



Almanack for September into October 2026

By Elizabeth Shepherd with additional writing by Eric

September 1 — **Mars in Cancer square Saturn in Aries** — This pattern contains much emotional tension and squashed personal expression. The key to this chart is in an aspect occurring at the same time, which is the Moon in Taurus forming a conjunction to Chiron. The struggle of Mars square Saturn is about all the feeling, sensation and direct perception that's been cut off by thinking that you haven't experienced something till it's been on TikTok and got a million views. Then it's finally real. You need better criteria, and it will involve experiencing your own openness, vulnerability and desire to share who you are.

September 4 — **Venus in Libra opposite Eris in Aries** — Here, the relational meets the ardent individual at all costs; or seen another way, the embodied lover comes face-to-face with the OnlyFans girl archetype (who takes many forms, from Taylor Swift to Tony Fauci). You cannot have both; you cannot be both; you cannot have the aspiration to collaboration and creation of Venus in Libra at the same time you have the psychic chaos and self-obsession of Eris in Aries. But at least for one day we'll be able to tell the difference between them.

September 10 — **Venus enters Scorpio and opposes Chiron, Mercury enters Libra and the New Moon in Virgo** at 11:27 pm EDT at 19 degrees, **Uranus stations retrograde**. Venus wants to keep its secrets, Mercury wants to talk about them all day, and the Moon and Sun in Virgo aspire to perfection on a level unmatched since Leonardo was keeping his notebooks. No, not DiCaprio, I mean Da Vinci. The New Moon stands in a close opposition to bad boy centaur Nessus, which is a reminder that there is no purity, but that's not an excuse for nefarious conduct, not that you would ever involve yourself in such a thing.

Sept 12 — **Mercury in Libra opposite Neptune in Aries** — This is a fabulous aspect for people who say there's no such thing as the truth. Everything is true! Nothing is true! Always remember that for the foreseeable future where we have Neptune we have Borasisi, which focuses the issue of belief. It also brings in the theme of the lies that are true and the truths that conceal reality. Sadly, astrology has no way out of this one. You will need to consult a shaman.

Sept 15 — **Venus in Scorpio square Pluto in Aquarius** — You may not think that your innermost sexual desire will ever have public approval. But why does it matter? If you want someone or something, that's between you and whomever might help you make it happen. Your naughty or saucy desires don't need upvoting on Instagram. The kinds of feelings that this aspect represents cannot exist in any electrical environment. They can only exist in your body and in an emotional exchange with another person. But the square says you have to work it out first. If you don't quite get it the first time, no worries...Venus will station retrograde in a couple of weeks and repeat this aspect two more times.

September 22 — **Sun enters Libra — Autumn Equinox** — birthday of Bilbo and Frodo Baggins — The Sun is considered to be in “fall” in Libra (opposite its exaltation in Aries). This may be because the September equinox is the point in the cycle of the northern hemisphere year where the balance of daylight hours tips towards greater darkness. So while the actual Sun in many places in the north is still warming, the colors are glorious and the crops are growing, there is the feeling of the endings to come. Neptune is right there to greet the Sun in an opposition, which may stir up a little more nostalgia for the good times we’ve had. What dreams or longings bubble up to the surface? There may be some useful information there. It’s also a great time to exercise restraint and discernment as things probably aren’t as they appear right now. An interesting note to this chart is that Mars is spending its last days in Cancer, harking back to its retrograde through late Cancer and into early Leo about 21 months ago.

September 25 — **Sun opposite Neptune** — This feels like the Full Moon happening in the 4th, 5th and 6th dimensions. You can’t see it and you can only feel it if you’re open to a certain kind of psychic input.

September 26 — **Aries Full Moon** at 12:49pm EDT — **Moon conjunct Neptune — Mercury opposite Eris** — The Sun and Mercury are offering a counterpoint to the tremendous amount of retrograde activity in Aries. As this lunation progresses, the cooler, more objective Libran position of the Sun and Mercury may help create some distance, allowing for better perception about the current crisis of human identity are amplified by the eyebrow-raising rollout of disturbing new technologies. Venus, the ruler of Libra is doing some deep, deep diving under quite a bit of tension in the waters of Scorpio, slowing to a near standstill

before turning retrograde in about a week. This is a great time for observation and information gathering.

September 27 — **Mars enters Leo** — Mars emerges from the emotional waters of Cancer ready for the solar radiance of Leo. Here, Mars is like the well-trained soldier in loyal service to the king. This is Mars with energy and a purpose and is the kinetic embodiment of Eric's definition of Dharma, "Acting as if to hold the world together." How will you use Mars' visit to Leo? Look to the whole sign house of Leo in your own chart for clues.

September 30 — **Mercury enters Scorpio** — Mercury joins Venus in Mars' feminine sign. Mercury is sharp, if not shrewd in Scorpio and this placement natally can indicate a person extra cautious with words and capable of generous silences. When comfortable, Mercury in Scorpio reveals itself as insightful and observant, deep thinking, and quite imaginative. I know engineers and researchers with this placement as well as the best logical thinker I know, that person I go to anytime I want to see the holes in my thinking. Mercury is flanking and witnessing Venus as it comes to a standstill.

October 2 — **Mercury in Scorpio square Pluto in Aquarius and Venus stations retrograde at 9 degrees of Scorpio** — These are the most intensity-rich days in October and the next three days can be read as one aspect pattern. While Venus begins her 40-day retrograde journey, Pluto is adding a lot of pressure to the inner planets, elevating their normal functions to a feeling of high stakes and big consequences for words, actions, impulses and desires right now, especially in relationships and communication, in public or in perceptions of the "public." How often do you broadcast the unfolding story of your relationships in the public sphere? You may find the line where your integrity meets a wall of collective judgment. This can be a purifying or

poisoning influence, the difference will be in how willing you are to go the distance and see it through without caving to outside pressure.

October 3 — **Mars in Leo opposite Pluto** — All roads at the beginning of October lead to Mars in Leo. Mars has not been opposite Pluto since its last retrograde period at the end of 2024 — think back to November 2024 (the month of the last presidential election in the U.S.), the first few days of 2025 and the end of April 2025 to find the trail markers from the last time Mars was here. Unlike the last time, Mars will move quickly through this opposition. Watch for power plays, sudden meltdowns and cathartic explosions. At its best, the intensity will serve to galvanize direction, purpose and action. This transit does also bring up the more recent and epic Jupiter opposite Pluto (basket pattern) and Full Moon in Aquarius during the last ten days or so of July. Was there any combustible material left behind? It might be a good idea to take care of any smoldering coals because Mars opposite Pluto can feel like a fight to the death or rage ready to boil to the surface.

October 4 — **Sun in Libra opposite Saturn in Aries** — This transit also takes us back to July — this time to the end of the first week when the Sun made a square to Saturn from Cancer. Now the Sun is in the opposition and there is a strange mutual reception in that the Sun and Saturn are in each other's places of exaltation and fall. Both of these planets in fall can have self-esteem issues and it is often precisely a lack of self-esteem that keeps a person from rising to the occasion of Sun-Saturn invitations. The cycle represents the maturation process of the masculine, something every human experiences regardless of biological sex. A good example of a Sun-Saturn challenge is at the doctor's office. Who makes the decisions there? Who has the ultimate authority? Across the Libra-Aries axis, we might look at

relationships as a place where we may experience invitations to hold greater self-authority. The key to the paradox of this mutual reception and its self-esteem “problem” lies in focusing on purpose and doing what needs to be and what must be done; the key to the tremendous pressure of the first days of October is self-esteem – the value one gives one’s own existence.

October 10 — **New Moon in Libra** at 11:50 am EDT at 18 degrees and **Venus Rx in Scorpio square Mars in Leo** — This is the New Moon in Venus’ sign and Venus is retrograde and square Mars for this lunation, and so this becomes the major theme of this month’s lunar cycle. The aspect and degrees recall storylines that emerged at around the time of the Aquarius Full Moon on July 29. That last square happened between Mars in Gemini and Venus in Virgo, both flexible signs ruled by Mercury and which have different functions but a common purpose. This square happens across two fixed signs, which adds a feeling of willfulness and less willingness to negotiate. However, the extra tension can be used to generate energy for erotic and creative purposes. Venus is risk-taking and shadow hunting during this part of the retrograde, Mars is in the stronger position and also Venus’ host, so keeping drive, energy and motivation focused on purpose will help uplift Venus from any less creative shadows – this is the time for a safe word if there ever was one. This is also a seed moment: not only is this all occurring at the New Moon, but Venus is retrograde and not decided on anything yet. (The final square for this part of the Venus-Mars cycle will happen with Venus direct and Mars newly retrograde, in January of 2027.) This New Moon in Venus’ sign is opposite Vesta in Mars’ sign, which adds to the tension of the square and brings in a powerful insistence on service and devotion to the ever-becoming sense of Self. If left unconscious, it may insist on service and devotion to digital identity at the expense of authenticity and the inner

witness. Relationships and all kinds of partnerships, in the analog and digital world, will most likely be where the reminders are most deeply felt.