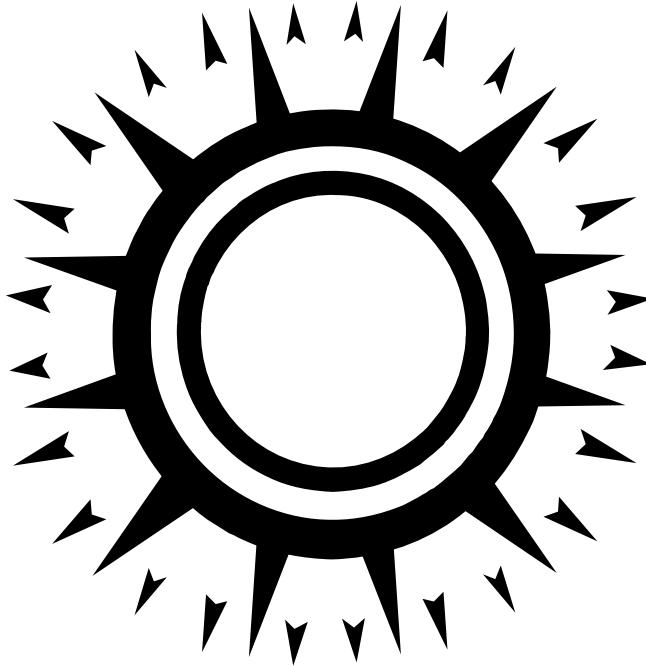


THE SKY WITHIN

Report for Ernest Hemingway
An Interpretation of Your Birth Chart

by
Steven Forrest



This report compliments of:

The Sky Within

TheSkyWithin.com

Your Chart Data

Ernest Hemingway
Jul 21, 1899
08:00:00 AM CST
Oak Park,IL
087W47'00", 41N53'00"

Planet	Sign	Position	House	House Cusps
Sun	Cancer	28°Ca32'	11th	01 07°Vi34'
Moon	Capricorn	09°Cp56'	05th	02 01°Li09'
Mercury	Leo	25°Le30'	12th	03 29°Li56'
Venus	Cancer	13°Ca08'	11th	04 03°Sg22'
Mars	Virgo	20°Vi34'	01st	05 08°Cp09'
Jupiter	Scorpio	01°Sc10'	03rd	06 10°Aq00'
Saturn	Sagittarius	17°Sg49' R	04th	07 07°Pi34'
Uranus	Sagittarius	04°Sg12' R	04th	08 01°Ar09'
Neptune	Gemini	25°Ge45'	10th	09 29°Ar56'
Pluto	Gemini	16°Ge10'	10th	10 03°Ge22'
Midheaven	Gemini	03°Ge22'		11 08°Ca09'
Ascendant	Virgo	07°Vi34'		12 10°Le00'

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 Cancer.

Opening the inner eye, mapping the topography of consciousness, learning to express compassion -- these are Cancer's evolutionary aims. To assist in that work, Cosmic Intelligence has cranked up the volume on the Crab's ability to feel. No other sign is so sensitive -- nor so vulnerable. A certain amount of self-defense is appropriate here; after all, this world isn't exactly the Garden of Eden. Trouble is, legitimate self-defense can degenerate into shyness or a fear of making changes. You really do care about the hurts that other beings suffer. That's good news. You also have an instinctive ability to soothe those hurts, homing in on the source of the pain. More good news. The bad news is that you could choose to remain forever protected within the safe (and invisible!) role of the Healer, the Counselor, or the Wise One.

With the Sun in Cancer, you feed your solar vitality by finding a role in the world in which you address the hurt in the lives of other beings. You become a nurturer or a healer of some sort.

You also need to make sure that you have enough real intimacy and quiet, private

time to "nurture the nurturer" -- yourself, in other words.

Those methods strengthen your sense of identity. They trigger higher states of awareness in you. If you don't express your soothing wound-binding instincts, all the glories of the world would leave you feeling like an imposter in your own life. And without quiet time and naked intimate honesty, you'll quickly burn out on playing the role of everyone's psychotherapist.

Like the crab, you're a vulnerable creature who's evolved a shell. That's fine and necessary. But again like the crab, you must eventually shed your shell and grow a larger, more inclusive one, or you'll be awfully cramped.

We can take our analysis of your natal Sun a step further. When you were born, that solar light illuminated the Eleventh 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.

What do you want out of life? What are your priorities? What kind of old person are you in the process of becoming? Those are core Eleventh House issues. The challenge here is to accomplish something many people talk about but few actually do--lead a life; that is, create your future according to your deepest interests and values.

The planetary forces focused in this segment of your birthchart are Teachers dedicated to helping you find the threads of your destiny. They describe what you were born to become -- and warn you of how you look when you're off course. "House of Friends" is the old name for this part of the birthchart, although "House of Acquaintances" is perhaps more accurate. Intimacy isn't the issue here; teamwork and networking are. But clear priorities must come first, or all those talking faces serve no purpose. They just tie you up in pointless social interactions.

With the Sun in the Eleventh House, you're majoring in a couple of closely related subjects: group dynamics and the formation of life-strategies. Increasingly, you'll find yourself in positions of leadership... but not dictatorship. That is, you'll be working to hold together often contentious crowds of individuals, and you'll be needing to do that with diplomacy rather than brute force. For those team-projects to be ultimately successful, it's critically important that you know exactly what you stand for personally. Every year or so, try to get off by yourself for a couple of days and think about what you've accomplished, what you're doing next, and how you've evolved since last year. One more point: The second half of your life will tend to be more dynamic and colorful than the first half; it takes you a while to get up to full steam, but when you do, there's no stopping you.

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 Capricorn.

Tell the truth about Capricorn and you start sounding like a voice out of the Boy Scout Handbook. Here are the key concepts: integrity, character, morality, a sense of personal honor. Those are the Sea-Goat's evolutionary themes. They all boil down to the capacity of will to dominate every other aspect of our natures, including emotion.

The Capricornian part of you needs to begin by asking itself one critical question: In the part of my life touched by the Sea-Goat, what is the highest truth I know? The rest is simple... at least simple to understand. Just live it. Keep a stiff upper lip, and do what's right.

But be careful. There's nothing wrong with expressing feelings as long as they're not doing your decision-making for you. If you're tempted to do something wicked, don't be afraid to mention it. Otherwise, half the world will think you're a saint while the other half thinks you're a pompous ass. And neither half will get within a light-year of your human heart.

With your Moon in Capricorn, you have vivid emotions and ravenous hungers... but often you find yourself in situations where expressing them is dangerous, inappropriate, or ethically questionable. The effect is a bit like dynamite exploding in a steel room. From an evolutionary perspective, you are taking a master class in self-discipline. The plain fact is that, spiritually, you've come to a place in the journey where you need to toughen up.

To feel comfortable, you need to feel that you have embarked upon Great Works -- long-term projects that require concentration, commitment, and excellence.

Paradoxically, you relax by working. Inactivity, at least more than a few hours of it, tends to make you nervous and tense.

Be wary of holding too much inside you; sometimes that's necessary, but many times it's not. The Moon is emotion and Capricorn means self-discipline: one translation is that you are learning the discipline of appropriate emotional self-expression.

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

Pleasure -- that's Fifth House territory. It's as though God marched you off the end of the cosmic diving board with the words, "Go down there and try to have a good time!" That sounds pretty lightweight, but think about it: feeling good in this world isn't so easy! We've got global pollution, schizophrenics with AK-47s, ego-maniacs with nuclear warheads... not to mention disease, taxes, mosquitos, cars that won't start....

How do we feel real pleasure here on planet Earth? Alone, the "pleasures of the flesh" can't cut the mustard; money, alcohol, orgasms -- they help, but they're not enough... just look at the usual life-expectancy of a "purely physical relationship." Where to turn? To the pleasures of the mind, the heart, the soul! The joy of learning. The spiritual high of athletic excellence. The bliss of meditation. And, perhaps above all, the sheer pleasure of creative self-expression.

Astrological force is focused here in your birthchart. It offers joy -- and warns of the addictions that can overcome you if you miss that joy, or seek it all in one place.

With the Moon in the Fifth House, there's clearly a playful streak in your character, a desire to express yourself whimsically and creatively. Trouble is, it's fairly easily

abashed. Your evolutionary challenge is to keep that "child within" alive and confident, despite the wounds of life's early years. You have a terrific imagination. You can build inner worlds before breakfast. Make sure you enjoy the bliss of expressing that fantasy-life. If you don't, you'll try to make up the pleasure deficit in less healthy ways: stupid self-indulgences, typically with food or sex.

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, Virgo was lifting over the eastern horizon of Oak Park, IL. Let's begin our analysis by considering the meaning and spiritual message of the sign of "The Perfectionist".

Virginity isn't the point. That's just a kind of inexperience, and in the long run no one learns much from avoiding experience. Virgo means purity. Perfection. Getting everything exactly right. That's a tall order. Perfection is a harsh master. It drives the Virgoan part of you, haunting you with a sense of what could be, a sense of the ideal. It also holds a flawless mirror before you, revealing all the imperfections and shortfalls in your character. The combination is powerful. It fills your spirit with hunger and divine discontent, imbuing you with restlessness, as though you'd taken out an insurance policy against complacency. Be careful, though: Virgo energies can self-destruct, slipping into a crippling hyper-awareness regarding all the flaws and shortfalls inherent in people, oneself, our possessions, our prospects -- everything. And nothing kills our climb toward perfection faster than that.

With Virgo rising, your style is precise and analytical. You radiate intelligence, sometimes rather intimidatingly. Something in your aura seems to be studying everything -- and everyone! -- searching for errors and weaknesses. And of course, you usually find them. That's fine, but you may need to cultivate a little diplomacy in the way you express what you've discovered.

To feel centered, you need to feel as though you're good at something. Technical skill bolsters your confidence and your general feeling of well-being immeasurably. That skill can be in any category, from figure-skating to neurosurgery. Similarly, you'll feel best when you're working and when the work you're doing is clearly helping someone in a practical way.

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 Cancer with the Moon in Capricorn and Virgo 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 Healer", or "The Wise One", or "The Invisible One". Those are just different ways of saying you have the Sun in Cancer.

We can say you have the soul of "The Authority", or "The Prime Minister", or "The Boss"... your Moon lies in Capricorn, in other words.

We can add that you wear the mask of "The Perfectionist", or "The Analyst", or "The Servant". Those images capture the spirit of your Ascendant, which is Virgo.

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

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 is steaming in the searching, questioning, restless field of energy we call Virgo. The Warrior inside you is bent on one target: seeking out flaws, weaknesses, errors. Like a magnetic compass, you unerringly home in on the fracture zones in any monolith -- be it an argument, an idea, a strategy... or a person. Spiritually you're learning two lessons here. One is how to be scrupulously honest in naming problems. The other, which makes the first endurable, is forgiveness.

With the War-God occupying your First House, people's first impression of you is that you're a rather daunting individual, strong-willed, and one with whom nobody trifles. There's a presence, a passion, an intensity about your "persona," perhaps more so than you know. From an evolutionary perspective, you center yourself most effectively when you willingly, actively, face your primal fears. Scared of heights? Then learn to sky-dive.

Sometimes a planet gains prominence in a birthchart simply by sharing a House with the Sun. That's the case with you. Venus is bathing in solar light, occupying the Eleventh House along with our central star.

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 Cancer. Thus, both your aesthetic sensitivity and your taste in partners is shaped by the imaginative, womb-like spirit of the Cosmic Mother. In the realm of beauty, whether natural or wrought by human hands, you have a taste for subtlety, for enclosure in dream-like, intimate spaces. The same goes for friends and sexual partners -- you are drawn to people who open up slowly, like yourself, people who promise a long, unfolding journey, with the challenges of radical emotional nakedness made bearable by an absolute commitment to faithfulness.

With Venus in the Eleventh House, as you mature, your Venusian energies figure more prominently in your character and situation. That suggests a trend toward more prosperity, more comfort, and better fortunes in the world of intimacy as the years go by. There is an artist in you, but it's a late-bloomer... even if that truth is veiled by lesser successes earlier in life. Is all that guaranteed? Yes... provided you don't cancel it by slipping under the thumb of the dark Venus, descending into laziness, self-indulgence, and escapism.

Your birthchart displays another area of heightened activity: the Fourth House. The reason for that is simple -- there's a lot of planetary activity. With Saturn 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.

Peel away the layers of the psychological onion, get down to the core of your being, the realm of your heros and nightmares -- you've entered the Fourth House. This is psychic bedrock. Traditionally, it's the House of the Home. That's a valid notion in lots of ways. First, with any astrological factor in this part of the birthchart, you're at least "minoring in psychology" and that process requires a safe haven; hence, you feel an elevated need for the privacy and security of the "nest." Second, much of your psychic bedrock was profoundly influenced -- or scarred -- by your childhood experiences. Many of your most fundamental challenges spin off the effects of a powerful parent upon your present character. Third, "Home" is "where you're coming from" -- and this House answers that question in the deepest way: it's the core of your being.

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 boundary-shattering terrain of Sagittarius 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 Archer's shadow side: a tendency to spend years denying one's natural need for risk and adventure, only to release it all in one glorious existential pratfall. Will yourself toward a robust engagement in life. And support that journey in practical, Saturnian terms by fortifying yourself with the concrete skills and strategies a gambler needs in order to survive -- especially ones pertinent 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.

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 Sagittarius, the process of individuation for you is tied up with the Path of the Gypsy. That is to say, you strengthen and clarify your own Uranian identity through stretching out toward new horizons -- and without that kind of mind-expanding experience you're likely to foul up your life with long periods of "practicality," punctuated with explosions of impulsiveness. Consciously chosen forays into the exotic and alien, such as adventuresome travel or exciting intellectual stimulation, purify your sense of self, purging out the spurious "inner voices" you've swallowed sitting in front of the great wraparound television set of late twentieth century Industrial Culture.

House of the Home -- that's the old name for the Fourth House, where your Uranus lies. The issues are broader; not just home, but also your psychological "home base" - the innermost "Myth of Self." Uranus is your Teacher here, and the myth or archetype upon which your outer life must be founded is that of the Genius or the Revolutionary. But to achieve the expression of that brilliance you first face some friction: something happened to you in your early life, something that antagonized the expression of your individuality. Find it and conquer it.

Your birthchart shows still another area where planets congregate: the Tenth. By combining forces, Neptune and Pluto emphasize that department of your life almost as powerfully as the Sun or Moon would.

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.

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 Gemini. Thus, to trigger higher states of consciousness in yourself and to stimulate your psychic development, you may choose to follow the Path of Witness... that is, consciously, intentionally to seek astonishment and wonder, never allowing your mind to content itself with prerecorded position papers. Without exposure to the purifying, soul-bleaching effects of the miraculous, you tend to drift away from Spirit, losing yourself in the mazes of daily life.

Neptune, planet of transcendence, occupies the Tenth House of your birthchart, where its mystical feelings are linked to questions of your status in the world and to larger issues of destiny and purpose in your life. To become the kind of person who can fulfill the outer purpose for which you were created, you must first turn your back on the attractions of status. Why? Because your destiny, if you choose to accept it, is to function as a kind of spiritual inspiration for your community... and there's no way to fill those shoes if you're still attached to looking important!

"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.

One more point: Pluto moves so slowly that it remains in a given Sign for many years. As result, its Sign position in your birthchart refers not only to you but also to your generation. The House position, however, is much more personal in its relevance.

Pluto was journeying slowly through the sign Gemini. Thus the shadow material you

are called upon to face has to do with the dark side of the Storyteller archetype: rationalization. In what part of your life or personal history have you spun an armor of pretty words around some precious, ego-preserving lie about yourself or your circumstances? (If your answer is: "Nowhere!", then congratulations... you're Enlightened... or not looking hard enough.)

At the moment of your birth, Pluto gleamed in the Tenth House -- the part of the natal chart that helps clarify your "cosmic job description." You were born with a mission, and your sense of meaning in life depends on fulfilling it. What is the mission? We can't say precisely, but we can narrow it down. First, it involves blowing the whistle on lies. Second, it involves countering the force that has historically been called Evil, and healing its effects. Third, it depends totally upon your courage to speak out at the level of moral principle.

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.

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 roaring in Leo. That combination links your mental functions to the self-expressive, dramatic logic of the Lion. Your intelligence is hungry for an audience and knows how to attract attention. Spiritually you are learning about the importance of being heard -- and about the trap of sacrificing honest but threatening content for the sake of mere showmanship.

With the traditional "Messenger of Gods" occupying your Twelfth House, your intelligence is much concerned with the investigation of consciousness itself. You trigger greater psychic sensitivity and spiritual awareness in yourself when you flood your senses with incongruous, surprising, stimulating information or questions: What's the sound of one hand clapping? The trick here lies in using the intellect to trip the intellect.

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 Scorpio. 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 Sorcerer. Go walking under the moon in a hard wind. Fill your house with candlelight. Get lost in the eyes of another

soul who shares some of your humility before the awesome mysteries of existence.

In your chart, the "King of the Gods" reigns in the Third House -- traditionally the "House of Communication." You are a natural teacher, able to convey not only information to people, but also enthusiasm for that information. Given time and an audience, you're a spellbinding storyteller. Spiritually, you are learning to gain confidence in the fact that you have a very specific kind of healing in your voice: you can give people hope, and doing that is a big piece of your destiny.

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 Gemini, the sign of the Storyteller. Anyone looking into your eyes as you took your first breath would have observed the results of lifetimes spent sharpening the senses, honing your capacity for instantaneous reaction and adaptation. Many incarnations in which you lived by your wits have made you quick and fluid, hungry for fresh experience, eager to share ideas. But triumph for yourself -- that's the only cure. The triumph may be huge -- like getting your Ph.D. -- or it may be a little daily thing, like actually getting around to cleaning out the closet.

That nascent ability to come to terms with the intuitive, faithful side of your own psyche is symbolized by the North Node of the Moon, which lies in Sagittarius -- the

sign of the Gypsy. 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 Sagittarian spiritual work? The "yoga" is easy to say, harder to do: you must overcome your addiction to the sharpness of your own formidable intelligence, intentionally placing yourself in situations which you do not comprehend and to which you must therefore respond from your gut rather than from your head.

There's another piece to the puzzle: The Moon's South Node falls in the Tenth House of your chart. This implies that previous to this lifetime you were often a "pillar of your community." That is, you were a figure of authority and substance, often setting the tone for the cultural process around you. Trouble is, even though there's nothing inherently wrong with wielding power, you did get attached to it... not so much in the sense of blind, unscrupulous ambition as in a difficulty imagining yourself stripped of a meaningful, stabilizing social role.

In this lifetime, with your North Node of the Moon in the Fourth House, you must act to counterbalance some of that focus on your role in society... not so much because it's "wrong" as because you've already learned everything you can from it. The time has come for you to concentrate on your interior life, both psychologically and spiritually. And one of the most effective ways you can accomplish that is to establish a "nest" with a mate, perhaps with children. That path will ultimately reveal more to you this time around than having your face on the cover of Newsweek.

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.