

# *The Starfire Messenger*



**A Free Weekly Newsletter**

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### **Rx Mercury, Liminality, and the Thinning of the Veils at Samhain**

As autumn's golden leaves fall and the grey cool evenings steal up faster each day in the northern hemisphere, the time draws nigh for festivals commemorating the deceased and the world of spirits. Whether understood as the Pagan Samhain, the Christian All Soul's Day, American Halloween, or the meso-American Dia de los Muertos, the passage of time around October 30 through November 2 signals the arrival of a special atmosphere which cloaks the world in mystery and invites incursions from the otherworld into the land of the living.

As Pagan tradition holds, this unique passage arises because the veil which normally separates the physical world from the spirit world becomes much thinner at this point in the year, allowing for more ready transport across that seeming boundary. Thus, the period of October 30 through November 2 signifies a moment in time during which encounters with the other worlds become all the more likely. For example, fairies may be glimpsed and words may be heard as if whispered disembodied on the air. Visions of wraiths, spirit guides, ghosts, and all manner of psychic manifestations are possible. The other world gathers on its side of the invisible boundary and clamors for interaction with this world. The dead may rise from their rest to tread the land and bring a message from beyond.



This year's festival of spirits and the dead is even more potent in this regard, for a number of potent astrological influences all in keeping with the anomalous and extraordinary do in fact cluster right around this period. Retrograde Mercury is prime among them. As readers undoubtedly recall, Mercury turned retrograde on October 13 and will remain in that condition through November 3. Thus, Mercury will be retrograde throughout this year's festival of the spirit world. Mercury retrograde on its own tends to put everyone in a slightly hypnotic mood, shifting attention from the outer world of seemingly solid phenomenon to the inner

world of psychic and spirit functioning. Indeed, retrograde Mercury invites and facilitates a borderline consciousness which partakes of both the tangible and intangible worlds. When Mercury is retrograde, then, human consciousness readily shifts back and forth between the here and the hereafter. Add this to the inherent potency of the Samhain period, and what results is a potent brew capable of setting the stage for a powerful shift of consciousness.

Twentieth century British anthropologist Victor Turner developed a specific term for such a state. He called it liminality, meaning a transitional state of consciousness in which the mind is freed from the usual constraints imposed by physical reality and can as a result more fluidly interact with the sacred, unseen, and subconscious worlds. Turner tied the onset of the liminal state to participation in ritual, such as those, for example, practiced by Pagans at Samhain. As Turner conceptualized it, liminality arises in the ritual process when participants separate from their everyday existences, repair to another location or situation, and engage in significant rites.<sup>1</sup> Before Turner, this same notion was articulated by French anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep who, in his 1960 publication titled *The Rites of Passage*, documented numerous indigenous rites the world over which included as an initial phase the dramatic departure of participants from their customary surroundings.<sup>2</sup> Both Van Gennep and Turner thus attested to the existence of the liminal state; both also associated the emergence of the liminal state with the ritual removal from the commonplace zone. In other words, the seeker sets aside the daily life for a time and enters into sacred space, passing through the liminal gateway to get there.

Turner saw liminality as a golden key, which, if turned just so, could grant entrance into a domain of consciousness with restorative and healing

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<sup>1</sup> Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 94; *From Ritual to Theatre*, 24.

<sup>2</sup> Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 74.

powers. Yet liminality as Turner understood it is inherently an undefined state, a condition of being in the margin, neither here nor there, betwixt and between, floating, indeterminate. He calls it ambiguous, and says it is symbolized by death, invisibility, darkness, wilderness, an eclipse of the sun or moon, the intra-uterine state, and even by bisexuality.<sup>3</sup> To these conditions might be added places and times of day also inherently liminal. Liminal places are borderlands where one thing becomes another, such as stream or river banks, cemeteries, gateways, bridges, or boundaries between one location and another. Liminal times are twilight or crepuscular, such as just before dawn and just after sunset. Thus, a decidedly liminal condition may be had by visiting a liminal place at a liminal time. Holding ceremonial observances in that milieu would further heighten the degree of liminality.

Individuals who enter such a condition afford themselves permission to shed everyday identity and taste of the beyond. This is precisely the opportunity offered by the combination of retrograde Mercury and the special energies of the Samhain/Halloween/All Soul's Day/Dia de Los Muertos period. However, that's not all! This year's festival of the dead and of the spirits also features the arrival of Full Moon, with the Sun at 9 degrees of Scorpio and the Moon at 9 degrees of Taurus. Transiting Uranus figures in as well, like the Full Moon positioned at 9 degrees of Taurus and thus receiving a conjunction from the Full Moon and a simultaneous opposition from the Sun.

As a result, this year's thinning of the veils is massively aided and abetted by four powerful astrological enhancements:

- 1) retrograde Mercury,
- 2) Full Moon,
- 3) Full Moon conjunct Uranus, and
- 4) Sun opposite Uranus.

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<sup>3</sup> Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 94 – 95.

October 30 – November 2, 2020 is therefore a prime time to enter into the liminal state, the transitional zone between the worlds, in which the mind opens to communication from the beyond. Step into trance any way you like at this time, and scry into deeper states of being. Be ready, for the moment of opportunity fast approaches! That done, enjoy the unparalleled invitation to connect with the hidden worlds.

### **Daily Analysis and Prediction for the Week Ahead**

**Monday October 26** begins the week with the waxing Moon in reflective and impressionable Pisces. With the Sun now in water sign Scorpio, the water sign Pisces Moon sets up the day for psychic harmony, deepened perceptions, and cleansing of the emotions. This is particularly true 9 – 11 am CDT when the sensitive Pisces Moon makes the exact sextile to revelatory Uranus. We are able to relax and enjoy new discoveries about ourselves and the world around us. At the same time, we intuit better ways of living that will help us conform better to our ideal or target states.

On **Tuesday October 27**, the waxing Moon in Pisces continues to set a scene conducive to scrying, psychic work, meditation, dreaming, shamanic journeying, and all manner of subjective workings. This is especially evident 4 am – 8 pm CDT while the Moon conjuncts Neptune and sextiles Jupiter, Pluto, and Saturn. Then, an emphasis on the sign of Libra emerges when Mercury retrogrades into that sign from the 30<sup>th</sup> degree side and Venus in direct motion enters that sign from the 0 degree side. This odd pincer-like grip on Libra shapes up at 8:33 pm CDT and 8:41 pm CDT respectively, representing an uncommon squeeze on the issues associated with Libra. Hence, unusual conditions emerge in the areas of relationships, associations, societies, and political parties, with individuals and concepts going in seemingly opposite directions set to meet in the middle.

**Wednesday October 28** sees the waxing Moon ratcheting up the energy as it enters the sign of the magical Ram of rambunctious Aries at 3:45 am CDT. The fires of passion thus heat up. Motivation levels mount in all areas of life. The drive to accomplish and to achieve notice comes on strong.

Today sets up a trend which will work out over the next couple of days, as individual intention intensifies and comes into conflict with social resistance. This trend will prove itself highly visible over Wednesday and Thursday as the Moon opposes Venus, conjuncts Mars, and squares Jupiter.

**Thursday October 29** scores as high-octane action, for the hot-headed Aries Moon conjuncts retrograde Mars (also in Aries), thus enflaming bottled-up rage which has been building up for several weeks now. Beware the time of fireworks from 12 – 3 pm CDT while the Moon is precisely conjunct Mars.

The sense of conflict with authority carries over into **Friday October 30** as the sometimes impudent and pugnacious Aries Moon squares Pluto and Saturn and opposes retrograde Mercury (now in late Libra). Here is the stuff of tangled communications for sure, especially 1 am – 1 pm CDT when these lunar aspects are exact. On the promising side, inside that same interval, there is plenty of energy and inclination for overcoming stubborn obstacles and for capturing information normally hidden from view. While the Aries Moon opposes retrograde Mercury, words tumble out of others unguardedly and impulsively, thus revealing the truth. Much agitation of mind and emotion underlie the visible world today. That business dies down, though not for long, when the Moon enters less volatile Taurus at 4:19 pm CDT. Even so, the drama set for tomorrow begins to make its presence felt in the psychic as well as physical domains. We sense something big on the way.

High tension energies dominate the scene on **Saturday October 31** as the Moon reaches exact opposition to the Sun, and hence Full Moon moment, at 9:49 am CDT. At the same time, the Moon is conjunct volatile and explosive Uranus in earth sign Taurus, thus fomenting overpowering realizations and dramatic eruptions from the hidden realms deep within the self and the Earth. The Sun in Scorpio reaches exact opposition to Uranus today, further intensifying the tremendous pushes and pulls at work on mind and matter. Psyche and Eros collide and clash. The role of the physical body in evolution gets attention. The mineral world surges forth into human consciousness with a message of power hidden in the

elements. All of the kingdoms of nature are under terrific activation. Normally withdrawn and reluctant, the gnomes of inner earth in particular are thrown into high visibility and relevance today as Earth moves. Upheaval reigns for a time, both inwardly and outwardly. Creative powers under the aegis of Uranus dislodge that which interferes with the freedom of the spirit, doing so in unruly, seemingly chaotic ways. The x-ray vision of Scorpio is magnified and foregrounded for a time, revealing inner causes going back to past lives. Aha moments abound. We see that which we must jettison both personally and collectively if we are to actualize our full potentials. Yet at the same time, we are held to our present state of responsibilities as retrograde Mercury moves into square with Saturn, thus indicating perpetuation of the status quo for the moment. Impatience thus meets resistance. In the U.S., the time standard changes from Daylight to Standard Time at 2 am on Sunday, so Americans, remember to set the clock back one hour before falling asleep tonight.

**Sunday November 1** brings the exact square of retrograde Mercury to transiting Saturn from 26 degrees Libra to 26 degrees Capricorn, thus drawing forth the themes of serious deliberation, somber reflection, great burdens, worries, responsibilities, setbacks, delays, and difficulties in moving agendas forward. Even so, we find clever ways to navigate around current obstacles 4 am – 9 pm CST while the potentially pleasant Taurus Moon sextiles Neptune and then trines Jupiter, Pluto, and Saturn. Yes, CST! In most locations in the U.S., the time standard will shift from CDT to CST at 2 am today, November 1.

In sum, it should be said that **October 26 – November 1** represents a potent week for insights, breakthroughs, and even for personal empowerment. With retrograde Mercury, the Full Moon, and intensive activation from liberator and crisis-maker Uranus all working at the same time, powerful changes and developments are sure to come. What has been veiled, deliberately hidden, or simply obscured by time and nature will dramatically stand disrobed and revealed - good news for seekers ready to make the next step in discovery of magic and extended perception.