

The Iris Asteroids Report
Rainbow Messenger of the Gods and Goddesses
by Roderick Kidston

for

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since the beginning of the 19th Century, astronomers have been aware of the existence of asteroids, but astrologers have only been using them as part of the horoscope since 1973. And even so, only a small number of astrologers actually use the asteroids when reading charts for people. This is in large part because the asteroids (or dwarf planets, as some are recently re-defined astronomically) are not well understood, except for the first four to be discovered: Ceres, Pallas, Juno and Vesta. But now, the Iris Report aims to change all that! Here you will find interpretations for twelve major dwarf planets and asteroids, and their impact in the natal chart. They add balance, detail and depth of meaning to astrological interpretation.

Most of the dwarf planets and asteroids found in the Iris Report are named for classical goddesses rather than gods, and this is partly in order to balance the excess of masculine energy that a purely planetary astrology reveals. Most of you will know that the ten 'planetary' factors used in standard astrological interpretation are the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto. Many astrologers also include the planetoid Chiron to this list of ten, making eleven. But if the Sun and Moon are considered primal masculine and feminine energies respectively, then out of the remaining nine god symbols listed, there is only one goddess, Venus. This hardly represents the yin-yang balance of either physical Nature or what is taught about the spiritual realms.

(The issue of the 'demotion' of Pluto to dwarf planet status does not have any real impact on the philosophical issues being discussed here, or the current 'promotion' of Ceres from asteroid to dwarf planet status, and the possible elevations of Pallas, Vesta and Hygiea. The power of the divine archetypes standing behind astrological symbols is more significant than what is or is not defined astronomically as a planet, dwarf planet or asteroid.)

The other reason for choosing certain asteroids or dwarf planets over others is that several of the early heavenly bodies discovered show a resonance with the way that the culture was evolving at the time, which in turn reflects the ongoing evolution of consciousness in the material realm of the Earth. The dwarf planet and asteroids Ceres, Pallas, Juno, Vesta, Astraea, Iris and Hygiea are all especially relevant in this regard.

The other asteroids selected for the Iris report are Diana and Apollo (additional lunar and solar symbols that show the primal life energies working in a larger social context); Proserpina; and symbols of the two great gods not represented by planets in the solar system: Bacchus and Hephaistos. These all together complete a kind of balanced listing of archetypal energies which astrologers can use to make sense of a horoscope.

One of the ways of deciding which asteroids are useful is found by considering the concept of the energy dyad. The Sun-Moon dyad of archetypal masculine and feminine energy is very well known to astrologers, as is the desire and love dyad symbolized by Venus and Mars. But other possibilities are proposed in the table below:

Yang symbol

 SUN: archetypal masculine/yang
 life energy, spirit
 MERCURY: masculine/yang intelligence,
 "left brain", data collecting,
 and analytical mind
 MARS: masculine desire, dynamic
 activity, outward acting pleasure
 JUPITER: Sky Father, male
 protector and nurturer,
 promoter of ethics/abundance
 SATURN: masculine energy of
 tradition, structure, and
 material good order
 CHIRON: masculine energy of healing-
 transformation and purification
 URANUS: masculine change agent
 and consciousness raiser
 NEPTUNE: masculine passivity and
 sublime/altered states
 PLUTO: masculine energy of primal
 power and transformation
 HEPHAISTOS: masculine principle of
 work, order, integration and
 disintegration
 APOLLO: additional solar symbol,
 creative maturity
 BACCHUS: masculine symbol
 of dark primal passions,
 escapism and individualism,
 and inspirational power

Yin symbol

 MOON: archetypal feminine/yin
 life energy, soul
 IRIS: feminine/yin intelligence,
 "right brain", intuitive
 and synthesizing mind
 VENUS: feminine desire, receptive
 activity, inward drawn pleasure
 CERES: Earth Mother, female
 nurturer and protector,
 promoter of ethics/abundance
 VESTA: feminine energy of
 tradition, structure, and
 material good order
 HYGIEA: feminine energy of healing-
 transformation and purification
 PALLAS: feminine change agent
 and consciousness raiser
 PROSERPINA: feminine passivity and
 sublime/altered states
 JUNO: feminine energy of primal
 power and transformation
 ASTRAEA: feminine principle of
 work, order, integration and
 disintegration
 DIANA: additional lunar symbol,
 emotional maturity
 BLACK MOON LILITH: feminine symbol
 of dark primal passions,
 escapism and individualism,
 and inspirational power

With this table you find a balanced grouping of archetypal divine energies which have significant astrological influence. The Iris Report gives you the opportunity, for the first time, to add twelve asteroids to the major factors usually considered in the chart - the Sun and Moon, the planets, Chiron and Lilith - and thereby get a much more complete picture of how the astral energies were constellated at the time of birth for the chart you are reading, whether it is your own or someone else's.

Of course, the balance suggested by these dyads, or pairings, does not mean that the yin and yang symbols are identical - Venus and Mars are hardly the same, after all! But there is a sense in which the two planets or asteroids involved represent divine archetypes whose energies complement each other, and work something like the positive and negative charges of an electrical current. One end of the archetypal 'pole' is outgoing and active, or 'masculine'. The other end of the archetypal pole is incoming and receptive, or 'feminine'.

In each of the twelve mini-chapters that follow, a particular asteroid (or dwarf planet, depending on the new astronomical definitions!) is given the focus of attention and related to all the other major elements of the horoscope, including those two important angles the Ascendant and Midheaven, and also the Nodes of the Moon. They are listed not in any order of importance, but according to the order in which they were discovered, from Ceres first to Hephaistos last.

So - let Iris, the rainbow messenger of the goddesses, add her many colors to your chart and complete the work of Mercury, the messenger of the gods.

For the benefit of astrologers and students of astrology, information used to produce this report is given below:

Sun	4	Sco	03	Ceres	29	Vir	25
Moon	24	Leo	47	Pallas	7	Vir	42
Mercury	13	Sco	53	Juno	13	Lib	58
Venus	18	Vir	04	Vesta	26	Sag	23
Mars	3	Cap	45	True Lilith	17	Tau	48
Jupiter	1	Vir	22	Astraea	19	Sag	47
Saturn	7	Ari	09	Iris	27	Lib	51
Uranus	27	Vir	12	Hygiea	14	Cap	41
Neptune	23	Sco	21	Proserpina	23	Ari	28
Pluto	21	Vir	57	Diana	1	Ari	44
True Node	27	Ari	55	Apollo	10	Lib	07
Asc.	27	Can	53	Bacchus	5	Cap	25
MC	16	Ari	45	Hephaistos	12	Gem	40

Tropical Koch Daylight Savings Time observed
 GMT: 04:16:00 Time Zone: 5 hours West
 Lat. and Long. of birth: 33 N 44 56 84 W 23 17

Aspects interpreted:

Conjunction	: 5	Deg	00	Min	Sextile	: 3	Deg	00	Min
Opposition	: 5	Deg	00	Min	SemiSquare	: 2	Deg	00	Min
Square	: 4	Deg	00	Min	Sesequiquadrate	: 2	Deg	00	Min
Trine	: 4	Deg	00	Min					

Chapter 1: Ceres

Ceres, lady of loving-kindness

Ceres symbolizes the fertility and abundance of the corn goddess, an aspect of the great Earth Mother. Ceres was the Roman deity; Demeter the earlier Greek goddess of grain and fertility in the classical tradition. With the new astronomical definitions of the various bodies in the solar system, Ceres the former asteroid is now considered to be a 'dwarf planet'. In astrology, the divine archetype Ceres bestows the blessing of loving-kindness. She distils her energy gently in the horoscope, and does not make a fuss.

Ceres helps you to see the world through kindly eyes, and to enjoy what is natural and simple and good. With her help, you grow in compassion for others, and gain in empathic understanding. She promotes generosity of spirit, and helps you to help other living beings: people, animals, and the natural world. Her position shows something about how you find ways to look after other people, and seek to bring out the best in them. Ceres nurtures and educates, in the best sense of those words. And on a larger worldly scale, she promotes the good of ordinary people, helps humankind to build democracy, and fosters respect and care for the environment as a whole. Her darker side tends to smother love and games involving manipulation or rejection. However, her more noble urge prompts everyone towards leading a good life, which facilitates the correction or elimination of such unattractive qualities.

Ceres in Virgo:

Ceres is very comfortable in Virgo, her natural domain. You have an affinity with the natural world and could be a 'greenie', or drawn to holistic studies and health practices. You are basically a very practical person and a reliable source of advice for those close to you. Regardless of your work or worldly status, you tend to find yourself offering service in some way, and will consider serving others is a high moral value. Since you operate with a quiet efficiency, your good efforts may not always be obvious, but you know you've done well, which matters more than any showiness. You are good at making connections and readily make sense of the chaos in the lives of others, especially at work. Just be sure you don't always take second place, or get lost in the pushy throng!

Ceres in 3rd house:

The Ceres instinct to support, teach and mentor finds a very easy expression in the house of communication. Your strong practical intelligence finds numerous outlets in the world, but you are likely to be happiest when exchanging ideas with people. Whether passing on the latest gossip, or fostering a work or life skill, you take pleasure in seeing ideas going round and taking on multiple forms. You have strong networking abilities and can be very good at bringing people together, pointing out common ground to those in dispute. Negotiation and conflict resolution are amongst your strengths, but you can have a low boredom threshold and need to stay engaged, seeing things through to their conclusion.

Ceres Conjunct Uranus, Orb: 2 deg. 13 min.

There's something of the zany parent or right-on reformer in your style. Whether wacky mom or mad professor, you excite people with your electric energy and ability to help them see the world with new eyes. Eureka! They got it. Now what's next? You move fast, but may lose others if you skip too many steps. Slow down and smell the roses.

Ceres Sextile Asc., Orb: 1 deg. 32 min.

Your ability to endow all you do with Ceres qualities of loving care and practical support gives you deep satisfaction and is a source of strength in your dealings with the world. People come readily to you for advice and comfort, and you seldom turn anyone away, but will need to guard against exploitation and exhaustion if you give too much.

Ceres Opposition Chiron, Orb: 3 deg. 25 min.

Your desire to help people to understand their difficulties, get over the pain, and find ways of coming out on top, is very worthy, but it can get you into trouble. You need to find the right ways to educate or enlighten, or you risk alienating people by coming on too strong. Gently does it - do as you would be done by! And don't smother, either!

Ceres Square Vesta, Orb: 3 deg. 02 min.

From time to time you encounter significant challenges presented by clashes of duty. Which comes first, work or family? Can you have it all, and is it worth having anyway? What do you value most and why? As you un-knot these questions you will slay your doubts and get a clear focus, in turn allowing you to provide real support to others.

Ceres Opposition Diana, Orb: 2 deg. 19 min.

You may feel driven to reject childhood patterning in the quest for a more autonomous life, but this can provoke challenge and grief in the process. Establishing emotional maturity and independence are vital, but paradoxically you may also face challenges in allowing a similar freedom to others. Honor difference, and live and let live.

Ceres SemiSquare Mercury, Orb: 0 deg. 32 min.

The urge to connect with people, and to keep the information exchange flowing, can sometimes overwhelm either you or your audience or both. You can't be everywhere at once, and should beware of confusing efficiency with officiousness. Get practical about communication, and maintain a focus: a scattergun approach gets you nowhere.

Chapter 2: Pallas

Pallas, lady of consciousness-raising

Pallas was a title of the great Greek goddess Athena, warrior, strategist and wisdom seeker. Her Roman counterpart was Minerva. The asteroid (perhaps eventually to be classified as dwarf planet) Pallas brings gifts of understanding, insight and skillfulness, and helps you to take things to a higher level than you might have thought possible. The energies of Pallas often seem to appear suddenly in the horoscope, and she can present in a surprising, even shocking, way. These upheavals are necessary sometimes in order to shake you out of your complacency and get you moving.

Pallas helps you to see much more clearly, and although this can involve pain, it is for the best in the long run.

Illusions are stripped away and you comprehend at a deep level the lessons brought by this asteroid. You grow in intellectual dexterity and sometimes manual dexterity as well, and learn how to approach issues more strategically. Just as Pallas improves the linkages in your brain, so she also helps you to create better linkages in the world at large. Pallas can prompt you to respond very coldly, too, so you need to be careful of her chilly intellectualism and its snare of retreat into airy, abstract absolutes. But Pallas also promotes equality and cooperation, and helps you to help others in clear-sighted and astute ways. She assists you to act more fairly towards people, and to fight for fairness in turn. Pallas is a true raiser of the level of consciousness, and ultimately she helps you to think and act in much better, more skilful ways than you might ever have imagined possible.

Pallas in Virgo:

The Virgo drive for efficiency and wholeness provides a fertile soil for the strong mental processes of Pallas to seed. You can be an 'operator', in both the best and worst senses of that word, depending on the clarity and integrity of your intentions and actions. Negatively, you can manipulate your way into and out of anything; positively, you have the capacity to work your way systematically through the most complex challenges, the kind that defeat less disciplined and thoughtful folk. Your mind is a sensitive and powerful instrument that enables you to see both the wood and the trees, depending on your focus. This enables you to become a very effective change agent, because your innovations are grounded in practical realities, and an awareness of others.

Pallas in 2nd house:

Your values and approach to gathering resources can be a bit different when Pallas is part of the picture. New ideas and technologies can be grist to your mill, and a source of income as well as intellectual delight. You tend either to be indifferent to worldly success or a touch obsessed with proving your worth, especially your originality and cleverness. Above all you value the mind and its immense potential, and at your best you are a true wisdom seeker whose lofty idealism can take you far, literally and metaphorically. More prosaically, you can be a dab hand with computers and gizmos of various kinds, or turn your skill with handicrafts into a business instead of, or as well as, a hobby.

Pallas Trine Mars, Orb: 3 deg. 57 min.

You are able to create considerable success from your finely honed strategic instincts and ability to fight life's battles in an astute and fair way. Ambition is strong in you, and you don't like to lose, but because you tackle issues or people cleverly, you don't lose very often. And when you do, you dust yourself off and start again. Nothing stops you!

Pallas Trine Bacchus, Orb: 2 deg. 17 min.

You are very in tune at your best, and can receive the most wonderful flashes of inspiration to guide your works. Although you go your own way, people don't tend to mind and instead admire your independence and zaniness. Life's a bit of a roller coaster ride, but that's how you like it, and you'll find drama if drama doesn't find you.

Pallas Sesquiquadrate Proserpina, Orb: 0 deg. 46 min.

The great learning experiences of your life involve a willingness to see things clearly, steadily and whole. You have a tendency to resist the transformative events that catalyze this understanding, especially as they have a way of erupting when you least expect them. The trick is to calm down, go with the flow, and allow it to unfold and make sense.

Chapter 3: Juno

Juno, lady of personal power

Juno symbolizes the primal power of the original Great Mother Goddess, whom the Greeks called Hera. The goddess Hera's supreme position was lost when the sky and warrior gods of patriarchal tribes supplanted the deities of the old agricultural proto-civilization. Hera became the wife of Zeus and patroness of marriage, a much narrower remit of power. Her Roman counterpart was Juno, wife of Jupiter. Although most astrologers read the asteroid Juno primarily as a symbol of relationships and the passions and power struggles entangled in them, there is a much deeper significance to this asteroid in your chart.

Juno is above all about personal power, where you find it, and how you use or misuse it, or fail to use it at all. People often struggle to express their Juno energy, perhaps because the world still struggles collectively with what feminine energy really means. It is not simply about sugar and spice and all things nice. Juno is often not very 'nice' at all, and challenges you to wake up to what you want and find a skilful way of shaping your life path. Juno shines a light on inequalities and demands fairness, or - if she feels thwarted - retreats into angry sulking and defeat. Her most blunted and distorted energies manifest as arrogance and self-entitlement, or in envy and spite; but at her best she bestows a kind of truly royal authority, grounded in maturity and deep understanding.

Juno demands you take responsibility, first of all for yourself. She also teaches you lessons about your values and helps you to transform anything primitive, selfish or self-defeating into a mature and empowering way of being in the world. Juno's great gift is precisely this: empowerment. As a corollary, she can help you make money or gain material successes along the way. And she can give you great style and a powerful presence, too!

Juno in Libra:

Issues of power and equality in relationships tend to get you more than a little hot and bothered. For someone who talks peace and harmony, you can become remarkably ornery when your passions are engaged. When you are able to preserve calm and charm, you are very effective in building linkages between people, negotiating or arbitrating. You certainly like to talk, and keeping the ideas circulating also matters to you. You feel empowered when you sense you are modeling fairness and justice and building harmony wherever you go. But you are also sensitive to slights and your own balance is easily upset. Remember always to do as you would be done by, and all will be well. Keep a clear focus, too, as prevarication never gets anyone anywhere in the long run.

Juno in 3rd house:

You find power in the resources of your mind, which are truly formidable once you have realized what you can do with them. At first this may present something of a challenge, and either school or family influences, or both, may have been problematic in making room for your full self expression. But you can't remain stuck in the past unless you want to stagnate there, and your whole-of-life education is ultimately up to you. It is important to find smart, interesting people you can exchange ideas with, and maybe to live in a neighborhood with a happening vibe. The more you think and learn and experience, the deeper and richer your ideas become, and you can make a truly valuable contribution.

Juno Conjunction Apollo, Orb: 3 deg. 51 min.

Once you are sufficiently confident of your capacity, you are able to kindle splendid creative fires and shine a light in some area of endeavor. Your main pitfall is pride, and becoming too attached to image rather than substance. But if you do the work, whatever it is, you have the potential to unleash great technical skills and

achieve real success.

Juno Trine Hephaistos, Orb: 1 deg. 18 min.

You are driven by strong fires of inner passion, and usually find benign channels for them. Practical works of any kind are excellent, as they also open up the possibility of worldly success. You do take pride in your good sense and skills, and just need to watch out for becoming too concerned with the appearance of doing well over the reality.

Juno Opposition MC, Orb: 2 deg. 47 min.

You have a huge fund of ambition driving you to the top, and a real potential to get there. But you need to know what you want and have a realistic plan for achieving it. This is where it gets tricky, as conflicting obligations can get in the way, and you need to deal fairly with everyone and everything in your life if you want the best results.

Juno Square Hygiea, Orb: 0 deg. 43 min.

The blazing intensity within you is a source of purifying energy and power, but it can be too much at times, and end up seething unconsciously or get suppressed. Yet there is a healing power here which you can channel into your work, and call on to become the best you can be, contributing somehow to greater wholeness for you and your environment.

Chapter 4: Vesta

Vesta, lady of focused service.

The asteroid Vesta constellates a very pure energy of dedication to a higher purpose. In worldly terms this often steps down to more ordinary, everyday realities: the willingness to work hard, the willingness to put personal preferences aside to deal with issues at hand or to assist others in need, and above all the ability to focus intently on something in order to get it done.

It is worth remembering that the Roman goddess Vesta was lady of the hearth, and the Latin word for hearth is 'focus'. Where you put your focus you are, in some sense, kindling a fire in a hearth and tending it, just like the Vestal Virgins looked after the sacred hearth whose fire symbolized the life of the whole collective. Vesta helps you to maintain your focus for as long as it takes to fulfill your obligations or to get the work done. With her help, you become less egoistic and more willing to put others ahead of yourself. But she also teaches you how to do this appropriately - turning into a doormat is hardly going to work well in the long run, either. You can become rather obsessed, too, where Vesta goes, and become righteous about issues with a moral dimension. You need to go a bit easily and honor difference whilst maintaining your own standards. Leading by example is better than grandstanding, and Vesta teaches you to work away quietly, without fuss, and achieve the sense of deep satisfaction that comes from recognizing and doing the right thing. You don't have to advertise this - virtue is its own reward!

Vesta in Sagittarius:

Quiet, efficient Vesta can take a while to get used to the expansive energies of Sagittarius. Vesta likes detail and concrete tasks; Sagittarius prefers the big picture and no restraint. Once you learn how to reconcile these two different energies you can be one of those rare people who see not only the wood, but also each of the trees in it. But until you've got that sorted out you can be a bit all over the place, totally focused on some little thing one minute, the next breaking out and using all your zealousness to demand absolute freedom. Perhaps the best solution is to find some line of work that opens up wide fields of opportunity, sown with idealism, whilst easing yourself into a corner where you can deal with the little things too. And as you know, the little things mean a lot.

Vesta in 5th house:

There are several ways for you to express this energy, and perhaps the most risky is to take life too seriously and neglect to have fun. You may have been squashed a bit in childhood and feel uncertain about how to let loose your wild, creative side, or you may simply have internalized an austere work ethic to an excessive degree. In any case, the best thing is to heed the advice of Mary Poppins, take a spoonful of sugar, and turn your job(s) into a game. The other possibility is that you could play the full-on hedonist out of rebellion. But you're not a rebel through and through: you just want to be seen, or heard. Once you focus your creative gifts there is nothing you can't achieve with them!

Vesta Trine Moon, Orb: 1 deg. 36 min.

You approach relating with a high seriousness and a certain degree of emotional control. You are not cold, but do have a sense of responsibility for others, and for your interactions with them. Game playing is not your way. You value honor and commitment and model such good behaviors in your own quiet, unassuming but strong style.

Vesta Trine True Node, Orb: 1 deg. 32 min.

You find it easy to work hard, and draw strength and satisfaction from your ability to deliver the goods, as they say. And you can usually put a limit on worrying too much about what 'they' say, because you know how to balance what 'they' want with what you want. This is a rare gift which you can share with others who find such balancing hard.

Vesta Trine Proserpina, Orb: 2 deg. 55 min.

Despite the contradictions, you grow in strength and capacity from blending energies that are very concrete and realistic on one side (Vesta) and very otherworldly on the other (Proserpina). You have a talent for grounding your imagination and disciplining any passivity tendencies, and can model this for other less assured and confident souls.

Vesta Sextile Iris, Orb: 1 deg. 28 min.

Your imaginative responses to the world are empowered with a sense of possibility. You are very good at 'getting' people and their thoughts, and more abstract information as well. There is much of the practical idealist in you, and you have a potential gift for working in concrete ways to make the ideal a reality in the everyday world.

Vesta Square Uranus, Orb: 0 deg. 49 min.

Life has a roller coaster quality for you some of the time, and it is very important to stay flexible. You tend to be challenged either to let go of the past when need be, or to be more willing to preserve things instead of moving on: extremes don't work well in the long run. It's best for you to work at the cutting edge, maybe as a freelancer.

Vesta Square Chiron, Orb: 0 deg. 23 min.

Life challenges you to find work somehow geared to the future and to maximizing personal potential and development. Getting stuck in an ordinary rut is likely to make you suffer until you get energized enough to work through it. 'Onward and upward' should be your motto. Working in unusual, innovative or spiritual ways will yield the best results.

Chapter 5: Astraea

Astraea, lady of right judgment and integration

Astraea was a classical goddess of justice, whose symbol was the balanced scales. She presided over the moral sense of rightness and good order, and the poetic tradition relates that she was the last of the divinities to leave the world at the end of the Golden Age. Astraea was then translated into the heavens as the constellation Virgo. These elements of myth give you clues to the meaning of the asteroid Astraea in the horoscope. She is concerned with the integration and organization of things, bringing sometimes disparate elements together and finding the common links that join them up in the web of life. She helps you to focus on detail and understand the meaning of the fine print. She helps you to work both hard and well, and helps you to become more ordered and tidy in at least some aspects of your life.

Astraea can also help you to become quite high minded, whilst integrating into this spacious vision an ability to zero in and see all the small things that go together to make up the greater whole. She can stir up a compulsive quality, too, and stimulate an obsessive streak. This can cause a kind of splitting, which is another aspect of Astraea energy: the goddess who brings things together can also tear them apart. She does all this, ultimately, in the service of wholeness, and reveals those things it is time to clean up and get rid of, so that everything else can evolve into a more perfect form. Wherever Astraea goes, you are urged to get organized and get your act together - and become the best you can be!

Astraea in Sagittarius:

You are a visionary at best, with a spacious aerial view that takes in the whole world and sees in a glance every connection. At worst, your desire to take in everything means you have no focus and your energies are squandered in a scattergun way. There is a fervor to your nature which is perhaps best described by words like 'spiritual' or 'religious', though your object of worship may as easily be something sporting or worldly as divinely inspired. Your zest for life can be strongly attractive, but there are less energetic folk out there who may find you a bit full-on sometimes. Still and all, you're too busy having fun to waste much time on them. You'll take a risk if the payoff looks good, or just for the heck of it. You have a gift for stirring things up and making them happen.

Astraea in 5th house:

For all that Astraea tends to wear an unassuming demeanor, there's a little exhibitionist streak inside you, or at least, a small voice crying out for an audience: you need to be seen and heard and understood. Sometimes you just want a platform so you can strut your stuff, but you'll do best when you have something creative to offer, and then you can really have an impact. Even when you're operating quietly, there's something about you people tend to notice, sooner or later. You can have that most intangible of qualities, presence. But you can take your time getting to the stage of showing this. Perfectionism is your biggest pitfall, and can stifle self-expression. Go a bit easy on yourself!

Astraea Trine MC, Orb: 3 deg. 01 min.

You find strength and success from hewing a life path that is dedicated to achieving integration on as many levels as possible. Service with a capital 'S' is the name of the game: not servility, but recognizing that in doing your best for everyone, you do the best for yourself, too. This allows you to grow into a practical change agent in the world.

Astraea Trine Proserpina, Orb: 3 deg. 41 min.

Going deep is as natural to you as breathing. Okay, so sometimes you go to hell and back, but you do come back because you have a gift for organizing things around the centre of your being. You're a survivor, and can come up with practical strategies to help others to become survivors in turn. They trust you, because they know you know what's real.

Astraea Square Venus, Orb: 1 deg. 43 min.

The quest for harmony and integration is a strong driver for you, and helps to turn you into a connoisseur. That's fine, as long as it doesn't warp into being pedantic about taste, or neat-freak about order. Not to mention way too fussy about the ideal partner checklist. Let good taste guide your life, not tyrannize it! You catch more flies with honey.

Astraea Square Pluto, Orb: 2 deg. 10 min.

There's an intense, brooding streak in your nature, a tendency to bottle things up and seethe inside. But you need to watch what you think, because thoughts have wings, much like the butterfly wings that can mutate into tornadoes (chaos theory and all that). Use your powers of concentration to find the hidden stuff and bring it into healing light.

Astraea SemiSquare Sun, Orb: 0 deg. 43 min.

You have a tremendous capacity for getting it all together and making it work (whatever 'it' is). Indeed, this is one of the central themes of your life. But you could get off track if you get bogged down in petty details and start antagonizing people. Stay focused and practical, allow for different viewpoints, and practice being flexible.

Chapter 6: Iris

Iris, lady of the intuitive mind and illumination

In Greek myth, there were two divine messengers: Hermes (equivalent to the Roman god Mercury), and Iris. Some traditions suggest that Iris was the messenger of the goddess Hera (whose Roman equivalent was Juno), whilst Mercury served Jupiter. However you play with the myths, there was a feminine energy associated with communication as well as a masculine one. And modern neuroscience tells us there are masculine and feminine aspects to the brain, too.

Few astrologers have learned yet how to honor the great goddess whose archetype stands behind the 'feminine' brain and style of communication. That is why this asteroid report is named in honor of Iris! The symbol of Iris was the rainbow, and the Iris energies of the horoscope seem to encompass all the colors of the spectrum, all kinds of light: ultimately, the light of pure consciousness.

Mercury shows how you think and communicate in a more systems oriented, data gathering and sorting way. His energy is yang and outward directed. Iris, however, has yin energy and is receptive. She shows how you receive ideas, how you listen, how you intuit and empathize, and how you deal holistically with all the information thrown at you by living in the world.

Iris helps you to understand things at a deep level, and to grow in wisdom. She adds color and depth to the Mercury energies of the chart, and shows another avenue of expression. She helps you to meditate. At her very best, Iris helps you to find true illumination. There is a vastness and sublime beauty to Iris energy. Wherever she sits in your horoscope can be magical, as she helps your consciousness to expand and evolve.

Iris in Libra:

Fair play and balance are concepts that keep recurring in your consciousness. There is something very spacious and accommodating about your mind, and you find it pretty easy to listen to people and really hear them, a gift that can win you lots of friends and gain you lots of influence. The usual Libra caveat applies here, though: don't dither too much, even though you want to give due thought and weight to every idea and point of view. And you can't please all the people all the time, either, so sooner or later you need to come to a few decisions! But you do have charm, a true blessing, and a gift of insight into people and their pain. You can be a good counselor, because whilst you are attentive and sensible, you're also able to disentangle yourself from any excess emotionalism.

Iris in 4th house:

Although it can get a bit lost under layers of disguise, your deepest drive is to find the inner light. This may start with trying to make home a place of calm and reflection, especially if that is how it was in childhood, and even more so if you feel you have to make up later for early deprivation. You almost certainly understand your family very well, possibly better than they understand you. The parental bond can be particularly strong, and one or both of your parents has probably had a powerful influence on the development of your mind and your approach to learning and communication. But above all, you want inner growth, and live out the Confucian edict, 'Cultivate your person.'

Iris Opposition True Node, Orb: 0 deg. 03 min.

There can be a line of least resistance for you in detaching from the world around you and becoming so chilled you are frozen. The real trick here is to focus on developing the skills of a true meditator. At your best you can achieve that prized goal of quieting the mind and taking in pretty much everything around you. Illumination beckons!

Iris Opposition True Node, Orb: 0 deg. 03 min.

Your mind is so open and receptive you can almost feel physical pain if you are around people with strong negative energies. Certainly you need boundaries and detachment, but must avoid equally an aversion response and a total shutting down to the signals and needs of others. Work on, and for, a proper balance. Take time out, but don't vanish!

Iris Square Asc., Orb: 0 deg. 02 min.

You have a strong drive to project the Iris qualities of receptivity and awareness into your personal style, but sometimes this can be too full-on for full effectiveness. Use your ability to detach and watch to make careful assessments before you leap in. With a little tact and planning you can make fantastic connections, and contribute socially.

Iris Opposition Proserpina, Orb: 4 deg. 23 min.

At times life takes you to dark places, and teaches tough lessons in order to strengthen your mind. Although you may resist initially, or become almost passive in response to challenge, ultimately you learn a great deal and attain a kind of austere wisdom born of pain. You learn, gradually, a valuable skill: how to shine the light that banishes fear.

Iris Sesquiquadrate Hephaistos, Orb: 0 deg. 12 min.

The ability to blend practicality with imagination is very strong in you, but the tough dynamics of this energy linkage may make it tricky at first to figure out how to get the balance right. Neither hard work alone, nor mere doctrinaire talk, will do it. Get brain and brawn joined up, though, and nothing stops you. Go for one goal at a time, too.

Chapter 7: Hygiea

Hygiea, lady of purification and healing

Hygiea is named for the classical goddess of health and well-being, whose name also yields the English word hygiene. This brings a sense of cleansing and purification to the symbolism for the asteroid Hygiea, as well as meanings associated with health issues, sickness, cure, and the moral and physical wholeness that are implicit in ideas of good health or good order. Wherever Hygiea goes in the horoscope, she has a way of cleaning up things, bringing them into a very pure, even ideal, state of being.

Hygiea intensifies any other planetary energy with which she links, and assists it to express in a cleaner, stronger,

truer form. Sometimes this poses real challenges and problems, making circumstances appear worse before they get better. Then Hygiea seems to act like the force behind a fever, which can rise to dangerous heights before it breaks, and the healing occurs. It's all about getting the poison out first, so that wholeness can be restored, or aided to form. The poison is more often metaphorical than literal, of course. Hygiea always helps you to scrub up, or purge. She's a catalyst for action as well as a force for intensifying and purifying other energies. However testing a time you have whilst she's busy, you're always left in much better shape when she has finished with you!

Hygiea in Capricorn:

You like the idea of order, and are very good at keeping things clean and tidy on many levels. Although you could be as house-proud as a manic Virgo, your real interest is probably in how to keep the social order nicely ordered. This could make you something of a revolutionary in your fashion, if you think your patch of turf needs a good re-organizing. Because you understand the rules of society so well, you know exactly when and how to break them, either to do a minor fix without causing intolerable disruption, or to cause just as much havoc as you judge necessary. You'll tilt at the windmills of authority if it suits you, but don't like to be challenged yourself. But if you never bend the knee, your own knees could give you trouble. Or other bone or skin diseases.

Hygiea in 6th house:

The urge to be useful is strong in you, which seldom makes you servile but may make you feel a little superior at times. Sure, you can be the healer's healer and the worker's worker, but you don't want to overdo the helpfulness thing to the point where your pride in achievement founders on the rocks of exhaustion. This can all too easily tip you into illness of some kind. Be gentle with yourself, and temper your pride in your practical capacity with a little humility in recognizing where, when and how to draw the line. You can't be all things to all people or you'll learn the bitter lesson of pleasing nobody if you try to please everybody. Please yourself first! Work on your own integration!

Hygiea Trine Venus, Orb: 3 deg. 23 min.

You find strength and a sense of achievement in healing the pleasure principle. This doesn't mean going without, unless you get into the voluntary simplicity thing (which you might) but does mean cultivating discernment and good taste. Life draws out your instincts for refinement and enjoyment of the best that's going. You don't like fake.

Hygiea Sextile Mercury, Orb: 0 deg. 48 min.

Your clear mind is a source of strength, fostering talents that can take you a long way in the world. Astute and driven, you're very aware of what is going on, and can use your insights both for purposes of healing (on many levels), and for merely personal agendas if you close in on yourself. Be open: use your gifts for communication in beneficial ways.

Hygiea Trine True Lilith, Orb: 3 deg. 07 min.

You find satisfaction and strength in your ability to delve deep from time to time, and scour out the dark corners of the psyche. Because you go skillfully, the healing crisis aspect is likely to be less intense, but you still get the benefits of purifying the more primitive parts of the feeling nature. Then you can help others with their pain, too.

Hygiea Square MC, Orb: 2 deg. 05 min.

Your zeal to clean up the world, or at least some part of it around you, can be very noble in theory, but go horribly wrong in practice. If you believe that you alone know best, you may not play purifying angel after all, and end up wondering why nobody appreciates you. Listen and think before acting, and judge wisely so you work for the good.

Hygiea Sesquiquadrate Jupiter, Orb: 1 deg. 41 min.

You have a huge access of energy with this combo, and can approach the world with great open-heartedness. But you can also inflate into a know-all and blowhard. So you need to be able to keep your feet on the ground even while you go for broke. Excess is a bad idea, especially if it turns physical. You need to love your liver. Eat and drink well!

Chapter 8: Proserpina

Proserpina, lady of transitions, other-worldly realms, and sacrifice

The asteroid Proserpina is named in honor of the goddess of the dead, consort of Pluto, she who was known as Persephone to the Greeks. As a goddess archetype, Proserpina constellates an energy that is often hard to fathom at first, because in the poetic myths Proserpina/Persephone seems to have little personality of her own. As the innocent maiden, abducted by Pluto/Hades into the underworld, she was scarcely distinguishable from her fertility goddess mother Ceres/Demeter. As Pluto's wife and queen of the underworld, though, she receives the souls of the dead and as such, is also a guide to other realms and levels of being, and the deepest places of the psyche. The asteroid Proserpina seems to manifest as an energy of innocence and ignorance that learns a very great deal by (often hard) experience. She shows where you tend to take the line of least resistance, to be passive or helpless, and teaches you the consequences of such unaware or unassertive responses. She points to what you learn through the various transitions of life, which may or may not be painful, but which always entail a letting go of what has ceased to be viable, and carry therefore some sense of sacrifice. She shows you altered states of being, can help you to open up to all the stimuli of life, assists you to adapt and change in response to your environment, and even helps you to cultivate psychic perception.

Proserpina is a tricky energy to deal with, though, because she is so hard to know in essence. You need to be still, and quietly open, to access Proserpina and work with her successfully. Ignore her altogether and you may find yourself plunging into situations you never expected or wanted; honor her and she will help you to find a way through the dark, a guide for your soul who aids your inner journey and ultimately, as a result, your path to individuation in the outer world.

Proserpina in Aries:

Deep spiritual longings fire your way of being in the world, but early in life you may not quite know what these yearnings are, or what to do with them even if you can name them. So you may come across as a bit lost at first, but with a certain zest and courage that keep you from harm - people sense you aren't really someone to mess with, no matter how gentle or obliging you seem. To protect your soft places, of course, you might over-compensate and come across as feistier than you are (or genuinely feel). There is a bit of the actor in you, and you can play a part if it serves your purposes. You just have to be clear what your purposes are - and if you

don't know, sooner or later some sort of identity crisis will force you to wise up and define your direction. Then you're away!

Proserpina in 10th house:

There is a strong spiritual streak in your makeup, though you may give it another name, and it prompts you to seek a special (if unusual) place in the sun. Once you've overcome the challenges faced by an idealist who has to reckon with the hard old world as it really is, you'll discover a deep wellspring of inner moral authority that allows you to gain and exercise as much outer worldly authority as you want. But you're good at keeping people guessing: you've a chameleon quality, and what people see is definitely not always what they get. You may look as though you're doing one thing, yet all the while you're up to something else. Quietly but firmly, you run your own race and do your own thing.

Proserpina Conjunct True Node, Orb: 4 deg. 27 min.

The desire for experience is strong in you, but initially you may have trouble defining quite what kinds of experience you're looking for. This can lead you down some blind alleys, but eventually you'll find the high road to happiness. You are good at learning from your mistakes but can sometimes get prematurely confident about where you are.

Proserpina Trine Moon, Orb: 1 deg. 19 min.

Strong emotions do not frighten you in the least, unless there are countervailing influences at work, and you can draw strength and pleasure from your ability to feel deeply and have a sense of connection with many people and situations. Your boundaries are mostly good, but take care to keep them in order, and also be aware of sob stories.

Chapter 9: Diana

Diana, lady of emotional maturity

Diana was the classical goddess associated with the moon, a virginal hunter who was expert with the bow and arrow. She preferred to keep aloof from the company of most of the other gods and goddesses, living in wild mountain fastnesses with her retinue of maidens.

Diana took an interest in the affairs of ordinary mortals primarily when women were giving birth, and she cared for the young of all creatures. But she could be fierce, even lethal, if her rights were impinged upon, or if she were slighted. Her arrows never missed their target.

The asteroid Diana has not been used a lot by astrologers, which is a pity as she seems to show a different quality of emotional response from that traditionally associated with the Moon. Where Diana goes in your chart you are not inclined to the sort of overt, even child-like sensitivity and vulnerability that the Moon tends to indicate, but to a more restrained, independent and even sometimes avoidant response to the stimuli of life. Diana energy is more austere, but she does not show a lack of sensitivity as such. Indeed, she can be almost hypersensitive in her way, which is to acknowledge feelings and immediately put boundaries in place to contain and protect them, so that Diana can sometimes seem cold or hard where in fact she is simply looking after herself. Of course, she can help

you to be tough if circumstances demand it! She can also point to intense fear responses, which in turn stimulate the 'fight or flight' reflex, which in turn makes you either combative or prone to head for the hills. Ultimately the position of Diana in your chart tells you a lot about how you develop emotional maturity, although she can also say something about the distortions and setbacks of this process, too. She shows where you are able to rely on yourself rather than depending on others, and also points to ways in which you will help other people - as long as it suits you!

Diana is not needy, except for space and for the opportunity, quietly, to nurture the inner needs of the soul. She helps you to figure out what you want, but without all the emotional baggage associated with Lunar attachment. Detached, disinterested and dispassionate, Diana energy helps you to engage with life on your own terms, as a fully fledged adult. With Diana, you put away childish things and come into a richer fullness of being.

Diana in Aries:

There is something very swift about the way you process your emotional responses. Even if your Moon is in a gentle sign, you have a tough streak that enables you to cut a path through the world on your own terms, and you can be a cool negotiator either in a crisis, or when looking after Number One. Though you can be quick to anger, you as quickly move on; but heaven help those who have aroused your ire. They could be wondering what happened long after you've darted off, chasing another goal (or quarry). There is something of the hunter in you, but you can lose interest in your pursuits more rapidly than always serves your good. Apply some discipline and consistency instead, and you can do great things. Your goals matter more than perhaps you let on. Stay focused!

Diana in 9th house:

There's something rather quirky about your take on the world, and it may not always be easy for you to communicate this to a small audience - you'll probably do best with a big one, if you can get it. And if you want it! You don't really want much except freedom, and carry the lean and hungry look of having been born to roam. You learn most and best through your travels, whether literal or metaphorical, and can be pretty serious about the study thing. Knowledge gives you a high. It can also take you up so high you find it hard to get down again to the same level as ordinary folks. That may or may not matter. But you'll happily share your spacious vision with like-minded souls, all free as air.

Diana Trine Asc., Orb: 3 deg. 50 min.

It is easy for you to project an air of authority into the world, and to wear descriptions like, 'having gravitas.' You probably grow up faster than the average, and take on responsibilities readily and (usually) cheerfully. Not that you necessarily present as cheerful, since you're a serious soul, but a good and useful one who helps others.

Diana Opposition Uranus, Orb: 4 deg. 31 min.

Perhaps you sometimes feel as though you're on the outside looking in, or you just don't get what's happening - or don't want to get what's happening, because you understand it only too well. You tend to feel out of step with this energy interchange, and look at the world in a wry, even wacky, way. Accept difference: 'live and let live' is a good motto.

Diana Square Mars, Orb: 2 deg. 01 min.

You could be a naturally angry cuss, or you could be just dog tired of always seeming to find yet another battle to fight. Whatever your actual aggression level, there is a strong warrior energy with Diana-Mars, so get kinda Zen and martial artist about it, use wise discipline to manage the force flow, and focus always on what constitutes right action.

Diana Square Bacchus, Orb: 3 deg. 41 min.

There is an anarchic quality to this energy mix which makes you feel a sense of separateness from people and situations around you. Free-willed, self-willed, and highly creative, you may also find it difficult to channel this energy until you can settle on some kind of focus and satisfy yourself that people are worth your efforts in the first place.

Diana SemiSquare True Lilith, Orb: 1 deg. 04 min.

Because your feelings are so deep and raw, you are likely to cover them up with a fierce armor of indifference, but you'll jump like a cat if anything loud surprises you. You probably prefer to keep your interactions cool to the point of iciness, but may find challenges in learning when and how to trust those people who are worthy of respect.

Chapter 10: Apollo

Apollo, lord of creative maturity

In classical mythology, Apollo was the god of the sun, whose patronage extended over harmony, the arts and healing. He was not the literal, physical sun, however, and the asteroid named in honor of this god has a slightly different quality from the Sun energy with which traditional astrology is familiar - just as the energy of Diana is rather markedly different from that of the Moon.

Although work is still in progress on understanding the influence of Apollo - as with all the asteroids! - he seems to take the creative, personality-making energy traditionally associated with the Sun and then place and develop it in a wider social context. If the Sun is about 'Me' and my life force in pure potential, then Apollo shows 'Me' how to become more fully and completely and socially myself - or rather yourself, as the case may be, since this report is about you, the reader! For this reason Apollo is described here as the lord of creative maturity. He has a sway over the process of full individuation that allows your innate gifts to shine their light into the world. Apollo shows another aspect of your talents and potentials, but he also shows possible areas of downfall, if more primitive egoistic urges get in the way of the maturation process.

It is all too easy to become proud wherever Apollo goes in the chart, and to become excessively perfectionist and demanding. But all these distortions are unfortunate ways of misusing his wonderful capacities for creation. At his best, Apollo gives clear sightedness, and this includes clarity of insight into who you really are and what you are best able to do in order to make the best of yourself in the world at large. Don't allow vanity or lazy self-entitlement to trip you up. Be honest about where you are and what you want, and do the best you can to be the best you can. That's what Apollo's drive for (true) excellence is all about!

The asteroid Apollo also has a rather strange orbit and appears to spend much longer in some signs of the zodiac than others. Appropriately enough, he is much more often and longest in Leo, the traditional sign of the Sun. If you have Apollo in the signs from Sagittarius through to Taurus, this is a relatively more rare placement.

Apollo in Libra:

There's an idealistic streak in your makeup, a desire - mostly - for all things bright and beautiful, peace on earth and goodwill to all men (and women). Of course you can send all this sky high, and when the balance of Apollo in Libra is disturbed, the results can be highly disturbing. Forget about fair play, peace, harmony and all that sissy stuff! What about ME (you)? It can be quite shocking to discover you aren't always poised and intelligent and ultra respectful of others. It can be even more shocking for other people if they see your shadow side. But when you soar, you can be one with the angels, gentle, patient, a born diplomat and mediator. At your best, you bring balance into your own life and into all the lives you touch, by dedication to a true middle way of being and doing.

Apollo in 3rd house:

Sure, humans are social animals, but your drive to communicate and connect is a little stronger than the average. Or maybe a lot stronger somehow or other you have a message to share, or several messages, and you could even make a terrific entertainer if other factors stimulate the drive to get up on a platform, or a stage. Word play can be a source of great joy, but there's also a serious side here. You have a scholarly instinct, a deep need to understand the mind. And as you mature, you'll probably discover an even deeper need to understand the heart. At your best you can bring both forms of understanding together, and model a fine example of head and heart connection.

Apollo Trine Hephaistos, Orb: 2 deg. 33 min.

You have a remarkable capacity to harness your creativity in very practical ways. Apollo's harmonizing light shines benignly on your intense passions and allows them to find a channel and resolution. You could have great skill with one or more arts or crafts, and certainly have a strong aesthetic instinct. Physical pleasures also mean a lot to you.

Apollo Opposition Saturn, Orb: 2 deg. 58 min.

There is a certain severity with this energy, and your desire for the simple harmonies of mathematical precision and order can lead you to take offence at disorder or laziness or wildness. Taking the hard line can engender a lot of resistance. Some will want to flout your 'rules' simply to rebel, so try loosening up and taking a more flexible approach.

Apollo SemiSquare Moon, Orb: 0 deg. 19 min.

Your strong emotions can fuel a splendid creative fire, if you learn enough detachment to tend the blaze effectively. But there is a risk you could project too many of your personal notions onto your environment, and assume people and situations are only and always the way you think or feel they are. Lighten up - others can be (and are) different from you!

Apollo SemiSquare Neptune, Orb: 1 deg. 46 min.

If you can link your mystical, visionary qualities to a practical and consistent spiritual practice, you can manifest an extraordinary creative capacity. But you can be tempted to take short-cuts, or wallow in confused fantasies, or just laze about expecting the universe to provide for you. Get real, take responsibility, and you can turn dreams into reality.

Chapter 11: Bacchus

Bacchus, lord of altered states and divine inspiration

In Roman mythology, Bacchus was the god of the vine and wine, equivalent to the Greek Dionysos. The cult of Dionysos was ancient and mysterious. He was a strange and subtle god, other-worldly, now kind, now cruel, connected with altered states (including those induced by drugs, from alcohol to hallucinogens), the deity presiding over peak experiences from ecstasy to agony. He was close to nature, wild and free, and his worship had many anarchic as well as transcendental elements. Eventually his archetype and worship became so important to the Greek collective psyche that he was elevated to the Council of Twelve, the great gods and goddesses who presided over the government of Mount Olympus. Unlike other (male) gods, Dionysos was surrounded by women, and mortal women were his most significant votaries. There is an inter-sex, almost androgynous or transgender quality to this divine archetype.

The asteroid Bacchus constellates all these contradictions and mysteries in the horoscope. A good deal of the Bacchus/Dionysos archetype is also apparent in the planet Neptune, and where this asteroid differs and adds value to the chart is in the way it focuses the area of life where you are most open to inspiration and where you are most eager for pleasure and escape from the everyday. Neptune has a collective energy, but Bacchus is more directly personal. Bacchus tells you a lot about where and how you play, what excites you and inspires you to do better, to go further, and to push things not only to the limit but even past it. The consequences, if any, you will deal with later, if you must. Where Bacchus goes you have a little taste of freedom, a little glimpse of heaven or - if you play foolishly or choose badly - you get a harrowing vision of hell. You need to be careful with Bacchus energy. When he is good he is very, very good; and when he is bad he is horrid. Or to quote another old proverb: 'Take what you want, the Good Lord says - and pay for it.'

The asteroid Bacchus has an eccentric orbit and spends more time in some signs of the zodiac than others. His longest sojourn is in Sagittarius; if you have Bacchus in the signs from Pisces through Aries to Virgo, this is a less common placement.

Bacchus in Capricorn:

Bacchus in Capricorn is inspired by power, perhaps the most seductive and dangerous of all temptations. There's an old adage that the real test of anyone is not failure, but how they handle power. And you want it. Yes, precious, you want it. Like Gollum with the ring, you want it, it's yours, yours, yours! Okay - settle down now, that's enough of that. You have to get real about how power is used or abused, or you could run in terror and never return to consensus reality, or turn into a tyrant, or end up being squashed. None of these is a good outcome. Get focused, get real, get practical, and you will be just fine. Don't overdo anything, especially any power tripping! Make a proper estimate of your true skills, work hard, and let it all take care of itself, which it will. Greed and other emotional excesses lead directly to hell. Get skilful and go up to heaven instead!

Bacchus in 6th house:

You find it very easy to channel inspiration into your work, to the extent that what for many people is drudgery, becomes for you a sandbox for play, and the touchstone for your finest achievements. An affinity for the natural world, or a sense of inter-connectedness with all sentient beings, can bring out a curious mixture of humility and nobility, because you don't exaggerate the special-ness of anyone or anything, but find the right measure of value everywhere. You are strongly idealistic, whether this wears a progressive or conservative face. And you can become a high achiever because of your capacity for inspired and inspiring organization, making all the right connections.

Bacchus Conjunct Mars, Orb: 1 deg. 40 min.

You get rather high on the idea of action. No lolling about for you wasting time and valuable energy - but you do need a good channel for all that vigor, or you could stomp about alarming people. Getting physical is an obvious choice; so is hard manual labor. And before you laugh, ponder the value given to work in wisdom traditions worldwide.

Bacchus Sextile Sun, Orb: 1 deg. 22 min.

A rather wild imagination fuels an approach to life that is free, flexible, playful and entirely your own. You just want to have fun, whatever that means and wherever it takes you. But you don't come across as crazy so much as inspired, because you know how to ground your visions in the everyday, and are willing to work to achieve your dreams.

Bacchus Square Saturn, Orb: 1 deg. 44 min.

This can be a push-pull energy exchange: imaginatively wild one minute; severe, even repressive, the next. Extremes of restraint or revelry won't take you far in the long run, just keep you see-sawing. But if you can link your gift for inspired thought to a little elbow grease and practical effort, you can ease the tensions and do great things.

Chapter 12: Hephaistos

Hephaistos, lord of inner fire, talent, craft and work

The asteroid Hephaistos is named in honor of the ancient god of fire and the forge, the master craftsman and divine blacksmith. In the proto-civilizations of the early Bronze Age, those who worked with the wonders of fire and metal seemed to be magicians, and were thought to possess special powers. But the god Hephaistos had a sad, strange story. He stands for aspects of the masculine that are not only amongst the most worthy (he is a hard worker and consummate artisan) but also the most unfortunate, because Hephaistos was crippled and ugly, so the other gods and goddesses wanted little to do with him. But they could not ignore him, because he was too clever and too skilful, and he was one of the great gods who sat on the Council of Twelve governors. As we know in human life, too, those who are truly gifted always find a way to the top, and this is something the asteroid Hephaistos can point to in your horoscope. He also shows where you may feel very unworthy and self-doubting, and so make an extra effort. He reveals many of your deepest passions and dearest desires, but also shows some of your greatest sufferings, because other people do not necessarily understand you or want your company or input.

He shows where and how you work, where and how you are perhaps most skilful. But above all, the divine blacksmith hammers your soul on his forge in order to make you better than you are already. This process of soul making, of what used to be called 'character building', can be hard and painful, but it is very necessary.

Hephaistos knocks you into shape. Once you understand what he is doing, it can actually be fun to cooperate, and turn the work into a game. Mary Poppins, arguably the first super-nanny, knew a thing or two about the secret purposes of the Hephaistos archetype. With his help, you can take the base metal of your nature and transform it into gold, or at least move from childhood to adulthood.

The asteroid Hephaistos also has an even more eccentric orbit than Apollo, and spends very little time in some signs of the zodiac. He is most often in Taurus, and the nearby signs of Aries, Gemini and Cancer. If your Hephaistos is in the signs from Leo to Pisces, this is a much rarer placement.

Hephaistos in Gemini:

Hephaistos spends quite a lot of time in Gemini, so you are linked to a broader collective process about learning truly effective communication. For you, soul making is bound up with learning how to give and receive ideas and information, without either holding back or demanding more than your share of the oxygen. You may find a challenge in speaking your mind, either saying too little through under-confidence or a failure to prepare, or banging on for too long and alienating people. At your best, you can be very bright, and if you really work on your ideas and the best way to communicate them, you can discover a real talent for speaking or writing. You could be a natural psychologist and work through deep issues (talking therapy!) or a gifted inventor with something new to offer the world. All you need is a platform - and a properly grounded self-belief - and away you go.

Hephaistos in 11th house:

The soul making process indicated by the sign your Hephaistos occupies is channeled into the area of life that connects you up with groups and links you to friends. It is also one of the testing grounds for ideas, especially those with an idealistic cast and the potential to have a social impact. You have a strong and spacious mind, a clear orientation towards the future, and can be very ardent about social change. Those who are able to share your vision will admire and assist you, but others may be less friendly. It will all flow better if you can link your own soul urges to the movements of the 'anima mundi', the soul of the world. Then you will go with the tide, instead of against it.

Hephaistos SemiSquare True Node, Orb: 0 deg. 15 min.

There are times when the intense inner fires of your passions probably threaten to overwhelm you, as you deal with the consequences of your attachments whether to worldly things or to particular people. Soul work is a profound process of transformation and upheaval, as you find ways to manage the impacts of all your hopes and actions.

Hephaistos SemiSquare Asc., Orb: 0 deg. 13 min.

Self criticism can be helpful if it checks a runaway ego, but it's a burden if you give way too much to lack of self esteem and self denigration. You may need to get a little less hard on yourself. Look for practical works to do so you can present a capable image, and stop fretting about superficialities. Your skills are worthy of real self confidence.