



Almanack for October into November 2026

By Elizabeth Shepherd with additional writing by Eric

October 2 — **Mercury in Scorpio square Pluto in Aquarius and Mars in Leo** — 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, 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. Look back to October 2018, when this retrograde in Scorpio and Libra last happened to look for the patterns that may emerge.

October 3 — **Venus stations retrograde at 9 degrees of Scorpio; Mars in Leo opposite Pluto;** — With so much action in Scorpio at the beginning of the month, attention turns to its ruler, Mars, who is 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. This 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. Today Mercury also enters the shadow phase of its upcoming retrograde starting October 24. This means that today Mercury is at the degree it will station direct at the end of the retrograde on November 13, so for the rest of October, Mercury will be traveling through degrees in Scorpio that it will later revisit.

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 erotic and creative energy. 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 a great 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 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 and the cult of the image 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.

October 15 — **Pluto stations direct at 4 degrees Aquarius** — Pluto ends its retrograde that started near the beginning of May. The extra slowness of Pluto in all of October brings emphasis, and it's worth mentioning that Pluto is out of bounds. Watch and maybe we'll learn something about what that means.

October 18 — **Sun in Libra opposite Eris in Aries** — Are you having a relationship with another person or with a mirage of yourself? It's difficult to tell, and most people casually conduct their intimate relationships in the hall of mirrors known as the relationship and wonder why things get weird. Try having all conversations in person and perhaps see how it feels to place a one week ban on any form of short message communication. If you say you're going to be somewhere at a certain place and time, just show up on time without 20 text messages to confirm.

October 20 — **Venus Rx in Scorpio square Pluto** — This is the second, retrograde pass of Venus square Pluto. As a way to work with this transit, look at the questions posed in the October 3 entry. By now, you may be having experiences that offer material for introspection in the realms of relationships, sexuality and power dynamics and how they relate to self-concept and identity. The tension is largely between authentic, vulnerable expression and dependence on an image presented to the public and the need for "the public" to buy it.

October 21 — **Sun in Libra opposite Chiron in Aries.** There's an edgy feeling around this aspect, and it is a milestone marking the end of the Chiron in Aries era. That began in 2018 and there may be some replays or attempts to relive the past, by you or others. The idea here is to resolve and not to relive. There's no nostalgia in healing, and there should rightly be some sense that a struggle will be necessary to get to the next step. This is likely to involve a relationship situation where there are still feelings of betrayal or the harboring of grudges. Beware of the bone of contention. You could choke on it.

October 23 — **Sun enters Scorpio** — The Sun here often exhibits the qualities of focus, determination, ambition and great endurance. There is an inherent wisdom in this placement as the Sun approaches its cross-quarter between the Equinox and the Solstice. The Sun knows that the dark of night has overtaken its daytime brilliance and it continues the journey anyway, unflinching. The veil now is thin, the Sun travels between worlds, accessing another most often beyond our perception, but more available this season.

October 24 — **Venus cazimi (conjunct the Sun)** at 1 degree Scorpio, **Mercury stations Rx in Scorpio** at 21 degrees Scorpio — Just ahead of the Full Moon, the conjunction of Venus retrograde and the Sun in Scorpio is a moment of crystallization, where the principle messages of the retrograde may become apparent. Pluto is still involved and so those confrontational themes around power dynamics, collective pressure and personal values may emerge as primary. Mercury begins its own Scorpionic retrograde, so not only will our values and use of power be up for review, but also the way we use our mind and communication to achieve our goals.

October 25 — **Venus Rx re-enters Libra** — Venus is dividing its retrograde time pretty evenly between Scorpio and Libra, which is a fascinating opportunity for learning about the different feeling quality of Venus in both of these signs. This happened in October of 2018 as well.

October 26 — **Taurus Full Moon** at 12:11 am EDT and **Sun and Moon square Pluto in Aquarius** — The Full Moon of Scorpio season features the Moon in Taurus, the feminine, Venusian sign of wild, abundant Nature, a place the Moon thrives in. The symbol of Taurus is the cow (as well as the bull) an animal known for its profound generosity towards humanity. Eric has noted that in less modernized times, the presence of a cow made the difference between life and death for many families living through harsh winters. This Full Moon revisits the themes of Oct. 2-3 when Venus stationed retrograde while Mars was opposite and Mercury was square Pluto. Now, the Moon and the Sun are in a square with Pluto so the intense pressure coming from groups and the public takes on even higher stakes as the planets representing the cycles of becoming (Sun and Moon) are part of the pattern.

Venus has just finished her square to Pluto (see Oct. 20 as a reference) and is now back in Libra applying to a second opposition with Chiron. These next few days, as Venus opposes first Chiron and then Eris, there is a question: are you afraid of potential catastrophe, or in love with the idea? Many factors in the environment are stoking people's worst fears; the question for you is how you respond to these marketing and PR campaigns.

This aspect may also bring to light the places where there is tension between seemingly opposing psychic factors. For example, magnetic attraction versus the illusion of attraction; genuine human values versus the content of advertising; and desire versus obsession. The themes from the Oct 10 New Moon resonate now as well. This is part two, the reconsider and introspect phase of three oppositions that Venus will make to Chiron as Chiron spends its final months in Aries before moving into Venus' sign Taurus next spring.

October 28 — **Venus Rx opposite Chiron in Aries** — Look back to what was happening around the New Moon in Virgo on Sept. 10 when Venus made its first opposition to Chiron, while Venus was in Scorpio, and Chiron was still in Taurus. This series of oppositions are giving us a taste of what the Chiron in Taurus years will be about and what the final messages of Chiron in Aries will be.

October 30 — **Mercury Rx in Scorpio square Mars in Leo** — Mercury's retrograde is hosted by Mars in Leo, which gives Mars the slight upper hand in this tug-of-war tension. The first square between these two planets happened on Oct 2-3, in that extremely powerful and provocative beginning to October, the themes of which have kept repeating all month. Mercury is in the internalized, introspective phase of those themes and this time Pluto is out of the pattern so there is a more personal and less charged review of how we use our mind's power and communication to advance a personal agenda. This may be an opportunity to look at where we may have felt very certain we understood a situation or subject and realize maybe we don't have all the information; this could also be the realization of having accepted a mainstream narrative because of the "authority" behind it and not because it is "correct."

November 2 — **Venus Rx in Libra opposite Eris in Aries** — This is the second, retrograde pass of this aspect — the first was Sept. 4. Look to the entry for Oct. 26 to get some ideas of how to work with this.

November 4 — **Mercury in Scorpio cazimi (conjunct the Sun) at 13 degrees** — It's a pretty unique cazimi right in the middle of the cross-quarter days. The king (the Sun) who knows he is dying receives the messenger into his throne room. What messages does this wiser and more sober king have for the psychopomp traveler through the worlds?

November 9 — **Scorpio New Moon at 12:02 am ET at 17 degrees** — This New Moon happens very close to the cross-quarter days of the Sun's transit through the middle of Scorpio. This adds a more ponderous air to an already ponderous season. Venus and Mercury, whose retrogrades have danced with and reflected each other since the beginning of October are nearly stationary, and preparing to return to direct motion in four days. The New Moon happens just one degree from the Mercury square Mars aspect from almost ten days ago. Mars, the host of this lunation and the retrogrades of Mercury and Venus, is an important planet to pay attention to. What do we desire and what are we willing to do to achieve our aim? Who or what are we in service to? Who or what are we indebted to? The veil is thin over these cross-quarter days and the dark of the Moon emphasizes this liminal time. The pulse of this New Moon and near stationary planets seems to be asking for something deceptively simple: only a moment of stillness before the next inhale begins.

November 13 — **Mercury stations direct in the morning at 6 degrees Scorpio and Venus stations direct in the evening at 23 degrees Libra** — The retrogrades of Mercury and Venus, remarkably, end on the same day. They have left their mark on the season and the harvest of their fruits is imminent as they return in direct motion over their retrograde degrees for the next few weeks.