

# Astrology's Promise of a Fated Future

Our fascination with the stars' alignment in the sky leads back to ancient times. We study the placement of the Sun, the Moon and the other planets hoping to harness the knowledge they hold into some semblance of control, of predictability over our own messy and very human lives. Even better if the stars can help us hone the failures and disappointments of our love lives into something we can call dignified.

These days, the local bookstore, the library and the internet are packed to the brim with astrological advice for couples in the throes of new love, or hopeful singles longing to one day be part of a duo. Type your Sun sign into Google's search box and a seemingly unlimited number of websites will sprout, telling you that if you match your Taurus Sun to her Pisces Sun, your future will look nothing like your aunt Sherry's marriage, the life visibly seeping out of it like an old deflating tire.

On each astrological website, you can enter your birthday, the birthday of your unsuspecting victim, or...ahem... Future Wife... and see what the stars have been cooking up for the two of you since the day you were born. These simple astrological calculators come in Western flavor, Indian or Vedic flavour, as well as Chinese, all somewhat different systems that try to condense the complex intricacies of compatibility into simple and digestible answers.

## Putting It Into Practice

You take your newfound knowledge, go on that date with the cute Pisces Sun girl from the graphics department, and wait for the sparks to fly. But... then they don't. You tell your best funny stories, the ones you reserve for first dates. Her laugh barely registers.

Maybe she lost part of her hearing in an accident, you think. That's okay, you can take care of her when she goes deaf. After all, you're a great match. But then you take note that every time her phone chimes, she hears it perfectly.

Hmmm, you realize that some other force is afoot.

# Newspaper Astrology Versus Good Astrology

The problem with astrology is that good astrology is expensive and takes time, and cheap astrology is almost completely useless. The dozens upon dozens of cookie-cutter, Reader's Digest-types of websites serve no other purpose than to keep you busy scrolling the net on those long Fridays when your married friends are having potlucks and you're still trying to lure your fated paramour into a first date.

To get an idea of your compatibility with another person, most astrological websites look to your Sun. Ah, the Sun, the burning ember of your personality, the spice that flavours your entire astrological chart. Surely, if your Sun signs are complementary, everything else will fall in line?

Not even close, you hopeful muffin, you. Not even close.

To get to the real good stuff of compatibility, we have to consider a myriad of options that can both make and break the potential of a relationship.

## Great Compatibility is a Complex Recipe

Complementary Sun signs certainly help, but the recipe for great compatibility is like a delicious pot of soup, with layers of flavour melding together to form a cohesive whole. And just as in a great soup, some of the flavours might take a while to really develop and come through.

The same concept applies to mixing personalities. While two people sharing complementary Sun signs may feel a natural and comfortable ease with each other when they meet, the flavours of their entire birth charts could develop into something very different six months down the line.

If your Sun signs are compatible, but your Moons are in hard aspect to each other, no amount of Sun sign compatibility is going to make up for your communal lack of emotional understanding of each other. Because the truth is, there is so much more to compatibility than our Sun signs, and it's those rich layers of compatibility or lack of that lie behind the cloak of the Sun that solidify or liquefy a love bond in the real world.

## How Many Ways Do We Fit Together

Just as in a good soup recipe, the finished product turns out better when the main ingredients go well together. So let's go over some of the major aspects of compatibility between two people.

## **SUN-SUN CONNECTIONS**

Yes, Sun compatibility does matter. It's not the final word in compatibility studies, but it sets the tone nicely if the very essence of a person is not in direct violation of the essence of the other. The Sun represents our creative life energy and the core of our conscious mind. It's also said that the Sun signifies our ego, but this is a more complex matter, as the influence of the Sun in our own lives tends to increase with age, and as we transition toward maturity and toward identifying with this core part of ourselves.

In that sense, easy Sun-Sun combinations that form trines and sextiles are wonderful between two people. Even the opposition is, in this case, one of the only instances in which an opposition can be considered a positive aspect between two charts. In fact, the opposition can bring that opposites-attract, I've found my mirror image pull that is at times delicious and at times maddening. Just enough differences to bring interest, but also enough understanding to feel comfortable. The opposition can also signify a merging of the "I" and the illusory "Other" that is part of some of the deeper layers of affinity.

The square is not a happy place. Exciting, maybe. But not for long, and generally not exciting enough to cover up the grating feeling of two egos scraping against each other like your steak knife against your empty plate.

## **SUN-MOON CONNECTIONS**

What rivals easy Sun-Sun combinations?

Easy Sun-Moon combinations. There is a reason Sun-Moon conjunctions are called the 'soulmate aspect.' It's also one of the most common aspects found in the charts of married couples.

When the Sun and Moon, known as the Luminaries of a chart, are in positive aspect with each other there is a cohesive and pleasant energetic dance between the yin and yang, the night and day, the conscious and unconscious mind. Your Sun conjunct my Moon brings easy understanding between your core identity and the landscape of my feeling nature. There is an innate understanding between us that can buffer many day-to-day irritations because, despite other differences present in our charts, this basic affinity between us soothes us like a balm.

Other soft aspects between the Sun and Moon are also lovely, and point to a basic understanding between two people. If soft aspects go both ways between the Sun and Moon, what is known as a double whammy aspect, there is a strong flow of energy that passes between both people's identities and their feelings. Hard aspects like oppositions and squares don't work as well between the Sun and Moon, although they can create a strong initial attraction. With hard aspects, there is a fair chance you could spend the next six months to forty-six years explaining your actions and feelings to each other until one or both of you reaches the point of exhaustion.

### **MOON-MOON CONNECTIONS**

What about your two moons? Does it matter if they fall in easy aspect to each other?

Only if you enjoy being in emotional sync with your partner. If petty misunderstandings and having to stomach your partner's unbearable and impossible-to-understand personal traits is your thing, then by all means, go forth with that relationship with the big red square between your two moons. I'm kidding.

But only partially.

Moon-Moon soft aspects like sextiles, trines and even the conjunction in this case, provide a link between our individual capacities to give and receive emotional nurturing and support. They show kinship in the way we each feel well emotionally and the way we are able to share those good feelings with another person. Venus ties into this aspect as well, but positive Moon-Moon aspects set the scene for whether there is an essential understanding between our feelings or not.

Hard Moon-Moon aspects are not easy to iron out in the long run and make it difficult for two people to support each other emotionally. When two Moons are in hard aspect to each other it usually points to very different emotional reactions and emotional instincts, which can be fascinating at first (like watching a toddler throwing a tantrum in a corner of the room, that you can't quite grasp), but wear on each other's good graces over time.

Personal habits fall under the rulership of the Moon as well, as they are dictated to a high degree by our feeling and instinctual natures. Easy flow between your personal habits and your mates also makes it more likely to have an enjoyable and stress-free home life together.

## **VENUS-MARS CONNECTIONS**

Flowing aspects between Venus and Mars point to good energetic flow between your love natures and your sexual natures and drives. Even hard aspects between Venus and Mars are acceptable and even desirable between charts. When they are there, you hardly notice them - sexual attraction and love are a given, they come with the connection naturally. When they're not there, you have to look to other aspects between the two charts to see whether the love connection exists at all or whether its source comes from another place in the chart altogether. There are certainly more ways than Venus-Mars linkages to have a happy and steamy romantic connection.

## **VENUS/MARS-PLUTO CONNECTIONS**

Enter aspects from Pluto to Love Planets.

When Pluto touches the love planets, it does so with the intention of burning down the facade and getting to the deepest layers of what the other planet possesses. Pluto doesn't like boundaries, and it boulders past them with complete disregard. Pluto-heavy relationships range from mild upheaval to complete destruction of all that was before. They are not for everyone.

But the heat? It sticks around. Pluto wants to possess, to transform, to take the thing it desires - be it your beloved's Venus or Mars or any other unsuspecting planet it touches, learn all of its secrets, strip it down to its very essence and use it on the path of its own growth journey.

And Pluto's most base tool? Sexuality. Or more accurately, a deep and unyielding forced melding of piercing psychological turmoil and sexuality. Pluto's energy is compulsive and insistent.

Pluto aspects are well-known for bringing the steam to the sauna, but beware of the hard aspects. They are as deliriously delicious as they are destructive, and can easily degrade into hurtful and degrading power games.

## **The Deeper Layers of Romantic Connections, aka the “Inner Marriage” or “The Sacred Marriage”**

All of these cross-aspects between charts are great and can speak to how much we like or even love another person. But such connections can be as fleeting as they are passionate and intense.

The real connection between two people has to first and foremost satisfy their individual inner blueprint of their ideal partner. At least to some extent, and we'll dive further into this below.

What is the Inner Marriage? Essentially, it is our search for completion through the other. Carl Jung believed that each person's search for partnership is really a search for the Animus or Anima that lives within ourselves, the representation of the other sex that is imprinted inside of us for the entirety of our lives. It forms the archetype of "The Other" and infuses each of our encounters with potential partners.

So while your Venus may play nicely with my Mars, and your Sun sits on top of my Venus in a tight conjunction, unless your basic planetary configuration meets my needs for partnership, I will have a hard time seeing you as a long-term partner. I may want to play with you for a while and enjoy your company, but eventually, I may come to the conclusion that there is something not quite right, not quite enough between us.

The same concept goes in the other direction. We may have noticeable differences in our upbringing, beliefs, and even in our basic temperaments, but you will likely be compelled to ignore much of those differences if I fit well into the instinctual picture you have of your ideal partner.

### **DESCENDANT CONNECTIONS**

This is not an aspect that is commonly talked about on astrological websites, but it is nonetheless one of the most important components of attraction between people. The descendant also falls in the seventh house, which has additional meaning to the vista of our relationships with other people. If my ascendant represents the "I," the thing that I already possess, then the descendent represents the 'Other,' the elusive qualities that I seek to integrate within myself to become whole. If my ascendant is in Aries, and your natal chart is full of planets in Libra, I will sense that you have something I want. Even better if I'm lacking air in my chart, because then your Libraesque vibe will complement my own lack of Air.

### **OPPOSITE SUN SIGN AND OPPOSITE SUN HOUSE**

Another opposing principle of attraction can be described by the opposite sign from your own Sun sign, as well as the opposite house from your Sun Sign. If your Sun sign represents your own personality and identity, then the opposite house can point to the traits and personality of the "Other," of all that we encounter in our travels in the world.

Thus, a Taurus native will naturally be intrigued by a Scorpio Sun sign, and will be compelled to seek others with traits representative of the opposing house to their Sun. For example, if your Taurus sun falls in the 10th house, not only will you gravitate towards partners exhibiting Scorpio traits, but your partners will also identify with many of the characteristics and traits that the 4th house represents.

### **SUN-MOON MIDPOINT CONTACTS**

Another important but often ignored aspect of compatibility is the Sun/Moon midpoint and contacts to it from the other person's personal planets, especially the Sun, Moon, Mars, Venus, and Saturn.

To calculate your own Sun/Moon midpoint, find the middle point between your Sun and Moon in your natal chart. This very receptive point is sensitive to contact with others and can create a powerful and immediate reaction between two people. It's also one of the aspects commonly found in the charts of long-term relationships or marriages.

### **TWO-WAY SUN-MOON AFFINITIES BETWEEN NATAL CHARTS**

Mutual Sun-Moon affinities are consistently present in the charts of long relationships. They indicate important and lasting unions between two people, and often 'glue' people together even if other negative aspects are present between their charts.

To further explain this concept, let's assume that your Sun falls in the 12th house of Pisces. Your partner's Moon also falls in the 12th house of Pisces. This not only creates an affinity by sign (both your Sun and Moon are in Pisces), but it creates an additional affinity because both signs are in the 12th house. Thus, your shared understanding of 12th house issues and your identical approach to handling 12th house issues creates a strong and lasting bond.

Shared house placement is very important in this case, as it provides a common playground for the bond. Even if your Sun and Moon are in different signs, if they share the same house, this affinity is activated.

# Lasting Compatibility is Both Mysterious and Predictable

Enduring compatibility is not an exact formula. A contradiction of sorts, a successful relationship is both enigmatic and if we're lucky, if our stars are aligned in the right configurations, mildly foreseeable.

As any good astrologer will tell you, no one can say precisely how long two people will stick together, or whether they'll still enjoy sharing their lives with each other decades later.

What astrology can do is look at the most common indications of compatibility, and tells us if the odds are stacked in our favour or against us. Though even then, free will is a wild animal, and it can surprise us even in the most "predictable" of astrological circumstances.