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LIVING BY STARLIGHT an Astrological Newsletter

December – January 2016

AUTHOR'S NOTES:

This is the last newsletter for 2015. What can I say? When we look around us and see the shape of what our planet has become, it's not hard to feel pessimistic. Terrorism, climate changes, a shaky economy, the destruction of the ecological balance, and the plight of the animal kingdom all weigh heavily on our collective consciousness.

But despite the difficult issues we are facing, or perhaps because of them, I am sending out my hope and faith that next year will be better. It's easy to be optimistic during good times. But we need it even more when the clouds are covering the sky and the winter wind pushes us to our limit of durability. If we all do our part and stand together maybe we can figure this out. I'm not ready to throw in the towel, but I'm also not interested in sticking my head in the sand.

The main aspect afflicting our world right now is still the Saturn-Neptune square I have been writing about all year. Each of these planets represents a different type of worry. Saturn is wary of all things material, such as poverty, loneliness, illness, and such. Neptune brings up those things that are more illusive. There is a feeling of non-reality with this planet that can create irrational panic. When they combine it creates an atmosphere of disillusionment and depression. And many of my readers have expressed these feelings. Reality, structure and stability (Saturn) seems to dissolve under Neptune's influence, and the faith that Neptune usually gives us dissipates under Saturn's cold stare. There is an illogical and often unfounded fear of what will be. We must address those fears in a direct and honest fashion and try to separate realistic trepidation from irrational alarm.

THE DIVIDED STATES OF AMERICA:

I'm often asked at lectures if I believe this is the end of the American Empire. My answer is always: **no** - not the way the age of England or Rome ended. They were small nations that relied on the imports from the countries they colonized. We are a huge nation with more resources than we need – a self-contained area that could easily survive under stressful situations. We don't need to import most resources. But this is only true because we *are* such a large and diverse country. We grow copious amounts of food in some areas, build our technology in others, and have economic and political centers in still other places. The states interact in a harmonious way for the good of the general populace. As long as we remain the **United States** that will be the case. **But we are in danger of no longer being the United States of America, but could become The Divided States of America.** Is Texas really part of the same nation as New York? Is Alabama in the same mind frame as California? Or are our collective goals no longer the same? The split in ideology has widened to a chasm. And it doesn't look like it's going to be healed anytime soon. If that split continues, the era of American prominence may very well come to an end. We have always had different agendas, some of which led to the Civil War. Are we really one country, or is there a chance that this continent could someday hold several nations competing rather than cooperating? Until that day this will continue to be a strong nation that represents a better life for most of the rest of the world.

Humankind has been on this earth for only seconds in the universal clock. Yet we have made much of the planet uninhabitable and are escalating the destruction at a rate far greater than even the dourest prognosticators had predicted. In 150 years we have polluted the air and the seas, destroyed forests and rivers, and pushed our world to a point that many scientists believe is already post the point of salvation. Is it any wonder that so many people are depressed or feel disenfranchised by these events? But we are all too concerned with our own security, wealth, iPhones, computers, cars, and personal political agendas to pay much attention. Do you think it will matter whether you called yourself a Democrat or a Republican when there's no more food, clean water, and breathable air?

In the 18th century the cod fish off the coast of New England were so thick that ships often had to wait for days for the schools to move on so they could dock. They numbered in the hundreds of millions. Now there are so few that they are farming fish to feed an ever growing human population.

If you travel through America and stop at the majestic Rockies, or drive through the Great Plains with its clean air and endless horizon it's difficult to believe that the world is in the shape it is. Yet the air in China is no longer acceptable for humans. In Beijing you can't see your hand in front of your face at high noon. The world is a small place and what goes on in one corner will eventually affect those in another. I'm glad that most people finally recognize what is happening and I hope the Paris accord on the environment succeeds.

We will continue to struggle with ISIS and home-grown terrorists until there is a collective decision on how to deal with this troubling issue. Our economy continues to falter, and the equity markets will remain shaky throughout 2016. There is no easy solution, and it's important that we protect our resources and savings. I don't expect the markets to find a solid footing for at least a year.

I will make my yearly predictions in the next issue after the New Year.

I wish you all the very best of holidays, no matter which you choose to celebrate. And a joyful and loving New Year.

Mitch

NEW MOON:

The New Moon falls on Friday December 11th at 5:28 A.M. EST at 19 degrees Sagittarius 03 minutes. The Sagittarius New Moon is filled with hope, optimism and a far-sighted perspective. This is the moon that heralds the December holiday season, which many religions celebrate in their own way. This makes sense, since Sagittarius rules religion, education, and the higher mind. But what it lacks is a sense of boundaries and limitations. It's very hard for this sign to say: "Enough". So the problems often come from overextending and crossing the line. In astrology we understand that there needs to be a balance between the expansion of Sagittarius and the confinement of Capricorn. For many years I've said that one of the main problems with our species is the order of those two signs. If Capricorn preceded Sagittarius we would first lay down a strong foundation and then build upon it. But as it stands, humanity first invents, expands and enlarges, then looks for a structure upon which to place that expansion. Well, unless we can move the signs and planets, there isn't much we can do except try to learn this most vital and powerful of lessons. We must first build the foundation and then expand it, both in our personal lives and in the collective. Those with a strongly placed Saturn are capable of doing that. Those with a more powerfully aspected Jupiter tend not to.

This month is all about seeing the bigger picture and looking further down the road. That's fine as long as we don't lose sight of the need for a firm underbelly. So try to see how you can aim towards the future without destroying the status quo. It's quite possible to do so if you understand this concept and are willing to commit to securing what is needed before going after the brass ring.

THE SUN SQUARES JUPITER:

On Monday December 14th at 10:02 A.M. EST this powerful yearly aspect comes along. This is a day to visualize what this New Moon has to offer and break out of our confinement. Because this is a square it will be rather forceful in its effects. It's quite easy to overdo things or take on too many projects and promises. The Jupiter squares are unlike others. They are often positive in their results, and mostly offer us opportunities for growth and new knowledge. But they do challenge our ability to stay within necessary restrictions. This includes personal relationships, financial matters such as budgets and risks, and in our indulgences. Because this is the holiday season many of us will overdo food, drink and other pleasures. So if there is a Christmas party Sunday or today, I would advise using caution and having a designated driver. Maybe even a designated drinker, too. I may be available for that job.

MERCURY SEXTILES NEPTUNE:

Also on Monday December 14th at 2:40 P.M. EST this creative and potentially enlightening transit will add to the Sun-Jupiter square mentioned above. This is a great day for all artists or communicators. It's easier to link the ethereal with reality. Writers, poets, painters, and musicians can gain insight into projects and can reach deeper into their craft to express the inner self. Even if you're not active in the arts, just indulging in a show, concert, museum, or movie could bring you much enjoyment and possibly some self-awareness that would not normally be noticed.

VENUS SEXTILES PLUTO:

On Thursday December 17th at 6:17 A.M. EST love will take a decidedly deeper tone. Pluto digs into any subject it is associated with. So we can expect romance and finances to be affected. Because this is a positive and malleable sextile it will be easier to handle any information that comes up. But astrologers often misinterpret the trines and sextiles as being less powerful or important than the hard aspect, and that's a mistake. We need to proactively use these softer transits because they don't force themselves upon us like the conjunct, opposition, and square. But if we direct the energy of a sextile the results can be very positive and impact our lives in a constructive and affirmative way. Don't be afraid to dig deeply into relationship issues. You should be able to get something very positive from it.

MERCURY CONJUNCTS PLUTO:

On Saturday December 19th at 1:54 P.M. EST this intense transit will make communication deep and insightful. But you must be careful. People will be thinking and speaking in a powerful and passionate way. Opinions will be strong, and it will be difficult to get others to change their point of view. Don't get into a discussion unless you want to hear what the other person has to say. This is not a frivolous transit or a day for a light-hearted conversation. But it is a good time to get to the bottom of any subject. Because the Pluto-Uranus square is still within a few degrees, the inner planets will aspect both in short order. Mercury will square Uranus tomorrow (see below), so this is a few days of some intense conversations. Caution is called for in communication and travel.

MERCURY SQUARES URANUS:

On Sunday December 20th at 10:07 P.M. EST Mercury now squares Uranus. This is a very powerful few hours during which many of us may not have our usual restraint or patience. This square can lead to misunderstandings, errors, and accidents. Caution is certainly called for while traveling. It's easy to be distracted, so pay attention to what's going on around you. This can also lead to anger or frustration, especially if it sets off your personal planets. It's the suddenness of Uranus affecting our thoughts and speech that leads to difficulties. If you can focus and pay close mind to what you're doing you can avoid most problems. This may be a day or so when there are a number of accidents involving cars, trains, planes, etc.

THE SUN ENTERS CAPRICORN:

On Monday December 21st at 11:49 P.M. EST winter begins. This is a sign that tends to look at things in a stoic and long-term manner. Capricorns are better than many others at planning for the future and using their saturnine patience to build a strong foundation. This is a month each year when we are faced with the reality of our lives. With the state of the world being what it is at the moment it may be a stark awakening for many. Hopefully it will lead some to examine their lives and look for ways to help the world. While Capricorn can be a bit stogy at times, it's an energy that demands stability and structure. And lord knows we need some of that right now. Winter is a time of withdrawal and revamping. And the month that the Sun travels through this sign is a good time to look at things and make plans for the changes that will most likely be instituted in the spring when our sense of optimism is greater. But it is under the more restrictive aspects that we plan for those changes.

VENUS SEXTILES JUPITER:

On Thursday December 24th at 5:03 A.M. EST this wonderful transit comes along. This Christmas has several very positive and optimistic transits that should help make this a holiday to remember. The Cancer Full Moon falls early Christmas Day (see below), which may add a lot of emotions and some stress to the holiday. But with this sextile

completing on Christmas Eve and the Mercury trine Jupiter coming on Christmas Day there is plenty of hope and exuberance to create a pleasant atmosphere for family and friends to share. Whenever Venus and Jupiter are in aspect the main concern is not to overdo things. Eating and drinking too much is common, so try to keep things in perspective.

FULL MOON:

This month's lunar peak occurs on December 25th, Christmas Day at 6:11 A.M. EST at 3 degrees Cancer 20 minutes. The Cancer Full Moon is the most emotional of all. It brings up the past, family issues, and puts us in touch with our deepest feelings. It's interesting that it falls on Christmas Day when most of us will be with our closest people. Try not to become overwhelmed by your emotions. You should be able to use the Mercury trine Jupiter (see below) to keep things in a positive and outgoing manner. What this Full Moon represents is a peak of sorts in your relationships to others and to the past. If some issues come up that stir your feelings, you'd be better off talking them out with someone you trust. Releasing the tension will free you to be more in the moment and not lost in the past.

MERCURY TRINES JUPITER:

Also on Friday December 25th at 3:19 P.M. EST this wonderfully positive trine will add feelings of friendship and outgoing enthusiasm to the holiday mix. This is a great aspect for any conversations or for looking back at things in a more optimistic way. This is positive for travel, and it should help us all handle the coming and going to holiday parties. Take a long walk, a drive, or just sit outside and watch the world go by. There will be a cheery undertone to most communications.

URANUS GOES DIRECT:

Also on Friday December 25th at 10:53 P.M. EST this planet turns around and will allow us to seek out changes that may have been stifled for a few months. If you've been waiting to change direction in your business, relationships, or other life choices this is the time to begin to make them. New ideas and plans can be instituted more readily and you should be able to view these plans with a clearer perspective. Anything unusual or experimental that you've been considering may present an opportunity to try it out. Because Uranus rules explosive situations, and coming so close to the Full Moon, there may be some event that shakes us up. It may be an accident or a planned event. Let's hope not.

THE SUN SEXTILES NEPTUNE:

On Tuesday December 29th at 8:18 A.M. EST this creative transit will allow us all to get in contact with our artistic and spiritual side. While this isn't a terribly powerful transit, its underlying theme is important and can bring our consciousness to a higher level. It may be subtle, but the effects can be deep and rewarding. Because it completes so close to the Mercury square Mars mentioned below its energy will be overshadowed by that more powerful square. But if you can meditate or in some way delve into the unconscious you will feel it. This is a very creative energy, and if you can connect it through that Mercury Mars square you may be able to project something very inventive and original.

MERCURY SQUARES MARS:

Also on Tuesday December 29th at 9:54 A.M. EST this difficult and potentially dangerous transit completes. Caution is called for this morning. Communications may be very volatile and you could easily get into a spat or disagreement. Try to avoid any unnecessary arguments. With this kind of transit often people will fight just to release the tension and there may not be anything gained by going through the motions. Travel is also at risk, so extra caution should be observed.

VENUS ENTERS SAGITTARIUS:

On Wednesday December 30th at 2:17 A.M. EST Venus enters this Jupiter ruled sign until January 23rd. For the next several weeks we will all be prone to overindulgences and a somewhat unrealistic approach to love and possessions. A little restraint will go a long way. While I think we should all embrace the optimism and outgoing attitudes this will

provide, we should also remember that the Sun is transiting Capricorn and structure and reality are the underlying themes. If you use these two energies in tandem, there is much that can be accomplished. Many of us will be more outgoing and sociable, so plan some get-togethers and explore your creative side.

MERCURY ENTERS AQUARIUS:

On Friday January 1st, New Year's Day at 9:21 P.M. EST Mercury enters this erratic Uranus ruled sign. Thoughts and ideas will speed up now for about a week, but Mercury will retrograde on January 5th (see below) and reenter Capricorn on January 8th, so this aspect will not last long. Make use of this energy while it's around. This is a very good placement for Mercury and helps us seek out new ideas and changes to existing ones. Mercury will return to this sign on February 13th and we can get back to that attitude just in time for Valentine's Day.

MARS ENTERS SCORPIO:

On Sunday January 3rd at 9:33 A.M. EST we begin a period of some intensity. Mars is given co-rulership of this sign. But as often happens with a planet in the sign it rules, there can be an overabundance of the energy of that sign. One of the challenges of this placement is to make use of the Mars energy without allowing it to overwhelm you. Egos will be a bit out of control, and many people will tend to be black or white about a lot of issues. Relationships will be especially passionate and a connection that begins with this placement can be volatile and powerful. Of course that can be a good thing, if it's handled properly. Try to be as open and honest as you can about things. That way you will prevent Scorpio's tendency to express itself in a hidden agenda. It's always easier to deal with things out in the open than try to see it clearly in the shadows.

MERCURY SQUARES MARS:

On Tuesday January 5th at 7:00 A.M. EST this explosive aspect completes. Communications of all sorts can be harsh and there will be little filtering. People will say exactly what's on their minds in a direct and aggressive manner. If you're not ready to hear what someone has to say, don't answer the phone. Travel is also difficult now, and you simply must act in a defensive and aware fashion. Road rage is common. If you're feeling angry it would be best not to get behind the wheel of a car. Accidents or breakdowns are also plentiful. But if you are aware of how you're feeling and what's going on around you, you can avoid much of the potential problems this can bring up. This takes place early in the morning and fades quickly, so just stay out of harm's way for a while. There is a lot of energy behind this square, and if you can focus your attention onto any mental activity you can accomplish much in a short period.

MERCURY RETROGRADES:

Also on Tuesday January 5th at 8:06 A.M. EST the winged god begins its thrice a year run backwards until January 25th. As always, use caution while traveling, and leave extra time for connections etc. There are many upsetting situations that occur while Mercury is askew. Conversations are often misunderstood, packages are either lost or delayed, and all items associated with travel or communications can breakdown or cause difficulties. It's a very bad time to sign important documents or complete negotiations. You may overlook something important and not realize what you're signing. It begins its backward journey in Aquarius, but then retrogrades back into Capricorn. Once it returns to that earth sign many issues involving business or real estate will be especially susceptible to problems. We only have so much free-will, and often we must make decisions or complete something without the freedom to choose when. Take your time and carefully review anything that you're working on. The world is slowing down for a few weeks, and this is a chance to catch up on things or grab someone's attention. Just be aware of the energy and work it accordingly.

VENUS SQUARES NEPTUNE:

Also on Tuesday January 5th at 9:34 A.M. EST romance will be quite confusing. This can create a day of spirituality, and if you can focus on that it can be enlightening and very creative. But in personal relationships this transit can make

things foggy and difficult to understand. A relationship born with this aspect will fluctuate between the spiritual and the confusing. I wouldn't plan a blind date or an important first meeting of any sort. If possible reschedule for another day. Finances will also be murky. Be careful that you aren't being overcharged or that you didn't understand the price of something. Keep an eye on your cash in general. This can be a day when spend much more than you realize.

THE SUN CONJUNCTS PLUTO:

Also on Tuesday January 5th at 10:26 P.M. EST this powerful aspect will create an atmosphere of intensity. Power struggles will abound, and nothing will be easy to accomplish. However, if you can compromise and get others to work with you towards a common goal you can achieve a great deal. Do not take on every challenge or test you encounter. And if others are attempting to drag you into a fight do not take the bait, unless you feel the subject is worth battling over. Save your energy for the important issues. This is a day when nothing will be superficial. Everyone will feel the depth of this aspect and respond accordingly. So be aware that even the simplest things may be viewed as important by someone, and you may have to struggle just to get your daily activities completed. Because of the ongoing Pluto-Uranus square the Sun will square Uranus in a few days (see below). So this is a few days when caution is certainly called for. Both this and the Sun square Uranus will have a strong effect on the equity markets. I expect the stocks to drop perceptibly this week.

THE SUN SQUARES URANUS:

On Thursday January 7th at 7:22 A.M. EST this potentially explosive aspect will make itself known. The night before and into this morning we should all pay attention to things and avoid any dangerous or volatile situations. People will be on edge and some will be looking for a fight. If possible, walk away. There is nothing to be gained and much to be lost. As with all aspects there is a positive side. If you've been feeling stuck or unable to push a project forward, this may offer you the opportunity to do so. It's an impulsive and unpredictable energy, but it doesn't sit still for long and will demand that some action be taken. If you are in control, you can choose what that action is. If you aren't awake and ignore this, the universe will make that decision. This may be a bad day for the stocks.

JUPITER RETROGRADES:

Also on Thursday January 7th at 11:40 P.M. EST the largest planet begins its backward motion. This is the start of a period of slower growth and expansion. It's not a time to increase your business or take on too many risks. Things will begin to pull back in and anything that is reliant on growth or enlargement may suffer a setback. Historically this is the beginning of a bearish period for the stocks. I expect that to be the case and my advice is to wait until the markets stabilize before buying into the equities. In personal issues, this is a time to get inside and prepare for your individual growth. Jupiter is very much a planet of spirituality and faith. When a planet retrogrades its energy is internalized. So that is where you will find the opportunities for expansion. Look for soul growth rather than material. Meditation, yoga, and other methods of reaching within you will be very rewarding. This is a good time to begin such disciplines. Travel may be difficult with misdirection and other problems, but there will be a personal sense of satisfaction that comes from any trip you take. I recommend travel during the next few months, but advise you to take such journeys with a good and optimistic attitude. Precautions and extra care are called for, but if you do so you may have a very important time.

MERCURY ENTERS CAPRICORN:

On Friday January 8th at 2:37 P.M. EST Mercury retrogrades back into this earth sign. Until it returns to Aquarius on February 13th we will once again experience a bit of a dour undercurrent in our conversations and other communications. A serious undertone will permeate our world. But with things being how they are at the moment, what else would you expect? Hopefully the more realistic side of Capricorn will be prominent and some common sense will prevail. But as an old girlfriend used to tell me often, *common sense is not that common*. Most people will be thinking from a more serious and pragmatic place. Pay attention to what's most important and you can focus your energy where it will do you the most good.

VENUS CONJUNCTS SATURN:

Also on Friday January 8th at 11:11 P.M. EST this somewhat heavy aspect will complete. Venus rules love relationships and finances. Both will be restricted by Saturn's force. This can be a difficult day for all relationships, especially intimate ones. I wouldn't plan an important date or put money into a risky venture. My guess is that there will be fewer than normal winning scratch off tickets sold. But Saturn has a deeper and longer-lasting effect. If a romance has been hedging, this may finally push things into a decision. If it doesn't really have enough to go the distance, it may end. But if there is a strong foundation that hasn't been expressed, this may be the time when the commitment is taken more seriously.

DARK OF THE MOON:

The next New Moon falls on Saturday January 9th at 8:30 P.M. EST at 19 degrees Capricorn 13 minutes. The day or two leading up to it will be a particularly low energy period. If you tend to be emotional this may be a very trying time each month. I have found that people with prominent moons or a Cancer Sun, Moon or ascendant respond to the cycles of the moon more intensely than others. Spend this time finishing up anything that is incomplete, don't try to initiate new projects on a waning moon, it just won't work out. Once the New Moon hits you begin new projects or attempt a new approach to an existing problem. If you have been living in a situation or involved in a relationship that is intolerable or has outlived its usefulness this would be the proper time to move on with your life. If you have been working on a project that is almost complete but you seem to lack the energy for the finality, you must push during these low energy days to end the matter once and for all. If you don't, when the New Moon arrives it will bring this "dead" energy along with it and conflict with the newer force being presented. Each month we are offered a chance to clean house, so to speak.

Note: All aspects are most powerful and effective as they apply. Once the transit has completed, its force is lessened. The further it separates the weaker it becomes.

For information regarding personal readings please contact me at: mitchastro@aol.com.

Below is a list of times this month when the Moon is Void of Course and neither important decisions nor purchases should be made during these periods. The Void of Course Moon is a time when we should try to center ourselves and deal with spiritual matters not materialistic ones. Any decisions made on the VC Moon will not turn out the way we had expected.

The Moon is Void of Course from the time it makes its last major aspect in a sign until it enters the next sign. For example, if the Moon squares Mars at 27 degrees Aries and then has no more aspects until it enters Taurus it will be Void of Course for three degrees or about 6 hours. The aspects used are the conjunction, sextile, square, trine, and opposition. All times are Eastern Standard Time:

Please note: In response to requests from a few readers I have added a few VOC Moons into the next lunar cycle for those who need to make plans before my next newsletter is released.

December 11th 11:06 A.M. – December 12th 1:47 A.M. ***Moon is void all day

December 13th 6:07 P.M. – December 14th 7:59 A.M. ***Moon is void all night

December 16th 2:17 A.M. – 12:45 A.M.

December 18th 10:14 A.M. – 4:26 P.M.

December 20th 5:01 P.M. – 7:13 P.M.

December 22nd 9:26 A.M. – 9:31 P.M. ***Moon is void 12 hours

December 24th 3:04 P.M. – December 25th 12:26 A.M.

December 26th 10:36 P.M. – December 27th 5:31 AM.

December 29th 12:38 P.M. – 1:58 P.M.

January 1st 12:33 A.M. – 1:41 A.M.

January 2nd 11:23 A.M. – January 3rd 2:36 A.M. *** Moon is void 15 hours

January 5th 12:47 P.M. – January 6th 1:56 A.M. ***Moon is void 12 hours

January 7th 9:44 P.M. – January 8th 10:07 A.M. ***Moon is void all night

January 10th 12:39 P.M. – 3:23 P.M.

January 11th 8:09 P.M. – January 12th 6:53 P.M. *** Moon is void 24 hours

January 14th 11:31 A.M. – 9:46 P.M.***Moon is void 10 hours

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New York City

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