

Welcome to the second issue of

The Return

Newsletter for Aquarius Rising Astrological Consulting
www.aquariusastrological.com

*Courage is not the absence of fear,
but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.*
– Ambrose Redmoon



* Photograph by David Gummer, © 2004 Royal Alberta Museum

Aries
♈
March 21 – April 20, 2007

Fight the Inner Fight First

By Lark Bowerman

Positive Archetypes for Aries:

The... Spiritual Warrior; Pioneer; Daredevil; Survivor; Adventurer; Champion/Defender/ Rescuer/Protector; Heroine/Hero

Negative archetypes for Aries:

The... Warmonger; Mercenary Soldier; Bully; Coward; Reckless Fool; Bitch/Brawler; Thug; Deserter/Traitor

High on a rocky slope a small group of mountain sheep suddenly becomes aware that they've been cornered by a cougar. A thousand foot precipice gapes on two sides, a sheer rock cliff blocks their retreat. The cougar crouches in their only escape route, ready to pounce. Horns lowered, the largest ram turns and charges only a split second before the puma leaps. The two animals collide. The force of the ram's horns break the mountain lion's jaw, hurling the cat into the gorge. The Ram struggles to regain its footing on the icy slope, coming to a halt just one foot from the canyon edge. For the moment, the mountain sheep are safe.

Few animals are so well adapted to extremes of elevation and temperature as the bighorn sheep. Their agility and swiftness are almost unrivalled. Their eyesight is so acute that they can detect slight movement from as far as a kilometer away. All of these characteristics, as well as the inaccessible terrain where they live to avoid predators, are what has made them one of the most sought after prizes of the trophy hunter.

But those massive horns of the male sheep are not so often used in defense as they are in butting contests during the mating season. Two males will face one another, rearing up on their back feet, then falling forward onto all fours, they charge each other at speeds anywhere from 20 to 70 miles per hour. The resounding crack of their horns colliding can be heard a mile away. This can go on for up to twenty hours or more. Because of the rams' strong heads with double layers of bone to protect the brain they can test each other's strength this way. The winner will afterward follow the nearest ewe to mate.

A pregnant ewe will seek out a high, isolated area to give birth, usually to a single lamb who will begin practice jumps from her back when only about an hour old! After the mating, during the winter months, the whole flock will travel together under the leadership of a mature ewe.

Is it any wonder that these magnificent animals serve as the astrological symbol for the warrior and the lesson of courage? And yet, do you find it interesting, as I do, that this animal is prey, not predator?

Exit: The Trophy Hunter

Enter: The Spiritual Warrior. According to one of China's most profound philosophers, Lao Tse,

The best soldier is not soldierly.

The best fighter is not ferocious.

The best conqueror does not take part in war.

This philosophy is clearly demonstrated by the legendary Shaolin monk-soldiers of China. Weapons literally shatter on the bodies of these Kung Fu masters! How do these men, who spend their lives in quiet seclusion, who meditate a good portion of their day along with their martial training and subsist on a vegetarian diet, have such unfathomable power? And what is their goal in acquiring such power? To "become the Buddha."

In our Western tradition, the Knights of King Arthur's Roundtable went out in search of the Holy Grail, sacred elixir of spiritual enlightenment. During the Medieval period in Europe, religious visionaries were occasionally given titular command of the army, as happened in the case of the heroine, Joan of Arc, who rallied French troops against the invading Britons; but we also know that Joan, after being captured by the British and sentenced in a mock trial, was burned at the stake as a supposed witch. Truth is, most historical and present day wars (think "Iraq") are clear expressions of the absolute worst traits in human beings – sagas of exploitation, greed, vengeance, rape and torture – all lower expressions of the archetype of the warrior. Obviously, this is not the easiest energy to handle! But war is only one arena for learning the lesson of courage...

Monday morning dawns rainy and cold. As you reach over to turn off the alarm, you feel as though a half pound of cold lead is lodged in the pit of your stomach. Work! Your boss! You know that if you don't ask for a raise sometime soon, your self esteem will be totally going down the tubes.

You wake up, dress. Gulp down a few mouthfuls of breakfast and head for the door. Arriving at work, you manage to make an appointment to talk with the "tyrant." Later that day, knees shaking, you manage to sit down calmly in front of her desk. One part of you feels like screaming, "YOU BITCH" and launching into a tirade on all of the indignities inflicted on you, but you contain yourself. In a well-planned speech you first acknowledge one of her best points. (You really had to work on that.) Then you briefly but clearly mention the problem of being grossly underpaid and overworked in your most casual voice, while your pulse races to an absurd tempo and your palms turn sweaty. You conclude with a simple, but honest

thank you for an almost insignificant concession that has already been made and then rest your case.

Your boss has been stopped in her tracks. That someone even had the courage to speak up is a frontal assault on her denial and she knows it. That the problem has been stated clearly and yet without anger or insult leaves her with no more excuses.

She keeps her composure, promising to consider your request. You both rise and as your turn to leave, the cloud of depression that has haunted you for months has lifted. You walk down the street, and for the first time this spring, you notice the color of the daffodils and the lightness in your step matches the bounding gush of pure happiness and vitality that wells up from the core of your being.

Does your boss's decision matter one way or the other any more? No, not ultimately. "Hey!" you think, "Now that I've got my courage up, I might just go ahead and start my own business!" What mattered the most is that you were true to yourself. You refused to allow yourself to be victimized any longer by your own fears or rage. You have fought the fight of the spiritual warrior. Your soul is free! The Holy Grail is not some fantasy out of a dusty Medieval legend. You've claimed it through your own experience. You've learned the lesson of Aries.

If you were born with your Sun sign (ego/identity) or Moon sign (inner emotional nature) or Ascendant/Rising sign (outer personality) in Aries, or with Mars prominent in your natal chart, you are here to learn the lesson of courage in a very deep and profound way. (For an explanation of the Sun, Moon and Ascendant, listen to my sound recording at www.aquariusastrological.com.)

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– Lao Tse

* The bighorn sheep is found throughout the western mountainous region of North America from northern Alberta and British Columbia south to northern Mexico. Mature males stand about one meter high at the shoulder and weigh up to 150 kg. Both sexes have horns; those of the male, such as the animal in this photograph, are massive and curled, while those of the female are small, slender, slightly curved spikes. Annual cycles in the growth of the horns produce rings that can be used to tell the animal's age.

**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 available from Amazon or from www.sevenpawspress.com

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