

# BLUE BIRD LENORMAND™

FORTUNE TELLING CARDS



WRITTEN BY STUART R. KAPLAN

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*Portrait of Mlle. Lenormand*

# BIOGRAPHY

Marie-Anne Adelaide Lenormand (Le Normand) was born on May 27, 1772 in Alencon (Orne), France. She was the eldest of three siblings. Her parents died before she was six, and her care was entrusted to stepparents. Lenormand had a mischievous spirit and she was often petulant.

Life with her stepfather and stepmother proved difficult, and her stepfather decided to entrust her education to the Benedictine nuns of the Royal Academy at Alencon.

Lenormand's extraordinary gifts of prophesy became evident at an early age. At the age of seven, she made several predictions for her young

companions which proved remarkably accurate.

The devout Benedictines subjected Lenormand to severe punishment of bread and water to counter her budding sorceress abilities.

When a Benedictine Abbess was dismissed for misconduct, Lenormand predicted that the king of France would name her replacement. Eighteen months later her prophesy was fulfilled when the king named a Mme. De Livardie as her successor.

Lenormand left the Abbey of the Benedictines for the Abbey of the Sisters of St. Mary where she continued her education. Although Lenormand showed a great avidity for learning, her stepmother could no longer subsidize

her education. She was apprenticed at age fourteen to an obscure seamstress, but Lenormand had neither the skill nor temperament for sewing. With only a single white dress and a six pound crown, she soon left for Paris.

Her stepfather secured a position for Lenormand in a commercial house as a saleswoman where she gained much knowledge and experience. A clerk in the firm taught her arithmetic. Lenormand soon realized that the mysterious numbers and calculations had an application beyond the capacity of her mentor. She was eager to expand her knowledge.

At this time, the teachings of Doctor Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828) were in vogue. Doctor Gall researched the

functions of the brain and eventually became known as the originator of phrenology. Lenormand was desperate to go to London to meet the doctor. She had no funds, but she was astute with the calculation of numbers. She won 1,200 francs in the lottery. Immediately, she traveled to London where Doctor Gall received her cordially. He recognized her special abilities and encouraged her, using the prestige of his name to attract clients for her. Soon, she was no longer the little adventurous girl from Alencon; she was now a recognized prophetess skilled in reading cards.

In 1790, at the age of 18, Lenormand returned to Paris. She took employment with an ardent Royalist, Mr.

Amerval de la Saussoie on Rue Honore-Chevalier. He instilled in her a love for the Bourbons. Thereafter, she established herself on Rue de Tournon, opening a salon of divination and a bookstore. She devoted herself full-time to the art of divination. Her fame as a fortune-teller quickly grew. She was arrested and imprisoned by the police several times, although not for very long.

These were times of great unrest in France. The breath of revolution and death was everywhere. Life changed on a fatal encounter; a wrong word or gesture might mean imprisonment or death. Private hatred and resentment burst to the forefront; mobs ruled in defiance of the king. The guillotine claimed untold victims. Members

of the nobility, fearful for their lives, flocked to Lenormand's door for consultation.

Mlle. Lenormand predicted the violent death of King Louis XVI (as did other fortune-tellers). As a fervent Royalist, Lenormand risked her life in a vain attempt to save Marie Antoinette who was held at the Temple prison. Mrs. Richard, wife of the prison's concierge, and Michonis, prison administrator, conspired with Lenormand in a bold attempt to free the empress. Dressed as an errand girl with a basket of fruit in her hand, Lenormand entered the prison where Marie-Antoinette was held. But the empress, bewildered and stupefied, did not have the courage to attempt an escape, and eventually she fell to the guillotine.

Lenormand's clients included members of the French court, the nobility, revolutionaries, artists, the fashionably dressed, the wealthy and the poor. There were countless hundreds who publicly displayed an impenetrable shield against imminent danger but, behind closed doors, they knew moments of anguish and fear. Notable clients included Robespierre, Marat, Saint-Just, Legendre, Hebert, Desmou-lins, Barrere, Mme. Tallien, Garat and Barras. The most famous of Lenormand's clients was Empress Josephine.

Marie Josephe Rose Tascher de la Pagerie was married to Alexandre de Beauharnais, Visconte de Beauharnais. Frightened by the unsettling events of the time, Josephine summoned Lenormand for a reading. Lenormand

foretold that her husband would be executed and that Josephine would one day be married to a young officer whose star would rise to great fortune. General de Beauharnais was executed on July 23, 1794, and nearly two years later Josephine married Napoleon, the future emperor of France on March 9, 1796.

Josephine was a superstitious person and often consulted Mlle. Lenormand. During a dramatic reading session, Lenormand foretold to Josephine that Napoleon would divorce her. This so infuriated Napoleon when he learned about it that on December 11, 1809 he ordered Lenormand imprisoned. The publicity only served to increase the reputation of the prophetess.

Napoleon divorced Josephine on January 10, 1810. Years earlier, Lenormand had also predicted the emperor's calamitous downfall in 1814 during a severe winter in a foreign land.

For over 50 years Mlle. Lenormand reigned as the Paris Sibyl on Rue de Tournon. Beyond the borders of France, she was consulted by kings and queens, princes, ambassadors and leading people of all kinds from Europe. Between the years 1809 through 1832, she authored 13 books describing events of the times and her many experiences with Empress Josephine and other nobility.

Mlle. Lenormand died at age 72 on June 25, 1843 from complications after an operation that resulted in gangrene.

Mlle. Lenormand left an estate of 500,000 French francs to her nephew, Alexandre Hugo. Her remains are interred in Pere-Lachaise Cemetery, Paris. Her gravesite was originally marked with a mausoleum. In the mid-1970s, Stuart R. Kaplan visited the gravesite and took a photograph of the mausoleum that had collapsed and fallen into disrepair. The mausoleum has since been replaced with a tomb and headstone.

The reputation of Mlle. Lenormand continues today. Her gravesite is visited by many admirers who often leave flowers as a token of their esteem.



Photograph by Stuart R. Kaplan © 1974. Further reproduction prohibited



*Mlle. Lenormand's mausoleum in collapsed state of disrepair, circa 1974*

Photograph by Paula Palmer © 2014. Further reproduction prohibited



*Mlle. Lenormand's tomb, circa 2014*

Note: Material contained in the biography of Mlle. Marie-Anne Lenormand is drawn from *Mlle Le Normand, sa biographie, ses predictions extraordinaire, son commerce avec les personages les plus illustres d'Europe, de la Republique, du Directoire, de l'Empire et de la Restauration jusqu'a nos jours.* by Francis Girault. 2nd Edition. Paris: Breteau et Pichery, 1843. Held in private library of Stuart R. Kaplan.

## BLUE BIRD LENORMAND CARDS

The explanations printed on each card and a sample card spread are described more fully on the following pages. Card readers should allow their

own interpretation of the cards using the text as the basis for basic card meanings. With practice, the cards will afford many rewarding hours of insight and enjoyment.

## METHOD OF SPREADING THE CARDS

The Diviner, or person who will read the cards, shuffles and cuts the deck, and places the cards face up in four rows of eight cards each, and one row of four cards, beginning from left to right at the top row as follows:



The person who seeks to have his or her future foretold (it can also be the Diviner for a self-reading) is known as the Querent and is usually designated by one of the Gentleman (28) or Lady (29) cards. These cards are of important significance since their position in relation to the other cards determines what factors and influences presently exist upon the Querent, what influences will exist in the future, and to what extent. Cards that are closest to Card No. 28 or 29 have the most important significance in the reading.

The cards located above the Querent have greater influence over the Querent and are influenced by the cards that lie nearby. The cards beneath the Querent have a weaker influence on the Querent. Cards to the right

of the Querent are usually powerful influences. The nearer the card to the Querent card, the more important and stronger the effect, while the farther away, the less the influence is felt.

After the cards are laid out, examine them carefully, study their relation to one another, see where the strongest influences come from, note the position of every card and how one card controls another.

## EXPLANATION OF EACH CARD

### Card No. 1 — CAVALIER

This card signifies good news coming from a stranger. It may mean wealth, or wishes will come true. This card is

a good omen and is usually a sign that the outlook is becoming favorable, unless the card is surrounded by other cards of bad omen and augury.

### Card No. 2 – CLOVER

This card brings good luck and good fortune. If this card is near the Querent card it signifies that present misfortune or sorrow will soon disappear. If this card is far from the Querent card then its good luck is weakened, delayed or even entirely offset. If this card is surrounded by cards with bad signs, then events feared by the Querent will occur and will bring sadness.

### Card No. 3 – SHIP

This card means that an opportunity is approaching the Querent that opens up new avenues for good fortune and

success in business. However, care must be taken in the event of unexpected setbacks. When this card is very near the Querent card it signifies a journey or trip with many memorable events.

### Card No. 4 – HOUSE

This card signifies that current undertakings will continue to be fruitful and successful. The opportunities ahead are promising. In the event this card is below the Querent card, it suggests caution especially with respect to other surrounding cards. You need to be strong in your beliefs.

### Card No. 5 – TREE

If this card is near the Querent card your outlook is generally favorable and your spiritual roots are well-grounded. This card located far from the Querent

card means you should pay attention to your health.

### Card No. 6 – CLOUDS

The meaning of this card is determined by which side the card is positioned to the Querent card. If to the left of the Querent card it is a sign that strong events lie ahead. If to the right of the Querent card, the outlook is stormy but more influenced by surrounding cards.

### Card No. 7 – SNAKE

The snake is a sign of betrayal, possibly someone seeking to do great harm to you. The degree of danger is dependent upon the distance that this card is from the Querent card. The closer the card, the greater the danger.

This card invariably signifies treachery

and deception.

### **Card No. 8 – COFFIN**

This card signifies sickness, loss of money and eventually loss of courage to meet and overcome problems. The closer this card to the Querent card the more serious the omen. Even if the card is far away it is still to be feared.

### **Card No. 9 – FLOWERS**

This card depicts a bouquet of colorful flowers, which signifies happiness and contentment in all things. It is a card of joy in all daily aspects of life. The closer this card to the Querent card the stronger the favorable influences.

### **Card No. 10 – SCYTHE**

This card means the cutting away of current troubles or the weakening of a bad situation. Misfortune can be over-

come if the Querent is willing to make sacrifices to overcome the challenge.

### **Card No. 11 – BIRCHROD**

This card signifies disharmony and conflict in personal life. If this card is near the Querent card it may signify quarrels, domestic trouble, stormy friendship, unhappy romance and failing marriage.

### **Card No. 12 – BIRDS**

This card suggests the need to talk with a friend. When this card is far away from the Querent card it indicates negative communication or unfavorable gossip.

### **Card No. 13 – CHILD**

This card suggests that the Querent needs to embrace a new start with a youthful attitude. It indicates that the

Querent is pure of heart and an honest person.

### Card No. 14 – FOX

When this card is near the Querent card, the fox suggests someone is trying to deceive the Querent. There is danger by sly craftiness and the Querent should be alert to all pitfalls and false friends.

### Card No. 15 – BEAR

This card suggests strength and protection. The Querent should assert themselves to protect their interests. The company of overbearing persons should be avoided.

### Card No. 16 – STARS

This card is an assurance of continued success and favorable outlook in all endeavors. However, when this card

is surrounded by other cards of bad omen, harmony may be disrupted.

### **Card No. 17 – STORK**

When this card is near the Querent card, it suggests a change of abode or lover. If this card is far away it suggests change may be delayed or postponed indefinitely.

### **Card No. 18 – DOG**

If this card is near the Querent card it signifies a true and lasting friendship. If this card is surrounded by cards of bad omen, it suggests a needy friend who takes more than they give.

### **Card No. 19 – TOWER**

This card suggests the Querent is a person of strong authority and influence. However, if this card is surrounded by cards of bad omen, it

suggests weakness or arrogance under certain circumstances.

### **Card No. 20 – GARDEN**

This card suggests that the Querent will go to a party or meeting and make an important new connection. If this card is near the Querent card, it indicates a nurturing environment.

### **Card No. 21 – MOUNTAIN**

If this card is near the Querent card it warns of a formidable obstacle that needs to be overcome. If this card is far away, even though loyal friends will come to the aid of the Querent, you need to summon your own strength.

### **Card No. 22 – CROSSROAD**

This card foretells the need for making important decisions. If this card is

removed from the Querent, you may need to consider alternative options.

### **Card No. 23 – MICE**

This card is a sign of theft or robbery. The loss is a gradual one, not sudden like with the Scythe. If this card is near the Querent card, the stolen articles may be recovered. If this card is far away, the loss may be irretrievable.

### **Card No. 24 – HEART**

This card is a sign of joy and good fortune. It foretells that romance will bloom and happiness will embrace the Querent. This is a strong, favorable card of overall contentment.

### **Card No. 25 – RING**

This card when to the right of the Querent card signifies a blessed union

and a happy and prosperous life. When this card is to the left of the Querent card it means troubles and discontentment will arise, resulting in possible separation, broken engagement and even divorce.

### **Card No. 26 – BOOK**

This closed book holds knowledge or a secret. The closer the card to the Querent card, the more significant the secret. The secret may be favorable or unfavorable depending upon the surrounding cards.

### **Card No. 27 – LETTER**

This card indicates that a letter from afar will bring news to the Querent. If favorable cards surround then the news will be good. If cards of bad omen surround then the news will be bad.

## Card No. 28 – GENTLEMAN

There are two cards representing the male Querent. One can be used for a young boy. A second Gentleman card shows a more mature man, facing the opposite direction. Choose one, or use both for same sex relationships. The card can also denote male energy or a male figure in the Querent's life. The location and direction of this card is of important significance in the reading of the cards.

## Card No. 29 – LADY

This is the Querent card representing the woman or a young lady. It can also denote female energy or a female figure in the Querent's life. A second Lady card shows a more mature woman, facing the opposite direction. Choose one, or use both for same sex relationships.

The location and direction of this card is of prime importance in the reading of the cards.

### Card No. 30 – LILIES

This card signifies a happy and virtuous life by an ambitious person. When this card is above the Querent card it reveals good disposition and outlook for the Querent. If the card is below the Querent card, the person's integrity is questionable.

### Card No. 31 – SUN

This card when near the Querent card emanates good fortune and bright outlook. When this card is away from the Querent card disappointment threatens and discouragement arises.

### Card No. 32 – MOON

When this card is near the Querent

card it is a sign of great honors to come. This card foretells respect and recognition to the Querent. When far away this card suggests displeasure, lack of appreciation and even grief.

### Card No. 33 – KEY

This card when near the Querent card signifies success in new undertakings and accomplishment of new goals.

When far away this card is a sign of disappointment, troubles and plans going awry. Solutions remain elusive.

### Card No. 34 – FISH

This card promises wealth and substantial fortune to the Querent if he or she is willing to grasp the opportunity. Success is apparent in many ventures.

When this card is far away it suggests new pursuits will be more difficult

to accomplish.

### **Card No. 35 – ANCHOR**

This card is a sign of successful undertakings in business and love. It indicates advantages in work and faithfulness in love. When this card is far away it suggests instability and a change of mind.

### **Card No. 36 – CROSS**

This card generally indicates a period of suffering and adversity. Sacrifices may need to be made to turn the situation around.

## **SAMPLE READING**

Based upon the foregoing explanations for each card, the following is a sample Grand Tableau card spread and reading:

17	27	22	19	4	8	30	21
11	18	5	2	24	36	26	32
20	10	16	3	29	1	12	25
14	6	15	13	31	28	23	7
		34	33	9	35		

Starting with each card near the Querent card, one card at a time is interpreted by itself and then in combination with other nearby cards so as to weave a continuing story. **Querent card No. 29** is located in the third row near the middle. The **Heart card No. 24**, above the Querent card promises good relationships, romance and happiness. This card is further strengthened by **Clover card No. 2**, which also indicates good luck and suggests that any present sorrow or unhappiness will

soon disappear. The **House card No. 4** confirms that future opportunities are favorable even if minor difficulties presently exist.

The **Cross card No. 36** is a sign of some imminent suffering. Because the card is close to the Querent, it indicates that troubles will have to be overcome.

The **Cavalier card No. 1** and the **Birds card No. 12** signify that news will shortly arrive from a distant place, probably from a Gentleman. The **Mice card No. 23**, and the **Snake card No. 7** indicate that someone may be betraying you or possibly stealing from you. The **Ship card No. 3** together with the **Stars card No. 16** reveal that an approaching opportunity will

open new avenues of success for the Querent.

That success may be threatened by the surrounding cards of bad omen including the **Scythe card No. 10**, which portends danger, and the **Clouds card No. 6**, which warns that something disagreeable and unpleasant may occur. The **Bear card No. 15** indicates that you will have to draw on your strengths and protect your interests. The **Mountain card No. 21** signals a daunting challenge. These unfavorable cards are partially offset by the **Child card No. 13**, which could indicate a fresh start and a bright outlook.

The **Birchrod card No. 11** may signal some quarrels, and the **Fox card No. 14** warns of deception. But since

the **Dog card No. 18** is closer to the Querent card, it indicates that loyal friends can be relied on for help. The **Garden card No. 20** points out the importance of social connections.

There are two extremely positive cards lying directly beneath and supporting the Querent. The **Sun card No. 31** and the **Flowers card No. 9** are favorable signs indicating that the Querent will find success and happiness. The **Anchor card No. 35** further strengthens your sense of security. The **Ring card No. 25**, located to the right of the Querent card, signifies a blessed romance or marriage. The **Moon card No. 32** combined with the **Book card No. 26** suggests that you will gain insights into some secrets. The **Cross**

**card No. 36** and the **Coffin card No. 8** above it indicate that some sacrifices will have to be made, perhaps because of ill health. However, the overall outlook remains favorable as indicated by the **Lilies card No. 30**, which rests above the **Book** and to the right of the **Querent card**.

The **Tower card No. 19**, in conjunction with the **Crossroad card No. 22**, means the Querent will be expected to exert authority and make some important decisions. The **Letter card No. 27** and the **Stork card No. 17** indicate an upcoming delivery of crucial documents. Deducing from the above spread, the cards reveal that the Querent will enjoy a happy, prosperous and long life provided the Querent remains alert to possible threats and

challenges. The Querent should rely upon friends for assistance in times of trouble. Overall, the outlook is quite favorable and the Querent is leading a productive and contented life for which there is much to be thankful.



The clear intellect of Mlle. Lenormand is world famous. We have published these beautiful cards in their original full color, certain that they will be put to good use as a means of reading the future or for their value as entertainment and enlightenment. The cards will serve as a valuable souvenir of the celebrated fortune-teller whose legacy will be cherished by her admirers for many years to come.



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