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## An Annotated List of Fantasy Novels Incorporating Tarot (1990-2005)

Emily E. Auger  
*Independent Scholar*

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### Abstract

This annotated list of books from 1990 through 2005 continues the bibliography in *Mythlore* 36.2 (Spring-Summer 2018) and includes abstracts for each novel or series and some card layout diagrams.

### Additional Keywords

Fantasy literature—Bibliography; Tarot in literature

## AN ANNOTATED LIST OF FANTASY NOVELS INCORPORATING TAROT (1990–2005)

EMILY E. AUGER

THIS ANNOTATED LIST IS A CONTINUATION OF “An Annotated List of Fantasy Novels Incorporating Tarot (1968–1989)” in *Mythlore* 36.2 (Spring-Summer 2018) 231–250. Post-1989 novels that are part of series begun pre-1990—see Doris Egan, Barbara Hambly, Stephen King, Terry Pratchett, and Roger Zelazny—may be found in that earlier publication. Many of the novels identified here are taken once again from Nina Lee Braden’s more expansive, but largely unannotated compilation (2002; 2008). I sorted these titles for those likely to be of interest to readers of *Mythlore* as mythopoeia or as fantasies with mythopoeic and archetypal elements, and for the sometimes complex use of Tarot or Tarot-like cards as archetypes in relation to narrative.

To Braden’s list I have added some of De Lint’s books, Pratchett and Gaiman’s *Good Omens*, Deitz’s *Dreambuilder*, Powers’s *Earthquake Weather*, and Moore’s *Bloodsucking Fiends*. As in the 1968–1989 list, I intended to include only books first published in English, and once again found myself with an exception that was simply too interesting to omit: Jostein Gaarder’s *The Solitaire Mystery* (1990; Eng. Trans. 1996). This particular novel is also the odd one out insofar as it involves regular playing cards, rather than Tarot or a Tarot-like deck. The present list includes publications from 1990 to 2005; however, those interested in Tarot and/or cartomancy may also enjoy Erin Morgenstern’s *The Night Circus* (2011), R.S. Belcher’s *The Six-Gun Tarot* (2013), Sonya Terry’s *The Golding* (2014) and *The Silvering* (2015), Rachel Pollack’s *The Child Eater* (2015), and Christian Brown’s *Feast of Fates* series (2014–2016). Richard Kaczynski’s entertaining urban fantasy *The Billionth Monkey* (2015) also features Tarot.<sup>12</sup>

### CHRONOLOGICAL LIST

An asterisk indicates a novel in which Tarot is a minor or briefly used motif; however, the distinction between a minor motif and a major one is not always easily made.

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<sup>12</sup> I have previously published lists and discussions of films incorporating Tarot and cartomancy: *Cartomancy and Tarot in Film 1940–2010* (Intellect 2016) and *A Filmography of Cartomancy and Tarot 1940–2010* (Valleyhome Books 2016). I discussed the relationship between the historical development of Tarot and that of the novel in *Tarot and Other Meditation Decks* (McFarland 2004).

- 1990 de Lint, Charles. *The Dreaming Place* (1990), a Newford book; and the Newford books featuring Jilly Coppercorn, including *The Onion Girl* (2001) and *Widdershins* (2006).
- 1990 Gaarder, Jostein. *The Solitaire Mystery*. Eng. Trans. 1996.
- 1990 Gentle, Mary. *Rats and Gargoyles*.
- \*1990 Pratchett, Terry, and Neil Gaiman. *Good Omens: The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch*.
- 1991 Bull, Emma. *Bone Dance*.
- 1991 Deitz, Tom. The Soulsmith Trilogy. *Soulsmith* (1991), *Dreambuilder* (1992), and *Wordwright* (1993). Also, a very brief mention in the earlier novel *Windmaster's Bane* (1986).
- \*1992 Brust, Steven, and Megan Lindholm. *Gypsy*.
- 1992 Cunningham, Elizabeth. *Return of the Goddess*.
- \*1992 Murphy, Warren, and Richard Sapir. *The Ghost in the Machine* (Destroyer series #90).
- 1992 Powers, Tim. Fault Lines Trilogy: *Last Call* (1992), *\*Expiration Date* (1995), and *Earthquake Weather* (1997).
- 1994 Franklin, Cheryl J. *Sable, Shadow, and Ice*.
- \*1994 Hambly, Barbara. *Stranger at the Wedding*. First published as Sorcerer's Ward.
- 1994 Wrede, Patricia. *The Raven Ring* (Lyra Novels book 5).
- \*1995 Chopra, Deepak. *The Return of Merlin*.
- \*1995 Moore, Christopher. *Bloodsucking Fiends*.
- \*1995 Tryon, Thomas. *Night Magic*. A retelling of "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" (1797) by Goethe.
- \*1998 Britain, Kristen. *Green Rider*. 1998. First novel in ongoing series.
- 2001 Dennis L. McKiernan. *Once Upon a Winter's Night*.
- 2002 Quinn, Daniel. *The Holy*.
- 2004 Clarke, Susanna. *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*.
- 2004 Lackey, Mercedes. *Phoenix and Ashes*.
- \*2005 Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. Harry Potter series from 1997.

#### ALPHABETICAL BY AUTHOR

\***Britain, Kristen.** *Green Rider* (Daw Books, 1998). Ebook edition Introduction by Kristen Britain, 2008.

Karigan is the young adult daughter of a wealthy merchant in a world where the King's messenger service includes numerous "Riders," young men and women who are drawn to duty by a supernatural call. While running away from the school for those who have answered this call, Karigan encounters a dying

rider with two black arrows in his back and agrees to deliver two messages he carries. Her subsequent adventures avoiding and surviving attacks by those who would prevent her from accomplishing this task take up much of the novel.

Tarot is referred to in three consecutive chapters—"Gray One," "North," and "King-Haters." First, Joy Overway, a young Rider in search of Karigan, arrives at the town of North and meets a fortune-teller who lays a warning card showing "a messenger fleeing arrows." A few pages later, the villainous gray rider's arrow transforms her into a wraith obliged to serve him. In "North," Karigan meets the same fortune-teller—"Clatheas, Seer"—who takes a special interest in the ghost following her and explains that the cards do not tell fortunes, "merely mirror one's thoughts [...] They simply reflect." The same card she drew for Joy appears for Karigan: "The picture was a rider in green, on a red steed, fleeing arrows." At the end of the next chapter, "King-Haters," the minstrel entertaining at the inn tells Karigan that Clatheas is "an accurate seer."

*Note:* To date, I have read four additional novels in the ongoing series, including *First Rider's Call* (2003), *The High King's Tomb* (2007), *Blackveil* (2011), and *Mirror Sight* (2014). None of these includes Tarot, but they do incorporate other innovative methods of future-telling. For example, in *First Rider's Call* (book 2) Karigan's unique Rider ability, associated with her brooch, begins to carry her backwards and forwards in time with results akin to divination. *Blackveil* (book 4) includes a dancer wearing a mirror mask that shows Karigan and others images from the future, and also a villainous old woman who uses yarn to weave spells and see the future. In *Mirror Sight* (book 5), Karigan's Rider power takes her into the future where she has glimpses of the past, and perhaps the past sees her in the future through a shard of the mirror mask. She returns to her own timeline but a shard pierces one eye and it takes on the qualities of the mask itself.

**\*Brust, Steven, and Megan Lindholm.** *The Gypsy* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 1992).

A villainous and otherworldly "Lady" is orchestrating the corruption and demise of this world. The Gypsy, aka the Dove, aka Cigany, aims to thwart the Lady's ambitions. He has magical powers, but is severely hampered by his inability to retain memories from his own realm in this one. He wanders, seemingly haphazardly, to his goal by way of his involvement as a suspect in a murder investigation and subsequent interactions with the policeman Mike Stepanovich, Mike's partner Durand, and Mike's former partner Ed; and contact with his own two brothers, the Raven and the Owl, and with the Coachman and the fortune-teller Moria.

Moria lays a spread for Gypsy (222 ff), reading it as she lays the cards and then interpreting it again with previously unmentioned cards added. Moria draws the Hermit Rx<sup>13</sup> as Gypsy's significator. The "Key" is the Emperor Rx, crossed by the Ace of Swords. Gypsy is motivated by the Tower—probably by a desire to destroy it—and the Wheel of Fortune Rx is what has just past and brought him to this situation. The next card shows "An old king standing on discs with stars, holding another star, while yet another rested on his crown" (224). Moria believes this card is about gathering forces, and the next, the 10 of Pentacles, suggests he may get what he thinks he wants. The 10 of Swords may refer to an unfortunate end for him or those who aid him, but is mitigated by the card for his environment, which is undoubtedly The Star, as it offers "hope if nothing else." On this card, "A beautiful woman drank from the cup, her eyes fixed on it as if in contemplation" (225). His desire is Temperance, he wishes for the 9 of Cups, but will "have the 5 of Cups to regret" (225). Moria reviews the cards again, beginning with the Hermit, followed by the Queen of Swords Rx (not previously mentioned) as a surrounding and evil influence. Moira believes Gypsy wants to put together what has been taken apart (Temperance) but the outcome may be indicated by the 10 of Swords (disease) or three other cards: the 9 of Cups (wishes coming true), the 5 of Cups (sorrow), and the Sun (escape and protection). The spread seems to be a variant of the celtic cross, but the specific deck is unclear. It may be the *Rider-Waite*, with the old king standing on discs with stars being a reference to the 4 of Pentacles; however, none of the *Rider-Waite* cards have a figure that drinks from a cup. In any case, Gypsy realizes that Moira's sight has been compromised by the Lady and corrects her interpretation—Moria herself is the Queen of Swords Rx (227) because the Lady has bewitched her sight. With this realization, he and his allies find the proper path to his goal.

**Bull, Emma.** *Bone Dance* (New York: Ace Books, 1991). Nominated for Hugo and World Fantasy awards.

It has been fifty years since Tom Worecki, one of the "horsemen"—spirits who live by jumping between human bodies—pushed the button that brought about the apocalypse. Frances, also one of these spirits, has hunted and killed almost all of the horsemen, and is now after Tom. The main character, however, is Sparrow, a gender-neutral "cheval," originally bioengineered as a kind of offering to the horsemen so they would have no need of human hosts. With the arrival of the apocalypse, Sparrow awakens alone in a flooded government facility and, having no idea of who or what "zie" is, learns to survive by finding and selling video-tapes of old movies and by way of zir technological skills.

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<sup>13</sup> Rx, in Tarot reading annotations, signifies reversed.

Much later, zie finds zirselt repeatedly awakening with no memories of what happened in the preceding hours or days, and zie turns to Sherrea, a Tarot-reader, for help. Sherrea's deck is bizarre, with "luridly colored" figures from an astonishing assortment of sources and the images move when the cards are tipped: "The Page of Swords was Joan of Arc at the stake, holding a sword over her head. The flames leaped and Joan's head nodded up to look at heaven, down to study hell" (27; ch. 1.1). Sher has Sparrow make a wish and choose a card. She chooses the Page of Swords, which means she can't have whatever it was she wished for. Sher shuffles the cards again, has Sparrow cut the deck, and then lays a celtic cross spread (28).

	CROWNING: Lovers		OUTCOME: Tower
	SIGNIFICATOR: Page of Swords		HOPES: Star
BEHIND: 7 of Swords	COVERING: Death Rx	AHEAD: 7 of Wands	SURROUNDINGS: Devil Rx
	CROSSING: Sun		
	BENEATH: 2 of Pentacles Rx		FEARS: 10 of Swords

Sher's reading is fairly detailed: Swords indicate fighting and the juggling man (the 2 of Pentacles Rx) means that something is out of balance and is growing in a way that is "stagnant and sick" (29). So many major arcana means that others control her future: "There's powerful people playing with it. You're going to have to fight to get it back [...] There's the Devil, the Star, the Tower. In the country of truth, where your spirit lives, your life still isn't your own." (28)

Sher's detailed reading is interrupted when one of her spirits takes charge and tells Sparrow that failure to do her work threatens her own life and those "bound to her." When Sher resurfaces, she shuffles the spread cards—all except the Page of Swords—and lays them again for clarification, but the same spread appears. The same cards also appear as headers for the main chapters which tell the tale of Sparrow's coming-of-age. There are no illustrations, but the first page of each Tarot section includes interpretations for the relevant card by such renowned Tarot authors as Arthur E. Waite, Aleister Crowley, and Eden Gray, all paraphrased from Bill Butler's *Dictionary of the Tarot* (1978). The Devil is identified as a reversed card in the chapter title (195), not in the text describing the spread.

\***Chopra, Deepak.** *The Return of Merlin* (New York: Fawcett Books, 1995).

The main characters gradually remember that they are really Arthur, Igraine, and others from Arthurian mythology, and that most of them are destined to

save the world from the forces of evil. Evil takes the form of the villainous tarot-reading Mordred, who wants to escape his fate of growing ever weaker as he grows younger in the future—due to wizards aging in the opposite direction to everyone else. He is opposed by Merlin, who has plans to awaken a better world and banish Mordred’s darkness.

Most, though not quite all, of the card descriptions identify Mordred’s deck as *The Mythic Tarot* by Juliet Sharman-Burke and Liz Greene and illustrated by Tricia Newell (Stoddard 1986). Mordred ingratiates himself with Peg (Igraine), Arthur Callum’s mother, by reading her Tarot cards over a period of years; one reading is recounted in some detail (82-87). She tells him not to turn up the Hanged Man; but he refuses to “hide a card.” He lays five in a pyramid, with the 3 of Swords, described as the *Rider-Waite* card with three swords through a heart, in the middle of the base, and the Ace of Cups to the right. The other cards include the Empress and Strength, which is described as a man strangling a lion as in *The Mythic Tarot*. The “master card” at the top of the pyramid is laid but not named as the reading is interrupted by Arthur’s arrival. Mordred departs and Peg finds the Hanged Man under a tea cup:

“The Hanged Man,” it read in Gothic black letter. The splayed corpse of a naked man was depicted suspended upside down from a high rock. A large bird of prey was hovering over it with sharpened beak [...] Peg didn’t look up to see the two crows outside her window. The pair hadn’t flown away or even budged. Their bodies were as intently motionless as hers—for all the world one would have thought that they, too, were students of Tarot (88).



*The Mythic Tarot. Liz Greene, Tricia Newell (artist), and Juliet Sharman-Burke.*

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In another brief Tarot scene, Arthur’s police partner Katy/Guinevere/Fay comes upon Mordred interpreting his own cards (258-59; 376), which he has laid in a twelve-card horoscope spread that includes the Fool for Arthur and the High Priestess for Katy, whom he sees as Persephone: Mordred



suggests that she marry Arthur. Near the end (369-71), Mordred again reads the cards for himself and they seem to confirm that his plans are unfolding as he hopes, except for the Death card that appears unexpectedly at the center of his Star spread to represent “the heart of the matter (370). Unhappily for him, Death aptly foreshadows the conclusion of his ambitions for power.

**Clarke, Susanna.** *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* (2004; Ebook edition New York: Bloomsbury, 2014). Winner of the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award 2005.

In the early 1800s against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars a prophecy passed on by the beggar magician and fortune-teller Vinculus is fulfilled when the greedy practical magician Mr. Norrell begins instructing the natural magician Jonathan Strange. Norrell is dedicated to eradicating all memory of the debt English magic owes to the ancient “Raven King” known as John Uxglass, who was abducted by fairies as a boy and later returned with a fairy army to claim rulership not only of Faerie, but of England, and finally death itself, before disappearing. Strange rediscovers the magical roads between these lands and, in opposition to his mentor, dedicates himself to restoring Uxglass to a position of honor. The real hero of the story, however, is the Tarot reader John Childermass, who serves Norrell as his man of business, while also taking steps to mitigate Norrell’s mistreatment of others.

Tarot is introduced in Chapter 21, which is titled “The cards of Marseilles,” in the form of the unique deck that Childermass drew—half from memory—from a copy owned by a sailor in exchange for a reading. Sadly, the cards showed that the sailor would die within the year, and he did. Childermass made his drawings on the backs of letters, lists, and the like, and later pasted them onto colored cardboard, such that they retain little resemblance to the historical Marseilles-style cards. When Childermass and Vinculus meet, Childermass lays nine cards for Vinculus, all identified in the novel by their French names: Hermit, Fool, Justice, 2 of Wands, Page of Cups, Knight of Wands, 2 of Swords, Hanged Man, and World. He interprets them as meaning that Vinculus is a solitary man on a journey who has come to a cross roads, but has already decided to go wandering outside of London. He believes that the Page of Cups means Vinculus has a message to deliver. Oddly, and as an apt visualization of Vinculus himself, the words on the opposite side of the card paper show through such that the figure’s clothes and body appear to be covered with them. Childermass understands the last three cards as indicating a meeting and ordeal which Vinculus may or may not survive, and also that he will achieve his goal.

Vinculus then lays the cards for Childermass: Moon, Tower Rx, 9 of Swords, Page of Wands, 10 of Wands Rx, Priestess, Wheel of Fortune, 2 of Coins, and King of Cups. Childermass immediately recognizes the cards as showing

his life and begins to gather them up, but Vinculus wants to lay them again for Norrell. The result is a repeating Emperor card that gradually transforms into a “young, dark-haired king at whose feet strutted a great black bird.” Childermass fumbles with the cards, they fall, and all show the same figure.



*Tarot of Marseilles. © 1963 Grimaud.  
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Later Childermass finds that all of his cards have returned to their original form, except for the Emperor. He lays them out and repeatedly draws the Ace of Cups and the Priestess, as well as the 7, 8, 9, and 10 of Wands, which he interprets as lines of writing. These spreads lay the groundwork for Childermass’s realization that Vinculus’s body is magically tattooed with the last and only book written by Uxglass. Childermass alone actually sees Uxglass, but Uxglass contrives for him to forget the encounter, revises the book Vinculus carries on his skin, and leaves Childermass the task of figuring out how to read it for the benefit of a new school of magic.

The cards make several other appearances before that conclusion, however. Chapter 22, titled “The Knight of Wands,” establishes Jonathan Strange as the Knight of Wands. In chapter 30, they tell Childermass that Vinculus is alive when Lascelles tries to claim he is dead. At the end of chapter 48, Childermass responds to Strange’s efforts to enlist his services: “What lies ahead is too complex for the cards to explain clearly and I cannot find the right question to ask them.” In chapter 60, the cards have informed Childermass that, in spite of Norrell’s efforts to destroy all copies of Strange’s book, two survive: “Strange has one and Norrell the other.” In chapter 63, Childermass lays the cards in the same room with Mr. Norrell and Lascelles, who are waiting for Strange. The cards suggest that Lascelles has a message for Childermass, but when Childermass confronts him, he denies it. Childermass lays the cards again, and this time Norrell, who generally despises Tarot, asks what they say. Childermass tells Lascelles, that the cards say he is “a liar and a thief. They say that there is more than a message. You have been given something—an object—

something of great value. It is meant for me and yet you retain it." It is at this point that Lascelles forces Norrell to choose between them, and Norrell sends Childermass away. Childermass thus meets his new destiny as companion to Vinculus and interpreter of the writing imprinted on his body by the Raven King.

**Cunningham, Elizabeth.** *Return of the Goddess* (Station Hill Literary Editions, 1992). Cunningham is also the author of a book of poetry titled *Wild Mercy: Tarot Inspired Musings*. Illus. by Janet Black. Creatrix Books, 2007.

According to the author's website it is scheduled to be re-released.

Esther Peters lives a fairly dull and uninteresting life as the wife of clergyman Alan Peters and mother of their two boys Jonathan and David. She comes to the attention of the aging owner of the Blackwood estate, Mary Spencer Blackwood Crowe, who is besieged by relatives wanting her to will the property to them so that they can make a fortune building condos on it, and Fergus Hanrahan, who was a servant in the Blackwood household when Mary was a girl. Esther also meets the ex-con Marvin Greene, who was given a rare deck of "Spanish-Moorish" Tarot cards by a gypsy. While on the train to White Hart where he is to serve his parole, he ponders what the cards had shown him a half a dozen times at least: himself as the Fool: "Marvin knew enough to receive the card as a compliment from the cosmos: the Fool, first and last of the Greater Trumps, the beginning in the end, the zero, the great nothing that contained it all. Surely Lady Luck had plans for him [...]" (28; ch. 4).

Marvin lays a celtic cross spread for Esther (162 ff; ch. 20), from which she chooses the Star at the center as the card most attractive to her.

	6. WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND: 4 of Pentacles	11. OUTCOME: Strength
	1. SIGNIFICATOR: Star	10. HOPES AND FEARS: 2 of Cups
5. RECENT PAST: High Priestess	2. COVERING: Ace of Wands	7. NEAR FUTURE: Chariot
	3. OBSTACLE: World	9. HOUSE: 7 of Swords
	4. ROOT: Tower	8: SELF-IMAGE: Hanged Man

Marvin provides a lengthy and exemplary interpretation of the cards; ultimately it seems that the Goddess herself has called this unlikely pair to save Blackwood from Mary Crowe's would-be heirs. The High Priestess, Chariot, Wheel of Fortune, and Strength appear numerous times throughout the book, often as

articulations of visions and dreams about personal identity transformations and the future.

**Deitz, Tom.** The Soulsmith Trilogy. *Soulsmith* (Avon Books, 1991), *Dreambuilder* (Avon Books, 1992), and *Wordwright* (Avon Books, 1993).

*Soulsmith* provides much of the back story and context for the Welch family of Welch County. The Welches are "Listeners," meaning they can psychically hear and manipulate others. The "Master of Cardalba" is the male Listener responsible for the "luck" of the county; this position is conventionally passed to a son of the current master's sister. Main characters include Ron Dillon and the friend who turns out to be his twin brother, Lewis Welch, and the mysterious Roadman, who teaches Ron metallurgy. Ron and Lewis are forced to deal with the problems that arise when their uncle, the current master, decides to make his own son, the product of double incest, his heir. In *Dreambuilder*, Lewis convinces Ron to take his position as Master of Cardalba while he earns a degree and looks for their lost sister. In *Wordwright*, Jane, the insane sister of Ron and Lewis, plans to kill Lewis. Eventually, Ron takes up the responsibilities of Master, but with "time out" for him to also be the next Roadman.

The themes of divination and fate, as well as psychic manipulations of luck and futures, run through all three novels. The divining Head Ron builds in *Wordwright* is particularly fascinating, but the Tarot system devised by Dion, Ron and Lewis's uncle (and possible father), makes appearances in all three books. Dion is a musician and lawyer serving jail time (Welch luck is clearly not infallible) who discovers that the first song he hears in a day provides clues to the events of the next twenty-four hours, and the first ten songs he hears can be interpreted with reference to the meanings of the cards in a celtic-cross Tarot spread (see the Prologue, *Soulsmith*). He introduces Ron and others to this system and, by the third book, a limited edition of a complex concordance of meanings for various songs has been printed and distributed.

*Note:* Deitz mentions Tarot very briefly in at least one earlier novel with some mythopoeic elements. *Windmaster's Bane* (1986) is about David, a teenager who suddenly finds himself possessed of Second Sight, here defined as the ability to see the world of the Sidhe, which overlaps with that of humans. Soon after, he and his two best friends go to a fair where they take refuge from a sudden downpour in a fortune-teller's tent. The fortune-teller has a crystal ball and a Tarot deck with the Magician turned up on top and the Knight of Wands resting beside it and advises each of them about sticking together through the trials David will soon face (ch. 5).

**De Lint, Charles.** Newford books: *The Dreaming Place* (Triskell Press, 1990; ebook edition 2016); and the Newford books featuring Jilly Coppercorn, including *The Onion Girl* (Tor Books, 2001; ebook edition 2011) and *Widdershins* (Tom Doherty Associates, 2006).

Tarot is most significant in those “Newford” novels featuring Cassie as a secondary character. Cassie is beautiful, copper-skinned, wears her hair in tiny braids, and favors bright intensely-colored clothing and plastic jewelry. She looks younger than her years from spending so much time in the spiritworld with her lover Joe Crazy Dog. She is mentioned in *Trader* (1997), but is more significant in other novels. In *The Dreaming Place* (1990), Cassie and Joe spend their time in “the world as it is” as squatters in abandoned buildings; Cassie makes what cash they need by telling fortunes with her entertainment Tarot deck. When she tries to help her school-aged friend Ashley (aka Ash), however, she uses her magic cards, which she keeps bound with an elastic band in her jacket pocket. These cards all appear blank until they are laid out in a spread and then images appear in answer to the question put to them. Ash’s spread is not promising: the significator is Ash, the covering card is her cousin Nina, whose bedroom Ash has unhappily shared since her own mother’s death; another shows a woman who turns out to be a demon that is seeking Nina’s life force so that she can destroy the spiritworld; and a final card remains blank. Cassie, disturbed by the final card in particular, takes Ash to Joe, and the three are subsequently obliged to transport into the spiritworld to avoid a police raid. It is in the spiritworld that Ash finds the resources and information she needs to save herself and her cousin.

Cassie and Joe return in *The Onion Girl* (2001), this time living in a comfortable apartment and as friends of Jilly, a young woman who fled an abusive family many years before and made a good life for herself as an artist. Jilly has the ability to dream herself into the spiritworld, but cannot enter it “in her own skin” as Joe can. Unfortunately, she is the victim of a hit-and-run accident that leaves her with long-term paralysis. The novel tells much of Jilly’s backstory, as well as that of her sister, Raylene, who suffered in Jilly’s place after Jilly left home, but ultimately fought back against their abusive brother and left home too. After Raylene accidentally discovers Jilly, she and a friend named Pinky also find their way into the spiritworld where they begin hunting and killing unicorns. Raylene takes revenge on Jilly for abandoning her by kidnapping and taking her into the spiritworld for what promises to be a violent confrontation.

Cassie performs two three-card readings in this book. First, she tries to help Joe find the spirit Nokomis, whom he believes can help Jilly heal (Ch. “Joe Crazy Dog: Manidó-Aki). Joe chooses the cards: one of a dog with a crow’s head that is probably himself, a second showing wolves at the flank of a white horse (later shown to be a unicorn), and a third with a full moon reflected in water in

mountains and showing the seasons passing. Nokomis is known to like lunar images and the later image also suggests that he may be in the “quicklands” where time passes faster than in this realm. Second, Cassie tries to help Wendy help their mutual friend Jilly (Ch. Jilly: Newford, May 1999 part 4). Cassie lets Wendy shuffle and turn the cards, explaining that she wants to guard against her influence on what they show and that she doesn’t like to use the cards for herself for fear of becoming dependent on them. This time the cards show a teenaged boy abusing a young girl (which they later realize is Raylene), a pink Cadillac (which they later discover belongs to Raylene), and wolves with faces superimposed on them. The faces look like Jilly (Raylene) and a bit like Farah Fawcett (Pinky). Wendy takes the second and third cards, intending to show them to Jilly, but when she goes to put the first card back in the deck all three return to their blank state.

*Widdershins* (2006) picks up some time after *The Onion Girl* ends, with Jilly still obliged to spend much of her time in a wheelchair and still unable to paint as she used to. The larger plot involves several vendettas, but the happy ending includes Jilly coming to terms with her childhood, being magically healed of her physical injuries, and entering into a more romantic relationship with her long-time best friend Geordie. This book includes a number of characters described as “seers,” but Cassie remains the only cartomancer. Geordie compares Cassie’s two decks, describing the one as beautifully painted and kept in a silk bag and the other, “her real working cards” that “some old witchy woman” gave her as very plain and worn from use (*Widdershins* 198).

Cassie lays the cards to help Joe locate Jilly after she is kidnapped and taken into the spirit world: they show Geordie quite plainly, but the other images are unclear: “It was like there was a mist on them, or a veil. I think the cards were trying to look into some piece of the unknown, and that’s all they could give me” (161). She also shuffles and lays them for Geordie, who describes the moment of waiting for the images: “It was like the static charge you get when you walk across a carpet in the winter and the air’s so dry; like a promise, except instead of a static shock it was the promise of magic” (198). The cards show what is happening, but since the viewers do not have knowledge of those events, they really serve as signposts that are only belatedly recognized as such. Later, Cassie tries them again, but the images are the same: “That was how the cards worked. When you asked a certain question of them, they’d only give the one answer, it didn’t matter how many times you asked. She knew that. But that hadn’t stopped her from trying anyway” (314).

**Franklin, Cheryl J.** *Sable, Shadow, and Ice* (Daw Books, 1994).

In this post-apocalypse world, the technology of the long-fallen Empire that allows the survivors to survive is slowly failing. The prohibitions against studying and rebuilding that technology are powerful and enforced by both the secular rulers (Doms) and the magicians (Mages). Prince Hiroshi, descendant of an Empire ruler, believes that the human race will not survive unless they can rediscover the science they have lost. Hiroshi's vision for a new and better future draws many to and against him, including the Master Mages Ch'ango and her former student Aroha, whose magical abilities and antipathy misdirect many from the essential conflict regarding the rediscovery of science. The main character—Marita—has a key place as both heir to considerable political power and as an accomplished magician; thus, the current social leaders desire her allegiance. Hiroshi wants her because she is among the few who can read and write and are not bound by oaths as scribes, and Aroha wants her to help fulfill his own vision in which Ch'ango's corrupting influence is ended.

Marita's world and the characters that would shape its future are defined and frequently described with reference to the five suits (Blood, Brass, Ice, Sable, Shadow) and nine face cards (Prince, Mage, Dom, Cat, Everyman, Ghost, etc.) of a forty-five card Tarot-like deck. The deck's structure, associations, and primary spread are given in an appendix (409-11). Marita herself is an Ice Mage, senior of the Avalon school of mages. Although Marita often describes and has visions of others with reference to the cards (60, 68, 216, 249, 360, 379, 391, 394, 403, 404), she uses the cards themselves so rarely that she cannot read them relative to any complex situation (70-1). At one point, as she builds her own Ice-based vision of the future (305 ff), she claims that her mage skills have exceeded the need for a physical deck (307). She believes only Lilith, the youngest member of her Mage school, still practices cartomancy. Lilith performs the novel's single reading (143 ff), which is taken very seriously by her colleagues and specifically mentioned later (216, 242). Marita also has a vision of Lilith laying cards, during which she herself is magically attacked (279). Lilith, as it turns out, has been compromised (242) and her misleading identification of Aroha as the Tarot Blood Mage is corrected by Aroha himself—he plays the role of the Shadow Cat (158).

Although the cards are only read once in the entire novel, and then by a character who is notably young and weak in purpose, their images provide a deep description of the novel's social and political world. Virtually all of the characters and actions are defined and shaped with direct or indirect reference to a Tarot card.

**Gaarder, Jostein.** *The Solitaire Mystery* (1990 Norwegian; English trans. 1996 by Sarah Jane Hails; Ebook edition HarperCollins Canada, 2011). Cartomancy with a regular playing deck; no Tarot.

Hans Thomas's mother left him and his father when he was four. When he is twelve, he and his father set out on a quest to find her and bring her home. This road trip acquires mythic dimensions for Hans when a dwarf (the Joker of the tale) gives him a magnifying glass that allows him to read the miniscule book a baker places in a sticky bun for him. Each chapter title is named for a playing card and the cards have illustrations relevant to the story. In the Chapter titled Jack of Spades, Hans has his fortune told: the cartomancer lays twenty-one cards in three rows. She tells him that his future is full of surprises due to the appearance of the Joker beside his card, the Jack of Spades. Certainly, Hans is more and more surprised to find himself a participant in the book he is reading, and everything becomes increasingly bizarre after he meets Frode. Frode has been living on an island since he was shipwrecked there in 1790 and his only companions are fifty-two figures which have come to life from his playing cards, each with a story to tell. In combination, these stories have a lot to do with Hans's unusual ancestry and lead to revelations about his role in the reunification of his family.

**Gentle, Mary.** *Rats and Gargoyles* (1990; Ebook edition Gollanz, Orion, 2013).

The world is occupied—in ascending level of importance—by humans, rats (that act a lot like humans), gargoyles (living creatures evidently inspired by their medieval stone counterparts), and 36 decans (the gods). A plot has been hatched by which a plague at the lower levels will unmake the decans' long-standing hell-on-earth hierarchy. In a confusion of plots and subplots, mixed verb tenses, repeating adjectives substituting for personal names, and indecipherable mayhem and destruction, this plot succeeds because the gods allow it to. Luckily, the world is remade according to a human master architect's vision, which is transformed, in the nick of time, into a model that influences the remaking in a magically inverted rendition of the dictum "as above so below" into "as below so above."

Tarot is mentioned a number of times: when a landlady recommends that her new boarder have his cards or dice read (56; ch. 2), as tarot dice played with by the Rat-King (239; ch. 6), and by Candia (411; ch. 8). Candia is the Reverend Tutor of the University of Crime, and his talent is reading Tarot, which is described as a deck of eighty-six cards, including thirty trumps and the four suits of Swords, Grails, Sceptres, and Stones (339-40; ch. 7). He performs a reading for White Crow, who becomes involved in remaking the current hierarchy, getting three cards "in the Sign of the Archer," the House of Destruction, Plague, Death ("a skull with blue periwinkle flowers set into the



eyes”), The Sun, The Lovers, and The World. White Crow challenges his notion that Tarot cards can be “sharped.” His response: “Readings influence what will come, as well as being influenced *by it*” (341-2; ch. 7). Later, Candia reads the cards alone and finds that all of their images are changing (464; ch. 8). The dissolution of the universe (before its remaking) is also described with reference to Tarot, as if the discarding of the old cards themselves represents the discarding of the old order (428; ch. 8).

**\*Hambly, Barbara.** *Stranger at the Wedding* (1994 as *Sorcerer’s Ward*; Open Road Integrated Media, 2011).

Kyra left her family behind to study at the Wizard’s School and is preparing for her exams when all of her magic starts to go wrong: the water she dips for scrying turns to blood, the Death card turns up in ten out of twelve spreads (prologue), and so forth. She decides these events are omens that her younger sister, who is about to be married to someone twice her age, is in mortal danger. She then risks returning to the childhood home from which she has been banished to discover what that danger is and to save her if she can. Kyra finds much more than she expected, including courage, power, and love.

**Lackey, Mercedes.** *Phoenix and Ashes* (Ebook edition Daw Books, 2004). This novel is a retelling of the Cinderella fairy-tale.

Eleanor Robinson is a young woman who, around the time of the first world war, aspires to go to university, until her father comes home with a new bride. When he dies in the war, this woman cuts off Eleanor’s little finger and uses it to bind her to the house as a servant and to make those who once knew her either forget her existence or accept the fiction that she has gone off to school. With a little help from the local witch and her Tarot deck, the notes about Tarot that her mother wrote in a book left in the attic for her, and the Tarot mentors who come to her in her dreams, Eleanor realizes that her mother was a powerful Fire Magician and that she has the potential to become just as strong.

**McKiernan, Dennis L.** *Once Upon a Winter’s Night* (Ebook edition Penguin Books, 2001). This novel is a retelling of the Norwegian folktale “East of the Sun and West of the Moon,” which includes many elements of the story of Cupid and Psyche.

Camille, who lives with her large and destitute family in a cottage on the edge of Faery, reluctantly accepts a marriage proposal from the Prince of Summerland that includes an annual brideprice to her family and then finds great happiness in the match. Her Prince, however, has been cursed by Trolls such that he can never let Camille know that he must spend much of his time in bear form. When Camille discovers his secret, the curse takes hold and she finds

herself alone. With more than a little help from the denizens of Summerland, the three Fates who preside over time, and the Tarot-reading Lady of the Bower Lisane, she saves her Prince and most of those who served in his mansion. On the way, she also saves at least a few of the “Firsts,” those who are the oldest and first occupants of Faery from lives of torment by solving the puzzle of their fragmentary memories: the gods, upon hearing human stories, made those stories into actuality in Faerie so that the invented characters might live on for the amusement of the gods.

The “taroc” cards are first introduced as a game, though their use in fortune-telling is mentioned (ch. 13). Later (ch. 23), Lisane reads them for Camille, emphasizing that they can only show what might be, not what will be, and that the gender shown by the cards may or may not be relevant. The spread itself is complex, being “wheels—the rings within rings,” and so is the interpretation. However, the cards show the turn to misery for Camille and her lover, many Swords warn of conflict, and Lisane believes the 3 of Cups Rx is a warning that Camille should not always trust her first intuition. Enemies and friends both appear, one in particular being a Minstrel, whom Camille decides may be one of the First Ones. The final four cards are the Devil and Death Rx, which suggest terrible events, and the Moon and Sun, which suggest the happier possibilities that come in the end.

**\*Moore, Christopher.** *Bloodsucking Fiends* (1995; Ebook, Simon & Schuster, 2009).

An ancient and lonely vampire turns Jody into one of his kind, hoping she will be his mate. Jody, however, takes the aspiring writer C. Thomas Flood as her lover and assistant in all daytime activities. Their lives are complicated by the bodies the old vampire leaves for Jody, and which bring the young couple to the attention of local police detectives, but with a little help from the local “Emperor” and his two dogs, and neighbors with a new bronze casting technique, all turns out well in the end . . . probably.

Soon after arriving in San Francisco, Thomas reluctantly consults a café Tarot reader—the large, wildly dressed, cross-dressing (?) Madame Natasha—about Jody, whom he has just met (ch. 12). The Death card turns up twice for his relationships. Natasha tries to console him, saying “That does not necessarily mean physical death. The Death card can be a card of renewal, signifying a change. I would say that you recently broke up with someone.” Then s/he admits that it means his relationships and writing career are “fucked,” but his palm shows success in finding a new apartment. Given that Tommy is about to get involved with a vampire, the Death card for relationships is hardly surprising and it may also provide a clue as to Tommy’s unspecified fate at the end of the novel. He does indeed find an apartment.

**\*Murphy, Warren, and Richard Sapir.** *The Ghost in the Machine* (Destroyer series #90) (1992; Ebook edition, Gere Donovan Press, 2016).

On Samhain (Halloween), Randal T. Rumpff's famous tower is "spectralized" by the arrival through a telephone of a long-lost Russian agent wearing a Japanese-invented, Russian-developed suit that makes him, quite literally, the ghost-in-the-machine. As a result, those trying to enter or leave the building sink into the ground; only a few are lucky enough to land in the building's basement. Agents Remo and Chiun, student and Master respectively of the super-empowering martial art of Sinanju, are mobilized to deal with the problem, while IRS agents simultaneously attempt to foreclose on the building and Rumpff tries to turn the disaster into another deal.

The off-beat characters in this unrelenting satire-fantasy-thriller about a certain "Trump" and Gilbert Ryle's "ghost in the machine" include Delpha Rohmer, a Tarot-reading Wiccan who thinks her female powers can restore normalcy to the situation. Remo watches as she lays a spread of Marseilles-based (?) cards, including the Fool, Hanged Man, and Lovers (showing two naked women). She offers to read for him and gets the Hanged Man, which she says means the tower has been bewitched; and the Devil, which she interprets as meaning that Baphomet has come to claim Rumpff's soul. In response to Remo's cynicism, she says "The Tarot does not lie" (ch. 5).

**Powers, Tim.** *The Faulty Towers Trilogy. Last Call* (1992; Ebook HarperCollins, 2009). Nominated for the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award 1993. *\*Expiration Date* (1996; Open Road Integrated Media, 2013). Nebula Award Finalist. *Earthquake Weather* (1997; New York: Open Road Integrated Media, 2013).

This series is a complex re-envisioning of the tale of the Fisher King as a competition for power bestowed by Dionysus, with more than a few elements taken from the fate of Demeter and Persephone. In *Last Call*, the Fisher King—Georges Leon—draws the contenders for his crown into a card game called Assumption, by which he displaces their souls and they devolve slowly into confusion. When there is nothing left of their inner being, he is able to jump in and out of their bodies, thus becoming more or less immortal. The deck that makes this possible is a "Lombardy Zeroth Tarot," the last copy of which was made by Spider Joe, now a blind cartomancer. Georges fails to recognize his own son Scotty Crane when he makes him one of his victims. Scotty, however, with the help of his adoptive father—a man wise in the reading of all kinds of signs—and his adoptive sister Diana and a neighbor dying of cancer, remembers who he is, accepts that he is the legitimate heir to the King, and saves himself and many others by beating his father at his own Tarot game.

*Expiration Date* is all about the wild misadventures of Kootie Hoomie who accidentally inhales the ghost of Thomas Alva Edison and thus becomes prey to every ghost hunter in LA. The city, it seems, is full of the still animate bodies of the dead and people who are addicted to inhaling ghosts as a means of getting high and of prolonging their lives. Tarot is mentioned only once in passing in the context of an unsuccessful attempt to distinguish the dead from the living: “we fed LSD to some poker players and had them do sixty or seventy hands of seven-stud with a Tarot deck [...]” (ch. 12). In the end, Kootie walks away in the protection of Pete Sullivan and Angelica Elizalde.

In *Earthquake Weather* Pete and Angelica are married and “Koot” is their adopted son and a potential heir to the Fisher King crown. Scott and Diana are also married and have a family. Scott, however, has been neglecting his duty of spending a month in the underworld every year. As a result, Dionysus sends a multiple-personality named Cody [Cordillia] Plumtree to murder him. Diana and her allies take the body to Koot in hopes of restoring him to life. One of their primary obstacles to that end is a villainous psychiatrist, Dr. Armentrout, who uses his practice to indulge his habit of feeding on personalities, which are evidently as tasty as ghosts. He paid \$400,000 for a twenty card “Lombardy Zeroth” deck in 1990, which lacks the Death and Tower cards, and uses it in his practice. These cards were “painted by a now-disbanded secret guild of damagingly initiated artists, and the images on the cards were almost intolerably evocative of the raw Jungian archetypes” (ch. 2). Merely showing the images to patients evokes such a powerful response that he can then do whatever he wants with them.

Tarot cards are also referenced by Koot, who has a vision of a Cup card and the Chariot card (ch. 1). Scott is represented by the Sun card (ch. 7). Angelica does a Tarot reading for Plumtree which is key to understanding why she murdered Scott (ch. 8). References are also made to the Fool and his dog (ch. 16 and 23), and the Death card (ch. 12 and 21). There is a brief but significant explanation of the Fisher King experience in relation to Tarot archetypes in a flashback between Scott and Mavranos, a neighbor whom Scott cured of cancer in the first book of *Earthquake Weather*.

[...] Scott had always maintained that the old man [his adoptive father] had died in saving Scott from a murderous embodiment of Dionysus and Death that had taken the physical form of Scott’s dead wife Susan.

“Maybe you’re *s’posed* to dream about Death, Pogo,” Mavranos said. “It’s one of the Major Arcana of the tarot deck, and I get the idea that in your dreams you practically go *bar-hopping* with the rest of that crowd.”

"I humanize them," Scott said. "A perfect Fisher King wouldn't just have a wounded side, he'd have no left arm or leg or eye, like the *Santeria* orisha called Osain—his other half was the land itself. I take the archetypes into myself, and they stop being just savage outside influences like rain or fire, and start to be allies—family, blood relations—a little."

"Poor old Death sounds like the bad witch in *Sleeping Beauty*," said Mavranos. "Pissed off because she was the only one not invited to the christening."

"You haven't ... *been* there, Arky. Death isn't a ... it doesn't embody a characteristic that shows up in humans, the way the others do, so you can't *relate* to it at all [...] Death's just a blobby black hole in the floor." (159; ch. 12)

**\*Pratchett, Terry and Neil Gaiman.** *Good Omens: The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch* (1990); Ebook edition Transworld Publishers, 2006.

The angel Aziraphale and demon Crowley are left on Earth to await Armageddon while promoting the interests of their respective realms. Armageddon is expected shortly as the antichrist has been born. However, a mix up in "Adam's" family placement leaves him to grow up in Tadfield without any special attention from either side. Meanwhile, Anathema Device, who has spent her whole life studying the prophecies of her long dead ancestress Agnes Nutter, is well aware of the likelihood that life on Earth as she—and Aziraphale and Crowley—prefer it, is about to come to a violent end. While factions from all sides converge on Tadfield as the destined moment of destruction approaches, Adam also decides he likes things more or less as they are.

Tarot is mentioned twice. A note in the chapter "Saturday" says that Pepper's mother, a peripheral character, "gave Power tarot readings to nervous executives, because old habits died hard." The "old habits" referred to are presumably those of women who practiced witchcraft in centuries past. In addition, a secondary character, Madame Tracy, knowing that most of her customers have no interest in the occult beyond "dabbling," has "removed most of the Major Arcana from her Tarot card pack, because their appearance tended to upset people" ("Saturday"). More prominent throughout the book are Agnes's prophecies, which Anathema has recorded on file cards for easier reference. When she accidentally leaves her copy of Agnes's book with Aziraphale, she is forced to rely exclusively on these cards, even shuffling them like a deck and, at the instigation of her partner and erstwhile witchfinder, Newt, drawing one as she might draw a Tarot card ("Saturday").



Rider-Waite Tarot®. Pamela Smith (artist) and Arthur Waite. 1909 © 1971 U.S. Games Systems. Illus. reproduced by permission of U.S. Games Systems. Further reproduction prohibited.

**Quinn, Daniel.** *The Holy* (Context Books, 2002; Ebook edition: 2002, Zooland Books.).

Aaron Fischer hires Detective Howard Schein to find out if the gods denounced in the Old Testament actually exist. Howard, who needs the money, tries to take the job seriously: he has his cards read by Denise Purcell, meets the teenage psychic Richard Holloway who calls these gods “yoo-hoos,” and undergoes a pre-initiation rite with Satanist Joel Bailey. Eventually, he hooks up with Tim, a boy in search of his father David Kennesey, who left his family and ended up in the company of the “yoo-hoo” Andrea and her friends. As it turns out, the gods have hitched Howard’s quest to that of Tim, David, and David’s wife Ellen: they need David and Tim to transform the mess humankind has created of the Earth (and not in a way that may be desirable from a human perspective).

Each section of the book (ebook edition) opens with a Tarot card (*Rider-Waite* version): 7 of Cups, Devil, 7 of Swords, Fool, 2 of Pentacles, Page of Swords, 5 of Swords, and Sun, most of which appear in Denise’s reading for Howard. Denise draws the King of Pentacles as Howard’s significator (ch. 5), then has him shuffle the cards before she lays a celtic cross spread.

	4. CROWN: 8 of Cups		11. 5 of Swords
	1. PROMINENT INFLUENCE: 5 of Pentacles	7. FUTURE: Page of Swords	10. 2 of Swords Rx
6. PAST: 5 Wands Rx	2. COVERS: 7 of Swords		9. 7 of Cups
	3. CROSSES: 2 of Pentacles		8. Tower
	5. WHAT YOU BUILD ON: 3 of Wands		

She has Howard do a lot of the interpreting himself, but also provides a reading that is unusually sophisticated for fiction. She draws his attention to the two swords left behind in the 7 of Swords and the fact that the figure in the card carries the other five by the blades. She connects the abandoned 2 swords to the two ships in the background of the 2 of Pentacles and says he is underestimating the danger he is in. She links the 5 swords to the 5 staves in the 5 of Wands and says this means the battles will get more serious and the reversal of the card warns him of trickery. Denise offers three possible meanings for the Page of Swords: that Howard himself isn't ready for the battle, that it refers to someone she is thinking of offering to him as an ally, or that a young boy will need his protection, "but it's his sword you'll follow." The four cards she lays to the right include the Tower (Howard's own strength may make him a target), 7 of Cups (Howard will be confused), 2 of Swords Rx (a false peace, the two forgotten swords speak of treachery), and finally the 5 of Swords (the outcome is that his enemies are free to reassemble and take revenge). Denise also notes that three of the seven cards that show main figures with their backs turned are in this spread. Later, Andrea refers to Denise's reading for Howard (ch. 46) and clarifies which of the three meanings of the Page of Swords is correct—a point that is obvious by this time.

At a gathering where Howard sums up and reports to Aaron (ch. 50), Denise again offers Tarot-related advice. She points to the Fool as the card showing the beginning of a journey and the Magician as who the Fool becomes by the end. She proposes that David's destination was to start out as the Fool and become one of "them"—a yoo-hoo—and he couldn't do it. Tim, on the other hand, is just at the beginning of his journey.

**\*Rowling, J.K.** *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. (2005; Bloomsbury, 2018). Harry Potter series 1997 ff.

The Harry Potter books trace the coming-of-age of Harry Potter and his closest friends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger. Harry is famously the "boy who lived" when the archvillain of the series, Tom Riddle aka Voldemort, came to kill him and thus thwart a prophecy suggesting Harry might obstruct his ambitions for power. The prophecy was delivered by Sybil Trelawney, who, in spite of a dismal interview with Dumbledore, Headmaster at Hogwarts, gets the job of Divination Professor. When Harry arrives in her class, she torments him by frequently predicting his early and horrible death with whatever future-telling method they happen to be studying.

Tarot is not a significant motif in the series, but it is used effectively in *Harry and the Half-Blood Prince* in connection with Professor Trelawney to dramatize Dumbledore's end. Harry sees his professor walking the halls and drawing cards: the 2, 7, 10, and Knight of Spades, all of which would seem to

predict terrible things to come (ch. 10). They also suggest the use of regular playing cards rather than Tarot, in which the suits are more likely to be Wands, Cups, Swords, and Pentacles. In chapter 25, Harry comes upon Trelawney just after she has been unceremoniously thrown out of the Room of Requirement, where she had attempted to hide her empty cooking sherry bottles. She refuses to go to Dumbledore with Harry about this unusual event, because she says the Headmaster has made it clear he does not want to see so much of her.

“If Dumbledore chooses to ignore the warnings the cards show—” Her bony hand closed suddenly around Harry’s wrist. “Again and again, no matter how I lay them out—” And she pulled a card dramatically from underneath her shawls. “—the lightning-struck tower,” she whispered. “Calamity. Disaster. Coming nearer all the time . . .” (ch. 25; 451)

This reference and the later chapter title, the “Lightning Struck Tower” (ch. 27), suggest the Tarot trump. Trelawney, not incidentally, has her classroom in a tower room and Dumbledore meets his end when Snape sends him falling from the top of the Astronomy Tower.

\***Tryon, Thomas.** *Night Magic* (1995; Open Road Integrated Media, Inc. 2013). *Night Magic* is included here primarily because of the popularity of its source, “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice,” in modern fantasy. *Night Magic* is described in the “About the Author” page as a retelling of the eighteenth-century poem by Goethe, but the story is much older. Goethe’s poem is available in English translation online <[http://www.gygatech.ch/english\\_translations\\_zurich\\_sorcerers\\_apprentice.html](http://www.gygatech.ch/english_translations_zurich_sorcerers_apprentice.html)>.

Tryon’s version draws numerous magicians dating back to ancient Egypt, including Merlin and Cagliostro, into one character who wants an apprentice, whom he finds in Michael Hawke. Michael’s ambition to become the greatest magician in the world makes him particularly vulnerable to the old man’s will.

Tarot cards are mentioned several times in passing in the Prologue where some of the great magician’s past lives are detailed. While living in ancient Egypt, he sometimes uses the Tarot cards invented by the god Thoth to “read fates and fortunes.” When he is ordered to teach Tarot-reading to the Pharaoh’s son, he first has him learn the images and then gives him the Eye of Horus to wear as he looks at the cards. Both teacher and pupil are terrified when he draws first the Magician and then the Hanged Man, which “meant but one thing: death upon the gallows.” In the novel proper, the magician is called Max by his wife Lena, a woman with considerable talent as an automatic writer and whom Max keeps bent almost entirely to his will. Lena owns a pack of Tarot cards and, worried about her husband’s latest attempt to find an apprentice, she



lays the cards, drawing the Knight of Pentacles (“the coming or going of a matter”) with the Hanged Man “crossing her, against her” (ch. 9).

**Wrede, Patricia.** *The Raven Ring* (Lyra Novels Book 5) (1994; Open Road Integrated Media, 2012). The other Lyra novels (1982 ff) are set in the same world as *The Raven Ring*, but do not have the same characters and do not incorporate Tarot or any kind of fortune-telling deck.

When she learns that her soldier mother has died, Eleret makes the long trek from the mountains to Ciaron to claim her possessions and her pay. Ambushes, office break-ins, and outright attempts to buy and steal her mother’s kit bag alert both her and the local Commander—who assigns Lord Daner to help her—that someone wants one of these possessions very badly. Even Daner’s home is infiltrated by “luck-seer” Jonystra Niandol and her purported assistant, the shape-shifting Mobrellan (ch. 14). When Jonystra tries to use Tarot to alter Eleret’s future, the cards are set on fire by the back-flow of magic, but, with a little help from Daner’s aunt and another reading by one of Eleret’s allies, Adept Climeral (chs. 23-24), who is one of the “non-human, semi-legendary Shee,” they provide clues as to who is after Eleret and her mother’s raven ring, and partially clarify Mobrellan’s motives. The movements Eleret sees in each of the cards guide her as she and Daner and master thief Karvonen finally apprehend and kill him.

The deck used for “card-charting” by Jonystra and the Adept includes at least four suits (Feathers, Flames, Shells, and Stones), court cards (Lady, Mage, Priest, and Sorceress), “minor trumps” (Mason and Raven), and (presumed) trumps (Silence, Mountain, Despair, Taxes, War, Night, Death, Chaos, and Betrayal). When Mobrellan tries to use the deck for evil purposes, Jonystra’s inability to control his spell apparently allows them to work on Eleret’s behalf, rather than his. Jonystra herself helps fill in many of the details about Mobrellan’s activities. The Adept also uses magic during his charting of Eleret’s cards, but on her behalf and with more productive results.

**EMILY E. AUGER** (Ph.D.) is the author of numerous books and articles, including *Cartomancy and Tarot in Film 1940-2010* (2016) and *Tarot and Other Meditation Decks* (2004), editor of the multi-author *Tarot in Culture Volumes I and II* (2014), and the area chair for Tarot and Other Methods of Divination at the Popular Culture Association / American Culture Association conference.

