

4: Hastur; the Emperor.



Here is a very specific and powerful Card of the Tarot, and in writing this definition for the discussion of the HP Lovecraft Tarot, a number of strange things have happened to me in a personal sense (although I feel it best not to discuss such issues here). This is the Card of the Tarot that represents hierarchy; not only that hierarchy between ourselves and others, but also hierarchy within our mortal plane of existence, and the Gods of our system of worship. It is probably because of this aspect, with this particular God, that The Necronomicon directly states that to verbally utter His name is to bring certain

disaster on oneself. Whilst in actual practice this is not always the case, it does stand as an actual rule, and is a good rule to go by.

In terms of graphical representation, Hastur's Card is probably one of the least graphical in this Deck. In keeping my notes on the Deck I have thought that this may be suggestive of the message of this Card as portraying the message of an issue withheld. "Hastur is the Divine Ancestor of the King Who will Return; the King in Yellow", says the Lovecraft Tarot. In saying this it makes a statement that He Who Should Not be Named (as is the proper way to refer to Hastur), is a tribal God. In this Card the face of Hastur is depicted as primitive and tribal. Our religious interpretation is that this definition is accurate as we believe that He is worshipped by many global tribe cultures under different names. The Tarot elaborates on this slightly by saying that

“there are those who believe that it will be a human descendent of Hastur who will reign under the Great Old Ones”. In this we can interpret religions from primitive tribal societies, to the ethics behind the Church of Christ.

The Lovecraft Tarot tells us that “the important message of this card is that we are all descended from the Gods”, and the Biblical Book of Genesis can come into play now. The face of He Who Should Not be Named is portrayed to us here as the face of a human like Daemon, so should we assume by this that if we are made in the image of God, then it is in the image of that God of human hierarchy? In this statement then, if Hastur would be the god of the Mythos of hierarchy on whatever level, that He is represented as such, then are the other Gods somewhat more weird? “The most important aspect of this sovereignty”, the Lovecraft Tarot tells us, “is our personal responsibility for all

conditional aspects of our lives.” Again, should we here consider Christianity with their teachings of human free will?

Considered in more esoteric terms, the Unspeakable One represents hierarchy as an aspect of higher spheres of consciousness, and represents a mediation with which humanity can communicate with the Great Old Ones. It also represents boundaries, and areas in which hierarchy amongst people can run into problems. And the Tarot itself goes some lengths towards defining this as it represents mediation between people, ourselves and the Gods.

But it also represents our responsibility for our own actions as it states “The self is a rebellious kingdom, [and] therefore the first axiom of the ancient mysteries has always been ‘Know Thyself!’” With this, Card Four is depictive of our own actions as we relate to others, being the only Card of the

Major Arcana that is directly representing the involvement in our own lives, of the Necronomicon Mythos Gods as forces which can work for us if they are properly understood.

And further to this, if we understand its relation to humanity and our means of hierarchy, it can easily be understood that the Card that pertains to Hastur is the strongest Card of the Deck that can be drawn. It can be seen as representing a leadership principal or responsibility where a social position is upheld. As Hastur is the hierarchy God of mankind, everything positive about organization amongst people is apparent. Faith in issues, both personal and religious, and peoples faith – both personal and esoteric – are signified in this name of He Who Should Not be Named.

POSITIVE READING: As we progress through the Tarot, now Card Four (the

fifth Card) is representative of the social standing which characterizes human society, and assumed positions of power. This is the first statement that we have that humanity is above all other terrestrial races.

At this point I would like to put a personal point of view. He Who Should Not be Named is, with this Card, representative of the organization of the human race, specifically in terms of authority and social standing. It is the view of the author that authority is always wrong and that humanity would be better without it. But a position of authority may be a good thing as represented by this Card, and this is in terms of benefit to the individual, even if this can be argued to be unsound. The point should be made, though, that authority is symptomatic of society, and Card Four, in this context, says that this is an eternal part of the Cosmos.

Yet with all systems of the Tarot, meanings further than what is first obvious can be defined. So where the Lovecraft system speaks of “Leadership, Authority; [and] Dominion”, then it could just as well be speaking about circumstances within our personal lives (or with the person who the reading is for), where we will find ourselves in control. Readings beyond what is obvious must be uncovered.

Further to reading this statement as regards our own situation, the Tarot speaks to the individual more directly now. “Healthy Self-Image; Independence, self sustaining confidence & faith” are all statements that concern the individual, and this follows on directly from the above.

But this Card is very much one of the ego. Whilst a ‘balanced karma’ may be suggested from the above, Card Four carries on with defining it as positive that

“Paternity, inheritance, heritage [and] ancestry” are likely to come into the picture, possibly in the form of an inheritance from a relative? Again, what this means in a personal sense is great, but all of this has to be within the context of a system that could be argued to be unjust.

But a definite positive situation is finally given to us, as the Positive Reading defined in the Lovecraft Tarot forecasts a situation of “Earned respect & / or position.” This statement is not about authority assumed, but is in terms of gain where it is deserved. It would seem to me that the history of our race and religion revolves around the standards as they are defined here.

NEGATIVE READING: The Negative interpretation of the Card here, is still very much about social position and power. It is representative of hierarchy; of

the chain of authority from one person being “above” another in situations where power can come into play for any reason.

The start of this definition in the Lovecraft Tarot speaks of the mentality of power in a personal sense; of “Delusions of grandeur, paranoia”, and of a “Napoleon Complex”. If this Card is drawn, then maybe we should look within ourselves to ask if we are displaying the symptoms that these statements would indicate? It could, however, also speak of these symptoms in others, and if these aspects are becoming part of our lives, then they are in the immediate sense something that should be ‘nipped in the bud’ – to be prevented before they start. Further to that, these symptoms might be the result of taking Mythos worship too lightly. It could be the result of ‘dabbling’ with the occult, or of entering into acts of magick before being properly prepared.

This context can be continued in

exactly the same way when the Tarot defines this Card with the statement: “Domineering personality [and a] need to control others”. Again the question is whether we display these symptoms ourselves, or whether they are symptoms displayed in others? Either way these are definite issues that need to be immediately addressed. The Tarot continues with the definition that “dependence on external validation for security” is an issue in question. This does, on first impressions, sound like a human symptom which, as with the rest of this definition, also needs to be immediately addressed. But in discussing the HP Lovecraft Tarot and the interpretation of the Cards, this can be seen to have a further meaning. This statement can also be referring to a dependence on the Gods for such ‘validation and security’, and such a dependence on these Gods of Chaos for

security may be a direct route into madness.

So as we have here defined authority from above and a number of negative issues as defined, the Tarot often speaks of such negative issues in the same statement, with an opposite definition in the same aspect. So whilst authority from above is indicated in this respect, this Deck continues directly in defining its meaning as, the “Orphan, illegitimacy [and the] Nouveau Riche”. Whilst power can be misused, and this is warned of, now we see the danger implied in actions begun without any form of higher resort. It warns us of taking action without authority to accept responsibility should those actions be wrong.

In ending its definition with a Negative Reading with this Card, authority in the wrong hands or without responsibility is defined with a warning. “Power aquired through fear” is forecast;

as is “manipulation, and / or aggression.” This Card, therefore, predicts issues whereby authority is misused, where lifestyle issues may need to be addressed, or where rebellion may be justified, whether that be in terms of magick, or through means of looking within ourselves to see what can be changed.



