

# In Search of Surrender

*Vision Quest for Leo by Eric Francis Coppolino. Published by Planet Waves, Inc.*

Your charts this year vibrate with one theme: vulnerability. This is set in the context of the seemingly different healing projects that you have going on, involving partnership, money, family and potentially healing your body. There are so many of these that it might feel overwhelming, as if no matter what you do you're trying to resolve or work through something else.

And in times such as this, having a vision for your life is vital. At minimum it's important that you look in the direction you want to be going, rather than focusing on the work at hand to the point of being myopic. In times of profound healing and change, it's true that you must keep centered in the present. Yet you must have something you're working toward; something you believe in; some direction in which to guide and direct the changes you're going through.

If much of what you're addressing is about the results of the past — whether your personal past, your family background, or the legacies partners are bringing into your life — seeing beyond your current circumstances can be difficult. But there will be many clues you discover along the way. There will be things you retrieve, and this concept — retrieval — is one of the most helpful tools to keep with you at all times.

Retrieval can save you considerable time and effort, as you discover not just the effects of the past, but also the gems and accomplishments waiting there to be found and put to use. You will discover past knowledge and even wisdom, which will be genuinely relevant today.

Many of the questions, themes and issues you're facing involve structure: that of your family, your body, your home, your work. There would seem to be a vast restructuring going on, which is now at a tipping point. Even if there is just as much work to do as there was yesterday, you have the benefit of experience. You have the benefit of having established some workflow, and you have an idea of your agenda.

The structure question involves Pluto in Capricorn, which began in 2007 and is now at its halfway mark. Pluto at this stage of Capricorn is acting like a kind of tether. While Pluto tends to be about upheaval and change, and at times destruction and renewal, the way it's positioned in your chart makes a central reference point for you. There are many other newer inner journeys, and ones in relation to others.

They all point to the same thing: a softening process, an opening up of your emotional body, and the choice to be vulnerable. This may not be easy for you. For one thing, we live in the age of 'don't dare be vulnerable ever!' There should be a word or title for this. Our culture's rising obsession with guns, with warfare, with xenophobia (fear of 'outsiders') and with many other unfriendly and antisocial states of mind is anything but vulnerable.

Were so many people not so numb and so impressed by the hardness of their own shell, which seems like common sense to keep on, they might feel this. It's easy to miss, if someone thinks they are safer in a bunker than they are in the clear light of day. There's a control drama going on as well, or rather, many of them.

Why is porno so popular, even among soft-spoken crucifix-and-sweater-wearing folk you might never imagine?

What is it with all these guns, and the fascination and mania about them? *South Park* parodied this in a recent episode, wherein the entire town, including the children, are armed. Everyone has a gun, and everyone is trying to make everyone else do what they want them to do. If the whole concept of a gun feels like a blend of emotional whiplash and the gnashing of teeth, that's the control part: you can make someone do anything you want.

Without a gun, you cannot do that. But in our frustrating, frustrated, competitive times, when there is so much handed to us as mandatory, it remains a temptation (as gun sales reveal). In our society of doing things just because you can do them (which generally means being intrusive, getting over on people or frustrating their efforts, rather than helping them), we get the brunt of the power of others.

The *South Park* episode ends with everyone figuring out that the only way to make life better is to communicate more, and to care about one another. That, you could say, is what your charts are describing.

The power you have is not power over anyone; it's the power to change yourself. At different times in your life you discover this really exists. This is a bigger deal than it may seem in the life of a person with such a strong fixed-sign chart. Leo, for several reasons, is the essence of that particular astrological quality, which is about stability. So change can seem particularly daunting or tumultuous or frightening. Yet you've had to do a lot of it lately. And as any biologist can tell you, that which does not change is doomed to die. That which adapts is much more suited to continue living.

There are two descriptions of Leo that fit this 'fixed' quality. One describes your sign as needing to be the star of the show, who does not care about the desires or will of others. Under this theory, you assert your ego no matter what.

The other notion, my own description, has you being represented by the Sun, which is at the center of the solar system. In this capacity your role is to hold things together. The Sun does indeed hold the solar system in place.

In either capacity you would need to be pretty strong, and steady, and display little in the way of vulnerability. But that is changing, and those changes have reached a new phase of their various processes. Your primary way of meeting the world cannot be with that cool-blooded, pillar of strength image, or actual approach. In exchange, you are tapping a new kind of strength, something that's rooted in your openness and your emotional sensitivity.

This is unlikely to be something you've emphasized in your journey. It's not that you're not sensitive, or emotional — it's just not typically the thing you put out first, or make the most accessible. Now, however, that's one of the key things that is changing and that will continue to change.

### **Pluto in Capricorn: Getting Underneath It All**

Capricorn is the 6th house in the Leo solar chart. The 6th is the house of health and wellbeing. In the course of astrological history, this house has come a long way from its origins as that of military service. It has evolved into work, service in general, health and medical matters (beyond those involving battle, but you could say the 'battle of life'), and as Sally Brompton at the *New York Post* put it so aptly, wellbeing.

Capricorn here describes a conservative, traditional approach to these matters. There is something strongly family-centered as well. With Capricorn, there's the implication of old, particularly in one's approach; and the bones are involved. This detail matters more in the house of health and wellbeing. Capricorn's relationship to the past, and to structure of all kinds, imposes itself on all of your approach to daily life.

It's one reason why many Leos are more saturnian than they are solar. It can be a saving grace, though it makes it no easier to change.

In 2007, Pluto entered the scene, and your life began to change irrevocably. This was holistic; everything was involved, every facet of work, of family and your relationship to your body.

Every planet acts differently on a sign. Many act with sweeping effects that influence several things. None except maybe Chiron go as deep as Pluto. The influence or symbolic representation of this planet has led you to burrow under the depths of your being. There are numerous possible images I could use to describe this, though we could concede that it has not been easy. This has represented a change-or-die set of scenarios.

Pluto almost invariably does something additional: revitalizes what needed new life. You might say Pluto completes the life cycle, which both ends and commences in regeneration. It is likely that you have some form of a new life — perhaps an entirely new life — than you had on this day in 2007. This has pushed, pulled, driven, dragged, stretched, torn and mended you.

This year the process of Pluto in Capricorn is exactly half over. Pluto is now hovering around the midpoint of Capricorn, which is both a tipping point and something else: for reasons a bit too esoteric to go into here (but involving a chart called the Thema Mundi), the midpoint of this particular sign is profoundly sensitive; it is keyed to the theme of relationships; and it represents a point of contact between your personal, individual process, and the environment that surrounds you.

Don't forget this connection to the environment — for many reasons that will come in the course of this work, it's essential. The main reason for that is it will take you beyond what you think of

as your limits, and the boundaries of your relationships, and connect you to a much wider world, and a wider sense of purpose.

### **Before Your Eyes: A Gathering in Pisces**

On the day the Sun arrives in your sign this year — that's the chart I'm using for your reading — the Moon arrives in Pisces. The Moon will ingress Pisces about an hour before the Sun gets to Leo. That's a synchronicity worth noticing.

This configuration reminds you to remain in touch with yourself, and with the reality that surrounds you; it's a reminder to place *seeing* what is true for you on the same plane as *feeling* what is right for you. Something is more likely to be valid if you both see and feel it.

The Moon's presence in Pisces is adding emphasis to a profound collection of points currently in that sign, some of which have been gathering momentum for several years. Those planets include relatively fast-moving Pallas Athene (an asteroid) and slow-moving Chiron and Nessus (both centaur planets); Neptune (a modern planet); and an odd, interesting point called Borasisi (just beyond Pluto, dealing with the issue of belief).

Then there is the Moon's south lunar node — which means eclipses in this house. Eclipses mean emphasis. That emphasis is almost all on matters of relationship, or what you might call relationship for truth.

What the Moon's presence is doing is drawing your emotional attention to this area of your chart, an area which has become more complex with each passing year as more planets arrive in Pisces. But the Moon is also sensory. Here is the part about seeing and feeling.

Pisces is a subtle field of energy. Outer (as in slow-moving, distant) planets can have that same quality, or they can act like alien influences, sometimes dropping below the level of immediate awareness.

Yes, the Pisces Moon is mystical and dreamy, but the Moon is part of our living, worldly, physical dimension of existence. It is likely to call your attention to scenarios that have been gathering, brewing and building for some years now, as if you can finally understand consciously what is happening.

You might think of the Pisces Moon as describing a dream you remember, rather than one you forget. And this dream is calling your attention to some profound work that you are doing, and must do with ever-greater awareness.

The 8th house is, in any chart, an intriguing place. In my approximate ranking of houses, it's the second most interesting house and the second most challenging to understand. (The 12th house comes in first place, in my evaluation. The 8th and the 12th have some meaningful similarities, especially in your chart with Pisces involved here.)

The 8th is the house that addresses secrets, money and sex. You might say it's about the secrets you tell, the money you inherit or share with others, and the sex you really want.

The 12th is about what you would not generally (or never, ever) share, your ancestral legacy and the sex that exists mostly in fantasy. Sometimes 12th house experiences seem to exist in 'another world', like a parallel reality, and can tread the space between real and unreal.

Pisces brings the spirit of the 12th to the 8th in your chart, and we might say this is about seeing your life and your relationships as they really are. I might add, rather than as you want them to be. Yet how you want them to be matters, even if it's difficult to attain. That's not the issue; being clear with yourself is, and as a result, with others.

Whatever may be the relationship scenario in your life, the sexual scenario could be profound. It is possible to loop the physical and fantasy worlds through one another and take yourself and partners profound places. The key to this pleasure is absolute honesty about what you want and how you feel. And in the wisdom of tantra, moving toward the shame and passing through it like a veil is the most direct path to ecstasy and submission, which is always to yourself.

There are elements of your 2nd house (opposite the 8th) which suggest that in service of this, you could be a lot more generous with yourself where selflove is concerned. I mean this in the sexual sense as masturbation, and also in the physical sense of self-esteem.

Many signs and elements of your charts indicate deep, complex interactions with others. The foundation, the trunk and roots of the fruit-bearing tree, are in the relationship that you have with yourself. In other words, your relationship with yourself is the one that provides the flowers and fruit of your relationships with others. There is a clear message in your chart to open up the flow of positive emotion toward yourself. It looks like you experience it somewhere nearby but are unable to access it directly.

This may take some angling in the mirror. Look for a point of view where you see yourself as beautiful and lovable, then just love. And remember, when we say love, we really mean trust and admire.

### **From the Moon to Pluto**

There is a connection between the Moon in Pisces (and therefore the rest of Pisces), and Pluto in Capricorn. They are in an aspect called a semi-square. There are no stock ways to interpret this aspect, though I prefer the idea of the 'hidden square' the best — the semi-square is similar to the tension of a square, but it's below the radar.

The other concept I have worked with is that the semi-square is a trigger aspect. Trigger in this situation translates to feelings that could get you to make action or take a decision, rather than to go on living with something.

That something might be what you don't want, or it might be what you want and don't have. There's also the implication that you may be feeling something you don't understand — and that when you follow your instincts and look closely at your situation, understanding will come.

Any honest assessment will involve getting fully clear on the role of sex and shared assets. The only reason that might be difficult is some form of denial or Pollyanna thinking. If you suspect you may be doing this, check in with trusted friends and ask them when you first said you wanted, or did not want, whatever may be in question. Get some external idea of how long this has been brewing. With Pisces in the picture, it may go back a long time.

Note that both the Moon and Pluto are also in aspect to your Sun. Here is the way that translates — what adjustments to your sense of personal identity do you have to make, in order to do this? In other words, one investment you may have is your image, and you may be concerned about giving that up.

I would suggest you look at this not as giving up an image, but rather as claiming your true sense of yourself; your true identity. Whatever your birthday may be, notice how you're feeling on July 22, when the Sun ingresses your sign. That is likely to be a true indicator of your real desires. It is clear that beneath anything involving any other person, you are cultivating a strong sense of who you are — perhaps stronger than ever.

It is, however, up to you to claim yourself — both your idea of who you are and your right to live as the person you are. In order to do this, you will need your own resources. That is often the one thing standing between a person and their ability to act on their personhood. It is indeed action we are talking about here.

### **The Earth Signs: Your Working Assets**

The earth signs in your chart describe your assets; specifically, your relationship to work, to your reputation and to your available resources. There are three earth signs — Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn. All of them are strongly situated right now, putting you in a strong position.

Let's take these signs in order: The first is Taurus, and the most notable planet there is Ceres. The first of the asteroids, Ceres represents one-third the mass of the asteroid belt, and is also the first-ever dwarf planet. Ceres represents a change in one's civil standing. Placed in Taurus, your 10th house of reputation and profession, it's time for a promotion.

This may or may not be handed to you. I would not proceed on that assumption. Rather, I suggest you move forward with the understanding that you must take the steps to initiate yourself to a new level of your work. By work I mean vocation and mission. I also mean what you want to be known for, because it is that thing that inherently represents your values.

Think of this as your method of feeding the world. Whatever the right thing for you to do is, it will come with that experience of nourishing the world. The nourishing the world part is something that reflects a personal value you have. The part about an initiation or change of status

in your life, in your relationship to the community and in your vocation, is what describes your current course of action.

Next is Jupiter, in your 2nd house of personal resources. That is Virgo. Points in this house describe a situation where your state of mind or some idea is blocking you from being aware, or from acting upon, what actual resources you have available. Jupiter indicates the resources themselves. A point called Transpluto — not a planet but a hypothetical point — which to me represents a thought form. That concept might be ‘I’m not worth it’, while in fact someone thinks you are. The thing is, that someone might be the person willing to support your endeavor or progress in some way.

However, I suggest this be someone apart from a marital partner or sexual partner. If there is a transaction, it would best be for financial purposes only. There may be exceptions to this. But the thing you want most of all to understand are someone’s motives; you must be as clear as you can be and then trust your judgment.

Remember that one thing you’re likely to be dealing with is a self-esteem question. It may not present itself as such. For our purposes though, doubt is the equivalent of despair. From a healing standpoint, I would caution that rather than being about some deeply rooted issue, this is more about an incorrect idea or misperception — probably passed along to you by a parent who was lacking a few clues necessary to help you on your way.

So much happening in your 2nd house is a reminder to be true to your values. You might say this is the root of self-esteem. Yet with so much happening across the dial in Pisces, your 8th house (which represents the values and resources of others), it is possible you are being swayed and influenced by the priorities of others. Further, it’s likely that this will come in the form of emotional attachment.

The remedy for this is to use reason and logic. I know that’s asking a lot for our world at this time, though that is what’s called for: that you logic out what is important to you, that you consciously set priorities, that you assess and analyze much that you’ve taken for granted for so long, and begin to make decisions about what is right for you.

This does not mean cutting off the influences of others. There are indeed people who believe in you for who you are, not merely because you can be of use to them. There are others with whom you can share and grow mutual goals and objectives. These are the people you want in your life — and for that to happen, you must learn to identify them and cultivate productive relationships with them.

The third earth sign is Capricorn, which we’ve already touched upon. This is your 6th solar house, which pertains to your work; that is, the actual physical and mental day-to-day work that gets you to the higher goals of the 10th house. With this you seem to be tireless to the point of being obsessed. You have tremendous capacity for work; what you would benefit from is a capacity for management.

This would help you ease back on your energy output and cycle some additional energy back into self-care. It's essential that you balance your devotion to effort with devotion to keeping yourself in balance.

### **Beyond Appearances: The Art of Embodiment**

If Leo is famous for one thing, it is maintaining appearances. One thing suggested in your chart this year is the ability to do just that. Yet in order to maintain appearances, you must to some degree do this with yourself. This will not help your cause, in a time when you must be honest with yourself above all other goals and necessities.

The opposite of maintaining appearances is not putting your issues on open display. Rather, it's about embodying what you hold to be true to your heart. Embodying rather than concealing; rather than obscuring for the sake of not ruffling feathers; embodying boldly rather than as some amorphous concept of doing what is right because it makes you a better person.

Your charts describe the need to come from the inside in everything you do. What I am describing here are Mercury and Venus in Leo, your primary sign of identity and your 1st house. One could easily read this as having plenty within your possession — and that's true. You have so much to offer. Yet with Leo as the filter through which these planets are passing, this could get translated into appearances and glamor. It would be easy, as we are so encouraged to do, to hold yourself as better rather than as better off than your fellow humans.

If we look at what those planets represent, it will be clear why there is a much better option, even though it's a more challenging one. Each of these planets represents two houses, or areas of experience, in your chart. Because they are placed in your sign (your 1st house), this illustrates drawing experience in and making it your own. It's not so much about a presentation as it is about holding space within yourself that is authentically you — then demonstrating that with your actions, including your decisions.

This is a more challenging set of translations than the contemporary 'feel good about yourself and all is well' school of thought. It is true that feeling good about yourself helps; the question is how you get there. The caution is to avoid shortcuts and to know when you're coming from a place closer to the core, or closer to the surface.

Mercury represents two vital houses — your 2nd solar house, Virgo, which we've covered (values, resources, self-esteem), and the 11th (your friends, community, collective resources). There is a calling here to be bold about your deepest values, and to embody this by bringing them into your community. As you know, it's a habit of many people around us to conceal what is true from their community so as not to be alienated or ruffle feathers. I suggest you push this as far in the opposite direction as you can, asserting who and what you are, and who and what is real to you, to every person in your life.

There is also likely to be some exchange between you and the people who share your values. The idea here is to have that be on the level of actually embracing and acting on what you discover to be mutually true. People who aspire to participate in their community must go beyond 'doing my

thing' and find their way to a space of 'doing our thing', the thing that helps the collective and which also nourishes you.

As for Venus, this could not be better situated. Venus connects to Taurus, your 10th solar house. This is about the full embodiment of your mission. There is no room for nine-to-five with this one — you are who you are, which means to succeed in your most cherished goals, holding yourself to being on one mission, all the time.

Venus also connects to Scorpio, your 3rd solar house. Interestingly, the 3rd is also a community house. It's less a community of interest and more your immediate, local surroundings, neighbors, neighborhood, town or village. There is a direct connection between what you are doing as a vocation and your most local environment. This is the ultimate expression of thinking globally and acting locally.

The shadow side of authenticity is what I call glamor — anything done for the sake of appearances. The remedy for glamor is service. Many factors in your lifetime chart setup describe a person driven by service. Yet this is also inconvenient and can be unprofitable. These things serve as deterrents to those inclined to put a Greenpeace sticker on their SUV.

This is not your karma. I would propose that your karma is to be the kind of Leo whose service is to represent the Sun, thereby providing the gravity to keep the planets in their proper orbits, and the heat to keep their biological processes alive.

### **Sort Out Your Life Gradually**

One last thought: It would appear that you have some sorting out to do, associated with relationships or financial circumstances that have come to dominate your life in some way. If you have a lot to clear out, begin in earnest, and proceed gently. Pisces provides key ideas how to do this. Think of it as flushing out a lake. This cannot be done all at once. It must be done gradually. Water must find its own pace and seek its own level.

It will help if you identify what an entanglement is versus what a collaboration is. Gradually seek to fill your life with productive collaborations, and hold everyone to that basic, reasonable, attainable and — most of all — well-grounded standard, and you will find yourself heading in the direction you want to go.

Of course this calls for leadership. As the Sun in the center of our solar system, remember, you have that to offer. As the Sun that orbits a galaxy of 300 billion stars, you are also part of something much larger than yourself.

It is not easy to be vulnerable in a world where so many people are wearing suits of armor, determined to carry weapons, and advocating warfare as a way of life. It's not easy to be vulnerable in a society where so many people are both aggressive and scared. Some would say it's unwise or impossible to let your guard down.

You may literally have to reinvent yourself in order to accomplish this — your goals, your expectations, your beliefs; most of all, your sense of who you are at the essence of your being. This is, indeed, the only sorting out you can do: your understanding of who you are. If you begin from the premise that you were misled, and determine to discover your own reality, you will find it much easier. Wipe away prejudice and misunderstanding, or be willing to admit these things exist, and be willing to see through them — and you will.