



# Shuffling Through Writer's Block

## When Your Story is Stuck



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# Shuffling Through Writer's Block

## When Your Story is Stuck

If you're a novelist or aspiring author, then you know that writer's block is no secret—it's one of a writer's most notorious enemies. Whether you've floundered on getting started with a project, wrestled with what two characters should say during a dialogue-heavy scene, grappled with what to write in an article or essay, or even struggled with what to say in a social media post, you've more than likely felt the sting of writer's block.

For many, overcoming this common dilemma can be achieved through implementing habits like meditation, setting aside time to write, eliminating distractions, brainstorming exercises, and progress tracking. On the other hand, these habits might seem easier read than done. From an energetic standpoint, writer's block is a lack of surrender, a misalignment with one's project. As such, the tarot can help, especially during brainstorming sessions.

To help you climb out of your creative slumps, I've designed a selection of easy and accessible tarot spreads and activities. From sparking inspiration to making decisions, one or more of these activities might help ease the writer's block sting.

### What you need for these activities:

- Your tarot deck.
- Your favorite tools for notetaking.
- Your intuition.

Click the buttons below for quick access:

Start, Stop,  
Continue

Advice Bridge  
Spreads

Stuck at a  
Crossroads

The Foolish Trip

# Start, Stop, Continue

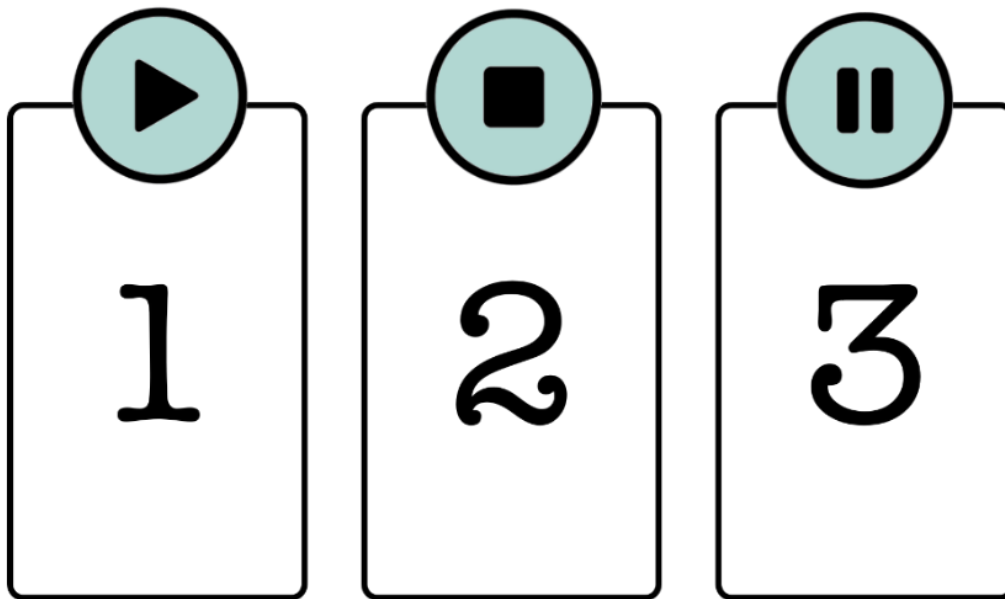
**W**hen you hit a block, this three-card spread can be a quick way of assessing what you need to start, stop, and continue doing in order to move forward.

1. Shuffle your deck until you are satisfied that the cards are ready for pulling, and then turn the deck facedown as if you were about to deal them.
2. Starting with the space for Card 1, pull three cards and lay them in the three spaces.
3. Ask yourself the following questions, using your intuition to consider the answers.

Card 1: What do I need to **START** doing in order to get over this block?

Card 2: What do I need to **STOP** doing in order to remove this block?

Card 3: What do I need to **CONTINUE** doing in order to move forward?



Use the spaces below to record your cards and thoughts.  
Remember to save your work!

1

2

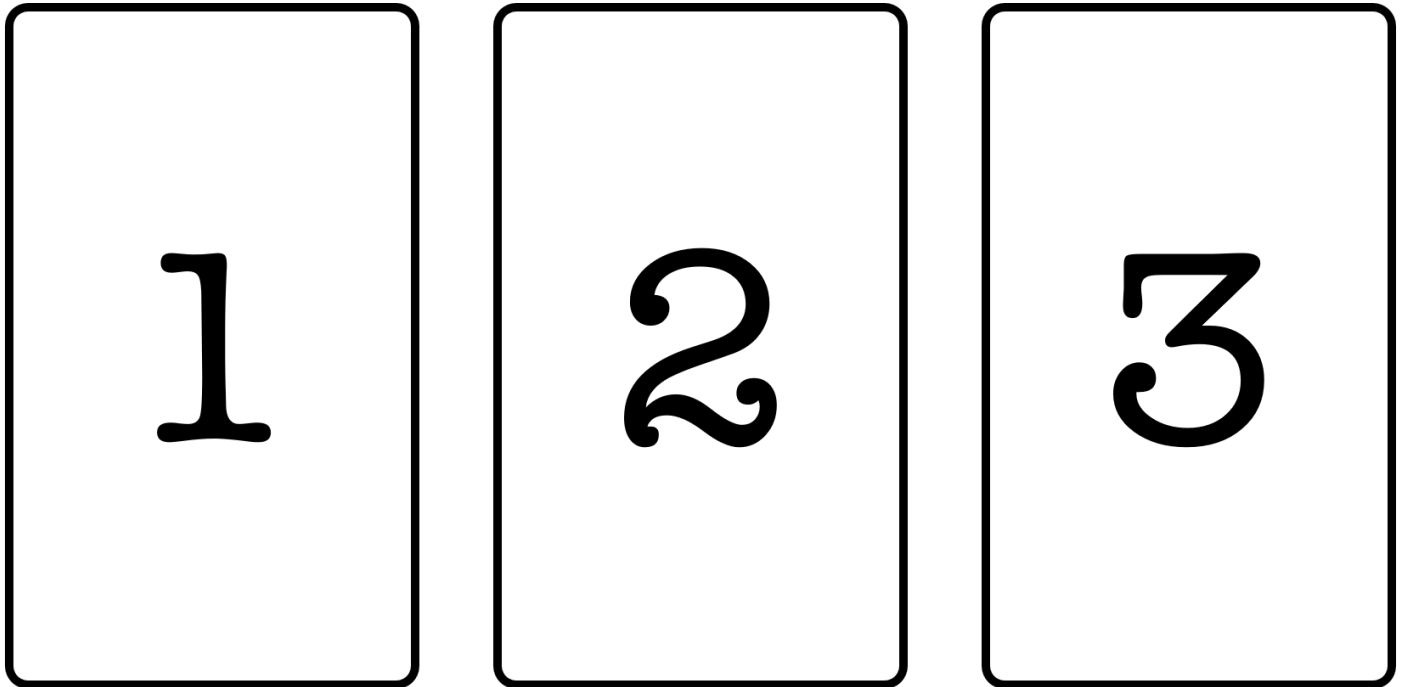
3



# Advice Bridge Spreads

Since the tarot's mysterious origins, people have used the cards for divining advice. *What should I do to attract a mate? How do I find a better-paying job? Which move should I make?* The cards can even offer advice around writer's block.

Now, you don't have to believe in supernatural forces guiding the cards—you can simply use your own intuition to mine ideas from the card illustrations. As such, when you find yourself at a creative impasse, you might try the following three-card Advice Bridge spreads.

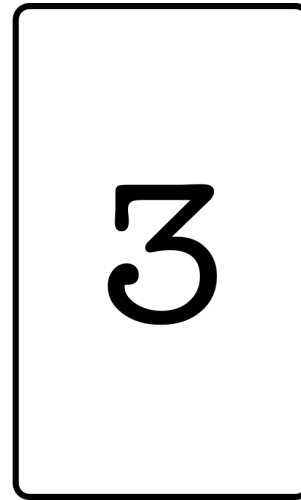
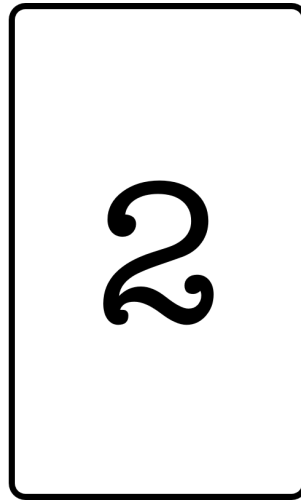
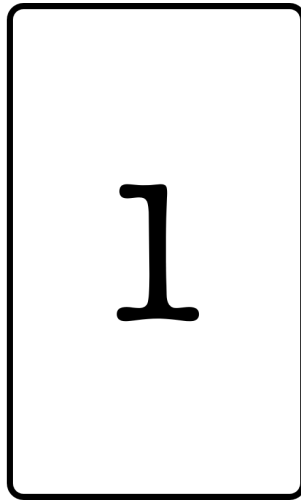


Card 1	Card 2	Card 3	
Energy Block	Advice	Solution	Go to Spread →
Hurdle	Advice	Outcome	Go to Spread →
Problem	Advice	Goal	Go to Spread →

1. Shuffle your deck until you are satisfied that the cards are ready for pulling, and then turn the deck facedown as if you were about to deal them.
2. Starting with the space for Card 1, pull three cards and lay them in the three spaces.
3. Ask yourself the questions related to the spread of your choice (next page), using your intuition to consider the answers.



# Energy Block / Advice / Solution



Card 1: What's causing my energy block right now?

Card 2: What advice can help me work through it?

Card 3: What solution awaits?

Use the spaces below to record your cards and thoughts.  
Remember to save your work!

1

2

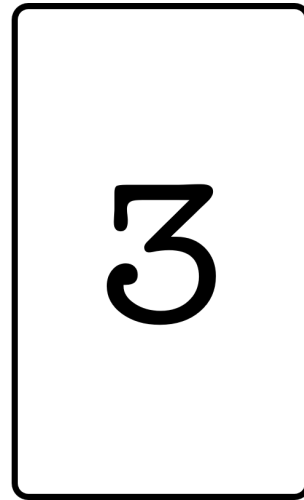
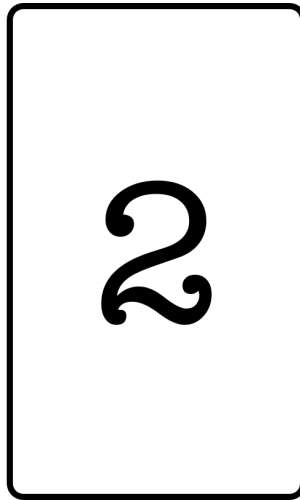
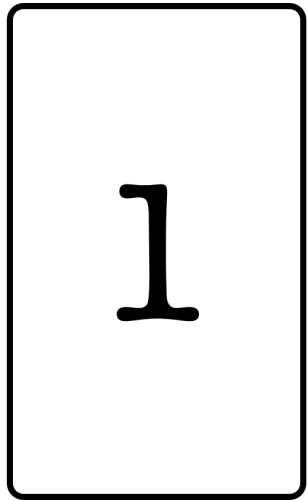
3

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[Next Spread](#)



# Hurdle / Advice / Outcome



Card 1: What hurdle is blocking my creative energy right now?

Card 2: What advice can I use to leap over it?

Card 3: What does the outcome look like?

Use the spaces below to record your cards and thoughts.  
Remember to save your work!

1

2

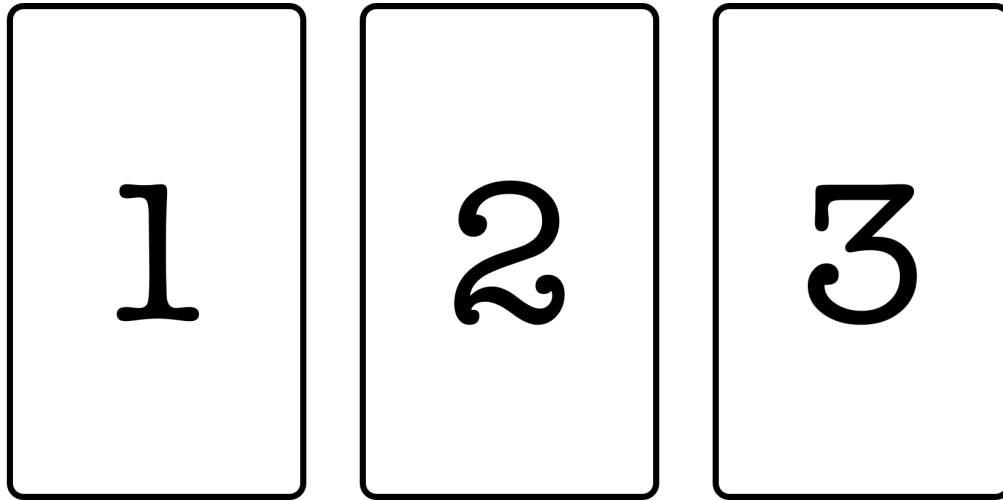
3

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[Next Spread](#)



# Problem / Advice / Goal



Card 1: What problem is affecting my creativity right now?

Card 2: What advice can help me move past it?

Card 3: What goal can I set in order to move forward?

Use the spaces below to record your cards and thoughts.  
Remember to save your work!

1

2

3

[Back to Instructions](#)

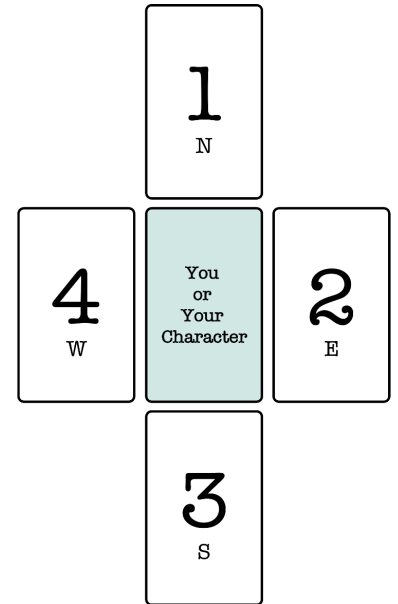




# Stuck at a Crossroads Spread

**W**hile this exercise was designed with fiction writers in mind, it can help with any kind of writer's block-related dilemma.

1. First, think of where you are in writing your story or project. Where is your character? What is the plot? What is the scene? Write what's happening right now—the issues and the concerns. Set aside your notes.
2. Next, search your tarot deck for the card that best represents you or your fictional character right now at this moment. Place the card in the center of the spread for Card 1.
3. Shuffle your deck and pull four additional cards, laying them around your character in the following order: north, east, south, and west. These cards represent considerations and decisions.
4. Ask yourself the following questions, using your intuition to consider the answers and move that writer's block out of your way.



[Go to Template](#)

Card 1—North: If my character or I keep pressing forward, what are the possibilities?

Card 2—East: What can I uncover if I work with the direction of this card?

Card 3—South: If my character or I turn around and go back in time, what might I change?

Card 4—West: What can I uncover if I work with the direction of this card?



# Stuck at a Crossroads Spread

Use the spaces below to record your cards and thoughts.  
Remember to save your work!

4	1 N	1
	4 W	You or Your Character
3	3 S	2

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# The Foolish Trip

**D**on't know what to write? Unclear about where in the world your main character is headed? Or are you feeling uninspired? Try jogging your creativity by taking a Foolish trip.

1. Shuffle your deck until you are satisfied that the cards are ready for pulling.
2. Find The Fool, which represents you or your character(s) in this dilemma. Lay the card in front of you, as far left as your space will allow.
3. Next, lay every card that follows The Fool in a line until you arrive at The World, which represents a conclusion. If you run out of cards before finding The World, continue with the cards that were ahead of The Fool.

For a practice run, when considering this spread from left to right, what story comes to you?

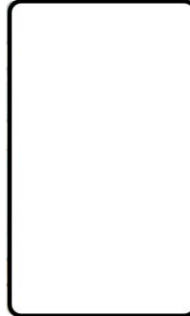
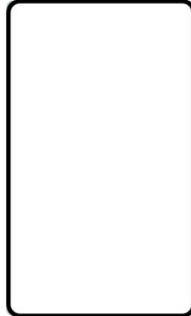
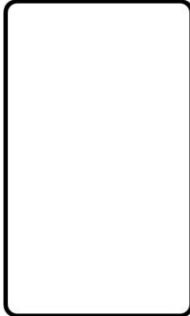


[Go to Template](#)



# The Foolish Trip

Although your story might include more cards than spaces on the spread below, use the template for inspiration and then record your story in space below. Remember to save your work!



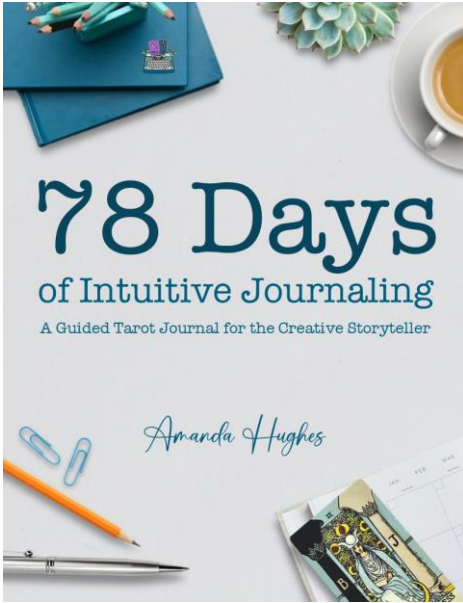
Large empty rectangular area for writing the story.

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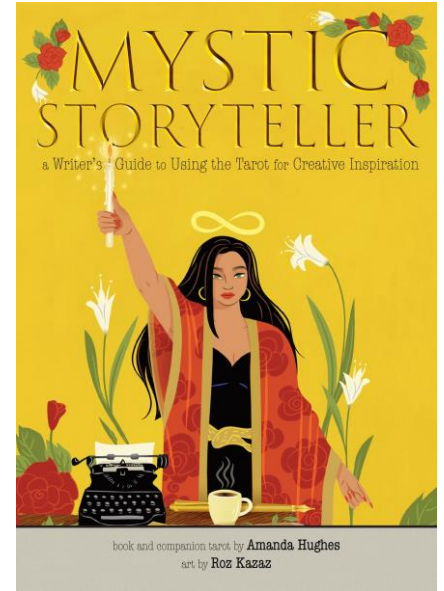
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Character Profile  
Toolkit

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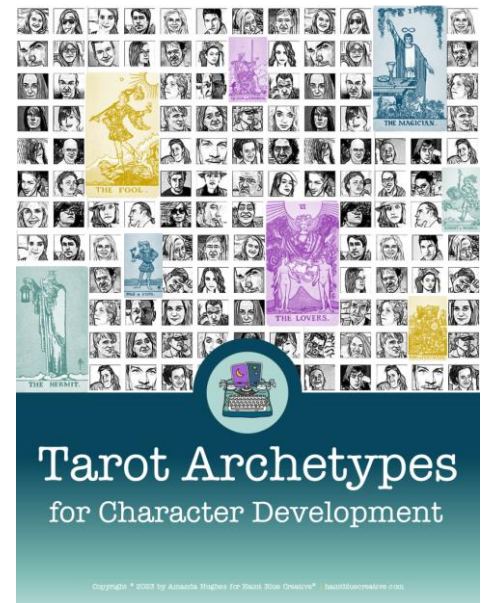
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Character Development Resource

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for Character Development

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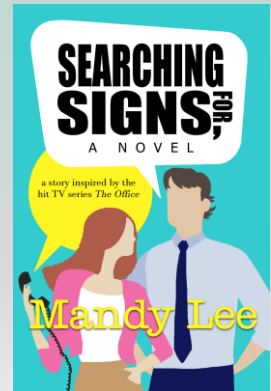
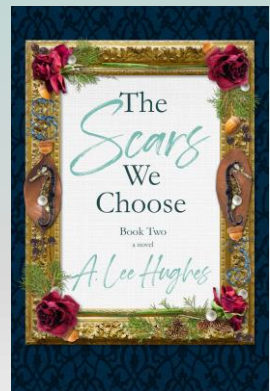
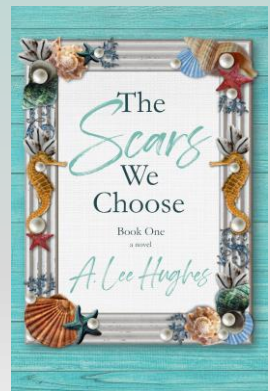
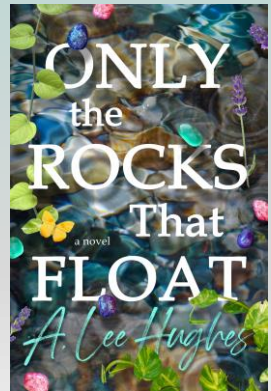
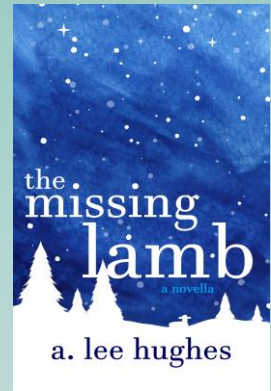
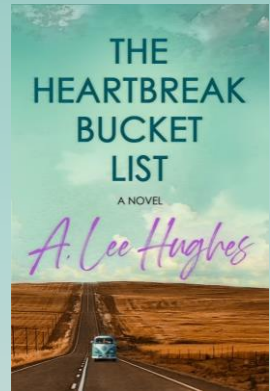
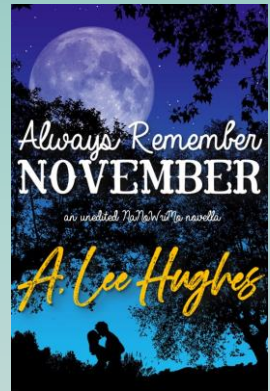
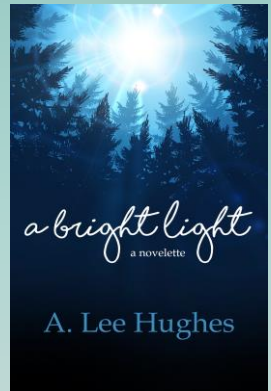
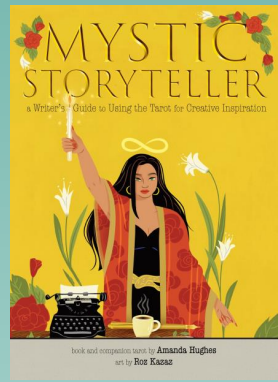
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## »————« About Mandy »————«

In her more than thirty years as a storyteller and visual designer, Amanda “Mandy” Hughes has written and designed over a dozen works of literary, Southern Gothic, and women’s fiction under pen names A. Lee Hughes and Mandy Lee.

Mandy is the founder of Haint Blue Creative®, a space for readers and storytellers to explore, learn, and create. She holds a Bachelor and Master of Science in Psychology, and she has worked as an instructional designer for nearly twenty years.

When she’s not writing, Mandy enjoys the movies, theater, music, traveling, nature walks, birdwatching, and binging *The Office*. She is a tarot enthusiast who uses the cards to enhance creativity and foster wellness. Her book *Mystic Storyteller: A Writer’s Guide to Using the Tarot for Creative Inspiration* and companion tarot deck are coming to La Panthère Studio in 2024.

Mandy lives in Georgia with her husband and four sons, two of whom are furrer than the others (but not by much). Visit her website at [haintbluecreative.com](http://haintbluecreative.com) and follow her on Instagram @HaintBlueCreative and @MysticStorytellerTarot.

