

From the desk of:

The Existential Detective Agency

Earth, Milky Way Galaxy, Universe, Multiverse

Subject: Chrystal

The first thing that strikes me about the subject, sitting in the late morning sun, is her physical resemblance to that which she is: a psychopomp, one of those strange creatures who mediate between the conscious and the unconscious realms. While it's true that psychopomps may take any form, my mind always casts Hermes/Mercury in the role. In Hellenistic astrology, Mercurial people are often tall and slender, narrow faced, and somewhat androgynous. Not only did the subject fit this description quite exactly, but her hair, rising in a wave to one side, has a rakish, pompadour-like vibe, and the etymological congruency of "pomp" delights me.

I have come to inquire after her services as psychopomp and, having secured them, I soon after find her playing this role in one of my dreams. Like Beatrice to Dante, she accompanies me through a Hieronymous Bosch-like internal landscape, interacting with each member of my family in turn. Every time she interacts with someone, they act out my own unconscious feelings about them. Upon awakening, I lie in bed reflecting with wonder at the power of this archetype within the subject.

But Hermes is not the only being that looks out from behind her eyes. She is not one of those muddy archetypal mish-mashes, one of those collapsed faces one sees on the subway train, gray from long adherence to toxic cultural norms. Peter Pan is also there, another face of the psychopomp, as are more elder beings. Though she is well and fashionably dressed, in a rather laid-back, Aquarian way, I know by her shamanic profession that she is not entirely domesticated. She has allowed some feral jungle creatures to ride alongside the disciplined Lord of Time who rules her Capricornian sun.

The question is not whether all these creatures are simultaneously present within her - I can see that they are - but *how do they get along?*

In Carl Jung's theory on the alchemical stages of the psyche, order is brought to the confusion of the undelineated unconscious (the *prima materia*) by the process of separating it into its component parts, or archetypes. Once named and illuminated by the light of consciousness, the archetypes begin to take on a life of their own. At this point,

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the Self - who can be seen as the conductor of the choir - can unite and synthesize the various voices into one melodious song.

I will now attempt to name some members of this choir. Looking at a snapshot of the solar system at the moment of the subject's planetary incarnation, I can readily identify the loudest voices.

It is 5:17 pm on Tuesday, December 29, 1981, in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. *Tuesday's child is full of grace.* The evening is warm and clear. 27 minutes remain until sunset. As the sun sinks, it trails Mercury, Venus, and the waxing crescent moon closely behind it.

Neptune, Uranus, Jupiter, Pluto, Saturn, and Mars have already set.

All 9 planets are quartered in the Western hemisphere, so it is said this child will be motivated by Others more than she is motivated by the Self.

Capricorn governs the Sun.

Aquarius governs the Moon.

Cancer presides over the Eastern horizon.

Here we have 3 odd archetypal bedfellows: an old and rather miserly man - let's call him "Old Goat," as I once called my grandfather (this is the sun in Capricorn). A wild-eyed, wild-haired eccentric who excels at knee jerk reactions (this is the moon in Aquarius). And the bountiful grande dame who grew from a slender girl into a powerful force of nature (this is the Cancer ascendent).

Imagine these three trapped in an elevator together, and you may form a picture of the subject.

At her lowest moments, these 3 inner characters may find themselves in a knock down, drag out fight. The Old Goat and the Grade Dame will be confident, supreme. They may at least agree on taking a conservative approach to the danger. The Old Goat will be more motivated by rules and discipline.

"Look here," he might say, tapping the elevator panel with a long, skeletal finger. "These instructions say we are not to attempt anything on our own. We will press the call button and wait for assistance."

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“But - can you feel that, that tremble?” the Grande Dame answers, a note of hysteria in her warbly voice. She looks between the other two, hand held in a protective gesture over her heart. “I don’t think we can wait. We may be in grave danger, we could all be killed!”

The wild eyes of the eccentric dart around, looking for inventive solutions. He seems to forget the existence of the other two for a moment, jumps up, and swings his arm towards the ceiling. “There!” he cries. “The hatch! Give me a boost, lady, and we’ll all climb out.”

“Are you mad?” retorts the Grande Dame, withdrawing to a corner.

“I have already pressed the button,” says the Old Goat, dryly. “According to the instructions on this placard, we have but to wait.”

But there is no answer to the call. The Eccentric presses the call button over and over again impatiently, tries to use an open panel as a stair step, examines the elevator wiring. Old Goat remains impassive, hands clasped in front of him, lips pressed firmly together.

“No doubt the authorities are already on their way,” he says tersely.

Grande Dame shows great interest in what the other two are doing, now supporting both in their approach. Yet she grows more hysterical herself, wringing her hands. “If I die, what will happen to the children?” she wonders aloud.

So long as each of the three remain fixed in their positions - Old Goat rigidly insisting upon a conventional and orderly approach, Grade Dame frozen in fright from her fight or flight survival response, and the Eccentric acting individually without concern for the others - these three will remain unmoving, trapped by their disparate actions.

However, I do not think the subject suffers from the Trapped Elevator syndrome. I rather get the impression that these three have learned how to function well as a unit, as the subject appears to be successful and stable (Old Goat) in a rather unusual career that involves plumbing the cosmic depths (Eccentric) and nurturing her tribe (Grande Dame).

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Well done, well done.

But now let us venture a little further into the dark corners of this elevator. For there are many other voices in this choir, and though some may speak quite softly, and some quite rarely, yet they arise from a deeper place and so carry more weight.

Hekate is certainly there in the shadows. She is another psychopomp character, a creature of the moon. Though she is accompanied by a wide variety of animals, most famously a three headed dog, she is also associated with serpents.

Serpents are ancient symbols of healing for nearly all tribal cultures. They are poisonous creatures, but a touch of their poison has the power to heal. The subject's Earth pattern is quite repetitive on the subject of snakes. Let's first examine the snakes in her Moon.

Her Aquarius Moon is found in the 8th house. This is Scorpio's house, the house of sex and death. It is a placement commonly associated with healers and their familiars, snakes. With this moon placement, the subject has the ability to go deeply into intense issues in order to transform them. She has the unusual ability to walk in the Land of the Dead without dying, and return to the Land of the Living, carrying a little pot of the Underworld's secret treasure: the magic unguent of regeneration to share with the Living.* This is snake medicine. To shed our skin, it is necessary to poison the parts of us that are holding us back, and peel back what is already dead. From this we step, reborn.

Her Moon is in geometric square to Chiron, the asteroid that represents The Wounded Healer in Hellenistic astrology. The traditional understanding of Moon square Chiron is that it represents a childhood wound that most likely originated from the mother. The conflicts were likely a result of the mother not being emotionally prepared for parenthood. Chiron shows us where we are wounded in a way that is not ultimately healable - it's a wound that never stops bleeding. She must heal others of the wound she cannot heal for herself. In this way, she will bathe herself in the flow of the healing she can never hope to possess. Administering snake medicine is the tithe she must pay to the galactic powers to ease the eternal ache.

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Perhaps it is karmic?

But it is not just our Mediterranean ancestors that insist that the subject must serve the serpent. According to the Mayan calendar, she was born on the day of the Serpent - and the day we are born determines our destiny. Intuition and body wisdom are her birthright, but that does not mean these gifts will be handed to her on a silver platter: she must discover them within. Like a butterfly that must struggle as it leaves its cocoon to build strong wings to fly, she will first have to conquer the dragon of her reptilian brain. Hers may cling to routines, to predictability, to cultural norms. She may include conditions with her love, she may secretly manipulate and judge. (So secretly, she may not herself be aware of it!) But if she practices spontaneity, hones her gut instincts, and cuts all the strings of attachment in the way that she loves, she will put herself back in touch with the passion and the power of the Serpent.

The theme of healer is repeated in her Mayan astrology, where her soul is also associated with the Jaguar. For the ancient Mayans, the Jaguar was referred to as the "Sun-runner" because he was in charge of carrying the sun through the underworld at night, from the moment it dipped below the Western horizon to the moment it reappeared in the East. (Recall now that the sun was 27 minutes to setting at the moment this Jaguar arrived - just in time!) Because of his association with the underworld, the Jaguar was endowed with magical, shamanic energies: he is the totem of the priest/priestess. This type of healer reminds us to look inside for our healing, and holds the "light" while we go searching for ourselves in the dark - and, indeed, this is exactly what the subject does for her living. As long as she holds fast to her integrity, harnessing her personal will and releasing the need for control, power, or fame, she will flourish in her chosen career.

Conclusion:

The subject appears to be living creatively, using her innate gifts in service to others, feet firmly on her path. This does not mean she can rest on her laurels, for as soon as she is tired, overworked, and overwhelmed, she may slip back into the stagnancy of her reptilian mind, which clings to the patterns of the past for stability.

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I recommend with a moon such as hers that she is careful with her time and energy, not exceeding her nurturing capacity, and thinks of herself as the mother on the proverbial airplane in peril, who must put on her own oxygen mask before helping her children. For who will nurture the nurturer?

*In the myth of Psyche and Eros, Psyche is sent to the Underworld on an impossible mission: to retrieve a pot of Persephone's "beauty treatment." She succeeds with some magical assistance.