

## 7 of Swords



The 7 of Swords is one of the more complicated cards in the tarot. It is often seen as the trickster, deceitful, secretive, or betrayal card. This may be the case at times, but that is not the definition of this card (in my humble opinion). If this card had to have a short definition, I would say that this card is about individual will, but even that is layered and complex.

Individual will is the act of following one's own self-autonomy and discretion towards an end or an action. The fox should fear the sword. The fox should be scared that there is not just one, but seven swords. But the fox is not scared. In fact, the fox is drawn to the sword. It could be the shine of the metal. It could be that the seven swords represent an excessive threat, and the fox has still outsmarted the threat, and dismantled the sword. The individual will of the fox is strong, which makes the fox more of a threat than any sword, no matter the number.

One of the reasons that the fox is a bigger threat than the sword is that the fox is strategic. The fox uses her swift strategy to evade and invade where she wills. She wanted to be that place and take that sword. She was so comfortable in doing so, that she rests on the threat she has dismantled. She is safe and protected no matter where she is because she can escape or defend if needed.

This strategy leads to something else about the 7 of Swords, which is perhaps what gives this card its negative connotation. When we think of the word manipulate, we see it as a negative word. But the ability to be in any situation and manipulate to either serve or teach is a gift and a strength. It means that even through challenges, setbacks, and the threats, the fox in us will still be able to come out stronger. When we use strategy to deal with situations, instead of instant reaction, we have found control.

As mentioned above, this card is often seen as the card of secrecy and betrayal. I often see this as a card of perspective. It may seem as if the fox is betraying someone or something, but what if what she is doing is best for her or her kin? Is it betrayal then, or is it only seen as betrayal to those who want her to align herself in some way? There is also something to be said about secrecy. Why is secrecy a bad thing? Not everything in the mind or heart or spirit or body needs to be told or shown to others or the world. Keeping things close to the chest can be an act of survival or love.

This card is complex, sometimes on the periphery, sometimes attempted through dictation by others. If this card has come up for you, look inward to your thoughts, strategies, private self, or ability to control parts of or a whole situation. Look to your strengths and use them to gain insight how to make something better serve you and your needs. Know what your wants and needs are. As Shakespeare once wrote in Hamlet: "To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."