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# QVAREIA - THE APPRENTICE

Module 9 - Working with Planetary Powers  
*Lesson 2: Saturn and Pluto*

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BY JOSEPHINE MCCARTHY

QVAREIA

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# WELCOME

*Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.*

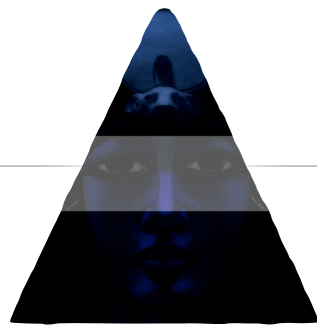
*The Quareia takes a magical apprentice from the beginning of magic to the level of adeptship and beyond. The course has no superfluous text; there is no dressing, no padding – everything is in its place and everything within the course has a good reason to be there.*

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*So remember - in order for this course to work, it is wise to work with the lessons in sequence. If you don't, it won't work.*

*Yours,*

*Josephine McCarthy*



# QVAREIA - THE APPRENTICE

## Module 9 - Working with Planetary Powers

### *Lesson 2: Saturn and Pluto*

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In astrology, the planet Saturn is expressed as a power that creates and upholds boundaries, the beginning of order, of discipline, and also of hardships and limitations. This is also the energy that this planet puts out from a magical perspective.

In your early lessons, when you first learned about the pentagram, you held the sword in your left hand, and the planet Saturn was declared in conjunction with the sword. In magical patterns, the left hand is Saturn's natural home: the hand of the limiter. In more commercial, lightweight magic, the sword is connected with Mars instead. This is a misunderstanding of the power of the sword, and indeed the power of Mars.

Saturn is feared, as it is interpreted as bringing hard work, as binding someone, and bringing destruction. Again, this is a misunderstanding of this powerful planet.

These sorts of misunderstandings serve only to lock an apprentice out of the true power of these planets. If you wish to do your own research into planets, don't skip through popular astrology sites; rather dig a little deeper, and there you will find explanations you will recognise.

The power that flows from Saturn is a power that slows things down, limits it, brings it into focus, makes it denser, and makes whatever is on the

receiving end of its power work harder to find its true form: it is creating a diamond.

The deepest expression of Saturn's power is found in the act of constant creation, where things are slowed down, formed, brought into shape, and expressed into manifest form, where they live and die. The old adage that Saturn is the planet of death is right, but our modern interpretation of this adage is wrong.

In our world today, we interpret such a quality as bringing death to life, which means to us that Saturn brings death. Actually, the reverse is true. Saturn is the force in the creative act that slows something down enough that it can manifest.

As you now know, at the point of physical manifestation or birth, death is woven into that manifestation as it steps into life: at birth is the pattern of death. At birth, the child draws breath and begins their individual existence. That existence, from the moment the umbilical cord is cut, becomes an existence of limitation: the baby is limited in that it needs air, food, water, protection, warmth. It has needs, it has vulnerabilities that limit its soul's scope of action.

In the Biblical story of the Garden of Eden, the man and woman are cast out from the Garden and into a world of birth, death, and hardship: they manifest into the physical world. This story tells of the action of Saturn at play. Saturn is the planetary power that allows souls to manifest in physical form, and that physical form is full of limitations.

On a more magically mundane level, Saturn is the power that makes us work hard, that gives us boundaries, and that limits us so we learn each step properly before we move on. Saturn is the power of the teacher, the guardian, and the parent who will not let us drive fast or overeat; the parent who forces us to study hard so that we gain skills.

Our modern consumer world has no place for the power of Saturn and the limiter; instead it is a society of the unraveller. And the relationship between the limiter (grindstone) and the unraveller (threshing floor) is a close relationship indeed.

Through your ritual work, you have been learning about the many different layers and octaves of power that flow through magic. Each of these

powers (grindstone, limiter, Saturn; threshing floor, unraveller, Pluto) have complex relationships with each other.

From a magical perspective, Saturn works in polarity with Pluto. Saturn exerts a power of slowing something down (hence its connection with lead). The next octave down from that is the limiter which creates boundaries. The next octave of that power is the grindstone: a power that makes us work hard to achieve, mature, and learn. This brotherhood of powers becomes the potter who forms the clay into a beautiful pot.

In harmony with that power, and at the opposing side of the seesaw, is Pluto. Pluto is a power that winnows. Its power sweeps over everything and challenges everything in its path. Those who stand up to the challenge, who consciously engage the power of Saturn, are strengthened and matured. Those who do not engage the power of Saturn are beaten to death by the power of Pluto, which is why it is linked to the underworld: those who not pass the test of Pluto are composted.

Pluto is the power that flows through the unraveller: those who do not consciously engage the power of the limiter start to unravel. Those who do engage the limiter have whatever is no longer necessary in their lives slowly unravelled from their pattern. What is left behind is measured on the threshing floor and given their due balance.

Now you begin to see why it is so important for a magician to engage these powers consciously in their lives. When we accept the challenge of the limiter, and immerse ourselves in it, all that unnecessarily holds us back is winnowed away from us by the unraveller: the powers of Saturn and Pluto become our best friends as we step into the stream of their power and work with them.

Usually, we magicians recognise these flows of planetary powers when they are active in our lives and engage them daily through our actions. We self-limit, make hard decisions, and we work tirelessly. In return, the deadwood in our lives is swept away.

In long-term magical projects, or in times of extreme difficulty, magicians may engage with the planetary spirits for advice and assistance. When an adept works on magical construction, these two key planets would be worked with, via the planetary angelic beings, to weave the power of the limiter and unraveller into the construct in order to maintain balance. These

two powers are the closest we can get to the raw powers of creation and destruction.

At a single point in time, the adept would contact and immerse themselves directly with the consciousness of the particular planet itself, in order to engage fully with its power in their lives and work. This is something you will come to later in your training.

As an apprentice, you will work with the planetary powers in various ways. You began this process in module two, when you learned to align your natal chart with your pentagram. The pentagram is you, and the planets are positioned around you. From there, you look at your natal planet positions in relation to the magical directions and the tools you work with. This you have already done.

The next few steps are to learn to engage the powers of the planetary influences fully in your magical practice, in order to see where your focus in life needs to be. You learn to connect that in with the magical tool and directions, and then you learn to connect and commune with the planetary spirits in order to learn.

Through this act of connecting, not only do you learn a great deal, but you also fully engage these powers in your life and magical work. It also gets your body used to the vast powers that these planets put out. The planetary spirits are the first layer of that power, the layer most conducive to humans, and the least likely to impact you.

As you progress in your magical development, the planetary spirits lead the way towards communion with the planetary deity and angelic beings who interface between living beings and the power of the planet. All of this is done in small, careful stages to let you adjust, and also to give you time to mature magically and emotionally, so you do not misuse this contact (which would destroy you).

The practical work in this module will take you step by step into the different layers of working with planetary consciousness, from ground zero (your own chart) to the first layer of contact, which is the planetary spirits.

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## *Practical work*

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### **ASTROLOGY**

The first and most important step is to ensure that you are very familiar with the two planets, and how they exert a force over your natal pattern and also your day-to-day life. You have looked at your chart and at your transits. You have looked at what houses these planets were in when you were born, and what signs those houses were in.

Get out your charts, and look where Saturn and Pluto are in relation to each other in your natal chart. Look at the respective houses they are in, and the nature of those houses: this sets a pattern for these two planets through your life.

When they return to the positions they were in when you were born, they strengthen their impact, and trigger a new layer of their life's action upon you (a return). Each return is like a review of what things within their purview need dealing with in your life, and each time they polish you a little more.

You can also look at the transits of these planets. As they go through each house, they affect that house's aspect of your life. Reading the planet's natal position in relation to your transit position tells you how that natal influence is playing out at any particular time.

I am no astrologer, and have only a rudimentary understanding of astrology, but I have figured out enough to work actively with these influences and forces. For most people, this is what astrology is about. But for a magician, it can be much more of a working tool.

Some magicians time specific magical jobs to coincide with specific transits, to draw the most power they can from those planets, and to affect their work in specific ways. While this can work well, I have found it much better to balance work with planets in a less controlled way, which allows deeper forces of planetary influence to surface. There is still a lot we do not understand, and by controlling something too much, you lock out potentially helpful influences.

When I plan a long-term project or do something magically important, I choose the dates of work according to my availability, then nearer the time look at the planetary influences to see what is going on under the surface. I find that fate nudges me onto particular dates, and when I look back, I discover that it was the perfect astrological time to do that job. So take care not to fall into the trap of trying to control something too much: work with the planets, and go with the flow.

### ***TASK***

Look at your current transits, and see where Saturn and Pluto are. Look at the houses they are in, and look up what those houses rule over. Most houses have different layers of meaning, so you will need to read the house according to what your life is like. (For example, the fourth house is home and family, but it can also mean working ancestrally.)

Think about these planets, what they do, and how they relate to your present life. What is the chart telling you about Saturn and limiting? Can you work out, via that planet's action in its current house, where you can engage your own self-discipline, what needs limiting, or what limitations are currently upon you that you need to stop fighting and engage with consciously?

Then do the same for Pluto: see what needs cutting away from your life, what needs winnowing down, and what needs bringing to a conclusion or making fitter, leaner, and wiser.

I had a Pluto transit in my sun sign of Sagittarius that started in my thirties (1995 to 2008). It was hell until I figured out what was happening and engaged it consciously in relation with Saturn (let go of things, work harder and with more discipline...‘suck it up’ was my mantra for years.) Once I had done that, and then worked with the planetary spirits, my situation turned from a disaster into training. During that very difficult transit most of my real and true magical learning happened.

### ***TASK***

Look at your natal chart, then cast a chart for the day you started Quareia. Look what houses Saturn and Pluto are in, and look at their posi-



tions in relation to your natal chart. Think what those positions tell you about your psychic ‘weather’ for that time. What influence were those two planets having on your life, and which aspects of your life were those influences playing out in? The answers may not become immediately apparent; just ponder on this, and take notes of your conclusions.

Make a note in your journal to revisit this chart analysis in a year’s time. Sometimes when you are in the midst of something, it is hard to see the wood for the trees. But once you have some distance, you can look back and make more sense of what the chart is telling you.

### ***TASK***

Look back over your life and locate key moments or times that resulted in major learning, or a major changes/clean-ups in your life. Then look at the chart transits for that time, and specifically at Saturn and Pluto. What houses were they in? Where were they in relation to each other? How do their positions in the transits bring their natal influences to the surface?

For example, Saturn is a major player in my writing and magical work, and this is reflected in my natal chart. Just before I started Quarcia, Saturn moved into a position where its influence would be very helpful to such a large project, and its house position also showed me how I would be working, and what difficulties this work would cause. The house position was key to showing me how to draw the most from the discipline of Saturn: it directed me to look at where my discipline would come from, and what learning and adjustments I would need to make in order to be successful.

Also, Mercury drew close to Saturn at this time (long-term project/discipline, and Mercury/writing coming along to help). Pluto was in the position of my ‘art,’ which is my writing, and showed me that I had a strong influence behind me to narrow down my focus, tidy up my approach to writing, and cut away unnecessary methods, approaches, etc.

Pluto was positioned to assist me in casting away everything in my sphere of writing that no longer has a place there, in order to make me more productive and efficient.

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## *Working with the planetary spirits*

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After you have started the process of trying to learn from the charts, and familiarised yourself with these two powerful planets, then it is time to go and meet the first layer of contact, which is the planetary spirits. It is pointless meeting them before you understand the influence of the planets in your life, so do the chart work first.

This work is done in vision, and triggers a working relationship between you and the planets that you can then build upon and engage in your life and magic. Before you delve into a visionary connection with these beings, ensure you understand what they are. They are not guides for humans; they do not exist specifically for our well-being. They are spirits who act as substations: lowering and filtering volumes of power influence that affect every living thing on the planet. Their job is the constant weave of power, the song that is woven between all the planetary influences to uphold life and death.

The planetary spirits have their most immediate effect on the manifest world, and as such are the best contacts to work with in the chain of power between planet and human. We understand them more easily than we do a planet, and they are fluid enough to pick up our tiny communications and interface with us.

When you ask a planetary spirit for advice and learning, the learning that comes back will not be individual and specific to you alone, but rather advice on how to make the most of yourself within the holism. What affects you affects everything around you, and what you do magically affects everything around you. So the advice that comes back is about the community of consciousness that you are part of. The advice shows you how to advance and mature in relation to everything around you.

The lack of awareness of this holism has caused many, many problems in magic in the past when magicians have worked with planetary spirits. A magician would work rituals and visions to connect with the planetary spirits, then ask for something specific to them alone, in a selfish and naive way. Often the spirits would give the magician what they asked for, then watch the show as the magician slowly unravelled.

But if you ask for help/advice/learning in a way that would be in harmony with the ‘weave’ that your life and existence is part of, then the spirits will fully engage themselves with you in your life.

Another bit of advice before we get to work. Do not keep pestering these beings with repeated visionary work over a long period of time. They are not hand-holders. You have to mature enough to know when to connect and ask for help/advice, and when just to let them get on with their job of influence.

The best way to do this is to make an initial contact with them, and then just to be aware of their actions in your life. Acknowledge that action when you see it, engage it fully through your everyday actions, and when you hit a really bad wall, then ask for help. And be aware that their idea of ‘help’ and ours are two different things.

For example, suppose you are going through a Pluto transit and your life is being torn to pieces. By engaging with the planetary spirit, you will amplify the action of Pluto in your life, and will be shown ways to understand why things are happening as they are. If you willing let go of what has to leave you, and you engage the spirit of Pluto, then the process can be sped up: everything that no longer serves a purpose in your life, and the things that hold you back, will be swept away from you. Because you are working with Pluto here, you know that everything you are losing is going away for a reason. You don’t fight it, and once the job is done you slowly emerge, ready for the next stage of your life.

For this first contact, because these are two of the most powerful planets, it is wise simply to make contact, say hello, and understand that the influences of these spirits are helpful to you, no matter how tough they can seem. Look upon them as taskmasters who are there to help you find the right path, and for you to have the resources that you need to walk that path.

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## *The Hall of the Planetary Spirits*

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Set up your working room, open the gates, and do your ritual for centering and grounding. Sit before the altar in the east, and go into the inner li-

brary. Tell the librarian at the centre of the library that you wish to talk to the planetary spirit of Saturn.

The librarian guides you down one of the main corridors. It seems to narrow the further you go down it. As you look up, the roof of the corridor slowly changes to become a roof of stars, and you see that the walls around you are decorated with intricate paintings of different spirits.

At the end of the corridor is a stairwell. One set of stairs goes up and ends at a large circular door. The other set goes down, and ends in a large bronze set of doors. The librarian indicates for you to go down to the bronze doors.

When you are in front of the doors, you realise there are no handles to open them. Close your eyes, and remember when you did your pentagram ritual. Remember the stance, the tools that you held or their sigils, and remember the sense of the planets around you. Stand in that stance, and recover the feeling of being in the midst of the pentagram ritual. This tells the doors who you are, what you are, and what you do.

The doors swing open, and you step into a vast hall that has the stars for a ceiling and the clouds for a floor. Even if you think you will fall if you step onto the clouds, trust the power and step out. You find yourself walking upon a narrow ledge out in the clouds. The stars are all around you, and you feel the wind swirling round your ankles. Walk until the clouds separate and you can see the end of the ledge. It ends at a circular platform. Stand on the platform and look all around you. All you can see are clouds. As you look up, you can see stars, and as you look closer you can see threads running between the stars in a complex weave.

Stand in the pentagram stance. See the sigils of your tools by your hands, the hexagram above you, and the earth below you. Remember your inner flame. Speak out your birth name, and ask if the planetary spirit of Saturn is willing to commune with you.

You will feel the wind round your ankles shift and become stronger, and you will have to concentrate hard to keep your stance. As you wait, think back over the times in your life when you did not engage your own self-discipline, and the times when you did, and what a difference that made. As you remember, you notice that the clouds seem to gather in one particular area. You silence your thoughts and watch.

The clouds seem to swirl around something, and out of that swirling walks a figure. They, too, are walking on a ledge that ends at a circular platform not far from you.

This figure is the spirit of Saturn. They are clothed in mist and are difficult to make out, but you can hear them very clearly: they are humming a sound. As they appear to you, bow, thank the spirit for appearing, and tell it your name. As you talk, the spirit's eyes become more defined: sharp, intelligent, and bright. Tell the spirit you are an apprentice of the mysteries, and you wish to begin learning about the planets and their powers. Tell the spirit you wish to engage fully and properly with the powers of the planets and the influences they have upon you.

If the spirit agrees, then talk to them in your own way, asking them what you need to focus on in your life and work. Ask if they are willing to be a guide for you in this early stage of your learning.

The spirit may talk back to you directly, or they may make sounds or actions. Don't worry if you do not understand what they are saying: the meaning will seep into your dreams, into your mind, and will also pop up in your life.

When you have finished and are ready to go, bow to the spirit and thank them. Try hard to get a feeling or image of this spirit, so that you will recognize it if it turns up in your life or dreams.

Wait until the spirit turns and walks away, and once they have gone, turn round and work your way back to the bronze doors. Before you pass back through the doors, turn and look at the clouds. Now that you have made a brief contact with a planetary spirit, you will be able to see more of what happens in this place.

As you look at the clouds, you notice clusters of clouds and you can make out faint figures in the clouds. They are reaching up to the weave in the stars, which seems to be constantly moving. They get a hold of some of the threads, braid them, then vanish down into the clouds with the braided threads, which are still connected to various stars.

What you are watching is the work between the angelic beings who weave the powers between the planets, and the spirits who bring those threads together, combine them, and then connect them to all living beings.

Turn and go back through to the main library. When you see the main librarian, ask them to guide you to a book about the powers of Saturn and how to work with that power in your life. The librarian will take you to a book, which you should put inside yourself.

When you are ready, thank the librarian, bow, and leave. Go back to your work space and when you are ready, open your eyes.

Before you do anything else, and before you close the room down, get your journal and open. Still yourself, recover the memory of the spirit: what it felt like, how it appeared, etc. Pick up the pen and start to draw a shape: you are allowing a personal sigil to come through that is the pattern of the relationship between you and the planetary spirit of Saturn.

Draw the sigil out without trying to control its shape. When you have finished, look at the sigil and remember the feeling of the being. Put it somewhere where you can go and look at it, and every time you do, recover the feeling of the spirit. This pattern is not the sigil of the spirit; rather it is a key to the connection between you and the spirit. It will not work for anyone else: it is individual to you and that particular spirit.

When you are actively engaging the power of that planet, or want to connect with that spirit in your outer life, use that sigil.

The act of going to the hall of planetary spirits triggers a power connection between you and the planetary powers. The planetary spirit acts as a go-between and interpreter for you. Once you touch base with these beings, they become more aware of you, and you become more aware of them. This allows lines of communication to open.

Meeting a planetary spirit is not really about getting information from them there and then (though this can certainly happen), but about connection. Once you are consciously aware of them and they of you, and you have stated that you want to work directly with the power and learn, then doors of much deeper contact begin to open.

The spirit will help you understand your own chart more, understand the influence their planet is having on your life, and will nudge you along the path so long as you are willing to work and learn. As Saturn is about disci-

pline and limitation, the more you engage yourself along such lines that you know are necessary for you, the more the spirit will back you up, nudge you, appear in dreams, visions, readings, and also in life in the form of hints.

This is the first stage of working with planetary beings for magical purposes. They will not engage with you to help you with magic until you have engaged with them to work on yourself. There is good reason for this: as you know, when you work with these deeper powers, the power comes through you first. If you do not have your house in order, and you work powerful magic that includes beings like these, then at best you will be plunged into a life disaster. At worst, you will be torn apart. In a sense, if you have not first prepared yourself to be a focussed filter, then when the power flows it will find your weak spots and break them apart.

If, however, you work to engage with these spirits at this stage in your training, and are willing to engage fully with whatever needs to be worked with, then when the time comes as an adept to work powerfully with these spirits, their power will enhance you as it passes through and around you.

So, for example, you have just connected with Saturn. This will result in you being more aware that you have to take responsibility for your own self-discipline, service, health, and learning. This will bring change to your life.

When these changes become very difficult, you can visit the spirit and ask for advice or help. Such help may take the form of straightforward advice, opportunities opening up for you, or a strong feeling of having the spirit beside you, watching over you and helping you.

This process will be an ongoing one in your life, and as you step into adept magic with these powers, the combined power of these spirits will flow through your efforts, strengthening you and making your path ahead clearer. This will happen even if you are not working with them for that reason: even if you are doing temple construction work, their power will still flow through you.

Over time, this will flip the effects of planetary influence on you. It will become more a positive force that assists you, rather than a tough teacher that batters you. You learn to flow with their power, and over time the influence of the spirits becomes stronger: they eventually become working contacts.

But in the early days, the relationship will be like your magical training: minimal help to ensure that you can do it for yourself, and that you are willing to take responsibility for yourself and your life.

### ***TASK***

Identify the areas of your life and work that need a Saturn-like discipline. Get the notes from your charts, and see what that influence is working on. From the information you get, think about the best practical way to make the required changes, where you can engage Saturn's influence through your own actions. When you get a tough path and are finding it really hard, sit quietly, remember the spirit on the platform, and quietly in your head ask for help.

If you find that you are an over disciplined person, then be aware of that, and be aware of when you are engaging to much Saturn power in your life: it is always about balance.

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## *Pluto*

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Now that Saturn is connected to you, it is time to return to the hall and meet the spirit of Pluto. Go through exactly the same routine, and ask if the planetary spirit of Pluto is willing to meet with you.

When you have finished, write down your notes and any observations, and create your sigil. Once you have done that, work with it as a key to trigger the connection between you and the spirit.

**Task:** Do the same chart tasks as you did for Saturn, just this time do it for Pluto, and look at the winnowing power of Pluto. See how it is potentially playing out in your life, or needs to be brought into your life.



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## *Summary*

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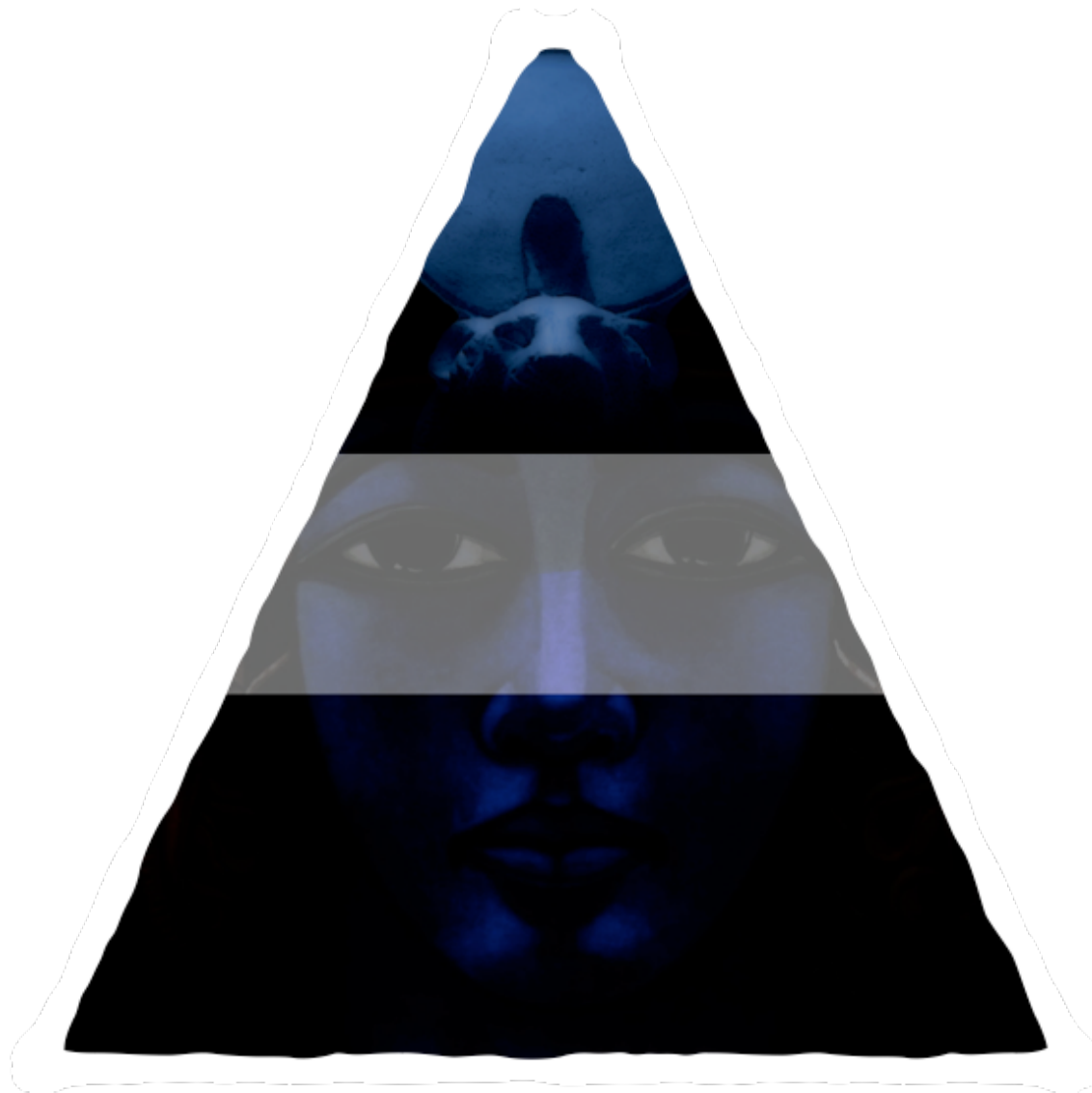
Work with the sigil in whatever way you are drawn to do, which does not necessarily have to be in a magical way. When you think about or actually engage with the dynamics of these two planets in your life, see the sigil in your mind or draw it out. Also work with recovering the feeling of the planetary spirits, feeling them around you, seeing them in your mind: all these things open that connection out in a very gentle way.

Take note of what happens in your life, what changes start to filter through, what signs you are given, and think about how best to work with them. Both these planetary influences are long-term in their effects, and their changes are deep and slow. But by engaging with the spirits, the process becomes more visible to you, which in turn helps to you spot it and engage it in your life

QVAREIA

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