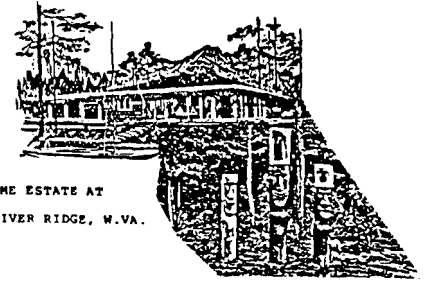


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THE AME ESTATE AT
RIVER RIDGE, W.VA.



Sotto Voce



On the Secret of Miracles.

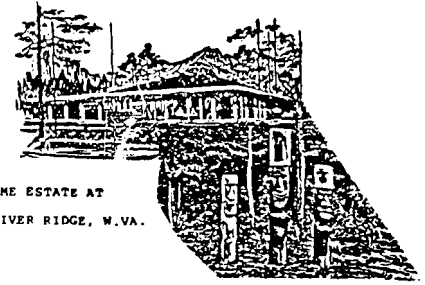
*Svenqali's Book Test
The Invisible Book*

Aristotle's Cloak



THE AME
MAJOR ARCANA
SERIES

XIV



THE AME ESTATE AT
RIVER RIDGE, W.VA.

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P.O. Box 155
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Sotto Voce

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SOTTO VOCE

A DIALOGUE IN WHISPERS

Young Magician: "While in Europe I saw Svengali tell a lady to choose any book from a shelve of many books and to open it to any page and choose any line.

Svengali, from across the room, told the lady what she was reading. I was very impressed."

Old Mentalist: "Yes! A good book test will baffle anyone. It taxes the imagination. It shatters all reasoning. It attests to a power from another world. - What his audience did not know was that Svengali already knew before the test exactly what book, page and line was to be chosen! Svengali was using a little known talent of mental influence between two minds. Let me demonstrate.

Please imagine that you are holding a book in your hands. Open the imaginary book to any page and choose one of the top 10 lines. What page is it? Good. What line did you choose? Great!

Remember that you had a free choice of the page and line. Please pick up that book on the table and open it to your chosen page and read the chosen line secretly. Note that the book contains a sealed envelope. Please open the envelope and read the line I wrote some time ago. The lines are identical!"

(NOTE: Svengali was a real magician who entertained tourists. Many tourists attested to the above test.)

Svengali simply performed the usual book test, but his audience, intoxicated with the ambrossia of imagination, completed the illussion of the wanted miracle.

Dear Reader. The reason for writing this mns. is the following: Deep in the labyrinth of files and ideas in the AME castle is a blueprint for a book that creates the Svengali illussion as detailed above by the old Mentalist.

£/4/26/94

The book is prepared. Yet the book looks ungimmicked and every page and line appear different. Yet any page and any line from 1 to 10 chosen will force the same phrase. I called this effect "Sotto Voce" and shelved it for later perusal. But the cost in time and money to produce such a book is prohibitive. The AME Codex-X took 18 years of time to put out. There is little profit in these masterpieces. The only compensation is the love for the art.

But miracles do happen and after giving the matter some thought, I noticed that the technique needed (using inexpensive materials instead of costly prepared books) to produce the test was already at hand.

Here follows my presentation of the Svengali Book test illusion using the Opener move from the Tesseract. The reader can vary his own presentation as desired.

THE INVISIBLE BOOK

PRESENTATION: Ladies and Gentlemen, I am going to write a 5 letter word on this card and then fold it into quarters and secured it with a paper clip thusly. Actually you write nothing or if you wish write the word "there" with a pencil. (The folded card secured with the paper clip is turned over for all to see at which time it is seen that the folded card is blank without marks on both sides. This fact is not mentioned, but it registers subconsciously in the minds of your audience. Everything so far is at it should be.)

NOTE: The act of folding the card into quarters and then securing it with a paper clip satisfies the audience that the secret word written in the card is secured. You state, "Please note that I have committed myself. I have written a word in this card that is folded and secured with a paper clip. In order to change the word I must first remove the paper clip." The audience knows that and as long as the card remains thusly secured, they pay little attention to the folded card that you are holding in your hand. You are therefore free to swami-write on the outside of the card. No one in your audience imagines or suspects that you will do such a monstrous thing. What for? Why write on the outside of the card when the vital information is in the inside and well secured?

I use the Opener move in everyone of my shows and when I state that I have written a word secretly, everyone believes it and their belief is justified later when they actually see the word written in the card!

THE FIVE LETTER WORD: Actually any short word will do. But the mention of a five letter word sounds like a trick to the audience. This makes the mystery deeper for the audience suspects that there is a psychological set-up but they cannot solve the

mystery.

If I am close to a shelf of books, I will use a book. But if no books are nearby I will use the "Invisible Book!"

"Madam, please imagine that you have a book in your hands. Please open the imaginary book to any page of your choosing. What page is it. 156! Good. You have a lively imagination. Now run your finger down the side of the book and stop at any line. Got that? Fine. Now run your finger across the imaginary page and stop at the first five letter word you come to. Got that? What word is it. The word is "there" you say. Great!"

If the word is "there" and you have written that word on the card, the miracle is done. Make the most of it. If not - -

You have the swami gimmick mounted on your thumb and holding the folded card with both hands ready to write on the outside of the card below the paper clip. See Fig. 1. If you tip the top of your writing hand towards you downwards, the audience will never see any hand muscles moving. I do this always.

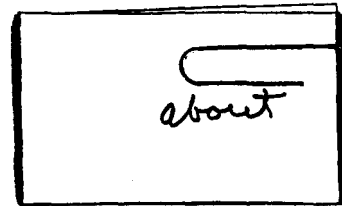


Fig. 1

NOTE: In Fig. 1, the billet is held with the loose corners pointing to the upper right. That is the correct way to hold the billet for later opening it. The folded card makes a solid surface to write on so that all you need do is to hold the card with both hands and use the writing hand to do the work, although it appears that what you are doing is holding the card with both hands.

There is nothing wrong with holding a billet with both hands. In fact it looks most natural. The audience is looking at your face and listening at what you are saying. You are otherwise motionless. Nothing that you are doing at the moment will throw suspicion to your hands for nothing is moving.

That is the beauty of the amazing Opener move. The vital action happens when no one is expecting it. I have often been asked by magicians, "When did you do the secret writing?" "I did it before you started looking for it!" I say. A better answer would be, "What secret writing?" The magicians in your audience and the Mentalists also, are expecting you to do some fast thumb wiggling after you open out the card. But by that time the goose is cooked.

Say the lady says that the chosen word is "about." You do nothing at this moment but say, "Look at the rest of the imaginary line of print and see if there are more five-letter words there." Whatever she says make the most of it. But as she or you are talking you write in the word "about" on the outside of

the folded card. Then as you call someone forward to show them what you have written on the card, remove the swami gimmick and palm it and then slide the trombone paper clip downwards on the folded card to cover the word on the outside of the card and place your thumb over the clip. This should entirely cover your swami-written word as you flash the folded card to the audience, but do not make too much of this. Just a small wave of the hand if any will do. Actually you do not have to show the audience the other side of the card. They have already seen the other side of the card.

Do not worry if part of the word shows from under the clip and your thumb. The audience will not see it unless you show it to them. They want to see what is written inside the card! Keep the swami-written side of the folded card towards you so that not even the person that comes forward will see it. When ready to open the card remove the paper clip and place it aside then hold the card horizontally, your hands covering the back of the folded card and snap it open with the Opener move and go on with the disclosure and finale.

When the person comes on stage, show him or her that the folded card is still folded and secured with the paper clip. Say that you are going to remove the paper clip and open out the card. As you remove the clip place it and the thumb writer into your pocket, assuming that you no longer need the thumb writer, otherwise keep it palmed, and then snap open the card using the Opener move.

After you snap the card open, the word "about" jumps to the inside of the card and the word "there" if you wrote it is now on the outside of the card facing you. Show the word around. Everyone will stare at it with disbelief and then pocket the card and go to something else.

ON SWAMI-WRITING: Practice will make any student a master of it. After the mastery you will surprise yourself to see how well you can write. Script letters all connected are the easiest to write. Since the letters are all connected you will write with an even flow in a straight line, while if you write in block letters you might superimpose one letter over the other making the message appear illegible. Dunninger was a master of swami-writing. He could write long sentences in an instant while talking. All the audience attention was on his masterly voice and not on his hands.

The beauty of the Opener Move when used with a folded card that is secured with a paper clip, is that even if the audience sees you wiggling your thumb they will not connect that with any secret writing. They know that the writing is out of reach inside the folded card. They will assume that you are simply rubbing the outside of the folded card with your thumb for some unknown ritual. BUT rest assured that if you handle the folded card

correctly, no one will ever see your thumb moving.

SO YOU WANT TO BE A HERO DEPARTMENT: It will happen sometime that it becomes necessary to have some person in the audience initial the folded card! A little knowledge is dangerous. Some wise guy in the audience who has heard about billet switching assumes that he is a well informed Mentalist so he may challenge you. BUT If the billet is initialed it will deepen the mystery and the person who initilaed it will say, "I initialed the card, so there was no trickery."

So have the folded card initialed on the outside. Then you say, "I am going to write something on this card." You remove the paper clip and then do the Opener Move to flip the card. The initials are now in the inside of the card BUT your audience is not aware of it. You pretend to write something but write nothing. Then refold the card leaving the initials on the inside and secure the folded card again with the paper clip. . Do the test. Swami-write the word or name on the outside of the card and then do the Opener Move again. After the card is flipped, the initials are again on the outside while the word or name is now in the inside! Little wonder that the girls want to kiss you.

THE OPENER MOVE

As shown in Fig. 2, the thumb and first finger of the right hand pinch the folded card by the loose corner of the top fold. While the thumb and first finger of the left hand take the card by the loose corner of the third fold. Both hands are then turned at the wrist only. As shown by the arrows in Fig. 2, the left hand turns backwards towards you while the right hand rotates forward away from you.

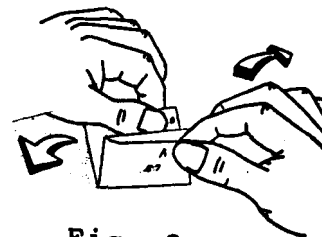
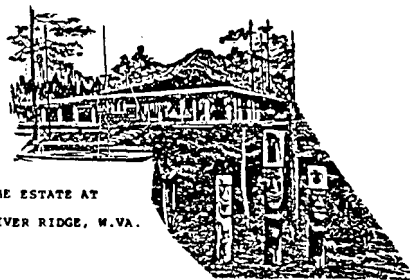


Fig. 2

This action snaps the folded card open and as the right hand moves to the left in front of the left hand, the card turns over so that what was the outside of the card is now the inside and any word or number written on the outside of the folded card now appears to have been in the inside.

Tel. 304-947-7730
P.O. Box 155
Great Cacapon, WV 25422

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RIVER RIDGE, W.VA.



Aristotle's Cloak

by Aristotle Hadjiantoniou

Our distinguished contributor of this section hails from Canada. He was born in Great Britain of Grecian ancestry some 50 years ago and later attended the University of Calgary. Aristotle is a mathematician who has lately been involved as a research associate for the University in developing the theory of all n-point compactifications of a topological space! No small order.



He is also a devoted practitioner of Tai Chi Chuan, which is the ultimate defence weapon. Besides a bullet-proof vest, Aristotle is the pal that you would love to have alongside of you while riding the subway in the Bronx at 2: A. M.

But as luck would have it, Aristotle says that his first love is Mentalism, and he so proves it by the fabulous secrets that follow.

Aristotle has invented a new tool for the Mentalist, especially for the perfectionist, that would ordinarily be considered impossible. He spent many hours pondering on the headline prediction double envelope that we know so well and which has been over-abused for centuries. Aristotle has taken an unprepared (single compartment) letter envelope and without gimmicking of any kind, has adopted it to perform like a double-compartment envelope. AND it can be examined ad nauseam without exposing the secret, for there is none. That, gentlemen, deserves five stars in anyone's column.

For some time, Aristotle had been looking for a headline prediction method that would hold its own in a show featuring Tr-Id and the Lexicon Phenomena. He found the method in Cassandra's Cloak, in the AME release Limelight. Aristotle says that Cassandra's Cloak is incomparable, simply because the Mentalist never touches the prediction envelope after it is mailed.

BUT there is one weak feature in Cassandra's Cloak, The Double envelope. If the spectator assistant misunderstands the instructions and opens the envelope at the wrong end, the double compartment feature of the envelope comes into evidence. And even if the envelope is opened correctly, it can not be examined. To put it mildly, the double envelope reaks of deception. I agree.

In Cassandra's Cloak two white business size envelopes are used. The audience sees only one envelope. The two white business envelopes are gimmicked as double-compartment envelopes. One business envelope, (envelope X,) the one that is opened by the VIP, contains two smaller envelopes, one in each compartment. Envelope A is further sealed in a large manila letter envelope, and mailed to the VIP weeks before the show with instructions not to open it till instructed during the show. The manila envelope prevents the VIP from marking the white envelope with "received -" or whatever, which would surely expose the trickery. The Mentalist keeps the other white business (envelope Z) for later placing the headline predictions of the day of the show.

The smaller envelope, the one that comes out first after envelope 'X' is cut open, contains one prediction of an insignificant headline that appears in the papers the day the prediction envelope "X" is mailed. (If the reader wishes he can add any other good force to embellish the insignificant headline.)

This headline is of the kind that appears in about pages 5/6 of the newspaper and is hardly noticed or it can be a headline that appears almost daily like the war in Bosnia. The page where the headline appears is saved and later added to the newspaper of the day of the show.

The smaller envelope in the other compartment of envelope "X" contains a paper certifying the hour and date of sealing the predictions. This paper will never be seen by anyone unless the VIP opens the predictions at home prematurely in which case he will find nothing amiss.

During the show after envelope "X" is opened by the VIP, the opened envelope "X" is switched for envelope "Z" that contains the headlines for the day! Using the newspaper as a tray, the switch is made simply by holding back one envelope with the thumb, while allowing the hidden envelope "Z" to drop on the table. See Cassandra's Cloak.

All is well that ends well. But instead of tearing up the envelopes and dropping them in the waste basket to remove the evidence of fraud, we will use Aristotle's envelope and leave everything on the table which is a normal and most natural gesture.

ARISTOTLE'S ENVELOPE:

Fig. 3 shows an opened white business size envelope (4 by 9 in.) just before it is sealed to mail to the VIP. Let's call this envelope "X." Inside this envelope are two smaller envelopes. One envelope contains the insignificant headline prediction, while the second envelope contains the certification of when the predictions were written, etc. The contents of the second envelope will never be seen unless the VIP opens the envelope before the show on purpose or by accident.

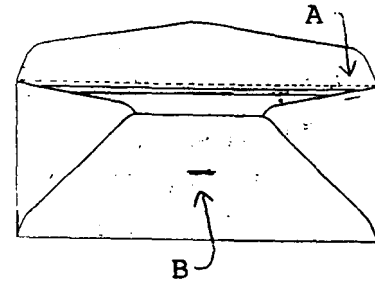


Fig. 3

NOTE in Fig. 3, there is a staple at "A." This staple does not go through both sides of the business envelope. It is used to hold back the second envelope, with the date of writing the predictions. Staple "A" goes through the seam side of the business envelope and through the smaller envelope inside, BUT does not go through the face or address side of the business envelope. After the envelope is sealed, staple "A" is never seen and the VIP never sees this staple.

Next, the envelope that contains the insignificant headline is placed into the business envelope, Fig. 3. next to the seam side. The whole set up is next stapled again as seen in Fig. 3 at "B." Staple "B" goes right through both smaller envelopes and the business envelope and can be seen from both sides. The envelope is then sealed and it looks like in Fig. 4.

Fig. 4, shows the sealed envelope that will be mailed to the VIP. Again it is best to enclose the white business envelope in a larger manila letter envelope. Please note that in Fig. 4, only staple "B" is seen. Staple "A" has been covered by the flap after sealing.

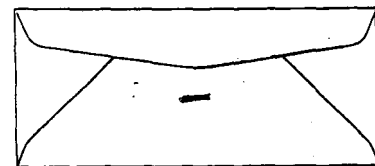


Fig. 4

Fig. 5 shows the address side of the white business envelope just before it is mailed. Note that staple "B" shows. There is also a line of dashes on the right edge with instructions to cut the envelope open at that side.

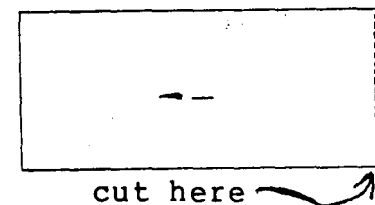


Fig. 5

A second business-size white envelope "Z" must be prepared. This is the envelope that will contain a smaller envelope with the predictions of the headlines that will appear on the day of the show and which will be switched for envelope "X" after envelope "X" is opened. (There is no need to staple this envelope unless the

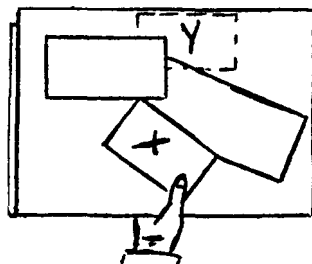
operator wishes it.) You will bring envelope "Z" to the show hidden inside the top page of the newspaper. NOTE that envelope "Z" must look exactly like envelope "X." It must have the two tiny holes of the staple on both sides of the envelope. You simply staple the envelope and then remove the staple and it must be cut open on the right edge, exactly like in Fig. 5.

After the switch is made and the insignificant headlines have been shown, you ask the VIP to look at the second envelope that is still inside the business envelope! VOILA! again. Everything can be examined. You can tear out the headlines from the newspaper and throw the paper away.

You can leave the messy glue pot at home but be sure to cary a staple remover. The VIP is instructed to remove the staple 'carefully.' There is always the danger of the VIP tearing up the envelope while removing the staple with or without the staple remover. If that was to happen you stop as soon as the insignificant headline is shown and make the most of it. Cassandra's Cloak was designed for that emergency.

Be sure to practice aplenty the switch with the newspaper.

There are many very clever double envelopes in print, but this is the greatest. I am sure that the Aristotle envelope has many more uses.



The Switch From Cassandra's Cloak