

Nothing More to Prove

EXHUMATIONS

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SOME TRICKS ARE "BURIED" in one's mind as partially remembered tricks that exist in bits and pieces like ghostly debris. They lack context and one cannot recall if they were read somewhere or someone related them to you. The only thing you are certain of is that you didn't dream up these fragments on your own. They were triggered by extrinsic means. The following effect is an example of putting together "pieces" to form a trick that in one's mind is unsponsored and, hence, uncredited.

Effect: A card is freely chosen and returned to the deck. The deck is tabled face down and the performer turns his back and asks the spectator to cut off a portion of cards and place them in his pocket. The performer then turns to face the spectator again and explains that both he and the spectator will *simultaneously* deal cards from their respective portions face up to the table. It is important to realize that at this stage neither the spectator nor the magician should be able to know how many cards comprise their respective portions. The simultaneous dealing begins with the spectator dealing his cards from inside his pocket and the performer openly dealing cards from the portion in his dealing hand.

After a number of cards have been dealt face up, a card from the performer's portion suddenly appears and has a message printed on its face: "YOU HAVE JUST RUN OUT OF CARDS"—which turns out to be the case regarding the spectator's situation because there are no more cards left in his pocket. This also strongly suggests that the performer previously cut off an equal number of cards to match the cards secretly cut off by the spectator.

This is a satisfactory ending to the trick but the performer explains that he also knows which card in the deck was chosen at the outset. To prove his claim, he removes the selection from his pocket or wallet.

The beauty of this trick is its direct simplicity. Not only is it easy to perform, it is mostly semi-automatic. When I began performing this trick about 43 years ago, I was surprised how many magicians were fooled by it.

I showed it to Tony Spina at Tannen's Magic shop and he loved the trick. When he saw how simple it was to perform he asked for permission to market it. I had no objection because I told him that it was not my invention and I had no idea regarding its origin. Tannen's sold it for \$1.50 and I have no idea how many were sold, but I know that other dealers ripped it off. Then, after a short time, everybody forgot about it and it resumed its "buried" status.

Not long ago I was reminded of this trick and I began trying to find its origin. The closest thing I discovered was a presentation by Stanton Carlisle called "Out of Cards—Way Out!" that appeared in the *New Pentagram* in 1987. His effect, however, is not semi-automatic, involves no selection, and uses a somewhat transparent sleight.

Furthermore, the message card is done at the outset when the performer writes on the face of a Deuce, making the prediction angle predictable and removing the element of surprise. That being said, perhaps you are ready to learn the method I did for Tony Spina?

Requirements: 1. A regular deck of cards; 2. A blank-faced card whose back matches the regular deck and on whose face is written "YOU HAVE JUST RUN OUT OF CARDS." Also, lightly pencil-dot the diagonally opposite corners of this card's back.

Set Up: Place this special card 20th from the top of a deck.

Method: Introduce the deck and, if you like, false shuffle and cut the cards. Then spread the cards face down between your hands for a spectator to make a free selection. Make sure that a card is taken from below the 20th key card. Suppose the selection is the Queen of Hearts. As he looks at his card, respread the cards until you spot the pencil-dotted message-card.

Separate the cards at that point and make sure that the pencil-dotted card is the top card of the left-hand portion.

Next, have the spectator return his card onto the pencil-dotted card. Place the right-hand cards on top of all and close the spread. The Queen of Hearts is now 20th from the top.

Turn your back and ask the spectator to cut off a small portion of cards (less than half) and instruct him to place these cards in his pocket.

He must cut off less than 20 cards.

Say, "At this point, you have no idea how many cards you have in your pocket, right?" As you utter this line, quickly deal 20 cards from the remainder of the deck, face down to the table, reversing their order.

Pick up these dealt cards and hold them face down in left-hand dealing position.

Say, "Both of us will now simultaneously deal cards face up to the table. So, please deal or take a card from your

pocket one at a time and place it face up to the table. I will also deal a card along with you."

To demonstrate, as soon as the spectator deals his initial card onto the table, follow suit by dealing a card from your 20-card packet onto his. Continue in this manner until you are eventually holding the pencil-dotted message-card.

Pause and then turn this pencil-dotted key card face up to reveal the message "YOU JUST RAN OUT OF CARDS." This is a surprise because the spectator will simultaneously realize that the message is true because he has no more cards in his pocket!

The good news at this point is that the top card of the remaining cards in your left hand is the spectator's selection (Queen of Hearts). Using the misdirection of his surprise in seeing the printed message, you can easily palm the Queen of Hearts to your pocket or handy-dandy wallet! •