

*La Femme
Fatale*

Companion



photo: DeCenzo-Cordova.com

San Francisco's premier genre-busting artist Marilyn Yu continues the mythic story of Eva in *La Femme Fatale*. Eva was first introduced in *Relations That Suck: The Story of Eva and Dries*.

*La Femme
Fatale*

*Companion
by Marilyn Yu*

Published by Art & Lenny, San Francisco

La Femme Fatale Companion

Text: Marilyn Yu

La Femme Fatale

Text: Heather Papp & Marilyn Yu

Illustrations: Marilyn Yu

Published by Art & Lenny

San Francisco, CA

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ISBN 978-0-578-06860-2

www.MarilynYu.com

Printed in China

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How to Use this Deck

A Story

This deck tells the story of Eva through text and illustrations. Her life spans 700 years. The story is not a continuous narrative; instead, each card tells of a significant episode in her life. The cards are numbered to facilitate reading them in chronological order or by theme.

Divination

The poetic text and images speak to the heart and emotional mind, and may bridge the conscious and unconscious in a way the reader may find helpful. The cards may be used to access the wisdom of the unconscious - the felt meanings of dreams, wishes, and fantasies. Let the cards inspire your exploration of the emotional mind. The cards may also be used to clarify a situation by imagining it in terms of the archetypal issues associated with each card.

Reflection

This deck may also be used as a tool for reflection and introspection. The anecdotes, symbols and themes in the cards reflect an image of reality. Studying the symbols and meditating on the experiences may help you gain insight into

yourself. Suggested reflection topics are included with the card descriptions.

Card Games

As with any deck of cards, you may use your ingenuity to come up with games to play with yourself or others.

Card Structure

Inspired from tarot and illuminated manuscripts, “La Femme Fatale” tells the mythic story of Eva the vampire encapsulated in a deck of cards. Eva lives for 700 years. The number seven represents security, victory, introspection and mystical maturity. Seven also symbolizes the universe, being an addition of three (symbolizing time) and four (symbolizing space). There are forty-two cards total: twenty-six story cards corresponding to the letters in the alphabet and sixteen suit cards.

Card Numbering

The first card is numbered zero and represents Eva. The rest of the story cards are grouped into five sets of five cards. Each set of five represents a phase in Eva's life. The number five in numerology is the number of activity, strength and justice. (Numerology is the study of the occult meanings of numbers and their supposed influence on human life.)

Phase 1 – Molding: How Eva becomes who she is

Phase 2 – Belief: Eva's relationship with religion and love

Phase 3 – Man: Eva's experience of the secular world

Phase 4 – Woman: Eva's exploration of what it means to be a woman

Phase 5 – Spirit: Eva seeking to understand the larger context of the world

Light and Dark

Vampires are darker, shadowy aspects of human-kind. Eva identifies more strongly with humans than vampires and chooses to live at the fringe of humanity instead of communing with fellow-vampires. She struggles to be accepted but is well aware of her difference. This duality shows itself through the illumination on the cards. There are thirteen cards that are light and thirteen which are dark. Each of the twenty-six cards is illuminated by a specific kind of light that sets the mood/tone of the card. The illumination source for each card is noted in the card descriptions. Each suit has two light and two dark cards as well.

Suits

The suits embody themes that run throughout Eva's story. Each suit card is derived from combining the suit theme with the meaning of a particular number. Colors help differentiate the suits.

	Staff	Blood	Ibis	Web
	<i>Structure, Physical body</i>	<i>Emotion, Feelings, Volatility</i>	<i>Immortality, Spirit, Justice, Truth-seeking</i>	<i>Destiny, Inter-connectivity</i>
One	<i>Beginning, Singleness, Masculine</i>	Singular pursuit, Focus, Drive.	Eternal beginning, Promise, Hope	Individuality, Solitude
Two	<i>Reflection, Duality, Balance, Feminine</i>	Ambivalence, Cross-roads	Versatility, Options, Relativity	Pleasure and pain, Tension
Three	<i>Multiplication, Development, Magic, Creativity, Social, Time: past, present, future</i>	Struggle, Bursting	Speed, Ungrounded	Evolution, Multi-dimensional, Rich, Fertile
Four	<i>Order, Stability, Calm, Space: four directions, Four elements</i>	Structure, Order, Efficiency	Rigid, Inflexible	Civilization

Mental energy, Solar, Male, Consciousness *Passion, Desire, Action, Aggression, Mars* *Communication* *Venus, Love, Fertility*

Yellow & Orange **Red & Maroon** **Blue & Grey** **Green & Brown**

Card Descriptions

The card descriptions provide brief historical context for each card, explanation of main symbols, and suggestions for themes to reflect on. Also included are the card number, title, corresponding alphabetic letter, suit, illumination source, and whether the card is light or dark.

Card Map

			0 Eva		
Molding	1.1 Birth	1.2 Turning	1.3 Song	1.4 Exiled	1.5 Anger
Belief	2.1 Lace	2.2 Love	2.3 Loss	2.4 Inquisition	2.5 Heroine
Man	3.1 Enlightenment	3.2 Revolution	3.3 Spoils of War	3.4 Machine	3.5 Devolution
Woman	4.1 New World	4.2 Sex	4.3 Woman	4.4 Child	4.5 Earthquake
Spirit	5.1 Desert	5.2 Forest	5.3 Mountain	5.4 Ocean	5.5 Death

0 – Eva (A, Dark)

This card describes Eva's spirit before she is born and given a physical body. She is with her spiritual mother and learning who she is and what she needs to do.

Card Imagery: In the four corners are a bull, lion, eagle and man. These symbolize the following seasons, signs and elements respectively: Spring/Taurus/Earth, Summer/Leo/Sun, Fall/Scorpio/Spirit and Winter/Aquarius/Air. Astrological signs representing the universe encircle her. Behind her are silhouettes of lilies, a lunar flower which stand for purity and innocence.

Reflection: Imagine you are with your spiritual mother who protects, feeds and nurtures you. Ask her who you are. Don't fixate on an answer. Instead, continue to ask who you are and explore the question deeper.

Molding

1.1 – Birth (B, Staff, Sunlight, Light)

Eva is born in the beginning of the fourteenth century in Cairo. Her family is Coptic and a minority in Egypt. At this time, Egypt is ruled by the mercenary Mamluks. It is a time of prosperity when learning and art are valued. Eva is special. Not only is she the only daughter, but her birth is marked by the appearance of a five-pointed star. Stars symbolize hope, good fortune and intense aspirations. The five-pointed star is strongly associated with magic, military and war.

Card Imagery: This is Eva's baptism. Her family crest, a snake, is in the corner. Snakes symbolize eternity and transformation.

Reflection: What does it feel like to begin something, dreaming of what could be, excited about the potential of the unknown?

1.2 – Turning (C, Blood, Moonlight, Dark)

From the fourteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Black Death kills about half the population of Europe and Egypt. It is thought to have been carried by fleas residing on black rats. Eva is stricken with the plague and her family desperately tries to save her. Their last resort is to make a deal with an old gypsy woman who turns Eva into a vampire.

Card Imagery: Rats perched on top of skulls amidst a river of blood symbolize the deadly plague. The image of an ibis (representing eternal life) against the moon (representing a womb, tomb and cycles) symbolizes Eva's rebirth into darkness.

Reflection: Consider a difficult decision made on your behalf that drastically alters your life. How do you feel about those who made the decision? How do you feel about not being able to participate? Or imagine being surrounded by unpredictable death - how does that affect your outlook on the future?

1.3 – Song (D, Ibis, Filtered light, Light)

The founding of the monastic movement is attributed to the Copts. They wanted to isolate themselves from the world in order to pursue visions of God's purpose. Hundreds of monasteries were scattered throughout the Egyptian deserts. Fearing for Eva's safety, her family entrusts her to the Coptic sisters in a convent. Their financial support of the convent helps the sisters turn a blind eye to Eva's appetite for blood. Eva learns a new way of life: hermetic, disciplined and in the company of women.

Card Imagery: The musical notation is based on Coptic hymns. The ibis and scarab beetle are symbols of Egyptian mythology.

Reflection: Picture a quiet, meditative space with no distractions - a safe space to find your voice.

1.4 – Exiled (E, Web, Candlelight, Dark)

By the fifteenth century, though Eva has not aged, time has taken both her biological and surrogate families from her and she needs to move on.

Card Imagery: The tree symbolizes both her family tree and the web of life. The family crest has fallen and Eva is the remaining leaf on the tree. One of the nuns bids her farewell as Eva sets off into the desert.

Reflection: Imagine saying goodbye to one chapter and beginning another, leaving the safety and security of your home and learning independence coupled with fear of the unknown.

1.5 – Anger (F, Staff, Comet at night, Dark)

Eva is learning what it means to be a vampire and to be alone. She is surrounded by fear: her fear of the sun and the unknown and people's fear of her. She turns fear into anger and channels it towards the nuns who she feels have inflicted this torture on her.

Card Imagery: Eva is portrayed as Isis, the greatest Egyptian Goddess who governs magic, fertility and motherhood. She is also the guardian of the dead and the goddess of children from whom all beginnings arise. In this card Isis is a metaphor for Eva discovering herself and her powers just as Isis, who was once a human, learns magic and becomes a goddess.

Reflection: Two major motivators are love and fear. What do you love? How does it influence your actions? What are your fears? How do they influence what you do?

Belief

2.1 – Lace (G, Ibis, Holy Light, Light)

After half a century of revenge, Eva again seeks the peace of the church. She makes her way to the Vatican where she learns to make lace. Lace-making is

a unique industry in that it provides women a way to make a living. At this time, the Church is the principle user of lace. The structure of the lace, process of lace-making and Eva's surroundings provides her with safety and calm.

Card Imagery: The two olive trees (symbols of peace) and a menorah represent Eva making peace with the Church. The text of the card is in a grid formation to represent the lace pattern structure and the structure it gives Eva's life.

The card text reads: A year ago, I stood on the rising slope of Monte Fumaiolo gazing at the whiteness of the Tiber River as it flowed through gorges and broad valleys to Rome. A few coins dropped in the hand of a merchant ship captain, a week's passage, and I now reside within Vatican City. Immediately upon arrival, Reverend Mother began teaching me the art of *opus araneum*, lace-making, and today a talented corp of nuns and I run a children's lace school within Vatican walls. She has appointed me the task of publishing a pattern book showcasing our shop's most prized work and daily, my hands stitch skeletal thread patterns to parchment backed by linen. At night, the delicacy of creating such complex webs consumes my thoughts, and gradually, I purge myself of almost a century of revenge-seeking. Sisterhood again is my sanctuary. And the systematic working of the toile-- setting geometric forms within squares, crossing and radiating lines, edging all with buttonhole stitching--purifies me like no other retribution, quickly becoming my daily penance.

Reflection: What structures are in your life? What freedom do you find within them? When are the structures limiting?

2.2 – Love (H, Blood, Lunar eclipse, Light)

In the Vatican, Eva develops a special relationship with a priest. Father Alessio has also lived as an outsider because of a deformation of his legs. Eva is comforted in finding a kindred spirit who does not judge her for how she derives her nourishment. Father Alessio finds healing in helping another who is shunned.

Card Imagery: We catch a glimpse through a window of their illuminated silhouettes inside the confessional where they meet.

Reflection: What do you share with kindred connections, biological families and/or spiritual families that makes these connections special?

2.3 – Loss (I, Web, New moon, Dark)

As time passes, the world continues to change, compelling Eva to move on. After Father Alessio's death, the other priests do not want to keep harboring a vampire in the Vatican. The Spanish monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, have asked the Church to help financially support the Spanish Inquisition. This seems like a great opportunity to send Eva on a dangerous mission to Spain to protect the Church's interests while also hoping that maybe tragedy will befall her. While Eva's presence in the world disturbs them, the clergy cannot bring themselves to take her life directly.

Card Imagery: The organic knot pattern symbolizes the cycles of life.

Reflection: What does it feel like to lose something or someone you treasure? There is a time for everything. How do you accept change?

2.4 – Inquisition (J, Staff, Gold, Dark)

Eva is flattered by her new assignment which bears much responsibility. She is elated that her special skills are now valued and can be used in service of her beloved church.

Card Imagery: The aesthetic of this card draws from Eva's love of ancient Egypt and is in the style of paintings found in tombs to satirize the situation in Spain. Here the Egyptian god of the underworld, Anubis, is depicted in a monk's robe. He is weighing the hearts of the deceased against gold coins instead of Maat's feather of truth and justice. The other images show Inquisition activities in the Egyptian-stylized form. This juxtaposition of visual styles highlights the secular purpose of the Spanish Inquisition which answers to the King of Spain

(not the Pope as other inquisitions). The Spanish Inquisition is used as a political tool to control the diverse kingdoms of Spain.

Reflection: What does it feel like if people who have scorned you suddenly accept and appreciate you? How does that impact how you trust?

2.5 – Heroine (K, Blood, Full moon, Light)

The Spanish Inquisition is frequently used as a tool of terror to keep the Spanish people fearful and obedient. Because Eva's mission is to curb the excesses of the Spanish Inquisition, her activities eventually make her a popular hero. As in the days of the Old Testament, to show appreciation, people sacrifice small birds to her.

Card Imagery: Eva is shown here in a traditional royal or holy pose with a halo, on a throne and holding a sword and skull (in place of an orb or scepter). Her throne is atop an olive tree (a symbol of peace) growing from a knot (a symbol of life) and surrounded by birds.

Reflection: Positive feedback. How do you feel when you are able to use your skills to help others. How do you feel when you are appreciated for who you are and/or the work that you do? How do you show your appreciation?

Man

3.1 – Enlightenment (L, Ibis, Flame of knowledge, Light)

By the turn of the seventeenth century, Enlightenment ideas start trickling into Spain despite heavy censorship. The thoughts advocating individualism resonate with Eva and her new-found empowerment. She is intrigued by the dominance of logic and reason over church doctrine. She begins to break with the church's antiquated belief system and travels to Paris to learn more. Public libraries are rare at this time. Large collections of books are assembled by institutions such as the church or a university. The wealthy also keep smaller collections in their homes.

Reflection: Do new things energize or scare you? How do you incorporate new things into your life?

3.2 – Revolution (M, Blood, Sunlight, Dark)

Eva is confused and shocked by how passion can overtake the lofty ideals of the Enlightenment. The French Revolution is showing signs of horror similar to the Inquisition she left in Spain. She finds a kindred in her compatriot Charlotte Corday who plans to kill the Jacobin leader Jean-Paul Marat in an effort to stop the Reign of Terror. Eva sees herself in Charlotte, nicknamed *l'ange de l'assassinat* (the Angel of Assassination). Even though Eva knows that Charlotte will be killed for her actions, she helps Charlotte fulfill her destiny. On 17 July 1793, four days after Charlotte kills Marat, she is executed under the guillotine.

Card Imagery: Poppies, the flower of death, rain down on a piles of skulls.

Reflection: How do you decide what is right and what is wrong? What things are absolutely right or wrong (if any)? How do you value what things are more right or more wrong than others? Do the concepts of right and wrong influence how you act?

3.3 – Spoils of War (N, Web, Solar eclipse, Dark)

France declares war on Britain on 1 February 1793. Eva is impressed by the order Napoleon brings to France and, in 1798, she goes with his scientific expedition to Egypt. She is excited to return home. Not much has changed. Bubonic plague cripples Napoleon's army. The expedition uncovers many interesting artifacts (like the Rosetta Stone), which they surrender to the British after France's defeat. She follows the Egyptian treasures to England.

Card Imagery: This card depicts a contest. Two players, an armed angel (symbolizing the righteous soldier) and a lamb (symbolizing innocence and peace), face off surrounded by figures. Each figure represents an astrological

sign together symbolizing the universe.

Reflection: How do you relate to objects? Of the objects that you possess which are for utilitarian purposes and which do you keep for sentimental reasons? Can you appreciate something that you admire without disturbing it and owning it?

3.4 – Machine (O, Staff, Hazy sun, Dark)

While continental Europe is at war, England embraces industrialization. Technology promises to bring a better life. Eva journeys to England to witness the benefits of the Industrial Revolution. She discovers that efficiency comes at a great cost to quality of life (for human, animals and the planet). Heavy soot from the incessant coal-burning constantly clouds the skies. Cities reek with a perpetual stench from feces, both human and horse, in the street, pollutants regularly dumped into the rivers and the stench from infrequent bathing (baths were considered a health risk and only to be taken under the strict supervision of a physician). With no child labor laws or workers' safety regulations, many people (children and adults) have missing or deformed fingers, hands or other body parts as a result of the working conditions in the factories.

Industrialization makes more products available at a lower direct cost. For the first time the supply of goods outstrips demand which elevates the purpose of marketing to demand creation. New forms of markets are built to sell goods to their larger customer base.

Card Imagery: Eva is walking by the Burlington Arcade which opened in 1819. It is one of the first shopping centers.

Reflection: What do you value and how does this show in how you live your life? Is the price of a good or service your primary consideration? How about the materials and labor put into it? What are the ramifications of your consumption? Is it local, sustainable and/or improving the quality of life of other people, animals and the environment?

3.5 – Devolution (P, Blood, Sunset into water, Dark)

The French monarchy is restored in 1814 as a constitutional monarchy instead of the absolute monarchy of the “Ancient Regime.” This period is characterized by a sharp conservative reaction and the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic Church as a power in French politics. Napoleon III hires Baron von Haussmann to “modernize” Paris. (Modernism is the improvement and re-shaping of the environment with the aid of scientific knowledge and/or technology). He hopes, in hiring Haussmann, that Paris could be molded into a city with safer streets, better housing, improved sanitation, more hospitable and shopper-friendly communities, smoother traffic flow, streets too broad for rebels to build barricades and battalions and artillery to circulate. The Haussman Plan 1852 – 1870 creates broad avenues linked to the main train stations so army troops from the provinces can be operative in a short amount of time. Haussmann accomplishes much of this by tearing up many of the old, twisting streets and rundown apartment houses and replacing them with the wide, tree-lined boulevards and expansive gardens for which Paris is famous today. Other elements of Haussman's plan include uniform building heights, grand boulevards, and anchoring elements including the Arc de Triomphe and the Grand Opera House. As a result of the Haussman Plan, Paris becomes known as the most beautiful city in Europe.

Card Imagery: This card depicts a partial map of Paris in the 1860's. An illustration of the Arc de Triomphe is in one corner and Gare du Nord train station in the other. The bright red Seine River represents the suffering endured in the process of beautifying Paris.

Reflection: What are the benefits and drawbacks of centralized power? Are grand-scale monuments possible without centralized power and suffering? What is too much?

Woman

4.1 – New World (Q, Staff, Sunrise/New dawn, Light)

Eva decides to leave everything she knows to make a new life for herself in the new world. She is no longer ashamed of her identity and uses it to create new opportunities. She pioneers across North America on the Oregon Trail to San Francisco like thousands of others in search of a new life. Cholera strikes her wagon train.

Reflection: What does it feel like to boldly explore the unknown, leaving what you have and know behind in search for something new?

4.2 – Sex (R, Blood, Red lamp, Light)

In 1849, when gold is discovered in California, San Francisco quickly grows from an outpost of 700 people into a small city of 25,000 within two years. With almost no law-enforcement and a predominantly young, male population, San Francisco is a violent place. Eva opens a brothel in San Francisco's Barbary Coast, the district of vice. Unlike other brothel owners who steal or import poor girls, Eva takes in orphans and run-aways. The average prostitute begins working at the age of eight to fourteen and works for about six years before she dies or kills herself. Eva treats her girls well and they all thrive.

Card Imagery: A portrait of Eva hangs from an ornate Victorian sign.

Reflection: How do you carve out a space for yourself? What do you need to thrive?

4.3 – Woman (S, Web, Kitchen fire, Light)

Eva's brothel is a sanctuary for women amidst the violence of the world of men. It attracts girls from other houses and allows them the space to be who they are. They become sisters and mothers. Eva surrounds herself again with

a surrogate family.

Card Imagery: Eva is in a long dress full of roses (the flower of love, passion and the moon) and faces of women. The knot pattern in the background symbolizes the eternity of life, nature and love. This knot has thorns completing the sanctuary metaphor of the thorns (symbolizing violence and danger) that surround the roses, Eva and the women.

Reflection: How do you define your community? When is a group sharing similar beliefs and/or characteristics beneficial and when is it detrimental?

4.4 – Child (T, Ibis, Kaleidoscope, Dark)

Children populate Eva's brothel as some of the women give birth. Innocence and purity visit Eva's life. When one of the boys becomes ill Eva is faced with a similar choice as her parents were. Instead of intervening, Eva lets nature take its course.

Card Imagery: Poppies (the flower of death), narcissi (symbolizing death and rebirth) and pomegranates (the fruit of the dead and a symbol of fertility) are shown in a kaleidoscopic pattern. Kaleidoscopes, invented in 1816 as a science tool, quickly became a popular toy in the 1870's.

Reflection: When does compassion require action and when does it require restraint?

4.5 – Earthquake (U, Web, Fire, Dark)

San Francisco experiences a massive earthquake and fire in 1906. 28,000 buildings are destroyed and 225,000 people are made homeless. The Barbary Coast burns to the ground. With San Francisco becoming a respectable city, many do not want it rebuilt. Eva takes the fire as a sign to move on and many of the girls decide to work together to start a legitimate business.

Card Imagery: People are falling from a burnt out city on a cloud. This image

references angels falling from heaven following Lucifer's rebellion.

Reflection: How do you recognize when one phase is over and that it is time to move on?

Spirit

5.1 – Desert (V, Staff, Sunlight Light)

In Eva's last phase of life she turns inwards. First she journeys to the desert, like the nuns she knew centuries ago, for some solitude. She communes with the sun, a symbol of individuality, creative power and generosity.

Card Imagery: Joshua Tree National Park

Reflection: What are your strengths? How can you grow and develop them?

5.2 – Forest (W, Web, Sparkling Dew Drops, Light)

Next Eva ventures to the lush forest where life's interconnectedness is prominent.

Card Imagery: This card shows a madrone tree, calla lilies and monarch butterflies (all Californian natives).

Reflection: Where do the things in your immediate surroundings come from (i.e. food, water, clothes, electricity)? Trace the sources as far back as you can.

5.3 – Mountain (X, Ibis, Milky way, Light)

Eva seeks the peak of a mountain for clarity. She knows much of the world now and strives to live in and love it without attachment.

Card Imagery: The mirror reflects the mountains and the Milky Way.

Reflection: What are the things that you need and treasure? Can you appreciate them without holding onto them?

5.4 – Ocean (Y, Blood, Holograph, Light)

Lastly, Eva searches from the furthest corners of outer space to the smallest quantum particles within finding circular dimensions at either end.

Card Imagery: Fractals appear similar at all levels of magnification so have come to symbolize infinity.

Reflection: Focus on one thing and try to see the entire world in it.

5.5 – Death (Z, Ibis, Sunrise, Dark)

Eva befriends a traveling spider named Dries. She is inspired by his excitement for life. However Eva's lack of drive frustrates him. When Dries storms off after a fight one night, Eva is forced to confront her attachment to her own life. Once she lets this go, she is able to transcend and be born again. She decides it is time to fulfill her last wish. She pulls back the curtains and waits for the sun to rise.

Card Imagery: Eva is wearing the mitre the priest had on in Card 1.1 during her baptism symbolizing that she has come back to her beginning. She is standing in a narcissus flower (a symbol of death and rebirth). A ring of narcissi surround her.

Reflection: What are you attached to? How do you become aware that you are attached? What suffering does your attachment bring? How do you learn to let go?

Author

Marilyn Yu is a creative guru who has interwoven media, ideas and people in her creations for over a decade. In her latest works, Yu is creating the mythology for a contemporary heroine, Eva, with a team of creative professionals. By challenging the stagnant ideas of the dominant belief systems, Yu aims to empower people to take control of their thoughts instead of letting thoughts control them. She introduced Eva in “Relations That Suck: The Story of Eva and Dries,” a piece of art in book form that bridges the worlds of fine art, fashion, and fiction. “La Femme Fatale,” is a gateway work that invites readers to have an intimate interaction with the beautiful and profound.

Yu’s artwork has always mixed her lighthearted and humorous perspective with critical topics ranging from urban sprawl to the culture of consumerism. Indeed, she was a pioneer in introducing sustainability to high fashion with her award-winning, hemp-based clothing line, Plutonium Clothing.

Yu strives to direct our cultural evolution onto a more constructive trajectory. As advances in technology break down traditional boundaries, Yu finds our inherited cultures unskilled at dealing with the collisions of different ideas and views. Instead of leading to greater understanding, easier access to information and people has led to defensiveness and an entrenchment of ideas. She believes that as our interdependence increases, the ultimate ramification of misdirected

aggression is self-destruction. This motivates her to strive for compassion and self-exploration in order to shed inherited expectations and obligations.

Yu's vision is to bring diverse people together to engage in reflection, critical thinking, and cooperation. Her dedication to building and transforming consciousness and community-based organizations impels her to assemble teams that question the status quo and love to experiment. She works through a collaborative process that creates space for spontaneity and organic development.

Yu has a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Sculpture from the Rhode Island School of Design and a Masters in City and Regional Planning from UC Berkeley.



photo: DeCenzo-Cordova.com

Frequently Asked Questions

How did you come up with the character Eva?

I wanted a character with a dramatic inner conflict, something fundamental to her nature that she couldn't change. Eva is a compassionate, Catholic vampire who believes that it is a sin to kill people. Her life is a journey towards self-discovery and self-acceptance. I am hoping that readers, looking at how Eva reconciles her conflicts, can apply some of her lessons to their lives.

How did you come up with her name?

Eva's full name is Eva Prim. I wanted her name to be made up of the letters in the word "vampire."

How did you come up with the story and format?

I wanted to write about modern relationships. "Relations That Suck" deals with an interpersonal relationship. La Femme Fatale is about Eva's relationship with herself. The card format came about because I wanted to highlight important episodes in Eva's life as well as make the story more interactive. Being able to rearrange the cards also reinforces that these conflicts and conditions are timeless struggles and not specific to a time or place.

How did you come up with the title?

Eva is the contemporary femme fatale archetype, encapsulating age-old human struggles, interpreted from a contemporary perspective. I believe that it is important for our heroes, myths, and belief systems to evolve as human social organization evolves, so they can constructively guide human behavior. Our current dominant belief systems evolved during an agrarian age. In this post-industrial, information-based economy, we need updated archetypes, role-models who navigate the challenges in a society that values the individual, to promote considerate and intentional thought. Because it is our thoughts that create our world.

Does Eva need to die?

By the end of the story, Eva has come to accept who she is. She doesn't want to continue living as a vampire though. She is reluctant to kill herself until she meets Dries. Her interaction with him helps her become aware of her attachment to her own life. Once she lets this go, she is able to transcend and be born again.

How is Eva different from other vampires?

Eva likes humans. She prefers them to vampires because vampires are quite cynical. Alive for hundreds of years, vampires know a lot, but value very little.

How old was she when she became a vampire?

Eva was a teenager when she became a vampire.

Is La Femme Fatale a version of tarot?

No. Tarot cards were initially made for games. Later they also became used as a divination tool. La Femme Fatale is primarily a story that encourages introspection, both thematically and through its format.

Why a deck of cards?

I wanted the story to be interactive. In card format the reader can choose how they want to use or experience the story.

How do you go from designing clothes to writing books and making short films?

I have a wide variety of interest and like exploring intersections with other creative people. I am creating multifaceted projects that I can work on collaboratively.

It is common for fashion magazine spreads to imply a narrative to draw the images together. I took this concept and applied it to an actual story. Making moving pictures was a natural progression from the narrative still photographic series.

Feedback

Marilyn would love to know what you think of the book. Feel free to write her and share your thoughts.

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Here are some questions to get you started.

1. Which are your favorite cards and why?
2. What parts of Eva's story speak to you the most and why?
3. What would you like to know more about?
4. Would you give it as a gift? If so, who would you give it to?
5. Did you read "Relations That Suck"? If yes, was it helpful to have read it before reading *La Femme Fatale*?
6. Had you read reviews before reading it? If so, do you agree with the "official" reviewers or not?

