

## *September 2010 – Virgo*

### *Good Time Oatmeal Astrology by Joseph Banks*

Welcome to the month of Virgo. Late summer in the mountains; the green winds come over the ridges and sweep down the damp valleys of the heart. Trout rise to big grasshoppers in the creek out back and earth's round belly swells with a cornucopia of good things to eat. It's an abundant universe indeed. The transition from Leo to Virgo is quite a big change. The Sun leaves its home in Leo and enters the earthy sign of Virgo at 8:07 in the morning on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. In Leo, the psyche glories in self-attention and self aggrandizement. Once the individual is fully satisfied with itself as the benevolent King and ruler of its own domain there is nowhere else to go but outward toward social consciousness.

Virgo confronts the social universe as a thing to which it must adapt, and as a framework through which it learns efficiency and service to others. Virgo thrives not on social recognition, but on the sense of knowing the job has been well done. The playful egotism of Leo eventually meets with personal defeat. The humility and caution of Virgo is a natural reaction to this.

Virgo is certainly not lacking in courage or confidence, but it is sobered by external necessities and a sense of duty. The precise techniques needed for success are the natural tools of this sign. There is a strong sense of self-evaluation based on orderliness and dependability. No other sign strives more for perfection. A strict ethical system is developed and used to judge the behavior, not so much of others, but of the self. Here we see the occasional down side of the Virgo mind. Self-judgment can lead to self criticism. When the self-critical eye turns outward others may feel the merciless judgment of its gaze.

Virgo is the most flexible of the earth signs. Though it is traditionally ruled by Mercury, some astrologers associate it with Chiron and the major asteroids Pallas and Juno, both of which embody powerful aspects of the feminine.

Virgos love to serve and do so without seeking recognition. They do sometimes feel the need to be needed. My life is blessed by a number of Virgos among my close friends. Each of them has, at one time or another anticipated a genuine need before I realized it myself. Their guidance and assistance has contributed much to my success and happiness. There may somewhere be a world without Virgos but I'm sure it's not as fine and joyful as this one.

#### The Big Picture

I've heard from a number of people that they are feeling frustrated lately and are having a generally difficult time. The astrological correlation to this is a big, very slow moving alignment of planets called a T/square. People with planets in Pisces, Aries, Libra, Cancer and Capricorn are the most affected. The effects of this huge train wreck of

transits in the sky are affecting everyone to some degree. It's a bit of a mess and will continue for several months, although it is past its peak for most, but not all of us. A full description is impossible without a look at your own unique chart. Even a general description is rather complex.

There is a need to embrace new ways of relating to others and to our environment. We feel a pull to hold on to some old beliefs and behavior patterns which are comfortable "old shoes" for us. The demand for personal evolution is strong. We must examine our "facts of life" and realize that some of these so called facts are actually core beliefs set up by events in our childhood which may not be easily accessed by our adult memory. We must let go of some ideas which may have served us well at one time, but no longer do so.

Some examples of core beliefs we may mistake as facts of life: You must work hard to get ahead in this world; I am being punished for wrongs done before now, even maybe from another life time; I am fat; I am sickly; I always have the worst luck; money is everything; money is bad, and people whom have it lack spirituality; no pain, no gain; I have a chronic, incurable disease; cigarettes are bad for you; men are inconsiderate troglodytes; I'll never find true love; women are weak; brown skinned people are inferior; red meat is bad for you; I'm not good (or pretty, or smart) enough; I'm too sensitive; life is suffering; ad infinitum.

THE ABOVE ARE NOT FACTS. They are core beliefs and tend to attract events and other people whom hold similar beliefs to you. Your experience will weed out any incoming data which does not fit your core beliefs, proving them to be correct again and again. Life is much more multidimensional than we realize. We get whatever we focus on. If you believe you are overweight, you will never be slim until you look in the mirror and see yourself as a slender person at that very moment. As long as you believe you are poor, you will never have prosperity. We defend our core beliefs fiercely because we are damn well certain they are facts.

This is the kind of difficult work we are being challenged to do by that big T/square between Saturn, Jupiter, Uranus, and capped off by a dark and powerful Pluto while being strobed by the Moon every two weeks. The BP oil spill and the ethically ambiguous wars in the Middle East are global effects of this alignment. We must change the world in some major, fundamental ways and we must do it now or disaster may lie ahead.

I realize some folks disagree with some of the proposed core beliefs listed. Being able to produce evidence to prove me wrong. That doesn't bother me. However, it does support the point made about how hard it can be to shake loose a core belief. These ideas form our very personality and our own personal reality. So much for the big picture.

On Retrograde Planets

Several planets are in retrograde motion as the month of September begins, including Chiron, Mercury, Jupiter, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto (as well as several major asteroids.) Of the possible nine normally used planets that can ever go retrograde, six of them are doing so now. You wanna know what this means!...Not a whole freakin' lot. Most of the world's greatest western astrologers have commented that, in a chart reading, they don't assign much importance to retrograde planets, especially the outer ones. There is more popular urban legend about retrograde Mercury than you can sling a cat at, (I've tried!)

For instance, the outer planets are associated with very major life changes and important psychological tendencies. Each of the outer planets is retrograde whenever our Earth is on the same side of the sun as the planet in question. This happens almost half the time! Why do we hear no horror stories about Neptune in retrograde, or Pluto or Uranus? Poor ol' silver slippers Mercury seems to get a bad rap.

As a devoted full time astrologer I've been searching for conclusive, rigorously researched data for 20 years to prove the effects of retrograde Mercury. I'd love to find some, but I haven't. I have sources in the National Center for Geocosmic Research, The United Nations, N.O.A.H., The American Skeptics Society, the State Fish and Game Department, the Department of Transportation, and others all supplying me with non-biased data. We have yet to find any "significant statistical variance spikes" relating to the usual urban myths during retrograde periods.

The urban myths or other stats searched for include, but are not limited to, auto and airplane accidents, hospital E.R. activity, typographical errors in memos, traffic delays, etc; and just about all the other stuff people blame on a retrograde Mercury. As a scholar, I am forced to conclude that most retro Mercury stories are the result of "type one" statistical errors.

For example, lets say a busy office clerk sends out 300 memos in a year's time. Assume about 30 of these memos contain some typo error. Mercury goes retrograde about twice a year, for about 24 days each time., but we find the typos spread rather evenly throughout the year. Now, here's the kicker, almost every time a typo error occurs while Mercury is retrograde, some folks in the office crack a few of the usual harmless jokes about it. Meanwhile, all the perfectly correct typos are ignored, as well as the similar number of typo errors which happened when Mercury was not retrograde.

This is one of the most common errors in studying statistics and in scientific methodology per se. Our beliefs naturally bias us to recall the times when events supported our assumptions, while we conveniently fail to notice the majority of data not in support of our bias. In my predictive work, I admit I've made good use of this human character trait by sticking my neck out on some wild and detailed predictions, which, though soundly based on astrological alignments, are still "educated guesses." I'm right only about half the time, but folks are really impressed when I'm lucky enough to hit the nail on the head. I think 50% roughly accurate predictions equate to a batting average better than Babe Ruth's or Barry Bond's.

If anyone has rigorously gathered easily substantiated data supporting retro Mercury variance spikes, please send it to me! I don't claim retro planets have no effect, I simply believe we often misinterpret the true importance of retrograde symbology, and I DO think Mercury gets more blame than other planets which are retrograde for longer periods and/or more often.

All the best changes in my life, including my current great marriage, my best cars, etc happened with Mercury retrograde; and no, I don't have a retrograde Mercury in my birth chart. Well, we flogged that horse, but with about seventy percent of the solar system in retrograde today, I guess it was time again for my yearly rant.

The majority of the most widely recognized great minds in modern western astrology describe transiting retrograde planets as focusing their energy more internally, while retaining a similar outward event horizon radius. For example, under a retrograde Mercury, we may more clearly reflect on the last three chapters of the book we have written, correcting errors and refining the plot. However there is no reason not to begin a new chapter if the muse rests heavily upon us. Extend the metaphor to the specific meanings of other retrograde planets. Free will rules.

In a natal chart, retrograde planets are usually expressed idiosyncratically, often not in clear accord with the currently existing cultural status quo. This does tend to create some difficulties in social integration.

Ahh, ... To lay me down between the verdant green breasts of September... The year's full-grown foliage nestles us like tiny mice in an old drawer in some abandoned log cabin. Summer's long green beard is flecked with the white of queen anne's lace and yarrow while the first pale asters bend in the tall grass. All rolling with the waves of mild September winds as sylphs dance wantonly in the meaty air full of the goddess' sexy pollen. Rich air, you come right into me. As close as you can be. You touch my blood; and blood touch me.

The first five days of September will kick off with a burst of commerce transactions and a high rate of information exchange peaking at about 9:30 am EDT on the third. Romance, art and a desire to make harmonious amends cover the week, fading out on the sixth of the month. Expect some traffic delays as roads and airways fill to capacity. Insure against lost luggage.

The Virgo New Moon occurs at 9:31 am EDT on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Here is a fertile lunation with an emphasis on learning new techniques and helping others. Begin new projects now and you will advance well toward your goals.

On the ninth, Venus, goddess of love and beauty exits her home sign of Libra and enters dark, deep, intense watery Scorpio. Venus is a bit 'debilitated' in Scorpio. Relationships intensify, as change is demanded so we may release our personal baggage and blend our souls with our loved ones. The down side is that we may try to force others to change, forgetting that all we can really do is work on our own head. Expect deep or even

obsessive emotional encounters, including events in the sexual arena, for the next few weeks.

Jupiter slips retrograde back into the water sign of Pisces. If you were born between October 18<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup> you may come upon a period of success as your horizons broaden. You may travel or have luck in legal matters. Past friends and lovers may benefit you. Watch out for the Mars/Neptune trine at 9:15 pm EDT on the ninth. Don't promote yourself or sign any contracts on this day. Work creatively or escape into pleasurable activities that require little physical effort. Transcendental beauty is at your gates. Personal achievement in noncreative or normal matters will elude you.

Mercury takes station and turns direct at 7:08 pm EDT on September 12<sup>th</sup>. Folks born in late August will experience some excellent ideas as personal opinions are transformed to align with your life's path. Mars enters Scorpio on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Mars is strong in Scorpio and all water signs will begin to gain personal power and renewed vigor. Press steadily forward and dig deeply into the mystery of how our emotional focus creates and draws to us whatever we are concentrating on. Be persistent to get what you desire.

On the 18<sup>th</sup>, Jupiter conjuncts Uranus, both being retrograde. This is a great opportunity to gain an enlightened view of how your past actions have brought you to this very point in life. Broaden your scope and move forward to find unexpected gifts awaiting you. The key to success here is to feel your impulses and follow them. Impulsive action will connect you to oddly synchronistic events, leading to the joyful expression of a gift you didn't realize you possessed. Embrace the unknown with enthusiasm; just don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. Your desire to escape responsibility is strong now. This alignment lasts for about a month or more. This is the strongest aspect of the month, while still somewhat under the restrictive tension of the previously described Big Picture.

As the Sun passes over the Jupiter/Uranus conjunction (28 degrees Pisces) the above opportune alignment will be triggered into immediate action. Begin something new and daring now and you will probably succeed. This happens on September 21<sup>st</sup>. It really is the most intensely focused period in the month. A three day window will open to new adventure. Possibly, you may release something from your life which has been holding you back. Again; Follow Your Hunches. This is how your soul sends you guidance for growth. Most excellent!

The Autumn Equinox occurs at 11:09 pm EDT on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Fall Equinox always occurs at the point when the Sun moves out of the sign of Virgo and into the first degree of the airy Venus ruled sign of Libra. The Equinox is so named because now the days and nights are of about equal length. It is one of the holy days of the older agrarian societies which based their life and survival on the turn of the seasons for the planting, growing, eating and preservation of livestock and food. At the turning of Her hand the bards sing. The sweet secrets of the shadows grow stronger now. The magic of the cold stars sings as the mysteries of birth, love, and death fill the forest; tiny blue sylphs riding on the first of Autumn's windblown leaves. Life hangs in the balance, and continues its ever winding spiral from the heart to the stars.

The Full Moon rises at sundown in the East, big and red in the first degree of Aries. Luna is exactly Full at 5:17 am EDT on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. There will be a powerful culmination of events possessing the nature of the Jupiter/Uranus alignment described above. Here is a real kicker of a Full Moon in the most powerful first Cardinal degree of the Zodiac. This year's Equinox is the strongest one to have occurred in the past ten years! Colors are red and orange and silver and gold. Herbs are apples, yarrow, roses, hot spicy peppers, nettles and cinnamon. Use copper and iron with red stones mixed with moonstones. Sing and dance the spiral dance with abandon. "In darkness we do what we can,...with our hearts so raw and clear. We're moving away from here...."

The Sun is in Libra now, and Virgo's rich harvest begins drawing to a close. The feelings move from the gut to the thinking head. Libra is concerned not so much with service, but with an equal measure in all relationships.

During the last three days of September, be prepared for some delays or setbacks. Keep working hard to receive incremental gains after the first few days of next month. If depression rears it's soggy head, just bear it out. It will pass soon.

Key words for Virgo: analytical, industrious, methodical, service and reliable

New Moon is on September 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 AM EDT @ 15 degrees of Virgo  
Full Moon is on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5:17 AM EDT @ 0 degrees of Aries