



Inside Ed's Head

May 2013

J. K. Hartman
(He's The Leader of the Pack)

Magicians are blessed (or cursed, depending on how deep your pockets are), with an abundance of fine writers who create and share dazzling effects with us. When I look into my library, I see that there are two authors who stand out when it comes to high creativity and prolific output. Harry Lorayne certainly must come to mind when we think of such a person. I feel very lucky that he was kind enough to contribute material to this column.

The only other writer who can rival Harry's creativity and output (my opinion, of course) is J. K. Hartman. I first read his material almost thirty-five years ago (!) when I encountered his typed, three-hole punched manuscript "Loose Ends." This was a revelation for me, and I sought out his other work. I was able to find "Secret Subtraction" and "Odd Lifts," but his other manuscripts were unavailable. Fortunately, Tannen's reprinted some of them, and now I'm pleased to say I have it all, except "Super Dupes," which somehow managed to elude me at the time.

As I've mentioned before, sometime in the '90s I started taking notes on the magic books I was reading, and entered what I considered the most interesting information from these books into my home grown database software. (The Magic Database™, www.magiciansoftware.com). Examining my database, I see Mr. Hartman has 330 entries. (Startlingly, this is the exact same number of entries I have for Harry Lorayne!) This **doesn't** include any of his books before Card Craft, or anything from his latest book, Card Dodgery. This latest book is published by Vanishing, Inc., and if you go to their website, you can find it, and several other of Mr. Harman's books.

<http://www.vanishingincmagic.com/magician/jk-hartman/>

Surely if you want to read the best of what's out there, seek out Mr. Hartman's work.

The following effect is exactly that of the trick "One Down, Two to Go" published in Card Dodgery, p. 68. He based his trick on "Sandwich for Two," by Jeremiah Xiufu Zuo, which was published in Antimony No. 10. Since I don't know what part of the original version Mr. Harman changed, I don't know whose material I am changing. For all I know, I might have changed the trick back to its original version, but judging by what Mr. Hartman wrote, I'm guessing I didn't.

The Hartman version gets into position to accomplish the effect in a very different way than I would, so for the record, here's my variation.

My Favorite Four Ace Trick **(With Five Cards)**

Effect: Taking a packet of **five** cards from the deck, you explain that you are about to do your favorite Four Ace trick, but since you have five cards (four aces and a king), you'll do your

favorite five card trick as well. You place the king face down on the table, and now display just the four aces.

You surround the face-down red aces with the face-up red aces, and make a lame joke. Apologizing, you tell the audience that your next trick will be much better. Suddenly, you show there is now only **ONE** card between the face-up aces. It is the King that you placed on the table at the start. The two red aces are now on the table, where the odd card had been.

Method: Remove the four aces and an X card (preferably a red king). Arrange these as follows from the **face** of the packet: AH, AC, KH, AD, AS. Display these cards in a two-handed, face-up left-to-right spread as you make your initial comments. You now will ostensibly place the odd card face down on the table, while actually switching it for the AD below it. You should place the switched card centered right in front of your working surface. Here are two ways you can accomplish this:

Switch 1 - turnover second deal: Separate your hands, holding the AH, and AC in your right hand, the others spread in your left. Your left thumb is resting on the face of the KH, your left middle and ring fingers are on the back of the AD. You will now turn you left hand palm down, in order to place the card on the table. As the hand rotates, the left thumb pulls the KH to the left, almost, but not quite, square with the AS. Simultaneously, the left fingers push the AD to the right. By the time your hand has turned completely palm down, the AD can be dropped to the table. If it doesn't free itself from the packet of its own momentum, the left fingers can pin it to the table to finish the process. You will now bring the cards in both hands to a position facing you, the backs of the cards towards the audience. Place the cards in the right hand onto the face of those in the left, and square up; the AH will be at the face of the packet.

Switch 2 - displacement: Separate your hands, holding the AH, and AC in your right hand, the others spread in your left. You will now apparently take the KH in your right hand to turn it face down on the table.

As above, the left thumb should be on the face of the KH. Your right hand moves back to the left, replacing the cards back on the spread. The **right** ring and middle fingers should contact the back of the AD. Now begin to raise your hands so the backs of the cards will face the audience. As you do this, you will also separate the cards. Your left thumb holds the KH in the left hand, and pressure on the back of the AD with your right fingers as you move your hand to the right will take that card along with the AH and AC. Pause for just a beat so the spectators can see the fan of three cards in your right hand, and then continue turning your hand palm down to put the "odd card" face down on the table. (Remember, you want to convey the impression that you've taken the KH from the left hand and placed it face down. The two hands should be together very briefly.) Place the right hand cards on the face of those on the left and square up; the AH will be on the face of the packet.

Continuing: After either switch, lower the four card packet so the audience can see the face, and do an Elmsley count as you say, "Now I can show you my four ace trick." The Elmsley count showing four aces should absolutely cement the idea in the minds of your spectator that the KH is face down on the table.

Turn the packet face down into your left hand, and proceed as follows: thumb off the top face-down card into your right hand, and use this card to flip the next card (AC) face up. Take the AC **below** the card in the right hand, and use these two to flip the next card (AS) face up. You now say, "We will leave the face-down red cards [You can now rotate your left hand to show a

red card under the face-up AS, if you wish] in between the face-up red cards.” Proceed to place the left hand cards **on top** of those in the right hand, and take the squared packet into right hand end grip.

“With just a snap of my fingers, I will cause the face-up cards to turn face down and the face-down cards to turn face up. Watch!” So saying, snap your left fingers above the cards in your right hand, and then turn your right hand palm up. As your audience groans, but before they start throwing things at you, snap your fingers again, and turn your right hand back palm down, saying, “. . . and now back.” Spread the packet to show the face-up aces surrounding two face-down cards, saying, “Once again the face-up black aces are surrounding the face-down red aces.”

Look at your audience a little sheepishly, and say, “I seem to need a little more work on my Four Ace trick. Perhaps I’ll have better luck with my Five Card trick.” You will now finish as in the Hartman version.

Square up the packet as follows to prepare for the Vernon Transfer move. Grasp the top right card in overhand grip, and start moving it to the left. The left middle and ring fingertips should be on the back of the AH, keeping it from moving. Continue the squaring action until the AS, KD, and AC are all squared and the AH is right-jogged about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch. Maintaining the pressure of your left ring finger near the bottom of the AH, use your right pinky at the upper **side** of the AH to push it a small bit further to the left. The sideways push at the top of the card, combined with the friction against your left middle and ring fingers, should cause the lower left corner of the AH to protrude a bit from the bottom of the packet. You can now get a secure grip on this ace with the right thumb on the bottom, and the ring finger and pinky at the upper right corner.

Adjusting your left hand position, grip the packet to the left side, thumb on top fingers on the bottom (while retaining your right hand grip).



Top View
Right Hand Removed

Bottom View
Left Hand Removed

(I’d like to point out that I get into the Vernon Transfer in a non-standard manner. The standard approach involves kicking the lower right corner of the out-jogged card **up** with the left pinky, which causes the left lower corner to protrude from the packet. As the way I do it involves a little less finger movement, I prefer it. The card goes into the transfer grip with the motion of my right hand only.)

Now start moving both hands forward, and a bit to the left. As the packet passes over the face-down card on the table, stop moving your right hand as the left continues forward. When the right hand card is freed from the advancing left hand cards, lower your hand to the top of the tabled card, and with a spreading action leave the AH right-jogged on the tabled card.

As the right hand is moving downward, the left hand proceeds to the table and spreads its three cards slightly to the left. You now conclude by showing the face-down card between the black aces is now the KD, and the red aces are now on the table where the KD had been.

Postscript

J. K. Hartman commented favorably on this variation, especially the Elmsley count that reinforces the concept of the odd card on the table, and gets the cards in the right order to continue the trick appropriately. Since he didn't mention otherwise, I assume I did not recreate the original version of this trick.

As I continue to read Card Dodgery, I've been adding more material to my database, giving Jerry the most entries. Since Harry says he's not going to publish anything new, I guess this will leave Jerry at the top of my list.

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