



# SAGITTARIUS

## Take a Leap of Faith!

(Just Read the Fine Print First)

By Lark Bowerman

**“The beginning of knowledge is the discovery  
of something we do not understand.”**

— Jeanette Winterson

### **THE SHORTEST DAY—AND LONGEST NIGHT— OF THE YEAR WILL SOON BE HERE**

As I look out the window, snow is coming down in flurries. It's cold but I'm hoping Winter Man will spread his white cape across the landscape, enclosing us for a day or two, into inner worlds of fantasy and inspiration. At any rate, I think this is not the time of year for pessimism. Letting yourself get downhearted now is like having to reach up to touch bottom. No way! And have you noticed, by the way, how the usual routines have started getting a bit skewed? That's the Sun in Sag — can't abide a stuck routine...

As the wheel of the year turns, Scorpio has hopefully succeeded in burning away the dross in our deepest consciousness, confronting us with death, asking us to approach it with reverence and deeper respect for life. The way has been cleared for renewal. Everything in our physical world and in our spiritual world that dies leaves a place for something new to be born or to take place.

### **ENTER SAGITTARIUS, STAGE LEFT... The Story of the Arrow**

The Hunter stands poised. The moment has come. The prey, a young buck, stands tired, weak and vulnerable somewhere in a nearby thicket. But where exactly...? Kenge has been pursuing it for close to eight hours now...

The tribe was very hungry. The roots, berries and various plants they'd been gathering were good food, but not enough. The oldest and best hunters had gone out to follow the antelope herds. They'd followed them for four days without sleeping, catching short naps only seconds long while standing waiting for the herd to move. An animal had finally been selected — the buck that Kenge now had to find. It had been chosen for its inability to keep up as quickly with the herd. That made it a realistic target for a persistence hunt. Then, Kenge had been selected as the fastest runner of the tribe to outrun the antelope. An arrow had been shot. It hadn't hit the animal. From that distance that would have been extraordinary luck. Unbelievable. The antelope were not either stupid or slow. The herd sprang into motion, flying away in what appeared to be effortless motion over the grassland, clearing small thickets with easy, fluid grace. Kenge sprang into motion too and the hunt was on.

Now, about eight hours later, both man and animal were spent. Kenge's advantage in this semi-arid terrain was his human ability to carry water with him and his smooth, hairless skin that allowed him to cool off by sweating as he ran. The antelope had to use all fours for running and its fur made cooling down in the sun very difficult. He had to find shade. Now he was taking what may well be his final rest. Kenge judged that he must certainly not be far off.

In a half stupor of exhaustion himself, Kenge summoned his strength and began to

perform a very purposeful pantomime of the antelope's actions. He lived day to day in the same world as the antelope, knew their ways so intimately. His life and the life of his tribe could very well depend on that intimate relationship in this moment. He placed his mind into the mind of the antelope, focusing intently in his inner vision to "see" its every move. And there it was! Closer than he had suspected! He carefully reached down into his quiver for an arrow — an arrow that had been crafted with so many hours of skilled handiwork. It had taken a long time too, to gather and process the herbs that its tip had been dipped into, those herbs that Kenge hoped would soon send the antelope into its final sleep — an easy passing over into the world of spirit. Kenge moved slowly and quietly just a little closer around the next thicket, then raising his bow, his powerful arm pulled the string taut and then released the arrow. His aim was true! The shocked antelope suddenly staggered to its feet, only to quickly sink back with exhaustion. In a short while, its struggle was over.

Kenge approached very carefully and slowly. He had one more very important responsibility before returning to let the others know where the antelope's carcass lay. He poured out a little water onto the earth and said a prayer, thanking the spirit of the animal for its life and apologizing for killing it. This moment demanded his total, heartfelt respect and it was easy to give. He had felt the antelope's life and its strength. He'd matched it with his own. He'd felt the last tremendous shudder of its spirit leaving its body. In that moment he experienced clearly and knew himself, with all his life and breath, to be one with the antelope; knew that his spirit would one day leave his body in a tremendous shudder too.

The deed was done... Kenge had risked his life to pursue the antelope. Now he could return. He would sleep a long sleep. And then celebrate with his tribe.

**"What you risk reveals what you value."**

— Jeanette Winterson

### **THE SIGN OF SAGITTARIUS IS SYMBOLIZED BY THE ARROW, NOT BY THE HUNTER**

I've told you this story to illustrate how much preparation went into the actual use of that arrow that Kenge killed the Antelope with. It's just a fiction that I've made up; but it is based on the real life practice of the Persistence hunt as practiced in Africa from antiquity.

**It took such an expense of energy and so much carefulness of intention**, that when the arrow was finally shot it was almost anticlimactic. What that arrow represents to me is **the correct use of intention and focus to achieve something great**, in this case, survival with honor and respect for the balance life and death.

Not many of us are called upon in our culture to risk our lives directly for food. We're presented with different kinds of risks in our lives today. But, as one member of the First Nation Vancouver tribe pointed out in an interview with National Geographic, "The hunt is still with us." We're living in a time when it's easy to lose sight of the fact that we're still dependent on the balance of nature (however indirectly) for our survival. Every choice we make still reflects our relationship to the Earth — whether we pause to think about it or not.

**I think the biggest challenge that we have now is to keep our soul and our spiritual vision alive. That's what Sagittarius is all about.**

### **IN THE AFRICAN VILLAGE WHERE I GREW UP...**

I remember sitting down to have meals with black African folk and being amazed at the amounts of heavy food they could eat. **As much as they ate, though, they were always**

**trim and strong.** You see very few overweight people in Sub-Saharan Africa and in Congo, I don't remember ever seeing anyone who was obese. Their lifestyle asked that they use their bodies every day in some form of demanding exercise. And every night when the Moon was full they would dance. You could hear the drums across the valley as the celebration went on all night. Our existence as "White Folks" seemed to be so pale and milquetoast compared to theirs.

My missionary parents and their colleagues frequently called upon Africans to perform tasks that we weren't able to do — catch snakes or tarantulas that had wandered too close to the house, climb trees for fruit or honey, skin animals that they'd shot with a gun, or just painstaking menial tasks like sweeping the compound, washing clothes by hand and then ironing them with the antique coal iron, cooking and what not — tasks that the missionaries felt would take too much time from their all-important service to God. I couldn't help but feel, as the Sunday sermons droned on and on, that this had to be the most boring existence in the world. Hell somehow seemed at least **not boring** and I made up my mind that, once released from this prison called "Truth," I would **never** again live a boring life! I didn't know anything about astrology then, but if I did, I would have known as I approached my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and prepared to leave Africa for Canada, that my Progressed, Sun representing evolving identity, was moving into the 9<sup>th</sup> House which is related to Sagittarius. Can you guess what its traditional name is? **The House of Long Journeys Over Water!!**

**"One doesn't discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore  
for a very long time."**

— Andre Gide

So, off I went! I landed first in New York city, planning to take a smaller airplane up the coast a week later to Nova Scotia. My first day in New York city plunged me into massive culture shock. First of all, I had **NO IDEA** that there were so many **PEOPLE** in the world!!! It was completely beyond my grasp that you could not make eye contact with every stranger you passed in the street. I had lived most of my life in a village in the Ituri rainforest. And when it began to rain, I lay on my bed and cried as the rain fell, not on soft receptive earth, but on hard, unreceptive pavement. So this was the world that my pious parents had chosen to "give up" for the "trying" existence of living in Africa winning souls to God... I had jumped out of the frying pan into the fire and I knew it. Obviously I was in Hell now but there was no going back. I knew that it would take many years of living in a different way to undo the deep impressions that my parents' belief system had made on my mind. If I returned too soon, I would be imprisoned again and maybe never find my way out.

**If we value the pursuit of knowledge, we must be free to follow wherever that search  
may lead us. The free mind is not a barking dog, to be tethered on a ten-foot chain.**

— Adlai E. Stevenson Jr. (1900 - 1965)

**Little had I known as I was growing up in the 50's that one of the great  
anthropologists of our time, Colin Turnbull, was doing research among the Wambuti,  
the Forest People, only a short distance away from me.** Years later, his book, "The Forest  
People" was handed to me one day by someone I barely knew. I read it and returned it. My

perspective had changed in a beautiful way. Something had been explained for me about the people that I had grown up so near to in a way that I could finally begin to understand.

As I began to write this newsletter, I tried to think of Sagittarians who might be good examples of the best traits of the sign as cultural bridges. Colin Turnbull came to mind. "Must have been a Sagittarian, I thought." A google search brought up the day and place he was born and even though I couldn't find a time, sure enough, a chart for zero hours that day shows a Sun sign at one degree, twenty-six minutes Sagittarius! I watched a video clip of Turnbull and his African-American lover of twenty-nine years, Dr. Joseph Towles. They were discussing a film based on Turnbull's book, "The Mountain People." Turnbull was describing how he saw himself pictured in the movie as "...a not very nice but not very nasty kind of bumbling around old anthropologist sort of doing things by mistake more than anything else. Not far from the truth but my feeling was, 'God, if only I was only half as nice as that character on the stage..."

...whenever anyone reads an ethnography, I **wish** we could know more about the personal beliefs and aspirations of the anthropologist because **hopefully** most of us are still human beings as well as anthropologists. I've got a feeling that some of my colleagues are not. You know that they are so wrapped up in anthropology as a science that they go off into the field like calculating machines. And they come back like calculating machines only with new programs sort of programmed into them...'

Gary Larsen captured this in one of his cartoon scenes: In a hut are some Africans with t.v. and other modern gadgets. In the distance you can see white men with pith helmets, notebooks etc. One African says to the others, "Quick, hide the t.v.! Anthropologists are coming."

**"You can know the name of a bird in all the languages of the world, but when you're finished, you'll know absolutely nothing whatever about the bird. So let's look at the bird and see what it's doing — that's what counts. I learned very early the difference between knowing the name of something and knowing something.**

— Richard Feynman (1918 - 1988)

In our own ways, it seemed that Colin Turnbull and I had both experienced the down side of the Sagittarian archetype — I with the missionaries and he with anthropologists. You want to say to people like this, "Just because you have a stone head, don't take everything for granite."

**"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes."**

— Marcel Proust (1871 - 1922)

But turning from the shadow side of Sagittarius toward the light, what do we see? Well, in Turnbull, a man who, however he may have struggled with his personal demons, had the courage to search for meaning outside the stultifying confines of his own culture. He's been criticized for his romanticizing of the Congo Wambutu and at the same time his insensitivity toward the Ek, of Uganda, the Mountain People. There's probably some truth to this but, that aside, he was a man who forged tremendous bridges of understanding between Africa and the West. I think what can be said of his shortcomings, or anyone else's who makes this kind of effort, is this:

**“If you’re never scared or embarrassed or hurt, it means you never take any chances.”**

— Julie Sorel

In his book, “In the Arms of Africa; The Life of Colin M. Turnbull,” Richard Grinker has this to say about him: “Through Kenge, Colin realized a total and consuming passion for both the forest and the Pygmies who lived there, and he would remember the night he saw Kenge dance in the moonlight as a revelation. For it was on that night, amidst the music and the effervescence, **in a momentary vision and a brief conversation, that he became convinced of the human capacity for love and for goodness.**”

One more quote from Grinker: “For Colin, that early mother-child bond among the Mbuti was the best model for future relationships with family, friends, and lovers; only when that bond was absent did children and parents find themselves in conflict, with both sides feeling rejected and worthless. Then, in the absence of that bond and when it was already too late, love had to be demanded; then love became the burden Colin knew so well. “What would we lose,” he once asked, “if we gave our children something different, something of what the Mbuti have to teach us about motherhood?”

**It’s been pointed out that in gatherer-hunter tribes,  
although starvation is not unknown, children are never forced to work  
and the work day is only about four hours long.**

After his lover, Joseph Towles’ death from aids, Colin gave away most of what he owned, took the name, Lobsong Ridgol, and until the end of his life (he too died of aids) was tutored by the eldest brother of the Dalai Lama in the monastery where he chose to live. I don’t know what you think, but I think that took a pretty open mind for someone who grew up in the British Isles. He was born in Harrow, England on November 23, 1924 and died on July 28, 1994. One great Sagittarian, if you ask me.

**“Risk! Risk anything! Care no more for the opinions of others, for those voices. Do the hardest thing on earth for you. Act for yourself. Face the truth.”**

— Katherine Mansfield (1888 - 1923)

## **SANGUINE SAGITTARIUS**

It’s true that Sagittarius is a naturally very “up” kind of “medicine.” The focus when people usually think of this sign is that straightforward honesty and high enthusiasm so characteristic of the people born at this time of the year. That emphasizes the feeling of the arrow in flight. The zing of forward motion and leaving the past behind with a tremendous **PUSH!** This is true enough and Helen Keller put it very aptly when she said this:

**“No pessimist ever discovered the secret of the stars or sailed an uncharted land, or opened a new doorway for the human spirit.”**

— Helen Keller (1880 - 1968)

Studies have shown that people who think too much about the real problems involved in starting new projects are much less likely to ever start the project. It's that natural faith in the goodness of life that Sagittarius relies on for its great leaps of faith. And what we truly think and feel is what will end up happening in some form, most likely; but counting the cost of the voyage is also important. **The moment of pulling back on that string, when the arrow is held in tension against the drawn bow and the mind of the hunter is intent on the goal, isn't too be overlooked.** It's said that the Zen archer, when missing the target, doesn't go to look for the arrow right away, but sits down in meditation first. The archer turns inward to understand where the mistake was first made. Not taking enough time to look first or to look inward when the target has been missed are the points Sagittarius is more likely to miss than not taking the risk at all (although, there are Sagittarians who systematically refuse to take any leaps, becoming the most crotchety old folks you never want to mee, stuck in the biggest rut.)

**"Take calculated risks. That is quite different from being rash."**

— George S. Patton

—ALSO—

**"The policy of being too cautious is the greatest risk of all."**

— Jawaharlal Nehru (1889 - 1964)

So off Sagittarians go into the wild blue yonder. Wish them luck. Luggage gets lost, cab drivers can take you in circles, camels bite, flights are delayed or cancelled, foreign cultures turn out to be stranger than you ever could imagine, running out of money and energy in a place where you can't even speak the language can be fatal, so can diseases you have no immunity for; but life goes on and the perspectives you gain from changing your perspective open moments of truth otherwise unavailable. What is accomplished?

**The spirit is refreshed. Life is given new meaning.**

**ALL OF THE OTHER ZODIAC SIGNS HAVE A SPECIFIC GOAL OF SOME KIND, SOME END POINT THEY WANT TO ARRIVE AT. WHAT IS IT FOR SAGITTARIUS?**

Sagittarius wants to **NEVER ARRIVE!** It wants to stay on the journey forever. It wants life to be forever new and fresh. And it should do whatever it can to make sure that that happens. Look at Colin Turnbull. Even close to his death he was changing his name and taking on a new spiritual perspective. Sag needs to learn to say, "I'm not too old to do that," and go ahead and do it. And we can all learn something from that, can we not?

**There is a theory which states that if anybody discovers exactly what the Universe is for and why it is here, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable. There is another theory which states that this has already happened.**

— Douglas Adams (1952 - 2001)



## ***Lucky Winds***

*Lucky winds are blowing.  
You can't tell which way they'll go.  
They could bring you sunny skies,  
or very heavy snow.*

*Luck is a chameleon.  
Changing color every day —  
Could creep by when you're at work  
or on your holiday.*

*Leopard-Luck is leaping now!  
Are you aware that you're its prey!  
It can ambush you through bliss —  
or through a pain-filled day.*

***Where the wind blows,  
How the color glows,  
When the weather snows,  
Which way the river flows,  
Every changing scene is for you.***

*The kaleidoscope of Luck  
Adjusts to every turn you make.  
All you need is eyes to see  
each awesome, newborn shape.*

*Luck is never known to wait  
But with some practice you can see  
Those kinky, slow chameleons  
in every single tree.*

***Where the wind blows,  
How the color glows,  
When the weather snows,  
Which way the river flows,  
Every changing scene is for you.  
Every ever changing scene is for you.***

— Lark Bowerman



## IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW THIS

Forget about those one-size-fits-all horoscopes. Your unique chart is constructed from your personal birth data: **Exact time, date and place of birth.**

In the method of Evolutionary astrology that I use, the **Sun** sign represents our basic *sense of Identity*. The **Moon** sign represents our *inner, emotional nature* and the **Ascendant**, or **Rising** sign tells about our *personal style and how we interface with the world*. Sun, Moon and Ascendant are called the Primal Triad and are the foundation for understanding **your personal themes**. I consider the chart as a **WHOLE**. I also very carefully study the way the symbols are arranged in order to make **your personal life themes** clear.

You can find more information about Evolutionary astrology on my web site or email me and I'll happily answer your questions.

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### SOME OTHER WELL-KNOWN SAGITTARIUS SUN SIGNS

George Armstrong Custer  
(Sun/Moon/Asc.)

Tara Sutphen (Sun/Moon)

Brad Pitt (Sun/Asc.)

Frank Zappa (Sun/Asc.)

Eve Curie (Sun/Moon)

Jimi Hendrix (Sun/Moon)

(Sun/Asc.)

Caroline Kennedy

(Sun/Asc.)

Ludwig Van Beethoven

(Sun/Moon)

Caroline Myss (Sun/Asc.)

Keith Richards (Sun)

Edith Piaf (Sun)



\*Many of the astrological archetypes in this newsletter are drawn from the book, *The Inner Sky* by Steven Forrest or from *Skymates I*, by Jodie Forrest and Steven Forrest. These books come highly recommended by me as well as many others. They are also available from Amazon or from [www.sevenpawspress.com](http://www.sevenpawspress.com).

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