



SIGILLUM DIABOLI

Alan Rorrison

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Sigillum Diaboli, which means apparently, the mark of the Devil, is Alan Rorrison's take on Roy Walton's Card Warp. Now I suppose that I ought to declare an interest early on. I think that Card Warp is a great effect. Roy Walton's original method and some later variations have been part of my performing repertoire for many years. I love the original effect and so approached Rorrison's variation with some trepidation. You have to be pretty confident, or pretty stupid, to try and improve on an already great effect!

Just in case anyone out there is not familiar with the original, a

card, folded lengthwise, turns over as it slides through a second folded card, banknote or similar. A card, folded face inward transposes to one face outward! Visually strong, Card Warp defies logical explanation. Can this be improved upon? Well yes. Rorrison has devised a method, which builds on the original premise and, wait for it, dispenses with the second card! Yup, the folded card transposes between the performer's fingers, literally in the wave of a hand. Sound too good to be true? Well it is not.

In a four-phase routine a card, chosen by a spectator, is folded face inwards, signed on the outside and 666, the mark of the Devil, is added. Clipped between two fingers, a wave of the hand and the lower half, the evil 666, turns face out revealing the chosen card. A second wave and the second half turns over, revealing the whole card, and both sides are shown. Once again, folded face in, this time in quarters, one section turns face out. Finally, in one last wave, again half the card turns face out. The transpositions are neatly linked to the patter providing both a presentation and a 'logic' for what happens.

The effect is great. Quick, visual, with a presentation that neatly matches the 'Devils mark' theme.

I like this variation a great deal. Now to the method. Not surprisingly this is not exactly straightforward. It's not difficult, but neither is it anything like as easy as Roy Walton's original. The trade off is that in order to ditch the second card, used for cover in the original, you will have to put in the work to master a series of moves and the careful but casual handling needed for the effect to look effortless. If Card Warp is not in your repertoire already then my advice would be to start with the original, which is much easier. Personally I use two or three alternative versions and might well add this one for the joy of it.

For repeat performances a small re-set is necessary and I wasn't too taken with the method suggested but that could be overcome. You are also left with an unboxed deck in a pocket, which needs replacing. Using the same techniques as Sigillum Diaboli, you get a second effect in which two chosen cards, one held by a spectator, transpose. There is also a 'bonus' coin effect, which might be fun for small groups. **SB**

WHAT'S HOT: Visual uncovered transformation

WHAT'S NOT: Some work needed to master the moves.

★★★★☆