

# Personal Notes

by Roberto Giobbi

## The Mysterious Envelope

Roberto maintains that this is one of the ten best card tricks for repeated table performances (“table hopping”). The original idea goes back to Paul Le Paul and is described in his book. In addition, Roberto teaches a versatile card control.

### Effect

A selected card is shuffled back into the deck. A random card is shown and placed into an envelope. This card penetrates the envelope and appears face up in the deck. Inside the envelope is the spectator’s selected card.

### Props

- An envelope sized to fit into Roberto’s wallet
- A deck of cards

### Method and Presentation Notes

Hand the envelope to a spectator for examination. A card is selected and controlled to the top. Roberto uses a variation of a method originally described by Frank Garcia, as follows:

The spectator shuffles the deck. Roberto dribbles the cards from the right hand into the left until a spectator calls “Stop.” The cards remaining in the right hand are placed beneath the portion held in the left hand. The deck has thus been cut at a freely chosen point. Roberto emphasizes the fairness of the procedure and shows the top card, turning his head away as he does so. He replaces the card on top of the deck.

He now takes approximately the top third of the deck and side-shuffles it from right to left into the remainder (Fig. 1). The deck appears to be squared. In reality, the fingers of the left hand press the inserted portion slightly downward along its right long edge, enabling the left little finger to obtain a break above the spectator’s card (Fig. 2).

Without interrupting the action, the right hand lifts the portion above the break and shuffles it once more from right to left into the rest of the deck. The spectator’s card is now on top.

“I hope your card did not accidentally rise to the top during the shuffle.”

Turn the top two cards face up as one on the deck, displaying an indifferent card (for the Double Lift, see *Card College*). Take back the envelope and place it on the table with its opening to the right. Turn the double card face down and insert it face down into the envelope (Fig. 3).

Pick up the envelope with the right hand while the left hand holds the deck in dealing position. As if responding to a doubt in the audience, Roberto places the envelope momentarily on top of the deck so that the right hand can remove the card from the envelope

and display it again. In reality, he removes the lower of the two cards (Fig. 4) and shows it to the audience.

Roberto tilts the envelope and deck slightly toward himself. He appears to return the card to the envelope but actually places it squarely back on top of the deck (Fig. 5). The hands are lowered, the envelope is placed on the table—one can see a card inside—and it is closed by inserting the flap (do not seal it).

Using the “Braue Reversal,” turn the deck face up, secretly reversing the spectator’s card beneath the deck.

“Please cut the deck. Perhaps you will cut to your own card.”

(The patter reinforces the idea that the card is still in the deck and emphasizes that the envelope will be inserted at a freely cut point, thereby strengthening the illusion of penetration.)

Roberto holds the deck face up in dealing position in the left hand. A spectator cuts approximately half the deck onto the table.

“Is that your card? No? Never mind—we shall place the envelope at the very point where you cut.”

Place the envelope onto the tabled packet and replace the remaining portion of the deck on top.

Hold the assembled packet with both hands and rotate it several times (Fig. 6), then place it face down on the table.

“Because of the law of centrifugal force—which unfortunately I did not invent—something rather curious happens.”

Slowly lift the envelope together with the portion of the deck resting upon it (Fig. 7) and set it aside. The previously displayed card has apparently penetrated the envelope and now appears face up on the face-down packet on the table (first effect).

“Simultaneously, however, because of the law of compensation—which I did invent—something else has occurred.”

Hand the envelope out to be felt from the outside.

“Has something arrived inside the envelope?”

Open the envelope (or allow the spectator to do so), remove the card, and turn it over. It is the spectator’s selected card (second effect).

### **Personal Assessment**

A card effect that can be performed at any time. If no envelope is available, a card case may be used instead. An excellent card trick for any occasion and under any performing conditions—visual, baffling, and featuring a double climax.

### Notes

1. Le Paul, Paul, *The Card Magic of Le Paul*, pp. 143ff., “The Substitution Envelope Mystery,” Tannen Publications, USA, 1959.
2. Garcia, Frank, *Exclusive Card Miracles*, pp. 21–22, “Unusual Piece of Business,” USA, 1980.
3. Roberto’s handling of the switch is based on Lewis Ganson, *Further Inner Secrets of Card Magic*, pp. 29–30, “Switching a Card in an Envelope,” Supreme, Great Britain, 1972.