

# What Happens When Pluto, Neptune and Uranus Cross the IC?

by Anne Whitaker

*I'm often asked about what clients or students can expect when the biggies, ie Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, cross the Imum Coeli or I.C. Well, here is an account of one person's experiences, ie mine! Do not worry, those of you in the throes of one of those heavy duty, life changing transits. I've had all of them cross my I.C. and I'm still here... (as far as I know...)*

*Although this article was written and published in the mid and late 1990s, I thought it was worth re-posting in 2017 on my astrology site ["Astrology: Questions and Answers"](#). It's also been the most-read-ever article on my other site, now an article archive: [Writing from the Twelfth House](#)*

## Introduction



Liz Greene once wryly observed in one of her seminars that, if you wanted a relatively quiet and peaceful life, you should arrange to be born when the outer planets were as far away from the personal planets and Angles as possible. '**I wish!**' say many of you reading this, as indeed does the writer, who has all the outer planets bolted onto all the personal planets and has had anything BUT a quiet life.

(Encouraging note for the similarly challenged – I'm not young any more, but I'm still here – more or less! – and pretty happy with what I have been able to make of my time on this earth to date).

In similar vein, many people – depending on the horoscope yielded by their particular date, time, and place of birth – will never even experience one of the outer planets Uranus, Neptune and Pluto crossing their IC (for non-astrologers reading this, the IC symbolises the point of origin, roots and core of a person's life).

However, I have had the lot – and am still here to tell the tale. Here it is....

## A Plutonian Imagination

In my horoscope the IC is conjunct the South Node at 28 degrees of Scorpio. Pluto, its ruler, is placed in the twelfth house conjunct Mercury, Saturn, Venus, Moon and Sun in Leo. As a child I would lie in bed watching the roses on the wallpaper turn into malevolent faces as daylight faded; I had to make bargains with them before they would let me sleep.

I read voraciously, and particularly recall the works of Victorian novelist H. Rider Haggard whose myth-steeped descriptions of his characters' adventures in Africa last century fascinated me. But da Silva, the Dutch explorer whose frozen body was found centuries after his death in a cave high up Mt. Kilimanjaro, transferred himself from "King Solomon's Mines" to the wardrobe in my bedroom, on and off, for a couple of years. Getting to sleep was no mean feat with an imagination like mine!

My 'real' life – eating, sleeping, going to school – was incidental to my inner life which was full of what I felt were the really interesting questions: why are we alive, where do we go after death, do we live on several planes of existence at once, what is happening in other galaxies, if there are x million Catholics and even more Buddhists and Hindus, how come they are all Wrong and Damned and a few thousand members of the Free Church of Scotland are Right and Saved?

And what would happen if you unwrapped an Egyptian mummy and I wonder if I could make a shrunken head like the Jivaro Indians and why did people paint pictures on cave walls thousands of years ago?

These were the issues which preoccupied me for years. No-one knew about them except my maternal grandfather. He had spent time taming wild horses alone in the middle of Argentina before World War 1, and in later life was the only Church of Scotland missionary to visit ill or injured foreign sailors of all religions in the local island hospital, despite the disapproval of the Free Church. "We are all God's children", he would say firmly to his critics – and to me. He died when I was eleven, after which I spoke to no-one until I grew up and left home about anything which really mattered.



## Pluto – revisiting the family past

As Pluto squared 12th house Venus, Moon and Sun, then crossed the IC conjunct South Node from 93-95, what was left of my family of origin fell apart in a particularly painful and tragic way. I had to make choices in order to protect myself from the destructive urges of other family members which involved separation from loved ones which is probably permanent. The major decision I made during those years was that the blood tie does not give others the right to destroy your life. I was indeed fortunate in having an astrological framework, which helped to provide a meaningful context for the pain.

As part of trying to process what was happening, I decided to compile a family history, returning to my native island to collect some oral material from old people who knew my family back a couple of generations. The day I sat down to write it up, transiting Pluto was exactly conjunct the South Node, within half a degree of the IC. During the same week, I looked back through some old writings of my own, finding two unpublished pieces.

## Neptune on the IC (i)

The first was written in July 1970, six months after the start of Neptune transiting the IC. I had no knowledge of astrology then.....

".....My sister and I decided to take the dog and walk from our house, just outside the town, to a beach very exposed to the sea, well beyond the harbour. It would be a long walk, but it was a beautiful briskly windy sunny day – snatched from the usual bleak incessant rains of a Hebridean July.

We took a curving route through the town, then via an outlying district overlooking the navigation beacon. This landmark had winked its electric eye reassuringly at the mouth of the harbour for as long as I could remember. Approaching the district cemetery, my sister walked on by, but I slowed down, never having passed through its gates. Only men attended funerals in the Outer Hebrides when I was growing up.

"The sun is shining on the dead today!" I called to my sister. "Let's go and pay our respects." She wasn't too keen. "Have you ever visited Granddad and Granny's grave?" I asked.

"No," she said. "I suppose we could do that."

We pushed open the heavy creaking gate. The graveyard, beautifully tended, sloped gently down to within a few hundred yards of the sea. I realised that I did not know where my father's parents lay.



"I remember where Daddy said it was," my sister said. "Follow me. With our English name, it shouldn't be difficult to find."

Our paternal grandfather had been posted to the Outer Hebrides before the First World War, meeting our grandmother on his first trip ashore. English gentlemen were a great rarity in these parts; very desirable "catches" to aspiring island girls like Granny, who had by all accounts been a handsome, strong and wilful young woman. He was well and truly caught; apart from a period of war service he remained in the Outer Isles for the rest of his long life.

His death devastated my grandmother. They had been married for fifty two years. I remember sitting with her in her bedroom, she who had always turned herself out so elegantly propped up in bed, an old singlet of my grandfather's failing to conceal her droopy, withered breasts from my young eyes. Up to then I had never known the desolation of not being able to console another human being – or that old people ever cried. She wept and wailed and moaned, repeating:  
“I don't want to live any more. What's the use, what's the use now he's away? “

Live on she did, doggedly, for nine years, lightened only by a late addition to the family. I was fifteen when my brother was born. Granny was eighty two, and half way senile. The child was called Frederick, after Granddad; as the novelty wore off Granny slipped into senility, a querulous fractious husk, and finally just a husk, and a medical miracle, carried off at eighty six with her fourth bout of pneumonia.

I was at university when she died, having become so distant from her by then that I felt nothing but a vague sense of relief ....

“I've found it!”

I had fallen behind my sister in my reverie. She was standing about twenty yards away; I hurried to the spot. It was a plain, simple grave. A low railing ran round it. The headstone was in sandstone, with only the facts of their births and deaths etched on it in gold lettering. Noting with satisfaction, which my grandmother would have shared, the absence of ‘fancy versification’, I stood and looked at the grave.

Without any warning, for I had felt quiet and composed, there was a rush and a roar in a deep silent centre of my being; a torrent of desolation and grief swept through me. I wept and wept and wept, quite uncontrolled.

There they were, half my being. Where had it all gone: the passion of their early love; the conception of their children; her sweat and blood and pain as she thrust my father into the world; their quarrels, silences, love, laughter, loneliness and grief; their shared and separate lives? And this was it. On a hot beautiful day with the sea lapping on the shore and the seabirds wheeling and diving, a few bits of cloth and bone under the earth, an iron railing and a stone above.

I was not weeping just for them. Overwhelmed by total awareness of my own mortality and that of all human beings before and after me, I had never felt so stricken, so vulnerable, so alone.” (i)

## Neptune on the IC (ii)

The second piece, however, written in the autumn of 1971, at the end of the Neptune transit to the IC, whilst Neptune was 0 Sagittarius, shows that something else was now emerging from the underworld which would offer me inspiration and support :

(The ‘pibroch’ referred to is the music of lament played on the Scottish bagpipes)

“It was a clear autumn evening. Peter called just after seven; he was going out to practice some pibroch. Would I like to come along? It was a rare time of balance – in the weather, in the satisfaction of work which was still new enough to be stimulating, in the fact that Peter and I were falling in love.

Peter drove several miles out of town, winding slowly up deserted country roads to a hill above a small village. Taking out the pipes he began to blow them up, and after much tinkering began to play. To avoid distracting him, I strolled slowly down the road. Peter was standing on a bank of grass at the top of the hill; on his left was a little wood. On the other side of the road was a ditch thick with whin bushes.

Beyond the ditch was a rusty, sagging fence; on the far side of the fence, smooth, mossy moorland dotted with whins, their vivid yellow colour fading into the deepening dusk. In the distance I could just see the Highland hills, purple and rust, gathering shadows in the autumnal twilight.

A myriad of stars, taking their lead from Venus, was growing bright with increasing intensity. A mellow harvest moon was slowly rising, casting a glow on the hills. The air held a hint of cold. I could feel the melancholy music of the bagpipes flowing through me like a magical current.

Reaching the foot of the hill, surrendering myself completely to the intensity of the moment, I lay down in the middle of the road. Spreading out my arms, I gazed up at the stars.

A gentle breeze blew over my body, soughing through the reedy grass. Drifting with the music through the night sky, slipping away from awareness of myself or the present, I was a timeless spirit of the air, travelling the vastness of space on the notes of the pibroch. An unobtrusive rhythm, a pulse, began to beat; growing more and more steady, it became a whispering message in my mind :



‘There is nothing to fear,’ it said. ‘There is nothing to fear.’

An image of my lying dead, under the earth, came to me. Such images, occurring at other times, had filled me with panic and disgust. Now, there was none of that. I could gladly have died at that moment; my flesh would return to the earth and nourish it, my spirit would soar to infinity. The pulse continued, flooding me with its light :

‘There is nothing to fear, nothing to fear, nothing to fear....’

At that point of spiritual ecstasy, I felt the absolute reality of my soul.

Such a moment might have lasted a second, an hour, or a hundred thousand years; but the music ceased, and the chill which was gradually taking over my body drew me back gently into the present.....” (ii)

The knowledge that such a vitalising sense of connectedness was possible, glimpsed during the above experience, kept me going through the long struggle to believe that life had an overall meaning, and to find my own way of offering my energy creatively in the years which were to follow.

### **Uranus zaps the IC - enter astrology!**



When Uranus crossed the South Node/IC in 1980/81, I began to study astrology, thereby fulfilling a prediction made by an astrologer I had casually encountered in a laundrette in Bath in England in the early 1970s.

I also met, moved in with and later married my partner – his Scorpio Moon is conjunct my IC and South Node, and he has an Aquarian Sun and Venus. All very appropriate symbolism for the timing of the Uranus IC transit!

His steadfast support, combined with the deep awareness of teleology which many years’ practice of astrology brings, have been vital for my personal and professional growth and development from the time Uranus crossed the IC until now, (ie end 1995/early 1996) as

Pluto moves off that point.

When Pluto was still transiting the IC, but from Sagittarius, I applied and was accepted for a major astrological study course. The very day that Pluto was exactly on the South Node and about to cross the IC for the last time saw me beginning the first year of study. I felt a powerful sense of standing on firm inner ground after the turbulence and trauma of the last few years – of being in the right place at the right time, of having done what I could, for now, with my family inheritance – of being ready to move on to the next growth cycle.

Now that the outer planets have crossed the IC and moved into the Western hemisphere of my Horoscope, I feel liberated from much of the pathology of the past, and more able to use directly in the world the undoubted creativity inherited with it. Nor do I need any longer to make bargains with the shadowy figures who emerge when the light of day is dimming....