

THE SKY WITHIN

Report for Winston Churchill
An Interpretation of Your Birth Chart
by
Steven Forrest



This report compliments of:

Great Bear Enterprises

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Your Chart Data

Winston Churchill
 Nov 30, 1874
 01:30:00 AM GMT
 Woodstock, UK
 001W21'00", 51N52'00"

Planet	Sign	Position	House	House Cusps
Sun	Sagittarius	07°Sg43'	03rd	01 29°Vi56'
Moon	Leo	29°Le37'	11th	02 28°Li45'
Mercury	Scorpio	17°Sc36'	02nd	03 27°Sc32'
Venus	Sagittarius	22°Sg02' R	03rd	04 29°Sg55'
Mars	Libra	16°Li33'	01st	05 02°Aq20'
Jupiter	Libra	23°Li34'	01st	06 01°Pi08'
Saturn	Aquarius	09°Aq36'	05th	07 29°Pi56'
Uranus	Leo	15°Le14' R	11th	08 28°Ar45'
Neptune	Aries	28°Ar26' R	07th	09 27°Ta32'
Pluto	Taurus	21°Ta26' R	08th	10 29°Ge55'
Midheaven	Gemini	29°Ge55'		11 02°Le20'
Ascendant	Virgo	29°Vi56'		12 01°Vi08'

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 Sagittarius.

To the medieval astrologer, there were three kinds of Sagittarian: the gypsy, the scholar, and the philosopher. They're all legitimate, healthy parts of the picture. Sagittarius represents the urge to expand our horizons, to break up the routines that imprison us. One way to do that is to escape the bonds of the culture into which we were born -- that's the gypsy. Another is to educate ourselves, to push our intelligence beyond its customary "position papers" -- the way of the scholar. Finally, our intuition can stretch outward, trying to come to terms with cosmic law, attempting to grasp the meaning and purpose of life. That's the philosopher's path.

To keep your Sagittarian energies healthy, you need to feed them an endless supply of fresh experience. Travel. Take classes. Learn to scuba dive. Amazement feeds the Archer the same way protein feeds your physical body. Conversely, if there's a cardinal sin for Sagittarius, it is to consciously, willingly allow yourself to be bored.

With your Sun in Sagittarius, freedom is the most precious arrow in your quiver. You thrive on experience. Your heart beats faster at the sight of a far horizon. Your life is a quest... for adventure, for experience, ultimately, for meaning. The Gypsy, the Scholar, and the Philosopher all play major roles in your interior existence... and need to have major input into your existential shopping list! There's a Gypsy-like destiny element in your life that presents you again and again with culture shock, like travel or working with people from different backgrounds. The Scholar manifests as your lifelong desire to learn, to break up your mental routines. And you've been a Philosopher ever since you were born -- you popped out of your mother's womb wondering, "Why am I here?"

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

Learning to see what's before your eyes -- that's Third House territory. Traditionally, this is the House of Communication. Perception might be a better word. The words on this page are "communicating" with you. But so does the blueness of the sky and the warmth of a friend's touch. Through your perceptions, the universe floods you with a continuous storm of raw information. Trouble is, we tend to miss most of it. How? By filtering it through the thick mesh of our preconceived notions and pet theories, often symbolized astrologically by whatever planets lie in this part of the birthchart.

The evolutionary question you're facing in this House is simple... to say. Can you keep a radically open mind? Can you really see what is before your eyes? Can you bleach your senses as clean as buffalo bones in the desert?

Spirit has given you intelligence and a capacity to communicate. It's given you curiosity. The discipline here is talking -- and listening. Experiencing -- and digesting. Understanding -- and endlessly questioning your understanding.

With your Sun in the Third House, you're bright and communicative, generally curious about the world around you. You've probably been given the gift of gab. You're a natural teacher, too, born to explain things. From an evolutionary perspective, everything depends upon keeping yourself... confused! That is to say, keeping yourself in a state in which what you've allowed yourself to experience is a few steps ahead of what you've figured out.

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 Leo.

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 your Moon in Leo, you have the instincts of a performer. To feel comfortable, you need to feel appreciated. That is to say, you need to feel as though people are enjoying you, taking pleasure and inspiration from what you have to offer them. This combination is a little odd: the Moon, unlike Leo, is inherently timid. You must nurture the performer in yourself, making sure it's not too easily rebuffed. Some of that work revolves around cultivating your own creative talents, polishing them, making them all that they can possibly be. Another piece of the puzzle lies in learning to select the right audiences... and if you're giving your best and everybody's yawning, then for sure you'd better pack your bags and go somewhere else.

If you don't feed your Leo Moon the applause it needs, then you'll slip into the "occupational hazards" associated with this combination: getting haughty, self-centered, or demanding. You'll be the "performer" who offers nothing, and still expects everyone's rapt attention.

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

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 Moon in the Eleventh House, you have uncanny "political" instincts -- and whenever more than two or three people get together to try to accomplish something, we have "politics!" Your destiny lies with processes that spill over the boundaries of your own life and your own powers and interact with the destinies of other people; you are a team player by fate, if not by taste. As you mature, you will become more and more lunar -- that is, more emotionally expressive and probably more creative. In you, there is a softening that comes with time. If you get six out of every ten existential questions right, that's good news. Do worse, and you'll do a slow drift in the direction of moodiness, prickliness, and maudlin self-indulgence.

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 Woodstock, UK. Let's begin our analysis by considering the meaning and spiritual message of the sign of "The Perfectionist".

Virginitly 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 Sagittarius with the Moon in Leo 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 Gypsy", or "The Scholar", or "The Philosopher". Those are just different ways of saying you have the Sun in Sagittarius.

We can say you have the soul of "The Performer", or "The Aristocrat", or "The Clown"... your Moon lies in Leo, 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 lies in civil Libra. It's as though the Warrior has gone to charm school! Libra is peaceful, diplomatic, consensus-seeking. Reflexively, your Mars pursues reconciliation, mutual understanding. But there's one offense that fires your rage: that's willful injustice. Spiritually you are learning a lot about building bridges of respect and fairness -- without slipping into the trap of hollow forgiveness and whitewashed grudges.

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.

There's even more going on in this part of your birthchart. Also found here is Jupiter.

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 Libra. 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 Harmony. First, relax. Then let your eyes rest on something lovely -- a painting, a sunset, a sloop reaching across the whitecapped bay. Then go find a dear,

caring friend, and enjoy the solace of refined companionship.

In your chart, the "King of the Gods" reigns in the First House -- traditionally the "House of the Self." A bright, positive, expansive quality radiates from you... even when you're feeling rotten. In the old days, astrologers viewed a first House Jupiter as lucky. There's some truth to that, in that you usually end up getting what you want. But spiritually you're learning that fulfilling desires, especially flashy "Hollywood" desires, doesn't always deliver the advertised bliss.

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 Third 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 Sagittarius. Thus, both your aesthetic sensitivity and your taste in partners is shaped by the expansive, restless spirit of the Gypsy. In the realm of beauty, whether natural or wrought by human hands, you have a taste for grandeur, for noble intentions gloriously realized. The same goes for friends and sexual partners -- you appreciate individuals who experience life as a heroic quest, people who are committed to living robustly in the preciousness of each moment.

With Venus in the Third House, your speech is graceful and gentle. You could read the phone book to a person in pain, and he or she would be soothed by it. Cultivate the poet in yourself, the weaver of metaphors. You have an uncanny sense of the rhythm of language and of how to find the right words to make difficult truths bearable.

A planet can gain authority by sharing a House with the Moon. We find that situation in your chart. Uranus is bathing in moonlight, occupying the Eleventh House along with Luna.

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 Leo, the process of individuation for you is tied up with the Path of the

Performer. That is to say, you strengthen and clarify your own Uranian identity through cultivating and polishing your innate capacity for creative self-expression -- and without that outlet, you're likely to clog up your life with unnecessary bombast and drama. Consciously chosen forays into the realm of performance, such as theater, music, or even the pursuit of athletic excellence, 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 Friends -- that's the old name for the Eleventh House, where your Uranus lies. The issues are broader; not just friends, but also the framework of goals and priorities by which you orient your life. Uranus is your Teacher here and the lessons can be summarized this way: the older you get, the stranger you get! You are on a diverging course from the social mainstream, and you come into increasing conflict with the "tyranny of the normal" as you mature. Trust your path! You have a unique gift for the human family, but you're not ready to offer it until you reach the second half of your life.

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.

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 Aries. Thus, to trigger higher states of consciousness in yourself and to stimulate your psychic development, you may choose to follow the Path of the Warrior... that is, consciously, intentionally to seek the kinds of stress that strip you down to your essence. Without the purifying, soul-bleaching effects of high adventure, you tend to drift away from Spirit, losing yourself in the mazes of daily life -- or the labyrinths of metaphysical speculation.

Neptune, planet of transcendence, occupies the Seventh House of your birthchart, where its mystical feelings are linked to your experiences with those whom we call soulmates. Your natural partners in this lifetime are people with a strong theme of transcendence in their natures. Hopefully, they're using that energy to explore consciousness, but some probably have been overwhelmed by their own sensitivities, moving in addictive, numbing directions. One point is sure: You need the balancing, inspiring effect of partners and friends with sincere spiritual commitments.

"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 Taurus. Thus the shadow material you are called upon to face has to do with the dark side of the Bull archetype: materialism. In what part of your life or personal history have you lapsed into possessiveness -- or passively accepted crippling limitations because you couldn't get up the steam to provide for yourself? (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 Eighth House... a part of the natal chart concerned especially with sexuality and with death. It is essential that you make contact, however brief or long term, with soulmates with whom you share insights about two processes: mating and dying. Through these intense encounters, your being is transformed -- and the capacity to fulfill your transpersonal mission arises. What is that mission? To counsel people in the face of death and separations.

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 seething in Scorpio. That combination links your mental functions to the penetrating, soul-searching logic of the Detective archetype. Unerringly, your intelligence seeks out hidden truths and lies agreed upon, always drawn into the realm of the taboo. Spiritually you are learning a lot about intellectual courage, especially when it comes to unraveling painful human situations.

With the traditional "Messenger of the Gods" occupying your Second House, you prove yourself to yourself most effectively by constantly making an effort to stretch your intelligence -- and your capacity to communicate it -- to its limits. You may collect books... but make sure you read them too!

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 iconoclastic terrain of Aquarius 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 Water-Bearer's shadow side: phony eccentricity. There is an element of genius -- that is, radical independence of mind -- in your character. Develop it! Push it to its edges! That's how you were born to distinguish yourself, not through mere contrariness. Support that journey in practical, Saturnian terms by fortifying yourself with concrete skills and strategies -- especially ones pertinent to Saturn's House in your birthchart. Which House was that?

The Fifth! The arena of life where we learn to refine our self-expression, to turn our human experience into some kind of creative product. With Saturn here, you need to focus your will on the polishing of the channels through which your imagination expresses itself. Learning to trust yourself here is the first step -- you really do have talent. Hard work comes next. And finally, you must learn to transcend method and acquire one last discipline: the creatively essential, paradoxical discipline of spontaneity!

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 Libra, the sign of the Diplomat. Anyone looking into your eyes as you took your first breath would have observed the result of lifetimes spent learning the virtues of true courtesy: sensitivity towards the feelings and values of others, an ability to adjust your behavior to fit another's needs and fears. In previous incarnations you've had experiences which bring to mind that old joke about how one properly addresses a five-hundred-pound gorilla -- Call him "sir!" Now, like an obsequious houseslave who's just been freed, you must learn a new lesson: how to claim your own rights, experiences, and nature.

That nascent ability to claim what's yours is symbolized by your North Node of the Moon, which lies in Aries -- the sign of the Warrior. 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 Arian spiritual work? The "yoga" is easy to say, harder to do: you must overcome your peaceful instincts and consciously seek stress... that is, you need to intentionally place yourself in situations where forcefulness, energy, and inner fire are methods of survival -- perhaps the only methods.

There's another piece to the puzzle: The Moon's South Node falls in the First House of your chart. This implies that previous to this lifetime you had accumulated considerable experience as a leader. That sounds glorious, and maybe it was. But now the evolutionary issue is that you had centuries in which the buck stopped with you, and you had no one to whom you could turn. This bred self-containment, but also a terrible burden of isolation.

In this lifetime, with your North Node of the Moon in the Seventh House, you must act to counterbalance some of that focus on self-sufficiency... not because it's "wrong," but because you've already learned everything you can from it. The time has come for you to concentrate on listening and learning, accepting the alien wisdom of your soulmates, weaving it into your own wisdom. Two moves are essential: one is finding partners whom you honestly respect, and the second is letting them change you.

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.