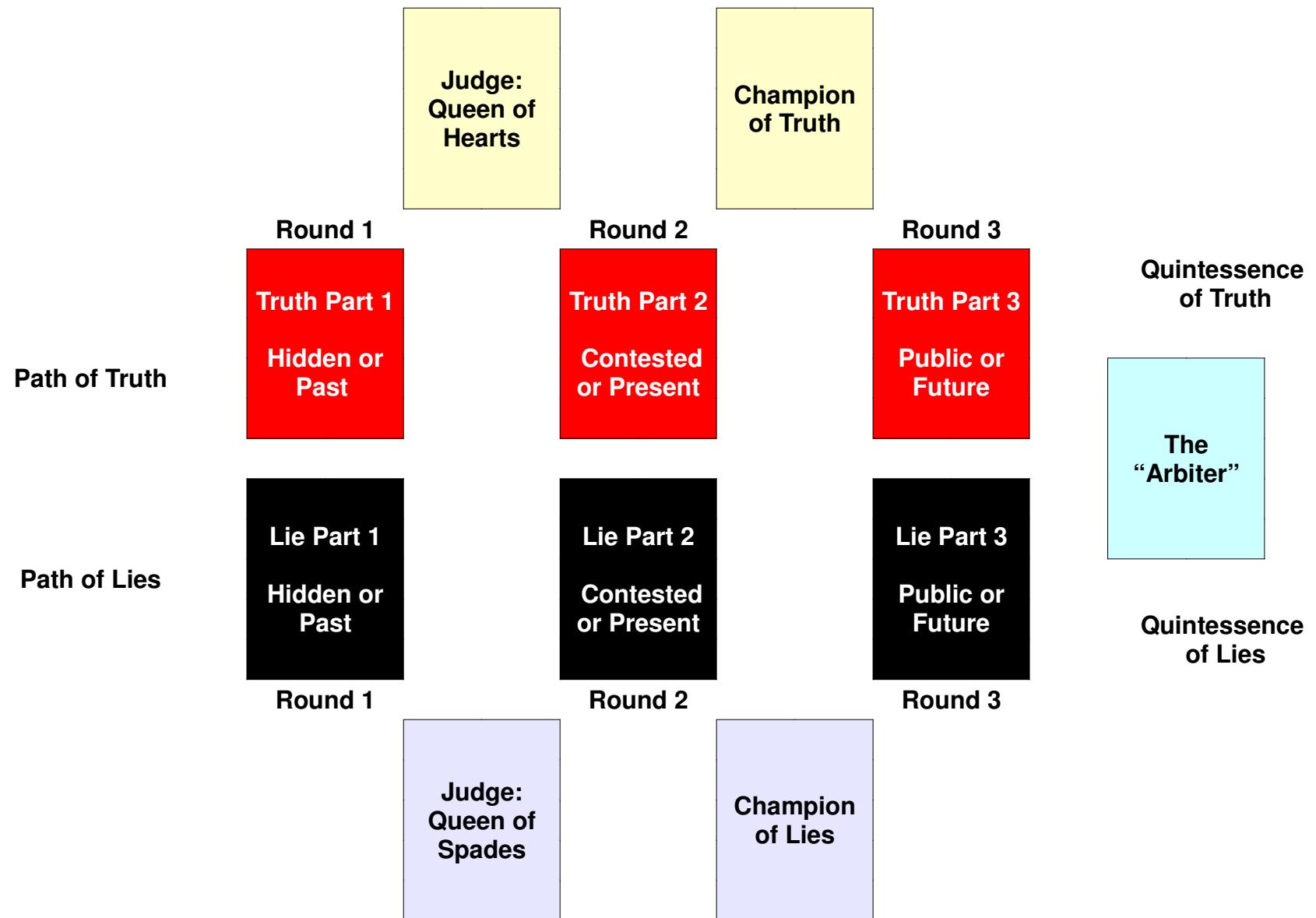


“Truth vs. Lies” Spread



The “Truth vs. Lies” Spread

This spread explores whether the “truth” or the “lie” faction has the upper hand in any situation where conflicting claims exist (as in “he said/she said” disagreements).

You will need at least two tarot decks and one playing card deck. Because “every story has two sides,” two tarot decks will allow the same card to appear in both lines, showing “two sides of the same coin” for the truth or lie deliberation. The decks don’t have to be identical as long as they’re both 78-card packs. No signifier is used.

Before starting, take the Queen of Hearts (“truth, in general” in playing-card cartomancy) and the Queen of Spades (“lies, in general”) from the playing card deck and set them aside. These will represent the “judges” for the last step in the reading.

Read reversals or not according to your usual practice, and adjust the interpretation accordingly. (Reversals may suggest unclear motives or a hidden agenda.)

Shuffle and cut the first tarot deck and lay out a line of three cards. This is the “Path of Truth.”

This series can be read as “past-present-future” - the emergence of the “facts of the matter” over time - if appropriate to the question. Alternatively, the left-most card can be read as “what is hidden” (behind-the-scenes intrigue or maneuvering); the middle card as “what is contested” (the “heart” of the controversy; and the right-most card as “what is public” (the outlook and possible influence – support or obstruction - of other stakeholders). Combining these approaches may also be effective. In addition, all three should be blended into a single interpretation to summarize their testimony. The result will be read as the “signature” or “keynote” of the “truth argument.”

Shuffle and cut the second tarot deck and lay out a line of three cards directly below the first three, making three two-card columns. This is the “Path of Lies.” The same considerations apply as for the “truth” series.

Place a seventh card to the right of the two lines, on center; this will be the “arbiter.”

These paths, when read as parallel “story-lines,” will show which influence has the most plausible claim to being accurate in the final analysis.

The above-and-below pairing of the cards into three columns offers a way to judge whether the “true” or the “false” is most likely to dominate the situation in each focus area (in more fanciful terms, they can be seen as “sparring partners” that “duke it out” for dominance).

Court cards in any of the pairings could show “who is telling the truth and who is lying” in one or more areas of the matter – Wands show actions (who did or didn’t do what); Cups show feelings (who can - or can’t - be trusted); Swords show understanding (who thought or said what); and Pentacles show status (who is in the best - or worst – position to gain in the dispute).

The comparison of each vertical pair will give an idea whether the “force for truth” or the “force for lies” will emerge as the most convincing argument at any given point in the development of the matter. These pairings are similar to “rounds” in a boxing match; each one will give a preliminary “decision” in its area of inquiry. Some judgment will be required in “close-call” situations and a “split decision” - an inconclusive outcome – may result.

Weigh the final “signature” interpretations for the two lines against one another to see which makes the strongest case for supremacy. Also factor in which series has won the most “rounds.” A “split decision” is also possible in this outcome.

Next, consider the “sum-of-the-parts vs. the whole” match-up. A powerful Trump card like the Devil anywhere in the “lies” series can “give the lie” to everything in the “truth” series unless a similar potency is exhibited there. In the latter case, careful consideration must be given to the nuances of each card (or cards) to see which influence “carries the day.”

Form a preliminary “verdict” from these considerations.

Finally, select a “champion” for each series. There will be a “trial by combat” to see where the truth lies in “the eyes of the gods” (the archetypal wisdom of the Trump cards). The champion is chosen by deriving a “quintessence” card from each series using numerological addition and reduction to arrive at a number from 0 to 21, after which the associated Trump card is picked to represent each faction. (Upright card values are added to the total, reversed card values are subtracted; a negative result produces a reversed “quint”). If the Trump so derived already appears in the spread, draw the champion card from the other deck or from a third deck as necessary.

Before positioning these cards in the spread, place the Queen of Hearts above the middle card in the “truth” series and slightly to the left; she is one “sitting judge.” Place the Queen of Spades (the other “judge”) below the middle card in the “lies” series and slightly to the left. No interpretive significance is given to the Queens, this is just a ritual touch.

Place the “truth” champion next to the Queen of Hearts and the “lies” champion next to the Queen of Spades.

Compare the meanings of the two Trump cards to see which appears to provide the most compelling argument for or against the correctness of the preliminary outcome. Use the “arbiter” as a tie-breaker if neither Trump dominates; look for supporting commonality in the symbolism between the arbiter and each Trump card, including pictorial, elemental, astrological, qabalistic and similar correspondences. (Note that no one Trump is “stronger” than any other; some are just more aligned than others to a positive, negative or neutral outcome.) Extra weight should be given to Trump cards that appear in the spread series of the same quality (truth or lie) in addition to being a “champion.” Some ambiguity can be expected in the final analysis, although a “split decision” is unlikely to occur at this level. “No winner” is a possibility, however, if the oracle isn’t revealing its secrets at that particular time. If that happens, accept the preliminary verdict as the final answer.

Award the “crown” to the combination (preliminary verdict and “final showdown” outcome) that emerges as the clearest winner.

Offer the querent an informed opinion regarding which faction holds sway in the matter: whether truth plainly wins out, whether falsehood has the inside track or whether the outcome is uncertain. Depending on the querent’s stake in the matter, the advice could be to throw support behind the “true” bias and withhold it from the “false,” align with the winning side to minimize vulnerability, stand pat until the situation becomes clearer or simply “run for the hills.”