

From Pisces New Moon to Aries New Moon 2023: a time for reflection, for waiting, as a New World Order emerges

by Anne Whitaker

Introduction – the Old Order: on the way out

How are you feeling these days? I have been – unusually for me – pretty lackadaisical, unmotivated. Left field unpredictability, some of it welcome, some not, has been a distinct theme. Inability to make firm plans, experiencing even tentative plans having to change...sharing with fellow humans both locally in my small nation of Scotland, nationally in the UK, and internationally a general feeling that the world is falling to bits, the Old Order is no longer sustaining us and somehow has to change... Does any of this sound familiar?

Well – the good news is that astrological perspectives may not provide a solution, but they DO enable us to set a meaningful context to the current turmoil both personally and collectively. We can then use this perspective, should we so choose, to decide the best – or the least worst – way forward in these turbulent times.



I have written a number of articles and essays in recent times concerning the changing world order which is upon us, with [Some Notes on Cycles in a Time of Crisis](#) (i) being one of the first, and [Waxing and Waning Crescents: Windows to the Future](#) being the most recent (ii) Readers wishing to reflect in some detail on the Big Picture context to our current turmoil in order to understand it better from a symbolic viewpoint, will hopefully find these writings helpful. There is also a whole section on Cycles in my latest book [“Postcards to the Future”](#) – an acclaimed collection of 60 internationally published essays, articles and columns.

Where are we now, as the zodiacal year 2022/3 ends?

In this essay I am reflecting on the here-and-now of our lives: where we all are, right NOW, moving through what I have come to regard as possibly the most potent (although least commented upon) concluding phase of the zodiacal year: those four weeks, that twelfth house time from Pisces New Moon to Aries New Moon 2023: a time for reflection, for waiting...

The twelfth house, the final sector, is the least graspable, possibly most misunderstood and misrepresented of all the twelve houses of an individual's horoscope: a place of mystery and mysticism, otherworldliness, dreams – a place of 'sacred' rather than 'ordinary' time, where human experience, personal and collective, dissolves into collective memory AND – *where the seeds of the future lie*. Being a person with either five or six planets in the twelfth house, depending on which house system one chooses, I have written extensively on this mysterious 'place in space' over the years. (iii)

Having survived pretty well into my (hopefully useful!) Elder years and led an interesting, at times tempestuous, but productive life well-tempered by many challenges is, I hope, positive testimony for younger twelfth house folks coming after me that it doesn't have to be the doom-laden place of sackcloth and ashes that some writers seem to think it is!

Waning and Waxing crescents: collective life phases

Moondark/twelfth house phase is the hidden 2-3 day period in any month when the fragile, waning crescent Moon dies into the darkness from which the next New Moon is born. As such, it is a liminal time, a threshold time. It is the time of withdrawal and dissolution of energy – think of wintertime, the

stripped trees, the cold, barren earth – a time of dark power in which the old order dies at a number of different levels, so that fertile energy can emerge from the womb of the night.

Moving from considering personal to reflecting on collective life, one can usefully map the waning crescent/Moondark/twelfth house phase at the end of the familiar 29.5 day cycle of the Sun and Moon, onto **any** cycle, large or small.

In those terms, the period of 2000 to 2020 (*does that year ring any bells?*) can be seen as the waning crescent/Moondark/twelfth house phase of a whole period, beginning in 1803, when the epoch-defining Jupiter/Saturn cycles did their 20-year dance through the Earth element. Their first flirtation with Air began in the 1980s with the conjunction taking place in Libra before returning briefly to Earth for one final cycle. On the Winter Solstice of 2020 (**who** chose that date?!) these two planets then met at 0 Aquarius, symbolically announcing the full beginning of a new Air era which will be the backdrop to life on this planet until 2199.

Continuing with this analogy, the period 2020-3 can be seen as the opening crescent of a new twenty year Jupiter/Saturn developmental cycle. We are still recovering from the worst ravages of the pandemic. However, in keeping with the pattern of new energies gradually taking shape and manifesting – think the first 2-3 days of the monthly lunar cycle which are good times to begin new projects – 2023 feels especially dynamic, turbulent, challenging...profound change is in the air.

The major collective challenges taking shape are the dangerous state of our climate as it grows more unstable, war once again in Europe which could escalate, increasing migration from beleaguered parts of the world to areas seen as safer and offering more opportunities, and the cost of living crises triggered especially by Putin's invasion of Ukraine and its knock-on effects across the globe in the year since the invasion took place. It's also becoming increasingly evident that the power of AI is taking exponential leaps: reference the recent rise to prominence and availability of the controversial [ChatGPT](#).

In twelfth house time: old patterns break down, dissolve...

So – here we all sit in the annual twelfth house space of the zodiac year which began with the New Moon at 11.31 Aries on 1st April 2022. The next Aries New Moon is on 21st of March, 17.14 GMT, at 0.50 Aries. Most of the people I know, whether family, friends, students, fellow astrologers, people who write to me in response to my work, the folks I know and chat to in my local environment, all say much the same things, echoing my opening paragraph: life feels turbulent, changeable, unpredictable, often difficult.



People are finding old patterns are no longer working, are changing them either voluntarily or having change forced upon them. There's an increasing feeling that top-down systems of government are increasingly broken worldwide, that perhaps greater community co-operation and action is what's developing. In my small local community, there's brilliant work of this kind being done. Technological innovation is developing apace, with the usual shadow/light dynamic accompanying this.

Despite all the worldwide difficulties, there's a sense of restlessness, an appetite for change. It's not all bad.

Spring 2023: an especially potent time

This particular Spring 2023 Moondark/twelfth house period is especially potent...why? As I said in an earlier paragraph, the twelfth house is 'where the seeds of the future lie'. As we sit here, hopefully using the final sector of this zodiacal year to reflect on where we are and where we are headed, wondering how we can cope with the daunting challenges of a fast-changing world without losing sight of our potential for being positive contributors, the astrology shaping up during this Spring truly is pointing to a different world in the years that lie before us.

The astro-world is currently alive with commentary. The introduction to my colleague Christina Rodenbeck's [March Horoscopes](#) gives an excellent summary of upcoming energy shifts, including helpful historical perspectives. I do not propose in this overview essay to add much to what is already being said.

First off, Saturn enters watery Pisces on 7th March 2023 during this final crescent of the 2022/3 zodiacal year, hopefully signalling a cooling of the fractious divisions which have riven our collective and often our individual lives as traditionalist Saturn and future-oriented Uranus battled it out in recent years in an air/earth struggle where no-one seemed inclined to give ground. Hopefully with Saturn in Pisces gradually moving to a trine with Uranus in Taurus by 2024/5, a more co-operative spirit may emerge. Check out this [emerging news](#) (5.3.23) which fits the symbolism perfectly, announced the day after Mercury moved into Pisces! Mars' entry into watery Cancer on 26 March after a long year's traverse of disputatious and opinionated Gemini (sorry, Geminis, I know that's not all there is to you guys!) should also help to cool things down somewhat.

And – in the opening crescent of the zodiacal year 2023/4, comes the BIGGIE that has been increasingly gripping the attention of the whole astrological world: Pluto's shift into Aquarius on 23 March 2023 for the first time since the revolutionary 1770s, days into the New Moon in Aries. This shift will not be complete until 19th November 2024...very shortly after the next USA election, start date 5 November. Pluto's crossing the first degree of Aquarius where the Jupiter/Saturn conjunction symbolically launched the new Air era on the Winter Solstice of 2020 could not be a more powerful indicator that the next two years truly are going to be revolutionary and world-changing.

As Pluto dips back to Capricorn from June 2023 to January 2024, then again from June until his 19 November 2024 forward motion through Aquarius, the Old Order will not let go easily. Here are just a few examples:

Big Oil will continue to fight the challenges posed by an increasing push toward developing sources of clean energy; most multi-billionaires will continue to hang onto their obscene wealth whilst a hugely increasing gap between richest and poorest continues to grow, feeding political instability and the spirit of political and social revolution worldwide; ageing, Earth-era dictator figures like Putin, Xi, dictator-lites like Trump and (in a minor way) UK's deposed Prime Minister Johnston will hang on with varying degrees of success as the pressures of the new Air era bear down on them all; archaic, brutal, political systems run by the Taliban in Afghanistan and the mullahs in Iran, will also come under increasing threat as their people, mainly young women and men, continue their defiance even in the face of brutal oppression.

In a highly illustrative example from my own small nation, Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon, a politically dominant Scottish Nationalist figure for the whole Pluto in Capricorn era from 2007/8 right through to 2023, and our First Minister for the last eight years, resigned unexpectedly on 15 February. Her successor, who will be a member of the younger generation of politicians, is due to be declared by 27 March: days after Pluto shifts into Aquarius.

Shifts between world eras have always been difficult and turbulent; as with tectonic plates grinding against each other, earthquakes both literal and metaphorical are the result. However, as master astrologer Robert Hand vividly commented some years ago, we are in a time in which '*...the past has minimum hold upon the present, but the present has a maximum hold on the future...*'(iii)

The New Air Era is indeed on its way: Pluto's transit through Aquarius until the 2040s powerfully emphasises that Era's radical quality. By its end in 2199, the next "Great Mutation" will occur, when Jupiter and Saturn begin consecutive 20 year conjunction cycles in water signs. Humanity, if we are still here, will by then be inhabiting an unimaginably different world.

Meantime, how do we mere mortals cope?!

It is no accident that I am writing this essay in what I have described as the most significant annual Moondark/twelfth house period for a very long time. Thoughts have been buzzing around my head on this topic for weeks. I've been ascribing my non-ability to get down to recording them, to the usual writerly inertia and procrastination. But no – I am being reminded that there is a right time for everything...and this is a time for reflection...

So – what are we mere mortals to do, as we sit in 2023's twelfth house, contemplating whatever chip of the prevailing energy of dissolution, disruption and (hopefully, eventually) re-emergence we have been handed that we cannot give back?

I've decided to end on a very personal note. I would not presume to tell anyone what they should do in these deeply uncertain times, especially since there is so much dreadful suffering of all kinds and degrees going on at present. But I **can** tell you what I'm doing. Maybe it will help...

- I am using the varying perspectives provided by my knowledge of astrological symbolism, especially the longer-term historical cycles, to remind myself that life on this planet has always been a turbulent and tempestuous business, with periods of relative calm always interspersed by upheavals of varying kinds. Being able to detect and understand symbolic, meaningful patterns, comforts me deeply by providing a sense that life is meaningful, no matter how hard it can be at times. We are not butterflies pinned to the board of Fate. We have agency, even if only to choose what our response is to grim circumstances coming our way.
- The 2020-3 period described had been truly life-changing for me. On 12.01.2020, **five hours** into the new Saturn/Pluto cycle in Capricorn, my husband and soulmate Ian (we married in 1982 in the last year of the Saturn/Pluto cycle in Libra) was felled by a stroke. So I had to begin a different life – just weeks before lockdown. The stunning timing of his death, which brutally emphasised the dominance of the Saturn/Pluto cycle in shaping my whole life (I have Sun, Moon, Venus and Mercury conjunct Saturn/Pluto in the twelfth house – fortunately all square Jupiter in the third house!) actually provided me with bleak comfort. It felt as though we had been allocated a particular Venus-ruled Saturn/Pluto time together, and when the Saturn-ruled Saturn/Pluto cycle began, our time was up. So I set about aligning myself with Saturn's demands, by becoming what I hope is a useful Elder in my various communities.
- Like everyone else at present, I have my times of bleakness as I look out at the world and realise how many things are wrong. But many things are right, and I practise gratitude on a daily basis for my home, my supportive family, friends and neighbours, my special astro-colleagues (you know who you are!) and for being part of a world-wide community of astrologers. Like every other community world-wide at present, sadly we have a divided, fractious dimension. That should not stop us from feeling grateful that we share something amazing: knowledge that helps us to see that we each have a meaningful part to play, however small, in the unfolding of a vast, ultimately mysterious Cosmos.
- Lastly, here is my mantra. It centres and supports me, especially when I am feeling a bit sorry for myself/the state of the world: *'Start where you are, do what you can, use what you have –and just get on with it!!'*



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