

The Half-Dozen Cousins™

SECRET INSTRUCTIONS

THE TRICK

You, the magician, show your spectator a “family portrait” of your Half-Dozen Cousins. You ask your spectator to count each cousin by placing his or her finger on each face — six in all. Suddenly you notice your spectator’s dirty fingers have left fingerprints all over your cherished portrait! You’ll have to carefully clean off each of the three pieces of the portrait with your handkerchief. When you reassemble the portrait, there are only five faces. One of the Half-Dozen Cousins is missing! To everyone’s surprise, you find the missing cousin’s face on your handkerchief, of all places!

THE SECRET

When you pick up each piece to “clean” off your spectator’s fingerprints, you return each piece to its same position on the table *but each piece has been flipped over*. The portrait is designed a special way so that, when you reassemble it on its flip side, only five faces are created instead of six! Your audience will be amazed because the portrait is completely transparent and cannot hide any clever gimmicks. There are also no complex sleight-of-hand maneuvers for you to master. The “missing” face has been pre-printed on your “handkerchief.” You keep this face hidden until the end of the trick.

THE PROPS

Your trick includes the three-piece family portrait and the handkerchief with pre-printed face. (See Figure 1.)

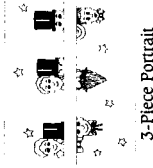


Fig. 1

3-Piece Portrait

Handkerchief

THE SECRET PREPARATION

Look carefully at the three pieces of the family portrait. Notice that the faces have been printed on one side of the plastic. You can feel which side has the printing. This information will help you to assemble the picture to show five or six cousins. Assemble the family portrait to show six cousins as shown in Figure 2.

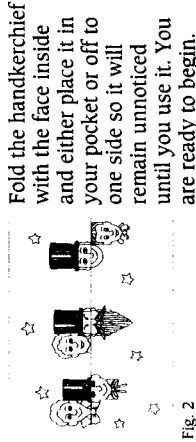


Fig. 2

THE PERFORMANCE

As you show the assembled portrait to your spectator, you explain that these are your Half-Dozen Cousins. You ask your spectator to count the cousins with his or her finger. It's very important that your spectator actually *touch* the faces! After your spectator has counted all the cousins and announced that there are six in all,

you remark that there are now fingerprints all over your nice picture!

Produce your handkerchief and tell your spectator you need to wipe each piece clean. One by one, very casually pick up each piece and “clean” it with the handkerchief. Don't hide or cover any of the pieces as you handle them, or your spectator will think you are changing the pieces in some way.

NOTE: If, for some reason, your spectator refuses to actually touch any of the pieces, you'll have to improvise! You might say you've suddenly noticed how dirty your family's picture has become and you're so embarrassed you must clean it.

Keep the pieces somewhat apart from one another but in the same general location as you replace each piece on your table on its flip side (see Figure 3). Now reassemble the picture (see Figure 4). Ask your spectator to count the faces now. There are only five. One cousin is missing!



Fig. 3

WHAT'S THE PATTERN?

Patter is what magicians say to create a mood for a trick and to draw the audience's attention to details like innocent-looking props. You can use the patter we've provided or make up your own!

Have I ever told you about my crazy relatives? You know, I have six cousins. Here's a picture of them. Aren't they weird-looking? You can't trust any of them. They're always up to no good. Would you do me a favor and just count them for me? I can never tell if they're all here or not. Go ahead and count them with your finger. Make sure those faces are really on there. (After your spectator has finished

counting) ... *Hey! You got my picture all dirty! This is a treasured family heirloom, you know.* (With the handkerchief, casually pick up and "clean" each piece of the picture.) *You have really dirty fingers. Were you eating something greasy today? (As you put back the picture's pieces on their flip sides)... wait a minute. Something's wrong. Count my cousins again. One of them's missing!* (Open the handkerchief and show the pre-printed face.) *Here he is. Cousin Mikey. What a sneak. Never could trust him.*

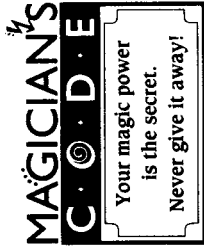


Fig. 4