

# ONE COSMIC DAY

AN ASTROMEMOIR



WANDA SMITH

ONE  
COSMIC  
DAY

AN ASTROMEMOIR

WANDA SMITH

Copyright © 2016 by Wanda Smith. 710189

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

Rev. date: 07/18/2016

Originally published on XLibris



Cover design by Felix Calitz  
Interior layout by Marilyn du Toit  
Astrology Software by Regulus (API) UK

To my mother, Mimi Bortolutti.  
Thanks for letting me be what I am.

# INTRODUCTION

“We are all deprived; we are all disappointed; and therefore we are all, in some sense, idealists. The need to link the real and the ideal is a perpetual tension, never resolved so long as life persists, but always productive of new, attempted solutions.”

Anthony Storr in *The Dynamics of Creation*

Why do I spend so much time with others and so little by myself? Why do I clash with my father when my brother and sister don't? Why am I always disappointed in my relationships? Why did I look after my parents for thirty years? Why don't I ever reach the goals I set for myself?

You can continue asking questions like these throughout a lifetime. Some people never find the answers. Some people never ask the questions. Rather, they suppress unsettling thoughts arising from their unconscious. Yet to find the pearl – of wisdom, hopefully – oyster divers have to descend to the darkest depths, more often than not on their own.

Perhaps it was these thoughts that led me, at the age of 40, to write in my journal:

Rather than return to my therapist, I shall unravel the dense web of mystery, word for word, sentence for sentence. Once I believed, like the psychologists, that if language was at the root of one's disease, then language could cure one. And although I no longer know whether it is true, I shall do it anyway. 'En bonne foi' - in good faith - as Sartre would say.

But on my own. I shall find the end of one strand in the tangle and pull it out of myself, undoing the knots it has formed with others, setting it free, giving the others the space to reveal themselves in a linear fashion.

“Linearity is a masculine concept,” my friend Leanne reminded me.

Yet without it, the dancing star will not be produced from the chaos in me, but remain stillborn forever (Apologies to Nietzsche).

But how do you unravel lines of thought and action when you don't know where they began in the first place? Some people spend years in therapy trying to make sense of their lives. Others ask questions that might never be answered. Which is exactly what I did for most of my life: my journals teem with questions. At age 46 I wrote:

What I want in my life is the time and the talent to write about all the emotions I've been through, all the people I've met and all the places I've been to; the time to assimilate everything, to see some underlying structure. Or is life just a happening with chance encounters, unresolved questions, and random insights?

At what point in life does one see any reason, any sense? Why do things change so fast? Why is change the only certainty? Or is our consciousness so underdeveloped that we can grasp nothing? Perhaps this is the downside of Homo habilis: that there is ultimately nothing to hold onto despite his immense dexterity.

Is everything in vain?

Sometimes I did see the light, but only some years after the experience. Then, in my fifties, I studied Astrological Psychology which gave me an accurate compass to retrace the steps of my personal development.

At last I had found a methodology that worked for me in my search for meaning, albeit for my personal truth. I don't believe there is an absolute meaning which is the same for every person. Rather, that humans create meaning in their lives based on their motivations, experiences and faith. Putting this meaning within the less subjective and more objective context of Astrological Psychology has helped me greatly on my quest to make sense of my life.

After all, we all want to live the life we were meant to live, no matter how unusual it might seem to others. As Oscar Wilde said, "The aim of life is self-development. To realise one's nature perfectly – that is what each of us is here for."

This is where the principles of Astrological Psychology can be a guide to anyone wishing to make sense of the twists and turns of their lives. It is not predictive as prediction – what's in the stars today? - often leads to a fulfillment of the prophecy, sometimes with disastrous consequences. Neither is it judgmental. Aspects and planetary energies in the chart are not good or bad; they stimulate, challenge or maintain growth.

"... we must be willing and able to work on ourselves, to try to see reality as it is: opportunities for individual development offered to us at different times of our lives. We must mature into reality with an awareness which is free of deception, free of protective illusions and fearsome prophecies."

Bruno and Louise Huber in *LifeClock*

Astrological Psychology was founded and developed over many years by Bruno and Louise Huber in Zurich. This book is based on their research and practice, but you don't have to be an astrologer to understand the basic principles. The Appendix gives an overview of the basic principles, particularly the Age Point Progression technique as symbol of an individual's consciousness, which you can refer to when necessary. There is also a list for further reading.

Based on my natal chart and aspect figures which are the underlying structures of my consciousness, this book relates every sign, house and aspects made to planets by the age point - my developing consciousness - to real events in my life and themes in my writing.





of the chart suggests a strong interaction with the outer world from the vantage point of the inner world. There are more planets in the upper hemisphere than the lower one, indicating a bias towards the individual rather than collective thinking and being of humanity. This is amplified by the overabundance of green lines which are awareness-seeking aspects.

In my journals from the age of 35 to 55, there are countless entries of how I viewed the world, and as many questions on my way of being. Greater awareness has always been my driving force. Like my mentor, I too strove to reach new heights in consciousness.

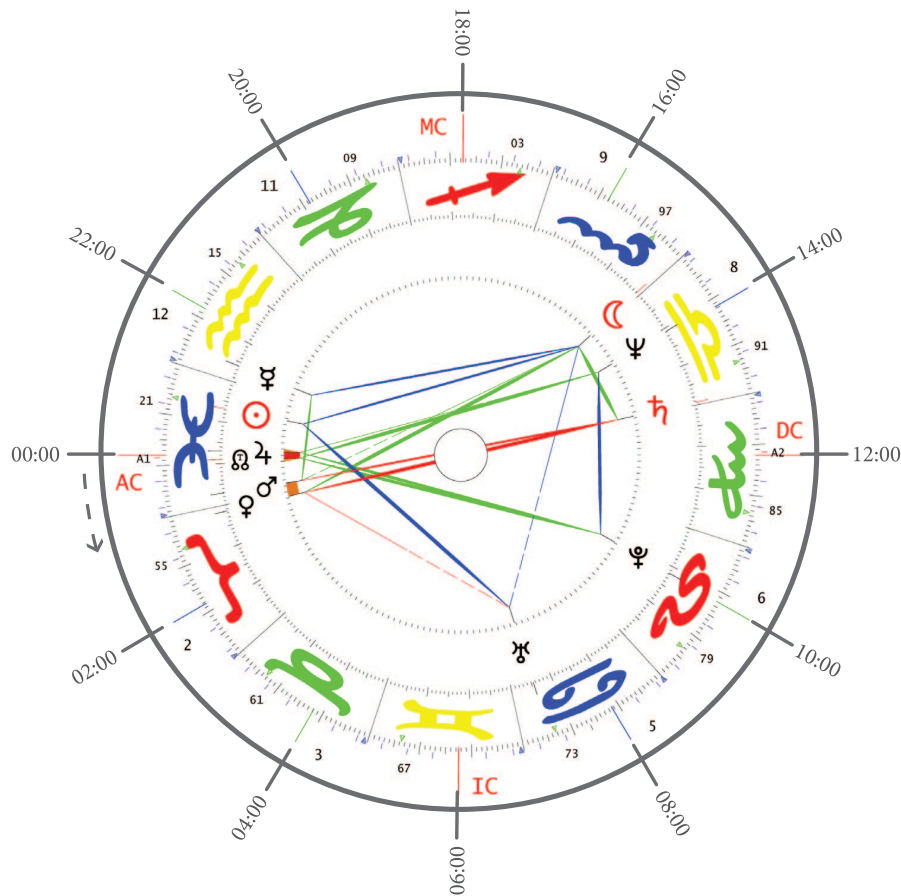
*On the beach I revel*

*in the silver smoothness of your soul, of my soul.*

*I adorn myself with the wispy white of the mists  
that hide the dark spots, the blind spots of my vision.*

*When will I see all - be all - seeing?*

# THE COSMIC CLOCK



The cosmic clock had just struck twelve midnight when a divine spark, much like a falling star, flew through the sky. It was my soul. As it fell to earth, a bright light flashed across the night sky.

Jupiter had just switched on his cosmic projector. The screen for the film he intended running throughout my life was held up by Neptune at one corner and Pluto at the other. Both were wearing dark green velvet jackets, rather theatrical in design, which would later in life tug at my heart. Perhaps even shatter it.

How handsome they were, these two gods, dramatically set against a backdrop of stars forming what looked like a scorpion behind Neptune, and a lion behind Pluto.

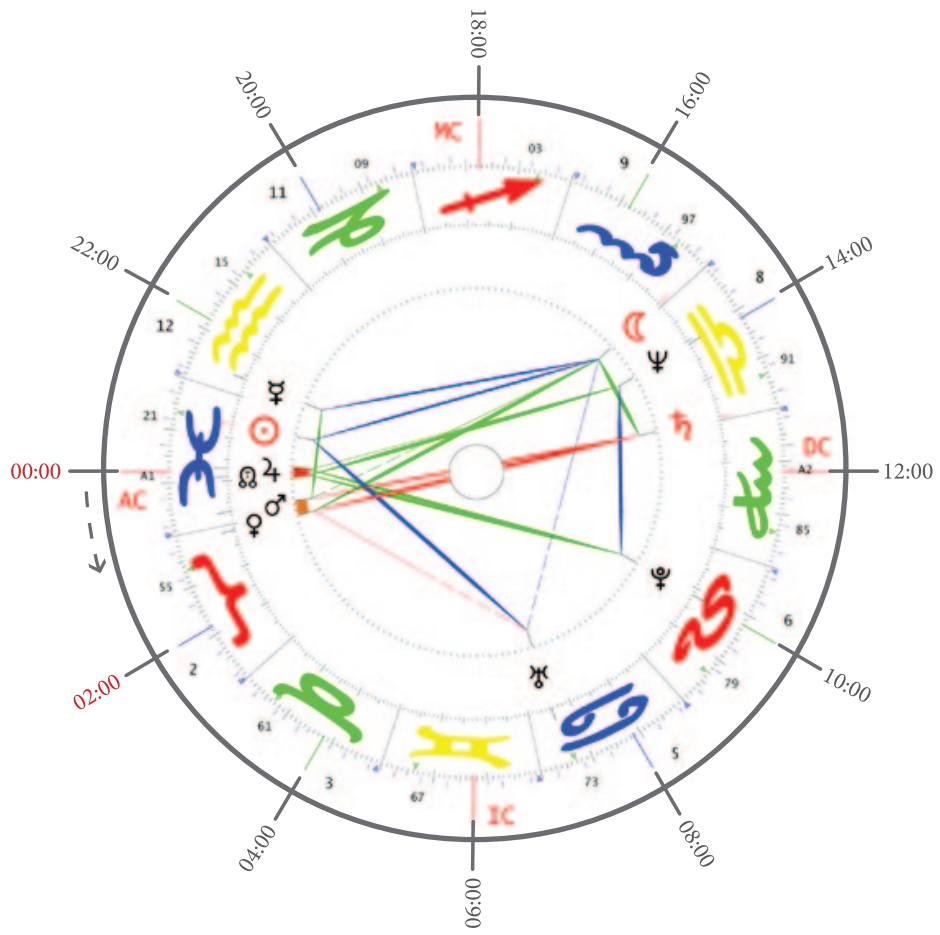
Neptune was, for once, not whipping up storms to terrorise people at sea. He was in a more loving mood and was going to let me see, during the course of my life, what love meant. Not the love that induces chemical imbalances in the brain, creating chimeras leading to tempestuous relationships, wanton sex and heartbreaking disillusionment, but a more divine kind of love.

Pluto was, for now, not causing earthquakes that rend the earth and swallow entire civilisations. He was in a more constructive frame of mind, aiming to teach me about will. Not the willfulness that would drive my decisions, making me take risks, mostly uncalculated, based on nothing more than hubris that can only incense the gods, but constructive will, or right will, as they say in the East.

Jupiter would also be my closest companion, introducing me to the world, opening doors for me, widening vistas and playing music from other spheres; sometimes beating a different drum, other times blowing his own trumpet. To welcome me to the world, he was playing a song that would forever be the sound of my soul. It was called *A Day in the Life of a Fool*.

No wonder I couldn't wait to land on earth.

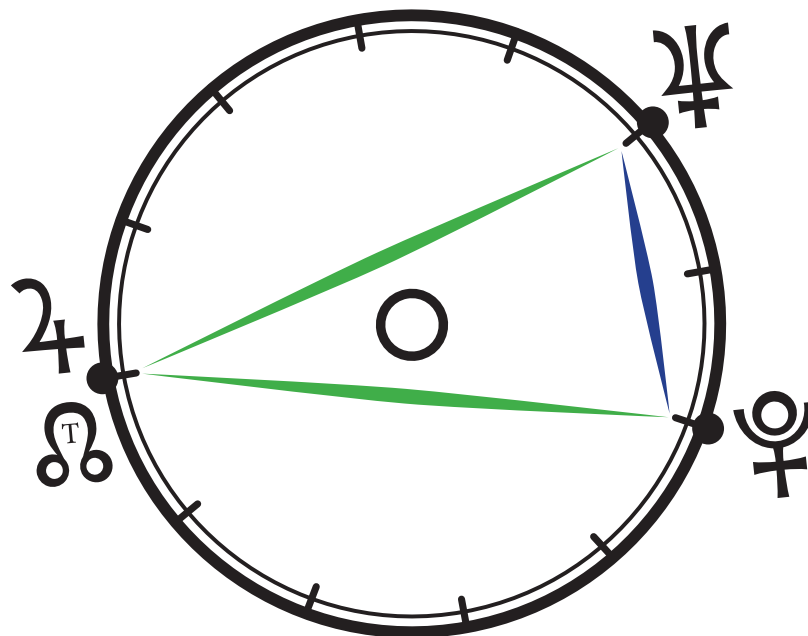




00:00 – 02:00  
1951 – 1956

The day I was born is the day the Projection Figure with Jupiter at the helm - the green apex - was set in motion. It is a large structure which encompasses the centre of the chart, the whole personality of an individual. The two long green aspects - quincunxes - pick up information and energy or insights from the quality of the planet at the apex, in this instance, from Jupiter, that energy that enables us to distinguish between the true and the false. Through Jupiter, “We shall gain clearer insight into the hidden machinery that rules appearances.” (*LifeClock*, p. 188) As symbol of all our senses, Jupiter and the contacts it makes with other planets refine our perceptions. Our system of inner values can thus grow in scope and depth over the course of a lifetime.

### THE PROJECTION FIGURE



In my chart, Jupiter is on the Ascendant in Pisces’s intense emotions, dreams and imagination, from where the projector operator beams aspects of my inner world onto the outer world. According to Bruno and Louise Huber, these projections are made consciously or unconsciously, depending on the level of awareness of the individual, and can inspire the chart owner with creative visions once the illusions and false ideas have been eliminated from projections. Then the figure becomes a project rather than a projection which, with the help of a developed will, can introduce changes that help carry out God’s plan. “Like a searchlight, people with this Project triangle ... scan the surrounding area for knowledge, to see the evolutionary plan in a visionary way and to implement a small piece of it.” (*Aspect Pattern Astrology*, p. 190)

Because the Projection Figure consists of only green and blue aspects, both of which are passive, I couldn't consciously act on or in this alternative reality. Yet I always had a sense of something hidden driving me as if I were on some secret mission. Green and blue aspects can also be dreamlike and escapist, in short, illusory. Only when my consciousness was affected by red aspects – squares, oppositions and conjunctions – did something happen, not necessarily in the outer world, but in my inner world.

The Projection Figure is also called the Finger of God, or the Yod Figure. Research has shown that it points towards the personal spiritual destiny like a finger. When consciousness as represented by the age point transits the apex planet, a major inner transformation can take place. In my life, this could happen at the age of 72 when I might finally see whether my lifelong goal to reach greater awareness has materialised or not. “From a spiritual point of view, the Projection figure is concerned with inner conversion, with transformations and changes of awareness.” (*Aspect Pattern Astrology*, p.192)

Furthermore, my Sun, which symbolises the mental ego, is at a low point in the same obscure Piscean world as Jupiter. Low points in a chart are considered the gateways to the soul. Before discovering the Hubers' Age Point Progression, I didn't consciously know this. It was simply a force that attracted me to introspective subjects such as literature and psychology, and later, to comparative religion and psychological archetypes. This excerpt from my journals casts some light on my lifelong quest:

The shaman. He who thinks, as he is called by the Eskimos. Or he who sees, by tribes in Northern Siberia. Perhaps it is coincidental, or no coincidence at all, that I should have encountered him, become him, in this my fortieth year.

Never before have I experienced such a death, such a loss of life force and contact with the outer world. For brief moments, I thought I would never return to reality. How I longed for someone to hold down my body while my soul went on its dizzying flight!

But the ascent soon turned into a descent, into the darkest depths of my soul. Demons hounded me, black dogs cornered me, held me captive so that I feared any movement, any sign of life on my part, lest they maul me, destroy me. Some of my friends have turned into vicious dogs, tearing at my flesh with their rotting teeth, growling at my emotions, befouling my sacred space.

It was Bosch's *Inferno*, sick in its sordidness, steaming with pungent, repulsive vapours like a witch's evil brew. I wept in horror and pity at humanity, at my own humanity. Tormented by my powerlessness in so much wrongdoing, I died.

But then, in all that darkness, in that black hole, something was born. Something that pulsates with the sheer joy of life. “It’s growing in me,” I said to my close friend and confidant, Dante, “but talking about it now, would destroy it.”

Let it gestate, let it run its course, hectically, uncontrollably, developing according to its own mysterious rules. Let it be born and see the light, not without excruciating pain though. A long, painful labour that finally bears fruit? I’m looking forward to its juice running down my chin as I bite into its full ripeness.

Which are the planets involved in this structure of consciousness? Linked to Jupiter at the projector head by two awareness-creating green aspects are two outer, spiritual planets: Pluto and Neptune. Because they are ‘higher ego principles’ or organs of the ‘higher self’ (*LifeClock*, p. 189), they are almost indescribable. Descriptions such as ‘right will’ for Pluto and ‘universal love’ for Neptune capture only some of their essence.

In the *Mayan Code* on the *Piscestribe* website, Barbara Hand Clow gives some indication as to how to proceed: “The only way we can actually master Neptunian spiritual enlightenment is to transform our emotional limitations by embracing absolute truth and integrity, which is Pluto’s agenda. Pluto is the key to finding this emotional purity, since it rules transformation of inner darkness...”

I expect that my mission will only be completed when my age point has gone full circle to conjoin Jupiter whose energy will then be experienced in its most concentrated form. As mentioned, this will happen at age 72. Only then will I fully understand the themes of the ‘film’ Jupiter has directed with Pluto and Neptune holding up a reflective screen, like a mirror, to me. I am looking forward to this event, yet not without trepidation, as I’ve always had a fear of seeing that it was all just make-believe – as films inevitably are. This fear is clearly expressed in my journals. When my consciousness was experiencing the essence of The Great Teacher, Saturn, which in my chart is in the area of close, personal relationships, I wrote:

The power of the illusion.

Words I wrote five years ago when I first realised how I was driven by my dream world. How Durrell’s description in *The Alexandria Quartet* of Narouz, Nessim’s ugly brother, took me on such a flight of fancy that I fell in love, just for a night, with an Israeli who, to me, was Narouz. The ugliness, the gap in the teeth, the whip with which Narouz caught rats on the run, Baruch had them all – even if the whip was substituted for a gun; a gun which he took out of its holster and put on the coffee table, to my extreme discomfort.

It was my first encounter with the powerful and dangerous games my mind plays. It triggered the desire in me to get rid of all fantasies in my life, to not delude myself, a theme I have often discussed with my friend Leanne. And yet, every time I utter the words, they are accompanied by a strange unease, a feeling that the really big unveiling was still to come; a sense of tragedy, of being doomed, of not seeing the underlying driving force to my life when it was always so obvious to everyone else.



*Cupid's Valley.*

Now that I had landed in the world accompanied by Jupiter on the Ascendant, what did I see? It was too early to feel any longing for the Plutonian and Neptunian energies out there. But as my consciousness developed, I became aware of *Cupid's Valley*, the farm where the first five years of my life were spent. It was a place of extreme desolation and isolation as I had no-one to play with. My bullying brother and withdrawn sister, six and eight years older than I, were both at school and only got home in the afternoons.





*My sister (back left) and my brother (front right) with me in the middle.*

My first awareness of Mercury came in the form of my discovery of books. Not that I could read, but books fascinated me. It was the beginning of my lifelong love of language, of reading and writing and learning new things. In my chart, Mercury is linked to Mars by a short green aspect indicating a link between my thinking and my doing: an awareness in my inner world of my actions in the outer world.

It was the height of summer and the soaring temperatures were evaporating ever more of the comforting coolness of Pisces's water I had been splashing in. When my consciousness moved from Pisces to Aries, I felt as if I were on fire. I cried uncontrollably till my mother realised it was the blazing heat in that godforsaken part of the world. She put me into a tub with an inch of water in it. I immediately stopped crying. I was in my element again, and peace was restored to the house.

But the oppressive heat of that part of the country had scorched a spot in my soul as I wrote in my journal in 1986 when I was at the coast:

Somehow, I prefer the squawking of the seagulls to the screeching of the cicadas in the midday sun. That blinding, headache-heat of my childhood has deadened a part of my soul. Perhaps the seagulls will call it back to life?

At the age of three, I experienced Mars, my assertive spirit, through a brother six years older who indirectly taught me to take on life's challenges.

I had pedaled on my tricycle, first down garden paths and around the house, and then further afield to the big tree where the outside toilet, the 'long drop', stood. My brother was there. He had just climbed the tree. "All the way to the top," he boasted.

"I want to climb too," I said, looking up longingly at the tree that reached for the sky.

He lifted me onto the trunk from where the branches spread out in all directions. Eagerly I clambered up one of them. My brother dared me to go further still.

"Or are you already frightened?" he wanted to know.

I continued climbing up the ever thinning branch. Soon it swayed under my weight. "I can't ..." I admitted in a quavering voice, after I had glimpsed the ground, way, way below.

"You're such a scaredy cat," he concluded disdainfully, and with that, walked away, leaving me perilously perched on a branch.

I was now panicking and couldn't lift a foot for fear of falling. I ventured another downward glance and saw him speeding away on my tricycle, his knees almost higher than his head. Soon he was nowhere to be seen.

There was nothing I could do but keep on shouting till my screams reached the gardener's ears. He alerted my mother and the two came to my rescue with a ladder. While he held the ladder securely, my mother climbed up and coaxed me down.

I had gone too far, overreaching myself in typical Jupiterian fashion. For some reason, my strength went into a decline after this near fall from a dangerous height. I now clung to my mother. I wouldn't let her out of my sight. I insisted on going with her wherever she went: to the village to shop at the general dealer or to the café to have tea with the Lebanese owners she had befriended. When my mother had to go to hospital for medical treatment, I screamed blue murder as the beige Austin Healey drove down the gravel road leaving me without anyone to fall back on. It was my first experience of life's low points.

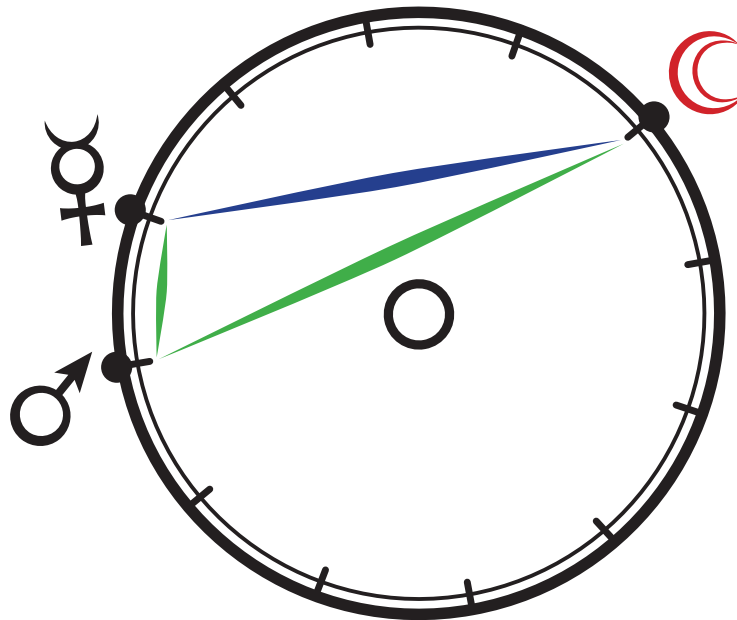
At the same time Mars appeared in my life, I had a taste of what would be the major challenge in my life: the fiery opposition between Saturn and Mars conjunct Venus. I would henceforth face major opposition from an invisible, but strict, teacher aptly dressed in that bright red of the cloth held up to a bull. But support would come in the form of Venus, an Aries goddess with horns

like the little ram my grandfather had given me. And with horns on my side, I could take on the Great Teacher's challenge.

Because the effects of a conjunction or opposition can be felt a year in advance, and then last for up to year after contact with the age point, it meant that from age one to four this tension was in the air. Firstly, restrictive Saturn blocked Mars, my assertive masculine energy. Then Saturn's strict discipline was sorely felt in a direct confrontation with my consciousness, and finally, Saturn sternly opposed Venus, my receptive feminine energy. Thus both my fighting spirit and my loving spirit would be kept in check throughout my life by Saturn's demands of accountability and balance.

The uneasy tension between Saturn and the masculine and feminine energies in me happened at a time when my consciousness had already 'unscrambled' itself from that of my mother. I had moved from what the French philosopher Jacques Lacan calls an '(h)omelet', an inseparable part of the mother, to the phase of the mirror image in which a child can see, for the first time, itself as distinct from the (m)other. The search for my undivided self had begun.

### THE SEARCH FIGURE



Like the Projection Figure, the Search Figure consists of only blue and green aspects and therefore needs red aspects, made by either an attachment to another structure in the chart, or by the age point, to turn the awareness and talents into something useful rather than just pie in the sky. The blue aspect facilitates a talent for seeking meaning whilst the long green one creates a yearning for a better world.

The Search Figure is considered the underlying motivation of the divine discontent who is constantly searching for abstract goals and ideals, often utopian. It is a drive in me that would initiate a never-ending pursuit in the outer world for the meaning of my intense emotional nature and consequent suffering (Moon in Scorpio in the 8th house) linked to men as writers and thinkers (Mercury in Aquarius in the 12th house) and men as magicians and lovers (Mars in Pisces in the 1st house). The men in my adult life would be seen either as Apollo or as Dionysus, as intellectual or sensual.

The Apollonian in humans has always been associated with light and order, with rationality and reason, whilst the Dionysian is related to the dark and chaotic, to wild and unconstrained passion. These two archetypes, which created a dichotomy in my relationships with men, might have had their origins in my early childhood when the Search Figure was activated by the Mars conjunction: my father, who read stories to me, was experienced as Mercury, my brother, who fought with me, as Mars.

Did the therapist not point out to me in my thirties that there are always two men in my life? My two fathers, perhaps, but also that exhausting dualism in my feelings for men, the constant ebb and flow, the breathing in and out. In the split second between them lies the nothingness. Or the all?

Finally, the Search Figure is probably also what underlies my ability to put the inchoate emotions of my Moon in Scorpio into order; into the clear language of Mercury in Aquarius.

At age 36, when I started becoming aware that the men in my life were in reality in me rather than in my environment, I wrote:

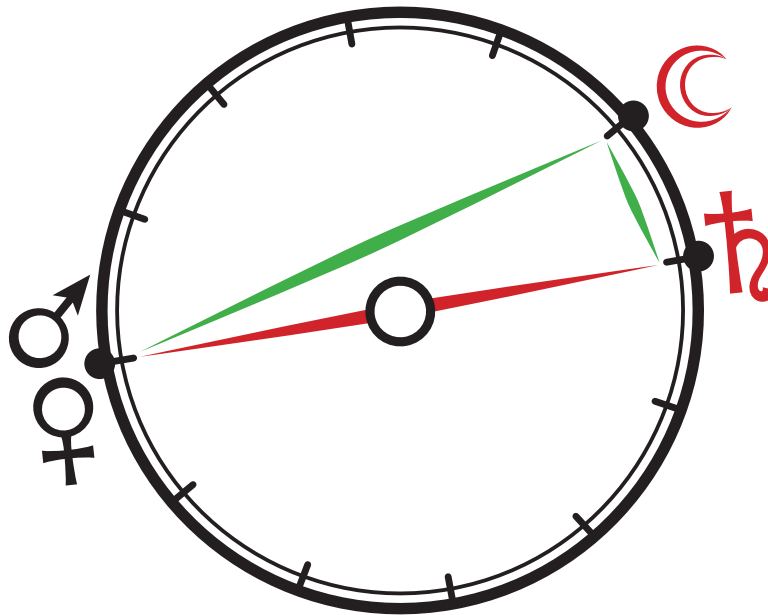
What could it mean? This fear of mine of a black man breaking into my bedroom through the French doors? Or standing behind the half-open bedroom window? For what? To kill me? Rape me?

Perhaps this is not just a fear emanating from the precarious political situation in which we are, but rather from myself. Is this black man related to my dream one night after I had spent the evening with Mark? The two black men who frightened me so much that I immediately locked the car door and so lost Mark's favourite instrument, his guitar, which was lying on the pavement?

Is this black man an animus figure? If so, why am I so frightened of him when he is in me? Why do I wake up from my sleep, gasping for air, palpitations shaking my body?

By the time Venus appeared in my consciousness, the goddess of love would find herself in battle-dress. Rather than a cove of love, Cupid's Valley was fast becoming a battleground, especially now that my consciousness had entered the realm of the warrior, of Aries. The relationship between a defensive Mars and Venus and an offensive Saturn would become a constant irritation in my life when what I longed for was emotional wholeness.

### THE IRRITATION TRIANGLE



The age point contact with Mars and Venus switched on another figure in my consciousness: the Irritation Triangle, an aspect structure in which mutually irritating red and green aspects can lead to querulous exasperation. Venus's self-assertion and Mars's seemingly weak Piscean character would always be opposed by a Libran Saturn's demand that the masculine and feminine energies in me be well balanced in my personal relationships. At the same time, my emotions would be deeply affected by ongoing imbalances.

Mars however is in Pisces where he prefers to assert himself creatively rather than physically; where making works of art is his first love much like the god Hephaestus who, according to leading archetypal psychologist, James Hillman, is the introverted feminine creative principle in men. And my confrontational Venus, being in an Arian first house of self-assertion, felt she didn't need a partner to be a woman; she was a woman in her own right. With her sense of aesthetics, Venus could be the ideal complement to creative Mars just like the mythological Venus was married to Hephaestus. But it would remain a yearning as this journal entry in 1994 suggests,

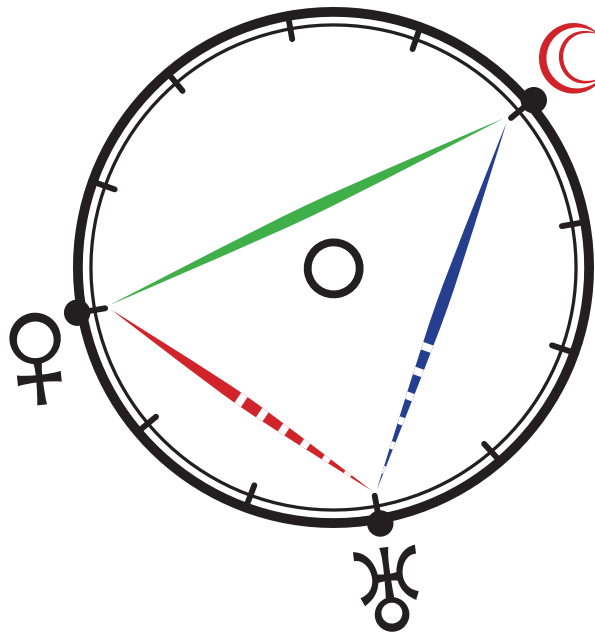
when my consciousness was midway between the higher and lower energies of love, between Neptune and the Moon:

A weariness is weighing me down. A lifetime of failed relationships, of men who never live up to my expectations, of me not living up to theirs. Or of me not living up to mine for that matter? Why is it so much easier to forgive and overlook the same qualities in my woman friends? Do I at base dislike men?

What has happened to men? Or to me? Is it true that there is no male archetype in my natal chart as the astrologer-psychic told me and that I therefore seek him in vain? Is the search for him what drives me, what my life is all about? Often I have felt that the 'him' I want is not a man at all, but God.

Or am I stuck in my Moon energy which is in Scorpio? Forever locked in an endless Plutonian cycle of sex, death and rebirth? Forever having to walk through the fire of transformation?

### THE DOMINANT TRIANGLE



Via a short green aspect between Saturn and the Moon, the Irritation Triangle is linked to a Dominant Learning Triangle with the Moon, Venus and Uranus – all three being feminine planets - at the three angles. Because this structure encompasses the centre, it affects my whole consciousness. There is no doubt that my Scorpionic emotional nature would go through many deaths and rebirths; many transformations. And because the Dominant Learning Triangle moves retrograde (clockwise) rather than direct (anticlockwise), this emotional pain and gain would be repeated in my life, again and again.

Blue and red contact points cause ambivalence. In my case, it's in the area of home and family. But the red square linking Uranus and Venus then becomes a call to action in the 1st house of self-assertion, where Venus resides, which leads to a longing (the green aspect) for a resolution of the dilemma. Thinking about the problem by going beyond the black and white, could result in a reconciliation of the opposites and thus in greater harmony ...until unease on the home front sets in and the workings of the Dominant Learning Triangle are set in motion again.

This meant that I never felt at ease in the traditional family or community situation, and if I found myself in one, I would remain on the outskirts where I could be true to myself, yet not without the awareness that I was taking the risk of isolating myself.

It was during the passage of my consciousness through the sign of Aries that my grandfather gave me a lamb, a soft, cuddly animal that followed me wherever I went. But then the lamb grew up and, in the process, developed little horns. One day, while I was digging in the sand for 'hidden treasures', I looked up and saw the little ram charging me, his head lowered so as give his budding horns full thrusting power. I leapt up and, facing the attack, held up my spade. He rammed into it. And that's where I kept him until my terrified screams called my father to the rescue.

The lamb was taken away to be with the rest of the flock. It was the first big loss I can remember, but fortunately I had something I could fall-back on: my cat. I now clung to it as I would to cats throughout my life. They were my favourite animals and would always be a great source of comfort. Four decades later, when Scorpio was rearing his ugly head for a major confrontation with my consciousness, my cats would teach me the painful lesson of having to let go of attachments, no matter how deep they are.

It was when my consciousness hit the first low-point in my life that I felt lost and lonely. My brother was as unpleasant as always and my sister took no interest in me. I cannot recall a single game we played together. There was always a distance between us. In this regard, my sister was more like my father than my mother. He too preferred being absent from the family, eventually absenting himself completely in alcoholism.

My aloneness in such a desolate part of the country is reflected in a story I wrote in my early thirties, *Woman of Sand*.

She saw with shock that her hair was turning red. She moved closer to the oval mirror on the bedroom wall. She had noticed it before, especially after the sandstorms outside, but would not admit it to herself. She shook her head vigourously, as if to shake out the colour, but to no avail.

From the corrugated iron storeroom she fetched a bar of soap Jacob had made from paraffin and pork fat some weeks before. She crossed the manure kitchen floor to the water pump outside. With her head under the spout, she pulled furiously at the lever with one hand, while the other worked up an idle, odourless lather from the soap.

She washed her hair, once, twice, thrice, and rinsed it as thoroughly as the meagre flow of water allowed. Delighted at the sight of water, a goose waddled over to the small puddle under the spout.

She sat down on the bench outside the kitchen door, untangling her hair with a wide-tooth comb of which some teeth were missing. She held it up to the sun. It reminded her of Jacob's teeth which had been filed into sharp points. When he smiled, he resembled the face her brother used to carve from hollowed-out pumpkins.

The goose was joined by another in the puddle. She wondered why their white feathers had not turned red. For hours she sat staring through the unusually windless day.

Her time was hers. No-one had laid claim to it for years. Not even Jacob, who spent his days sweeping the house and yard, making soap and seeing to her needs.

She had been alone for so long that she could not think of anything to say to him. Speech had become superfluous. When he brought her a cabbage or pumpkin from his vegetable garden, she responded with a smile. He knew she was grateful, for she had, in return, given him her brother's clothing and when this had worn through, she had torn up the tablecloths and sheets to protect him against the harshness of the sun and the sting of the sandstorms.

Not that she left the house often. Sometimes, when the air was clear, she would walk to the embankment to look at the dam. Its level was low for they had not had rain for months, perhaps even years. She could not remember when, for time was unimportant now.

Her life was a wide expanse of wind and dust, divided into units of light by patches of sleep. She spent her days doing what she wanted, or not doing anything at all. What had all her activities – the sweeping, sewing, washing and cooking – meant? What had they amounted to over the years except an escape from her thoughts?

She touched her hair. It felt bone-dry and wiry. She went inside to the mirror where she saw that it was still red. She knew then that the red dust was taking over her body as the rust had taken over the reservoir.

The rest of the afternoon she spent lying on her bed, listening to the wind building up and batting particles of sand against the window. The curtains were drawn, serving as a screen against the scorching sun. She had taken off her clothes to feel the coolness of the sheets against her skin.

She dreamt she was playing clay-stick with her brother who was laughing at her clumsy casting attempts. She was laughing too now, for her ball of clay had hit him on the forehead. She hastened to reload her stick, but his balls of clay pelted down on her in such quick succession that the hurt and helplessness made her sob uncontrollably.



She woke up with a start, her throat tight, her skin stinging. The wind had loosened the clamp on the window and was blowing the grains of sand it had scooped up in its whirl onto her.

She lifted her arm and blew off a thick layer of dust. Some grains lodged in her pores. She sat up and tried to rub them off, but they stuck to her skin. With the nail of her forefinger, she managed to dislodge a few particles which fell onto her legs. Her whole body was full of sand; her thighs, her belly, her breasts.

She got up, closed the window, and ran out into the wind to the pump where she filled a bucket with water. In the storeroom, she poured the water into an oval iron tub, then returned to the pump to fetch more water. Jacob, who had been sweeping the yard, looked at her over his sinewy arm resting on the upright broom.

When the tub was full, she sat down in the water. Letting her legs dangle over the side, she submerged her body and head in the water and held her breath for as long as she could. Then she drew her legs into the tub and imagined the water embracing her was a lover.

Suddenly a feeling of unease overcame her, not unlike the one she felt when she saw her red hair. She opened her eyes and looked at the thin rays of light shining through the tiny holes in the corrugated iron. There was no way the wind could blow into the storeroom, yet something was swaying to and fro above her head.

She strained her eyes. It was the strips of meat Jacob had hung on the rafters for curing. The sinewy, dark, dead flesh frightened her in a hitherto unknown way. She got up, draped a towel around her body and went back to bed where she hummed a long-forgotten lullaby so that she would not feel any fear. 'Tula, tula, tula mia baba' she sang to herself in a whisper as she remembered how Jacob had sung it to her and her brother when they were children. She would have liked him to sing it to her now.

In the middle of the night when the wind had burst through her window again and strewn sand over her clean body, she knew it was useless to fight it. She ran outside, across the farmyard, far into the veld where she stumbled and fell and lay still on the ground. A layer of red sand slowly covered her body. A feeling of peace came over her like a light, downy blanket.

She wondered whether her body would provide enough moisture for the veld to sprout its tiny white flowers, but the veld did not flower, not then or ever again.

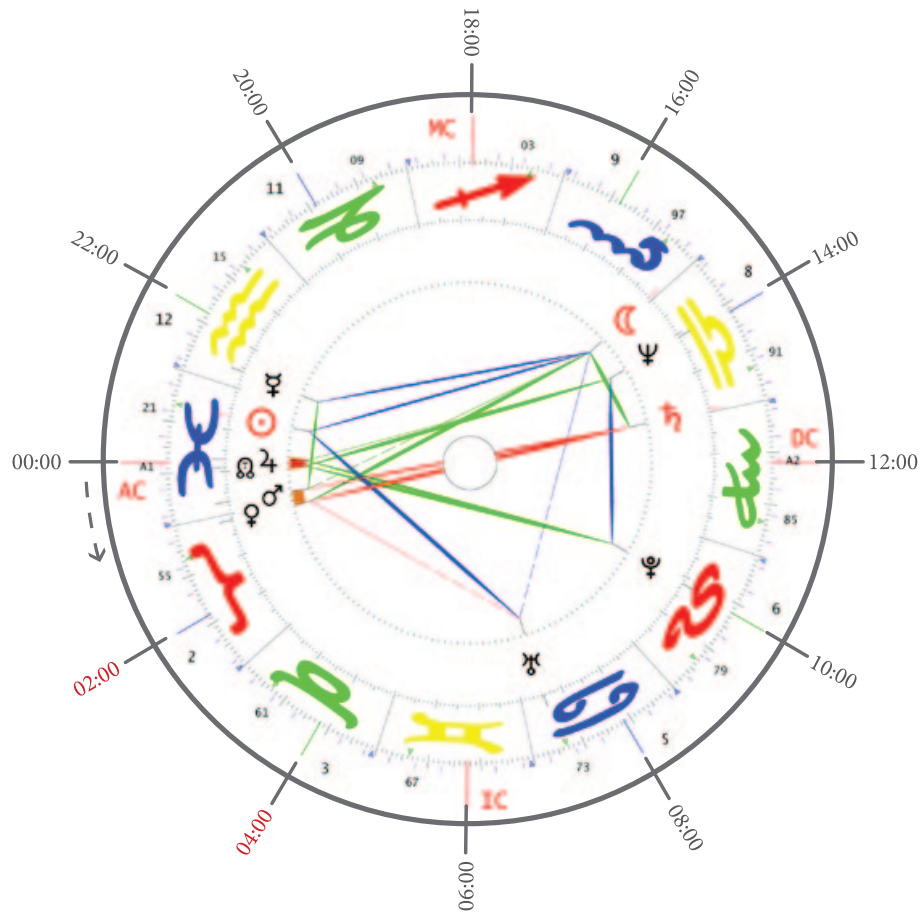
I wasn't yet four when the Sun as symbol of the father in childhood made me aware of my father's withdrawal from the family. This is accurately reflected in my chart by a low-point Sun in the hidden 12th house, in the dark depths of Pisces. My father had gone into a deep depression after the death by drowning of his youngest brother, which my mother believed was what underlay his alcoholism.

With my age point not making any aspects during my fifth year, not much new happened in my life; just more of the same thing with my brother. Such as the walk he took me on to the pigsty. A 'walk' meant that he put his hand on the back of my neck and, gripping it tightly, steered me

to the pigsty where a large sow was grunting next to the barbed-wire fence. He decided that if I wanted to be a boy - like he was - I would have to ride the sow like cowboys ride bulls. He opened up the lines of barbed wire in a rather unexpected gentlemanly fashion, and I climbed through the fence. He then helped me on to the animal's mud-stained back with an unusually pleasant "Whoopsy daisy."

Alarmed, the sow shot forward and I went flying onto the fence. A rusted barb ripped the tender flesh of my underarm. Blood spurted everywhere. My brother started laughing, or rather, cackling like a hyena at this pipsqueak of a cowboy. I ran home for comfort. The injury left a long welt, but it wouldn't be the last. Over the years, my scars at the hands of men would multiply.

Fortunately, freedom from this state of affairs did come just before I turned six, with an unexpected stroke of luck, compliments of beneficent Jupiter: I got a bicycle for Christmas. Now I could get away from my family and visit friends in the village a few miles away. The freedom I experienced of going to new places was the beginning of a life of travel and adventure; one that would eventually take me to the four corners of the world.



02:00 - 04:00  
1957 - 1962

My belief that my bicycle and school were going to take me away from my intimidating brother was wishful thinking. My father would now show me an abuse of power far greater and more frightening than that of my brother. At first my father only caused scenes once or twice a month. As his drinking increased, so did the flare-ups and, by the end of two years, they occurred almost every day. Sundays were the best because he was a strict Calvinist and never drank on the Sabbath. In the late afternoon, the family would have a picnic on the lawn next to the house. This is my only memory of good times with the family.

The endless series of ugly episodes would evoke in me a dreadful sense of shame, of extreme disappointment in my father. It would also take its toll on my self-confidence and make me extremely shy in social situations. Interestingly, the family never discussed his behaviour. They remained silent as if it hadn't happened, or perhaps I was left out of such conversations as I was only seven. But thoughts about my father abounded when I saw him again, thirty-six years later.

A shocking week it has been, with my father in hospital in a coma, not dying and not living. Is this also the state of the animus in me who won't act like he used to, yet lingers on, ailing? The 'fight' has gone out of me. I have given up my house, my friends and my job, and let go of so many material things, including all the books I read in the previous era in my life. I have sensed for some time that it was the extroverted, masculine phase in my life, hopefully to be replaced by a more introverted, feminine way of being.

In spite of the problems at home, I continued to enjoy school and learning to read and write. I now became conscious of possessions, but already then, my possessions were more of a mental kind. I was learning new things every day and gathering knowledge which would, over the years, become my main form of security.

Pluto, who symbolises will power, gave me the inner strength to remain on course, no matter what. Years later my mother confessed that she often feared I would stop enjoying school because of the scenes at home, or perhaps become a problem child, but to me school had become a haven.

The Neptune opposition brought with it the exact opposite of this planet's unconditional love. The unloving behaviour of my father was becoming extreme. He never hurt me physically. His abuse was purely emotional and, of course, verbal. The extreme dislike for my home language, Afrikaans, started here. Particularly when my father became tyrannical and my mother, in self-defense, sarcastic.

I did get a hiding from him, once, for coming home late after a visit to friends. I knew I might get into trouble as it was already getting dark when I approached our property. There he was, waiting for me at the gate. He took me inside the house, pulled me over his lap and spanked me with his shiny brown shoe. But I refused to cry. He kept on hitting, but still I didn't react as I'd decided that he was not going to hurt me. I'd seen how he'd humiliated my mother and sister, and he wasn't going to do the same to me.

Twenty-four years later I would portray this uneasy reality in *A Child's Story* which disturbed me greatly at the time of writing. Now I recognise it as an act of 'turning the tables' on my father.

It could have been the monkey's wedding.

After all, if the constellation of the stars predetermines a personality as astrologers will have it, why should climatologists not stake their claim as well? Surely children born on a sunny day are more disposed to laughter while winter babies feel forever a chill in their bodies, as if their souls were suffering from frostbite?

If this holds true, then the day on which Danny was born was at the bottom of it all. It was a hot day, as clear as can be. Yet a drizzle descended upon the earth at the same time that the waters broke in the body of his mother. And it kept on sprinkling the scorched earth for as long as it took him to work his way out of his mother's womb.

"It is the monkey's wedding!" called the farm workers as they clapped their hands in delight at the sparse drops of rain plopping into the sand and turned their dazzling white smiles towards the revered rain god somewhere in the sky.

"It is a boy and all is well!" called the midwife as she slapped the baby's bottom and he let forth a terrified scream at the two-facedness of the world around him.

Was it raining or was the sun shining? Years later, he still could not tell.

It was auction day; the day Danny's father-to-be had looked forward to for weeks. Auction day meant people. And he longed to talk to people again. White people, that is, because he did have black people on the farm, but who could talk to them about anything interesting? Such as the motor car at the previous auction. A brand-new, navy-blue Chev had driven up the dusty road, hooting every so often. The sound wasn't completely unknown to him, but the source of the hooting was an astounding sight. In the sun, the Chev looked like an iridescent tortoise. Except that it went much, much faster.

He circled the car, scrutinising it from all angles, as if he were judging a bull. He pushed his face right up against its magnificent paintwork to correct his distorted reflection. Then he took his striped handkerchief out of his trouser pocket and mopped up the greasy mark left by his nose.

He made no bids that day. No piece of livestock, no matter how impressive, could get his attention away from that motor car. When the auction was over, he left empty-handed, but full of ideas. Of new possibilities that such a Chev could open up. He could go to the village once a week, instead of once a month with the horse and cart. And perhaps one of those excursions could lead him to the wife he so wanted.

Back at the farm, he wandered from room to room, restless as a ferret. How he wanted to talk to someone about that Chev! He felt angry with himself for not having spoken to the farmers he had been with that very afternoon. Somehow he had been dumbstruck by desire.

He went to sit at the head of the dining-room table. It didn't feel right. He moved around to the side from where his mother had served Sunday lunch for the twenty years he had known her. He looked at the portrait of his parents hanging on the opposite wall. It did not do them justice. It was far too grainy in texture to capture the features he had once known. The pores on his father's large nose. The wrinkles on his mother's thin lips. He took the striped handkerchief out of his trouser pocket and wiped the dining-room table. Then he blew his nose in it and went to bed.

He thought, just before falling asleep, that his stomach was feeling empty, yet it wasn't rumbling.

The following morning marked the beginning of a four week wait until the next auction. It seemed an eternity. He had vowed not to leave the forthcoming auction without the bull he needed to swell the herd which had dwindled since the death of his father. For some months now, he seemed to have lost interest in the farm.

To make good his foolish behaviour of the previous day, he set about erecting a fence on the farm. Smok, the housekeeper's husband, helped him, making as if the amount of hard work so suddenly piled on him was the order of the day. He dug holes to sink the poles with a keenness that matched that of his master.

His only protection against the fierce mid-day sun was a white handkerchief, now soiled by sweat and red sand, which was knotted at each corner to conform to the shape of his skull. His body glistened with perspiration like the flanks of a fiery horse that had just been broken in.

Danny's father-to-be worked equally hard. When the fence had been completed a week later, he slaughtered a cow that had been crippled in the steel-toothed trap set for the jackal. He skinned, gutted and quartered the carcass. Two hours later, he sat down to a hearty meal prepared by the housekeeper, Anna. When he told her he was going to build a room onto the house, she muttered to herself that something had gotten into the man. Why did he need an extra room when he lived alone in a house that already had two bedrooms? She shrugged, she didn't know. He also didn't know.

For a solid three weeks he and Smok toiled with sand and stone and cement and corrugated iron till the room was finished and he could once more don his grey flannel trousers and white shirt and steer his horse and cart in the direction of the auction.

He was disappointed when told that the owner of the Chev had gone down to the sea, but then all uneasiness was dispelled by the sight of the bull.

What a bull it was! Its solid body predicted a progeny that would fetch many pounds on the meat market. He inspected the beast's teeth to determine its age. It had to be at the prime of its calf-producing life. The bidding for the bull wasn't hectic. He was pleased that the owner of the Chev had driven down to the sea for this man had the money to outbid any farmer and sometimes did so, simply to reconfirm his status in the community.

"Two pounds, eight shillings to Mr Coetzee!" said the auctioneer, concluding the bidding with a dull thud of his hammer. The two other bidders nodded their heads at Danny's father-to-be as if to approve of his purchase. He smiled. The bull had been worth the four-week wait.

On the way home, this time, his thoughts were taken up by wondrous visions of wealth. This bull could increase the size of his herd. He tried to remember where he'd heard about artificial insemination. His mind ventured a quick guess and he was about to establish Dries Dysel as the source of the information when he saw a brown calf lying in the tall grass just off the road.

He brought the horse to a halt and jumped from the cart. Only then did he see a shoe on the brown heap. A high-heeled shoe. He gasped. Lying in the red sand was a young woman. The only injury she seemed to have was a gash on her forehead. She was alive, but somehow lifeless. He spat into his handkerchief and wiped the sand and black coagulated blood from her face.

In vain he tried to get an answer from her. Who was she? Where did she come from? Who were her people?

Perhaps she's a fallen angel, he thought.

He got up and looked in the direction from where he had come. No-one was to be seen on the road that went over this hill and the next and endlessly onwards.

He picked her up and put her on the back of the cart, pulling her brown coat down to cover her calves. There was nothing else he could do but take her to his farm.

For once he didn't hurry the horse with the whip. He couldn't submit an angel to such a bumpy ride.

Once or twice he looked over his shoulder to see if she was still alive. He noticed the paleness of her skin and the curliness of her blonde hair and wondered if she had blue eyes.

Then he speeded up the horse ever so slightly.

The minute Danny's father-to-be had carried the limp young woman into the bedroom and put her to bed, he sent Anna to summons the doctor. Anna returned three hours later with a hand-written note from the doctor's wife. Her husband, it read, was out of town. He would of course see the sick woman as soon as he had finished his business up north.

Danny's father-to-be was in a dilemma. Should he inform the police of his find, or should he wait and see if he could perhaps win the angel's heart before he lost her to the skies again.

If only she could talk to him! But no matter how hard he tried to elicit a response from her, she remained silent under the patchwork quilt carefully made by his mother.

He had given his patient sugar water in case of shock, smelling salts in case of weakness, Jamaican ginger in case of stomach cramps and bush tea, the all-purpose medicine, in case he still had not hit upon the true cause of her affliction.

Late that afternoon, he saw her eyes open. They were as blue as the sea. As blue as the Chev he had so wanted. He immediately jumped up and placed himself within her view. She closed her eyes and fell asleep again. Perhaps she was suffering from sleeping sickness, he thought.

At the crack of dawn when he was putting the kettle onto the coal-stove to make coffee, the doctor arrived. He looked haggard, yet displayed an unexpected amount of energy.

He diagnosed the patient as suffering from severe shock resulting in loss of speech and, possibly, loss of memory. Only time would tell. He fetched a bottle of medication from his car and gave it to Danny's father-to-be, assuring him that the patient would recover from her state of shock within a few days and from the other disorder in good time.

The doctor was right. By three o'clock the following afternoon, the patient suddenly sat up in her bed. Danny's father-to-be put a tray of food on her lap. She pushed the meat and potatoes to the side and took four cucumber slices from the salad bowl and put them between two slices of bread on her side plate. Then she picked up the sandwich and slowly ate it.

He was somewhat puzzled by her strange choice of food, but this feeling was soon dispelled by the pressing need to resolve the dilemma into which this woman's arrival had thrown him. She had scarcely swallowed the last mouthful of food when he popped the question: "Will you marry me?" He thought he saw her smile before her head fell forward in a single nod and she fell asleep again, still sitting upright.

That very afternoon he returned, just before dusk, with a magistrate who was so stunned by the generosity of this groom-to-be that he married the couple without asking why the bride propped up in bed, didn't open her eyes.

That very night Danny was conceived in a lifeless woman who suddenly spoke her first words: "You clumsy oaf!" she shrieked. "Get away from me!" Danny's father didn't understand what she was saying, but knew he had to get out of there as fast as he could.

The night of Danny's conception was the last night his mother and father slept in the same room. The sun had just peeped over the horizon when his mother wandered through the house and selected the new bedroom as her territory. That vile man would never again touch the body he had considered his property.

"I shall sleep here," is all she said to him. Somehow he knew what she meant.

"Alone," she added in case this man with the potato nose hadn't understood her.

When her screaming had subsided the night before, she fell into a dazed dream in which she saw herself swimming under water till her body had been cleansed of all human contamination, till it took on the transparency of the water itself.

"Goed," is all Danny's father said.

What a coarse language, she thought. As ugly as the face from which it had emanated. As ugly as the house she now stood in, as ugly as the surrounding barren land she saw through the window. She couldn't remember if life had always been so ugly.

Danny's father looked at the floor. He had noticed that her clear blue eyes became murky when she looked at him.

She immediately locked herself in the bedroom. The only person allowed to enter was Anna who either took cucumber sandwiches and tea to the room, or a neatly covered chamber pot – Danny's mother had sworn never to use the outside toilet lest she become infected by that 'foul mess.' That afternoon Anna returned from the village with yards and yards of white material and a straw hat.

When Danny's mother finally reappeared, two days later, she was wearing a white flowing frock and straw hat. She swept past his father down the long, dark passage and out the back door.

Her bedroom door was ajar. Her husband pushed it open.

White curtains covered the windows in elaborate drapes. The bed, from the pillows to the bedspread to the floor, was a cascade of frills. He thought he had stepped into a cloud and wanted to touch its soft whiteness, but held back his hands and put them into his trouser pockets before turning around and walking to the backyard where he scooped up handfuls of red sand and let it sift through his fingers.



Days passed. Danny's father half-heartedly busied himself with the welfare of his herd. At night before he sat down to the single plate of food Anna had left on the dining-room table, he stopped in front of the door of his wife's bedroom to listen for any signs of life. Sometimes he heard her humming a tune he didn't know. Other times all he could hear was the hooting of the owl outside.

He questioned Anna on his wife's state of health, but without any luck. She no longer seemed to understand him. Perhaps she was now also speaking his wife's language. One morning he waited till Anna had left his wife's abode, carrying the porcelain chamber pot, and barged into her bedroom.

His wife started screaming so incessantly that he felt his eardrums would burst. He fled to the barn where he took a hacksaw from the hook next to the door and started sawing off the horns of the bull he had bought on that fateful auction day.

The bewildered animal started bucking and kicking like a horse, but Danny's father seemed to possess a superhuman strength that kept on sawing till he hit the horn nerve and a torrent of terrifying sound rented the air for miles around. To Danny's father, it felt as if the sound were coming from the pit of his stomach.

For days he felt no desire to talk to anyone.

Weeks passed, months passed. The only change in his life was the birth of a few calves. Some evenings he followed his wife when she strolled down to the orchard. He watched her from a distance as she picked fruit or lay in the grass under the fig-tree. One day he saw her hugging her swollen belly and he knew that he'd soon have a child, even if he didn't have a wife.

Nine months after his wife had uttered her first shriek, he heard her scream again and saw Anna entering the room with a pot of hot water and several white cloths.

He ran to the side of the house and peeped through an opening in the drapes.

His wife lay on the white cloud, her large belly protruding like an ostrich egg in its fluffy nest. It was heaving so heavily now, soon it would crack.

As he looked up at the clear blue sky, he felt a drop of rain on his nose.

It was the monkey's wedding.

There is no doubt that the traumatic experiences with my father left a deep imprint on my mind. I believe it reconfirmed a decision I'd made in *Cupid's Valley* already: that I would never get myself into a similar situation with a man.

Behaviourist psychologists would see this as a negative turn of events, but I never have. I intuitively felt that I should go it alone. This was confirmed for me half a century later when I discovered Astrological Psychology and its interpretation of the North Node in the first house of a natal chart. The Hubers state: "With the Node in the 1st house, what is required is the courage to stand up and say "This is what I am, and I am not going to change for anyone." (*Moon Node*

*Astrology*, p.46) My North Node is in Pisces where, according to the Hubers, "...learning is an inner, existential learning on the spot, and has to do with the meaning of life... Understanding the significance of the world and oneself as parts of the Whole, and saving others, is the highest task of the Piscean Node." (*North Node Astrology*, p.86)

Throughout my life, I wondered whether the earlier years in my life were what caused a certain dismissal of marriage and created the need to live alone. When I was fifteen a line from a poem written then foretold my life philosophy: *'Tis not only in humans one finds companionship*. In my fifties I saw that not only nurture, but also nature contributed to this state of affairs, as if it had been written in the stars all along.

With my natal Sun on a low point in the creative imagination of the 12th house, I often withdrew into my inner world, and when I got older, to the lower layers of consciousness. Perhaps, if I had not had adventurous Jupiter on my Pisces Ascendant, I would have found this inward pull unbearable. Instead, later in life I considered it an intriguing 'journey to the interior.'

Neptune now opposing my consciousness was intensely felt in a sense of lovelessness in my family. Of course my mother protected us when and where she could, but her ability to be loving was severely hampered by my father who was becoming a threatening tyrant, often demanding to know 'Who's the boss in this house?' Decades later, this phrase would crop up again in my writing.

One image would return to haunt me when I was 28 and my consciousness was at a low point in the 5th house. I started getting the most frightening visions of a 'dark man'. He always appeared in silhouetted form, against a window, or hovering in a backlit arch. Admittedly, at the time I was taking appetite suppressants which, as I would find out later from a pharmacist friend, caused hallucinations, but the question remained: why this particular image?

Only in my forties did I realise where it came from. It was the seemingly long-forgotten vision of my father turning on the light in the passage outside my bedroom door to wake me when it was time to go and find my mother and sister whom he'd earlier in the evening thrown out of the house. Clearly I had retained this frightening image in my unconscious from where it emerged again when my consciousness hit the low point.

In 1993, shortly after my father's birthday, and once again thirty-six years later, I confided in my journal:

What agony I have been going through with all the anger against my father welling up inside me. As if it has been lying there for years, like a well-trained dog, obeying my commands of 'stay' and 'play dead', waiting for the moment when my subjugation stops to pounce and grab me by the throat.

In the middle of the night, when my body shakes with sobs, I can feel its jaws tighten around my throat. My ability or desire to order it to 'go' has gone. What will pacify this vicious animal? What will make it watch over me, protecting me from evil and harm, rather than turning against me?

Fortunately things changed. My family finally left the village and returned to Johannesburg, the city where my mother had been born. With my mother now working and thus becoming financially independent, it was possible for the family to survive without a father who refused to live in Johannesburg which he called Sodom and Gomorrah.

The low point in the area of personal possessions brought about many losses. By the time I was seven, we'd lost the farm, the house in the village and the father of the family. The worst thing for me was that I'd also lost my bicycle and my friends. Without my wheels, I would feel the fixity of the second house very strongly indeed, and fixity has never been an easy state of being for someone with so many triangles – which suggest mutability – in her chart.

I was now in a strange city, in a small flat rather than a large house and at a new school where I hadn't yet made any friends. My mother had to work full-time to keep the family going and was only home in the evenings. The long green aspect with Saturn could well point at my ache for some familiar structure, for some close relationship, even if it was tinged by the energies of Mars and Venus which I had experienced so strongly in *Cupid's Valley*. But my brother had stopped bullying me. Perhaps he'd had a bit of his own medicine, albeit in a far more potent form, from my father.

While my consciousness was directly opposing my feeling nature - the Moon - my emotional needs were not being met. I felt at sea with nothing to cling to. My mother returned from full-time work with little energy for the children. My sister was inaccessible as she had always been. All I could do in this lack of a support system, was rely on myself. School was the only place where I could relate to people other than my family. Perhaps I was intuiting the impending low point

which would hit me the next year. 1959 was one of the worst years in my life, and I would feel its pain again, greatly amplified, in 1995. (Yet again, 36 years later.)

Just before my consciousness was filled by the Moon at age 44, I would be in a home situation which was the polar opposite of that in 1959. In 1995 Libra was colouring my consciousness with harmonious and refined relationships and I now had everything I didn't have in 1959: a wonderful home with a congenial atmosphere and several close friends with whom I could share aesthetic pleasures and have interesting conversations. I had created the perfect environment, not just for my body, but also for my soul. And I had done so on my own. But with the Moon on the distant horizon, this too would end, for my Moon is in a Scorpionic place of death and rebirth: I would often experience devastating emotional cataclysms.



When I was 9, there was an unexpected change, facilitated by innovative Uranus. We moved to another apartment where I befriended an English-speaking girl my age. Soon I could speak English. It was the first step towards letting go of my home language which I would eventually

speak only when necessary. When spoken harshly, it touched a sore nerve in me and would do so for most of my life. It was the language of the abusers, not only of the women in my family, but of millions of people in my country. The inhumane apartheid regime consisted of predominantly Afrikaans-speaking politicians and police forces. My home language would become a loveless language to me. In my early thirties, I wrote:

My unease with this country has developed into an unbearable nausea. I can no longer suppress the feeling and stop lashing out at those who intensify the malaise. It makes me hate myself for not being more tolerant or more outspoken. I seem to lack the courage to do either properly.

At times like these, I develop the urge to go swimming or cycling, an urge that goes unsatisfied for I know it is a psychological and not a physical need. Perhaps the desire to act is some archaic remnant of me, the warrior, for I have always been doing battle.

I must write and keep on writing till I have uttered every word. Why don't I persevere after the first burst of creativity? Am I not prepared to let go of everything, imagining that there will be nothing left but a husk once I've put everything down on paper? Is this the purpose of expressing feelings and ultimately, the purpose of life? Of course, I can only do so in English. Not in my home language.

Afrikaans. It has fragmented me, for I cannot deny that it is an inseparable part of my character, yet I have disowned it, but still not strongly enough. It still hovers around the background, interfering in my sphere of life. Like my father did? Can a child be so affected by a language? Or is she affected by the father who spoke it?

I am confused, I no longer know the difference between personal and social depression – the one seems to have slid over into the other, erasing the dividing line, if ever there was one. Politicians repeating their empty rhetoric ad absurdum anger me more than anything I can think of. I can no longer desensitise myself to them.

Perhaps it is the display of power/authority which irritates me beyond words, for I feel at ease with my Afrikaans-speaking aunt and uncle, simple people, honest people. Yet what gives me the right to demand honesty from anyone? Am I not power-hungry myself and projecting my problem onto the powers-that-be? I fear I shall never find the answer to this question and hence the resolution of the problem. I fear that my life will be forever divided.

I simply cannot take this frustration anymore, this stagnant patriarchal principle that keeps things under control, stifling them so they can't breathe the creative force of life.

The blessings the Sun now brought into my life after I had suffered the 2nd-house low point came in the form of a new father. My stepfather was Italian and Catholic, the complete opposite of my Afrikaans, Calvinist father. Fun-loving and outgoing, he'd play opera music every Sunday morning and sing arias to my mother in an entertaining, melodramatic way. He took us out on picnics and holidays with a clan of Italians whom I soon grew to love. They were warm, friendly people who knew how to enjoy the small pleasures in life: eating, singing and dancing. At last I was living! Moreover, my stepfather spoke Italian – his English was rudimentary – and over the next few years, I would learn his language. It would become the language of love to me.



*My mother and stepfather.*

Jupiter was now in an expansive mood and, through my new father, introduced me to the joys of traveling to other parts of the world. Every year, we went on holiday to Mozambique, a Portuguese colony at the time. There I discovered yet another culture, its food and customs, its dances and music. My stepfather had introduced me to these exciting adventures which fueled my lifelong

passion to experience other countries and cultures. In my forties, when Jupiter made me long to travel, I went to Rio de Janeiro where the Brazilian jazz I had first heard in Mozambique evoked a great nostalgia in me.

In Brazil, the singer Mario awakened my senses with his soulful sound. From the dark labyrinth where I had held onto the thread for so long, to help the ineffectual Theseuses in my life, only to be kept there by the Minotaur - or was it by Hades? - Mario's music drew me back into life again. Like Orpheus with his sweet lyre? *Manhã de Carnaval* or *A Day in the Life of a Fool* as it is called in English, will always be my song.

I was now twelve and Pluto's will-developing energy was highly activated in the area of learning and education. I did particularly well at school that year, getting 96% for Arithmetic. Where my stepfather boasted to his friends about his 'clever' daughter, my real father simply asked me why I couldn't get 100%. This breaking down of my self-confidence no longer devastated me as I now had a doting new father who boosted my self-esteem. His loving support led to a strengthening of my will to remain on purpose.

The yearning for Neptune's unconditional love was also fulfilled by my stepfather. He gave me snatches of insight into a love greater than I had ever known. Thirty-six years later when Jupiter who had initiated my travels to other countries gave my consciousness a blessing, I went to Italy where my stepfather was then living. It would be our last meeting for he died a year later. To thank him for having shown me what unconditional love meant, I wrote *The Moon in the Man*.

It was only five o'clock, yet already dark. We stepped outside into the mist that was descending fast. He put on his hat. It was black and made him look as elegant at eighty-six as he was when I first saw him forty years ago in his stylish red shirt with the slit pockets.

His dark hair was now as white as the beard he had grown since the last time I saw him. He wore his hair long and straight which gave him the air of an artist. But then he was an artist, an artist of life, and what he had taught me was the art of a life rich in little pleasures rather than great material wealth. A life of music, dancing, travelling. A life that celebrated every day with a cappuccino.

"*Ti voglio tanto bene,*" I wanted to say to him. "I love you very much." Instead I hesitated. I looked into the eyes which earlier that week had not recognised me.

"Who is this woman?" he had then asked his sister when she had opened the front door.

I was visibly shocked at how old and fragile my stepfather had become. This man who had had such a magnificent physique, a body honed by professional soccer, a body called, Leone, a name that suited him with his leonine bearing, his taut muscularity and his impressive style.

“It is your daughter,” his sister reminded him and, when she saw the sadness in my face, mentioned to me that he had lost his memory a few years ago.

I looked into those eyes which now sparkled with the same naughtiness I had grown to love in him when I was a child. I had sensed then already that there was something of the trickster in him, something excitingly unpredictable – like a magician who could pull who knows what out of a hat – which manifested itself in his love of gambling, be it poker or horses, something as shifting as the constant transformations of the moon. But then, he was a man of the moon.

“*Canaglia,*” he used to call me – rogue - when he caught me playing his game of joker in the pack. Though never discussed, it had become a pact between us. A way of loosening the grip of the strictures society imposes on one. An initiation for me into playing a joke on life as much as life played a joke on me. Perhaps of changing the order, just for a moment, like the joker in the pack.

“*Ciao, bellissima,*” he said now when, in a moment of complete clarity, he remembered me.

My heart ached. Not just at the tenderness in those words, but at the immense kindness of Italians who call each other *bella* and *bello* because they like to make everyone feel beautiful. And at the bitter-sweetness of love. I have always marvelled at the closeness, in Italian, of the words *amore* and *amaro*, love and bitter, and how they seemed to be so perfectly combined in a cappuccino whose light frothiness is just an introduction, an invitation, to the dark bitter-sweetness that awaits. Isn't that what life and love are? As light and as dark as a cappuccino?

As white and black as my father's hat and hair, as light and dark as his long tweed coat, as *chiaroscuro* as the moon which was the other reason I had come to Venice in winter rather than summer: to take a photograph of the full moon in the lunar rather than the solar season, because no other city represented the feminine principle to me more than Venice. (And if the essence of the moon is reflection, then Venice with its myriad reflections in a maze of canals is the realm of the moon.) I had come, despite temperatures that were below zero, to experience the moon in its magnificent full-roundedness.

Yet it was too overcast to see it.

So I wandered through Venice, through the labyrinth of my world's feminine soul, my *anima mundi*, in the innerscape in me that had taken on the most fantastic hues and textures due to encountering, forty years ago, the man who was to become my father. Not the father in my blood, but the father in my heart.

Everything in Venice - the buildings, the piazzas, the waterways, the pigeons, the sky – was grey. Yet it wasn't a dull grey, but a silken grey, like mercury, like the sea in winter, like Venice on that day.

In boutique windows too, the essential tones of the city were reflected in clothing ranging from a light-grey to a metallic blue grey and black, with wispy white scarves capturing the mysterious Venetian mist that hung over the city.

In my mind's eye, I saw ornately costumed and masked figures appearing from the mist like characters from another realm - as they do at carnival time in Venice, usually in late February. If there is one dream I would like to realise once in my life, then it is to be in Venice at a carnival during the full moon. I would be quite content to, like the count in *Death in Venice*, die there having experienced the essence of my feminine soul.



Perhaps it was this desire that presented me there and then with a preview of my dream come true - without having to pay the full price for it. After following the twists and turns of dusky alleys, a gloriously radiant shop window presented itself to me. I stood mesmerised by the beauty of its richly decorated gold and silver masks and suns and moons and stars. It was a perfect picture of carnival madness, of that other essence of the moon: the moon as lunacy.

That a good dose of lunacy is innate in Italians is clear in their films, for no matter how dark life gets, the lightness is there too. Perhaps it's their fine sense of the absurdity of life. (Did one of the Greek philosophers not call man 'the laughing animal'?) A sense of the need to play, to interpret life in a more playful way, because in all its shades of black and white and grey "*La vita è bella*".

For anyone else, it would have been difficult to see that sense of madness in the old man who was standing in front of me, about to embrace me once again, perhaps for the last time. Yet as fragile as old age had made his body and as hazy as Alzheimer's had made his mind, his eyes sparkled like that shop window.

"*Ti voglio tanto bene,*" I said to him. "I love you very much." It was the first time in my life that I could utter the words without any embarrassment. Perhaps, because I knew it would be the last time.

We embraced each other.

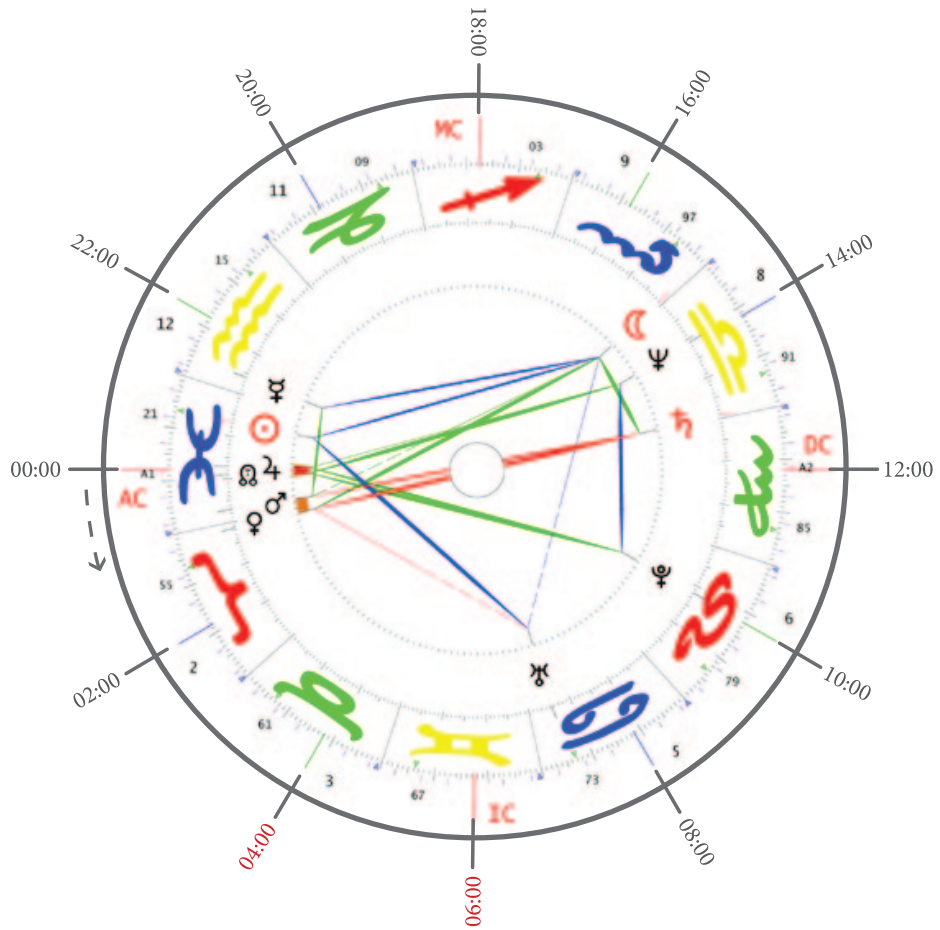
"*Ciao, bellissima,*" he said in a quavering voice, his eyes misting over.

He turned around and walked away - or rather, floated away - so light was he. I stood waiting for him to turn around and wave, but he didn't. Further and further he moved away from me, till he had disappeared into the mist.

I looked up at the sky, but still couldn't see the moon. Then it dawned on me. Why did I need to see the full moon in the sky, when I would have it forever in my heart?

Grazie, Leone.





04:00 – 06:00  
1963 – 1968

My entry into high school was sparked by a Mercurial energy to acquire knowledge. The more down-to-earth learning of Taurus would soon take off on the wings of thought when my consciousness shifted to Gemini. I loved school and found holidays at home uninspiring.

Mercury also manifested itself in the form of my first mentor: my English teacher who was what I would later describe as an intellectual. This teacher was a German Jew whose parents had fled the Nazis from Berlin to Switzerland (where she completed a degree in law) before settling in South Africa. I sensed there was something on a higher level in this woman for she didn't only teach me English literature, she made me aware of other ways of being. My classmates, who were from conservative Afrikaans families, didn't relate to the teacher as strongly as I did, but having been introduced to foreign worlds by the Italians, I embraced the teacher's 'otherness'.

We would always be close, and two decades later on a guided imagery journey into a forest to encounter one's spiritual guide, I met up with her again. All she said to me was: "Just know that you are." This sense of "That I am" helped me greatly to accept my by then conscious tendency to be drawn to an unseen world which I seldom discussed with anyone lest they think there was something wrong with me.

A year later, my relationships were made easy by Saturn. I fell in love with a boy whom I saw as a rebel like I was. He attended the school across the road from mine, but chose a pretty blonde in my class as his girlfriend. I felt as unattractive and unfeminine as only an adolescent can. Thanks to Venus's sense of taste and beauty, I became more aware of myself as a woman and now started wearing dresses more readily. (I still preferred the trousers though.) This longing for a loving relationship that would meet my emotional needs was perfectly reflected by the long green aspect to my Moon which shares feelings with communicative Mercury: it led to the first writing I ever did - poems inspired by my unrequited love.

Then Uranus came with a pleasant surprise: a journey to another part of the world; to Europe where we went to meet my stepfather's relatives. We visited several countries and I often felt as if I had 'come home.' Later in life, I would have a strong intuition that Europe was the 'head' of the world as expressed in these lines I wrote a few years before I left for the East:

*Crucified I am on the four corners of the world:  
My feet in Africa, root of the world  
My head in Europe, mind of the world  
My right arm in the West, body of the world  
My left arm in the East, soul of the world*

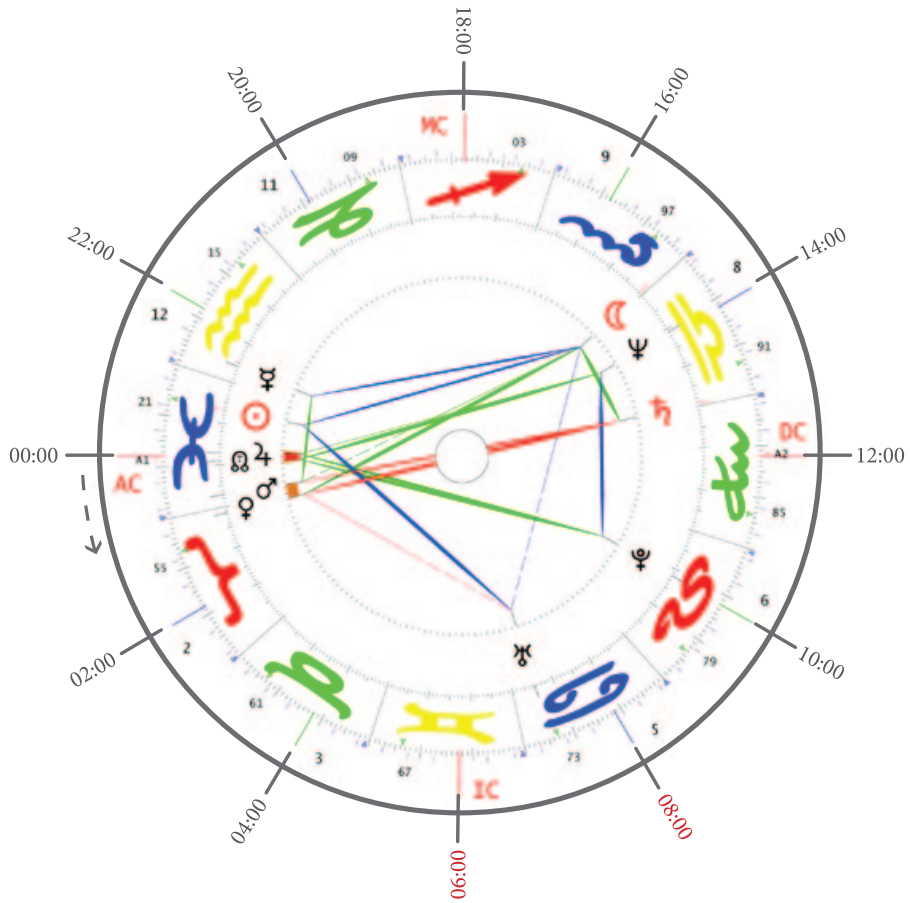
This expansion in knowledge would be followed by a contraction, by a low point in the 3rd house of learning: I suddenly lost interest in my studies. But soon afterwards, the Sun gave my mental ego new impetus in Gemini, and I wrote several short, aphoristic poems. Although these seem mawkish today, it is remarkable that they already featured the themes of my later life: that material possessions are secondary to inner riches, that death might be more valuable than life and that solitude is a necessity. This phase heralded the beginning of a lifetime of writing about what was going on inside me. But then, my Sun on a low point in the inner world leans towards such introspection.

The Sun now also engendered strong masculine experiences for me through a Swiss man, seven years older than I was, who introduced me to sex and Schopenhauer. This relationship was the first experience of the Dionysian and Apollonian in my life as represented by Mars and Mercury in my chart. Only in my fifties would I be able to relate to men not only from the senses or the intellect, but from the heart; the synthesis to the thesis and antithesis of my relationships with men.

Then fiery Jupiter prompted me to expand my worldview during my last year in high school. My mind was abuzz with new insights and discoveries. My main area of growth was not at school, but with my boyfriend whose Euro-centricity opened up further avenues for learning. I was already studying German and French at school and decided to do a BA in European languages much to the surprise of my teachers who believed I should become a doctor as I was good at math and science. Yet, although I appeared outwardly to be a left-brain person as indicated by aptitude tests, in essence I was more right-brain. Of course, these concepts didn't exist at the time. I was entirely guided by my intuition. My parents also never pushed me in any particular direction. Neither did they sit on my back to study or achieve. I was always left to my own devices; a freedom I have always been grateful for.

I didn't want to burden my parents with university fees, but Jupiter was opening doors for me: my studies were entirely funded by bursaries. Furthermore, I considered myself lucky to be going to an English university when my classmates were going to an Afrikaans university. It was the final break with my language legacy, at least on a superficial level.

With my inborn Jupiterian optimism and idealism now highly charged, I looked forward to university with great enthusiasm. What would I experience there? The anticipation of great new discoveries made it easier to deal with my boyfriend's return to Switzerland where I would visit him over the Christmas holidays.



06:00 – 08:00  
1969 – 1974

The adaptation to this new world was facilitated, as it had been when I went to a new primary school, by Pluto with its will-enhancing energy. At the same time, the North Node fueled the progress of my soul's journey into the creative realms of man's consciousness, while Neptune offered me a treasure chest of creativity through the European writers I was studying. I believe many of the prescribed German, French and Italian authors were guides on my soul's journey, for they took me on an excursion to the inner world of writers and thinkers over the centuries: from Dante's *Inferno* to Goethe's *Faust* and Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*.

My consciousness was still tinged by Gemini, with an extra dose of learning energy coming from Mercury during my second year at university. I loved the sense of freedom and space I got from my studies and from campus life. Concepts were slowly gelling, making connections that spread wider and wider in my mind. I could make some sense of obscure writers such as Kafka and Camus, although I didn't yet have the maturity to truly understand them.

A question that arose for me and has been with me ever since was: What in the writer created this particular work? What were the underlying mechanisms that resulted in his or her writing? It was the beginning of an ongoing search for the subtext to the texts I was reading. It was also the beginning of my interest in psychology and symbolism. Finally, it would become the motivation for this book.

During my final year at university, all planetary energies in my relationships – Mars, Venus and Saturn – were ignited. The more intensely I immersed myself in the mental, the more intensely I became involved in the sensual. On campus I made friends with several male students, but my heart still belonged to my Swiss boyfriend whom I intended visiting after my final exams.

Soon Mars in his hot-headed guise presented me with a new boyfriend who didn't last long: he was irascible and committed the unforgiveable sin, in my view, of shouting at me. The Venus in me would flare up in defense, but only occasionally, as I wanted to be loved. There was too much fire between us and the relationship fortunately soon burnt out. Not though without some blistering on my part.

I clearly hadn't learnt my lesson and soon fell head over heels in love with a German whom I consider the Adonis of all my encounters with men. He wasn't particularly engaging intellectually, but love - or rather lust - is indeed blind. The Moon now blessed me with a sense of emotional completeness. I 'loved' him and he returned my 'love.' It would take me a few more decades and several more emotional disasters to discover that physical attraction is not love.

Saturn demands responsibility and I now had to account for the betrayal of my boyfriend in Switzerland. What were relationships about? Was it the respect I felt for my Swiss boyfriend who was reliable and trustworthy? Or was it the mad passion I felt for my German boyfriend who was overly critical and not half as decent as the first? Would I go to Switzerland to be with my first love, or would I stay in South Africa with my Adonis? I was overwhelmed by this deluge of thoughts.

In the end Adonis decided for me: he was going to return to Germany and after my visit to Switzerland - when I would tell my boyfriend the truth - I would join him in Berlin. My world looked rosy again, perhaps too much so, for Saturn disapproves of rose-coloured spectacles. It was the first time that I felt such intensely conflicting emotions in my relationships, and it wouldn't be the last.

I was too young to see the cause of my relationship problems: the either/or approach I took to men - that is, I either liked them intellectually or physically, and never the twain could meet. Both extremes would be unacceptable to a Libran Saturn who insisted on balance in my close relationships. Only when my consciousness experienced the essence of Saturn eighteen years later would I become fully aware of this rift in my thinking-versus-feeling approach to men. This theme would then dominate my writing endeavours.



*In Switzerland.*

A few months into the freedom offered by boundless Uranus, I had completed my final exams and left my family and country for Switzerland. At first I felt exhilarated to be in another part of the world, but soon the Swiss family environment became unbearable. Although Uranus was in the caring, loving sign of Cancer, I didn't experience any of its qualities. I felt out of place with my boyfriend's parents, a conservative, hard-working couple in their sixties, who found me too 'foreign'. I had enjoyed complete freedom of thinking and being the year before, on campus and at home, and thus found the restrictions in Switzerland stifling. With Uranus in the area of home and family in my chart, freedom is what I needed on the home front. But with my consciousness now on a low point in this area, I experienced its downside. I had never enjoyed being part of my original family and even less so with my Swiss family.

I needed to get out of their house and thus enrolled at the School of Interpreters in Zurich where I would study for the next two years. Here I made new friends, but beneath my social mask, I was becoming increasingly depressed. All the excitement and stimulation of the previous year had fizzled out. Unfortunately, so had my feelings for my Swiss boyfriend and the idea of marriage and family. I was also out of integrity with myself as I still hadn't told my boyfriend about Adonis from whom I finally received news. Bad news, as he'd been imprisoned when crossing the border from Eastern Germany into Berlin which he'd fled a year before I'd met him to avoid a criminal court case. I felt as imprisoned by my situation in Switzerland as Adonis was by his crimes in Berlin.

He was finally released from prison and visited me in Zurich, but I was too depressed to imagine that he could save me. I had to do it myself. He returned to Berlin, disappointed and angry. Of course, my boyfriend in Switzerland had been aware that I wasn't happy living with his family and wasn't surprised, but deeply hurt, when I finally ended our relationship and moved to an apartment with fellow students.

All this extreme unease translated into a dis-ease which was diagnosed a year later: my thyroid gland had become overactive which also caused extreme depressions. I finally underwent radioactive treatment and slowly recovered, but never fully until my mid-forties. This sickness had changed my face to such a degree that I looked quite frightening, for it had made my eyes protrude. I couldn't look at myself in the mirror. 'Stark, staring mad' is the description that came to mind. When my mother heard the bad news and suggested I return home, I leapt at the thought. I had been too unhappy in Switzerland. Like Persephone had been with Hades in the underworld?

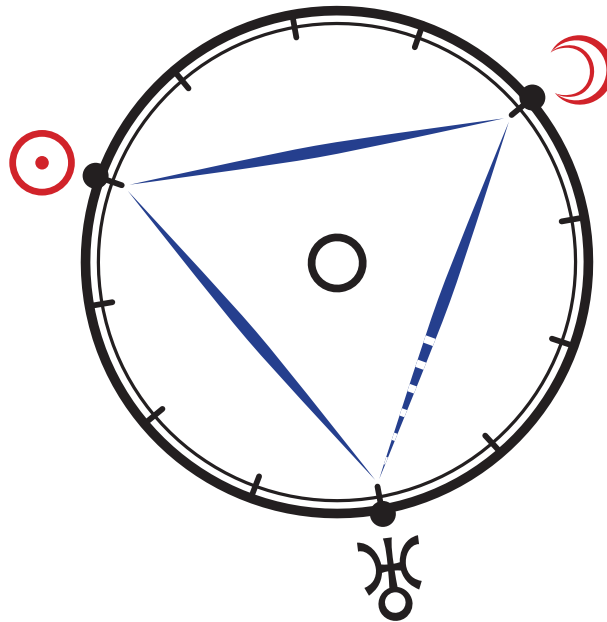


Indeed, I consider the Swiss episode one of the most difficult times in my life. I had suffered much, emotionally and physically, and was glad to get back to my home and my studies. Fortunately no planetary energies were prompting me into action the following year, as if I'd been given a break to recover; one I desperately needed.

At university I continued my studies in German literature, but campus wasn't as exciting as before. I buried myself in books and assignments. My closest companions were Günter Grass, Peter Weiss and Bertolt Brecht, all writers who were at some stage in their lives active in Berlin, a city that fascinated me. Then I met a real life Berliner, one with whom I'd have the longest relationship in my life, albeit only 6 years. At the end of 1974 – on my new boyfriend's birthday – Jupiter brought joviality back into my life with a man who had a great sense of humour. At last I could laugh again like I used to before the Swiss debacle.

I stayed with my parents for a few months, and then moved into a flat. It would be the first of several. It was the Uranian energy in the area of home in my chart: I'd stay in a flat for six months, and after I'd decorated it, move to another. I never understood why I felt compelled to move so often. Perhaps I had a nomadic streak, I speculated. The truth was, I loved transforming spaces, but once I'd completed the process, I'd get bored and move on to another challenge. I now see that it was an indication of a talent for interior design or architecture, but then only saw it as constant transformation of my home environment, an activity that would continue throughout my life. My encounter with Astrological Psychology finally made sense of it: with an overabundance of mutability in my chart, ongoing change and awareness are my main motivations.

## THE LARGE TALENT TRIANGLE

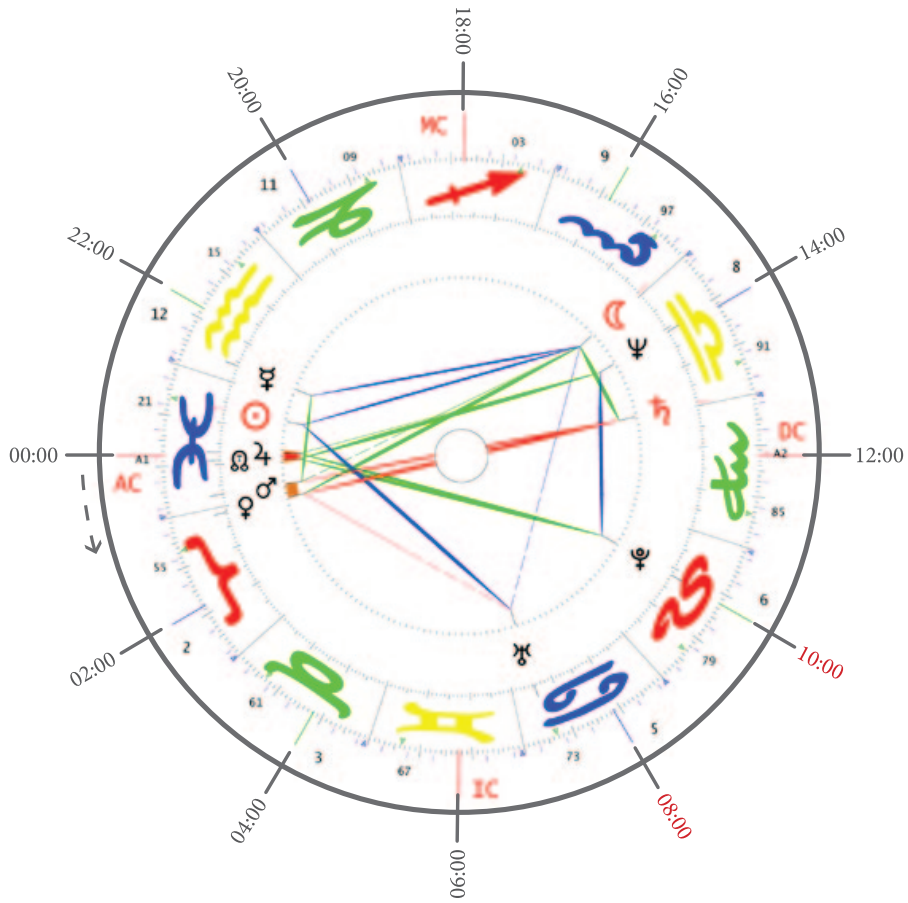


In my chart, Uranus is one of the planets in an aspect figure the Hubers call the Large Talent Triangle consisting of three blue aspects. As such, there is a sharing of resources between, in this instance, the transpersonal planet Uranus and the two ego planets, the Sun and the Moon, which results in a specific talent. Most things I put my hand to were relatively easy to master, but I didn't have a distinct talent such as painting, writing or composing. Only after studying the Hubers' aspect figures would I come to understand what my talent had been all along; what had carried me through all my comings and goings: the ability to transform and to undergo transformation.

On a physical level, it is the transformation of spaces as already mentioned. On the emotional level, it is the transformation of dark, Scorpionic emotions as we shall see when my age point transits the 8th-house low point at age 44 when I made this entry into my journal:

Yet, over the years, it has become clear to me that there's no getting away from him. He is in me, this raging energy that both destroys and creates. It is Pluto who underlies the creative force in me. And if he is the Great Destroyer, what does he break down in me so that I may create? My will? My stubborn determination? And how does my will affect my creativity?

On a mental level, this transformation might only be completed in 2020 when my consciousness will meet the Sun at the last angle of the Talent Triangle. Only then might I fully grasp my talent. I suspect it will have something to do with my creative will as my thyroid flared up first during the Uranus transit, and then again during the Moon transit, the other two planets involved in this aspect figure. The throat, according to psychosomatics, is the seat of the will and creative expression.



08:00 – 10:00  
1975 – 1980

In 1975 my age point was still in the fourth house of home and family, and everything that I had missed in this area in Switzerland I now experienced in abundance. The love in my new relationship had all the elements of Cancer's gentle nurturing particularly when it entered this sign a year later.

It was also the first time in my life that I enjoyed being with my family. My parents, my sister and her husband, my boyfriend and I had wonderful get-togethers, mostly at Sunday lunches spiced with much laughter. Perhaps the forthcoming Neptune square also sparked an experience of ideal love, but I believe it was this planet's creative energies which urged me to do something more creative with my life.

I was completing my MA dissertation and also teaching German at a college, but I started wondering whether my future lay in the German Department, its internal politics and the academic approach to life. I felt that an academic career would stifle me. Too many strictures and constraints were put on one's creative self expression.

Socially, my need to express myself was also on the rise. My consciousness was now approaching Leo, that fiery sign that wants to make an impression, to shine, on the social scene. The social life I shared with my Berliner had lost its sparkle as I often found myself relegated to the sofa chatting to the women in our social circle while the men were drinking at the bar.

The seventies were the time when feminism was on the rise and although I never considered myself a feminist, I was fiercely independent. After all, my Venus is in self-assertive Aries and is fired up by two red aspects. I didn't want to live with, or depend on, a man. That is half the truth. The other half is that my boyfriend wasn't intellectually stimulating and after a few years, I was beginning to grow weary of the predictability in my life.

The move into a more creative environment came unexpectedly when an acquaintance offered me a job as a junior copywriter at his advertising agency. He had noticed the way I played with words and considered it indicative of an ability to be a copywriter. I didn't know what copywriting was, but soon found out. It was the beginning of three decades in and out, and in and out, of advertising.

Mercury and Mars facilitated my venture into this new area with the former's long green aspect stretching my mind and the latter's blue aspect providing the ability to assert myself in a creative field, aided by the creative impulse of Pisces. I met interesting people and often socialised with them over long lunches or at cocktail parties. This would take its toll on my existing relationship which I was slowly leaving behind.

Once my age point was in scintillating Leo, I turned into a social butterfly that flitted from one dalliance to the next. But this superficial life didn't interfere with my intense inner world. Perhaps it was even a welcome release from it. I spent most free time on my own. If I wasn't working on the dissertation, I was pondering life and its deeper meaning. Living at the extreme poles of extraversion and introversion was becoming a way of life. But that is to be expected as my chart has a clear horizontal orientation linking the I and the YOU sides of the chart.

Throughout my life, Saturn and Mars conjunct Venus appeared in different guises, sometimes holding up a red flag, other times offering me support or making me wonder about relationships. In 1977 Saturn was smiling on me with a bounty of more harmonious relationship support to which the blue aspect to Venus contributed its fair share. There was much congeniality amongst my colleagues, I had completed my MA and could now enjoy a life that didn't focus on academic, but on creative and aesthetic activities

My partner and I moved into a house, but it was a mistake: I didn't like not having my own space. I appeared to have landed myself the role of the woman as housewife which was the wrong role for my self-assertive Venus. When a kitten I had adopted got seriously sick, and my partner wasn't there for me, I took the kitten to my mother who eventually nursed it back to health, and I never returned to the house. True to myself, I couldn't commit myself wholeheartedly to a man.

This was a case of both nature and nurture; of my natal planetary energies, as well as my *Cupid's Valley* legacy. I have never found that close relationships are the alpha and omega of life and have always believed that I could get all I needed from myself, and by myself, no matter how difficult it got. The story I wrote at that time, *The Book of Life*, reflects this attitude.

There was a meeting in her office when the telephone rang.

“Andrea Hamilton, good afternoon.”

“Hi,” a deep voice replied at the other end. It was Carl, a friend she had only seen once since her return to Johannesburg.

“I hate to be rude, Carl, but I'm in a meeting and...”

“I won't be long. Why don't you come over for a chat after work?”

“I'll probably work late,” she started, but then stopped herself from making more excuses. “All right, I'll be there between six and seven. But I can only stay for an hour or so. I have some work to finish tonight.”

“See you then, sweetheart.”

Andrea wasn't fooled by the endearment. The trace of bitterness in Carl's voice made her realise that the evening was going to be anything but sweet.

After the meeting, Andrea sat down at her desk, deep in thought. I guess I'm going to have to tell him that that night in Cape Town was a mistake, she realised. As if he hasn't already worked it out for himself. Well, then I'm going to have to explain why Cape Town was a mistake and I know it's going to hurt him and get us into an involved psychological discussion again.

"Why don't you stop all this self-analysis, Carl?" she had asked in Cape Town, holding the menu a bit higher as if to soften the blow of such a direct question.

"Because I believe I'll be able to change for the better if I can understand myself."

"But you're good enough the way you are. Why the great need to change for the better?"

"You're basically just as self-critical as I am," he reminded her.

"Yes, I know, but I've opted out of the entire psycho-analysis bit. I don't want to be held back by my hang-ups. I want to get on with living. Enjoy the good things in life. Like this glass of wine," she said, raising her glass. "Here's to you and Cape Town," she added quickly to change the subject.

"Here's to you and Johannesburg! May you come back soon. I miss you."

She felt the same warmth towards Carl that she had often felt during their three-year friendship.

They had a superb lunch, enjoying every mouthful of the good Cape cooking and the mellowing effects of the Cape wine. Glowing with carefree light-heartedness, they drove back to her apartment where they laughed and talked and teased each other till the early morning hours when they finally went to bed. But she knew it had been a mistake, the very next morning.

And tonight, she now thought, I'll have to explain to Carl that one night together in Cape Town didn't mean I was in love with him. Maybe he had considered it a commitment, because he had withdrawn from what he termed 'mindless living.' Or perhaps, she thought, I should just be completely honest and tell him that I've never been in love with him, although I have wanted to be. But that would hurt him and he would expect a justification for my actions. Or a rationalisation.

Rationalisations. That's probably why I haven't been able to fall in love with Carl, she speculated. I'm so bored with my own rational side. I want someone who is less of an introverted thinker and more of an extroverted doer. How many hours have I spent with Carl, listening to his endless deliberations? Am I selfish? No, I just think I could use my energy more productively elsewhere. Like in my career, for example.

"Are you working late again?" Andrea's boss asked, interrupting her stream of thought.

"Oh," she replied, looking at her watch. "It's way past five. No, I have to go now."

"I'd like to discuss our system with you in the morning. Please let me have your suggestions for improving our workflow."

"I will," she replied, making a mental note to ask Carl for his advice, and for that reference book by Wade.

Downstairs in the building where she worked was a restaurant where she started every workday with a cappuccino. She was already late for her appointment with Carl, but decided to have one anyway. She felt she needed to prepare herself for the unpleasant task that lay ahead.

I wonder if Carl and I will still go out for our Sunday evening chats after tonight? she wondered. Funny how things change once one has spent a night with a guy. Like saying 'I miss you.' Whenever Carl had phoned her during her first few months in Cape Town, he would always say, 'I miss you' before ringing off. And she would reply, "And I miss you too," and really mean it. She had missed his company and moral support a lot. But since that weekend, she felt she could no longer say what she felt, as if one night together had put a different meaning into her words, loaded them with a meaning she didn't want. The time announcement on the radio put an end to her thoughts. She got up, and went to pay the bill at the counter.

"It's been a long, hard day for you?" the friendly Greek owner asked in his broken English.

"Yes," Andrea replied, laughing. "And it's going to be a long, hard evening too."

The moment Carl heard Andrea's car, he went to stand on the small patio of his cramped cottage.

"Hi," Andrea yelled as she walked towards him. "How have you been?"

"Very well," Carl answered, putting his arm around her shoulders and giving her a little hug. "Coffee?"

"Yes, please,"

She followed him to the kitchen where he had started his meticulous process of making coffee. It always had to a specific blend made the correct way. They carried their cups to the living room and sat down.

"How are you enjoying your new job?"

"Loving it!" Andrea replied excitedly. "But there's a lot of work and responsibility. A bit frightening, really."

"You'll make it. You always do," he said in his usual supportive manner.

"And I need your advice, Carl. On our traffic system at work. It's too complicated. Too much paperwork. I've got to come up with some suggestions by tomorrow morning."

Carl explained the system at the company where he worked in a few sentences. It was clear that he wanted to move on to another topic. But Andrea had some more questions which he answered mechanically.

"And before I forget," she finally concluded, "may I borrow that book by Wade?"

"Of course, you may," he answered. "But aren't you putting too much into your work? You're scarcely back and already you're driving yourself so hard."

Andrea sensed in his words something beyond a mere interest in her stress levels.

"I like my work," she said unnecessarily defensive and then shifted the focus. "What has been happening in your life?"

He told her about the new account he was handling and the successful presentation he'd made to a major client. Like good friends do, they often shared their little successes without the one ever feeling the other would consider it boasting.

"But I don't want to talk about my job," he said and then got straight to the point. "I've been thinking about us a lot and..."

"Discussing it with Meryl?" Andrea snapped. Meryl was the clinical psychologist he'd been seeing every Friday morning before work for two years.

“Yes,” he replied. “I’ve discussed you with Meryl, in detail. Before and after Cape Town. And she has made me realise that my love for you has been based on the wrong thing from the start. Let me begin at the beginning.”

Two hours and two more cups of coffee later, Andrea wished he hadn’t. She had a severe headache from trying to follow the thread of hurt in his life, from, childhood to adulthood. She wanted to feel empathy, yet she felt nothing. Perhaps she had steeled herself to soften the blow she was expecting.

“What I’m trying to say,” he slowly continued – Andrea could now feel the hurt in him – “is that I don’t want your approval anymore. I spent my childhood longing for my father’s and I have been doing the exact same thing with you.”

“Why has it taken you all evening to tell me that? Giving me the reasons, the background, the finest details. Why didn’t you just come out with your truth when I arrived?”

“Because I’ve always used you as a sounding board.”

Andrea felt the anger rise in her. “But you no longer need my approval,” she replied. She was shocked at the cruelty of her words. She realised they were a reaction to the hurt she felt. At the realisation that by letting go of his need for her approval, he had also let go of her as a friend.

“Would you like some more coffee?” he asked.

“No, thanks, I won’t sleep if I have more.” She looked at her watch. “It’s half past nine, I really must go now.”

He didn’t apologise for keeping her so late. He seemed to have withdrawn completely from the conversation. “Well then, you’d better be on your way.”

“Yes, I guess so,” she said as if nothing had happened between them.

Carl fetched her jacket from the kitchen and put it around her shoulders.

“Thanks for coming. I’ll walk you to your car.” His words were void of any feeling.

As they walked to the front door, Andrea’s eyes fell on the book she wanted to borrow from Carl, the one by Wade. But she could no longer bring herself to ask him for it. Perhaps because she would then owe him something?

When she got home, she had a hot bath and fell into bed. She knew it would be useless to sit down and work. She felt too drained for that. Her mind was numb, and she wanted to keep it numb. To forget the sadness she felt at the loss of a good friend.

Just before the alarm clock went off the next morning, she had a dream. She was in a bookstore to look for the book she needed. A friendly old lady with white hair served her.

“I need a book on PR systems,” Andrea said.

“They’re all here,” the old lady replied pointing at a wall lined with books.

Andrea went up the stepladder to look at the hundreds of books. On Communications, PR, Advertising, Television Production. Suddenly her eyes fixed on a book with a bright blue and yellow cover. On it was a cartoon character on a swing with his knees pulled up so high that his feet were way off the ground. His head was thrown back in sheer pleasure. She wanted that book so much that her heart ached.

“This is the one I want!” she shrieked with delight. “But I guess I’ll have to take the one by Wade.”

“You can have all the books you desire,” the old lady replied with immense kindness. “For free.” She handed Andrea a wicker basket. “Pack all the books you want in here.”



A feeling of happiness rushed through Andrea's body till she glowed so much that she felt as if she were the sun.

As she walked out of the front door, she saw her cat basking in the early morning rays.

"Moon," she crooned, patting him on the head. "You are the most beautiful cat on the block. And I am the happiest girl in the world. Somebody just gave me the book I have always wanted."

She got into her car and drove off towards a day she knew would be a good one.

Late in 1978, I bought my own house, the first in a series of seven. This was another expression of Uranus's unexpected changes that prompted me to move from one home to the next. It was second nature to me to move on, and not only in terms of homes, but also of corporate partnerships, an area in which Uranus contacts my Moon in Scorpio. Whether Scorpio's pain would be followed by gain remained to be seen.

Only in my forties did I begin to mull over this state of affairs:

For most of my life, I have wanted to be elsewhere. Anywhere other than where I was. I moved house at least once a year, sometimes, every six months.

Then, when I started working in advertising at the age of 25, I did the same with my jobs, leaving one for another whenever the atmosphere there did not appear 'growth-enhancing' to me, changing jobs sixteen times in fourteen years, interrupting my career three times to go freelance so as to be able to travel or study. Where I enjoyed all this movement before and felt exhilarated, I now feel exhausted.

Yet life continues to be, as Milan Kundera says, elsewhere. And for as long as it is not in my daily reality, I shall wander. And wonder.

Constantly wondering why all these changes were happening in my life, I enrolled for a degree in Psychology at a correspondence university. My Piscean Sun now made me long for more insights into the human psyche. I often thought about inner motivation and where it came from. What drove a person to do certain things and not others? But I disliked the course as it started with the behaviourists whose approach to the psyche was too mechanistic to my mind.

Yet I felt there was a need in me for a more profound experience of life than the fun and frivolity advertising was offering me. My mental ego's yearning was satisfied when I went for an interview

at an agency whose Creative Director would become my mentor. This man was extremely widely read and had such a vast map of human consciousness that I was in awe of him. No-one added to the development of my mind as much as he.

He would have the most profound influence on my life, one that I would only really understand after his death in 2001 when I wrote a novella on my relationship with him. With his ever expanding consciousness, he represented Apollo to me, and with his introverted creativity, Hephaestus, that god who preferred to work at his subterranean forge rather than consort with the other gods on Mount Olympus. Of course these were archetypal energies I projected onto my mentor, coming from within me; from my Sun and Mars in creative Pisces, and my Mercury in Aquarian philosophies, but at that point, I was twenty-seven and not yet aware of projection.

What goes up must come down, and the downside of all this elation and mental stimulation was the 5th-house low point which dragged me down into a deep depression that took almost two years to pass. This pull into the undertow was what underlay the poem I wrote that year entitled *Muse*, an indication of how the low points in my life were also the source of my deepest inspiration.

*I heard the flap of your wings  
and the rustle of the leaves  
as you perched your big, black body on me  
You've circled here before:  
my branches were twigs  
to your talons then  
Now you sit there.  
Watching. Waiting  
Beckoning  
with your beautiful black  
It's not my heart you're after:  
You've tried before  
pecking at my flesh  
till the blood spurted through my ribs  
hooking your crooked beak into my heart  
that contorted and convulsed and turned to stone  
It's my soul you want  
My hands tremble as they set your trap  
the veins thick with life, but dark with fear  
of not feeling the silky sheen of your feathers  
of not tracing my finger along your magnificent neck  
Why don't you sing me a song to steady my hand?*

Fortunately, my longing for life's adventure to continue was buoyed up by mind-expanding Jupiter towards the end of this dark period. It was a stroke of luck that would draw me back into life – after I had descended not only psychologically, but also physically to the root of Africa, to Cape Town at the southern-most tip of the continent. I was elated when my mentor called me back up north, to a position in Johannesburg whose skyscrapers I had always seen as representative of man's reaching for the higher areas of the mind: for greater consciousness.



While relationship dramas continued to play themselves out as my age point pressed the buttons of the Mars conjunct Venus and Saturn opposition, another area of my life was unaffected by the events in the outer world. Underneath the love and war, the attachments and severances, was a reality untouched by the tragedies and comedies of my life. It was the Projection Figure and the film Jupiter had shown in trailer form till then, would now open with Pluto in the leading role. The devastation this planetary energy caused in my life would change the existing order forever.

Pluto now presaged a great loss: that of my stepfather. Although my mother wanted a separation, my stepfather did not. I refused to take sides, but was extremely angry with my mother for instigating his departure to Italy. I felt as if I had lost a limb, and for the first time in my life, I couldn't cry on my mother's shoulder. She was plagued by intense guilt mixed with years of resentment, and any mention by me of love or loss of my stepfather led to heated arguments.

It was as if all hell had broken loose between mother and daughter and this struggle would continue for two decades. Saturn which in childhood appeared to have been powerful adversity from my mother would now come from the Saturnine energy in myself. No matter what my mother had against my stepfather, I loved him unconditionally. Fortunately Neptune's higher love made this Plutonic eruption in my life more bearable.

It seemed as if Pluto had removed my major props: my stepfather and my mother. I relived earlier losses and tried to come to terms with these by writing about my childhood. (It was when I wrote *Woman of Sand* and *A Child's Story*.) Only later in life did I understand that my support system had to be removed – against my will but in keeping with Pluto's higher will - so that I could become a fully independent being.

A year later, while I was still grieving for my stepfather, I encountered Pluto personified: a psychologist called Mark. I wasn't a client of Mark's, but would soon feel like one. He was a powerful intellectual who also wrote and painted. He appeared to represent both qualities I liked most in men, the intellectual and the sensual, and I fell in love with him, or rather, became obsessed with him. The Venus in me had finally met her match.

Mark was extremely confrontational as he believed that 'shooting from the hip' was necessary when people were 'playing Russian roulette with their lives.' A few months into our relationship, a battle of wits ensued. He didn't believe that my interest in psychology would provide any of the answers I was seeking. What was wrong with me, he believed, was that I needed to be

‘mollycoddled’ and was ‘longing for a man to make life easier for me’.

I, on the other hand, felt that he was too harsh with me. I still felt raw about the loss of my stepfather but didn’t tell Mark about it. I didn’t want him to see my extreme vulnerability. At the same time my Mercury, my thinking and speaking, was being opposed, whilst the long green aspect to my Piscean Mars was creating a yearning for a gentle man. Was Pluto showing me that passion is not compassion, in the same way that falling in love is not love?

Soon I feared expressing my thoughts, because Mark would inevitably counter them or dismiss them. Nothing between us flowed. I defended myself with a weapon I had inherited from my mother: sarcasm. Mark made me aware of my ‘uncalled for comments’ but I still didn’t fully grasp the extent of their damage. Language would continue to be my first line of defense. And with language, I tried to contain what I then saw as Mark’s power (and later in life, as Pluto’s):

*He moves in domed halls casting tall shadows on the stone floor.  
His step is slow, measured, purposive  
Part of a flow of time where individual seconds tick inaudibly.  
The dark-skinned muscularity, the clenched jaw  
Relics of a willful past.  
He moves in the halls of my soul, contented to remain  
More careful now with his power.*

These lines were written several years after my relationship when I had gained some insight into our relationship. And those below, seven years later when I met up with Mark again.

### ***Garden of Eden***

We arrived at his house in one of the wealthy suburbs of Johannesburg. The prickly pear at the front door had grown so big that reaching for the doorbell could draw blood.

“Let’s go around the back” said Don, leading the way through a wild overgrown garden to the kitchen. Don was an acquaintance, someone I bumped into occasionally and who wanted to introduce me to a friend of his, a psychologist called Mark.

“You’ll get on like a house on fire,” he had said. Months later, I would laugh at the irony of his words.

I felt uncomfortable with such deliberate introductions, but finally decided to go. After all, the past year in my life had been one of intense emotional scenes with my mother. It was time for me to distance myself from her.

“Hi. I’m over here,” a voice came from the kitchen. We stepped inside.

Seeing him was like being struck by lightning, so strong was his presence. It felt as if my entire being went up in a puff of smoke. Don’s introduction sounded like a distant echo.

“He is everything I’ve always wanted” was the only thought that went through my mind otherwise as blank as the Big Void. It was what the French so aptly called *un coup de foudre*: I had been struck, not by Cupid’s arrow, but by a bolt of lightning.

“We couldn’t get to the front door,” I remarked, desperately looking for words to bring me back to reality. “You must cut back the prickly pear.”

“No,” he chuckled, “you must avoid the prickly pear. Please sit down.”

Had he seen my shakiness, I wondered. Don’t psychologists see everything?

Dressed in jeans and a baggy pullover with holes at the elbows, he was stirring food in a pot on the stove.

“I’m making a pasta sauce without salt. Salt is bad for high blood pressure,” he announced.

The fact that his guests had to eat the insipid fruits of his fears never occurred to him. Later I would discover that his basic belief was: do what is right for yourself, no matter what others feel or think.

After a bland supper washed down with wine, we moved to the living-room. The walls were full of paintings. Many were portraits of Mark.

“Who’s the artist?” I queried.

“I am,” he replied. “I should’ve become an artist but didn’t have the courage to let go of my practice. I have to pay alimony for my three children.”

We listened to music and talked about literature for the rest of the evening. I discovered that his favourite instrument was the guitar, and his favourite author, the Australian novelist Patrick White.

“Next time you come,” he said when Don and I got up to leave, “I’ll take you for a tour of my garden.”

So there would be a next time, I thought, before falling asleep that night. I was looking forward to getting to know this powerful man. Then I had the dream: my mother and I are standing on the bank of a very deep canal. “Let’s jump in,” she says excitedly. But the water is too murky for me. Before I can answer, she throws herself into the canal. Terrified I lean forward to check if her body is going to hit the concrete sides of the canal, only to realise that it is no longer her body, but Mark’s. The strong shoulders and buttocks are unmistakably his.

At the next visit, he took me to the Promised Land: to his wilderness of a garden. He touched every tree as he named it in English or Latin. His touch was more than a singling-out gesture; it was a caress.

“I love planting things,” he said. “And watching them grow.”

I slid my finger down the bark as if to drain some of his tenderness.

“I planted every single tree and shrub on this piece of land,” he added, pointing at a rather neglected section of aloes, elephant ears and other indigenous plants. “I even had to steal some of them.”

I didn’t answer. It would have been an invasion of his inner being that was now so tangible that words could capture it. I turned to the hastily put together bird-tray, a landing board wired to a pole. A half-pecked apple lay there invitingly.

“I have spotted over forty different species here. If you sit on the patio, you’ll see some of them. Do you like birds?”

“Yes,” I replied in a thin voice. “Although I don’t know much about them,” I added, feeling strangely guilty, as if I should have known more.

We came to a densely overgrown section next to the pool. It reminded me of a forest I had walked in once, somewhere in Europe. It was cool and shady, ground-cover soft underfoot. Green ferns sprouted from the branches of trees.

“This is my favourite section,” I glowed. “It’s the most beautiful spot in the garden.”

“Every section is beautiful, each in a different way,” he reminded me. “Do you like the euphorbia over there?” he asked, pointing at a large collection in pots on the patio.

Before I could answer, he replied: “I always ask people if they like my succulents. Specially the large cactus. If they don’t, I don’t like them.”

I was relieved that I hadn’t admitted that I had never liked cacti. And intimidated by his harsh testing of people. Would I too be weighed and found wanting?

“I would like to lie down under this tree,” I answered. A non sequitur. A change of direction, away from his words and into myself.

He disappeared into the house and returned with a rug. Then he went off to work in his vegetable garden. I spread out the rug and lay down on it staring up at the sky through the branches. A sense of peace settled on me.

“I am one with nature, I am one with you, I am one with myself,” I chanted softly. One and one, on and on, om and om...the feeling of completeness was sustained by the hum in my voice.

“I am the prickly pear at your front door. I am the cactus on your patio. I am the indigenous tree in the corner, the one you watch at sunset when the light shows every crack in its bark. The one you spray because you’ve noticed ants crawling in the ridges, eating away at its insides.”

I woke up to the rattle of a tea cup.

“Were you sleeping?” he asked, sitting down next to me on the rug.

“Wakefully dreaming,” I replied. “It’s lovely having someone around.”

“Not someone,” he corrected me, slightly irritated. “But me.”

“Yes, of course. I meant a presence as opposed to an interference.”

He didn’t answer. He was looking at the mouse-bird pecking at the apple on the feeding tray.

I glanced sideways at the tiny beads of sweat on his dark skin, the damp wet hair against his temples, the thick black curls clinging to his neck. The longing to embrace him seemed to scoop out the insides of my stomach, leaving an emptiness where a moment before, my being had hummed so vibrantly. Somehow his physical presence overwhelmed me. He was so powerful that I felt as powerless as a moth.

*The moth settled down, exhausted from dodging the flame.*

*It shuddered at the closeness of its own destruction.*

*If only it didn’t have such paper-thin wings, such a powder puff of a body,*

*It would flit in and out of the flicker unscorched, untouched*

*Forever free in the Garden of Eden.*

There was a fierceness about him that attracted me. He had a stocky body and penetrating black eyes. His swarthy skin, wide mouth with full lips and high cheek bones reminded me



of the Tartars, a race I saw as essentially masculine. Primally masculine. They represented to me the warriors of the world, an illusion enhanced by the big actors of the fifties and early sixties: Victor Mature and Yul Brunner. Of course, their immense masculinity included a dangerous element of being overpowered, of being raped like so many women were by the Greek gods: Europe. Leda. And Persephone.

Which was what in the weeks to follow I began to fear in Mark. He didn't make love to me. He devoured me. Emotionally intense, he often clenched his jaws and ground his teeth. His commanding intensity made me uneasy. There was something ferocious about him. A baring of teeth. A relentless tearing to pieces until he had proven his dominance?

Perhaps this was due to his approach with his patients. It was not yet the nineties when human dynamics workshops taught us that we all create our own reality and ultimately, are responsible for our fates. It was the eighties when psychologists were not supposed to tell their patients how they saw the problem, but rather to lead the patient, often over years, to the point where they would see the truth. Their truth.

"Is this approach not too hard on your patients?" I queried, knowing that an advertising colleague who had gone to him for therapy had felt completely annihilated.

"People will do anything but see the truth," he replied. "I tell them the truth as I see it, which is of course only half the truth."

Perhaps he had to be cruel to be kind, I concluded. I didn't tell him that a fear often beset me. A fear of being confronted by the truth, the one big truth I couldn't yet see but had to see some time in my life.

On one occasion, I saw the gentleness in him. His twelve-year old daughter sat on his lap and hugged him. He embraced her tenderly.

"I liked the way you hugged your daughter," I said afterwards. "I wish I'd had you as a father."

He looked at me, irritated. As if I had said something he didn't want to hear.

"You want to be treated with rubber gloves," he said matter-of-factly.

He was right. I wanted him to be more considerate of my feelings, more sympathetic. In truth, I wanted him to be like my mother.

"Has a man ever hit you?" he asked.

"Only once, when I went hysterical, a man gave me a slap. Have you ever hit a woman?"

"Yes," he replied. "She asked for it. And in life, you get what you want."

"Did you enjoy Vos?" he asked referring to the novel by Patrick White.

"Yes, but it is sad, so very sad," I answered.

"That's life," he answered philosophically.

I left it at that. I didn't tell him why the novel had saddened me so immensely. It was the ending; the fact that the woman who was in love with Vos spent her life remembering him. Like I would spend years thinking of Mark. And the letter that she sent to Vos via a messenger never reached him in the Australian outback. Instead, the pages were scattered over the earth and blown away by the wind. Like my letters to Mark would never get to him, my obsession with him would never be revealed. I would keep that to myself until I had overcome its hold on me.

“Why don’t you write?” Mark asked me one day.

“Because I don’t feel I’ve mastered the language.”

“That’s an excuse. It’s because you fear your writing will expose you, lay you bare.”

“What is there to expose?” I asked, thinking of all the things I hadn’t revealed to him in our short, tempestuous relationship.

“Your soul.”

“I don’t believe that language can do it. Perhaps psychology can.”

“Psychology doesn’t solve anything,” he answered. “There are no absolute answers.” And then, after a pause: “You should express your needs. You can’t expect me to understand what’s going on in your head.”

But I couldn’t express my needs to him. My vocal chords felt sluggish in his presence, as if they were swollen. I was powerless without my voice. I thought of saying: “I feel so helpless,” but didn’t. It would have made me even more vulnerable than I already had become in my relationship with him. I was shattered by his constant intellectual and psychological onslaughts.

I got up and walked through the open French doors into the freedom of the garden. His garden. The Garden of Eden.

It was as beautiful as ever. It would always be. Yet its harmony had been disturbed, as if something sharp had ripped its grain, destroying its even texture. Like a burning candle would if you held a piece of fabric over it.

“I hate the heat,” is all I said as I picked up my car keys and sun-glasses. “I have to go now.”

He was silent as he walked me to my car parked at his front door. I got into my seat and as he leant forward to kiss me goodbye, he lost his balance and fell backwards into the prickly pear. I smiled to myself as I reversed out of the driveway.

Many months later when I passed his house, I peered down the driveway. Something had changed, I thought, but what? Then I realised it was the prickly pear. It had been chopped down to a stump of its former overpowering self.

## *Epilogue*

Seven years after I stopped seeing Mark, I bumped into him during interval at a film festival.

“Are you here alone?” he asked and when I nodded, he invited me to coffee after the film. Two hours later, he was waiting at the cinema entrance. We went to the nearest coffee bar. After a short discussion of the film, he suddenly changed the subject: “I always liked you enormously,” he said, “but I never knew what you wanted from me.”

“Nothing,” I answered, and then after a long pause: “Or rather, I wanted so much from you that I ended up wanting nothing.”

“What a waste of life,” he said sadly.

“No,” I answered. “One gets what one wants, even if it means intense suffering. And I will always have your energy in me. So I guess we could say I got what I wanted from you.”

It was the last time we saw each other.

It took me many years before I could speak about Mark without being overwhelmed by my powerlessness and discordant emotions. The lessons I learnt from Mark were some of the hardest,

yet most valuable in my life. I had internalised what I saw as his essence to such a degree that Ludwig, a man with whom I had a relationship twelve years later, once said to me: “You remind me of a psychologist I consulted years ago. And never went to see again.” It turned out to be Mark. Clearly I had adopted his confrontational stance, aided and abetted by my bellicose Venus, and only at the end of the film projected by Jupiter, when my consciousness would be filled with Neptune’s energy (1993), thus reaching the other point of the screen in the Projection Figure, would I be fully aware of it.

My Mars is in a Piscean first house and the seeming dichotomy of Pisces’s private being and Mars’s action in the outer world is a leitmotif in my life. In December 1982, my thoughts were tinged with melancholy by Mars:

Always this tension between activity and passivity, between participating in society, being part of people, and withdrawing into oneself. The crossover from one to the other is never smooth, as if it were a language one wants to lapse into and stutters over the first words.

While my inner language flows through its syntax, moving from word to word as graceful as a ballerina across a stage, pausing as it corrects or questions itself, only to be swept forward again by the beckoning of an exciting thought that seeks expression, theirs is truncated, sluggish, weighed down by the burden of their reality.

Where is the lightness? Perhaps only in music which transports one on the wings of a butterfly. “I write for emotional reasons,” my writer friend Kevin recently said, and I knew he too was creating more stanzas for the song of the endless silence.

Does one ever overcome the inability of language to express one’s being? Or am I to learn to speak all over again, like a child, the language they speak?

Still feeling enervated by the after effects of my encounter with Pluto and the strong opposition from Mercury, I welcomed the gifts and insights from Saturn, the Moon and Venus, all female energies; those embodied in the ‘softer, feminine energy’ I had longed for in my relationship with Mark. I formed a lasting friendship with a female colleague whom I saw as the most gentle and loving of all my friends; also with my team mate, an art director whom I would come to see over the decades as my brother; the supportive one I never had; the one who designed the cover of this book.

Once I had healed sufficiently, Uranus paved the way for unexpected travel. I went to southern Spain with its vast stretches of land and big blue skies. I felt entirely at home in Andalusia, but then,

hadn't I inherited from my stepfather a love of Spain? Yet, the story I wrote there is about an outsider in society; an outsider like myself?

### *The Sea in the Cave*

She must have come in the night. From where, no one knew. Paco first saw her one summer morning in the cave that had been standing empty since Dona died of a fearful disease.

No one came to the caves. Perhaps no one even knew that people in this part of the country lived in caves. Except the woman. She must have known for she had come to their community as a weary traveler would seek out an inn. Or was it destiny that had driven her there?

There was much speculation whether a similar fate as that of Dona would befall her in the cursed cave. Whenever the women saw her shaking out her sheets, they would shuffle closer, but not too close, and strain their eyes to see if they could see any signs of otherness. They did, in her eyes. One eye was as blue as the sea that lay hundreds of miles south of arid Andalusia. The other was as black as the labrador that used to protect them from mountain robbers before it was killed by the heat.

In the beginning the strange sight of her eyes was the reason every man gave for entering her cave. The men would return with wondrous stories for their wives who dared not enter the hovel, lest they be infected with Dona's disease.

The cave, the men said, was like a palace inside. The richest of silks hung on the walls. The air was saturated with the most pleasing perfumes. To prove their point, they would hold their shirts up to their wives' noses so that they could smell for themselves.

But not one of the men knew what lay beyond the damask cloth that divided the cave in two. She had never taken any of them into her sacred space.

Soon stories of the secret room led to further speculation amongst the men and required, as they told their wives, further investigative visits.

After much deliberation, they concluded that she must have discovered one of the treasures buried under the watchtowers centuries ago when the Moors ruled the country, for she always had money to buy food from Paco. And when he told them he had once peeped behind the curtain and had seen nothing but a large wooden chest, they were convinced the chest was full of money.

At night, in their dreams, they would see their arms elbow-deep in gold coins. And they would laugh out loud at their good fortune, waking their wives from their fitful sleep.

The men made a pact amongst themselves: the day she died, they would share the fortune that lay beyond the damask cloth. But they did not tell Paco, for they feared he would divulge their secret to the woman who, they whispered to each other, had him under her spell. Nor did they tell their wives. Instead, they led them to believe that the man who was in the cave when she died would collect all the coins.

The wives, who were now also dreaming of sumptuous silks, were eager to see their husbands get the money and encouraged more visits. They took over all the men's tasks to give them more time and a greater chance of claiming the fortune. Some of them even thought of baking bread with poison in it and giving it to the rest of the community so that there would be fewer claimants. But soon every conspirator feared she and her husband would fall prey to their own conniving.

Then, one hot afternoon, Paco said he heard the sound of the sea. At first the others thought he had lost his senses, but when they followed him to the cursed cave, they too heard it. In fear the wives clung to their husbands.

Paco entered the cave and found the woman on the divan. She had died with her eyes open. Both of them were now as blue as the sea that lay miles south of Andalusia. Paco gently closed her lids.

When he came out of the cave, he told the men and women of her death. Then he crawled into his hovel, leaving them to their greed.

The women sent their husbands into the cave where they tore down the damask cloth and carried the heavy chest out into the sun. They broke open the lid. The women's excited chatter died down. All you could hear were the cicadas protesting at the heat.

There was not a single coin in the chest. Just layer upon layer of books. They took the books and paged through them, but could not understand a word, for they had never learnt to read. They paged faster and faster. Then they took the books by their covers and shook them furiously. In mounting anger they tore the covers off and the pages out. Finally, they threw all the books on to the ground and stamped on them.

The women then swept the pile of paper into the cave and set it alight. In silence they watched the fire rage. The pungent smell of burning human flesh penetrated their nostrils. Some of them were wailing. Others stared silently ahead of them at a future as empty as the country around them.

When they had returned to their hovels to mourn the loss of their fortune, Paco walked to the blackened cave. He stood there for a long time, listening to the sound of the water lapping at its walls.

He never told them about her eyes. Or that the sound was the echo of her soul. They would not believe him.

They would say he had been bewitched by a woman who had once lived in the cave.



*In Andalusia.*

On my return to South Africa, I worked at an advertising agency owned by directors who were members of the Afrikaans Brotherhood, the patriarchal, authoritarian power that, in essence, ran the country. After the freedom I had experienced in Spain, I was back again in a culture in which I never felt at home.

Soon after this, my consciousness hit the 6th house low point in Virgo, the area of work and service to others. It was not as difficult emotionally as the previous low points, but I did start feeling uneasy about my working life. Questions arose as to what my 'real' work was? What was I doing in advertising? What else should I be doing? What contribution could I make to humanity?

A few months later, my consciousness was severely challenged by the Sun, symbol of the masculine ego. I was oppressed by the ruling thought in my work environment. Or was it by the status quo as originally represented by my father?

I also realised that I wasn't learning anything new; that I missed the more intellectual aspects of life; that I needed more mental challenge than advertising could provide. So after eight years of copywriting, I went back to university to study Comparative Literature, to find some depth to what had become a very superficial life especially for an explorer of the inner world.

At first the course looked exciting, but soon I realised that the study of literature had, in the intervening years, become a science. To my mind, literature was essentially an activity of the soul and with my Sun's 12th house placement, soul is what I wanted to study. But then a module of the course focusing on Semiotics, the science of signs, led me to Jung's *Man and his Symbols*.

I now left university and read every book I could find on archetypes. This exploration of archetypal psychology is an accurate reflection of my consciousness midway between Pluto, who rules the depths of the psyche, and Saturn, the teacher who demands that lessons are learnt in whichever area one is operating. Even if it is as invisible and intangible as Jung's collective unconscious.

At the end of 1986, my consciousness was opposed by Jupiter, that energy of higher learning. I sensed that I was about to discover some truth beyond my idea of the truth. Perhaps a truth about myself? I was still in the grip of Jung's archetypes and started having strange dreams which I recorded.

I wonder when I'm going to get out of this swamp. I've been stuck in it for a year now and sometimes I fear I will never again think as clearly as before. Somehow some deeper dialogue keeps on demanding my attention.

Now too, the dream makes so much more sense: a dark-skinned, rather primitive man asks me the way to the top of the mountain. It is the highest one on the right of a range of staggered peaks. As I look at the mountain behind a village of mud huts and dark alleys, they become two-dimensional as in a landscape painting. The route I took is indicated by a line of dots running from peak to peak across the range.

“I’ve often gone all the way up and I know the route well, but I wouldn’t know how to descend,” I answer this man for whom I feel a deep love. I am as strongly attracted to his virility as I was to Mark’s. I know that he is a part of me.

Now, a year later, it all makes sense. At first I only saw this as an indication that I must descend from my mountain, from consciousness, into the dark alleys of my subconscious, forgetting all the time that I am already there. Now I realise that this primitive, masculine part of myself, my animus, wanted to reach consciousness, hence his desire to know the way up the mountain.

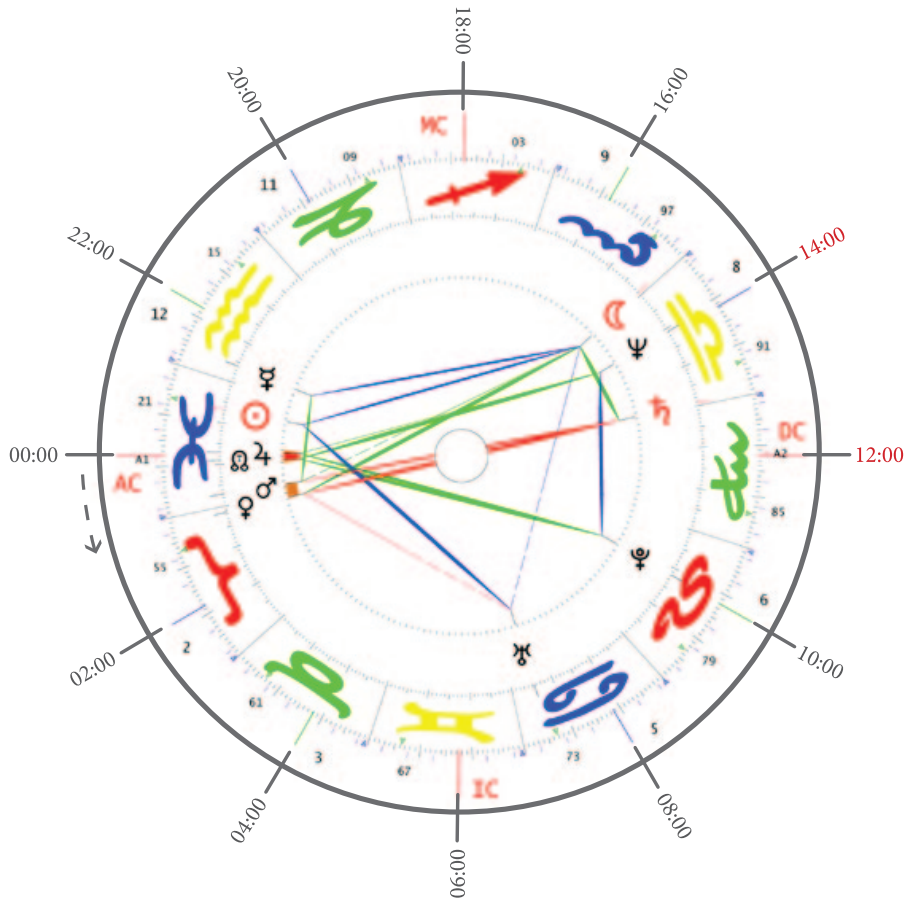
Taking on the challenge of Jupiter’s opposition, I expanded my horizons by driving 1600km to Cape Town to do research on a topic that had seized my attention: a San woman called Sarah Bartman, better known in the 19th century as *The Hottentot Venus*.

According to leading natural historian Stephen Jay Gould, Sarah’s life had unfolded in the tension between Logos and Eros, between thinking and feeling. This dichotomy also presented itself in my life. It had started with sex and Schopenhauer in my teens, which would dominate my life for two decades. It would move to the next level in my late thirties and become the Eros and Logos in my psyche. Was the Jupiter opposition demanding that I not only do the research, but also experience the dilemma – in my life - of being caught between thinking and feeling? I was in two minds about my new project:

Today I fear that this task is too big for me. I fear I shall never be able to translate the vision I have of *Bête Noire* into a book or film or play. I fear the writing itself.

It is now clear to me that I favour the interior monologue because it has become an act of self expression. More than anything else, I need to express myself. A lifetime of feeling and thought processes and insights demands to be known. By who? By others, or by me?

Sarah will, it seems, have to carry the burden of my sins too, become my scapegoat as well. Poor woman! Perhaps she is better off dead after all.



12:00 – 14:00  
1987 – 1992



In 1987, when I was 36, my age point moved into the upper hemisphere of the chart, into the conscious as opposed to the lower, unconscious hemisphere. People in their mid-thirties normally start questioning everything that happened in the past: the events, their reaction to them, their understanding of what really happened. It's called the midlife crisis. The third quadrant is one of thinking about one's actions rather than doing things impulsively or instinctively. With my consciousness now in the area of close, personal relationships, I started my long relationship with Sarah Bartman.

I went to Europe to do research on the life of this woman. Without knowing it, I was heading for a major discovery about myself. Jupiter and the North Node would confront me with the mirror I needed to see myself. At the same time, I was reading every book I could find on archetypal psychology, that area of research that illustrates how the myths, fairy tales and artistic creations, be it art or literature, reflect the creator's inner world: his subconscious. Over the next several years, I would write a novella, a play and a film script on Sarah Bartman, and each time upon completion feel that I still hadn't 'cracked' it. Seen what Jupiter wanted me to see?

Pluto strengthened my will to continue with my project, to leave no stone unturned in my research, whilst Neptune's universal love made me acutely aware of the inhumane treatment of women, particularly dark 'exotic' women, over the centuries.

I could not have known then, that I would be saving the goddess not in Sarah Bartman, but the goddess in myself; the one who had gone into hiding in my childhood. Operating the projector, the Jupiter in me was still projecting issues not only from the I-side of the chart, but from my innermost world onto someone in the outer world. All I could see were the opening titles of the movie the Projector was running. I would have to watch the film to its end before I could clearly understand its theme. But then, didn't Laurens van der Post, a close friend of Jung's, say that meaning has to be lived, before it can be known? Or as modern-day thinkers believe: meaning can only be understood backwards?

With my consciousness now midway between Jupiter and the North Node, this phase concerned my ability to see the truth, as represented by Jupiter, and the direction of my soul's journey as symbolised by the North Node (which points me in the direction of myself, rather than of others). Only when my age point approached the end of the Projection Figure's screen in 1993 did I 'own' my projections. Writing about my friends, I said:

Yet I know, what I find disturbing in them, are simply my own destructive and negative emotions, reflected back to me through my projections. I need more positive people around now, because I am more positive. Letting go of them is just letting go of my own negativity. When does one get to a point in life where one has withdrawn all one's own projections and see people as they truly are?

Responding to the longing for engaging in writing of a higher order, prompted by Mercury in the field of life philosophies, and the direct confrontation with Mars to assert my real creative self rather than my professional persona, I made the following entry into my journal in 1988:

Working on my own, on the story of Sarah Bartman, seems to have isolated me to a great degree. I find it very difficult to perform in the advertising world. Perhaps I am too impatient with myself - impatience being my worst quality.

It seems so paradoxical to me that I should be earning a good living by writing words such as "What did you do with your Philips today?" when I want to say something more worthwhile without getting any reward for it.

All I get is a dismissal of my endeavours by my creative director, or: "She's neurotic. It's an obsession with her," by another male colleague. Why do the words of these two stay with me when I have so many others supporting what I'm doing? Because they are men?

I must disregard these men – one who is a fine artist and should really be painting; the other who wants to write and has started many projects but never finishes any of them. I must delete their negativity from my mind and be thankful for those who are more supportive of what I'm doing. And if I am able to make a good living by writing garbage, then why not just continue doing so and write more worthwhile things in my spare time? Why do I want to spend my working hours involved in something worthy?

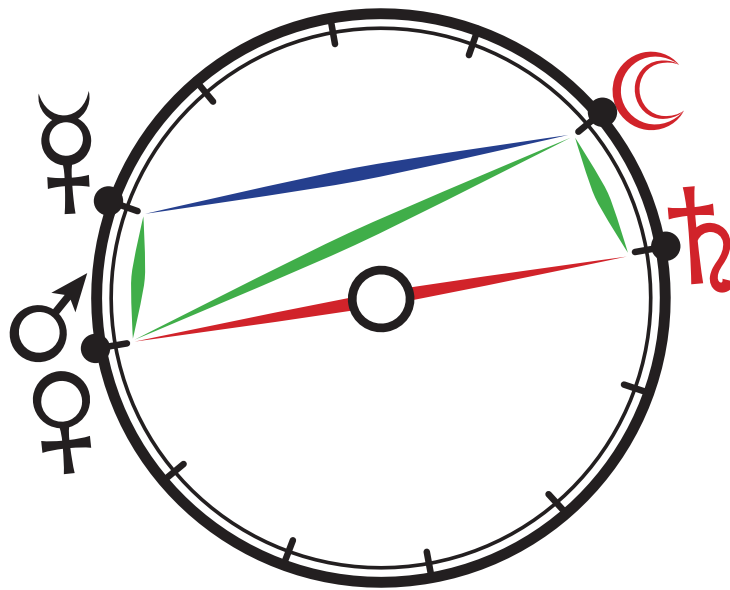
Most of my creative friends would answer that they too feel the discontent but cannot do anything else. Do I overestimate myself by feeling that I can, that I **must** do something else? These thoughts haunt me daily, nightly, and I seem to be rendered paralysed by them rather than make a decision and stick to it.

Is it a question of better the devil you know than the demons you don't? And why am I determined to get to know these demons?

In 1988 when Mars, my animus, was directly opposed by my age point, I was working at an advertising agency where I was the only woman in the creative department. In spite of advertising priding itself on its gender equality, I experienced the reverse. One day, the Creative Director asked me too vociferously: "How can you say that? You women don't think at all."

When I mentioned the incident to my teammate, a male art director, he replied: “Don’t worry your pretty little head.” I was incensed and realised I could not work in such an environment. Although my Mars is in the first house of self-assertion, I did not assert myself verbally because it would have caused an ugly scene and I knew I would lose the battle. All I could do was walk away from the agency and put my words into the mouth of Sarah Bartman, a woman who suffered immensely at the abuse by men.

### THE INCOMPLETE STAGE FIGURE



Together, the Search Figure and Irritation Triangle form an Incomplete Stage Figure; ‘incomplete’ as there is no long green aspect linking Saturn and Mercury. When such an aspect is missing the Hubers believe the chart owner could strain to set it up. In my case, this resulted in the unconscious effort to make a connection between Mercury and Saturn; in the urge to idealise personal partners by seeing them as archetypes: my mentor I saw as Apollo and Hephaestus, my confidant as Osiris, my lovers as Theseus and Hades, and my relationship with my mother as akin to that of Persephone and Demeter. This behaviour is an accurate reflection of the Hubers’ description of this aspect structure. “The Stage Figure knows many bit parts... It classifies each person that it has understood in its anthology of human roles and stores every detail.” (*Aspect Pattern Astrology*, p.245)

With the highly charged antagonism between Saturn and Mars conjunct Venus running on the Encounter Axis, the stage was set for endless tussles in the outer world. Every time the planets concerned were activated by my consciousness, another act in the play would unfold with *Cupid’s Valley* being Act 1 in my lifelong drama.

The curtains on Act 2 were raised in 1972 when Uranus, which is linked to Venus, triggered the conflict in the dramatic plot: the realisation in Switzerland that I wasn't 'marriage material.' This was followed by Act 3 in 1989 when my consciousness was saturated with Saturn's demands, leading to the emotionally devastating climax in Act 4 in 1995 when my full Moon was darkened by Scorpio's destruction of my Arcadia.

Fortunately, the denouement will be extending over a period of 24 years - the period it will take my age point to move from the Moon to Mercury - giving me sufficient time to recoup my energy before the curtains fall on Act 5 in 2019 when my age point will meet Mercury face-to-face. Hopefully Mercury will then deliver an insightful epilogue. Perhaps the Mars and Venus conjunctions and Saturn opposition during my terrible twos and again in my seventies might be worthy of a curtain call if, of course, the leading lady is still around.

In 1989 demanding Saturn played the leading role in Act III in which the confrontations between me and my mother were at their worst. So forceful were our arguments and so heated that I often felt the 'earth moved' when we clashed. An entry in my journals from 1988 reads:

All this anger in me. At my mother's ongoing barbed comments that have always ripped chunks out of my flesh. The reason I always forgive her? Because I know of the abuse she suffered at the hands of her stepmother – and the neglect by her own mother. I am so happy that I had the wisdom not to have a child so that the sins of the fathers (and mothers) will not be passed on to the next generation. Would a daughter not have suffered exactly the same fate in my hands?

Perhaps that is why the section I wrote on my mother disturbs me so greatly. I now understand what I sacrificed that Good Friday, 24 years ago. Not my mother, as in the nightmare, but my motherhood. So that no-one else has to go through the same pain. No daughter, no husbands. This has been the greatest achievement of my life. One I am proud of. One that underlies my sense of Self: to stop the suffering.

My relationship with my mother was particularly strenuous while I was working on Sarah Bartman. She seemed to resent it when she was excluded from my inner world which I kept to myself simply because it would have disturbed her: she had never understood my intense interest in the deeper layers of the psyche, often dismissing it entirely.

I got the distinct message from my mother that I should stop living in a 'dream world' and get back to earth. I should do more down-to-earth, practical things. Although I had always been there for her after the separation from my stepfather, I suspected that it would never be enough.

There would always be a need that could never be met, because it had not been met in her early childhood: she had been taken away from her mother at the age of five by Social Welfare and had never gotten over it. She then had an imperious stepmother whom she disliked intensely. Only in her eighties could she begin to forgive her.

I believed that my mother was right, that there was indeed something ‘missing’ in me, but it would take many more years before I found out what it was, the hard way, of course, as Saturn’s lessons are never easy. At that time though, the only defining thought I had about my relationships with men was that they had been based on an illusion of love. What is love really? I often wondered.

Even after having completed the third version of my Sarah Bartman story, now in the form of a film script, I still didn’t see that the themes in my writing were those in my own life, particularly in my relationships. Only after my admission interviews at the Jung Institute in 1992, when my age point was approaching Neptune, and Jupiter’s film its end, did I begin to see through the veils of my illusions.

The nightmare from which I woke up gasping for breath: that terrible image I have of Africa – one I saw in a magazine when I was ten, the one that triggered the Medusa dream: a pile of human body parts, arms, legs, heads and hands, a monument to the brutal cruelty of Africa. How this image has haunted me.

Why do I have such violent images in me? Is it a warning that I, like Sarah’s soul animal, the eland, will be hacked to death? That I must leave Africa and live in Europe?

The nightmare in which I was terrified by the stark stare and the slithering snakes of Medusa made me realise that there was too much masculine thinking in me, in the sense that I came from the head. It was time to ‘lose’ my head - and not by getting involved in physical relationships with men. I had sensed that was the easy way out of my predicament and, ultimately, not a way out at all. I would have to do it on my own. It was a difficult task and I didn’t know where to start, but believed that life would show me the way.

This confrontation with the feminine aspects of myself happened at the time when my consciousness was challenged by Venus. I began to question the Venus in me, what I now called (after having read the works of archetypal psychologist James Hillman) the ‘armoured Amazon’. I had finally understood that I had to temper the more masculine aspects in myself; take off, so to speak, the battledress I had donned in *Cupid’s Valley* as a defense against my brother and father.

“I feel like cutting off my head and throwing it into the sea,” I announced to my friend Leanne who was with me on an Indian island holiday a few months later. One day on the beach, Leanne came across a piece of coral in the shape of a skull. “I have found your head!” she shrieked. Of course I took the ‘head’ back home where it has been kept on the veranda ever since to remind me of my pact with myself.

Then came the close relationship. At the end of 1989, I met Dante, a gay man who is still one of my most intimate friends. We had many inspiring and intriguing conversations as we had much in common intellectually and will most likely have for the rest of our days. He was the one who pointed out to me that I always threw myself into relationships ‘boots and all’. I admitted to him that it had been a way of losing my head. Nothing more than a quick fix.

The next year, as if I were being tested, I lost my head wholeheartedly in a relationship with Renzo, an Italian man who reminded me so much of my stepfather that I couldn’t resist him. Through him, I learnt to play again. I was even considering having a child with him not yet knowing that what I had to give birth to was the child in myself.

Yet ultimately, this relationship couldn’t last. Our sensibilities were too different; our goals too diverse. I found his search for pleasure gratuitous and he found my quest for the deeper meaning in life pointless. He couldn’t understand why I was now studying Comparative Religion and wasn’t interested in hearing my views on the matter either. He also couldn’t deal with my introspection which became an issue when I was being called to turn inwards again, this time by the low-point in the house of close personal relationships. As always, I would have to go through it alone, confiding in my journal.

There is a strong sense of ‘no love’ in my environment. I feel as if I am in a cold place, in a prison of pain. I abhor my passivity in the matter. I could create that love around me, in a child and perhaps a relationship with a man, both of which I never really longed for before. But right now, I feel too helpless because of the failed relationship with Renzo.

The Saturn conjunction followed by the Venus opposition unleashed a tsunami of emotions on committed relationships: getting married and having a child. In short, all the perceptions and beliefs I had held till that year about my relationships with men were being called into question. Should I have a child? Do I want a partner who would always be around? Did I want comfort and security rather than the life of change and discovery I cherished? Or, as I asked in my journal,

‘Is my life to be lived alone, dedicated to writing and to exploring those depths that are my element?’

How difficult it is to relate to people when the dialogue in my head has seized my attention. So many threads scattered in all directions, with no clear connection between them... Where I spent most of my thinking life trying to fit the pieces of the puzzle into a whole, I seem to have lost the desire to do so. Or is it the will that is lacking?

What I want is to explode all concepts in my head, all previously held opinions before embarking on more knowledge. Is this the risk I take, have to take, to get to that reality which lies beyond my ordinary perceptions?

So long have I traveled, so many people have I met, essences have I discerned that the energy to go on yet another journey of discovery fails me. How wonderful it would be to take a break from this incessant seeking and lie in the arms of a man when the road gets too arduous. Or would that be the easy way out?

In my consciousness, there is always an aspect to the Sun soon after a low point. This suggests that throughout my life my mental ego was somehow in harmony, at loggerheads with or fired up by thoughts about my low-point experiences. After the low point in personal relationships in 1990, my thoughts regarding them abounded; as if I were trying to put into perspective my suffering. What was it all about? What did it mean? What perceptions and firmly held beliefs did I need to adjust? How was *I* creating my relationships?

For years, particularly when I was writing Sarah’s story, I would have the most terrible sensation that would overwhelm me at night. I would fall asleep, then wake up half an hour later, with my heart pounding in my throat – that most vulnerable part of my body – my mind gripped by the fear that my mother would die.

Why was I pre-empting her death in such an emotionally real manner when, in reality, she was getting older but was still well, active both at work and at home? At times like these, I was overcome by a sense of extreme loneliness. Longing for a man or child whom I could hold, warmly, against my body. Loneliness was a feeling I had seldom felt before. Why did I feel so utterly isolated at that time?

Only now, two years later, do I realise the full implication of that fear: it is not the death of my mother that I feared, but the death of that part of myself which I internalised from my mother. When the spiritualist astrologer told me – or reminded me, for I knew it in my unconscious - that the father archetype was missing in my life, that my mother had represented both the father and the mother to me in my childhood, I recognised what I had taken over from my mother: the woman as warrior and hunter. As Artemis.

Artemis served me well until my mid thirties. Then she was dethroned by Athena whose constant thinking haunted me with her Medusa-like powers. This aspect of me had to die, for the more feminine goddess, Demeter to show herself. May she breathe freely soon. May she fill her lungs with the wonder of life.

\*\*\*

Seeing Gary yesterday, after so many years, awakened old feelings in me. Of all the men I have ever loved, he holds a special place in my heart. The intensity I sense in him, the melancholy I have so often discerned in Jewish men is what attracts me to him.

My feelings for him are perhaps also what underlay my attraction to Renzo. Both are short, bearded men and both were bound to me in a strong sexual relationship. Was the dark side of the Great Mother in me too frightening for Gary and Renzo who chose to have relationships with maidens after me? The maiden in me, the breezy nymph, the Tinkerbell to Renzo's Peter Pan doesn't often take flight. But how I enjoy flying with her when she does!

To hear from Gary – who now has a daughter – that it was the most wonderful experience, was like a message from the gods. “You must have one,” he insisted, “and so must Barbara.”

The mention of her name again wounded me, just like his betrayal of me with her had done years ago. Or perhaps he sensed that I was still in love with him and his statement was purely a reminder that he was off-limits. Nevertheless, his words were an inspiration, especially after Renzo's angry statement that I will never have a child.

Renzo's words to me were like a red rag to a bull. How dare he tell me whether or not I can be creative? His fear of my creativity was not only restricted to childbearing. How often didn't he tell me to put away the film script on whose cover there was a dancing San woman, her head thrown back in the agony and ecstasy of a trance? He was petrified by my creativity. He wouldn't read the script. Even when I showed him the letter from Sir Laurens van der Post urging me to continue doing what I was doing – transforming darkness into light – even then Renzo could not accept this darker side of me. (Like Peter Pan wouldn't, perhaps?)

His statement: “You will not have a child,” was countered by my defiant: “I will.” A child of the mind then, if not of the body.

As if to encourage me, I had a dream in which I gave birth to the child I wanted. Something magnificent is happening in me – even in the absence of any man. Like my poor absent father who, because he wasn't there for me, gave me the strength to create meaning in my life – without a man.

\*\*\*



“You have a great fear of living,” I said to Renzo last night “and because of this fear, you will stifle everything around you.”

All I wonder now is whether this is my fear or his fear. Am I talking to myself, to my own, stifling creative masculine aspect, the Bluebeard of every woman’s nightmare? And if I am, what is Renzo learning from the process? To deal with the Medusa in me when all he has ever wanted was Danae?

Was my relationship with him just a demonstration to me of how I stifle my own life?

Only two years later, the issue regarding having a child was finally resolved:

What a wonderful dream I had the first night I slept in the cottage on my property – the dolls’ house! It was full moon. In my dream, I saw a little girl’s silhouette against the front door, then heard her knocking, wanting desperately to come in. She was sad, anxious and I knew it was me as a child. Her fine hair was mine, her face was mine as it was then.

She was crying, lost and lonely in an unfriendly world. She walked around the bed and I could hear her speaking in my child’s voice. Comfort is what she wanted from me. I woke up before I could hug her, but I loved her in that moment with a feeling so intense, I could still feel its glow long afterwards.

How pleased I am to have her so close to me now. She is such a lovely little being! I am the only one who can look after her properly, care for her, know what her needs are. She is forever in my heart. I will never again forget to play with her.

Pre-empting Jupiter’s awareness-creating energy in 1992, I went to the Jung Institute in Zurich for admission interviews which turned into a real life drama in which I finally understood my own predicament.

Dr B lived in a beautiful house on the lake of Zurich. I arrived early and whiled away half an hour walking along the lake, my preferred place in nature.

At the interview, I expected to be questioned in depth on the short autobiography I had submitted. Instead Dr B focused on the creative work I had included.

“Dissection is a fascinating theme,” he said, referring to the section of *Bête Noire* he had read. Earlier in the interview, I had been amazed at his knowledge of film and theatre. He had also at some point in his life lived in Africa and consequently found the combination of Africa and Europe in my writing interesting.

“Why did you write her story in particular, when so many other Africans suffered at the hands of Western thinking?”

I hesitated to answer.

“Because you wanted to restore her dignity?” he answered for me.

“Yes,” I agreed, feeling that I wasn’t telling the whole truth. My retelling of her story

had become far more selfish than that. It was my story. Just as she was caught up in the crossfire of Eros and Logos, so was I. I wondered whether Dr B had picked up the discomfort in me.

That night, I reconsidered Dr B's question to me. Why had I hesitated to give him my real reason for getting involved in Sarah's history? Because inside me, a war was waging between the two extremes creating a profound tension in me. I was either absorbed in studying and reading, that is thinking, or involved in some erotic relationship that more often than not left me in pieces. Literally, cut up. And the only way I consoled myself at some heartbreaking loss, was to withdraw into my books and writing, in short, into my head. Perhaps studying at the Jung Institute would help me resolve the issue.

Still buoyed up by the exciting interview with Dr B, I made my way to the second interviewer, Dr C, the next morning. He lived in an apartment in Sea Street. Neptune was my ruling planet and I was sure to get on with any resident of Neptune's domain.

As the front door of the apartment block opened after I had pressed Mr C's number to announce my arrival, I immediately headed for the stairs facing me.

"Down here," came his voice from somewhere below.

I looked down at Dr C standing at the door to his apartment in the basement of the block.

"Good morning," I said cheerfully and bounded past him into his apartment. It was a bedsit with a dark atmosphere. Suddenly, a sense of dread made my hair stand on end.

He was the complete opposite of Dr B: cold and unsmiling. I became as deadly serious as he was and the interview didn't flow at all. Dr C focused on my autobiography.

"Did your father sexually abuse you?" was his first question.

"No," I answered honestly.

I had a feeling that he didn't believe me. More such questions followed which I answered to the best of my ability. I was beginning to hate this interview which felt more like an interrogation. Where Dr B treated me as a human being, Dr C related to me as an object of study. I didn't feel he'd gotten in touch with my psyche at all although he was a psychologist.

"Are you quite sure you want to be an analytical psychologist?" he asked.

"No. But sure enough to sell my house so as to be able to finance the course."

"I believe you are interested in Jung from a creative rather than a scientific point of view."

"Is that wrong?" I queried.

"The Jung Institute is a centre of scientific study. There is an intensive course starting in two weeks. I suggest you attend that to get an insight into our field of study."

It was Cuvier speaking, I realised. "Have you looked at the creative work I submitted?" I asked.

"No," he answered, clearly not interested. "Why?"

"Because I have just realised my interviews with you and Dr B are a reflection of the situation of the main character, who is a woman, between two men: Mr Bullock, a slave-abolitionist in England and Baron Georges Cuvier, a scientist in Paris who dissected her after her death. This is probably a case of transference or projection, but I feel exactly as she did. Dr B is Bullock and..."

"I am Cuvier?" he asked, completing my sentence for me.

"Yes," I answered, "and that is what has made this interview so difficult for me."

“Interesting,” is all he said, looking at his watch. “Our time is up.” He got up and stiffly extended his hand. “Goodbye. The Institute will inform you in two weeks whether you have been accepted as a student or not.”

I left his apartment feeling utterly dejected and depressed. I thought about my sense of dread on entering his apartment: it was as intense as that of Sarah when she enters a room at the Jardin du Roi only to see Cuvier dissecting a corpse. Was it a premonition of my fate?

### *The next day*

What a strange depression has come over me since my last interview. I couldn't fall asleep, something had grabbed me by the throat. Fear, perhaps. Or a stifled scream at the rigidity of my last interviewer.

And then came the terrible dream: a man I had just met was about to make love to me. As he caressed my body, he said: “I see, you have Sleeping Beauty syndrome.” My heart froze at his lack of warmth in such an intimate moment.

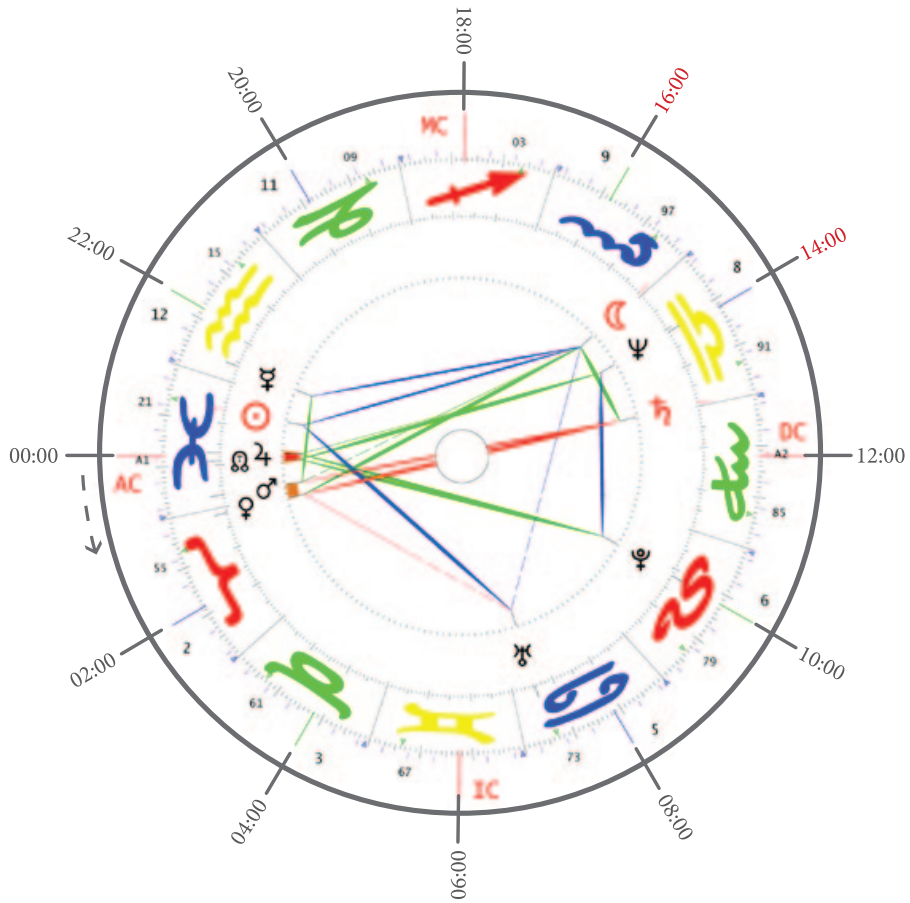
With a heavy heart I go for my third interview, this time with a woman. Will she be more caring?

Her friendly manner soothed me immediately. She was interested in the Medusa myth. I went through my creative process with her. The fears, elations, breakthroughs. Everything resonated with her.

Today a woman made me feel whole again.

The Zurich episode is an excellent example of how Jupiter prefers experiences to be lived, rather than thought about or talked about. I was also beginning to see the illusions I was creating. After all, Jupiter is the energy that demands the real, not the illusionary. I felt I needed to review my ongoing interest in the writing of Sarah Bartman's story and I now started writing a psychological novella.

It wasn't easy, but early 1993 Pluto gave me the inner resources to remain on purpose. Neptune, at the other angle of Jupiter's projector screen, was beckoning to me, but would only make its presence fully felt a year later.



14:00 - 16:00  
1993 - 1998

My consciousness was now moving into the eighth house, that place of loss and gain, but still being in Libra, it coloured my world with the glow of affability. The North Node early in 1993 created a yearning in me to spend as much time as possible on myself and by myself, doing the things I enjoyed most: being creative. I decided to work on a freelance basis rather than full-time so as to 'buy' more time for myself.

What a delightful time awaits me! With so many exciting things to do, and the feeling of new growth in me. How I love this passion to create! How it drives me, relentlessly through unexpected twists and turns, around detours, often down dead-ends, but always returning to the mainstream of its energy. Such is the glorious force of life!

Strange how lately I have no great desire to go out. Except when it is a special aesthetic or social event. Almost as if I have everything I want at home: books, music, memories. I have grown weary of social outings that became increasingly empty and meaningless. I have never enjoyed small talk. I have moved to my own centre again which has always been on the periphery of society. It is a place I adore.



*In Arcadia.*

I was engaged in an exhilarating creative project, one I had always enjoyed: redecorating my home. Once my living space had been transformed into a magnificent sanctuary, I often entertained a small, but intimate group of friends. On the horizon, Neptune, that planet of love and inspiration, was dimly visible. I now incorporated my understanding of the planetary energies into my house with

Neptune dominating in one of the bathrooms. I didn't know anything about Age Point Progression then. All I knew was Neptune is Pisces's ruling planet, and one's house is a symbol of one's self.

The different rooms seemed to be 'ruled' by the different gods: the living room where I entertained my friends, listened to music and wrote at the coffee table, sitting on the plush carpet, was decidedly ruled by Mars, Venus, the Moon and Mercury, those planets at the angles of The Search Figure. I was now experiencing the creative, emotional and philosophical highlights of my life as the many journal entries illustrate.

Finally I have the lifestyle I have been planning for! The security of an investment in the form of my house, and the freedom to work or travel, at least for a few months, and write. And now, having moved into the cottage to my house - a spontaneous decision that led to the realisation of this dream - I can live out my fantasies. How I long to be in Europe, traveling this time from Vienna to Prague by train, to see more of the Bohemian countryside.

This intense experience of Neptune would last for more than a year and culminated in my trip to Prague. Armed with Angelo Ripellino's *Magic Prague*, I experienced the city's magic and mystery so intensely that it had to be shared with others in a travel article aptly called *Neptune's World*.

"I have been bewitched by Prague," I said to a friend upon my return from this sombre city with its black statues that loom in the mist, its grotesque gargoyles on heavy doors that lead to secret places, its narrow cobbled streets that run, maze-like, up to the Castle which no-one can approach by a direct route.

"I am beginning to understand Kafka. Prague was his innerscape, the landscape of his soul. And although he longed to live in Spain where his uncle ran a successful business, he could never leave his mother city. Perhaps he too was bewitched."

"How you project yourself onto everything," my friend Leanne sighed, dismissing my great passion for Prague.

"Perhaps," I replied. "Yet there is more to Prague than meets the eye. So very much more." What then did I see in Prague? A sprawling city straddling the Moldau, or *Vltava* as the Czechs call their beloved river. On the surface, Prague is divided into 5 quarters: the Mala Strana, or Little Quarter, with its abundance of Baroque and Renaissance buildings where you can attend midday symphony concerts in the awe-inspiring High Baroque splendor of St Nicholas on Malostranska Square, or in one of the many other churches there.

The Hradcany district where I followed the tortuous meanderings of alleys leading up to the Castle that seems to raise the Gothic magnificence of the St Vitus Cathedral on the hill to the sky, as if it were making an offering to the gods. Later I discovered an easier way to Hradcany Castle: tram no 22, which takes you around and up the back of the hill where you can walk through the Royal Gardens to the Castle. The gardens are skirted by splendid palaces: the Schwarzenberg Palace scored with diamond sgraffito in the style of the Italian Renaissance; the Baroque Palace of the Archbishops of Prague; the monumental entrance

to the Castle; and Steinberg Palace which houses art treasures from the National Gallery of Prague.

Josefov, the former Prague Ghetto sent a chill up my spine: its haunting cemetery was serenaded by black birds, ravens perhaps, in the tall trees growing on a massive, moss-covered mound where 100 000 bodies are piled under 12 000 tombstones, which stick out like broken teeth. It was here in Josefov that Hitler intended to found a museum to an extinct Jewish race. Today, the artifacts he gathered from all synagogues in Europe for this purpose can be seen in the Jewish State Museum.

The Old Town with its mediaeval atmosphere: I wandered down its winding narrow roads and got to the Old Town Square where the focal point is a sombre black sculpture of the martyr, Jan Hus. I turned full circle and saw an unequalled display of architectural delights: the Gothic Tyn Church, the Baroque Church of St Nicholas, the Medieval Old Town Hall.

The most striking building in Prague must surely be the Peoples' Palace (or Municipal House) on Republic Square, the best preserved example of Art Nouveau architecture in the world. Its richly decorated, almost frivolous, colourful façade is starkly contrasted by the austere Gothic Powder Tower right next to it.

But that's Prague. Nothing remains light or bright for too long. Not the weather. Not the people. And certainly not my moods. As Angelo Ripellino says in *Magic Prague*: "Don't go there if you are seeking unclouded happiness. She grabs and burns with her sly glances, she bewitches and transform the unwary who enter her walls."

I walked for days in those areas and saw spectacular sights without even going into buildings: ornamental paintings on facades, elaborately decorated doorways, massive statues guarding entrances, exquisitely carved doors, entrances, intricate wrought-iron gates, lampposts, balconies and building decorations, windows that are a work of art in themselves. All this in a city that has remained unexpectedly intact despite a turbulent history.

All this I saw in Prague. But beyond her splendours, I sensed another world, a subtext to all the words written about her in books or spoken about her in travel guides. An awesome – and awful – essence. The more I wandered, the more I felt like the characters in Kafka's *The Castle* and *The Trial* who are constantly trying to get to a core which repeatedly eludes them. Perhaps there is no essence. Perhaps Prague is like the proverbial onion.

One day, standing on the Charles Bridge enveloped by mists, I grasped, for a split second, something of Prague's essence. She is like the subconscious, I speculated; like Neptune the ruler of the subconscious, who throws its veils of mists over everything, who dissolves the boundaries between the real and the unreal, between the personal and the universal.

And like the subconscious, she is the storehouse of ancient images, forms and memories. I recalled all the personages and images I had seen in this city: the statues of saints, heroes, martyrs and biblical figures I had passed on bridges and town squares; the angels and demons and peacocks and pretty maidens I had seen on building decorations; the Atlases holding up colossal entrances, knights slaying dragons, the lions guarding buildings; the singing fountain; the endless parade of every mythical and biblical character you can think of on parapets, on ceilings, doors and walls, in stained glass windows and paintings: madonnas, harpies, saints and sinners, battling giants, philosophers, archers, voluptuous women, bears, swans, griffins, water nymphs...

I called to memory those who had wandered in Prague before us: the alchemists who lived in Golden Lane where Rudolf 11 set them up in Lilliputian houses to make gold

from base metals; the astronomers like Kepler and Giordano Bruno who are remembered by the Astronomical Clock on the Old Town Square. The bearded rabbis of the Jewish Quarter who were the custodians of the secret teachings of Cabbala; the puppet masters who created characters that have gone down in Middle European literature and whose craft is today trivialised by puppet sellers on the Charles Bridge. The poets and artists who kept on returning to Prague: Rodin, Camus, Oscar Wiener, Werfel, Rilke, Apollinaire, Otto Pick...

Astrology sees the house which Neptune rules (the 12th house) as the house of karma; the place where dues have to be paid for secret actions in the past. Is this why Prague has been brought to her knees so often over the past ten centuries? And what could her sins be?

Perhaps she was too pompous in the monumentality of her buildings which were intended to express the greatness of the nation. Too arrogant in her attempt to play God and create a man from clay. Too greedy for gold when her alchemists used the laws of science in an attempt to enrich themselves while turning her into an academy of the occult. Too extravagant when she became the Imperial Court in the 16th century. Too careless with the spiritual power she wielded in the 14th century when she was the capital of the Holy Roman Empire. Too centre stage in her position at the point where the axes of the old world cross, as Middle Europeans believe.

If any of these were indeed her sins, when will she have paid her dues sufficiently? Will she be subjected to more suffering or will she soon realise the destiny predicted for her by the mythical Princess Libuse when she said: "I can see a vast city whose fame reaches to the stars?"

So many writers from the early twentieth century portray Prague as a temptress who will have the heads of her suitors. Says Oskar Wiener: "Anyone who has looked into her deep, trembling and mysterious eyes remains a slave of the temptress for the rest of his life. If your passion for Prague does not spell your downfall, you fall victim to a permanent yearning."

I should have heeded his words. I long to go back to Prague. Again and Again.

And yes, I did lose my head.

With the advent of Neptune in my consciousness, the screen of the Projection Figure was completed. There is no doubt in my mind that the expansive Jupiterian energy controlling this figure had let me experience the most intense learning curve in my life, starting with the loss of my stepfather 12 years earlier when Pluto appeared. But my deeper learning still had several lessons to go through, the most intense of which would be sparked off by Pluto in 1999. With projector-operating Jupiter showing me the difference between truth and misconceptions, I was finally seeing the fabrications of my mind for what they are:

What a fool I have been, thinking that my mother will make it all right. Of course, she can't. Her helplessness in her own life, and her need for others reflect on my life too; the distrust and dislike of men, yet the firm belief that they will come and save us. Is this where the concept of God the Saviour had its origins?



It reminds me of my first encounter with Renzo and the spirituality I saw in his blue eyes. He, in turn, said he saw love when I walked into his world. This spirituality and love we projected onto one another only to discover that we have to find it in ourselves first.

Projection is sheer illusion. Like a film is only make-believe life.

How this year off work, refining my creative projects and my surroundings has given me time to reflect on and relive all these emotions that have always been in me, but were suppressed by the pressures of earning a living. Who knows what it will lead to? The throwing off of more burdens? Oh, to breathe freely.

And To Forget Venice\*.

Just before Neptune was in my orbit in 1993, Pluto had blessed me with the ability to draw on my deepest self in order to bring this Plutonic energy, this dark man whom I had internalised to consciousness.

To have found which archetype underlies, now and maybe forever, my psyche! Hephaestus, of course, the blacksmith. How often have I not gotten my hands dirty or scratched or bruised by more masculine work such as carpentry or tiling? This is the reason, too, why I sometimes resent the way my mother asks me to put up some pictures for her or to fix her washing machine. It is not her request for help that irritates me, for I have become her surrogate husband since my stepfather's absence, but the realisation that she has spent a lifetime waiting for someone to fix things for her. And if he or she didn't turn up, they would be left undone.

This receptive rather than active feminine aspect of her is one I have never learnt to appreciate; one that causes endless disagreements and arguments between us, and probably always will. She, in turn, finds me and my creativity harsh. She has often called me an ogre or a little Hitler. In turn, I have called her a victim and a manipulator with her victimhood. How we have fought, pointlessly, because it is the marriage of the masculine and feminine in me that underpins the creative process.

Like Hephaestus, born of a mother with no intervention by a father, I too am bound to my mother's creative process in a powerful and painful way. But where she created children, I created works. I set up my life so that I could work and sweat away in my subterranean forge, refining and transforming hard and harsh materials with physical strength and willpower - a characteristic in me many of my male and female friends dislike.

And even if this hard labour of mine causes suffering at times, it is what my life is about. This introverted creativity that seeks to penetrate the layers of darkness for myself and, hopefully, for others. Is this what I am to do with my life forever, or do I need to soften

\* Title of an Italian film in which the characters have to let go of their illusions.

it so that it is more acceptable to the more gentle people around me? Why did I choose to take on this interminable task? What do I ultimately want to achieve with it? I have a sense of only having begun this labour. How I look forward to taking it to its conclusion!

When Mars made me hanker after my sense of the masculine - the artistic, writerly type - I contacted my mentor, whom I hadn't been in touch with for six years. With my age point now halfway between Neptune and the Moon, both energies of emotion and love, I was involved with two men, both married. But neither the inspiring relationship with my mentor, nor the one with Ludwig, the man with whom I felt the safest and the most secure, could prevent the death and destruction two years later.

With Mercury's blessing and Mars's bout of nostalgia in 1994, my journal writing was at its peak. I was in Arcadia, penned by my Mercurial qualities, not without rather utopian hues: my Mercury is after all in idealistic Aquarius. Questioning the meaning of life and death and the validity of my beliefs, I wrote:

I have come to a point in my life where all previous beliefs are important, but no longer matter. When will I have the courage to live my otherworldliness to the full? I have never committed myself to anyone. Not a husband, not a family, not children. As if this kind of commitment were not what I was on this earth for.

What is the use of living a life toeing the line, doing the right thing? I have no desire for extreme acts, just for what I believe I am here for. Whilst I enjoy the things that keep my body comfortable, my soul longs for a much greater adventure.

Is this why my father drank? Did he want to go beyond his boring life? A life he never wanted, but had created because he was scared of truly being himself? (I have a hunch he was gay, the way he dressed, the way he talked - when he was sober, of course - but he lived in the fifties and being gay couldn't be expressed.)

Are we not meant to go beyond mundane existence? Which is what makes drink and drugs so evil in the eyes of the abstemious.

WHAT IS THIS LIFE ABOUT? A plodding on? A remaining healthy? For WHAT? If every day you live brings you closer to the day you die, why do we go out of our way to stall death? Are we perhaps not dead already and what appears to be life, is really death? And only when we have died, the way we know it, do we really live? I don't know.

But it is all I can commit myself to.

While I was still experiencing the creative, emotional and philosophical highlights of my life, the killjoy Scorpio was looming. With my mentor now in the East, I was left with the other man in my life: Ludwig. Were his brooding intensity and firm Calvinist belief that ‘everyone has a cross to bear’ a preamble to the experience of Scorpio? Not yet having studied Astrological Psychology, I wasn’t aware that my consciousness was now going to experience Scorpio, the bringer of pain and gain, but in my physical environment, Scorpio suddenly made his presence felt, literally shaking me to the core.

Through bad workmanship when laying an underground cable, the municipality had left a hump across the street right next to my house. Every time a double-decker bus or a large truck went over the ridge, the earth would shudder and shake. These ‘earthquakes’ happened so regularly that I started feeling destabilised. My peace of mind was further destroyed by the long fight I had with the city council who only took corrective action after receiving a letter from my lawyer. Until then, they’d thought I was ‘some crazy woman’. And indeed, I felt as if I were going insane. The fault line in the road was finally repaired and my inner turmoil subsided.

Then my father died. It was not a traumatic event as I had lost him in childhood already and hadn’t seen him for 30 years. Now I simply had to go through the motions rather than the emotions of the loss. It was one of life’s ironies that the man I associated most closely with my father in gentle mode, Ludwig, was the one who accompanied me to my father’s deathbed where he lay in a coma from which he never recovered. Perhaps Ludwig’s dark depression was simply a reflection of the one my father had been in way back in 1959?

Suddenly, my house no longer provided any comfort. There was now an endless row of beggars knocking on my door, begging for food or money. The desperately poor from rural areas in the country were streaming to the city now that apartheid had been lifted. As if they had come to demand their dues, another Scorpionic trait. Alone in a house which had French doors on three sides, I started feeling vulnerable. After all, Johannesburg had become a crime capital and no-one felt safe anymore. Then there was a burglary in which my sound system and all my CDs were stolen one night when I was asleep.

It seemed that everything in my environment was conspiring to bring me down. I started having panic attacks (which were a foreboding of further thyroid problems.) Diary entries at that time illustrate the sense of threat I experienced all around me.

How deathly life has become! The tedium of being in a crime-ridden city, imprisoned in a house that has exhausted me with its demands to be taken care of. The suspended action that is required of me because Ludwig refuses to act. Sell the house, live at the coast, write plays, novels and articles...move on to another life, with or without Ludwig? Is he not always with me, anyway?

Yet a fear has crept into my soul: the constant threat of violence that lies over Johannesburg. Once again, I feel it in my throat which is tight, as if gripped by a steel hand. All of this is aggravated by the daily accounts of murder and mayhem.

Africa is Pluto's world. How I hate his endless displays of power! Terrorising those who walk on this earth; playing the tyrant, reminding them who's the boss; striking them down with lightning if he feels any mortal has assumed too much power. He is truly the dark side of God, more so than Saturn whom I regard as the Great Mother, the one who restricts and reprimands, but also rewards.

He is my most potent adversary. He is that black, rapacious bird that sits so heavily on my tree. That hangs like a dead-weight around my neck. There's no throwing him off, only a bearing of this terrible burden.

The year before, I had had everything I valued most in life, but now the tides had turned. History seemed to repeat itself. All the losses I had had thirty-six years earlier when we left my father, would now be suffered again: I would stop seeing Ludwig who, like my father, had withdrawn from life, and I would leave the house I had turned into my sanctuary, as well as many friends with whom I had shared those idyllic years.

My friends and family were horrified when I sold my house, but I felt that the house was undermining me. I needed something smaller and more secure. I bought outbuildings – to the horror of my mother – on a panhandle property safely tucked away behind a large house. It was as if I had gone into hiding, away from the extreme emotional difficulties I had suffered over the previous year. But if I thought leaving my life as it was behind by moving to a more safe and sound environment, which I named *Temenos*, meaning a sacred place, I was sorely mistaken for Scorpio would continue to cause chaos.

The task I had now taken on was the most difficult one in my life. Perhaps moving out of my lovely house had been a mistake, I sometimes thought, but my ever-increasing panic attacks demanded drastic action.

At the encounter in 1995 with my emotional ego - the Moon - rather than wine and roses,

I experienced the excruciating sting of Scorpio: I now found myself in a place of extreme physical and emotional hardship. It was the rainiest season in sixty years and my building plans had to be suspended. Consequently I lived not in a house, but on a building site, or in a squatter's camp as one of my friends so aptly called it. I felt totally defeated and considered selling the place and admitting that it had all been a big mistake, but I was too proud for that, pride being my second worst quality.

When Saturn and Venus evoked thoughts about my relationships, I realised that it was the most isolated I had ever been. I had stopped confiding in my journals, almost as if previously enjoyable activities like writing and reading, music and literature no longer mattered. Social outings were a small comfort. I was at a loss as to what was happening in my life. I had never felt as 'out of control' and the only comfort I found was in my two cats. (Was the hormonal imbalance caused by my overactive thyroid and the onset of menopause the cause or the effect of my condition? I would wonder later.)

It was the bleakest period in my life, and would worsen over the next year when I had to go through the 8th-house low point which the Hubers consider to be the major low point in anyone's life. All I wanted was what the Moon in me longed for: to get to the essence beyond pain, to where everything is so abundantly whole.

Only when Uranus set me free a year later was the transformation of my house complete and I could 'live' again. Now that I had a pleasing home again, the Venus in me longed for someone to share it with.

See now how I change my shape and become Eurydice. Feel the satin smoothness of my skin, the at-one-ness of my being, my body vibrant with life as I hear Orpheus' sweet lyre. Only he, full of life and love, can get me out of the labyrinth.

Then the Sun eased my thinking on the meaning of my life: my relationships, my vocation, my writing. At last I could see light again after so much darkness.

*Enough  
of this dark  
dank existence  
of the dusty  
musty maze  
that wends  
its weird  
eerie ways  
down detours  
to demons  
and dragons spitting  
fire and flames  
stifling the air  
with poisons  
sharpening their teeth  
on roots  
that never see the sun  
warming the morning  
polishing the pond  
birthing the glory  
of the day  
dispelling darkness  
bringing brightness  
to the splendour  
of the midday sun  
when mad dogs  
are on the run –  
but not I  
for I am now  
under the big blue sky  
of which the moles  
in their holes  
can only dream.*

I met a man whom I related to very strongly, both physically and mentally. Rob was a musician and I felt as if the Orpheus I had been longing for had finally rescued me from the underworld. But my fantasies were destroyed when my thyroid flared up again and he showed his true colours: his basic dislike of women, particularly sick ones. I realised that Rob wasn't Orpheus, but another Theseus who had unresolved conflicts with his mother. And I had been Ariadne again, a role I no longer wanted.

For months you have been in your dark hole, wandering through the labyrinth in search of the Minotaur. The one you have to slay before you find yourself and have yourself to give away. Where my golden thread illuminated your path for a while, you now see only the faint shimmering of my light. Separated we are by the large elephant and the three nuns in my dream.

What do they want? Is the elephant the Minotaur in another guise? The powerful Great Mother who will forever block your way to me. Or is it the great Mother and her religion – her nuns - in me who will forever block my path to you? Why did we become separated in the dream? Because you went back to the inner chamber to fetch my purse full of money? Did materialism tear us asunder? And if materialism comes from mater or matter or mother, was it because of her in yet another guise?

Whatever the reasons, I could no longer remain in the labyrinth with you. I could not suffer the same fate again. Too often have I been the faithful Ariadne for the Theseuses in my life. Too many days, years, have I sacrificed when I could be, shall be, with the Dionysus waiting for me. In the warm sun and cool rain and fertile earth and clear air. Why look back?

Already the elephant and the nuns are pinheads in my mind.

The veils of illusory love were further torn to shreds when Rob turned out to be a clone of my brother, even tripping me onto the ground like the latter used to. When one day I asked whether I could join him and ‘the boys’ at an outdoor concert, his answer was: “I suppose you could tag along.” The only difference was: I was no longer 5, but 45, and could therefore walk away from such treatment. I wanted a more gentle man.

The blood red cloth Rob gave me, the one that was hanging in the centre of my house. My question to him then was: why did they put fish and nails together in this design? I should have seen it then, but didn’t. It presaged extreme suffering.

So I am returning your gift, Rob. I do not wish to be crucified for your sins. Everything you said about me is a judgment of yourself. I don’t want a man who is so brutal; I want a gentler man, a gentleman.

During the years after the 8th-house low point, my journal entries abounded. Like my thyroid, this period was hyperactive from a psychological point of view. After going through the traumatic experience of further radio-active treatment, itself a Scorpic intervention, my medical condition that started in 1972 was finally resolved.

The body is the vessel of the soul, and my body has been hyperactive of late. I had to have it beaten into submission, radio-actively, so that my soul can settle down. It seems that what I have longed for most - letting my soul soar - is not possible. I seem to be trapped in this body, for this lifetime anyway.

To keep body and soul together, goes the adage. Have I not battled to do so? So many books have I read which have a lot of validity, but all focus on keeping the body happy and comfortable in the here and now, when I want to be in the there and eternal.

I have known people who never get out of their physical and emotional comfort in an entire lifetime. And whilst it hurts not to have that security, I choose, every time, to let go of it so that my soul may soar.

The pain of not having someone hold me is more bearable than the pain of being held back.

After the intense depression I had just emerged from, the Sun facilitated a flow of writing in my journals, as if my mental ego too were hyperactive. I wanted to come to terms with all the emotion in me.

Ninety-seven was heaven, and it was hell. I felt so much pain at the loss of Rob who made my life both more joyous and more painful. And whilst I accept that pain is just the twin brother of pleasure, I have been suffering too long.

Am I an emotional coward? Do I feel more deeply than other people or do all humans suffer to the same degree? My love life always seems to deal with the most complicated men intellectually or emotionally. How do the two meet, other than in or through me? Do they exist out there or do I create them in the proportions I want?

I just want to be loved like my mother wants to be loved. Is it my duty to give her the love she never had from her mother? And where do I get it from to give to her? Once I thought from Rob. His love made it easier for me to give love to others. Do I need to love more, or am I just unable to love?

\*\*\*

At last I am beginning to remember my dreams again! Two nights ago I decided to paint my house not the same shade of blue, but three different hues of blue. What is the significance of blue? Is it a more spiritual colour? Or is it water and emotion that I am allowing back into my surroundings after a long period of hurt and anger?

Then last night, I watch the Oprah Winfrey show *Women with Wings* about abuse in childhood and I cry uncontrollably as I feel again the pain of my abusive father. The violence, the ugliness of his behaviour, the nastiness of my mother's counter-attacks.



Why should the pain from forty years ago surface in my life now? Is it because Rob reminded me so much of my father and my brother?

\*\*\*

There have been many more dreams, most of them about houses and I seem to be dreaming about building a lot. As though I am looking for a different Self. Doesn't Jung say dreams about one's house are dreams about one's self?

\*\*\*

My birthday, 26 February 1998

That one builds up a certain social standing and ego with all its ramifications and implications, security, confidence, etc. And then spends the remaining years of life focusing on issues that are important to one: make a movie/write a novel and then realise that it is a lifetime's dedication to achieve...what?

A greater pandering to the whims of that gargantuan monster called capitalism which has to be fed all the time? By producing another movie/novel, and another, and another, each more brilliant than the last, until one is completely dried up.

What is my energy about, my precious energy, other than to give it all back? To causes I deem worthy, until I have given as much as I have received. Knowing that my life was not about giving to a family, but giving what I have to give to those who want to hear. When at sixty onwards I have given everything I have had, then I would have lived. Is it a kind of death wish?

No. To be worthy of death - then you have lived!

\*\*\*

So, I have built the smaller, safer house I wanted, I have honed my life down to the essentials so as to live according to the principle of 'elegant frugality'. I have realised that formal studying is no longer for me.

I am writing the articles I always wanted to write, I have been taking healthy walks for a year, my thyroid has been cured after 25 years of 'fiery drive' and still something seems to be lacking. Love. But not of the hectic, physical kind. A more spiritual love, more giving, broader altogether.

\*\*\*

Why has it always been such an issue for me to write when I know that I have so much to say? Is it because I have to put thoughts in order when I prefer an outpouring with no holds barred? What outpouring of emotion has become such an urgent mission for me?

I am completely overwhelmed by so much emotion: all the anger that has been in me for years has me at its mercy. As if the dark side of Neptune – which I call Poseidon - is forcing me to let go of my ego and move to more spiritual levels.

Do what you need to do. Be creative. Make things. Rearrange your house. Build your conservatory. Do your dolphin mosaic. Go and live at the coast. Observe Poseidon, but don't get entangled in his turmoil.

Later that day at Emmarentia Dam

The film *As good as it gets* wasn't showing as I expected this afternoon. So I am sitting under a most nurturing weeping willow, looking at the geese and ducks on the quiet water and I've just realised that trees and lakes and geese are "as good as it gets."

There is nothing better than nature for my soul. It is like being in the presence of God.



*Under a wild fig tree.*

In my dream last night, a voice says to me: "I will make you a star in the firmament." And I think, half awake, how so many mortals who had suffered were turned into stars by the gods.

When I am awake, I feel how wonderful it is to know you're going to be a star, not in the papers or in the movies, but in the firmament. One that shines brightly for all humanity. Isn't that the most precious star of all?

\*\*\*

How I flew through the skies last night, enveloped in the brightest light imaginable! I had just read *Anatomy of the Spirit* and was wondering whether I would ever let go of

my addictions when I had the dream. At first, I was very restrained by illness or other afflictions, then suddenly, I took off. It was exhilarating and I wondered whether I was dying. “No, you are living,” came a voice. “Really living.”

Perhaps it was these feelings of really living and experiencing things first-hand rather than thinking about them that led to *The Poseidon Adventure*:

It was one of those spontaneous decisions: to go on a horse trail although I had never been on a horse. It was something I had always wanted to do, to become one with the horse, like Chiron the Centaur, and gallop on the beach, the wind blowing in our manes. Horses seemed so muscularly masculine, so fierce and powerful.

“One day, I shall ride with the Mongols,” I said years ago, expressing a deep seated desire to become like the Mongolian riders who seem to take on the qualities of the thundering animals beneath them.

And so I found myself, not in Outer Mongolia, but 14 kilometres outside Port Alfred, waiting for horses on the earlier trail to arrive.

I was smoking more than usual. In fact, that morning over breakfast I had been gripped by fear at the thought of losing control of the horse, of breaking a leg, or worse still, my neck. Had the daughter of a close friend not lost her life when the horse he had bought her for her 15th birthday threw her and broke her neck?

“Yes, I do want to go on the horse trail,” I assured my companion.

Although the excitement I had experienced the previous afternoon had been dampened by fear, I would not let on. When I felt as if I were being seized by a panic attack, I put it down to being dressed too warmly. I took off my cardigan and went out into the fresh air. Soon I felt better and I remembered my real reason for wanting to ride.

Because of Poseidon, the sea god whose passion was reflected by the way he rode his horses. When out of control, the horses pulling his chariot would charge through the sea, whipping up waves and unleashing terrible storms on mankind. Woe betide ships or coastal towns that experienced the brunt of his unbridled passion.

Yet, when in control, his horses would sweep across the waters and frolic in the air. If water is his lower element and air his higher element, as I recently learnt, then the only way to control Poseidon’s destructive behaviour is to think before acting. A question of head over heart.

As a Pisces, I am ruled by Poseidon, so I know the power of his passion only too well. I had just walked away from a tempestuous relationship with a man who was Poseidon personified. Or perhaps my projections turned him into Poseidon so that I may experience the immense power of that aspect in me?

The mad passion between us had turned into a massive tidal wave that could injure us both. I tore myself away from him. I say tore away, because the magnificent madness is what my heart really wanted. But not my head. And having controlled the Poseidon in me, I now felt ready to get onto the beast that was at the centre of my being and ride off into the sunset.

“Do you think it’s right for me to go on this trail when I’ve never been on a horse before?” I asked the trail leader, half hoping she would relieve me of this experience.

“You’ll be fine,” she said, matter-of-factly, too down-to-earth, perhaps, for someone called Celeste. “This is Gent,” she said patting a big black horse. “He’s the most gentle of the horses. He doesn’t seem to like the other horses though. He’s always snapping at them.”

Sounds like Poseidon’s horse to me, I thought.

“Put your foot in the stirrup and swing your leg over his back.”

I mounted Gent. She shortened the stirrups, gave me the reins and that was that. No instructions. No elementary lesson on how to handle a horse. Or on how to have the pad of your foot – rather than the middle of it as I had - on the stirrup.

I looked down at the ground, way below. My throat tightened. I wanted Celeste to stay with me, but she rode off to head up the trail. The horses, eight in total, started walking in file towards the sea not too far off.

“How do I control this horse?” I shouted to the rider in front of me.

“With the reins. Pull them tight and down towards your saddle to stop him. Otherwise just relax.”

It felt magnificent being so high up. Like a god. But when I looked down, I realised I was a mere mortal.

Gent was one of the bigger horses and I had hoped I’d get the smaller white one. But looking at the latter now, the way it pranced about as if it were raring to go, I was pleased with Gent.

Had I not said after my just-ended stormy relationship that I wanted a more gentle and more gentlemanly man? So Gent, even if he was black and very, very big, was the right horse for me.

Except that he walked very, very slowly. Celeste came riding to me. I was lagging behind.

“He’s a slow coach, so dig your heels into him.”

I dug harder.

“Harder,” she said.

I dug even harder.

“He won’t feel that,” she said. “Harder still.”

I now kicked my heels into his flanks. Suddenly Gent started trotting and I was bouncing up and down in the saddle, clutching the knob sticking out in front. I felt completely unstable, what with my feet nowhere near the ground.

“Oh my God,” I yelled. “How do I stop him?”

“When he catches up with the rest, he’ll slow down by himself. If he lags too far behind, he’ll suddenly break into a trot.”

“But I feel so unsteady up here,” I complained. “Does he know I’m frightened?” I asked, suddenly remembering stories of horses that test the skill of their riders.

“Yes, he does,” she answered honestly. “But he won’t do more than trot. Just relax and enjoy it.”

She’s right, I thought, realising how sexually aroused the bumping in the saddle made me feel. Perhaps if I relaxed more, I would enjoy it more, I speculated. Perhaps I could even get to a point where I could admire the scenery. After all, the sea in winter is one of my favourite sights.

The other riders were already on the beach. Gent decided to take a short cut to catch up with them. Which meant he had to jump down the three-quarter metre bank onto the beach. Panic set in. I was sure I was going to fall over his head and onto my own...

I managed to stay in the saddle.

Just when I had caught my breath, he started trotting. The other horses were running free now that they were on the beach. Gent obviously wanted to do the same. But he was going too fast for me. Much too fast.

I pulled the reins down and tight, but to no avail. All I could do was grab the front of the saddle, clutching the reins, and hang on for dear life. The bumping on the saddle was hurting me badly now. As badly as the realisation that I had absolutely no control over the horse. Nor over my fear. There was nothing I could do except wait for it all to end.

Suddenly Gent stopped. I called, terrified, to Celeste.

“She can’t hear you,” the rider in front reminded me.

“I want to walk,” I announced, my voice quavering. “I’ve had enough of this horse. I’m terrified.”

“You don’t look it,” the rider said. “The upright way you’re sitting on that horse looks like you’ve been on one before.”

Celeste came riding towards me.

“I’m going to walk the rest of the way,” I insisted.

“It’s too far,” she said.

“But this horse is completely uncontrollable,” I moaned. “He’s going berserk.”

“Because the others started trotting,” Celeste answered calmly, but still much too unsympathetic for me. I was beginning to hate her cool control.

“I’ve told them not to trot. You’ll be okay now. You’re doing well for a first-timer. In fact, you’re a natural,” she said and with that, she rode back to the front of the line.

Why were they all telling me I was handling the situation when I felt completely out of control? The only reason I didn’t look terrified was that I was wearing sunglasses. And the only reason I sat so upright was that I was rigid with fear.

But now that Gent was walking slowly again, I felt calmer. Perhaps I could handle him after all. We continued this way for ten minutes or so.

The beauty of the beach, all in tones of silver grey, soothed me. For a while I forgot my fear and my aching body.

“This is so beautiful,” I swooned. The riders in front looked like the Magnificent Seven riding off into a distant shimmer. How I longed to ride with them! But as much as I was filled with nostalgia for heroic scenes, and overwhelmed by the beauty of the beach, something was bothering me in the back of my mind: we were lagging behind again.

I considered digging my heels into Gent so that we could catch up. The problem was, I didn’t know how fast he would go. I had learnt, the longer the distance between us and the back riders, the wilder he ran. My pelvic bone was so battered and bruised by now that I couldn’t take any more rough treatment. So I sat tight, hoping Gent enjoyed the scenery too.

It was then that his body suddenly dropped to the left. A hole, I thought in that split second before he shot to the right and then flew ahead like The Charge of the Light Brigade. Right past the back riders, the in-between riders and the front riders.

In terror I let go of the reins and clung to his neck with all my might.

“Oh, Jesus! Get me off this horse!” I shrieked.

Help from above did come. From Celeste. “Grab the reins,” she shouted, less cool than before.

Easier said than done. I didn’t have the hands for it. Both were engaged in what had

become a matter of life and death: clinging to Gent. Perhaps this was it then, I thought. The end. Perhaps this was my fate: to die for having tempted the gods.

For no reason, Gent started walking again.

I was adamant now that I was going to get off. I had realised how dangerous it was and how stupid it had been of me to get onto a horse in the first place. I begged the nearest rider to hold the reins while I got off. But Gent snapped at his horse and we went 'round in circles.

"Don't get off now," came the gentle voice of the lady rider behind me. "Or you'll never get back onto a horse again."

"I don't ever want to get onto a horse again," I said. But I was too frightened now to get off, to do anything about my situation.

"We're almost there," she said. "I'll stay with you."

That calmed me. She was an experienced rider and I felt safe with her beside me. We walked back, way behind the others, but at least Gent did not feel left behind and continued slowly.

"Bastard," I thought. "You really wanted to throw me."

When I finally got off the horse, I felt as if I were going to faint. My legs were like jelly. My inner thighs were aching. My pelvis felt as if I had been ravished by a bull.

Celeste came to me and put her arm around my shoulder.

"You did so well! Everyone said you did so well."

"Thank you," I answered weakly, utterly humbled by my hubris.

I said goodbye and walked towards the fence. A wooden stile led over it to the side of the road where my companion had parked the car.

I climbed up the stile but couldn't swing my leg over the fence. I seemed to have developed a kind of lock-knee.

"Arr you awright lady?" asked a traffic cop who had hidden his car behind my companion's to lie in wait for speedsters.

"Yes, officer, I am awe right now," I sighed and swung my leaden leg over the fence onto the other side.

Had I not just learnt the right kind of awe for the gods?

The very sore experience I had had with Poseidon needed to be healed. And the only way to do that was to experience his more gentle side: the dolphin in him.

After all, Poseidon had two soul animals: the horse and the dolphin. When he brutally raped the dancing nymph with whom he had fallen in love, it was the dolphins that taught him to approach her more gently. And win her heart, in the end.

I had to go swimming with the dolphins. That I knew. Yet it would remain a thought until I could go to places where groups were taken on dolphin encounters. But somehow I didn't want to go with groups. Neither did I want to have an encounter. I wanted a spontaneous experience. A revelation. So I did nothing about the matter. Had I not learnt my lesson with Poseidon's horse?

Then, the next week, I found myself on the beach again. I had parked my car and was walking towards a hotel at the end of the bay, lost in thought.

Clouds of mist descended on the beach. There was no-one else around. How wonderful to have the whole world to myself, I thought, enraptured by the ethereality of the scene.

It was getting cold. I knew I wouldn't make it all the way to the hotel and back to my car again. Not in that weather.

I sat down on the sand and lit a cigarette, listening to the sea and gazing up at the sky. Everything was that soothing silver I adore.

Someone approached on a bicycle, leaving in the sand a deep cut that was soon healed by the sea. It was an older gentleman.

"Have you seen the dolphins?" he asked as he passed.

"Where?" I jumped up with excitement.

"Right in front of you," he shouted over his shoulder.

I looked at the waves. There they were: a dozen or so dolphins frolicking in the water. Goose pimples ran over my scalp.

It was as if the sea were the stage and the dolphins the actors in this play that was being enacted just for me. I watched them for a while, my heart leaping with them. Elated, I walked back to my car.

I drove to the hotel to watch the sun set on the bay. It was the perfect ending to The Poseidon Adventure. One that required a toast:

*Combine the yang with the yin  
To get to the third beyond the opposites  
Circle the triangle to contain the new whole  
Add the fourth element, then square the circle  
to get the philosopher's stone.  
Is this the stone I now want for a heart?  
The one that turns passion  
into compassion  
And all the wanting  
into a wanting for nothing.*



At the end of 1996, the Sun let the words flow from my pen, as if my mind were pouring out all its deepest thoughts into my journals.

Having moved so far into the realms within myself, it is difficult to operate in the day-to-day reality. As if I am on an underwater swim – that recurring childhood dream in which I glide through clear water as free as a fish - to my destiny. As if I were not here on earth, in everyday living, but in the depths of Neptune's world.

For the past year, I have been circling calm water - walking around the lake every day - when I know the real me is swimming in the dark depths. I admire the poetess Ingrid Jonker for having had the courage to walk into the sea, never to return. Did the documentary show any of that? No, because it was written by a man whose words may be powerful, but who never captured the deepest emotions in her. The undertow.

I want to experience all the elements on a far deeper and a much higher level now.

\*\*\*

Perhaps in a previous life what I lost completely was my integrity, because in this life, I seem to cause myself so much suffering, all in the name of integrity. I have been hurt so often because of what I see as a lack of integrity on the part of my friends.

According to society and my mother though, I am strange, selfish and eccentric. When all I am is acting out what my task on earth is: maintaining my integrity.

“In the end all one has to do is be true to one's self,” said Oscar Wilde. And I agree. The question is: Do I have the integrity to be true to myself no matter what?

\*\*\*

Dearest Mother,

To answer your question: all I am doing is putting an end to the Demeter/Persephone myth of our lives. Where I – for 30 years – returned to you for 6 months of every year, I shall now spend 12 months of every year with Hades. My fulfillment lies in the subconscious, what you and my sister so glibly refer to as my preoccupation with psychology.

It is my element. And between now and death, I want to be predominantly in my own element. And should it be read as some kind of a death wish, it is not. It is a life wish. Because the lives you lead, the lives of never living fully because you fear the subconscious is death. And I want to live!

Lots of love

\*\*\*



The Problem with Men.

How do you tell a man you're with that you've had experiences of life, of the elements, with your girlfriends that you will never have with him? Because when he is around, the focus is on the sexual. He has never been able to walk on beaches with you, to ride a wild horse, to get lost in a countryside you don't know, and just stay in the moment.

This is my main problem with men. They can never really play with a woman like her female friends can, because of their strong sexuality. They can't go for a walk on a beach or sit on a beach at midnight in a foreign country, take a taxi to who knows where, because there is always some sexual tension.

They can't be swept along by the rush of a river in the soothing shade of a forest with you walking in front of them, because they'll be looking at your backside, longing to be in bed. How their lack of adventure bores me. I find women far more adventurous, far more into the moment than any man I've known, other than Dante.

\*\*\*

Life is not about procreating. It is about realising how irrelevant one's being and consequently one's progeny is in the greater scheme of things. Another great lie of humanity unveiled.

I find it interesting how most thinking people I know have not had children. Have they also realised that we humans are not as important as we thought? Perhaps by not having children, we are saying 'no' to the system, we are not only defining boundaries; we are going beyond the boundaries of humanness because being human is so limited.

Perhaps we sense that beyond human boundaries, there is something else, and all the so-called aberrations of the social order, are just manifestations of humans who are no longer necessary in some greater movement into pure spirit.

\*\*\*

Who is it in me who gets so hurt? So stuck in pain that she can't get beyond it for months? Who is it who chooses suffering? Did I somewhere in my childhood form a perception that life is suffering, and which event, exactly, gave me that idea? The witnessing of the hell between my parents? The internalisation of all their fears and angers? My karma? What led, right in the beginning, to the first programming of the cell in me that is suffering?

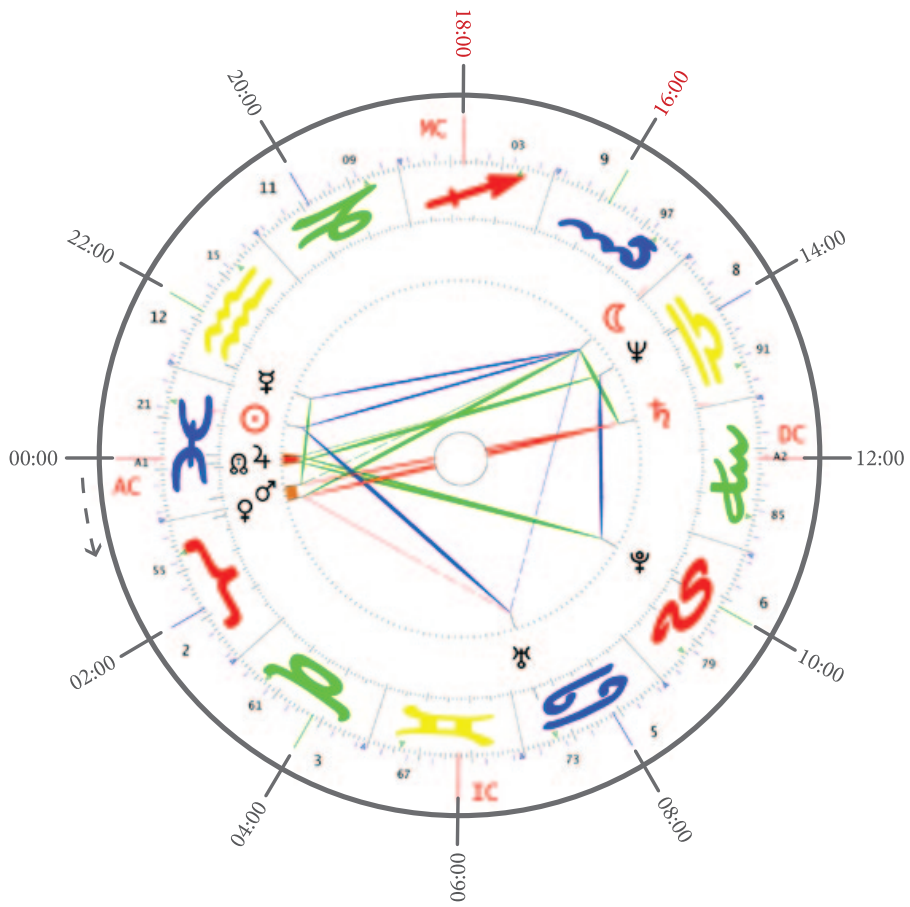
Is it true that suffering is the vale of soul making as James Hillman believes? I intuitively sense that he's right. If he is, how did I know it? Is it the same as the concept of original sin? And if sin is 'without God', is suffering then that moment when Adam and Even knew they had lost their closeness to God, that primordial state of at-oneness with the universe?

\*\*\*

No sooner had I written *Seeing* than life started showing me the dark side I didn't want to see, the shadow I had accepted as part of my psyche, but whose face I had still avoided. Then one day I saw the lies in its eyes, I felt the lust in its loins, the greed in its Gargantuan appetite, the snide expression of its monstrous ego.

During Jupiter's horizon-expanding energy at the end of 1998, exactly thirty-six years after I had first started traveling to other countries thanks to my stepfather who had initially introduced me to different climes and cultures, I went to Italy to visit him. I knew it would be the last time I'd ever see him, as described in *The Moon in the Man*. He died a year later.

Perhaps now that my age point was moving out of the sign of Scorpio my losses would be fewer, or so I thought. But Pluto, Scorpio's esoteric ruler, would still have a few scores to settle in the years to come.



16:00 - 18:00  
1999 - 2004

In 1999 Pluto was firing up my willfulness in protecting my property and my most prized possessions: my cats. The neighbour's cat went on a spree of viciously attacking my two, particularly my favourite, Tuxedo. A two-year long battle between neighbours ensued, resulting in a lawyer's letter and extremely unpleasant neighbourliness.

Had I been a Buddhist, I would have been able to detach from the issue, but as it involved my closest companions, my cats, I couldn't rise above my intense emotions. It was the nastiest period in my life and I had my fill of Scorpio's poison. It was also the loneliest time in my life, as I had no-one who could stand by me during these trials and tribulations.

What made matters worse was the fixity of it all: I felt stuck in a place of extreme conflict, both in myself and in my environment. I would remain there until my consciousness had moved through both the fixed eighth house and the fixed sign of Scorpio. And until I had let go of my most precious attachment.

During this time of anguish, the only support I got was from the North Node with its store of strength to 'go it alone.' Neptune then made me aware of having to get to a point where I could forgive and forget whatever had been done to me, or – as a nagging thought kept on reminding me – whatever I had done to myself.

Fortunately Mercury came to the rescue in 2000 with a major boost to my thinking and coming up with creative ideas. It was the most creative period in my life. It seemed to me as if all these ideas were being 'channelled' to me and I wondered whether my mentor with whom I'd lost touch when he emigrated to the East, had anything to do with it. I also had strange insights, for example, that we humans are irrelevant in the greater scheme of things. This could have been Sagittarius on the horizon, giving its bigger picture of life, expanding my understanding. Or perhaps it was Mercury playing tricks on my mind. He is, after all, also known as a trickster. Either way, I had a sense that life as I had known it up to then needed a drastic change of course.

Mars gave me the just-do-it energy. I bought a small restaurant, so as to have more time for my personal creative projects, rather than waste it in advertising. It was an enjoyable excursion into another world and I soon learnt the ropes. I felt I could breathe freely again. The sign of Sagittarius had indeed opened up new avenues out of the Scorpionic hellhole in which I had found myself for several years.

My relationship planets - Saturn, the Moon and Venus - brought gentle energies into my life with the Moon bringing to consciousness my desire to relate to people, not from the body or head, but from the heart. Then in 2001 Venus presented me with a gift: a dream which seems to indicate a healing of the wound I had felt so intensely at the Venus opposition in 1995:

At last! A dream worth recording: out of my left cheek, four shoots are sprouting. I know they are roses. It is also the birth date of my darling stepfather who taught me so much about love and life simply by being the way he was. Fun-loving and adventurous.

These roses with their thorns represent, I feel, the four aspects of the feminine: the Priestess, the Great Mother, the Lover and the Maiden in me. It would seem that they are now able to grow from me, from my more complete, feminine (left) side and produce their glorious beauty. That they are not without thorns seems apt: beauty needs to be protected as I discovered with Rob, lest it be trampled to death by insensitive feet (the proverbial doormat) or plucked by careless hands. Since my resolve to avoid such men, this wonderful dream has come to me. Already, I feel all 'rosy-cheeked'.

And then, two days later, on my darling father's second birthday (we never knew if it was on the 26th or the 28th) another dream... I am in a room with a man like Ray, as well as my friends, Minette, Lisa and Dyann. He and I are making love. He is gentle and loving and I am melted by his warmth and sensitive passion. (Ray represents the very refined man to me, with an impeccable bedside manner.)

Minette (the maiden) about whom Lisa (the lover) remarks: how ugly she has become. I know it is due to her descent – my descent - that this once beautiful angel fell from heaven. Dyann (the Great Mother), decides they should all leave me to be alone with Ray. She is slightly jealous, I feel. Like the Great Mother is? The Saturn to the Venus in me? Which leaves me - the Priestess? - to be with Ray.

I feel so whole and complete after these dreams. Did it take Rob's nails (as in the nails and fish cloth) to get me to this point? Or has my lifelong wound regarding men finally healed?

As my age point was in the ninth house of deeply experienced learning, 'coming from the heart' – a decision I had made in my journal at the time - would have to be lived, rather than just remain a theory. When I hit the low point of the ninth house, I experienced the pain of living from the heart. I had to have my darling cat put down.

Shortly after this excruciating loss, I met a lady who would become my close companion for many years. It seemed that I had learnt my lessons in personal relationships for I related to this friend entirely from the heart. It would be the best relationship in my life. Cupid had finally put away his painful arrow.

Then, in 2002, Uranus created a longing in me for another home: I unexpectedly bought an old farmhouse in the countryside. It was my fifth house and when I announced to a friend that it would be the last house I would ever buy, he just smiled in disbelief. After my bad experience with neighbours and the increasing crime in Johannesburg, I looked forward to one day living in a house that was ‘in the middle of nowhere’, yet safe. It had a sense of space around it with vast vistas of mountains - often snow-capped in winter. Unnerving to people who needed the security of high walls around them. And it was so quiet at night that you could hear the angels sing. It would be the perfect space for my sixties and seventies.

Later that year the Sun made my mental energies buzz and I put my heart and soul into writing about the loss of my stepfather, the loss of my mentor and of my much loved cat. I felt I was finally beginning to live from the heart. Perhaps I was growing in wisdom?

Then, in 2004, Jupiter induced more travel, now with my companion. We regularly went to different parts of the country, as well as neighbouring countries. It was a wonderful year, particularly after all the losses of the previous three years. But I sensed that my life in the city, even in the country, had to be re-invented.

The will to make a major change in my circumstances was strengthened by Pluto in 2005. I now sold my restaurant and house in Johannesburg and went to the East. Finding employment at my age had become increasingly difficult in a country with an ailing economy and the last thing I wanted was to return to advertising, yet again.

Fortunately the North Node showed me the way: to South East Asia. Travelling to this part of the world had never before been on my agenda, but then I found an entry in my journal dated six years earlier which reads: ‘It is time to move East.’ South East Asia was where my mentor had died and I believed his ‘teaching’ would continue there.

As I took the plane to Kuala Lumpur, the question on my mind was: What will remain of me once all those aspects which supposedly constitute my personality are no longer valid? What would my self be, stripped of its social mask? I had a habit of posing a question to myself before going to a foreign country, and I believed I always got an answer. Would ‘going east’ be a geographical direction, or a psychological one?

My consciousness was entering the realm of Being, the last quadrant in the chart, from the age of 54 to 72. It was now late afternoon.

And as the sun was setting in the west on my cosmic day, it was just beginning to rise in the east of my soul.



*In Cambodia.*

## 1. Overview of Age Point (AP) Progression in Astrological Psychology

AP Progression is one of the most intriguing aspects of Astrological Psychology. It represents the ever expanding consciousness of the individual from the beginning to the end of life. The AP is set in motion for its 360 degree movement around the astrological chart at the time and date of birth of an individual. Its starting point is the Ascendant on a natal chart (AC) from where it goes counter-clockwise on its developmental journey through the twelve houses which constitute specific environments in the outer world such as the workplace (6th house), close personal relationships (7th house) and the area of philosophical and humanistic thought (11th house).

The 360 degree circle is divided firstly into above and below (Figure 1), into two hemispheres with the lower half being that of collective consciousness and the upper half, of individual (or as Jung says, individuated) consciousness.

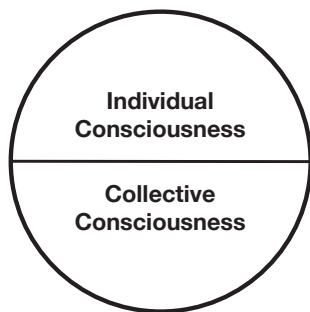


Figure 1.

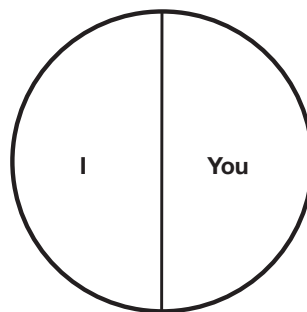


Figure 2.

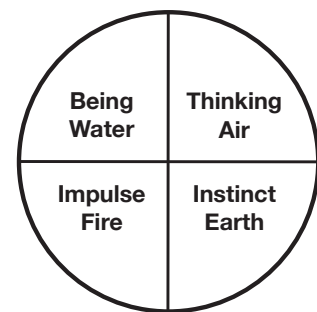


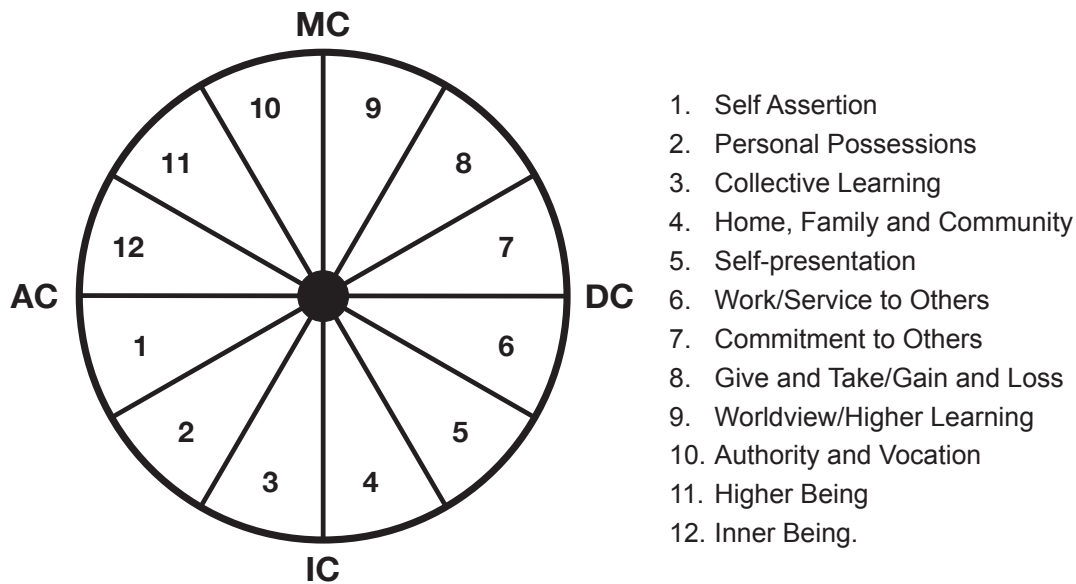
Figure 3.

The circle is also divided into the left and right hemispheres with the former representing the I and the latter the YOU (Figure 2). The progression of the individual's consciousness goes through four stages, each consisting of three houses each (Figure 3). The unconscious driving force behind planets in the first quadrant of Impulse is self-preservation. In the second quadrant of Instinct, the individual operates instinctively towards others (on the YOU side). In the third quadrant of Thinking, the unconscious drives of the first two quadrants are called into question and thus become more conscious. In the final quadrant, the planets facilitate Being in which the individual is on a journey of self-discovery. The four quadrants are also viewed as representing the elements of Fire, Earth, Air and Water.



Based on the Koch rather than the Placidus system, the houses are not all 30 degrees, but vary in size. It takes the AP six years to traverse a house, whether it's larger or smaller than 30 degrees. In houses less than 30 degrees, the AP moves more slowly than it does through large houses, giving the individual the impression that things are happening at a relaxed pace.

Throughout a lifetime, the psychological development of the individual takes place in the following areas:















The experiences in the houses will be different for every human being depending on the sign of the house and the planets residing in it. A Leonine first house will be different to an Aquarian first house, the latter asserting itself more circumspectly than the attention-seeking former. Should another planet, say Mercury, be in a Leonine first house, the individual will tend to express himself/herself via the medium of communication though not as philosophically as when it is in an Aquarian first house. Rather, the expression could take the form of public speaking.

In all houses, the AP will go through a balance point (BP) and low point (LP). At the BP, the energy required of the individual to operate in the environment (house) will be in balance with what he/she can deliver. At an LP, the individual has no energy to meet the demands of the outer world and withdraws into his/her inner world. This holding back is more difficult for extraverts who might experience the phase as a depression. However, the LP is considered a doorway to one's innermost being where visionary insights are possible. It is also seen as a gateway to the soul.

## The Signs

The journey around the chart is an experience of the specific energies of the signs. A house can be made up of one to three different signs, each of another element: fire, air, earth and water. In the upper hemisphere (above the AC-DC) the signs are the opposite to those in the lower hemisphere. Opposite signs are considered the shadow (hidden aspects) of each other. Where Aries puts itself first, Libra focuses on others. Where Pisces can dive into the depths, Virgo fears dipping a toe into the sea of fate. It prefers to tread carefully. And where Cancer puts family and community first, Capricorn wants to stand out as an individual.

Signs	Element	Motivation	Keywords, Positive and Negative
 Aries Ruler: Mars	Fire	Cardinal	Positive: Self-starting, achieving, enjoying challenges Negative: Selfish, pushy, doesn't see projects through
 Taurus Ruler: Venus	Earth	Fixed	Positive: Aesthetically oriented, talented craftsmanship Negative: Materialistic, too attached to people, stubborn
 Gemini Ruler: Mercury	Air	Mutable	Positive: Communicative, gathering facts and figures, witty Negative: Having only superficial knowledge, flighty
 Cancer Ruler: Moon	Water	Cardinal	Positive: Family and community-oriented, caring Negative: Dependent, clinging, too careful (takes no risks)
 Leo Ruler: Sun	Fire	Fixed	Positive: Having a strong presence, impressive, creative Negative: Hogging the limelight, grandiose, overbearing
 Virgo Ruler: Mercury	Earth	Mutable	Positive: Practical, thorough, renders good service Negative: Pedantic, can't see the wood for the trees
 Libra Ruler: Venus	Air	Cardinal	Positive: Amiable and affable, diplomatic, aesthetic Negative: Fearing aloneness, fence-sitting, excessive
 Scorpio Ruler: Pluto	Water	Fixed	Positive: Passionate, deep, alluringly mysterious Negative: Too intense emotionally, dark, dangerous
 Sagittarius Ruler: Jupiter	Fire	Mutable	Positive: Expanding horizons, traveling and exploring ideas Negative: Overoptimistic, high-handed, arrogant
 Capricorn Ruler: Saturn	Earth	Cardinal	Positive: Authoritative, successful, aiming high Negative: Too weighty, social climbing, emotionally arid




 Aquarius Ruler: Uranus	Air	Fixed	Positive: Free-thinking, innovative, inspired and inspiring Negative: Having fixed ideas, unrealistic, utopian
 Pisces Ruler: Neptune	Water	Mutable	Positive: Sensitive, creative, spiritual Negative: Hypersensitive, depressive, vague

### Planetary Energies

The planets are seen as archetypes, that is, psychic structures and energies which, as Jung demonstrated, symbolise the drives and motivations in human consciousness. The drive to communicate, for instance, is represented by Mercury; the motivation to broaden our vistas through traveling and higher knowledge by Jupiter. The keywords for the planetary energies in the following chart express just a grain of every planet's truth. Ten planets are used in the Huber method of interpretation (although the Sun is a star and the moon, the earth's satellite). Every planet is driven in a cardinal, fixed or mutable fashion; it operates in a highly active, more relaxing or constantly questioning manner.

### The Ego Planets: The Sun, the Moon and Saturn

These three planets are viewed as the mental, emotional and physical aspects of the ego which together give the individual a sense of self.

Planet	Motivation	Keywords, Positive and Negative
 The Sun	Cardinal	Positive: Store of personal energy and will, decision-maker, right will Negative: Egocentric, stubborn, willful
 The Moon	Mutable	Positive: Emotional actions and reactions, feeling nature, childlikeness Negative: Overreactions, neediness, childishness
 Saturn	Fixed	Positive: Physical sense, secure and structured, responsible, maternal Negative: Restrictive, limiting, fearful of unchecked development

### The Tool Planets

The ego planets have four tool planets at their service, acting out their agendas. During the first half of life, they act on a subconscious level, but as the AP moves into the third quadrant of Thinking, their actions might become conscious, depending on the individual. Their function

is to meet the survival needs of the ego so that it can develop and become more aware. Once awakened, the ego can use these tool planets consciously, thus directing their energies rather than letting them run the show.

<b>Planet</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Keywords, Postive and Negative</b>
♿ Mercury Hearing	Air	Mutable	Positive: Communicative, talkative, curious, teaching and learning Negative: Verbose, gossip-loving, noseey, mindless chattering
♀ Venus Taste	Earth	Fixed	Positive: Harmony, contact, lover of the arts, female libido Negative: Compromising, cloying, hedonistic, promiscuous
♂ Mars Smell	Fire	Cardinal	Positive: Active and reactive, productive, male libido Negative: Overactive, overburdened, philandering
♃ Jupiter Sight	Water	Mutable	Positive: Gets the bigger picture, judicious, optimistic, experienced Negative: Wears rose-coloured spectacles, arrogant, authoritarian

### **The Transpersonal Planets ♃ ♆ ♇**

Uranus, Neptune and Pluto transcend the ego planets and thus operate on a transpersonal, unseen level. They represent our drives to be all we can be: Uranus, in terms of creative intelligence, innovation and freedom of ideas; Neptune in the context of unconditional love and spirituality, and Pluto as regards the skillful application of transpersonal will and transformations that lead to a higher purpose in life and the quest for human perfection.

If the transpersonal planets make aspects to the Sun, Moon and Saturn, these personal planets have a link to the higher world of greater consciousness.

### **The Age Point (AP) and Aspects**

When the AP encounters a planet on its travels around the chart, the planet's archetypal energy will be experienced at its most concentrated. As the AP moves around the chart, it forms different aspects with this planet which can facilitate or block the expression of the energy in question. Aspects are red, blue or green with each colour indicating a different mode of influence.

<b>Colour</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Qualities</b>
Red	Cardinal	Action-oriented, challenging, energising
Blue	Fixed	Passive, receptive, maintaining the status quo
Green	Mutable	Constantly changing, unfolding, learning

Empirical research done by Bruno and Louis Huber over many years has confirmed that only aspects of 30 degrees provide insights into the character and life of an individual. This means after the intense experience of a conjunction, the AP will make an aspect to the same planet every six years, i.e. after 6, 12, 18, 24, 30 and 36 years when it is 30, 60, 90, 120, 150 and 180 degrees respectively away from the planet in question. Furthermore, the latter might be connected to other planets which are thus also affected by the AP.

<b>Degrees</b>	<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Colour</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
0	Conjunction	Orange	Essential energy of the planet
30	Semi-sextile	Green	Informative (not in great depth), becoming aware
60	Sextile	Blue	Harmony-seeking and creating, compromising
90	Square	Red	Activating, unleashing energy as in a spurt of growth
120	Trine	Blue	Resourceful, bounteous, abundant
150	Quincunx	Green	Questing, decision-making, longing
180	Opposition	Red	Countering, blocking energy

### **The AP and Aspect Patterns**

When the AP conjoins a planet which is linked to one or more other planets in the natal chart, the aspect figure - triangular, quadrangular or linear – is affected. These aspect patterns indicate underlying, hidden motivations. It's what drives the individual on a subconscious level. How it creates motivation depends on the colours of the aspect figures, as well as on their shapes.

If the aspect figure is linear, it suggests a drive for action, often for action's sake, particularly when the aspects are red. If it has a quadrangular shape, it indicates a motivation to maintain stability and security, both physically and emotionally. And if it's triangular in shape, it usually points at a need for change and growing awareness. The Hubers have researched more than thirty different aspect patterns over a period of forty years and found that they demonstrate specific

motivations such as achieving, learning, relaxing, seeking, etc. Their book *Aspect Pattern Astrology* discusses these structures in detail.

*One Cosmic Day* isolates individual structures from my natal chart for clarity, yet they don't always stand alone. Often they are linked to other aspect structures, both giving to and receiving from them.

## 2. FURTHER READING

Hopewell, J. and Llewellyn, R.: *The Cosmic Egg Timer. A practical introduction to Astrological Psychology*. (Hopewell, 2004)

Huber, Bruno and Louise: *Aspect Pattern Astrology*. (Hopewell, 2005)

*LifeClock*. (Hopewell, 2006)

*Moon Node Astrology*. (Hopewell, 2005)

*The Astrological Houses*. (Weiser, 1998)

*The Planets and their Psychological Meaning*. (Hopewell, 2006)

Huber, Louise: *Reflections & Meditations on the Signs of the Zodiac*.  
(American Federation of Astrologers, 1984)

One cosmic day equals 72 years, the time it takes the Self to sever bonds with its Little Ego. This memoir focuses on the first 54 years in the life of the author who kept journals and wrote stories about whichever themes and ideas entered her mind.

Viewed through the lens of Astrological Psychology's Age Point Progression which traces the development of an individual's consciousness, it looks at her fascinating journey to different areas of consciousness as reflected in her life and in her writing.



After studying European languages and literature and then working as a copywriter in advertising for several decades, Wanda Smith qualified in Astrological Psychology, the school of astrology founded by Bruno and Louise Huber in Zurich. This provided the context within which she could look at the subtext to the text of her life and her writing. Astrological Psychology's Age Point Progression became the inspiration for One Cosmic Day. As an AstroMemoir, it looks at how the Sun, the Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto all had a hand in her life. Wanda Smith lives in South Africa.