



Photo by Lanvi Nguyen

Inner Space for Cancer

Your Evolving Relationship to the World and Yourself

Dear Cancer Sun, Moon or Rising:

It has been an interesting ride since Pluto entered Capricorn in 2008. One of the most all-encompassing transits, Pluto through your opposite sign or 7th house has given you a little of everything and a lot of some things, particularly a reconstruction of your concept of relationships.

There have been some deep experiences (true soul contact), some over-the-top experiences (various shades of stalking are associated with this transit), and many new ideas of what your relationships are about. There have been unusual situations where relationships have come completely unraveled against all seeming odds.

But the most significant rearrangement has been to the entire structure and concept of relationships themselves. If you look closely, you may be challenged to find the facets of your prior values and expectations that have survived the journey.

Ruled by the Moon, following the tides, and made mostly of water, the sign Cancer has a cyclical and ever-changing quality that finds its counterpart in your opposite sign Capricorn: tradition, structure, and the textures of dependable chronological time. Cancer finds grounding and stability in Saturn-ruled Capricorn, where the element earth meets the sea and provides a steady, solid and dependable boundary.

Or at least it is supposed to, and has in the past. Yet now we have lived through more than 14 years of that Capricorn structure being revised, dismantled, rebuilt and/or demolished under the concentrated, persistent and unstoppable influence of Pluto. Count yourself fortunate if this has had the kind of renewing quality that Shiva or Kali are supposed to have when they are done with their work of clearing past karma.

The next 18 months or so, Pluto will be transitioning into Aquarius. This is the time for a review and reflection about what has occurred, and to trace the lines of where you were in 2008 to where you are today.

Early in my spiritual training, I encountered the work of an author named Thaddeus Golas, who wrote in *The Lazy Man's Guide to Enlightenment*, "We are equal beings and the universe is our relationships with one another."

Pluto in Capricorn has put this concept through many tests and many experiments. Pluto is often about studies of raw power, and coming from your opposite sign or 7th place, you have felt its impact on you. When Pluto is this active in your chart, it's necessary to rise to the occasion or risk getting crushed. You must somehow meet that influence in a constructive way.

This quality has compelled you to find your independence and learn how to stand on your own, without counting on that dependable Capricorn structure that has usually kept you focused. And it has placed you into a reality where you must, as a result, create and define your own principles of relationship. These, in turn, have a far-reaching influence that seeps into every facet of your life.

One of the most vital resources of the sign Cancer is your ability to draw strength from yourself and stand on your own. You don't need as much encouragement or support as you think — but you do need some. We all do, though you possess a spiritual gift that

describes having extraordinary self-esteem even if you don't feel that way. This emerges as a crucial and vital theme of the astrology of 2023.

Remember that Pluto through Capricorn is not over. It will spend nearly two years making a transition into Aquarius, where it may reveal its deepest secrets yet. In my reading of the chart, in the coming year you will discover the nature of the power that certain people have held over you, and how this was set up in the distant past. As this is revealed, the power dynamics of your life will shift in your favor.

Mars Retrograde in Gemini: The Inner Quest

Mars has been in Gemini since Aug. 20, 2022 and, due to the current retrograde, spends seven months in this extremely sensitive angle of your chart before entering Cancer on March 25.

Gemini is the place (or whole sign house) right before Cancer — for you, the 12th. This is the twilight zone of the chart, where the rules of consciousness seem to bend, where space and time lose their prior definitions, and where much material from the past collects.

Mars in any condition in the 12th can stir the pot, serve as a psychic irritant, and in some, provoke various shades of fear, paranoia or panic. Gemini is the quality of the energy field here, and that's a hall of mirrors, which often seems as if it has no way out. People who get trapped in this dimension (sometimes called psychosis) can live detached from conscious reality.

The 12th is the portal into the deeper aspects of consciousness, most often experienced in dreams, meditation and psychedelic experiences. It's the vast interior unknown territory of the psyche, usually only accessible through altered states of mind (or what you might call non-ordinary consciousness). Yet it has a way of seeping through into what we think of as waking life, like the memories of a dream you woke up from at 5 am then fell back asleep.

The 12th may present the key to understanding ordinary waking consciousness because it describes what seems to be its opposite. And it describes the ways in which we are looking through the filters of the non-ordinary all the time. Yet it comes out the most strongly when we set aside ego consciousness even a little.

For many, the 12th is a fearsome place because of this potential to lose contact with conscious reality. Many avoid it because they want the world to make sense to them,

and follow the conventional rules. However, due to what I call Full Digital Conditions — where we are today, as a society and often for individuals — it's as if we are all living in a vast, collective 12th house dream where nothing is really true and nobody is really sane. We live in a waking world where the rules of space and time are constantly bending, and where it seems like everything is the product of belief and not of verification.

When you are having deep transits to the 12th (and Mars retrograde counts), you will be drawn into various confrontations with your inner reality. Gemini — itself a hall of mirrors and interior relationships — brings out this effect even more fully than it ordinarily would show itself. What you've been through, spanning August 2022 through March 2023, represents an important course of learning that I suggest you document to the best extent that you can.

The questions of this transit include: are you aware of your inner life, and in what ways? Do you notice the calling of your inner being to enter an inner sanctuary? Or is your inner life something that has become alien? I think that the documented, profound influence of electrical and digital technology to violate this space and turn us inside-out has a maddening effect akin to being deprived of sleep.

To understand your 12th is to understand the inherently dual nature of your own inner space. While many signs describe some form of resolving polarity, Gemini is its very capital. And so if you notice that there are really two identities within you, twins — both with a different viewpoint on reality, you are onto something.

Mars Ingresses Cancer: The Probe of Desire

In my estimation, Mars retrograde ends when it enters your birth sign on March 25, 2023. Associated with the freshly ended retrograde, this is a major transit, even though it involves a fast-moving planet (usually not considered so important to astrologers). You will only experience it two or three times in one house of your chart, in even a fairly long lifetime. It is true that Mars enters your sign about once every two years, though not after spending seven months probing around Gemini and diving in and out of Neptune.

This is likely to come with a breakthrough and also release a burst of energy that will help you in many facets of your life, by bringing into focus what you want. It is a good idea to hold off on making major changes and decisions until after you get a feeling for this development.

The one crucial thing you must watch with Mars in any form of your 1st house — your Sun sign or rising sign — is to maintain positive and cordial relationships with women. By that I mean be cautious about how you respond if you are provoked.

Slightly more esoteric is this: Mars is going to be infused with the qualities of your 12th house for this entire cycle. This puts a special condition on your evaluation of what you want and whether it is appropriate for you: that of a full-spectrum evaluation of any possibility you might pursue. Mars is generally connected to the more obvious levels of motivation, desire and need. Now, that must be taken to the ultraviolet and infrared frequencies, and the subtler levels of existence considered carefully with any choice you make. What does this look like? Really, really listening to the “intuitive” hints that your mind is giving you.

How do you know what that is? It’s the little tug on your sleeve you know you’re not supposed to ignore; the subtle resistance you may feel when you try to do something you think you want. Intuition rarely feels like fear. It is entirely unlike the sensation of having left the stove on. Rather, it almost always feels like a form of subtle persuasion, a reminder, a hankering to be aware of something, or a subtle, odd feeling that many find easy to push through and ignore, often to their detriment.

Jupiter Transiting Your 10th and 11th Places

You have some spectacular transits this year, of both Venus and Jupiter. Let’s consider Jupiter first, as that is currently underway. Jupiter is making its way across your 10th house, Aries, which is where you may seek and find recognition, and where (if you’re aware) you connect with your true calling.

I strongly suggest you move in the order of calling, and do nothing specifically to gain fame or notoriety — recognize there are warnings against doing anything that violates Dharma on any level. Jupiter describes success and expansion on many levels, and to have Aries as a 10th house factor means that you are likely to both seek and find important elements of your life in the areas of life that it describes.

Aries is ruled by Mars, which is to say that Mars represents this success angle of your chart and as described above, it is making important moves this year.

However, there are also pre-existing transits in Aries that become factors in the equation, which include the longtime visits of Chiron and Eris. Jupiter will not merely magnify the effects of Aries and the mission or purpose of your 10th. It will be magnifying the influence first of Chiron, then of Eris.

(For reference, Jupiter conjunct Chiron takes place on March 12, and Jupiter conjunct Eris takes place April 23, both one-time only.)

While the conjunction of Chiron and Eris in Aries does not take place until May 26, 2025, I am treating this event as if it's already happening — and we will get a demonstration of that in these two meetings with Jupiter within a six-week period. Orbs of aspects are not arbitrary, and they are often demonstrated by the effects of transits. Still, these two potent, distinctly original outer planets (Chiron and Eris) are far enough apart for the conjunctions from Jupiter to be distinct (but related) events.

Note — this is the only time that Jupiter will meet up with both Chiron and Eris in Aries; by the time Jupiter comes back to Aries in 2034, Chiron will be in late Taurus. Let's take this as a reminder that each of the configurations I am describing in this report represents a unique opportunity and set of conditions that will never occur the same way again. And each has a distinct message for you at this time in your life.

And the general theme is what you do with your life in the vocational sense: how you express your mission on Earth. Now, there are a lot of ways this can be done, and in a sense, every house is about some form of mission. But the 10th is the most visible, and in our world, the recognition it can impart is the most tangible concept of success. Yet the conjunctions of Jupiter to Chiron and then Eris caution strongly against recognition for its own sake, or the goal of being "rich and famous."

Once you determine what you like to do, and what you are willing to do for long periods of time, I suggest you stick to the goal of objectively meaningful, fairly compensated employment (or business ventures) where you have room to grow, and then, grow. Growth is best diversified such that spiritual development comes in parallel with financial development (that is rare to find) and that one's sense of responsibility increases with influence (that is also rare). However, Chiron is holding no less of a beacon for you to engage with your purpose in a sincere and helpful way.

Venus Retrograde in Leo

(July 22-Sept. 3, 2023; Venus enters Leo on June 5 and exits Leo on Oct. 8. In longitude, the retrograde spans from 28+ Leo to 12+ Leo.)

Continuing on the theme of fire signs, one of your best assets this year is Venus retrograde in Leo, your 2nd place of personal resources, values, priorities and self-respect. Having Leo in this position serves you exceptionally well, as this is one sign that

provides an abundance of energy (associated with the Sun). You have plenty to draw on — a steady stream of strength, aided by the fact that Leo is a fixed sign.

While there is an energy source in all of the signs, it is (for example) challenging to have Pisces as the 2nd house (as the sign Aquarius does) because it is so given to mutation and self-doubt. In that example, Pisces provides Aquarius with spiritual and creative resources, which are somewhat more difficult to put to work in the world. This is different from the sign associated with the Sun, which is what you are fortunate enough to have.

The counterpart to this is the effect of, “The brighter the light, the darker the shadows.” Cancer is still subject to its cyclical nature, and that involves many factors, including the Sun-Moon interplay of eclipses (see next section).

This (Northern Hemisphere) summer (winter down under) we experience Venus retrograde in Leo. This means, among other things, that Venus will be spending more than four months in Leo rather than the usual few weeks it spends in each sign, in a place of maximum advantage in your chart. Whatever else the retrograde means, Venus sticks around for a while.

Venus itself is associated with assets, benefits, attraction, power and wealth. The retrograde provides you with an opportunity to replenish your supplies and your cash.

It does something even better, which is to serve as a probe into the whole matter of your self-worth, in both the spiritual and material senses of that idea. Self-worth (which I think is equivalent to “self-esteem” and “self-respect”) is a profound matter at this time of human evolution. It has often been an arbiter of success, though at the moment, individual worth is being absolutely crushed by Full Digital Conditions, where we are all reduced to being a nobody. Some people handle this better than others.

However, for most, this creates a desperate quest for relevance, an obsession with competition, and projecting our value into external space (likes, clicks, ratings, etc., plus tinted car windows, tailgating at 80 miles-per-hour, thinking money makes them a genius, and so on).

Self-worth is something to keep a pulse on, and Venus retrograde will provide you with an extraordinary real-time opportunity to study yourself. Do not be afraid to ask the real questions; you will like the answers more than you are expecting.

One thing I suggest for my astrology clients is to conduct an inventory of your talents and abilities. Everything counts, whether you think it's valuable or not. Part of what you're "worth," both in your relationship to yourself and to the world, are your natural and acquired talents, what you've learned, and what you are willing to do that other people are not. These private assets have far more value than your money, because without them, you would not be able to accomplish much.

Eclipses of the Moon and the Sun

Eclipses intensify events and focus transitions in the house and sign where they occur. As someone with your Sun or rising in Cancer, you are sensitive to all lunar cycles, and especially to eclipses. You can consider them all to be points of leverage for you — times of the year when you may focus your strength.

Eclipses are multidimensional events that can open up deep inner territory for you. Even ordinary Full and New Moon events can do this — they are portals, points of transition and moments of condensed experience that you can ride and use to transport yourself. Of all the signs, Cancer is the one that would benefit the most from tracking these events regularly: this would be practical astrology.

The eclipses, which follow the lunar nodes, are gradually shifting from the Taurus-Scorpio axis to the Aries-Libra axis. The general direction of movement is what I would describe as from the social to the professional (11th house to 10th house); and from the creative to the domestic (5th house to 4th house).

I've said plenty about the role of Aries in your life — add a solar eclipse to that on April 20, 2023. There is an unusually powerful lunar eclipse in Scorpio on May 5, 2023, which will open up a space for your deep inner sexual and creative exploration. You don't need to wait for the event; once you know about it, it's in play.

Another pair of eclipses take place in October — a solar eclipse in Libra on Oct. 14 will help you make or complete changes to your domestic and residential situation. The theme here is what the idea and the reality of feeling safe means to you. The implication is that this is wholly an inner state, rather than one described by your conditions. Many of the most materially stable people feel the most unsafe in the world and even in their home.

The Oct. 28 lunar eclipse in Taurus opens up a space for you in the rapidly disappearing in-person social realm. You will get to experiment with revealing deeper elements of

your psychic constitution to the people around you. It may feel on some level like you are “being exposed,” but in truth, you are revealing yourself because you are ready.

Saturn Enters Pisces

The Saturn-in-Aquarius era began on March 21-22, 2020. Saturn in Pisces begins March 7, 2023 and extends through early 2026. I am reading this as a stabilizing effect that will help you pull some focus in the spiritual areas of your life: your relationship to the vast unknown that is God and the universe.

You have plenty of energy here, though for a decade it’s been coming from nebulous Neptune. This provides the sense and perhaps the reality of a spiritual connection, though it can also be isolating. Saturn will work like a condensing lens that will help you establish your priorities and sort out what you have observed to be true from what you have observed to be false.

Whereas Neptune allows you to go on the basis of belief, Saturn offers no such luxury. This is an invitation to return to your spiritual roots (for example, the original books you read that put you onto a spiritual path), and to explore new territory as well. With Saturn, your focus is likely to be studying classical works and traditions rather than newer ones, with an emphasis on time-tested ideas.

Pluto Enters Aquarius

Beginning in March 2023 through November 2024, Pluto will make a series of ingresses into Aquarius, finally arriving to stay on Nov. 19, 2024. This will last until 2044.

It will not be possible to do justice to this topic in a few paragraphs, so I’m going to refer you to further reading in the form of [An Aquarian Era for Cancer](#).

You have experienced living through an important 8th house transit of Saturn. You have some idea what this will be about, thanks to Saturn’s movement through Aquarius since 2020. If you have done the work of Saturn, meaning clearing out the complex, transactional space of the 8th, you will find the Pluto transit to be much more fulfilling — even if it’s challenging.

This transit requires a measure of impeccability in all of your business affairs, tax matters and your involvement with in-laws; and any matter that might pass through probate court. Pretty much any issue that will come up under the influence of Pluto over the next 21 years has come up in some form under the influence of Saturn.

There is one core issue to this transit, and I will end here (and pick up in audio). During the Pluto-in-Aquarius era, we are going to need to safeguard our personal integrity, our right to make decisions for ourselves, and whatever “individuality” means to you, from the influence of group pressure and public infiltration.

Pluto’s presence thrusts one of the most intimate areas of your life into the realm where it is subject to pressure from external authorities, or things that claim to be authorities. Pluto is likely to distort the boundary between where you end and they begin. The issue of handling external power in all forms arises. This is why it’s essential that you recognize your true power source as an internal factor of your consciousness, and know how to tap into it.

Whatever else may be true, false or somewhere in between, you are a distinct and individual being in the universe. You are not subject to the opinions or worldview of others unless you choose to be so — though much of that choosing happens through the contracts you enter into.

This is why under Pluto in Aquarius, much of guarding your individuality means being extremely cautious about your agreements with others. Just remember, your agreements with yourself come first and are much more important.

With love,

