

the astrologers found that all of the planets quincunx and in the houses containing interceptions, when there was a conjunction with the Moon which formed an separating orb and midpoints house systems Koch Placidus Porphyry Equal Regiomontanus Ascendant trine Pluto and in the natal chart 3rd house planets and

## ARTICLE PARTICLES

# A Sedna Story



by *Barbara Schermer*

I did not know it then, but Sedna first came to me when I had just turned five years old.

I grew up in the suburbs far south of Chicago — lots of prairies, ponds, and tree-lined streets, but no major body of water. In the summer, our family would take beach trips to the southernmost point of Lake Michigan, at the Indians dunes. I got my first view of the lake as the car rolled up and down the dune road. It gave me an instant feeling of joyful anticipation. I had so much fun there with my younger sister and family friends. A favorite game was running full-speed down a dune to see how far into the water we could get.

The first major Sedna transit since my birth was when Sedna at 24° Aries (in the 3rd house) sextiled my 24° Gemini Sun (in the 6th). During this time, I had a near-drowning experience.

It was a perfect, sunny summer day. I was in the lake, walking backward facing the shore, when I fell back into a hole. The underwater scene was of pure wonder — a little minnow swimming by, the sunbeams shimmering down into the water. A floating piece of seaweed was close enough to touch. I had no impulse to leave this place. I felt peaceful, not scared. I don't know if it even occurred to me that I might be running out of breath. Suddenly, I was scooped up into the arms of a frightened neighbor who saw me go under and not come up. Despite the violent exit from this perfect water world, I had no immediate trauma. (That showed up later.) Instead, I developed a sense of comfort in water.

Since that time, Sedna has shown up by transit at important times in my

life — what I would call destiny choice points. I have kept a journal since 1973 (it's around 20 volumes now), so I have an accurate chronology to check back on my past. Journaling is always important for memory and, especially for astrologers, helpful for observing cycles.

At the fall equinox of 2006, I had a prescient dream about Sedna; it foreshadowed a rather serious medical diagnosis and subsequent surgery that reflected the dream symbols precisely.

In the dream, I am on a sailboat on my own in the Pacific Ocean, sailing west. I notice the water changing, the current swirling in a circle, a vortex that starts gently and then pulls me into it. I am being sucked down. I feel panic. I can't breathe ... I am suffocating ... I am drowning ... I feel vertigo, spinning, and disorientation.

The vortex is focusing and tightening, and the pressure is increasing. The closing vortex and the unpleasant physical sensation force me into a deeper center in myself. I have to find a quiet, unmoving place inside me. It is then that I realize I can breathe down here. My human body, transformed like a chrysalis into a butterfly, is turning into a dolphin body. Hardly any part of the human girl exists anymore. She has been transmuted, a nearly complete alchemical transformation, into a spinning dolphin.

I am pulled into the coldness and darkness and pressure that I have somehow adapted to. I am brought down to the deepest cavern and settle on the ocean floor. This place feels both familiar and totally foreign. Luminescence appears, along with an array of fantastical creatures that seem to be showing

themselves to me. The first is a Fanfin Seadevil, a prehistoric creature with long, voracious-looking fangs. Behind him comes an octopus with glowing colored spots that light up in undulating order.

I was diagnosed just after the 2006 winter solstice and was required to undergo a six-hour operation on January 19, 2007. The date was chosen carefully with the help of astrologers Kelley Hunter and Dale O'Brien. On that day, transiting Sedna exactly conjoined my Mars at 19°11' Taurus (in the 4th house) opposite my Jupiter at 19°00' Scorpio, with transiting Neptune in Aquarius closely squaring them — a rare 10,500-year transit! Many of you will also realize that Saturn in Leo came to oppose Neptune and was squared by transiting Sedna. These planets all formed a mid-degree fixed-sign karmic cross in my chart.

Upon awakening from six hours of being in a complete void, I was thrashing around in panic and yelling: "I can't breathe!" I felt like I was suffocating. The staff quickly gave me oxygen, which calmed me down. I was also given a morphine drip to control the pain. This self-medicating started out fine. Then I had a reaction to the morphine. It took two hours to adjust the dose. During this time, I experienced the exact same spinning feeling of vertigo the dream had portended.

For two hours, I had to choose between extreme pain or extreme vertigo. I couldn't move. I couldn't speak. I found that, even if I just wiggled my toes, I began to spin. There was no choice but to go deep within and concentrate on taking long, deep, slow breaths. That was the only way through. In yoga, this is called resting in "the empty chalice." I have never felt more myself than in this place. I learned from this dream that, in the deep stillness, I sense Sedna — and when I do, she comes.

During my healing process, I have used my 30 years of spiritual practice to help me face this ordeal and keep me connected to the deep place within. I especially use a Sanskrit mantra, the Markandeya, to triumph over death and disease. My chant master, Thomas Ashley-Farrand, calls this a "freight

train” mantra. The more you do it, the more sustaining power it bestows. (Go to [www.sanskritmantra.com](http://www.sanskritmantra.com) for more about Thomas’s work.)

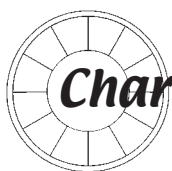
My most recent visit from Sedna was in a dream this past April. I am again on the same sailboat in my girl body, sitting still in the water. A huge, grey whale surfaces on my right side, approaches the little boat gently, and then swims up to embrace me. I am not afraid. She is tender. I feel as if I am as big as this whale, and we meet in a mutual loving embrace.

Sedna is the first planet to be named after an Inuit goddess. From an archetypal perspective, this naming suggests that an utterly new numinous presence is making herself known. For the next 72 years, Sedna moves increasingly closer to the Earth. She is becoming a living presence and has a story rich in context and variations. Her myth is one of betrayal and abuse, salvation and creation. For me, she has brought a centering and a proper orientation to life’s spinning that can be achieved only through inner stillness, peace, and calm.

**Author’s Note:** In May 2008, I will be speaking at UAC on “Sedna: Intimations of a New Feminine Archetype.”

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**Barbara Schermer** has been a practicing astrologer in Chicago for 30 years. During her recuperation, she researched the charts of significant individuals in the environmental movement and found many with Sedna prominently aspected. She believes that Sedna’s myth of abuse and salvation applies to the increasingly urgent need for environmental awareness. Readers may contact Barbara by phone: (800) 273-8868, or via e-mail: [bschermer@astrologyalive.com](mailto:bschermer@astrologyalive.com)



## Chart Challenge

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doorway. You will need to pay special attention to highly charged situations. Complete your unfinished business and bring open-ended matters to some kind of closure, if only in your own mind. You should have no game plan — you will only frustrate yourself if you move into this future with concrete expectations or an agenda. This is a time for living in the now, not trying to control your world. Good luck!

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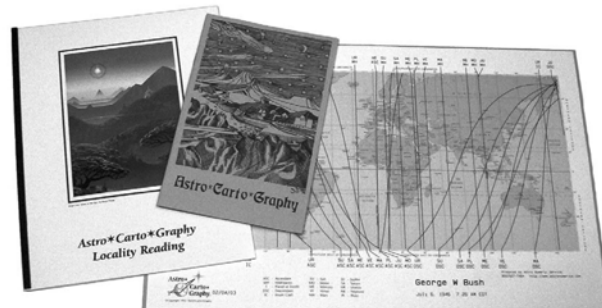
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