### **BUEBEARD'S BRIDE** TAROT OF SERVANTS COMPANION

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A SUPPLEMENT FOR BLUEBEARD'S BRIDE THE TABLETOP RPG

(Cristmenter)

# SAROT OF SERVANTS COMPANION



Published by MAGPIE GAMES

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> Based on the tabletop roleplaying game **BLUEBEARD'S BRIDE** created by **WHITNEY "STRIX" BELTRÁN**, **MARISSA KELLY**, and **SARAH DOOM**.



# **JABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction	4
Chapter 1: Tarot Reading	7
The Cards	8

#### 

Chapter 3: Making Servants	41
Laying Out the Cards	
Interpretation	
CHAPTER 4: EXAMPLE SERVANTS	45

	• •
Fairuza the Midwife	46
Ruzgar the Kennel Master	48

### IN CLOSING

49



# **Шынт ]s Янія?**

The **TAROT OF SERVANTS** is a supplement for **BLUEBEARD'S BRIDE**, a tabletop roleplaying game of supernatural horror set in a familiar fairy tale. The game is a little different than the story, in that a group of players explore Bluebeard's home together as the newest Bride and create their own version of the dark tale.

In the original tale, a young woman is married to an older man with the namesake beard, despite rumors of previous wives with unknown fates, and whisked off to his secluded home. Bluebeard then leaves on business, and the new bride is left to explore the house—except for one forbidden room. This room grabs her imagination, and the bride's curiosity festers within her until she finally succumbs and opens that door, sealing her fate.

During the game, the players spend their time in the rooms of Bluebeard's house. They learn about themselves, and about Bluebeard's former wives, and about the many terrible things that can be hidden behind a door with a lock. That last room, however, is where the game ends, and their story is concluded.

### How Do I Use This Deck?

If you are running **BLUEBEARD'S BRIDE**, you will create servants for your players to encounter while they explore the rooms of Bluebeard's home. You can base aspects of the house's inhabitants on information the players gave you at character creation, the keys they describe, or you can generate servants by using this deck. You will need the **BLUEBEARD'S BRIDE** core rulebook to play the game.

The **TAROT OF SERVANTS** is a play aid to help the Groundskeeper—the person running the game for the players—generate servants on the fly. All it takes is a quick reading of a few cards, and the Groundskeeper will be ready to introduce another face from Bluebeard's mansion, tailored to the house's dark secrets. It can also be used as a traditional tarot deck with a few modifications. This book contains the information you need to create a servant, plus a section on how to do a reading with the **TAROT OF SERVANTS**. We've included examples for you to use as a base for your custom servants.

Players and others may enjoy perusing the book for a hint of what the game is like, or to see what servants they could have met. Every servant will be different each time you play the game, and do not assume you know if someone is a servant or a horror—for there is a thin line between the two, and that line may change during an encounter.



# CHAPTER 1 TPAROT

READING

# **THE CARDS**

Coins, cups, swords, and wands. Maids, Valets, Housekeepers, and Butlers.

The **TAROT OF SERVANTS** is not your usual tarot deck. The imagery contained within is based on not just the Bluebeard fairy tale, but is steeped in the blood, pain, and violence that mark some lives. The artist and authors drew upon some of the darkest recesses of their imagination for inspiration, and so, we urge you to take care when using this deck for readings. It would be most useful for readings that explore the sinister side of femininity, fairytale like cycles in your own life, and exposing your own biases. Take care, then, and don't say you weren't warned.

> Tarot decks aren't just used for readings, however. You might select a card each morning to meditate on its meaning, or pin it to a inspiration board in hopes that some of the imagery influences your life. Do not choose cards from this deck lightly. Every bit of light shown in the images casts a shadow as well. When we open ourselves in hope, sometimes what answers is not what we expect. Know your own desires, and prepare yourself for what they reveal about your true nature.

### Тне Deck

Although this deck contains all the cards you may be familar with if you have used a Rider Waite or related deck, it has several additional cards from the Thoth tradition. This is not a judgement upon any tradition, but is intended to make the deck useful to a wide range of practioners. You may want to consult your favorite Tarot book for tips on interpreting the cards when doing a reading.

In order to use this as a regular deck in the Rider Waite tradition, first remove the following cards: Lust, Fortune, Art, The Aeon, The Universe, and The Root of Power. The deck is now ready for your use, although the court cards have been renamed to: maids, valets, housekeepers, and butlers.

In order to use this as a regular deck in the Thoth Tarot tradition, first remove the following cards: Strength, Wheel of Fortune, Temperance, Judgement, and the World. You will need to substitute Justice for Adjustment, as well as match the slight difference in some card names, such as Magician = Magus, Maid = Princess, and so forth.

#### Color

Since the Tarot of Servants adheres to a limited palette primarily composed of blue, gold, black, and red, practitioners using the cards for a reading may choose to ignore color symbolism in their readings entirely, or use these colors to tint their interpretations.

### Symbols

While some of the traditional symbolism of tarot has been retained, each card also contains details concocted by the artist and authors. Practitioners may find the inclusion of objects such as skeleton keys, stained glass, eyes, moths, meat, loss of gravity, paintings, etc, fire their imagination and lead their intuition to a fuller reading.

### A SIMPLE READING

Although this short text can not hope to cover the multitude of practices, opinions, research, and feelings people have on the subject of tarot readings, it would be remiss to not include a sample for the inquisitive newcomer. We'll be using the Rider Waite variant and a four card spread.

The querent is a 24 year old cis woman, who is looking for guidance on how to get her husband to trust her more. She feels that he's become withdrawn and is relying on others for the support that should come from her. She doesn't think she's done anything wrong, and is curious what the cards have to say.

For this reading, the Queen of Wands is set aside for the querent, or person being read. The reader has her shuffle the Tarot of Servants, then draws four cards, placed in a vertical line with the first card at the top, and so on.

#### The Cards

\*\* The Hermit \*\* Four of Coins \*\* Three of Coins (Reversed) \*\* Justice

In this simple spread, the third card signifies the heart, or love. The other three cards will expand on its signifigance and provide detail, but it is to the third card that the Reader looks for an answer, first concentrating on the overall meaning of the cards, then studying them to see how they apply to the querent's inquiry.

#### Their Meaning

Reversed, the Three of Coins symbolizes laziness, weakness, work going badly, or things worsening at a slow, steady rate.

The Hermit points to prudence, treason, corruption, learning, danger, and truth. The Four of Coins speaks of selfishness, dependence on material comforts, closing oneself off from the external world, and the imposition of structure. Justice represents right-ness, equity, expert, wisdom, pompous, and hidden knowledge.



It is significant that the two drawn Minor Arcana are both Coin cards. This suite incorporates: authority, discipline, freedom, greed, loneliness, protection, power, and vengeance. The emphasis of gold seen in the coins, flame, and woman's yellow hair and thread point to both mental force as well as material wealth.

#### The Reading

The cards confirm our querent's fears - her husband is closing himself off from her, and their relationship is deteriorating bit by bit. From the placement of the Hermit, it appears that seeking the reason behind this withdrawl may lead to learning the truth, but could also lead to danger - whether to their relantionship, or to the woman herself, is unclear, and restraint should be exercised in exploring the husband's reasons for his emotional distance. The Four of Coins in the second position tells us that clearer communication is needed, but without structure or an appeal to the husband's physcial comfort, any discussion may be doomed to failure. The position of Justice at the end suggests that the woman may be able to resolve her concerns if she listens to her own intuition and focuses on clear action.

The Three of Coins suggests that change of some sort is inevitable, although the Four of Coins tilts it slightly towards the positive. The emphasis on material possesions and worldly matters suggests the woman may want to evualate any recent financial decisions for their influence on her husband's mood. The appearance of the two lone older women (Hermit, Justice) against the two pairs of young lovers suggests that a mature consideration may lead to ending the relationship, or at least that a crossroads may be reached.

The woman took the reading well, and left with much to consider before deciding how to approach the rather thorny issue of her husband.







# THE DECK

This deck includes both the familiar Major and Minor Arcana seen in the Rider Waite deck, as well as additional cards based on the Thoth Tarot. Both the Major and Minor Arcana have been customized with **BLUEBEARD'S BRIDE** related art drawn by Jabari Weathers. This deck can be used to generate servants for the tabletop roleplaying game or as a regular tarot deck in either the Rider Waite or Thoth traditions.





# MAJOR ARCANA

The 28 Major Arcana found within this Tarot may reveal secrets and tell tales, but that which is revealed depends on which cards are in the deck and which order they fall. The cards below have no numbers, only meanings. They use the Rider Waite or Thoth naming conventions for their title, but the subtitle draws on the Bluebeard fairy tale. Below is a list of words to help you with the associations for each card.



# THE FOOL (Neophyte)

#### MEANING:

Folly, mania, extravagance, intoxication, delirium, frenzy, indulgent

### Reversed:

Negligence, absence, carelessness, apathy, vanity, stingy, bleeding heart

### THE MAGICIAN (Nurse)

### MEANING:

Skill, diplomacy, sickness, loss, self-confidence, will, high-handed

### **Reversed**:

mental illness, disgrace, disquiet, broken, timid, deluded



# THE PRIESTESS (Midwife)

### MEANING:

Secrets, mystery, silence, tenacity, wisdom, science, magic

### Reversed:

Passion, desire, conceit, obsession, cavalier, cold, single-minded



# THE EMPRESS (Cook)

### MEANING:

Fruitfulness, difficulty, doubt, ignorance, action, disdainful, smug

### Reversed:

Light, truth, rejoice, bountiful, frugal, neurotic, hysteric

THE PRIESTESS

### **THE EMPEROR** (Butcher) MEANING:

Stability, power, protection, conviction, reason, bloodthirsty, confident

### Reversed:

Benevolence, compassion, immaturity, forceful, deviant, pagan, authority





# THE PRIEST (Confessor)

#### MEANING:

Captivity, servitude, mercy, goodness, perversity, commanding, assured

### **Reversed**:

Society, kindness, weakness, self-doubt, impotence, anger, righteousness

### **THE COVERS** (Concubine) MEANING:

Attraction, love, beauty, trials overcome, sex, debauchery, infatuation

### Reversed:

Failure, foolish designs, crush, fascination, hate, compulsion,





# **THE CHARIOT** (Stablemaster)

### MEANING:

Succor, providence, presumption, trouble, sheltered, temptation, lush

### **Reversed**:

quarrel, dispute, defeat, threadbare, worn, scared, harnessed



### STRENGTH(Librarian)

### MEANING:

Power, energy, action, courage, setback, infinite, hidden

### **Reversed**:

Abuse of power, weakness, discord, trapped, shadowed, skin, helpless

# SHE HERMIT (Mother in-law)

### MEANING:

Prudence, treason, corruption, learning, danger, mystikal, truth

### **Reversed**:

Concealment, disguise, policy, fear, lies, enraging, disguise



# THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE (Artisan)

MEANING:

Destiny, fortune, success, luck, wounded, repair, obscure

### Reversed:

Abundance, increase, exposed, riches, opulence, decadence, comfort



### JUSTICE (Weaver)

### MEANING:

Rightness, equity, expert, wise, pompous, hidden knowledge, flawless

### **Reversed**:

law, bigotry, severity, wicked, biased, hypocritical, unfair

THE WHERE OF PORTUNE



# THE HANGED MAN (Sybarite)

### MEANING:

Wisdom, trials, sacrifice, prophecy, intuition, overindulgence, blindness

### **Reversed**:

Selfishness, the crowd, decadence, contradictory, depraved, unhinged, senseless

### **BEATH** (Gardener)

### Meaning:

End, mortality, destruction, caretaker, hospice, disfigurement, truth

### **Reversed**:

Inertia, lethargy, petrifaction, neglected, decay, growth, desecrate



# THE DEVIL (Temptress)

### MEANING:

TEMPERANCE

Ravage, violence, force, fatality, corruption, licentiousness, excess

### Reversed:

weakness, pettiness, blindness, downfall, carelessness, indulgence, impurity



### **SEMPERANCE**(Brewer)

### MEANING:

Moderation, frugality, goodness, virtue, self-reflection, thoughtfulness, unnaturalness

### **Reversed**:

religion, disunion, competition, gluttony, secrecy, daze, self-deceit

# **THE JOWER** (The Last Bride)

### MEANING:

Misery, ruin, adversity, calamity, disgrace, pain, assistance

### Reversed:

tyranny, imprisonment, oppression, haunted, besieged, cruelty, negotiation





INB SPHIC

# **<b><b>SHE STAR**(Washer Woman)

### MEANING:

Loss, theft, abandonment, light, hope, implication, exposed

### **Reversed**:

arrogance, haughtiness, impotence, stained, subverted, feebleness, despair



# **THE MOON** (Kennel Master)

#### MEANING:

violence, hidden enemies, danger, darkness, deception, brutal, hunger

### Reversed:

instability, inconstancy, silence, disobedient, clandestine, furtive, trickery

### THE SUN (Son)

### MEANING:

Contentment, marriage, material riches, heirs, playfulness, maddened, vicious

### **Reversed**:

less, barrenness, deceptive, rotten, empty, wishful, delusional



### **JUDGEMENT** (Nanny) Meaning:

Renewal, outcome, willpower, guardian, watchful, formal, descending

### Reversed:

weakness, simplicity, decision, punishment, failure, doom, fate



# THE MORLD (Dancer)

### MEANING:

Success, voyage, flight, unstable, confused, unrealistic, spectacle

### **Reversed**:

Inertia, fixed, stagnation, dullness, passivity, receptive, exhibition

JUDGEMENT



Courage, strength, magic, energy, craving, inflamed, inspired

### Reversed:

Covert, weakness, animalism, permission, frigid, cold, repulsed



# FORTUNE (Thief)

### MEANING:

Destiny, change, covetous, voracious, beauty, admiring, fanatical

### **Reversed**:

Deluded, sensitive, insatiable, indifferent, doubtful, tortured, greedy





# **JART** (Caretaker)

### MEANING:

Economy, escape, realization, outcast, sacrifice, creative, martyrdom

### Reversed:

Wasteful, torment, hunted, mistreatment, provoking, abused, targeted

# **THE GEON** (Huntsman)

### MEANING:

Past, finality, future, abundance, death, prepared, forewarned

### **Reversed**:

surprised, ensnared, loss, forgotten, suppressed, jilted, dismissed



### **THE ENIVERSE** (Governess) MEANING:

Movement, knowledge, balance, synthesis, delay, patience, perseverance

### Reversed:

ignorance, experimentation, blight, callousness, savagery, malice, spiteful





#### MEANING:

THE ROOT OF POWER

Power, labor, wealth, flesh, provider, mercy, protection

### **Reversed**:

assassin, feral, excess, shameless, careless, vulgar, grim



# MINOR ARGANA

The 56 Minor Arcana contain four suits as well as court cards. The suits are Coins, Cups, Swords, and Wands; the court cards include Dames/Maids, Knights/Valets, Queens/Housekeepers, and Kings/Butlers. These pairings are meant to reflect the traditional hierarchy seen in tarot decks as well as the difference in responsibilities for servants in Victorian households. You may use these as inspiration for your servants, or broaden your selection to other household positions.



# COINS

### Meaning:

Authority, discipline, freedom, greed, loneliness, protection, power, vengeance





# Cups

### Meaning:

Curiosity, female sexuality, freedom, loneliness, protection, vengeance




### Swords

#### MEANING:

Authority, male sexuality, greed, honor, protection, rejection, vengeance





### MANDS

#### MEANING:

Authority, curiosity, discipline, freedom, honor, rejection, vengeance







# CHAPTER 3 MAKING SERVANTS

#### LAYING OUT THE CARDS

You may create servants in advance or on the fly at the table. Using this deck to create practice servants will only hone your edge, and is good practice. Sometimes only one card is needed to give the required nudge to your imagination, while other times may require all three cards. Trust your instincts.

To begin, prepare a clear area on a table, and shuffle your deck. Take a moment, with your eyes closed, to consider the room, sisters, and horror you're working with. Then draw and place your cards one at a time, from left to right.



### INTERPRETATION

Look carefully, and take your time. Does a detail catch your eye and remind you of something brought up during character creation? Are you doing this at the table, in view of the Sisters? If so, did one of them react to a particular card you drew? Linger on that one with both eyes and touch, until a reason for that reaction comes to mind. Look at both the details as well as the overall mood of the cards. You can choose to use different lists from the previous section if the card is drawn reversed, but for the following examples we have used words from both.

The first card describes the servant's appearance. This should not be taken literally, but as a prompt to help you vary your servants in gender, age, and race, as well as provide details to help flesh out their description. Groundskeepers may use the colors of the cards to inform the Servant's appearance, mood, or the Room they inhabit. The symbols on the cards may be used to add details to the Servant's environment, behavior, or obsessions.

The second card describes the servant's drive. The drive you select represents what the servant wants from the Bride, how they address her, how they want to hurt her, or the feelings they project on her. You can use a feeling associated with a Major Arcana if that is the card you draw, or use the list of drives associated with Minor Arcana shown above.

The third card describes the servant's manifestation. The manifestation of that drive can be complicated or even contradictory, but it is here that your imagination should feel free to dive into its darkest corners. You may use the manifestations associated with the suit you drew, or simply choose the most appropriate one if you draw a Major Arcana.

#### Drives:

\*\* authority \*\* curiosity \*\* discipline \*\* freedom \*\* greed honor
loneliness
protection
rejection
vengeance

#### Manifestations:

\*\* they pervert the intent - cup
\*\* they physically display the need - sword
\*\* they prey on the Bride's sympathies - coin
\*\* they overtly challenge the Bride - wand



#### CHAPTER 4



## FAIRUZA THE MIDWIFE

Sarah is creating a servant for a game she plans to run next Saturday. She knows she may only use this servant for inspiration, but if they fit in with the themes and Sisters, Sarah can pull this servant in at a moment's notice.

After shuffling her tarot deck, Sarah draws Justice, the Nine of Swords, and the Seven of Coins.



She studies the cards, then takes the following notes:

- \*\* Appearance older, woman, blonde, good with her hands, puts herself into her work
- \*Drive authority, honor, protection, rejection, vengeance, failure, deception, disappointment, doubt, shame
- \*\* Manifestation they prey on the Bride's sympathies, mandrake, mysterious, well-dressed

This presents a picture of a powerful female authority figure, someone who uses her skills to protect or revenge male sexuality, and who will appeal to the Bride's better nature.

Sarah decides the servant is a midwife named Fairuza, whose purpose is to safeguard the Bride's virginity by claiming she will be punished if there's any doubt, and who will use a mixture of shame and titillation to convince the Bride to allow her to perform a "virginity test". If pushed or resisted, the midwife could easily turn into a horror convinced that the Bride was unfaithful, and then insist on performing an abortion to get rid of any evidence. She could answer the Bride's call from most any room, but will most likely be found in a bedroom, infirmary, or nursery.

Fairuza, which means woman of triumph, ties into the image of the decisive woman pictured on the Justice card, and whom Sarah will describe as blonde, maternal, and wearing practical clothes. Some of the swords in the Nine of Swords card have already found their mark, thus fueling suspicion of infidelity, along with the associated words: failure, deception, disappointment, doubt, and shame. The mandrake root in the Seven of Coins points to fertility, as well as matters close to the heart, and supports Fairuza's role as midwife.

### Ruzgar the Kennel Master



Marissa is in the middle of a game when the Fatale *cries out for help*. She has a few ideas in mind, but decides to turn to the Tarot for help in narrowing down exactly which idea to use. Marissa shuffles her deck and draws the Moon/Kennel master.

She studies the man directing the dog-like creatures in a nursery, and thinks of violence, hidden enemies, danger, darkness, and deception. The Bride is in a drawing room full of rats trying to gnaw their way under her skin, so a kennel master would make sense to rescue the Bride, but Marissa wants the Tarot to provide her with a few more ideas; she draws another card: The Queen/Housekeeper of Wands.

The card puts Marissa in mind of a playful predator, along with the words authority, curiosity, discipline, and rejection.

Now Marissa is ready to introduce Ruzgar the kennel master, a deceptively easy-going man who is very curious about the new bride, but who will erupt in violence if rejected in any way. She gives him a bald head like in the Moon card, and a bit of wolfishness about his features to echo his charges. Marissa grins at the Fatale over her cards, and begins to describe the kennel master's entrance.





Thank you so much for purchasing the Tarot of Servants! We would encourage you to let us know how you used it by tweeting or emailing us. We love hearing about your games.

Find the game **BLUEBEARD'S BRIDE** and related products at www.magpiegames.com. Contact us at info@magpiegames.com with any questions or concerns. You can also follow Magpie Games on social media to keep up with our projects. Twitter: <u>https://twitter.com/MagpieOfficial</u> Facebook: <u>https://www.facebook.com/MagpieGames/</u>



