

The wind rustles. A bitter, chilling wind bites into your neck and howling is heard in the distance. Yes kids, the scary monsters are coming. Run, hide, and beware. Halloween is almost upon us.

The fearful legends of Halloween are deeply rooted in the occult. At this time of year the occult seems to be popping up around us (or is this just another ploy from the candy manufacturers). But unlike the legends of old, nowadays, the scariest monsters we see are little kids who will accost you for candy. If you think they aren't scary just you try to avoid giving them candy and await their wrath!

Yet, behind all the playfulness of this occasion, there lie some pretty incredible origins for the customs we have to this day. Halloween used to be considered a fearful day when the dead and undead could rise and



origin of the cats you see on so many halloween decorations.

One of their legends involved a miser named Jack. He was not allowed to enter Heaven because of his penny pinching, and he was barred from Hell because he tricked the Devil. As a result he was doomed to roam the earth with his lantern. Remember Jack-O-Lanterns . . .

When the Romans conquered the Celts this holiday metamorphosed further. The Romans traditionally held feasts honoring their goddess of fruits, *Pomona*. And they believed that eating apples would ward off evil spirits. Hence — bobbing for apples. Interestingly, they also believed that if a girl ate an apple in front of a mirror she would see the vision of her future lover. Perhaps there were fewer mirrors in those days.

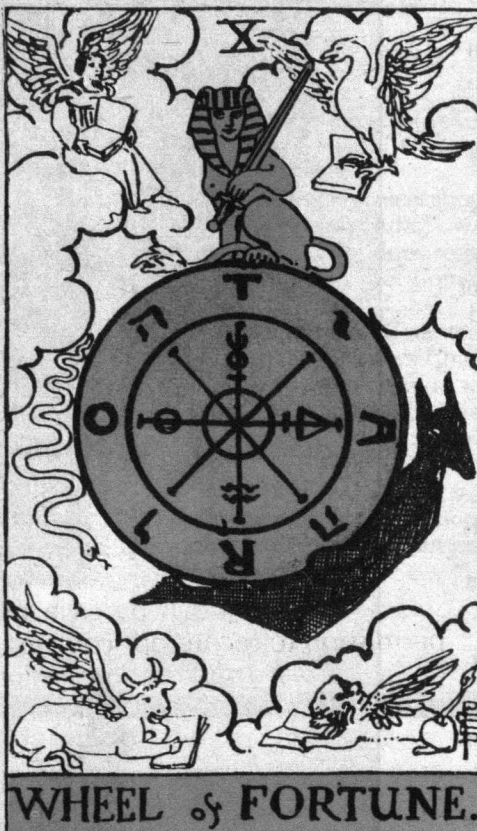
When Christianity took its grip on



occupy the earth as will-o-wisps, ghosts and other spirits. In these enlightened times, nobody believes a word of it. (Did you just hear a chain rattle? Nah, must have been your imagination.)

The origins of Halloween, which means literally "The Eve of All Hallows", are difficult to trace, but it seems certain that they are Celtic. Original Celtic religion was Sun worship based. They would celebrate the Summer and Winter Solstices as well as the Spring and Autumn Equinoxes. These last two were called *Beltane* and *Samhain* (pronounced *Sowin*) respectively and it is from this last holy-day that our modern holiday was derived.

The Celtic religion abounded with superstition. They believed that evil men's souls became animals as punishments. For this reason cats were sacred to them. This is the



of the Cluny Monastery, established All Souls Day on Nov. 2. With this day came the custom of "souling", begging for cakes in remembrance of the dead. The origins of "Trick or Treat"!

Eventually all these customs and other portions of the occult melded together to form the day we call Halloween. A day deeply rooted in black magic, fortune telling and the occult.

This is a traditional day for witches, fortune tellers, mystics, and magicians alike. On this day our sensibilities soften and we validate the "Black Arts".

We see fortune tellers and tarot readers and believe in the magic of what they tell us. Interestingly enough, Tarot cards as we know them today also find their roots in the same places Halloween comes from. The modern cards originate

# ALL HALLOWEEN

the world, these customs further mutated. The Christians celebrated All Saints Day on Nov. 1 and Oct. 31 became All Hallows Eve. In the Eleventh Century St. Odillo, an abbot

from Northern France and Italy. They spread through the traveling gypsies into the rest of the world.

Originally from Egypt, Tarot has changed over the centuries and is the ancestor of our modern cards. It's somehow fitting that these once magic, ordinary playing cards are among the favorite tools of modern magicians.

The Tarot consist of a 22 card Major Arcana and a 56 card Lesser Arcana. The Lesser Arcana consists of cards numbered one through ten, a Page (modern Jack), Queen and King in four different suits (Wands, Cups, Swords, and Pentacles). This is what became modern playing cards.

The Major Arcana is the popular conception of Tarot cards. It consists of 22 titled cards with names like 'Death', 'The Fool', 'The Devil', 'The Lovers'. These are the "powerful" cards of the deck. All of the cards in both Arcanas each have some unique pictures that is iconic of the meaning and significance of the cards. The placement and orientation of the cards also affects their meaning. Their value can also be changed by cards next to them.

Fortune telling is an art indeed,





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