

THE SKY WITHIN

Report for Paula Abdul
An Interpretation of Your Birth Chart
by
Steven Forrest



This sample report compliments of:

Matrix Software

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The Sky Within

Paula Abdul
Jun 19, 1962
02:32:00 PM PDT +07:00
Los Angeles, CA
118W14'34" 34N03'08"

Planet	Sign	Position	House	House Cusps
Sun	Gemini	28°Ge06'	09th	01 18°Li49'
Moon	Capricorn	21°Cp09'	04th	02 16°Sc57'
Mercury	Gemini	11°Ge51'	08th	03 17°Sg54'
Venus	Leo	03°Le09'	10th	04 20°Cp42'
Mars	Taurus	16°Ta11'	08th	05 23°Aq13'
Jupiter	Pisces	12°Pi26'	05th	06 23°Pi03'
Saturn	Aquarius	10°Aq44' R	04th	07 18°Ar49'
Uranus	Leo	27°Le20'	11th	08 16°Ta57'
Neptune	Scorpio	11°Sc00' R	01st	09 17°Ge54'
Pluto	Virgo	07°Vi46'	11th	10 20°Ca42'
Midheaven	Cancer	20°Ca42'		11 23°Le13'
Ascendant	Libra	18°Li49'		12 23°Vi03'

*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.*

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 Ninth 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.

The House of Long Journeys over Water -- that's one old name for this part of the birthchart. Since you have energy focused here a fortune-teller would say, "I see travel in your stars." True enough, although a deeper way of expressing the same notion is that immersing yourself in cultures outside the one into which you were born is a pivotal spiritual catalyst for you.

There are other kinds of catalytic journeys. Getting a wide education, formally or informally, is one. So is anything that breaks up the normal routines of life and thought. Even learning to hang-glide.

Ultimately, in the Ninth House you weave a grand scheme of life's meaning and purpose, at least your own version of it. This is the House of Religion... provided we recognize that many major world religions have no churches or temples. Cynicism is one such religion. Existentialism, Materialism, and Science are others, not to mention Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and so on.

With the Sun in the Ninth House, you have to pack the experiences of two or three lifetimes into a single lifetime. That means being willing to say good-bye to safe havens, to avoid the human tendency to drift into routines. The motif of the Quest is strong in your destiny-pattern. It manifests as travel, but also as a search for knowledge and meaning. Trust yourself; don't be seduced by "practicality"; above all, recognize that we're all just pilgrims in this world, here for a moment, then gone, carrying only what our souls have managed to digest.

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 Fourth house of your chart.

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.

With the Moon in the Fourth House, you have a natural combination: emotional, subjective Luna in the House of the Heart. The effect is to turn the volume way up on feelings. But there's a catch: The Fourth House is a hidden place, far below the horizon of the birthchart. Things there are basic to us, but they often have a hard time surfacing. "Still waters run deep" -- it's a cliché, but it captures the spirit of your lunar position.

You need a safe, quiet home, and you need a lot of time there. At some point, if you play your cards right, you'll really put down roots in a piece of land. There's even a good chance you'll figure out a way to make your living without leaving the place.

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, Libra was lifting over the eastern horizon of Los Angeles, CA. Let's begin our analysis by considering the meaning and spiritual message of the sign of "The Artist".

Perfect equilibrium. That's the spirit of the Scales. When Libra realizes its evolutionary aim, the nervous system is as still as a dark pool on a windless summer evening. Outwardly, Libran energy often looks as though it's already there: it seems graceful and balanced, even unflappable. Inwardly, it's another story: the Libran part of you is tuned as tight as the high string on a violin. Spirit gave you some advice back before you were born: don't pluck it. And don't let anyone else pluck it either.

Inevitably, with your terrific sensitivity, you'll get rattled from time to time. What can you do about it? Watch a ballet, or any other beautiful thing. The outer harmony will internalize; you'll sigh, releasing tension. That's the Libran evolutionary strategy in a nutshell: flood your senses with perceptions of beauty. It will soothe you, lifting you closer to the unbreakable serenity which is the true goal of this sign of the zodiac.

With Libra rising, you radiate grace and friendliness. Instinctively, people feel at ease around you... which spotlights the central characteristic of your outer self: courtesy. In this context that word doesn't mean being painfully "proper" all the time; instead it implies the capacity to grease the social wheels, to help people feel accepted and natural. You have that skill in abundance.

You feel most centered when you're creating harmony -- and that covers a lot of bases. Encouraging friends to relax and unwind certainly is part of it. But you can also create harmony between colors, shapes, and sounds. We call that "art," and expressing yourself artistically is quite self-affirming for you. Similarly, you can create harmony inside yourself by letting beauty wash over your senses, or by simply sitting quietly in an elegant place.

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 Capricorn and Libra 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 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 Artist", or "The Diplomat", or "The Lover". Those images capture the spirit of your Ascendant, which is Libra.

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 Scorpio. Thus, to trigger higher states of consciousness in yourself and to stimulate your psychic development, you may choose to follow the Path of the Sorcerer... that is consciously, intentionally to seek access to the power aspects of the Great Mystery, perhaps through the mastery of healing techniques, or a study of shamanistic traditions, or the use of divinatory methods such as astrology or the tarot cards. Without exposure to the purifying, soul-bleaching effects of what we could broadly call "magic," 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.

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

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 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 birthchart displays another area of heightened activity: the Eighth House. The reason for that is simple -- there's a lot of planetary activity. With Mercury and Mars 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.

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 Eighth House, your intelligence is exploring the realm of mystery. Instinctively, you are a student of all that's "taboo," all that's hidden and dark. Sexually, anyone with whom you can sustain long-term passion is mentally sharp, eager to share thoughts about the Journey, and willing to discuss anything, however unsettling. Such a person likely reads books... and does so without moving his or her lips!

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 quietly in Taurus... waiting. This is an odd combination, but a powerful one. The bull's patience clashes with the impulsiveness of the red planet. The result, at best, is that they temper each other; under pressure, you tend to remain calm and deductive. That's the good news. The bad news is that you need to avoid doing a "slow burn" when a quick confrontation would be better for everyone. Spiritually you're learning a lot about how to claim your right to have peace and quiet -- forcefully, if necessary.

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.

Your birthchart shows still another area where planets congregate: the Eleventh. By combining forces, Uranus and Pluto emphasize that department of your life almost as

powerfully as the Sun or Moon would.

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.

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.

"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 Virgo. Thus the shadow material you are called upon to face has to do with the dark side of the Perfectionist archetype: surrendering to cynicism and defeat. In what part of your life or personal history have you chosen to take refuge in bitterness over the pain of continuing your journey? (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 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.

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.

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 Pisces. 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 Dreams. That is, you restore yourself by sitting quietly, getting out of your own way, and just dissolving into that vast, shining space between your ears. For you, happiness is a natural state; when you're sad it's probably at least partly because you've allowed yourself to get overextended, too caught up in the worldly chase. So stop. Breathe. And feel bliss.

In your chart, the "King of the Gods" reigns in the Fifth House -- traditionally the "House of Children." Your nature is playful and self-expressive, and the "inner child" is vibrant inside you. Creativity comes naturally... but, spiritually, you are learning how to use it correctly. Sincerity and risk are the keys; without them, you'll produce a technicolor personality and lots of applause, but little else. The archetype that's trying to break through you is not simply the Bard... it's the Wise Bard.

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 Leo. Thus, both your aesthetic sensitivity and your taste in partners is shaped by the dramatic, playful, self-expressive spirit of the Lion. In the realm of beauty, whether natural or wrought by human hands, you have a taste for the monumental, for the lofty goal fully realized. The same goes for friends and sexual partners -- you appreciate people who express themselves with magnanimity and style, people who are unafraid of their own power -- and unafraid of yours too.

With Venus in the Tenth House, your "cosmic job description" is Peacemaker, Counselor, or Artist. An old-fashioned astrologer would simply say you're lucky when it comes to work and status. That's true... in a way. But be careful: Life will dangle cushy positions before you like the worm before the trout... and they conceal the hook of emptiness. (How to avoid it? Go back half a hundred words and re-read your "cosmic job description"... those Venus-sign images describe the paths of joy for you.)

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 Aquarius, the sign of the Exile. Anyone looking into your eyes as you took your first breath would have observed the results of lifetimes spent out of kilter with the dominant myths of whatever culture you were living in: independence, detachment, eccentricity -- and a near defensive quickness in justifying those qualities. In previous incarnations, you've had experiences in which you were sustained by little more than a stubborn indifference to public opinion -- that, or a capacity to keep strategic silence. Now, like the prodigal son, you must learn new lessons: trust, an easy bonhomie with the human family, an expectation of love.

That nascent ability to feel at ease with others is symbolized by your North Node of

the Moon, which lies in Leo -- the sign of the Performer. 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. How can you accomplish this Leonine spiritual work? The "yoga" is easy to say, harder to do: you must overcome the myth of the Exiled Genius inside yourself, release your attachment to the idea that no one understands you, and begin offering your gift to the world. Help yourself by cultivating polished crowd-conscious creative talents. This is the "wrapping" which will give others enthusiasm for the unexpected, sometimes shocking, wisdom you bring.

There's another piece to the puzzle: The Moon's South Node falls in the Fourth House of your chart. This implies that previous to this lifetime you were often born into "Great Houses" -- that is, families with powerful traditions... and clear expectations regarding the destinies of their progeny. You tended to remain safely ensconced within those established patterns, learning much about love, devotion, and respect for tradition, but little about creating your own independent future.

In this lifetime, with your North Node of the Moon in the Tenth House, you must act to counterbalance those old conservative tendencies... not so much because they're "bad" as because you've already learned everything you can from them. The time has come for you to express who you are, vigorously and publicly, probably through the medium of a colorful career.

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.