



Infinitum

PRECIS

The performer asks three participants merely to think of a playing card. One is to think of a black card, the second a red card, and the last can think of any card in the deck.

Taking each participant in turn, the performer attempts to read their mind and removes a card from the deck. Each time the performer's choice appears to be wrong because each thought-of card is found still to be in the deck.

After apparently failing three times, the performer explains that for each card there is another card that is the same color and value. Then, he reveals that of the cards he removed from the deck, the first two are the mates of the thought-of cards.

The third apparent miss, however, has no relation to the thought-of card. After a moment's consternation, the performer decides that the apparent miss is an "indicator" card—that it "indicates" where the thought-of card can be found in the deck. The third participant deals the same number of cards as the value of the "indicator" card—for example, if the card was a four, the participant would deal four cards. The card at the number is the thought-of card.

NOS ENCANTA

As a beginner, one of the first card tricks I was exposed to was the "wishing" card trick. You know, the unadorned one-ahead trick in which the performer makes the last choice in order to catch up. Even my beginner's mind figured that wearing your method on your sleeve was probably not the best way to go—a little sophistication was in order.

The "one-ahead" device works from the humblest card trick to the grandest mental epic. Because you are "ahead," however, you need to "close the loop" and catch up. Generally, the "loop-closing" choice is made by a force of some sort. And then, the "predictions" need to be switched or rearranged to put the correct cards in the correct locations.

As you may have guessed, the engine driving this trick is the venerable "one-ahead." But there are a couple of interesting aspects (at least, I think so). First, it is self-working. Accordingly, it does not rely on a force of any kind. And second, no gaffed cards or duplicates. Some tricks, similar in effect, rely upon gaffed cards such as a double-backed card to facilitate a switch at the end. This one does not.

I have given the trick its fanciful title because like most one-ahead effects, you can have as many instances as you like. I opted for the classic three-part formula: result, repeat, change it up a little. That structure, while a desirable goal, luckily fits the method perfectly.

MISE EN SCÈNE

No preparation, but it should be a complete deck.

Nominate three spectators and ask them each to think of a card—a great way to start a trick.

While not strictly necessary, I have the first participant think of a red card, the second a black card, and the third participant thinks of any card. I do this to mix it up a bit. It seems like an important part of the process, but it's not. (There is a small subtlety which may make the trick more deceptive, but is probably lost on everyone but me.)

Prediction One

Have your first participant concentrate on their card. Look through the cards and "commit" to a card. Remove any spot card and place it face down on the table. While any spot card will do, a smaller spot card makes things a little



easier. I always take out a Four—you'll see why (photo 1).

Have the card named. In the video, it was the Two of Clubs. A little acting is required. Act as though you, yourself, are surprised because you apparently missed the card. Any kind of quip can be used to explain your chagrin, including a simple, "The what?"

Quickly spread through the deck and remove the card just named and place it face up in front of your prediction (photo 2).



Prediction Two

Repeat with the second participant, but this time remove the mate of the first thought-of card and place it face down on the table (photo 3). Have the second card named



and place it face up on the table in front of your second prediction. In the video, the Two of Diamonds was named (photo 4).



Prediction Three

Do the same for the last participant. This time, remove the mate of the second thought-of card and place it face down on the table (photo 5). Have the third card named, take it out of the deck, and place it face up on the table in front of your third "prediction."



However, when you remove the third card (that is, the mate of the second thought-of card), also move the mate of the third thought-of card—here, the Nine of Hearts—to a position equal to the first card removed. So, if at the very beginning you removed a Four, move the mate of the third card to a position fourth from the top of the deck (photos 6, 7, and 8).

Set the deck aside to your right—you won't touch it again.





Closing The Loop

To conclude, explain that in a deck of cards, for each card there is a card that's the same color and the same value. As you do this, casually stack the three predictions by dropping the right prediction onto the second (photo 9), and then the two predictions onto the first prediction.



Place the "prediction packet" into your left hand (photo 10).

Now comes a maneuver that changes the order of the prediction cards. It's easy, discrepant and really can't be called a "move." With your palm-down right hand, take the top two cards—again this is open, so don't make a move out of it. Turn both cards face up onto the remaining face-down card



(photo 11 shows this just before the cards tip over).

Turning the pair of cards face up reverses their order, so the uppermost card is the face-up mate of the first thought-of card. Deal it onto the first thought-of card. Similarly, the next face-up card is the mate of the second thought-of card (photo 12). Deal it onto the second card.

The last "prediction" card is face down. Pause a beat



and deal it face up onto the last thought-of card. Of course, it is not the mate of the third card, but instead it's a spot card, a Four, for example (photo 13). Ponder the situation, then ask your third spectator to take the deck and deal, let's say, four cards face down onto the table.



13
Pick up the last dealt card and turn it up to show that the face-down card is indeed the mate of the third selection (photos 14 and 15).



14
15
We need to clean up the tableau before the final revelation. Pick up the Four and the dealt cards and put them on the deck.

Place the mate onto the third thought-of card (photo 16). Voila! •



16

Pursuing excellence in magic
and the appreciation
of its heritage