

# Odyssey

## PLAYING CARDS

It's argued whether or not playing cards originated in India or in China. They were brought from the Middle East into Europe during the 14th century, and in 1480 the popular French design of spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs was used in England and was soon the standard in the western world.

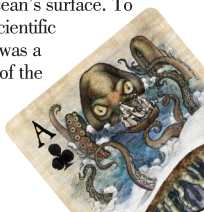
Odyssey cards highlight the struggles within humanity during the rapidly expanding world of the 16th through 19th centuries.

The artwork in this deck explores the ways in which these themes unfolded in the intertwined stories of the people in that age of exploration. Through the intimacy of these portraits, we see both the saga of their unique era and familiar themes that remain relevant in our own time.

For an in-depth description of each of the cards, please visit our website at [entertheglow.com](http://entertheglow.com)

**A♣ Fear**

Exploring the world teased out some of humanity's most primal fears. Hungry creatures filled the voids of the unknowns, bringing about stories of cannibals, wild beasts, and ships swallowed up by dangerous creatures. Long volcanic tendrils with plumes of smoke escaping from the ends could cause explosions and disruptions at the ocean's surface. To the un-scientific eye this was a sighting of the Kraken.



**J♣ Education**

Navigation was an enormous part of the early modern period; the future was promising for young dreamers in search of a connection between Earth and sky. Improvements in mapping and ship design lead to accelerated travel. By the mid-17th century, Europe had become advanced in the art of map cartography, creating the most accurate maps for travelers looking to face the wilderness to bring back valuable resources to home and country.




**Q♣ Appropriation**

Once a ship was captured, it was stripped of impractical embellishments and thoughtfully adjusted for increased speed. Smaller vessels could hide more easily but had less firepower and storage space, while the larger ships could carry more merchandise, firepower and crew but were not as fast and nimble. Successful pirate crews could purchase or commandeer a small ship and then "trade up," but most pirates would remain with one or two ships.




**K♣ Piracy**

Most pirates had previously served in the Navy and had the knowledge and confidence to sail ships and navigate the sea. Due to the unlawful nature of this occupation, battles at sea ensued and human casualties were enormous. The vast ocean became the final resting place for treasures as well as human remains. Many sailors kept a cat on their ship to control rat infestations and disease amongst the crew.



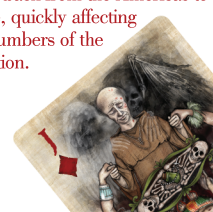
**A♦ Perception**

Sightings of sea monsters were usually just a quick glimpse of a creature before it disappeared, and "big fish" stories were born. These beasts were usually imagined to be enormous, spouting water, swinging long arms, flashing sharp teeth or beaks and protected by a scaly and slimy exterior. There were countless descriptions where men and their ships were threatened by a monster's fierce strength.




**J♦ Pestilence**

Missionaries from Spain brought Christianity in hopes to convert natives. Unfortunately, they also brought death in the form of disease. Beginning in 1519-1520, around 5-8 million natives perished, and smallpox was the leading cause of death. Diseases were passed in both directions and syphilis was carried back from the Americas to Europe, quickly affecting large numbers of the population.




**Q♦ Religion**

Aztec Mother Goddess, Tonantzin's, temple was destroyed by the Spanish. Peasant Juan Diego traveled to the bishop with evidence that Our Lady of Gadalupe appeared to him, revealing indigenous Spanish roses, a miraculous image of the holy mother on his clothing and orders to build a chapel in honor of her holiness at Tepeyac hill. This event won over the majority of the Aztecs preventing the Spanish from declaring war and wiping out the Aztec people.




**K♦ Addiction**

China produced some of the most sought-after products, including tea, salt, sugar, porcelain, and silk. Opium began to become part of the trade in China for medicinal purposes initially but by the 17th century, there had become a great desire for the substance. As the addiction to opium grew, demand caused wars between China and Great Britain.




**A♠ Authority**

The Ace of Spades was chosen for the printing of duty stamps since that card had the largest blank space of all the cards. Each deck was stamped with a seal which proved that the government received its due taxes. Even though we still use the decorative Ace card today, the stiff laws were eventually abolished. The Odyssey version is inspired by concepts and motifs of royalty, navigation and freemasonry.



**J♠ Risk**

There are no exceptions to the dangerous challenges of the ever-changing, unsympathetic weather and the ocean's immense waves. It was unknown whether or not a sailor would survive the next treacherous storm, have their ship commandeered by pirates, or tossed out to their demise, alone with fathoms of ocean beneath them.




**Q♠ Imprisonment**

The strict terms of life that royalty inherited could make a person feel like a prisoner in their own skin. In Great Britain there were strict terms under which nobility had to follow, such as being Roman Catholic and marrying a Roman Catholic of noble blood. The terms have changed since then in regard to marriages and relationships.



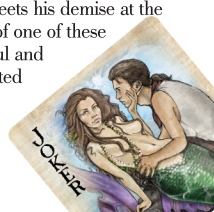
**K♠ Opulence**

The King of Spades highlights how the innocence of the prince was tarnished in the years following his coronation as King. With enormous responsibility and endless luxuries, he chose to follow a stern and judgmental path based on the foundation of entitlement, thus leaving him to be revered as a cold and callused human being.




**Joker A Folklore**

Varied stories of the mermaid go back centuries, branching off and evolving throughout time, leaving a collection of dramatic tales in their wake. A legend that has held up through time is the tale of mermaids that entice sailors by singing, using their alluring and hypnotic voices. Upon meeting these beautiful creatures, a sailor soon meets his demise at the hands of one of these beautiful and enchanted beasts.



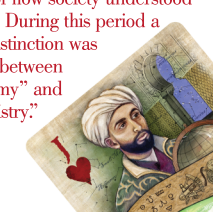
**A♥ Greed**

During the early modern period the demand for trading ivory erupted around the world and elephant tusks were fashioned into decorative items. Ivory's warm luster and receptivity to engravings meant that it gained stature as a luxury good. Elephant numbers plummeted. Laws have been placed to protect elephants but groups have still managed to find ways around them.




**J♥ Discovery**

Arabic scientists expanded on the ideas of classical Greek and Roman studies. Islamic astronomy was built on the sciences of the Greek and Indian cultures, which profoundly influenced Western scientific exploration. Developments in astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, physics, and biology changed the views of how society understood nature. During this period a rigid distinction was drawn between "alchemy" and "chemistry."



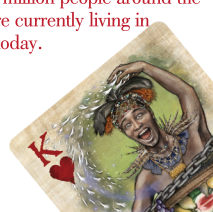
**Q♥ Resilience**

A young girl was orphaned and captured by an opposing King who planned to use her in a sacrifice, but a sea captain liberated her and she became a goddaughter to Queen Victoria. This is one miraculous example of an African girl in a dire situation in the 19th century. There were many women whose lives became a juxtaposition of where they started; sometimes needing to find the strength within themselves to overcome and turn their misfortune into fortune.



**K♥ Slavery**

Humans sold into slavery were once a relevant part of their society and vital members of their families. There was no guarantee that a slave would survive through the trade process or be released from the binds of slavery. Even though slavery has been abolished in most countries, it still exists today. More than 29 million people around the world are currently living in slavery today.



**Joker B Comprehension**

Legendary mermaids were debunked after accounts revealed that the creature with the smooth and curvy shape was a harmless mammal that we know today as the manatee. They may have resembled humans from a distance due to their flippers, which look like two stubby arms. Interestingly enough, their upper skeletal structures look similar to the skeleton of humans because they include hand and finger-like bones within the flippers.

