

THE FAMILY LEGACY
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– CHAPTER 11 –
PLANETS, ASPECTS AND HOUSES
Delineating the Family

Let's differentiate each planet in the horoscope from a family point of view, such as the experiences with the family circle, family fate, inheritances and patterns. Each planet plays its part by bringing its particular archetypal influence and unique meaning into the family through its aspects or its position in one of the houses of family. Therefore we will also summarize each planet in the family houses. In earlier chapters, we have examined the planets in the 3rd and 4th houses in some depth. Now planets in the 7th, 8th, 11th and 12th houses will also be discussed.

We will also examine each planet in relationship to each of the inner planets to illustrate how family themes can be extracted from these aspects. The Moon will be explored separately in the next chapter since it plays such a major role in the astrology of the family, especially through her theme of early attachment.

I will be cataloguing some of the themes I have experienced in my consulting practice, although writing in this manner can appear limiting and deductive to the reader. This certainly is not my aim; rather I would hope that these short scenarios help to amplify and introduce you to ways of thinking about the family astrologically. Therefore these are not delineations so much as amplifications of possibilities.

The Sun in the Family System

The Sun is associated with the archetype of the father. In the horoscope the Sun represents the personal father, his lineage and inheritance within the family system. Therefore, aspects to the Sun amplify our own orientation to the archetype of the father, illustrating his felt experience and ambience within the family. Its position in our horoscope will reveal our perception and experience of our father as well as of father-substitutes or surrogate fathers. Archetypically the Sun suggests the inherited solar nature. The familial attitudes towards males and the masculine shape the promotion and fostering

of the self; therefore the nature of our relationship to our father is often indicative of our sense of self-confidence, ego resilience, identity, self-expression and personal vitality.

☽ The Sun-Moon relationship is a template for the dynamic interplay between the masculine and feminine polarities, suggestive of the relationship between the mother and father. Aspects between the luminaries shape the phases of the lunation cycle. However, these aspects are also representative of the parental marriage. Consider the relationship between the mother and father as symbolic of the ease or difficulty experienced between masculine and feminine energies.

☿ Mercury is always within a 28° arc of the Sun; therefore its only possible aspect to the Sun is a conjunction. The combination of these two archetypes could be an image of father's intellect, his ideas or his ability to communicate; perhaps father as trickster. The pattern of communication with father is important to consider because his attitudes towards the intellect, learning and communicating may have been influential. This might also suggest a favoured sibling, the relationship between father and a sibling or it may perhaps point to the father's sibling and the relationship between them.

♀ Venus can only be 48° away from the Sun so aspects between them are limited. The possible aspects are the conjunction, semi-sextile and semi-square. Of these, the conjunction is the most potent. I would also differentiate between whether Venus is direct or retrograde, because Venus is emphasized in its retrograde position. Venus represents the sister archetype and if retrograde might suggest that its feminine expression through the family is unusual and non-traditional. Father's lineage might bring the legacy of the feminine into the family system and females on father's side, especially the sister or another close female, is highlighted. The Sun in family dynamics can often speak of a favoured one. Perhaps there is a favourite sister in the family system or the sibling system becomes split because of favouritism. Father's attitudes towards self-worth and his expression of affection and love are influential in the individual's development.

☉♂ When these two masculine archetypes combine, the roles of father and brother/s are highlighted in the family, as well as the relationship between father and his brothers or father and his sons. Through father's side of the family comes the legacy of the masculine spirit. How are the natural urges to be active, competitive, adventuresome and to take risks expressed in the family and is father an able role model for the expression of these masculine traits? Healthy attitudes towards rivalry, confrontation, anger and sexuality support the individual's vitality.

☉ **in 3rd** Father's birth order, role in the family and attitude towards his siblings are subtle influences on identity. This also highlights the role of the first child or the favoured one. The Sun may have cast its shadow over the sibling system, dividing the system into those who were favoured by father and those who were not. A boy in this system may feel obligated to identify with his father's values. Whether he rejects them or embraces them, they have contributed to what he identifies as being critical in his adult relationships. A girl who was father's favourite may feel in a precarious position, caught between her brother and father. In adult life this may rearrange itself as feeling caught between her partner and son.

☉ **in 4th** The Sun here suggests the impact of father and father's lineage upon the family of origin. His presence, or lack of it, influences the child's sense of security and safety because the child instinctually responds to the father principle. The image of the personal father is integral to emotional stability.

☉ **in 7th** With the Sun in the area of relationship, unresolved issues or complexes with father may influence adult partnerships because the partner may unwittingly constellate the relational pattern with father. Equally the individual may be drawn to qualities in their partner that are reminiscent of their father.

☉ **in 8th** Here we would consider the nature of the inheritance – emotionally, psychologically and financially – that is passed down through father's line. We might also consider any secrets or denials connected to father or his familial past. Therefore the

relationship to father could have a bearing on our ease with and experience of intimacy in adult life.

☉ **in 11th** Innately this placement may suggest an inclination to father the group or be its leader, or at least be the spokesperson for what needs to be accomplished. Therefore, father's role in the community, his social circle and capacity to socialize model the ability to take a position and find an identity in society. In the social world the individual may find father-substitutes in coaches, teachers, bosses or mentors who help to reconcile the personal relationship to father and build confidence and identity.

☉ **in 12th** The Sun in the 12th house points to father's ancestral line. This might suggest a loss or unavailability of fathering and/or fostering in the family. Perhaps father or father figures were missing or weakened in the family line. The spirit of the missing masculine influences the present system, which might be experienced as a yearning to connect to the spiritual dimension.

Mercury in the Family System

As an archetype, Mercury is associated with the guide, traveller and trickster; the god who we meet in transitions and threshold crossings. His nature is multi-dimensional with many facets; therefore he has numerous human surrogates, mainly companions, fellow travellers, playmates and cohorts, but we often meet him first in the family through the sibling relationship or the sibling stories within the family. Since the sibling is often a witness, guide, escort, attendant rival, tease and lifelong companion, Mercury is present initially in our interactions and experiences with siblings. Therefore Mercury and its aspects reveal the sibling archetype and its expression in the family system. It also suggests patterns of communication and attitudes towards learning within the family.

♃♁ The aspects between Mercury and the Moon suggest how feelings might have been communicated in the family. A difficult aspect between the two might suggest that emotions and feelings were difficult to express in the family, creating misunderstanding, arguments and strong reactions. Mother's feelings may not have been taken into account or she may have been ambivalent in her

expression of them. A Moon-Mercury aspect might also personify one of mother's siblings or the dynamics between the roles of a sibling and mother.

☿♀ Mercury and Venus are in a confined arc geocentrically; therefore the most potent aspect to consider here is the conjunction. When Mercury is conjunct Venus there might be a sibling story surrounding relationship, marriage or unrequited or unacceptable love in the annals of the family history. A sister story carried by the parents or grandparents may be in need of honouring.

☿♁ The role of a brother or the relationship with a brother is emphasized with this combination. The attitudes towards rivalry, envy and competition are rooted in the early interactions with siblings, and certainly with brothers. This might also suggest how the desires, goals and ambitions are passed on through the family story.

☿ **in 3rd** Mercury is at home in the 3rd house and strives to satisfy its urge for communication and learning with siblings and childhood friends. Drawing on early experiences the individual learns how to be heard, whether that is through clarity of expression, joking or persistence. Early patterns of communication are forged in the family with siblings; therefore language, expression of ideas, interaction, attitudes towards learning, mobility and travel are all strongly influenced by familial and sibling relationships.

☿ **in 4th** This suggests that a sibling story may be a feature of the family atmosphere. Whether this is a brother or sister of one of the parents or the sibling relationships within the family, these contacts are significant in childhood. These relationships contribute to securing the emotional foundation. This position also highlights the importance of communication between family members and its impact on the individual's sense of self.

☿ **in 7th** As Mercury is representative of sibling patterns and attachments, unresolved sibling issues may be drawn into adult relationships when it is in the 7th house. Our partners may constellate early patterns that were first established in the sibling

system, reminding us of the issues and concerns that have not adequately been dealt with. Mercury here may also refer to a sibling of our partner as well as reactions to and consequences from them. In a way this image speaks to the fusion of the sibling relationship with the adult one.

☿ **in 8th** Trusting others, respecting privacy and showing consideration for personal feelings begins in the early relationships with family and builds the capacity for intimacy. Listening authentically and communicating honestly are first modelled in the parents' relationship; the level of sincerity and integrity in the parental patterns of interaction influence the individual's capacity for open and honest relationships.

☿ **in 11th** Mercury in the 11th recognizes the individual's impulse to express themselves in public and feel equal and accepted by the group. In adult years sibling politics or dynamics may surface when unfairness or favouritism emerge in the social order. When in a group the individual needs to feel equal to the other members; if the leader is displaying favouritism, then the trickster may emerge to disturb the equilibrium of the system. On the other hand, Mercury finds its brothers and sisters through friendships and in social activities, helping to readdress and heal the earlier wounds with siblings and schoolmates.

☿ **in 12th** This placement focuses on the pattern of communication, learning and the expression of ideas in the family ancestry. The family's mythology includes strong codes about what can be said and what is correct, which may have influenced learning and expression. The individual with Mercury in the 12th becomes the spokesperson and mouthpiece for the family, often expressing or exhibiting the shadow of what was previously denied and prohibited.

Venus in the Family System

Venus brings its themes of feminine values into the family system and helps to illustrate the familial orientation to the roles of women: the importance given to the feminine as well as the expression of affection and love. Complex aspects to Venus might reveal

how familial attitudes towards sexuality impacted the individual and contributed to feelings of worth and self-esteem. Venus also constellates the spectrum of emotion that includes unrequited and unequal love, such as jealousy and revenge. Triangular by nature, Venus may reveal an involvement in family triangles, which in turn sets a pattern for three-way adult relationships. At a literal level Venus may talk of the familial attitudes towards money, possessions and acquisitions; complicated aspects may reveal unresolved issues of worth and value that affect the family members in the present. Generally I would suggest that Venus exerts her influence in the family through the attitudes towards the feminine and the way she is valued, and how this affects the individual's sense of self-esteem and importance. Venus also personifies the image of a sister and the sister archetype in general; from the familial point of view it brings the role of the equal and empowered feminine into the family.

♃♀ If Venus aspects the Moon the two potent archetypes of the feminine are in dialogue. The roles of the mother and the sister converge and either conflict or cooperate. When conflicting, mother may have preferred to be free, equal, a sister rather than a nurturer. On the other hand, a sister may have stepped into the mother role. This aspect also suggests that the roles of the feminine in the family history may have diverged and a family story concerning the feminine or females from mother's lineage still remains unresolved. This aspect could be personified by mother's sister or a close female relative in mother's family.

♀♂ When the two mythological lovers, Venus and Mars, are in aspect, there is a potent drive to express the inner life force, often through sexuality, creativity or personality. From the familial point of view this aspect brings together the archetypes of the brother and sister. While there may not be an opposite sex sibling in the family experience, an inner image of another urges the individual into relationship. Supportive familial attitudes towards desire, sex, intimacy and self-expression are paramount in helping the individual to feel free enough to express the self in an intimate relationship. Complex aspects might speak of the denial of these impulses in the family history.

♀ in 3rd In the 3rd house Venus is aligned with the sister archetype, and if personified by an actual sister then this sister brings to awareness Venusian attributes such as sexuality, attractiveness and beauty. The template for adult relationships, values and worth finds its taproot in the relationship with sisters and early female friends.

♀ in 4th With Venus in the 4th house the family attitudes towards money, wealth, esteem, worth and personal value are embedded in the foundation of the individual's sense of security. The family is where the earliest feelings of being valued and loved have either anchored or unfastened the individual's sense of security. Underneath the family facade lie deeper issues concerning gender, the role of women and the equality and acceptance of the feminine; the sister archetype needs excavation in order for the individual to feel safely anchored in their sense of self.

♀ in 7th From a family perspective Venus in the 7th draws on the images of the parental marriage, the relationship with siblings and earlier childhood friends to help navigate the adult world of relationships. Earlier patterns with sisters may be replicated in adult relationships or adult relationships may involve sisters.

♀ in 8th While Venus may be aligned with the 7th house in traditional astrology, she finds herself accidentally debilitated in the 8th; in psychological terms this might suggest that her nature now must turn its attention to what is not innately comfortable. And since Venus aligns herself with peace, in the 8th she may need to uncover the discord and darkness associated with her being. Being in this house suggests she may have inherited images of incomplete union, severed relationships, betrayals, affairs and triangles from the family records; therefore the avoidance of intimacy may be linked to a family complex. In the 8th Venus's journey takes the individual into the underworld of self in order to excavate the legacy left from past familial relationships and inheritances.

♀ in 11th Venus in the 11th might speak of the re-encounter with the family's attitudes towards the feminine and/or the

sister through relationships in the social world. Far beyond the parameters and the perimeters of family life we once again encounter our sister and our familial attitudes in the world. And from this perspective, a conscious understanding and acceptance can begin to take place.

♀ **in 12th** In the 12th, Venus highlights the role of the ancestral feminine. Often conflicted, the archetype seeks understanding and acceptance. On an inner level, a trail of devaluation of the feminine may wind through the ancestry seeking acknowledgement and understanding. Inherent is the gift of creativity and life force when the feminine begins to be redeemed. Reflect on the ancestral attitudes towards women, the feminine gifts of self-worth, artistry, affection and love, and how these were upheld in the family.

Mars in the Family System

To the ancient mythmakers, Venus and Mars were consistently paired together as companions, either as lovers or close sibling allies. In the family, the archetype of Mars is held by a brother figure. Mars characterizes the attitudes towards the masculine spirit in the family; it represents the familial orientation to the roles of men, the importance given to the masculine as well as the expression of independence and self-assertion. From a literal point of view, Mars may represent the family's standpoint on the expression of anger, its approach to desire and getting what one wants, as well as virtues such as courage and being identified. By nature Mars is competitive and driven, and its aspects may allude to how this was first experienced in the culture of the family. As the archetype of the lover, Mars might also indicate how passion and sexuality were expressed in the family.

♂ The active and passive principles are aligned in an uneasy combination. Mars is desire while the Moon is need, and often these are focused in different ways. How the clash between these was modelled in the family becomes an important factor in whether the individual is able to clearly state what they want or if they go about this passively. Anger and love may be entangled

in the family ethos, complicating the expression of anger and passion.

♂ in 3rd The archetype of Mars is experienced in the sibling system through rivalry, competition, jealousy and confrontation. With Mars here, the sibling system and early peer groups are important training grounds for taming the aggressive and sexual instincts, which when identified and honoured can be directed into conscious striving and determination.

♂ in 4th Mars seeks expression through the family here; when consciously expressed, the ability to assert oneself without disrupting the system strengthens the sense of being supported in going after what is wanted. However, if independence, competition and anger are not functionally expressed, conflicts and quarrels disturb the security and stability of both the individual and the family. The deep sense of feeling comfortable with one's individualism and freedom is shaped by the family experience.

♂ in 7th Through our adult partners we may be reminded of earlier patterns of competition and rivalry in our family. Mars in the 7th brings the brother image into the adult relationship; therefore, for a woman who has a brother, her relationship with her brother was an important training ground for later relationships. How our brothers and other males in the family react to our adult relationships is also signalled by this aspect; therefore masculine attitudes in the family have a bearing on how comfortable we feel when expressing our individuality in relationship.

♂ in 8th The expression of desire and sexuality in the parental marriage may impact the level of comfort the individual feels in their adult relationships. Sexuality and intimacy are woven together in the 8th house and the parental relationship is the first one we respond to in terms of feeling familiar with these themes.

♂ in 11th Early patterns of competition and rivalry with siblings are aroused in our relationships with colleagues and associates. The family's philosophy about ambition and expression of anger is met in social situations. Incomplete sibling rivalries and

resentments may seep into adult relationship; therefore it is the ‘sibling society’ of the 11th house where we can reconcile earlier issues in the family through conscious relationships with friends, colleagues and acquaintances.

♂ in 12th The 12th house often reveals what has been undisclosed or unexpressed in the family history; therefore Mars suggests that issues of anger, sexuality and ambition may be themes that were not adequately honoured in the ancestral experience. The individual with Mars in the 12th is weighed down with the burden of ancestral repression. The individual’s task is to redeem some of the more appropriate ways to express their individuality and desires.

Jupiter in the Family System

Jupiter brings its impact into the family through social and cultural themes, such as education, especially motifs concerning scholarship and formal study, religious beliefs and traditions, family philosophy – such as morals, ethics, principles and human values – cross-cultural alignments and skirmishes, as well as the family attitudes towards advancement, spiritual ideals, pilgrimage and travel. While Jupiter was considered a benefic in traditional astrology, its urge for expansion and integration may not always have been upheld by the family. Its flare for broadmindedness may be dampened by fear; its urge for cross-cultural unity may be discoloured by prejudice; while its attempt at optimism and idealism may end in disappointment and giving up. Family attitudes and past experiences contribute to shaping the spirit of Jupiter in the individual; therefore a retrospective understanding of the family’s embrace of this archetype helps to free its expression in the individual, not through rebellion but through conscious understanding.

☽ When the archetype of expansion dialogues with the archetype of safety, two possibilities emerge: either there is a security in freedom, adventure and travel or there is an air of uncertainty and trepidation about movement and reaching beyond one’s comfort zone. The resolution lies in the family’s attitude and experience of safety in exploration. Often in the family history there is an emigration story, a cross-cultural mix to the family or the

experience of living outside one's culture of origin. The degree to which the family embraced the foreignness of its experience is the extent to which an individual can feel comfortable and safe when exploring beyond the boundaries of his home and homeland. Through mother's heritage the motifs of religion, race, education, emigration and travel are brought into the family atmosphere.

☉♂ Two forceful and heroic masculine archetypes combine here, suggesting a spirit of adventure and optimism. However, the outcome is dependent on how father's spirit influenced the family. The motifs of adventure, questing, going beyond the perceived limits, searching for higher knowledge and truth as well as the spiritual journey are passed through father's lineage; therefore it is important to consider how these themes were perceived and lived out. Reflecting on father's legacy helps us to reconstruct our own beliefs and life philosophy. In father's family background are images that both support and inhibit our quest for understanding.

♃♂ When Jupiter aligns with Mercury an image of the youngest sibling arises. In terms of birth order, Jupiter could be seen to represent a youngest child: in Greek mythology, as Zeus, he was the youngest child who eventually became leader of the Olympians, confirming an adage that the last shall become the first. Whether or not the sibling is younger, the family theme centres on the urge to quest beyond the cultural inheritance of the family, whether that be educational, racial or moral. In the context of the family, there is often an issue involving education, cross-cultural affiliations or travel that is brought to consciousness by a sibling or siblings.

♀♂ Venus-Jupiter aspects suggest that the arena of relationship intersects with the cultural realm; in terms of the family this might suggest a cross-cultural marriage, which might combine partners of differing race, culture, education, religion or social/economic standing. How this mixture was managed in the family atmosphere affects the levels of intimacy, affection and expression of love. Spiritual values are a motif in the family matrix; the ability to value the search for meaning and feel open to life begins in the childhood home.

♁ Again, two potent masculine archetypes combine. As fuel for each other, it is important to note how the family handled the volatile emotions of desire and aggression and the human urge to compete and succeed. Family myths are inherited around taking the ‘right action’ or ‘doing the right thing’ and it is important to deconstruct the conceptual and philosophical attitudes towards anger and power to find an innate authentic approach for the individual. Consider how the family philosophy either supports or inhibits the individual’s natural instincts to act.

♁ in 3rd Astrologically we tend to see Jupiter expanding the area it occupies; hence we might consider how Jupiter expands the sibling system. How is it big? In size, in a social context, a cross-cultural mix, step-sibs or because of a larger-than-life sibling? With Jupiter here, the motifs of education and religion, travel and questing beyond the familiar are aspects of the sibling experience which have influenced us.

♁ in 4th Below the surface there are beliefs that form a template for the family’s way of life. Whether this is religious, spiritual, philosophical or moral, there is often a sense of what is right and what is wrong. If the definition is rigid the individual may feel unable to forge their own beliefs in life; hence it is important to consider the inherited family values and whether they are authentic. Travel, reaching beyond cultural constraints, prejudice, emigration and social compliance may also be part of the family tapestry.

♁ in 7th Familial beliefs, morals and prejudices may be entangled with adult relationships. Cross-cultural themes may be present in our own or our parents’ relationship to challenge and expand the family’s attitudes towards outsiders. Enmeshed with the search for a relationship is the search for meaning, and the extent to which these can unite begins with the familial permission and support to be free and explorative. The encouragement from our siblings to explore beyond the boundaries of the system is brought into the arena of adult relationships.

♃ in 8th Here, in the 8th, Jupiter symbolizes the familial inheritance. Underpinning this placement, I have often heard of a familial story of loss of this inheritance through gambling, overindulging or inflated business decisions. However, there may also be an abundant inheritance when the individual searches beyond the scope of the family. In most cases it is the inheritance of not only resources but ways of thinking, philosophy, optimism and generosity that is tested; the individual must often reach beyond the limits of the family's attitudes and values to find their own.

♃ in 11th Jupiter in the 11th might suggest that in our social sphere we begin to have a diversity of relationships that expand our perceptions of companions that were internalized early in the sibling system. Here in a social context we have an opportunity to be freer of the attitudes and behaviours learnt in our early childhood relationships and therefore to be more open, explorative and inquiring.

♃ in 12th In the family history there may be some religious idealism or spiritual principles that were not able to be lived out at the time. Inherited from the ancestry are spiritual urges and/or inclinations to explore intellectually or physically that cannot be reconciled with the current familial mindset. The individual is usually guided by an ancestral spirit that seeks to express itself in a spiritual, scholarly or courageous way through the individual.

Saturn in the Family System

Traditionally, Saturn is the patriarch of the family. In Greek mythology Saturn, as Chronos, was the father of six of the Olympians; one was Jupiter (Zeus), who would become the supreme ruler. As a father figure Saturn is not personal like the Sun, but more socially focused on the rules, standards and customs that need to be respected in the culture. In the family system Saturn is experienced more as the authoritarian or traditional parent. And its dynamic aspects to any of the personal planets often suggest that the regulations and decrees of Saturn may have first been encountered in family life. The archetype is complex in that its nature is feminine, yet it may be experienced

harshly as a result of its consequences and penalties for breaking the rules. In family life it represents boundary-making and authority. Saturn is also the process of maturation and ageing, and addresses attitudes towards the aged and respect for the older generations in the family.

☽ Saturn is often regarded as conditional, whereas the Moon is often seen as unconditional; therefore this combination seems to suggest that there are rules and regulations bound up with care and nurturing. Often the bonding between mother and child may be interrupted due to complications or difficulties with feeding or caretaking. When this occurs, mother's anxiety may be absorbed by the child. When attachment is complex, love may be felt as being conditional and dependent upon the 'right' response and behaviour. Mother's set of laws has a strong impact on the child's sense of security, so they need approval and mirroring from mother to know that they are doing what is appropriate.

☽ Two influential archetypes combine to characterize father as a strong authoritarian and disciplinarian. Regardless of how this may have played out, the inner image of the personal father is entwined with the conditionality of rules and performance. Father's approval and acknowledgement are very important to secure inner confidence and build strength of identity; therefore the father becomes an important model for defining and structuring the child's career. Whether father is physically present or not, he strongly influences the child's developmental sense of his confidence, well-being and vitality.

☿ Saturn, as the image of an elder or authoritarian, does not sit comfortably with Mercury, who personifies a younger, more versatile figure; therefore there may be a conflict between rank and privilege in the sibling system. This combination might suggest feelings of aloneness or exclusion within the sibling system. Or this aspect might point to a sibling who was overly critical, patronizing, depressed or excluded from the system. Duty and responsibility may become associated with siblings either through being responsible or having too many rules. Later this pattern might repeat in adulthood because of an earlier role

of accountability. This aspect also suggests the sibling may have had the role of teacher, authority or parent to the other sibs.

♀♃ The developmental sense of self-worth and esteem is strongly influenced by the prevailing conventions and attitudes towards the feminine. In the early family life a strong attitude about the roles of women or the value of the feminine is imprinted upon the child. Therefore the child is often highly sensitive and responsive to the accepted and traditional ways, feeling they will be unloved if they do not have the same mindset. The family folklore and rigid beliefs about the feminine and relationships challenge the individual's development of self-worth.

♂♃ The Martian impulse to act and go after what one wants is tempered by Saturn's reins. Rules in the family, the familial attitudes about responsibility and parental fear of consequences all influence the development of this aspect. When the individual is mentored and coached, the combination suggests the spirit is fighting fit; yet when overlaid with strict rules and potential penalties the individual's willpower is compromised. The familial attitude towards anger, desire and the masculine in general shapes the child's motivation and determination.

♃ in 3rd Saturn in the 3rd house is analogous of an only or elder child. While this may not be the literal birth order, the child often feels they have been placed in positions of control and responsibility too early. There is often an early sense of aloneness or separateness from others, which is often exacerbated by the feeling of rejection from the sibling. The child may feel the necessity to become self-reliant and not have to depend upon others for support, encouragement or comradeship.

♃ in 4th The atmosphere in the family of origin is affected by its rules and regulations. While directives, boundaries and authority are essential in development, the child's security is affected by how consciously the parents enforced and regulated these rules. Familial boundary stones are fundamental for an inner sense of security; however this depends on whether the child felt these were stepping stones or roadblocks. Parental control is highlighted.

♄ in 7th Saturn brings its air of authority to the sphere of relationships here. Power and control might be an issue in relationships if the family atmosphere of authority was rigid and controlling. Saturn tends towards a more hierarchical position; in the 7th this parental relationship may be projected onto the partner, confusing the roles of parent and partner. Commitment in relationship is important and the stability or lack of it was first witnessed and experienced in the parental relationship.

♄ in 8th Saturn in the house of inheritance might suggest that the family inheritance is an issue; perhaps unfairly divided, mismanaged or fraught with parental control. On an emotional level this might suggest a difficulty in the expression of intimacy or affection in the parental marriage; on the other hand, it might point to a limited financial inheritance. However this works out, the consequences of how the family has expressed emotional closeness and financial values over time is highlighted.

♄ in 11th Childhood experiences of feeling alone could resurface through group participation in adult life. Feelings of aloneness when in a group or being responsible for others in the group may awaken the earlier experiences of being an only or elder child, having a lack of playmates in early years, experiencing an isolated family atmosphere, having much older siblings or having to shoulder responsibility when a child. With Saturn in the 11th the challenge in adult years is to consciously find support and respect from peers who value the individual's wisdom and guidance in the community.

♄ in 12th Saturn in the 12th house looks back upon the legacy of achievement in the family. Ancestrally there may be a myth of success that papers over the failures and lack of accomplishment. Therefore the child often feels compelled to be triumphant and successful for the family, forging a path not of their own design but built on ancestral expectations. The individual is sensitive to the performance expectations in the family and challenged to find their authority to forge their own authentic path in life.

Chiron in the Family System

Chiron is not a planet in the astronomical sense, but as a celestial wanderer it fits the ancient tradition of a planet. Like most other counselling astrologers I have found its influence to be essential in revealing dimensions of character not necessarily embraced by the other planets. In many ways Chiron is marginal to the herd of planets. Similarly, in the family system Chiron feels on the margins. This might be experienced as the family feeling peripheral to society or a member feeling foreign in the family system. Chiron is the archetype of the refugee, the displaced and the orphan. It also brings the themes of wounding and healing in the family unit and its aspects may point to an ancestral wound or an individual's healing journey within the system of the ancestry.

♄ Chiron aspecting the Moon unites basic emotional security needs with wounding and healing. The lunar wound points to the early relationship with mother and the family system where safety and a sense of belonging may have been impaired. Mother herself may be wounded, having inherited the ancestral pain of feeling marginal or not fitting in. Therefore the child experiences the mother's isolation or depressions as rejection. Postnatal depression or family difficulties may have meant mother was disconnected from bonding with the child. Mother's ambivalence towards her role as caretaker may have developed during her pregnancy, leaving the child feeling emotionally unsupported, even drawing the child into complicity with her feeling life. The themes of dislocation and feeling foreign within the system run through the family.

☉♄ When the Sun and Chiron combine, we could imagine that the familial wound might lie in the developmental relationship to the father and other solar figures. This aspect also points to father's own wounding and sense of being marginalized. His spirit may have been crushed through the process of living and this atmosphere overshadows the ability to be connected to him. Hence the confidence to be ourselves, to feel comfortable with our identity and to express our self in a creative and magnanimous way, may be wounded. However, this aspect could also suggest that a fostering father or mentor figure helps us to heal the

relationship to our own heroic self. It is outside the family system where we might encounter fathering.

♃♄ Chiron in aspect to Mercury unites the themes of marginality with the sibling story. This might suggest feeling alienated or out of place in the sibling or family system. Later this might manifest as feeling on the periphery of our community of peers. Chiron is also associated with wounding and healing, and this may have been experienced in the sibling system. Literally, this image could suggest a sibling who is physically or mentally handicapped, an adopted sibling or the separation from a sibling through death or a schism in the family.

♀♄ The wounding of the feminine in the family is highlighted. This would influence the attitudes towards female values, sexuality and roles. In the familial past there may be a dishonouring of the feminine position in the family which shapes relationships as well as the relationships between sisters and other women in the family.

♂♄ The impulse to act is impeded by the fear of being wounded. This fear might be in the family atmosphere so the child learns to not be spontaneous or adventuresome for fear of being hurt. The familial wound points to Mars, the expression of anger and ambition and the will to strive for what one wants. This urge and willpower may have been damaged in the past, leaving its mark on the child's natural curiosity and spontaneity.

♄ **in 3rd** With Chiron in the 3rd house the family images include an adopted or relinquished sibling, a step- or half-sibling, one who is not wholly part of the sibling system. Or a schism may have occurred. Again this may not be literal but the feeling is one of displacement and not fitting into the system. This might also suggest that patterns of communication in the family between siblings might be difficult.

♄ **in 4th** With the archetype of the outsider in the 4th house of the family, this might feel as if the individual is an alien in their family of origin or perhaps the family itself was foreign to the

culture in which the individual grew up. The family atmosphere is influenced by its marginality, whether that is cultural, racial or economic, and this impacts upon the child. Chiron in the 4th also suggests that the themes of displacement, adoption, immigration or loss of home or homeland may have an effect on the development of a sense of safety and security.

♄ in 7th When Chiron sets in the 7th house, the individual may be vulnerable to being drawn to individuals who are marginal, displaced or wounded. How this individual relates to the injuries and wounds of others, and deals with their urges to heal and help was first mirrored to them through their parents' relationship. This will also redress the feelings of marginality and wounding that may have occurred with a sibling.

♄ in 8th The family legacy may have been affected in a variety of ways; however, the underlying similarity would be due to familial displacement and upheavals. Perhaps emigration, divorce, separation and loss may have contributed to the emotional and financial inheritance within the family.

♄ in 11th Chiron in the 11th is prone to recreating early feelings of marginalization in later relationships with colleagues and associates. However, it is in these relationships and with close friends where the familial wounds can be mended. Friends and associates can heal the wounds of feeling disconnected from others and can help to reshape earlier feelings of not belonging.

♄ in 12th In the collective unconscious is an image of Chiron who may take the shape of an outsider, a wounding agent, perhaps a mentor or a healer. Whichever way the image presents in the outer world, the pattern of wounding and healing is carried through the ancestry. In the background of the family may be the unhealed wounds from migration, repatriation, adoptions, relinquishments, undiagnosed mental disorders, etc. The individual is sensitive to what has been left unattended and unhealed in the family ancestry

Uranus in the Family System

Individuality and independence are important hallmarks in the Uranian family system. Aspects of Uranus to the inner planets reveal the urge to be adventurous, to take risks and be emotionally self-sufficient. Whether these have been lived out in the family history or not, these characteristics want to be valued and experienced. Surprises and unexpected change may be part of the familial landscape. Uranus often accompanies adjustments and separation. Its aspects to the inner planets often suggest that changes or schisms may have been experienced in the family atmosphere. This archetype is often experienced in opposition to family life as its urge is to disconnect and be independent rather than to connect and attach.

♃ Uranus's urge for freedom does not always mix well with the Moon's inclination for dependency; therefore, we might suspect that in mother and her family are struggles between traditionalism and unconventionality. Often with this aspect there are female ancestors who have lived alternative lives, been activists and sought equality and freedom. There is a feminine legacy of intelligence and originality. However, this may not have been lived out by women of previous generations who had to relinquish their urge for independence and education in favour of motherhood.

♃ Uranus brings its extraordinary and unusual characteristics to the archetype of father. Literally, the father may be unconventional or chose an out-of-the-ordinary career or path in life. The father's legacy may have been severed or schisms and divisions may have separated him from his family of origin. Therefore what might have been cut off is the will and spirit to shine and be successful. There may be a pattern of disconnection with the father in the family; however, this also suggests the inheritance of an independent and original identity.

♃ Individuality, unconventionality and freedom are inherent to Uranus and therefore it brings this influence to the sibling stories in the family. We may have first experienced a sense of independence and individuality in the sibling relationship, yet on the other hand a sibling may also have been distant, aloof or cold.

This combination brings the human experience of separateness and separation into the sibling system; in this relationship we learn about our sense of a unique and independent self. This might also suggest the experience of different systems such as half-siblings, step-siblings, blended families, etc.

♀♁ A thread of unconventional women runs through the family fabric. The combination of these archetypes suggests that value and respect for the independent feminine is part the family atmosphere. Yet, on the other hand, it may be the lack of value placed on independence and risk-taking that stimulates the appreciation of freedom and alternative relationships. The legacy of femininity and sexuality in the family is original, at times non-traditional, at others avant-garde. Familial attitudes to money and worth are also unorthodox.

♂♁ Both archetypes are masculine in orientation and therefore represent the attitudes towards masculinity and male roles in the family. Themes of adventure, pioneering, competitiveness and bravery may be passed down through the family. However, if this archetypal combination has been suppressed in the family it could point to unexpected accidents, hostility and aggression with males in the family. An unusual relationship with a brother or uncle, perhaps an atypical brother figure, may also be part of the family landscape.

♁ in 3rd Uranus's sudden and unexpected temperament may have affected early peer relationships including those with siblings. Never knowing what to expect in the relationship with a sibling, perhaps a sudden separation, feeling abandoned or an unusual relationship underlie this sense of apprehension. An underlying anxiety about the nature of relating may be brought into adult encounters.

♁ in 4th In family systems theory, this combination would point to a disengaged family atmosphere where there is an emphasis on individuality and separateness rather than closeness. Either parent may have experienced schisms, divorce or separations in their family system which influenced their security in the family

structure. Underlying the security and continuity of family life is the urge for independence and individuality as well as splits and separations from the past.

♃ **in 7th** The images of how two independent and separate individuals can forge a trusting and secure relationship would be first witnessed through their parents' partnership. Does separateness lead to divorce or does it open up new possibilities in relationship? Independence in relationship was also experienced with the sibling and these experiences will be brought into the adult relationship when Uranus is in the 7th house.

♃ **in 8th** As an archetype of independence, Uranus is not comfortable in this sphere of intimacy. Therefore this might suggest an early experience of separation or tension in the parents' marriage. However, this house is also the sphere of the family legacy and one of the inherited patterns may be the avoidance of intimacy due to divisions or splits in the past. This may also suggest an unforeseen inheritance or unexpected discovery in the parental or familial past.

♃ **in 11th** Perhaps, with Uranus in the 11th house, the freedoms and liberties that may have been denied or unavailable in the family can now be found through associations with others in the community.

♃ **in 12th** Uranus is unpredictable and often startling, so this may suggest unanticipated revelations from the ancestral past. As a familial motif it suggests that issues of independence, liberation and equality are highlighted in the familial system and the individual may feel a compelling urge to express this passion of individualism for the family. The ancestral history may include separations, losses and rifts that have ruptured the continuity of the family line.

Neptune in the Family System

Neptune suggests that the ideal of the family is important, even though the actual experience may be far from perfect. Creativity, spirituality and a heightened sensitivity to others are aspects of a Neptunian family life. Emotional understanding, compassion for others in the family and the community at large, as well as the urge to serve others, are all part of the ancestral ethos in some way. However there may also be many unspoken rules, ideals and expectations in the family that exert a great impact on safety. Themes of enmeshment, sacrifice, relinquishment and illness may colour the family atmosphere when Neptune is involved.

♃♅ When the two most sympathetic archetypes combine, it suggests that strong imagination, fantasies and expectations may be conjured up. In terms of mother this might suggest mother's dreams and visions for herself and her role as mother. The child is sensitive to mother's expectations and vulnerable to making her dreams come true. In the family there may be patterns of passivity or undiagnosed illnesses that represent past disappointments and helplessness. On the other hand, a legacy of creativity and spirituality is also part of mother's dowry.

♁♅ Neptune's pattern of invisibility may be connected to father; for instance, a disappearing father, one who was not there emotionally or one whose spirit was somewhere else. Or perhaps he was able to be a saviour and hero for others but not his own family. Father may have also been idealized in order to defend the loss. This also suggests that imagination and spirituality may be connected to father's legacy; if so, the individual's identity is caught up with the longing to express their inspiration.

♆♅ Neptune's domain is the vastness of the ocean and this image permeates the sibling relationship. At one level it suggests the multi-dimensional layers and boundlessness of the relationships, yet on another it suggests the lack of boundaries in the relationship. We may have first learned to sacrifice our sense of identity in our relationships by copying or mimicking the sibling. We may have idealized the sibling, yet this could also suggest a sibling who was ill or troubled. Either way, this may have left us feeling

invisible. In adult life this might lead to an estrangement with the sibling in order to untangle the enmeshment.

♀♃ These powerful feminine archetypes have some bearing on family myths concerning women and their position in the family. This may range from being idealized to maligned; either way, the roles of women in the family may feel limited by these perceptions. The feminine carries the creative and spiritual impulses for the family. When these are denied, the feminine values are weakened and not valued, leaving women vulnerable to feeling invisible and misunderstood. However, when the family system embraces these values we can expect to find inspirational, imaginative and resourceful women in the family system.

♂♃ The pattern of anger in the family may have conflicted with cultural or spiritual ideals; therefore, the child may have learned to not recognize the feeling, to sacrifice it or to forgive others in order to avoid confrontation. This learned behaviour weakens the family system and its members, resulting in the child not knowing what they want or feeling they are missing something. A weakened vitality or lethargy in the individual may also be caught up in the familial pattern of not being identified or outspoken.

♃ **in 3rd** Neptune's penchant for both idealization and confusion is brought into the early environment of the family through the sibling relationship, whether that is with their siblings or a parent's sibling. This might suggest that there are misunderstandings or sacrifices in the system. The misunderstanding might fester and create a sense of estrangement. A sacrifice by one sibling to selflessly protect another might lead to either enmeshment or drifting apart.

♃ **in 4th** With Neptune in the 4th, the family atmosphere may have been flooded with dreams, yearnings and ideals that became washed away in the everydayness of family life. What are the expectations of family life that the parents carry and how much has the child absorbed through the family atmosphere? The family legacy may be one of creative potential and spiritual realizations; however, it may also be corrupted by illusions, deceptions and

unrealistic beliefs. It is important for the child to be safely guided through the transitions from fantasy and make-believe into imagination and creativity.

♆ **in 7th** The romantic ideal of relationship is strong; therefore, there may be family myths around the parents' relationship or relationships in general. These romantic and idealized stories of perfect relationships may disguise the pain and disappointment in relating to others.

♆ **in 8th** Neptune yearns for the ideal and in the 8th this is focused on the ideal other who may have been unattainable for various reasons. As with its position in the 7th, this might speak about family mythologies around the parents' relationship or tragedies which occurred in relationships in the family history. There may be mystery and intrigue in the family background or a feeling of something being lost or absent. The family inheritance includes this otherworldly sense that there is something missing or misplaced in the familial archives.

♆ **in 11th** With Neptune in the 11th, the task of differentiating between fantasy and reality in relationships is affected by how well the family created appropriate boundaries and consistency. Our dreams and ideals are tested in the more impersonal world of the social order. With Neptune in the 11th, soulmates and spiritual companions are found through friendships; perhaps the creativity and spirituality which we might have sought in the family can now be shared in social pursuits.

♆ **in 12th** In the house it rules, Neptune feels boundless and never-ending. In a family context this might suggest that finding ancestral records, facts and information may be shrouded in uncertainty and misunderstandings. But deep in the family psyche lie the imagination and poetry of the past which the individual may naturally express through music, art or spirituality. When the past is allowed to remain mysterious, the ancestors become muses for the channelling of beauty and the sacred.

Pluto in the Family System

Pluto is connected to privacy and secrecy, and therefore could symbolize secrets in the family system when in one of these familial positions. It might also reveal buried grief in the family past, losses not acknowledged, sorrow not accepted or feelings not allowed. Pluto does not always manifest in this way in the family system, but generally brings its realm of taboos, grief and power struggles into the family atmosphere.

♇☾ If Pluto aspects the Moon we might consider that the mother or the maternal line could be the carrier of a family secret. This mystery may even be concealed from the mother, who was shaped herself by what had been repressed earlier in the family archives by her mother or grandmother. Our astrological assumption would be that the secret is being transmitted through the maternal line of the family. Another pattern might be that there are losses and grief carried by the mother that affect the level of security and attachment. It is this history that exerts its impact on our feeling bonded and emotionally safe.

☼♇ In aspect to the Sun, our astrological supposition would involve the father and his line. This could suggest a secret about the father or one that is connected to his lineage, either a powerful or powerless mysterious father or father figures. This family story will impact our levels of confidence and self-expression as well as our sense of identity.

♇♁ When Pluto aspects Mercury, loss and grief may be connected to the sibling story; for instance, a sibling unmourned, a loss unacknowledged. Or there may be a broken taboo or secret connected to the sibling system in some way; for instance, an unwanted pregnancy, a secret only known to some sibs but not others, a dead sibling. Whatever the fragment is, it has helped to shape our freedom to communicate and join in.

♀♇ Venus-Pluto aspects signal the potency of feelings aroused through the relationship with women in the family, perhaps with a sister figure. These strong feelings might be focused on jealousy, envy or betrayal. A secret love, passionate relationship

or love denied may influence the parental or other relationship in the family. This could also suggest the feelings of betrayal of the feminine in the family as well as the familial attitudes towards values, money and possessions. The feminine narrative of sexuality and power, love and desire, beauty and value are important in the family history. The way that this has been honoured in the past influences our orientation to this archetype and to the females who embody this for us.

♁♂ This powerful combination alerts us to the relationship with brother figures, such as uncles, family friends, etc. This might suggest power struggles between brothers or masculine attitudes in the family that strongly influence the individual. The masculine sagas of competition and triumph, aggression and direction, fight or flight are important to consider in the context of family history. The way that these motifs have been honoured or dishonoured in the past influences our orientation to this archetype and the males who embody this for us.

♁ in 3rd When in the 3rd house Pluto suggests a secret about a sibling or a secret shared by siblings, even a secret known to everyone but a sibling, or suggests that the sibling system is forced into colluding over a secret. There is intensity in the relationship to siblings or early childhood friends, perhaps due to a crisis or loss that occurred early in the system.

♁ in 4th Pluto in the 4th may point to a family secret that affects feelings of security and honesty. This secret may not even be conscious, yet its mystery infiltrates the family atmosphere. This might suggest too that there is a pattern of loss or grief that affects the stability of the family, such as a death or sexual tension that pervades the home. Pluto's pattern is brought into the familial sphere through the 4th house where the foundation stones of security and safety are laid down.

♁ in 7th Pluto in the 7th could describe something that is undisclosed in the parental marriage or the loss of a significant other in the life of one of the parents that influences their partnership. The impact of the parental relationship on the child

will be reflected in the way the couple dealt with crisis and how they handled honesty and integrity with one another.

♇ in 8th Here, in the 8th, Pluto might suggest a secret from the past about intimacy or inheritance affecting the family. There may be feelings of betrayal or loss that affect the levels of intimacy in the parents' marriage. Pluto in its own house suggests opening up the family closet which might contain some taboos and skeletons that are ready to be released. Excavating the deeper layers of the family may reveal hidden resources and wealth that can be brought to the surface.

♇ in 11th Pluto in the 11th could describe a social taboo, perhaps a secret alliance, that may have occurred outside the family circle but which affected the system's atmosphere. Loss and grief that are experienced through friends and colleagues may trigger earlier grief from the family of origin.

♇ in 12th Adrift in the 12th, Pluto suggests the shadows of secrets and shame buried in the familial history. It might refer to unexpressed grief, unacknowledged deaths or shameful taboos that have been violated in the annals of the family. Life and death are often entwined with Pluto, and these life and death issues may be an aspect of the ancestral environment. Researching the family history is a conscious way to acknowledge the ghosts of the past and lay them to rest.

One final note is to remember the multiple ways in which astrological symbols reveal themselves. Planets may show familial patterns in other subtle ways, such as:

- Ruling one of the houses of endings (the 4th, 8th or 12th house)
- Ruling one of the houses of relationship (the 3rd, 7th or 11th house)
- Ruling the 10th house
- The planet in a sign sympathetic to familial issues, such as ♀ (sibling issues and experiences) or ♁ (familial issues and experiences)