

THE SKY WITHIN

Report for Marilyn Monroe
An Interpretation of Your Birth Chart
by
Steven Forrest



This sample report compliments of.

Matrix Software

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Your Chart Data

Marylin Monroe
 Jun 01, 1926
 09:30:00 AM PST
 Los Angeles Coun, CA
 118W12'21", 34N03'46"

Planet	Sign	Position	House	House Cusps
Sun	Gemini	10°Ge27'	10th	01 13°Le07'
Moon	Aquarius	19°Aq06'	07th	02 06°Vi10'
Mercury	Gemini	06°Ge47'	10th	03 03°Li42'
Venus	Aries	28°Ar45'	09th	04 06°Sc03'
Mars	Pisces	20°Pi44'	08th	05 10°Sg38'
Jupiter	Aquarius	26°Aq50'	07th	06 13°Cp33'
Saturn	Scorpio	21°Sc26' R	04th	07 13°Aq07'
Uranus	Pisces	29°Pi00'	08th	08 06°Pi10'
Neptune	Leo	22°Le13'	01st	09 03°Ar42'
Pluto	Cancer	13°Ca24'	11th	10 06°Ta03'
Midheaven	Taurus	06°Ta03'		11 10°Ge38'
Ascendant	Leo	13°Le07'		12 13°Ca33'

Planets within orb of 1.5 degrees of the following house cusp are displayed and interpreted as being in that house, except the Ascendant which uses 3 degrees. Orb Conjunctions with Sun or Moon are 8 degrees. All orbs are set according to Steven Forrest's methods.

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THE SKY WITHIN

by Steven Forrest

Using Your Birthchart as a Spiritual Guide

A woman has a baby and is blissful about it. Another one does the same, and spends the rest of her life dreaming about how she might have been a ballerina. The same choice: having a kid. But only one smiling woman.

Nobody has a generic formula for happiness, at least not one that does the trick for everyone. That's where astrology comes in.

The birthchart, stripped to bare bones, is simply a description of the happiest, most fulfilling life that's available to you... personally. It spells out a set of strategies you can use to avoid boring routines, bad choices, and dead ends. It lists your resources. And it talks about how your life looks when you're misusing the resources and distorting the strategies -- shooting yourself in the foot, in other words.

All from a map of the sky?

Hard to believe. But think for a minute...

"How can the planets possibly affect us? They're millions of miles away." Astrology's critics are fond of rolling out that argument. But it doesn't hold water. Go out and gaze at the moon. What's really happening? Incomprehensible energies are plunging across a quarter million miles of void, crashing through your eyeballs and creating electrochemical changes in your brain. We call the process "seeing the moon." Certainly the planets affect us. The question is where do we draw the boundaries around those effects?

Let's go a step further.

Open your eyes on a starry night. What do you see? A vast, luminous space, full of shadows and light. Now close your eyes so tight they ache. Where are you now? What do you see? Again, a vast, luminous space, full of shadows and light. Consciousness and cosmos are structured around the same laws, follow the same patterns, and even feel pretty much the same to our senses.

"As above, so below." Just as the starry night awes us with its vastness, there's something infinitely deep inside you, a place you go when you close your eyes, a place that's beyond being an Aries or a Gemini or even a specific gender. At the most profound level, a birthchart is a map back to that magical center. It describes a series of earthly experiences which, if you're brave and open enough, will trigger certain states of consciousness in you -- states that operate like powerful spiritual catalysts, vaulting you into higher levels of being.

In the pages that follow, you'll tour your personal birthchart. But don't expect the usual "Scorpios are sexy" stuff. You are a mysterious being in a mysterious cosmos. You're here for just a little while, a blink of God's eye. You face a monumental task: figuring out what's going on! In that spiritual work, astrology is your ally. How will it help?

Certainly not by pigeon-holing you as a certain "type."

Astrology works by reminding you who you are, by warning you about the comforting lies we all tell ourselves, and by illuminating the experiences that trigger your most explosive leaps in awareness.

After that, the rest is up to you.

YOUR TEN TEACHERS

Freud divided the human mind into three compartments: ego, id, and superego. Astrologers do the same thing, except that our model of the mind differs from Freud's in two fundamental ways. First, it's a lot more elaborate. Instead of three compartments, we have ten: Sun, Moon,

and the eight planets we see from Earth. As we'll discover, each planet represents more than a "circuit" in your psyche. It also serves as a kind of "Teacher," guiding you into certain consciousness-triggering kinds of experience.

The second difference between astrology and psychology is that astrology's mind-map, unlike Freud's, is rooted in nature itself, just as we are.

The primary celestial teacher is the Sun. What does it teach? Selfhood. Vitality. How to keep the life-force strong in yourself. If the Sun grew dimmer, so would all the planets -- they shine by reflecting solar light. Similarly, if you fail to stoke the furnaces of your own inner Sun, then you'll simply be "out of gas." All your other planetary functions will suffer too.

How do we learn this teacher's lessons?

Start by realizing that when you were born the Sun was in Gemini.

Wonder, amazement, astonishment, a sense of the miraculous -- those states of consciousness are the best of what Gemini symbolizes. Although this is an Air sign and therefore rather mental in its orientation, the Twins represent something more primal than thinking. They represent perception itself: all the raw, undigested stuff that pours in through our senses. Thinking too much about that material removes us from its immediate, moment-to-moment reality. We start to inhabit theories instead of the actual world of perception. "Authority" creeps in. So does "rightness." And "mental clarity." And the Twins wither. Nourish your Geminian energies with an endless diet of newness and change. They're hungry for anything they've not seen or felt before. Feed them! Give them conversation, books, travel, education... anything but boredom.

With your Sun in Gemini, you're blessed with high levels of physical and mental energy. Use them! There's a quickness about you, an aliveness to the moment. People probably imagine you to be younger than you really are. Your deepest nature is driven by one force above all others: curiosity. You're happiest when faced with surprises. You thrive on the unexpected. And you wither in the face of rigid predictability.

Spiritually, you're learning to keep your mind wide open, to view life as a crash course in amazement. Feed your vitality with new relationships -- or old relationships with people who themselves are always new. Stimulate yourself with books and travel. When in doubt, look through a telescope! Take a course in Etruscan history! Do anything you've never done before.

We can take our analysis of your natal Sun a step further. When you were born, that solar light illuminated the Tenth house. What does that signify?

Start by realizing that Houses represent twelve basic arenas of life. There's a House of Marriage, for example, and a House of Career. Always, we find an element of "fate" in our House structures; the "Hand of God" continually presents us with existential and moral questions connected with our emphasized Houses. How we react and what we learn -- or fail to learn -- is our own business.

One brief technical note: Sometimes the Sun, the Moon, or a planet lies near the end of the House. We then say it's "conjunct the cusp" of the subsequent House, and interpret it as though

it were a little further along... in the next House, in other words.

Community -- that's the key to the Tenth House. How do you fit into your local branch of civilization? What role do you play there? "He's an anesthesiologist." That's a Tenth House statement. But so is, "She's into the women's movement." Even though she doesn't make a dime being a feminist, it still says something about the hat she wears in the community.

Planetary Teachers in this House do two things for you. They outline your "cosmic job description." That is, they tip you off about the role you were born to play in your community. Unfortunately, they don't do that very well; there are a billion roles and only ten planets, so the descriptions they provide are of necessity rather vague. At best, they're rough guidelines.

Tenth House Teachers do better with their second task. They point out parts of your own character that need to be developed to a radical degree before your mission coalesces before your eyes. Accept their suggestions, act on them, and you'll leave a lasting stamp of your vision upon the myths and symbols of your community.

With the Sun in the Tenth House, it's as though Spirit has asked you to figure out a way to get paid for being yourself. Prominent in your "cosmic job description" is the notion that you are to be some sort of role model or exemplar for your community, embodying in yourself a set of principles or skills. To accomplish that, the part of your character you must develop to a radical degree is... yourself. And that takes time. In youth, be wary of the way society will try to seduce you into prematurely accepting some role that doesn't have much to do with your nature or values. When a Tenth House Sun blooms well, it usually blooms late.

The next step in our journey through your birthchart carries us to the Moon.

As you might expect, Luna resonates with the magical, emotional sides of your psyche. It represents your mood, averaged over a lifetime. As the heart's teacher, it tells you how to feel comfortable, how to meet your deepest needs. While the Sun lets you know what kinds of experiences and relationships help you feel sane, the Moon is concerned with another piece of the puzzle: feeling happy.

When you were born, the Moon was in Aquarius.

Aquarius is the sign of geniuses -- and criminals. It represents Individuation, which is a five-dollar word meaning the process of being yourself. Set against your individuation are all the social forces of conformity. Buy a necktie! Shave your legs! Get hungry at noon! Outwardly, they show up as peer pressures. Inwardly, those forces are more subtle but even more formidable: all the internalized scripts that go with having once been a very little kid learning how to be human from mom, dad, and the television set.

The Aquarian part of you is odd somehow. It doesn't fit into the social environment, at least not without betraying itself. In this part of your life, the more centered you get, the weirder you'll seem -- to Ann Landers and her crowd. Go for it, and pay the price of alienation or ostracism. It's high... but not as high as the price of living a life that's not your own.

With the Moon in Aquarius, your feelings "don't work right" -- that, at least, will often be the consensus among your self-appointed psychotherapists, employment counselors, and sundry

gurus. There are times when you'll be under a lot of social pressure to feel happy -- and you'll be sad. Other times, you'll be pressured to mourn -- and you'll feel release. Or jealous -- and you'll be secure. Or enraged -- and you'll be accepting. It's enough to make a person feel crazy. Avoid that too; it's just another one of the social scripts you're learning to break. From an evolutionary viewpoint, you are developing the ability to be true to your own instincts about what's going on inside you... and to avoid what for you would be the deadening emptiness of conventional "normalcy."

The people who make you feel most comfortable are outsiders, the ones who don't fit any social mold very tightly. Spend time with them; they feed your spirit.

Going farther, we see that your Moon lies in the Seventh house of your chart.

One thing about love -- there's no way to learn much about it without some help! The Seventh House, traditionally the House of Marriage, is the part of your birthchart where you encounter the people who'll provide your deepest insights into intimacy. But that's not a code word for sex! For that reason, "Marriage" is a misleading title for this House. You can have intimacy without erotic or romantic feelings.

There are two parts to understanding the Seventh House. The first is that whatever energies you have in this part of your birthchart represent lessons you're learning about empathy, trust, and commitment. The second is that those same planetary energies describe the people who'll provide the lessons. They may be mates or lovers. They may be best friends. They may be colleagues or business associates. They may even be "worthy opponents."

With the Moon in the Seventh House, you've shoved the most vulnerable part of your psychological self right into the hornet's nest: the perilous world of intimacy! You bring tremendous empathy and caring into your love life; you also bring all your wounds and tender places. For you to feel comfortable, there has to be a lot of subjective "flow" between you and the people with whom you share your life. For that reason your "soulmates" tend to be emotional folks, full of imagination, in touch with their needs and fears -- and often, therefore, rather moody. In love, you're riding a roller coaster and that's scary... but you really wouldn't have it any other way.

There's a third critical piece in your astrological puzzle -- the Ascendant, or rising sign. Along with the Sun and Moon, it completes the "primal triad." What is it? What does it mean? Simple -- the Ascendant is the sign that was coming up over the eastern horizon at the instant of your birth. It's where the sun is at dawn, in other words. In exactly the same way, the Ascendant represents how you "dawn" on people -- that is, how you present yourself. It's your "style," or your "mask."

The ascendant means more than that. It symbolizes a way you can help yourself feel centered, at ease, comfortable with who you are. If you get its message, then something wonderful happens: your style hooks you into the world of experience in a way that feeds your spirit exactly the kinds of events and relationships you need. Your soul is charged with more enthusiasm for the life you're living -- and you feel vibrant, confident, and full of animal grace.

When you took your first breath, Leo was lifting over the eastern horizon of Los Angeles

Coun, CA. Let's begin our analysis by considering the meaning and spiritual message of the sign of "The Performer".

When we hear "Lion," we think "fierce." But that's misleading. Go to the zoo and have a look at the "King of the Beasts." He's lying there, one eye open, looking regal. He knows he's the king. He doesn't need to make a fuss about it. The lion, like Leo at its best, radiates quiet confidence. A happy, creative, comfortable participation in the human family -- that's what Leo the Lion is all about.

The evolutionary method is deceptively simple: creative self-expression. As we offer evidence of our internal processes to the world, we feel more at home, more accepted, more spontaneous -- provided the world claps its hands for us! That's the catch. Leo needs an appreciative audience. That audience can be a thousand people cheering or one person saying "I love you." Either way, it's applause, and for the Lion, that's evolutionary rocket fuel.

Toughing it out, not letting oneself be affected by a lack of support or understanding, may well be an important spiritual lesson -- but not for Leo. Here the evolutionary problem comes down to lack of real, ultimate trust in other people. The cure isn't toughness; it's building a pattern of joyful give-and-take. So perform! And if no one claps, go somewhere else and perform again.

With Leo on the ascendant, you radiate calm assurance into the world. Your outer self seems to announce, "I'm doing perfectly well, thank you." That's true, even if you've just stepped into a bear trap, contracted a social disease, and annoyed Muammar Gaddafi! The Leo mask is tough to penetrate; even when you bend over backwards to be self-revealing, people still imagine you to be a thousand times more in control than you feel.

To maintain a sense of well-being, it's pivotally important that you have some kind of creative outlet. It may be an art form. Or it may be something less formal, like telling stories or jokes or putting some flair into an organization. Whatever the pattern, throw yourself into it wholeheartedly, and make sure there are some people to appreciate it.

What have we learned so far? Quite a lot. Astrologers use the primal triad of Sun, Moon, and Ascendant in much the same way people who know just a little astrology use Sun signs. The difference is that while there are only twelve Sun signs, there are 1728 different combinations of all three factors. So when we say that you are a Gemini with the Moon in Aquarius and Leo rising, that's a very specific statement.

Here's a way to make those words come even more alive. Traditionally, signs are connected with Bulls and Sea-Goats and Scorpions -- creatures we don't see every day. But we can translate those images into more modern archetypes.

We can say you are "The Storyteller", or "The Journalist", or "The Witness". Those are just different ways of saying you have the Sun in Gemini.

We can say you have the soul of "The Genius", or "The Truth-Sayer", or "The Exile"... your Moon lies in Aquarius, in other words.

We can add that you wear the mask of "The Performer", or "The Aristocrat", or "The Clown". Those images capture the spirit of your Ascendant, which is Leo.

You can combine those archetypes any way you want. And you can go further: Once you have a feel for the three basic signs in your primal triad, you can make up your own images to go with them. Whatever words you choose, those simple statements are your fundamental astrological signature. It's your skeleton. Our next step is to begin adding flesh and hair to that skeleton by considering the planets.

Unsurprisingly, planets can gain prominence in a birthchart through association with the Sun, Moon, or Ascendant. These three are power brokers, and any linkage with them boosts a planet's influence.

We find exactly that situation in your case. Neptune lies in your First House, a part of the chart which is really just an extension of the Ascendant. Thus, Neptune adds yet another tone to your "mask," modifying and deepening some of what we've already seen.

You're lying in your bed, going to sleep. Suddenly a jolt runs through your body. You just "caught yourself falling asleep." Where were you two seconds before the jolt? What were you? Astrologically, the answer lies with Neptune. This is the planet of trance, of meditation, of dreams. It represents your doorway into the "Not-Self." Based on the sign the planet occupies, we identify a particularly critical spiritual catalyst for you... although we need to remember that Neptune remains in a Sign for an average of a little over thirteen years, so its Sign position actually describes not only you, but your whole generation. Its House position, however, is more uniquely your own.

Neptune was passing through Leo. Thus, to trigger higher states of consciousness in yourself and to stimulate your psychic development, you may choose to follow the Path of the Performer... that is consciously, intentionally to seek the purest expression of your creative vision. Without exposure to the purifying, soul-bleaching effects of spontaneous, unreserved self-expression, you tend to drift away from Spirit, losing yourself in the mazes of daily life.

At your birth, Neptune was about to rise -- in your First House, in other words. This is a position of great prominence for any planet. As a result, we recognize that Neptunian qualities (psychic sensitivity, spiritual leanings) figure vividly in your character, and that those qualities show--people sense them in you. At your best you wear the mask of the mystic, but you can also wear the mask of the chameleon, changing your colors to fit your surroundings and thereby losing track of your own vision and momentum. The cure? Keep Neptune healthy by feeding it meditative silence, ideally once a day.

Your own birthchart is complicated by the fact that, at your birth, Mercury was aligned with the Sun... or "conjunct" the Sun, to use the proper astrological term. Thus, the energy and spirit of that planet is fused with your solar identity. In a sense, you are an "incarnation" of Mercury."

What can that mean? Start by understanding the significance of the planet.

Mercury buzzes around the Sun in eighty-eight days, making it the fastest of the planets. It buzzes around your head in exactly the same way: frantically. It's the part of you that never rests -- the endless firing of your synapses as your intelligence struggles to organize a picture of the world. Mercury represents thinking and speaking, learning and wondering. It is the great observer, always curious. It represents your senses themselves and all the raw, undigested data that pours through them.

Mercury is in heaven -- which is to say it is in Gemini, its favorite sign. This is a powerful, natural, combination which massively stimulates your curiosity and your enthusiasm for the pleasures of the mind: knowledge, witticism, intelligent conversation. Spiritually you are learning about the difficulties of keeping your mind radically open when you're so good at constructing convincing -- and maybe addictive -- theories.

With the traditional "Messenger of the Gods" occupying your Tenth House, your "cosmic job description" is Communicator or Teacher. That means that you were born with something significant to say to the human family. You may write it. You may broadcast it. You may announce it from a soapbox. But before you can pull it off, you'll need to unravel a riddle Life has set before your spirit: How to find your true voice?

While a fairly large number of people have Mercury in that sign and house, the fact that it lies conjunct your Sun gives it special emphasis. By pushing the strengths it suggests toward their limits, you charge your solar vitality, approach your destiny, and set the stage for fulfilling your spiritual purpose.

The lunar dimensions of your astrological signature are deepened by planetary overtones. At the instant your independent physical life began, the planet Jupiter was conjunct the Moon -- aligned with it, in other words. As a result, we cannot discuss your emotions and instincts without including the notion that your Soul is charged with the spirit of Jupiter, as though that ancient "god" lived inside you.

Our first step, of course, is to get acquainted with this new element in the puzzle.

Take all the planets, all the meteors, moons, asteroids, and comets. Roll them up in a big ball of cosmic mush. They still wouldn't equal the mass of the "King of the Gods" -- Jupiter. Exactly that same bigness pervades the planet's astrological spirit. Jupiter is the symbol of buoyancy and generosity, of opportunity and joy. At the deepest level, it represents faith... faith in life, that is, rather than faith in anybody's theological position papers.

Jupiter stands in Aquarius. This is an important piece of information -- maybe a pivotal one. Being human is tough sometimes. When you need to boost your elemental faith in life, your answer lies in following the Way of the Genius. That is, be independent! Break some rules! Annoy a figure of authority! The underlying story here is that, nine times in ten, if you're sad it's because you've allowed yourself to buy into somebody else's picture of what ought to make you happy... and for you, that'll never work.

In your chart, the "King of the Gods" reigns in the Seventh House -- traditionally the "House

of Marriage." Your natural soulmates are people of jovial spirit -- that is, they are bright and energetic, but sometimes a little overbearing. Spiritually, they are sent to cheer you up and expand your horizons; listen to them. But, in loving relationships, learn always to ask yourself, "Am I settling for less than I need here? How can I make this bond better?"

Your birthchart displays another area of heightened activity: the Eighth House. The reason for that is simple -- there's a lot of planetary activity. With Mars and Uranus in that area of your life, it is charged with activity, soul lessons, and opportunities for personal development. Before we even consider the planets separately, our first step is to explore this piece of existential real estate in broad terms.

In the Eighth House you experience three basic human instincts in a radically heightened way. The first instinct is sexual -- not simply having intercourse, but also allowing yourself to bond fully with a partner, letting the primal sexual "program" in your deep psyche manifest, riding the roller coaster, trusting it, even though no one can completely understand it.

Death is the second Eighth House instinct. Again, we let ourselves flow with something deep within us, learning consciously something that our cells know automatically -- that death, like sex, is just another biological roller coaster, spooky maybe, but worthy of trust... which leads directly to the third instinct: our sense of immortality. Something deep and trans-rational in us knows there is a realm beyond death. Life has an "occult" dimension -- that is, a hidden one. Without an acceptance of that intuitive feeling, we live forever under a shadow of futility and foreboding.

You have lessons here. Let's consider them.

Pale red Mars suggested blood to our ancestors, and they named it the War God. That's an effective metaphor -- Mars does represent violence. But today we go further. The red planet symbolizes the power of the Will. Assertiveness. Courage. Without it, there'd be no fire in life. No spark. Where your Mars lies, you are challenged to find the Spiritual Warrior inside yourself, the part of you that's brave and clear enough to claim your own path and follow it.

Mars weaves its heroic fantasies in dreaming Pisces. Inspiration, passion, vision -- they all come rather easily to you, unless you quench your fire with some form of numbing escapism. Spiritually the trick lies in learning to translate those virtues into concrete strategies and specific creative projects... actually to doing something, in other words! You can pull it off, but only if you learn to resist -- sometimes -- the seductive gravity of your own rich interior world.

With the War-God occupying your Eighth House, the archetype of the dark-eyed Mexican Dancer -- moody, passionate, explosive -- figures vividly in your psychological make-up. From an evolutionary perspective, you are developing the courage to deal honestly and effectively with the most basic hungers in your spirit. Sexually, the only kind of partner who'll hold your attention for long is one with whom there is a real exchange of life-force... that is, lots of eye contact, plenty of emotional nakedness, and a spirit of endless risk.

If Uranus were the only planet in the sky, we'd all be so independent we'd still be Neanderthals throwing rocks at each other. There would be no language, no culture, no law. On

the other hand, if Uranus did not exist, we'd all still be hauling rocks for Pharaoh. All individuality would be suppressed. This is the planet of individuation... the process whereby we separate out who we are from what everybody else wants us to be. Always it indicates an area of our lives in which, to be true to ourselves, we must "break the rules" -- that is, overcome the forces of socialization and peer pressure. In that part of our experience, what feeds our souls tends to annoy mom and dad... and all the "moms" and "dads" who lay down the law of the tribe.

With Uranus in Pisces, the process of individuation for you is tied up with the Path of the Mystic. That is to say, you strengthen and clarify your own identity through a radically independent investigation of your own consciousness. You can call this process "religious" if you want to, but the key is that you never sign away your Uranian capacity to think for yourself and to experience your own inner life through as few philosophical filters as possible.

House of Death -- that's the old name for the Eighth House, where your Uranus lies. The issues are broader; not just death, but the whole realm of instinct, and most especially, your sexuality. Uranus is your Teacher here and the lessons can be summarized this way: sexuality plays a pivotal role, positively or negatively, in your spiritual journey. To be true to yourself in that department, you must break some cultural taboos. One piece of that puzzle is that your natural sexual soulmates are probably not quite the folks mom and dad had in mind for you...

In the final analysis, all planets are important. Each one plays a unique role in your developmental pattern, and failure to feed any one of them results in a diminution of your life. Just because the following planets aren't "having breakfast with the President" through association with the Sun, Moon, or Ascendant doesn't mean we can ignore them.

Venus is the part of your mental circuitry that's concerned with releasing tension and maintaining harmony. Its focus is always peace, inwardly and outwardly. As such, it represents your aesthetic functions -- your taste in colors, sounds, and forms. Why? Because the perception of beauty soothes the human heart. Venus is also tied to your affiliative functions -- your romantic instincts, your sense of courtesy or diplomacy, your taste in friends. Invariably, this planet has one goal: sustaining your serenity in the face of life's onslaughts.

Venus was passing through Aries. Thus, both your aesthetic sensitivity and your taste in partners is shaped by the direct, primal spirit of the Warrior. In the realm of beauty, whether natural or wrought by human hands, you have a taste for the elemental and primitive... no frilly fru-fru need apply. The same goes for friends and sexual partners -- you appreciate honesty, a willingness to roar, and a simple dedication to basics, such as loyalty and plain speech.

"House of Long Journeys" -- that was one ancient label for the Ninth House. With Venus, the "Goddess of Love," there in your birthchart, an ancient fortune-teller would announce that you were destined to "marry someone from a foreign land." Here's the translation: Your natural soulmates are people considerably different from yourself... that is, people who bring to your attention certain alien points of view and surprising, mind-stretching experiences. Trust them; they have a gift for you.

"Life's a bitch. Then you die." Go to any boutique from coast to coast; you'll find those words on a coffee mug. Meaninglessness. Like most truly frightening ideas, we make a joke of it. That's Plutonian territory: the realm of all that terrifies us so badly we need to hide from it. Death. Disease. Our personal shame. Sexuality, to some extent. Initially, Pluto asks us to face our own wounds, squarely and honestly. Then, if we succeed, it offers us a way to create an unshakable sense of meaning in our lives. How? Methods vary according to the Signs and Houses involved, but always they have one point in common: the high Plutonian path invariably involves accepting some trans-personal purpose in your life.

Pluto was journeying slowly through the sign Cancer. Thus the shadow material you are called upon to face has to do with the dark side of the Crab archetype: hiding from life. In what part of your life or personal history have you chosen safety over experience, the appearance of love over the steamy reality of shared growth, security over magic? (If you answer is "Nowhere!" then congratulations... you're Enlightened... or not looking hard enough.)

At the moment of your birth, Pluto gleamed in the Eleventh House -- the part of the natal chart that refers to your future and to the evolutionary flow of your life. You were born under a Plutonian pattern that suggests you'll be affecting the myths and symbols of your community in a significant way... but not until you have some "credibility lines" on your face! The first half of your life is best understood as preamble. One more piece of the puzzle: that transpersonal mission is not something you can accomplish alone. You must operate as the catalyst in the context of a group.

Look at a NASA photo of Saturn. The icy elegance of the planet's rings, the pale understatement of the cloud bands... both hint at the clarity and precision which characterize Saturn's astrological spirit. Part of the human psyche must be cold and calculating, cunning enough to survive in the physical world. Part of us thrives on self-discipline, seeks excellence, pays the price of devotion. Somewhere in our lives there's a region where nothing but the best of what we are is enough to satisfy us. That's the high realm of Saturn. In its low realm, we take one glance at those challenges and our hearts turn to ice. We freeze in fear, and despair claims us.

The psychologically-charged terrain of Scorpio offers a region of profound spiritual challenge for you, as Saturn was passing through that sign at your birth. You must learn to steel yourself in the face of the Scorpion's shadow side: obsessive self-analysis. Will yourself toward playfulness! If every now and then you act as though you were one of those bright-eyed idiots in a Toyota commercial, what harm is done? Support that effort in practical, Saturnian terms by fortifying yourself with concrete skills and strategies -- especially ones relevant to Saturn's House in your birthchart. Which House was that?

The Fourth! The arena of life where we encounter the primal roots of our personhood -- our family, our homeland, and most significantly, our "personal myth." With Saturn here, digging for those roots is a labor that calls for sustained effort, not to mention considerable moral courage. The journey may involve psychotherapy or even something akin to detective work

regarding your early life. When you arrive at your own center, what you will find there is a Survivor--a wise one.

Your Lunar Nodes

The soul's journey

Here's a jolly baby. Here's a serious one. An alert one. A dull one. A wise one. Those are common nursery room observations, but they raise a fascinating question: How did that person get in there?

Most of our psychological theory, either technically or in folklore, is developmental theory... abuse a child and he'll grow up to be a child-abuser, for example. But in the eyes of the newborn infant, there is already character. How can that be? One might say it's heredity, and that's certainly at least part of the answer. A large part of the world's population would call it reincarnation -- that baby, for better or worse, represents the culmination of centuries of soul-development in many different bodies. A Fundamentalist might simply announce, "That's how God made the baby." Who's to say? But all three explanations hold one point in common: They all agree that we cannot account for what we observe in a baby's eyes without acknowledging the impact of events occurring before the child's birth.

In astrology, the South Node of the Moon refers to events occurring before your birth, helping us to see what was in your eyes ten seconds after you were born... however we imagine it got in there! The Moon's North Node, always opposite the South Node, refers to your evolutionary future. It's a subtle point, but arguably the most important symbol in astrology. The North Node represents an alien state of consciousness and an unaccustomed set of circumstances. If you open your heart and mind to them, you put maximum tension on the deadening hold of the past.

As we consider the Nodes of the Moon in your birthchart, we'll be using the language of reincarnation. Whether that notion fits your own spiritual beliefs is of course your own business. If it doesn't work for you, please translate the ideas into ancestral hereditary terms. After all, it makes little practical difference whether we speak of a certain farmer weeding his beans a thousand years before the Caesars as your great, great, mega-great grandfather... or as you yourself in a previous incarnation. Either way, he's someone who lived way back there in history who sort of is you, sort of isn't, and lives on inside you--influencing but not ultimately defining you.

At your birth, the South Node of the Moon lay in Capricorn, the sign of the Great Father. Anyone looking into your eyes as you took your first breath would have observed an uncanny maturity, as though he or she were looking into the eyes of an octogenarian. For a thousand years you've found yourself again and again in positions of authority and responsibility, often in the face of daunting circumstances. As a result, resourcefulness has arisen in you, as have toughness and what the British call "a stiff upper lip." Now, like a child who grew up in a terrible street war, you must learn new lessons: spontaneity, emotional self-expression, a willingness to feel.

That nascent ability to open the heart utterly to emotion is symbolized by your North Node of the Moon, which lies in Cancer -- the sign of the Mother. As we saw earlier, the North Node can be seen as the most significant point in the entire birthchart. Why? Because it represents your evolutionary future... the ultimate reason you're alive, in other words. How can you accomplish this Cancerian spiritual work? The "yoga" is easy to say, harder to do: you must overcome the hermit inside yourself, drop your attachment to your own self-sufficiency, and reveal yourself to someone! That is, you need to intentionally place yourself in situations which encourage emotional self-expression: stable relationships with people whom you respect, trust, and view as equals.

There's another piece to the puzzle: The Moon's South Node falls in the Sixth House of your chart. This implies that previous to this lifetime you learned a lot about humility. Your method was radical devotion to service and duty. Trouble is, you learned a bit about humiliation along the way, often crippling your creativity and individuality with feelings of inadequacy, shame, and guilt.

In this lifetime, with your North Node of the Moon in the Twelfth House, you must act to counterbalance those self-undermining tendencies, and the critical self-appraisal that fueled them... not because critical self-appraisal is "bad," but because you've already learned everything you can from it. The time has come for you to accept the vastness of your own spirit, to realize your birthright as an evolving being. A "spiritual" ego-inflation isn't the point; the point is claiming the state of consciousness you earned long ago through your radical devotion to service and duty!

And that's your birth chart.

Trust it; the symbols are Spirit's message to you. In the course of a lifetime, you'll make a billion choices. Any one of them could potentially hurt you terribly, sending you down a barren road. How can you steer a true course? The answer is so profound that it circles around and sounds trivial: listen to your heart, be true to your soul. Noble words and accurate ones, but tough to follow.

The Universe, in its primal intelligence, seems to understand that difficulty. It supplies us with many external supports: Inspiring religions and philosophies. Dear friends who hold the mirror of truth before us. Omens of a thousand kinds. And, above all, the sky itself, which weaves its cryptic message above each newborn infant.

In these pages, you've experienced one reading of that celestial message as it pertains to you. There are others. You may want to consider sitting with a real astrologer ... micro-chips are fine, but a human heart can still express nuances of meaning that no computer can grasp. You may want to order other reports, ones that illuminate your current astrological "weather," or that analyze important relationships. Best of all, you may choose to learn this ancient language yourself, and begin unraveling your own message in your own words.

Whatever your course, we thank you for your time and attention, and wish you grace for your journey.