



Inside Ed's Head

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A Card in Hand, by Ted Annemann

(His Way and My Way)

Many years ago, many, many years ago, Bob Elliott, the master of Ring 244, showed a particularly good trick with the normal Elliott touches that enhanced everything he did. I later found out it's a trick created by Ted Annemann. You can find it in *The Jinx* #80, P. 522.

Annemann makes a point of noting that the trick is much stronger than it reads. He is absolutely right. However, I believe there are one or two problems with it. I'll get to them a bit later.

Effect

The spectator picks a card that is lost in the deck. The magician shows an indifferent card and gives it to the spectator who is asked to insert it partially into the deck and not let go of it. The magician separates the deck at this point, but the selection is neither above nor below the inserted card. The magician is surprised by this nasty turn of events and asks the spectator to help him find the selection in the deck. He can't; it's not there. The card that the spectator is holding is the selection.

Method

I'm sure you're all ahead of me here but I'll describe a bit of the byplay Bob used to make this trick work, so read on.

Have the card selected and control it to the top upon its return. Tell the spectator that you are about to imbue him with magical powers. Do a double turnover to show an indifferent card. Tell him that the [name the card that's showing] will act as the conduit of his newfound power. Turn the double face down and ask him to hold out his right hand to grasp the card—"like this." At this point, Bob holds out his hand, palm down, and makes a grasping motion with his fingers and thumb. Put the top card into his fingers. Personally, I have an instinct that tells me it's easier for the

spectator to inadvertently flash the card with his fingers on top, thumb underneath, but since Bob did it that way, I do it that way. So far, so good.

Once the spectator has the card firmly in his grasp, offer the deck to him in your left hand and ask him to insert his card part way into the middle. Tell him to continue to hold onto the card once he does this. Pause a beat and then lift all the cards above the insertion point with your right hand and turn them face up, displaying the face card of that half. Sing out "Ta-Da" in the traditional way one sings out "Ta-Da" to highlight something extraordinary.

The spectator will say, "No" or shake his head to say you haven't found his card.

You just reply, "I didn't say this was your card, I just said, "Ta-Da." It's fun. Say it with me ... "Ta-Da!"

Have fun with this for a bit, and then use your left thumb to move the top cards of its half to the right a bit and then use the right half of the deck to flip that card face up on its half.

The spectator will again say it's not his card. You may go from here to the denouement or find another way to make an excuse. "I didn't say this was your card. It's an indicator card. It says your card is seventh (for instance) from the top of the deck. If you can keep coming up with these and keep your audience entertained, more power to you.

When you're ready to wrap things up. There are a couple of ways you can end. Annemann just says, "Well a magician has to have some way of getting out of a hole," and blows toward the card in the spectator's hand. The spectator will look at his card and, so to speak, will be blown away.

I like to prolong the agony a bit longer. I spread the cards facing the spectator and ask him to think the word "stop" when he sees his card. When he doesn't see it, he might look at the card in his hand or just say, I didn't see it. You will now say, "Hmmm, I wonder where it could be," and stare at the card in his hand.

However you do it, you will get a strong magical effect.

Afterword

The very first time I did this, when I came to the part where I couldn't find the card, my spectator snickered and said, "I love it when you guys screw up."

I can't begin to tell you how pleased I was by this reaction. I played the reaction of "magician in trouble" to the hilt. When he finally looked at his card his reaction was priceless.

I realized this was an extraordinarily strong trick, but I also realized it was a sucker effect. I certainly wouldn't want to do it for a potential client or for someone I didn't know well—unless I needed a heckler stopper. The only people I ever did it for were old friends who knew me well enough to know I meant no malice.

It recently occurred to me that I could also get a strong reaction if I rejiggered the trick to make the magic happen in my hands. So here is ...

A Card in My Hand

Effect

As above, the spectator does not find his own selection. Realizing the spectator isn't very skilled at card locations, the magician gives him the deck and takes the 'X' card from him.

The magician plunges the card into the deck and does not find the spectator's card. With the aid of a little magic, he turns the 'X' card into the selection.

Method One

Have a card selected, returned, and controlled to the *bottom*. Show the top card and give it to the spectator face up. Have him turn the card face down and continue as above until you've exhausted the ways you can show the card has not been found. As you do this get a break above the bottom card. (The selection.)

Take the 'X' card from the spectator and drop it face down on top of the deck. As you do so, look him right in the eye and say something like, "Gee, I really thought you'd be better at this, let me try." With these last words, give all the cards above the break to the spectator and take the 'X' card in the same grip you taught the spectator earlier on. Insert the card without letting go and ask the spectator to do the "Ta-Da" bit and look for your card—just once. Don't drag this part out.

Admit that this method of finding a selection is harder than you imagined. (This will take the sting out of his failure.) Ask the spectator to name his card. When he does (or refuses, as some do), snap your finger over the card in your right hand and take your bow.

Method Two, for Top-Change Fans

This is more-or-less the same as Method One. Have the card controlled to the *top*. Take a card from the *middle* of the deck and give it to the spectator, face up.

After his failure to find his card, take the 'X' card from him. Now, look him in the eye and comment on the problem. If you are good with the top change, this should prove to be sufficient misdirection. Continue pattering a bit after the switch and then give the deck to the spectator and finish as above.

Afterward

There was one time when, after the performance of "A Card in Hand," the spectator said something like, "That was good, I never saw you switch the card." While I appreciated the compliment at the time, I now prefer that the spectator not come up with the proper, albeit unseen, solution. I'd much prefer, "How did you do that," or WTF!

Since I wanted to end this trick with the card changing in *my* hand, I had the opportunity to change the method a bit so I could give the card to the spectator *face up*. I believe a top change is the move that makes a switch appear impossible. The spectator has held the 'X' card in his own hand, and, as far as he knows, you took it right out of his hand and did not handle it any further.

Unfortunately, I've only learned the top change recently, and have had little experience using it. There's only one trick that I do where I feel the misdirection is strong enough to cover any deficiencies in my technique. So far, so good.

I've been doing the Jinx change for almost forty years. Despite its discrepancies, which might look obvious to the reader, the move has never failed me.

I wish all my readers a happy 2022. Things *have* to start getting better now, don't they?

See ya next year.

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