shy person and know-it-all, particularly when I'm with people who don't know me. Misunderstood? Perhaps, or perhaps the vain little shadow in me pushes out. You know that old Victorian novel phrase, "she flatters herself..." This is our Narcissus shadow. When we are more entranced by ourselves than by the world around us. We have to be careful that we don't end right back at the level of Serpent, working out our issues! Narcissus gives us an excuse to avoid connecting. Self-involved people never connect.

In a last assessment of the Prostitute archetype, let's look briefly at Samson and Delilah. I love that the issue here is hair. Isn't hair always the issue?! In Samson's case, we learn about temptation, but also about power: where does your power reside? Samson's is, of course, in his hair. Is this a euphemism? Who knows, anyway, what are you willing to trade for power on the battlefield of love? Where does your Prostitute step up and say, *I'll give you some of this for some of that power*. Have you noticed how much power and sex are connected in politics? They are the same shadow urge, aren't they? It shouldn't be that hard to rise above the basic

urges, but they certainly seem to stop some people and completely push them off their paths. If we allow the Prostitute to trade for bits of our self esteem we only delay moving forward on our journey. In some cases, we terminate the destiny altogether, subvert it completely into a mode of simple survival in which we might survive, but we will never love, be loved, or learn the transformative power of compassion and union.

Exercise: Loving Without an Agenda

Well, now, you'd just like to see me perform this miracle, wouldn't you? It might be easier than you think. You're ready for this now, you know it in your heart. You've done your work, chosen your path, moved along it acquiring tools and methods by which to effect the change required to realize your vision. How is it going?

In your journal head a page with two columns, one titled you, one titled with a name that represents the service project you have chosen.

In column 1 (you) list three "tools" you use daily to remind yourself of your path as Hummingbird.

Then list three "tools" you should use, but don't. If any of these three in the least little bit reflect a shadow archetype, put a "P" for Prostitute next to the word.

In column 2 (act of service) list three "tools" you use daily to effect the work needed.

Then list three "tools" you should source, but haven't yet.

Take an analytical look at your lists. Any "P" words? Why do you think you have had to resort to shadow work to get what you need? Can you eliminate that behavior? Why or why not? Write about this in your journal until you feel you understand the lingering shadow and the work you need to do to dispel it.

Finally, pick one "tool" from Column 2 that you don't yet have available and define a strategy for gaining that source. If you like working in the mandala format, do a sand painting around the status of your path. Where are you now? Where are you going? You are the Hero of your journey. Draw yourself and all those around you. How has compassion made a difference in your feeling of community? When there have been moments of stasis, inertia, voids in your progress, what has held you back? What has helped you move forward? Write these things down so that in the future, when you have slack periods, you will already have keys at hand to help snap you out of your lethargy.

If your analysis didn't produce any shadow archetype behavior, congratulations! Your final meditation work will be much easier for that fact. If you did identify shadow archetypes, work with them. Do the work at the level of the sacred, of ceremony. The level beyond words. We can throw words at problems for a lifetime and not resolve them, but if we give up the story, give it to the level of spirit, of the unspoken, we can sometimes effect miracles.

With these primary tools you are ready to wear your heart on your sleeve. You are ready to love without an agenda, because agendas imply shadows, bargains, deals made at the expense of your heart, your mind, your self esteem. Love with abandon, love knowing that you are on your path and you will only meet those who will love you in return along the way, because you have come to this point in balance. And that is the subject of our next meditation: Justice. Step up and sit on the scales.

