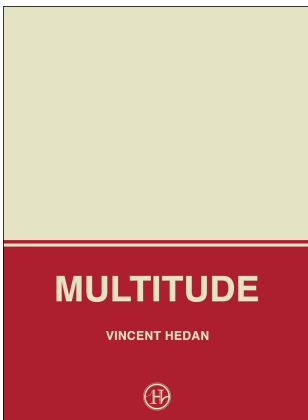
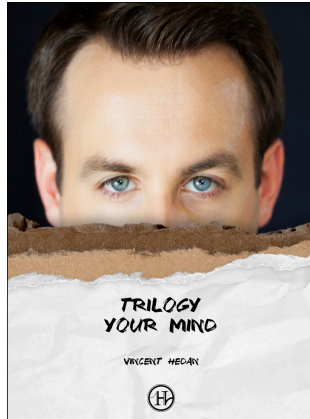
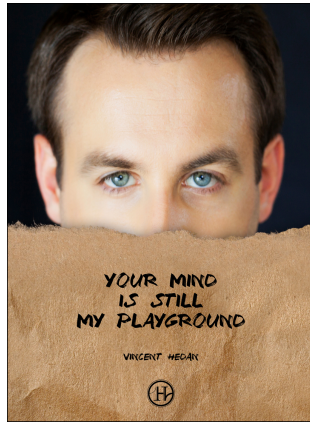
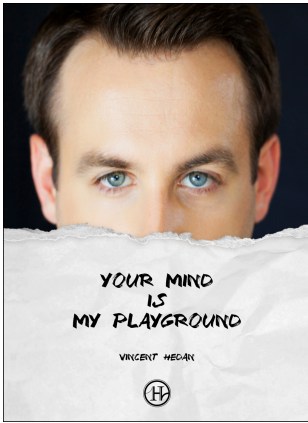


RAINMAN

Vincent Hedan

available on hedan.fr/mental



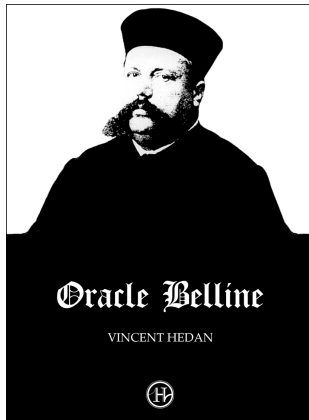
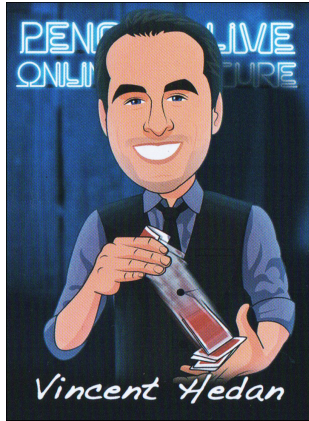
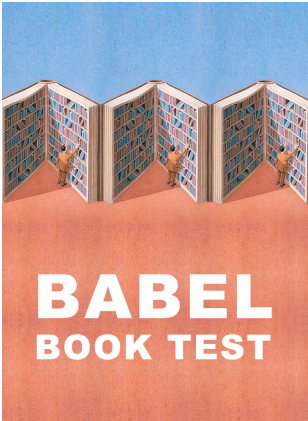
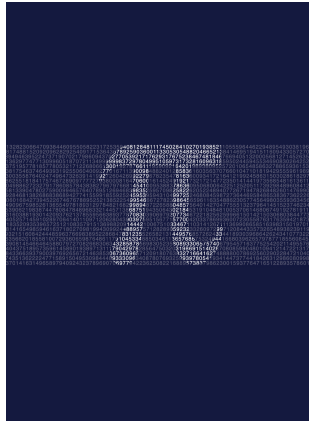
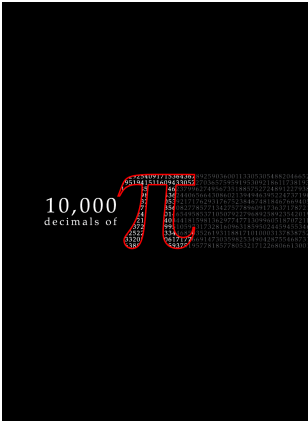


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INTRODUCTION

Thanks for your interest in *Rainman*! In this volume, I describe the routine with which I won the First prize in Mentalism at the French championship in 2008; it is also this routine that got me invited at the F.F.F.F. convention and allowed me to join this mythical group; finally, this routine owed me the Award of Merit during the Canadian championship of 2012.

The title of the routine comes from the classic movie *Rain Man*, directed by Barry Levinson. I was six years old when it was released in France in 1989, so I only saw it years later. In this movie, Dustin Hoffman plays the role of an autistic person (inspired by real-life Kim Peek) and he received the Academy Award for Best Actor for this role. The movie slowly reveals that his character is a memory and mathematics genius, despite his inability to interact socially. The movie contains several scenes showcasing his abilities and these moments are wonderful effects of magic and mentalism. Among other things, the main character is able to memorise one or several shuffled deck of cards very quickly. Cinema has always been one of my main source of inspiration and this mental prowess inspired me to create my own routine and to give it this title.

« Rainman » is not an isolated routine. It evolved from a simpler idea before becoming the full and fooling routine that it is now. In consequence, I decided to begin by describing the original routine, « Before the rain », in

order to introduce the basic concepts in an effect that is more flexible, with just one deck.

Then I explain « Rainman ». The script, preparation, technique and psychological subtleties: everything is described here in detail so that you can understand **how** the routine works, but also **why** it works.

I also included two more effects with the same theme. « After the train » refers to the final scene of the movie and pushes the methodology even further with six spectators and six decks of cards, without any additional effort from you.

« Triple Rainman » is performed with only one deck, three spectators and absolutely no memory or sleight of hands. Its method strays away from the three previous routines, all the while allowing you to perform an impressive memory demonstration.

This book also discusses the decks needed for the different routines, allowing you to adjust the principles to your own usage.

At several points in this volume, footnotes provide references and links to oeuvres and props mentioned in the book. These links have been shortened to make your life easier. You just have to copy them in your Internet browser (you will sometimes need to add `http://` before the link).

The following pages cover ten years of thinking and research, so you will find numerous details on the technical aspects, on the different gaffs, as well as on the presentation and the audience management. Explaining **how** things work is often quick and easy, but it does not give you a clear understanding of **why** things work. I chose to explain how and why in detail, in order to allow you to understand the methodological and psychological choices I have made, and to allow you to adapt them to your own work.

Know how to protect these secrets. This routine brought me a lot and I think you will enjoy studying it and understanding it. I hope these ideas will inspire you in your quest.

Vincent Hedan

Paris 2020

BEFORE THE RAIN

Effect

The mentalist invites two spectators to join him and sit next to him.

« As you probably know, there are some techniques to memorise things more easily, and there are some techniques to forget things less. There are people in this world who are experts of these techniques. They are kind of like « athletes of the mind » and they gather every year to attend an event called the World Championship of Memory. I know it can sound crazy, but these people are geniuses. They compete against each other with ten different mental tests. The last test consists in memorising a full deck of cards as fast as possible. Can you imagine what is the current record for this feat? Thirteen seconds!

I'm not that good, but I think I can show you something that you will not forget. Before we start, how many times do you want me to shuffle the deck (between one and five times)? Three times, ok. »

The mentalist shuffles the deck three times. The audience can see that each shuffle is real. Each shuffle is even different and the spectators take part in the shuffling process.

« We will also cut three times. »

The mentalist lets one of the spectator cut the deck three times and rearrange the deck in any order she likes.

« Perfect, the deck is completely mixed. Now I must memorise it as fast as possible. »

The mentalist starts to look through the deck, holding it faces toward him, focusing on the cards. He stops after a few cards.

« Maybe I should do this in a way that allows everyone to see the cards. »

He spreads the deck face up on the table while he tries to memorise it, closing the spread as he progresses through the deck.

Finally, he spreads it face up on the table for the spectators.

« Ok, I think I have the deck in mind now, so I must be careful not to mix the deck anymore, or else I will have to memorise everything all over again. »

He turns to the lady next to him:

« Alice, in a minute I am going to ask you to take any card in the deck, to show your card to everyone, to remember it and to insert it elsewhere in the deck. »

He then turns to the man next to him:

« Boris, while Alice is doing that, I am going to close my eyes and I will ask you to put two fingers on my eyes. This way we know for sure that I cannot see anything. Boris, I will also ask you to watch what Alice is doing. You must remember where she took her card from, so we can put it back in its place later. It is very easy to do, you just have to memorise the card next to Alice's card when she takes it out of the deck. »

The mentalist closes his eyes, Boris puts two fingers on his eyes and Alice moves one card anywhere in the deck.

« Alice, are you done? Perfect. Before I open my eyes again, can I ask you to close the spread please? Do this very carefully; if you mix the cards, I will have to memorise everything all over again. »

Alice squares the deck and the mentalist opens his eyes again.

« In order to find your card, I have to compare the image I memorised with the image of the deck that is on the table. It is a bit like the game of seven differences where one compares two photos, except here I have fifty-two elements to compare. »

The mentalist spreads the deck face up and focuses on it.

« I think you moved... this card! Alice, is this correct? Perfect. If my memory is accurate, your card was exactly next to... this one! Boris, you confirm that this was where Alice took her card from? Thank you. »

After the applause, the mentalist continues:

« This was kind of a warm-up. I think we can try to go even further, by having Alice and Boris participate together at the same time.

I will turn my back so I cannot see anything. While I am looking away, each of you will take any card in the deck and keep it to yourself. Of course, you can show your card to the audience if you want. When you are done, Alice, I will ask you to close the spread, as carefully as before, to avoid mixing the cards. Let's go. »

The mentalist spreads the deck face down on the table then he turns around so he cannot see anything. Behind his back, Alice and Boris each choose a card in the deck and keep it. Alice then squares the deck. The mentalist comes back, facing the audience.

« Since I have memorised the order of the deck, I should be able to spot the two places where a card is missing, then I should be able to remember each missing card. »

The mentalist takes the deck and looks through it, faces toward him. He stops and opens the deck somewhere.

« I think there is a card missing here. If I remember well, it was a red card... Hearts... it was the 8♥. One of you took the 8♥ out of the deck? »

Boris confirms that he indeed chose this card, by showing it to everyone. This card is put back at its position in the deck and the mentalist continues to look through the deck. He stops again and opens the deck somewhere.

« And I think there is a card missing here. I believe it was the 3♠. Alice, this was your card? »

Alice confirms by showing the 3♠ she chose. The card is put back at its position in the deck.

« Let's try something else with you two. I will spread the deck face up then I will look away. Actually, I won't touch the deck and you won't touch the deck either!

Alice, look at any card in the deck, without touching it. You will tell me what card you are looking at and I will try to tell you the card right next to it. This can only be done by memory because I cannot see the deck, I'm not touching it and you're

not touching it. What is your card? The 5♠, ok. If I remember correctly, the 5♠ is right next to the 10♣, correct?

Boris, your turn: look at any card in the deck, without touching anything. What card are you looking at? The 4♥, ok. The 4♥ is right next to the 2♥, correct? Thank you! »

While the audience applauds, the mentalist takes the deck and shuffles it.

« The hardest part for me now will be to forget the order of this deck of cards, and to memorise a brand new order next time I will perform this demonstration! »

Method

This impossible routine requires no sleight of hands, no false shuffle, no change or switch, no complicated mathematics, no multiple realities, no stooge and no assistant.

As I mentioned in the introduction of this book, « Before the rain » is the routine from which « Rainman » developed. The first three phases are similar and certain elements of the script are already in place. This is the reason why I will first describe « Before the rain » in detail here. It will allow you to familiarise yourself with some of the basic concepts that will then be exploited again in « Rainman ». In addition to that, « Before the rain » is easier to perform, lends itself to more situations than « Rainman », requires less preparation and is much easier for you to perform.

The first methodological principle of « Before the rain » is the use of a memorised deck. Personally, I use my own stack but, for the explanations of this book, I will use the Mnemonica¹ stack by Juan Tamariz. Of course, you are free to use any stack, as long as it does not repeat itself, looks like a shuffled deck and you know it perfectly.

(The most frequently asked questions about stacks are: Why should I know a stack? Which stack should I use? How can I memorise it? I answer these three questions in three articles available for free on my blog².)

¹ Juan Tamariz, *Mnemonica*, 2004, Hermetic Press, Inc..

² hedan.fr/2774

RAINMAN

Effect

The mentalist takes out a blue deck.

« I would like to show you an experiment of memory. « The memorisation of a deck of cards, in less than two minutes, is the most magical and intriguing thing that I have ever seen in my life »... This is a quote from Dominic O'Brien, a British champion who in 1993 was able to memorise forty decks shuffled together. Forty decks... that's more than two thousands cards! I will not memorise forty decks today, but I will show you that our memory is capable of incredible things.

For this experiment, I will ask someone to assist me.

Hello miss, what is your name? I will try not to forget it.

You will be our witness. We will use a deck of cards for this exercise. Why a deck of cards? Because a deck contains fifty-two different symbols, so that's a lot to memorise. In addition to this, everybody knows how to mix cards, so it's very easy to create different orders.

All the cards are of course different, otherwise it will be pointless. And each time I mix or cut the cards, a different order is created. You can see it even better if I shuffle like this. »

The deck is shuffled several times, sometimes face up and sometimes face down.

« Good, we have a blue deck that is well shuffled. But one deck, compared to the forty decks of O'Brien, that's not a lot, so I will use an additional deck to make things even harder. »

The mentalist takes out a red deck that is then shuffled.

« One more deck, that's even more possible combinations. We shuffled each deck and now we will shuffle the decks together, to create a giant deck of one hundred and four cards. »

The mentalist lowers himself to look at the thickness of the deck of one hundred and four cards.

« That's really a lot.

Now, we arrive at a moment that cannot be avoided: I need to memorise the order of the cards. »

The mentalist spreads the double deck face up on the table then he slowly runs his finger along the deck while focusing on it.

« Good, from now on I should know the order of the cards. But you don't have to believe me, which is why we will play with my memory of these cards.

Without me looking, you will take any card and move it somewhere else in the deck. I will also ask you to remember where you took your card from; when you take your card, simply remember one of its neighbours. Understood? Let's go.

Take any card in the deck and remember one of its neighbours; then you can show your selection to the audience and insert it somewhere else in the deck. Done? Thank you.

In order to avoid me having any clue, can you close the deck please? Be careful not to disturb the order of the deck, otherwise I will have to memorise everything all over again! Thank you. »

The mentalist faces the audience again and spreads the double deck face up.

« The game now consists in me finding which card you have moved. In order to do this, I must compare the image I have memorised with the image of the deck that is here. It's a bit like the game of even differences, except here I have one hundred and four elements to compare.

Hmm, I believe that you have moved this card... and that it used to be exactly... here! Is this correct? Perfect!

But I know what you are thinking. You are thinking: « It's easy ! » Yes, it's easy, because maybe I did some crazy calculations on the deck to indicate which cards had moved. I have heard that some magicians really do this! Such a bunch of cheaters...

To discard that possibility, we will start again, but this time using two cards; this way it's impossible to do calculations, it's too complicated! Just like before, you will take any card from the deck and this time you can keep it. After this, take another card somewhere else in the deck and keep it too. Done? Just like before, can you gently close the deck please? Thank you.

Now it is twice as hard, because I'm looking for two cards. In addition, I must first find where there is a card missing, then I need to remember what it was. »

The mentalist spread the double deck face up on the table and goes through the deck. He stops at some point and says that there is a card missing there. He announces a card, the spectator confirms that it is indeed one of her cards, and it is put back in its original position. The mentalist continues to go through the deck until he finds

the spot where the second card is missing. He announces a card, the spectator confirms, and it is put back in its original position.

« But I know what you are thinking! You are thinking: « It's easy! » Yes, it's easy because maybe I have a way of knowing which card you have touched! I have heard that some magicians really do this! Such a bunch of cheaters...

To discard this possibility, I will no longer touch the deck, I will no longer look at it, and you will not touch it yourself! Please, look at any card in this deck of one hundred and four cards. Really any card. Done? You will tell me your card and I will try to tell you, as fast as possible, which card is next to yours. Which card are you looking at? The 10♦? Ok, it's right next to the A♥. No? Wait, let me remind you that we are using two decks, so there are two copies of your card! Look for the other 10♦ and you will see that it is right next to the A♥. Is this correct? And for your 10♦, it is right next to the 6♠, correct? Perfect!

I think that I have demonstrated that I have memorised the deck. Actually, I could recite its order, but it would take too much time, so we will only use a few cards, about a third of the deck. »

The mentalist cuts about a third from the top of the double deck. He counts them quickly.

« 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30... We have about thirty cards here. I will let you look at them; I will try to recite them in order, and if I make a mistake, don't be nice (because we can see that you are a

nice person), just tell me stop and I will try to correct my mistake. Otherwise people will think that you said yes all the time out of politeness. »

The packet is spread face up in front of the spectator and the mentalist turns his back.

« 2♥, 7♦, 3♣, 4♥, 6♦... hmm... A♠? After it is the 5♥, 9♠, 2♠, Q♥, 3♥... No? I made a mistake, it's not the 3♥? What is it? 3♦? Yeah, ok, 3♦, 3♥, it's almost the same... Ah no actually you are right, the 3♥ is a bit further, right after the 2♣, correct? Great, let's go back to 3♦. Then it's Q♣, 8♥, 6♠, 5♠, 9♥, K♣, 2♦, J♥, 3♠, 8♠, 6♥, 10♣, 5♦, K♦, 2♣... our friend the 3♥, 8♦, 5♣, K♠, 10♥... Sorry ? Ah that's it, there are no more cards on the table?

Sorry for that, it ended on K♠, and I kept going on 10♥, etc. »

Indeed, the last card of the face up packet is the K♠, and the mentalist shows that the top card of the rest of the double deck is the 10♥.

« In fact, now I know this deck as well as I know my alphabet. Do you know your alphabet? Of course you do. But if I ask you what is the tenth letter in the alphabet? To answer this question, you have to recite the alphabet until the tenth letter; it's perfectly normal, everybody is like this, because we have only memorised the order of the letters, not their numerical positions.

This is what I did at the beginning: I memorised the order of the one hundred and four cards, but I have also memorised the numerical position of each card!

We have about thirty cards: can you give me a number between 1 and 30 please? 10? Hmm, that's the 2♠. Let's check... correct!

It works the other way around too. Look at any card. Done? Which card were you looking at? The 9♥? Ok, so the seventeenth card. Correct!

Thank you so much for your help, let's give her a big round of applause! »

The mentalist thanks the spectator and lets her return to her seat in the audience.

« As O'Brien was saying, the memorisation of a deck of cards is magical and intriguing, but why is it useful?

Well, this knowledge of the deck gives you a massive advantage if you are playing a card game for example. Let's imagine that we have four players and that the cards are dealt at random to each of them. »

While talking, the mentalist take the 30-card packet and holds it face down in his left hand. Then he deals four piles face down, quickly, without looking at the cards and without apparent logic.

« From the outside, it looks random. In this pile there are more cards, and here there are less; in this pile there are more blue backs, and here it's the opposite. It does not seem to follow any logic, especially since I have dealt the cards without looking at them and while talking, so I was not really focused.

But because I memorised the deck, I was able to deal, from memory, all the Hearts here... all the Clubs... all the Diamonds... and finally, all the Spades! »

The mentalist turns over each pile and spreads them face up, revealing that he indeed successfully dealt each suit into a different pile!

Method

This impossible routine requires only one sleight of hand (and it is optional), no change or switch, no multiple reality, no complicated calculation, no stooge and no assistant.

After I created « Before the rain », I performed it in front of several audiences, both laypeople and magicians. But I was not entirely satisfied. After a while, I realised what could be one of the reasons: there was no real ending, something that would be really striking. During the summer of 2007, I showed the routine to my friend Frantz Réjasse. Then, almost as a joke, he told me it would be insane to try to imagine a similar routine with two decks. Of course, I started working on a 2-deck version right away. It meant decks with different backs, and maybe two stacks? I experimented with a few approaches and ended up developing a routine with only one stack, two decks and six phases (later I would reduce the routine to four phases).

The first three phases of « Rainman » are quite similar to the three phases of « Before the rain »: all the cards are used and the theme of the effects is to prove that I really know the order of the cards. The last three phases of « Rainman » stray away from « Before the rain »: only a third of the cards are used and the theme of the effects is to show what you can do once the cards are memorised.

I showed this new version to different people and they told me I should present it in a competition. The French

national championship of 2008 was a few months away. I had the choice to perform in two categories: card magic or mentalism. Card magic was not really an option; although I was using cards during the routine, there was no visible technical prowess and I was afraid that the jury would wrongfully assume that it was a self-working routine, depriving me from the technical points in the final evaluation. The mentalism category was not much better, because I was not predicting anything, I was not guessing anything, I was doing a memory act. In the end, I decided to go for the mentalism category because it allowed more performance time and because my routine was more mental than visual.

Then I found the quote by O'Brien and I decided to make it the starting point of my presentation. It allowed me to announce that « *the most magical and intriguing thing I have ever seen* » was going to occur.

A few days before the competition, I implemented a heavy modification to the method, allowing me to get rid of the only required faro in the routine. The day before the contest, during an ultimate rehearsal, I realised purely by chance that there was a particular case that was extremely risky during the first phase. I found a solution at the last minute. The morning of the next day, I was performing « Rainman » at the competition.

Étienne Pradier was presenting the contestants and their acts. He announced my name, I exited from the side of the stage, lightly jogging to the table, entered in front of a giant arena in the darkness. I heard myself starting my script automatically. It's only when I introduced myself to

the spectator that I fully regained control on the operations and that I continued to perform the routine consciously.

I finished the act and exited the stage. At this point in time, my experience was a black hole: when I left the stage, I had zero memory of what had just happened. It's only several hours later that pieces of memory came back to me, then it was the award ceremony and I won the first prize in the mentalism category.

Let's now study the inner workings of the entire routine. As you will see, some elements from « Before the rain » are used again, and some new ideas are added. The preparation, the presentation and the management of the method are more complex here so I will do my best to be thorough. Of course, I doubt that anyone will ever present the routine like me. First, because it would make no sense for anyone to copy my presentation, my style and my method to create an unoriginal clone. Second, because the purpose of this description is rather to inspire the reader, to offer him ideas for his presentation and method, and to share with you the multitude of cogs at work in this creation.

The main challenge of « Rainman » comes from the multiplicity of methods that coexists in the same routine. The preparation must be thorough so that each element is correctly implemented; the presentation must be rehearsed like theatre to avoid bad improvisations, clumsy instructions and blackouts; the technical and mental

Structuring the routine

What I have described in detail in the complete routine with six phases. Now that you understand the presentation and the method of each phase, you can decide to change the structure of the routine to adapt it depending on the time you have to perform, or on the audience you are performing for.

The first three phases can be performed in any order. Personally, I think the current sequence (move a card, remove two cards, name a card) progresses toward an impact that is stronger every time.

Each of these three phases can be repeated. You could have one card moved, find it and put it back, then offer to perform this first phase again. Or you could have one or three cards removed instead of two, during the second phase. Or you could have more than one card named during the third phase.

On the other hand, you could also make the routine shorter by only presenting one or two of the first three phases. If you have no other choice than to perform only one of the first three phases, I would recommend performing the third phase, it is the most original and the most impossible of the three.

The fourth phase is impressive because you are reciting the order of the double deck that was shuffled, but it is optional and could be eliminated.

The fifth phase would probably be the phase I would eliminate first, if I had to.

The sixth phase could very well be eliminated, but then you would have to perform one of the other phases as a finale. I would disagree with this option because the sixth phase is really impactful, impossible and memorable for the audience.

AFTER THE TRAIN

Effect

The mentalist takes out six decks of cards, each with a different back: blue, red, green, yellow, purple and black. Each deck is really shuffled and cut several times, in several different ways.

After this, the blue deck is shuffled with the red deck, the green deck is shuffled with the yellow deck, and the purple deck is shuffled with the black deck. Each of the three double decks is spread face up and it is clear that all of them have a different and random order. The mentalist memorises these decks.

Then he turns his back in order not to see the cards. A different spectator stands in front of each of the double decks. One of the spectators names any card, for example the K♥.

The mentalist announces the neighbour of the first K♥ in the red/blue deck, then he announces the neighbour of the second K♥ in the red/blue. The spectator confirms. The mentalist announces the neighbour of the first K♥ in the green/yellow deck, then he announces the neighbour of the second K♥ in the green/yellow deck. The spectator confirms. The mentalist announces the neighbour of the first K♥ in the purple/black deck, then he announces the neighbour of the second K♥ in the purple/black deck. The spectator confirms.

TRIPLE RAINMAN

Effect

« Allow me to show you an exercise in memory, with this deck of cards. But first, can you help me shuffle the cards please? »

The spectator and the mentalist shuffle the deck.

« Alice, here are some cards for you. Boris, same thing for you. And here is for you, Claire. We won't need the rest of the deck for this.

I'm going to try to memorise the content of each of your packets. In fact, Claire, I will also try to memorise the exact order of your packet, so don't shuffle anymore please. Alice and Boris, you can keep shuffling your cards. Perfect.

Alice, spread your cards face up on the table so I can see what you have. »

The mentalist looks at these cards for a moment then looks away.

« OK, I'm going to place your cards in a mental box with your name on it. You can take them back. »

The mentalist does the same thing with Boris' cards. Then he moves on to Claire's cards.

« With your cards, it is a little bit more difficult because I have to create a mental image of the order in your packet. Do not shuffle these anymore or else I would have to memorise everything all over again.

I will turn my back so as not to be able to see. Claire, look at one card in your spread packet. Do you have one in mind? Perfect. Pull it half way out of the spread, without taking it out completely. If someone has a smartphone, can you please take a photo of Claire's spread, so we can see her chosen card sticking out? Thank you. Keep this photo, it will be our memory for later.

Alice and Boris, I'm going to ask each of you to take a card out of your own pile, to remember it and to put it in any of the other piles. So Alice, you can put your card in Boris' pile or Claire's pile; Boris, you can put your card in Alice's pile or Claire's pile. Finally, Claire, take your chosen card (the one sticking out of your spread) and lose it anywhere in Boris' pile or Claire's pile. Everybody is done? Perfect.

Alice, Boris, please shuffle your own packet. Claire, do not shuffle (or else I would have to memorise it again), but square your packet. »

The mentalist faces the audience again.

« Alice, here is the game we are going to play. I will look at your cards. One of your cards is missing because you put it elsewhere. And there might be an intruder in your pile too. Hold your cards face down in your left hand, as if you were about to deal cards for a game of poker. Take the first card and place it face up on the table please. OK, this one belongs to your pile. Keep dealing until I stop you...

Stop! This card, 5♦, it does not belong here. I remember it belonging to Boris' pile. Boris, this is your chosen card, correct? Perfect. Alice, keep dealing until the end of your pile...

Thank you, that will be all.

Boris, I found your card in Alice's packet, but there still might be an intruder in your packet. Like Alice, deal the cards face up one by one please...

Stop! This card, 8♥, it does not belong here. I remember it belonging to Alice' pile. Alice, this is your chosen card, correct? Perfect. Boris, keep dealing until the end of your pile...

Stop! This card, J♣, it does not belong here. I remember it belonging to Claire' pile. Claire, this is your chosen card, correct? Perfect.

Claire, I remember that J♣ comes from your pile. And since I memorised the order of your paquet, I should also be able to remember the exact position of your card. »

The mentalist spread Claire's packet face up then he inserts J♣ at a specific spot, letting it half out of the deck.

« This is where J♣ was, correct? Let's compare its position to the photo we took earlier. »

The photo confirms that the mentalist has correctly remembered the exact position of Claire's card in her pile.