

DIGGING FOR TREASURE

A journey through the astrological
symbolism of the planets



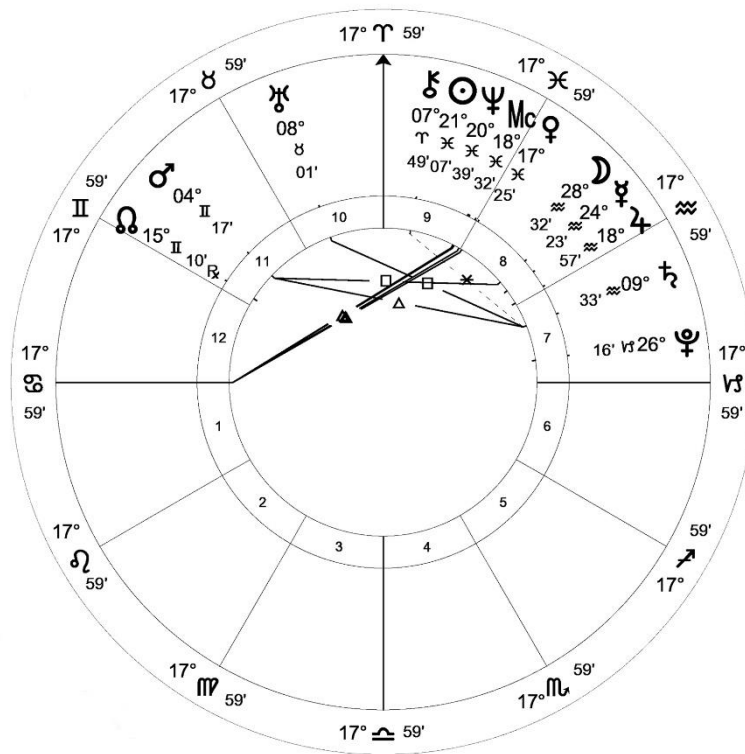
Simone Riley

Introduction

The following story was originally conceived many moons ago when I was first studying astrology. I hope it will be appealing not just to students of astrology, but also to anyone interested in the deeper meanings inherent in the language of symbolism.

I view astrology very much as a 'symbolic language', and there are many different layers and combinations of symbols that come into play within this vast subject area.

An astrological birth chart shows the 12 zodiac signs around the edge of the circle (known as the ecliptic, where these constellations are seen in the sky). The chart is also divided into 12 sections, known as 'houses'. Within these signs and houses the positions of the planets at the time of birth are shown. Certain spatial relationships between the planets, known as 'aspects' are yet another layer of symbolic information to work with.



The planets represent different facets of the personality, the 'drives' and 'energies' at play. The zodiac signs represent the way in which these energies will be expressed, and the 'houses' represent the *area of life* in which they are most likely to manifest.

In 'Digging for Treasure', an astrological fairy tale of sorts, I have concentrated specifically on the symbolism of the planets. It is not intended to be a comprehensive guide – more of a 'flavour' of the astrological characteristics and meanings of each, which become so relevant when applied to human psychology and experience.

Digging for Treasure – by Simone Riley

Finlo Fireglow was born in the sublunary realm known as Earth, and had little experience of other realms. From a very young age he was obsessed with the Moon. Every night before going to bed he would look up at the starry skies in search of her beautiful face. Every night he would have conversations with the Moon, treating her as a friend – and in return, she gave him amazing dreams. This is the story of one particular dream - a dream which Finlo Fireglow would carry with him for the rest of his life.

It began at the site of an archaeological dig. Finlo had been sent there to help with excavation work. The main part of the area being excavated was situated in a labyrinth of underground caves, and was aptly referred to as 'The Underworld'. It was a dark place – with only a small amount of light provided by lanterns – resulting in huge menacing looking shadows being cast on the cave walls.

The work was hard, uncomfortable, and required a great deal of resilience. Each person had their own particular area of ground to cover. Intense, almost obsessive concentration was required so as not to miss any potential finds. All sorts of things were dug up from the depths of the earth – debris from past lives, hidden fears, secret desires – but also things that were magical things, full of mystery.

Finlo had been digging for many days. First, he unearthed a petrified snake's skin, followed by a little pouch containing sunflower seeds - and then he unearthed an object so mysterious that he decided it needed further investigation. It was an old box, containing a scroll of sorts, which depicted an elaborate circular diagram, full of strange symbols. Finlo asked if anyone knew who might be able to reveal the meaning of this magical looking document, and he was told to take it to the High Priestess, who was renowned for her words of wisdom.

The High Priestess lived in a house high on a hill, in a place where the land meets the sea, a few miles away in a North-Westerly direction. Finlo set off to find her, making his way up from the Underworld, and out into the Over-world.

Before long, he found that he was walking through a beautiful forest. The trees were alive with magic. He felt a strange sense of one-ness with this new environment. As he walked, he became lighter with each step, as if the ground was disintegrating from beneath his feet. He became so light that he began to float. Wood nymphs danced along beside him, gentle caressing him, enticing him into the Mystery, where all things merge. Finlo was happy in this other-worldly place, so much so that he forgot the purpose of his journey. A sea of mist had entered the forest, creeping silently through the trees, distorting shapes and shadows, making edges undefined, enveloping Finlo and all around him. He had lost his sense of vision and direction, and felt lost and afraid as he waded through the silent confusion of what he could no longer see. Finlo was in danger of drowning unless he could escape from

the sea of mist. He thought he could see a doorway floating towards him and flung himself towards it. The illusion solidified, turning to stone, and he was knocked unconscious.

When he awoke, Finlo found himself lying in the middle of an ancient stone circle. He looked in awe at the huge stones surrounding him – there were twelve altogether. He tilted his head up towards the Above-world, and looked in wonder at the infinite number of stars; little glowing worlds, light years away. He thought about the infinite working and patterns of the Universe; how the planets revolve around the Sun, just as every tiny atom revolves around its own nucleus within its own molecular universe. As above, so below – the patterns large and small, reflecting one another – each little cosmos joining to form a larger version of itself, all part of a repeating pattern, all part of creating the whole. Finlo felt inspired and excited. He was beginning to understand. He stood up, and began walking, anti-clockwise, around the stones. As he did so, the stars all fled, and the whole sky was filled with a blinding white light. Lightning struck each stone in turn, randomly bouncing off onto other stones, creating squares and triangles of iridescent light within the circle. The final flash of lightning struck Finlo Fireglow. The shock rendered him unconscious once more.

He awoke sometime later, to find himself lying on soft green grass in a wild garden, full of the most exotic herbs and flowers imaginable. Finlo heard a gentle rustling sound, and from underneath a willow tree emerged a strong and gentle unicorn, with long soft lashes covering big brown eyes. “I used to be an ugly beast” said the unicorn, “but I learnt the art of healing, and by healing people I have learnt to heal myself too”. The unicorn held his head high, and his golden unicorn horn glinted proudly in the sunlight. He shook his silver mane, and as he did so a silver key fell from his ear. He told Finlo to take the key, then kissed him gently and bade him farewell. Finlo rested just a little longer, before making his way out of the garden, wondering which way to go next. He decided to follow his heart.

After a while, he saw a big gateway coming into view. As he approached, he could see that it had huge pillars on either side, one black and one white, with an old man sitting at the foot of each. Both were many thousands of years old, and consequently very wise.

The first explained that before Finlo continued he must remember that digging for treasure involves patience and hard work; to remember the darkness and the shadows of the underworld; to remember the sea of mist that had nearly drowned him; to remember the lightning that had struck him down. Through challenges we grow stronger; with strength we can build; through structure we can transform chaos into order, and dreams into reality. He gave Finlo an old bone, to remind him of his mortality. He also gave him a small piece of lead; “You will learn, with time and practice, how to turn this lead into gold”, he told Finlo.

Then the other wise man spoke. He told Finlo to remember the excitement of discovering the mysterious scroll; to remember the magic he felt in the enchanted forest; to remember the wonder of the universe – and above all, to remember his search. Through life we experience; through experience we learn; through learning we understand; through

understanding we broaden our vision. He gave Finlo an old tin box, containing a handful of sand; "Did you know", he said, "There are more stars in the sky than grains of sand on the earth. Travel to far away shores, expand your horizons, and always be aware of the bigger picture".

Finlo put the bone and the lead in the tin box with the sand, thanked the wise men for their gifts, and continued on his way.

Eventually he came to the place where the land meets the sea. High on a hill was a huge rambling house, and his heart told him that this was the dwelling place of the High Priestess. The door was open. The atmosphere was cold and musty, and there was no sign of the High Priestess. Finlo stood in the hallway, feeling brave, but nevertheless alone. He made his way further into the somewhat formidable house to find himself in a long corridor which seemed to disappear round a dark corner. There were three rooms in view, and he entered each in turn.

In the first room was a huge raging fire in the middle of the floor. The walls and ceiling were adorned with battle-scarred animal skins. Finlo stood staring into the wild flames of the fire and he felt a flame ignite within his own soul. He felt energized - full of passion and purpose. He remembered the darkness and the shadows of the underworld, and knew that he had nothing to fear.

The second room was full of beautiful paintings and ornate objects. Colours and shapes and soothing music filled the air. Finlo felt an immediate sense of peace, as he was reminded of the sea of mist and the dancing wood nymphs. His heart felt as though it were brimming over with love. There was so much of it that he knew he could afford to give it freely to others, and still have enough for himself.

The third room was full of books – many, many books – and written in these books were all the things that had ever been inside Finlo's head. He thought back to the infinite workings of the universe and the electric storm, and wondered at the workings of his own mind. He realised that his mind was responsible for the creation of his own universe, and that within it, as well as outside of it, were an infinite number of possibilities.

Finlo then ventured further down the corridor, to the corner where it disappeared. He was confronted with a door of gold and silver most elaborate in style. It was locked. He remembered the Unicorn Key and knew that it was time to use it. He unlocked the door and went inside. The room was like the sun and moon rolled into one. The edges were as black as night, but in the centre was a golden throne, surrounded by a disc of golden light. Beside it, water trickled over crystal encrusted rocks into a silver pool.

Finlo's heart told him that he had come to the end of his search. He sat down on the golden throne, and as he did so, the surface of the silver pool became a vast mirror. Finlo looked at his reflection in it, and looking back at him was the High Priestess. He showed the High

Priestess the mysterious scroll that he had unearthed at the beginning of his journey, and asked her if she could explain it. The High Priestess replied, "It is the blueprint of your destiny; it is the seed of the flower that you are meant to become; it is your own personal story – and you must learn how to read and understand that story". Finlo asked her what he should do next, and the High Priestess told him, "Search for your own answers, be the person you are destined to be, and shine your light for all to see – and in doing so, you will encourage others to do the same".

And at that moment, Finlo awoke from his dream.

THE END

Explanation of Symbolism

‘Finlo Fireglow was born in the sublunary realm known as Earth, and had little experience of other realms. From a very young age he was obsessed with the Moon. Every night before going to bed he would look up at the starry skies in search of her beautiful face. Every night he would have conversations with the Moon, treating her as a friend – and in return, she gave him amazing dreams. This is the story of one particular dream - a dream which Finlo Fireglow would carry with him for the rest of his life’.

Finlo is a Manx name with connections to an early pagan Celtic Sun god, and is therefore associated with the Sun. In astrology, the Sun represents our ego, our sense of self, our self-expression. The psychologist Carl Jung talks of the process of ‘individuation’ – of becoming ‘ourselves’ by understanding and integrating all the different parts of the psyche. The astrological birth chart is a tool to help us achieve this, and the Sun in our chart could be described as a symbol of our own personal radiance, seen when we are expressing ourselves fully as individuals.

The Sun also expresses the more conscious side of the personality, whereas the Moon reflects the more subconscious, instinctive, intuitive, inner nature. Finlo’s ‘conversations’ with the Moon indicate that he already feels a connection with the instinctive, intuitive part of himself, and is therefore more open to the language of symbolism, of dreams, and also to an understanding that there are other less visible realms within our earthly existence, that play a part in shaping our behaviours and experiences. The invisible realms of astrology, psychology and spirituality, all come into the picture when looking at an astrological birth chart. The story of Finlo’s dream is about the journey of becoming acquainted with the symbolism of the planets used in astrological interpretation. Finlo will ‘carry the dream with him for the rest of his life’ because discovering ourselves through our birth charts, and the influences of ongoing planetary cycles, provides a never-ending project for those who are interested in participating.

It began at the site of an archaeological dig. Finlo had been sent there to help with excavation work. The main part of the area being excavated was situated in a labyrinth of underground caves, and was aptly referred to as ‘The Underworld’. It was a dark place – with only a small amount of light provided by lanterns – resulting in huge menacing looking shadows being cast on the cave walls.

Excavation work can be likened to searching beneath the surface – digging deeper. The ‘Underworld’ is associated with the planet Pluto (or in Greek Mythology the story of Hades and Persephone). It is a place of metaphorical death and rebirth – a place of transformation. The shadows cast on the cave walls are a nod to ‘Plato’s allegory of the cave’, in which shadows were perceived as being the actual reality – a reminder that what we think we know or see, isn’t always the truth – and when we can only see the shadows, it

may not be the whole picture – there is always more than meets the eye. In Jungian psychology, the ‘shadow’ refers to parts of our psyche that may be hidden from us - kept in the dark. This can represent parts of the personality that we are not familiar with, or not comfortable with, or sometimes even frightened to acknowledge. The energy of the planet Pluto is concerned with plumbing the psychological depths, seeing past the superficial, and getting to the bottom of things – unearthing the truth.

The work was hard, uncomfortable, and required a great deal of resilience. Each person had their own particular area of ground to cover. Intense, almost obsessive concentration was required so as not to miss any potential finds. All sorts of things were dug up from the depths of the earth – debris from past lives, hidden fears, secret desires – but also things that were magical things, full of mystery.

Pluto’s energy is powerful, determined, resilient, and can also be intense, obsessive and relentless. Because of its connection with the themes of death, rebirth and transformation, there is naturally a connection with life cycles and reincarnation (past lives). Pluto is also connected with the occult (which simply means ‘hidden’), with sexuality, and with subjects that may be considered ‘taboo’ (secret desires).

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A snake’s skin is a universal symbol of transformation – the shedding of an old skin for a new one. The pouch of seeds is a symbol of the promise or opportunity for growth, and ‘Sun’ flower seeds relate to Finlo’s name, and in astrological terms, to growing into the fullest expression of his own Sun. The scroll, with circular diagram and strange symbols, is Finlo’s astrological birth chart.

In this part of the story, Finlo has spent time and effort digging below the surface, in a dark hidden place full of shadows, known as the underworld (beginning to explore his own psychological depths). Here, he has found something which will set him off on a journey of further discovery and transformation - his astrological birth chart – a way of understanding and integrating all the different and complex elements that form his character, and contribute to his way of behaving, perceiving and experiencing.

The High Priestess lived in a house high on a hill, in a place where the land meets the sea, a few miles away in a North-Westerly direction. Finlo set off to find her, making his way up from the Underworld, and out into the Over-world.

A hill represents an elevated situation, being nearer to the heavens (a raising of consciousness). The direction north is traditionally associated with the element of earth (land), and the direction west with water (sea). Earth represents our physical existence. Water has associations with the Moon, and in turn, the Moon has a symbolic connection to our intuition (or 'inner-tutor'). Finlo must go to a place where he can deepen his relationship with this part of himself.

Before long, he found that he was walking through a beautiful forest. The trees were alive with magic. He felt a strange sense of one-ness with this new environment. As he walked, he became lighter with each step, as if the ground was disintegrating from beneath his feet. He became so light that he began to float.

Wood nymphs danced along beside him, gentle caressing him, enticing him into the Mystery, where all things merge. Finlo was happy in this other-worldly place, so much so that he forgot the purpose of his journey.

Before long, a sea of mist entered the forest, creeping silently through the trees, distorting shapes and shadows, making edges undefined, enveloping Finlo and all around him. He had lost his sense of vision and direction, and felt lost and afraid as he waded through the silent confusion of what he could no longer see. Finlo was in danger of drowning unless he could escape from the sea of mist. He thought he could see a doorway floating towards him and flung himself towards it. The illusion solidified, turning to stone, and he was knocked unconscious.

This represents the ethereal, spiritual, other-worldly qualities of the planet Neptune. The influence of Neptune manifests in situations in which we may experience feelings of 'losing ourselves' in something. This could relate to the euphoric state of being 'in love', a mystical transcendental experience of some sort, taking mind-altering drugs, being 'in the zone' when involved in an artistic or creative activity, or just simply feeling 'on a high'. In all of these examples there is a loss of the 'self' in some way – a sense of something magical happening, a feeling of merging with something greater – being in a place where 'normal reality' is suspended for a while.

The planetary influence of Neptune can have both positive and negative connotations in the astrological birth-chart. It can, for example, denote great perception, sensitivity and empathy, and perhaps a leaning towards spiritual, artistic or charitable endeavours – or it can presage an urge to escape from reality, or seeing the world through rose-tinted spectacles, perhaps resulting in over-idealism, delusion, deception, and/or a loss of personal identity or boundaries.

Neptune is associated with the 'spiritual' realm (whatever we may choose to call it). If we believe in such things, we might describe this as being something greater than ourselves, which our individual 'souls' are all part of and connected to, that transcends our physical existence. However, we have been born into physical bodies, with our own unique

identities, and therefore boundaries and a sense of individuality are a necessary, natural and important part of our earthly existence and experience.

In this passage of the story, Finlo loses himself (or his 'ego') in a mystical reverie, where he senses the existence of something more magical and spiritual than the earthly realm. He feels 'at one' with (part of – not separate from) this experience. It gives him a glimpse of what the connection with spirit (deity, universal energy, unconditional love, higher mind) can offer – but then he is shown the other side of Neptune. The sea of mist (the sea being ruled by the deity Neptune in mythology), overwhelms and engulfs Finlo, resulting in him losing all sense of reality, which is both confusing and frightening, just as it is for any of us if we become 'lost' or lose our sense of who we are.

When he awoke, Finlo found himself lying in the middle of an ancient stone circle. He looked in awe at the huge stones surrounding him – there were twelve altogether. He tilted his head up towards the Above-world, and looked in wonder at the infinite number of stars; little glowing worlds, light years away. He thought about the infinite working and patterns of the Universe; how the planets revolve around the Sun, just as every tiny atom revolves around its own nucleus within its own molecular universe. As above, so below – the patterns large and small, reflecting one another – each little cosmos joining to form a larger version of itself, all part of a repeating pattern, all part of creating the whole.

Finlo felt inspired and excited. He was beginning to understand. He stood up, and began walking, anti-clockwise, around the stones. As he did so, the stars all fled, and the whole sky was filled with a blinding white light. Lightning struck each stone in turn, randomly bouncing off onto other stones, creating squares and triangles of iridescent light within the circle. The final flash of lightning struck Finlo Fireglow. The shock rendered him unconscious once more.

The stone circle is suggestive of the astrological birth chart; the twelve stones representing the twelve zodiac signs. The planet with a specific symbolic connection to the science of Astrology, is Uranus (Father of the Sky/Heavens in Greek mythology). Astrology, of course, is all about the starry heavens, and very much about planetary cycles and the 'patterns' created by planets as they travel round the ecliptic wheel of the zodiac. The 'squares and triangles of iridescent light' relate to the shapes of some of the planetary relationships (aspects), that feature on an astrological chart. In the world of esoteric study, the circle is frequently used as a symbol of Spirit. The square, a symbol of Earth, but also the four astrological elements (air, earth, fire and water). The triangle, the Trinity - Mind, Body and Spirit, but also representative of the three 'triplicities' or 'qualities' of the zodiac signs (cardinal, mutable and fixed). There is also the implication here of a connection with 'sacred geometry' – the mathematics behind the physical and energetic patterns that form the structure of the universe and everything in it.

Uranus is associated with inspiration, innovation, discovery, new ideas, and all that is progressive. Its influence invites us to think outside of the box and to challenge conventional norms. It can manifest as one of those 'lightbulb moments' of inspired mental clarity, or it can appear as a shocking 'bolt out of the blue' that can turn our perceptions upside-down. The energy of Uranus is that of the maverick, rebel, genius. It likes to shake things up, in order to make us look at things in new ways. The influence of this planet may offer potential excitement and positive change, or unexpected disruption and chaos, depending on the surrounding circumstances and the way in which this energy is managed.

Finlo walks in an anti-clockwise direction around the stones. This is in keeping with the direction/order the zodiac signs appear on an astrological chart, but contradictory to the usual direction we use when measuring a period of time. Being contrary, or going against the grain, is another characteristic of the planet Uranus.

In this passage of the story, Finlo has started looking at the universe from a new, more enquiring and objective perspective. He is given an insight into the huge scope of exciting knowledge that is being offered through contemplating the starry heavens – but true to the nature of Uranus, there is a sudden shocking disruptive chaotic lightning storm, resulting in a moment of 'enlightenment', followed by a return to 'unconsciousness'. We all experience times when life can seem erratic, unpredictable, and/or out of our control. It is often said that under the influence of Uranus, we should 'expect the unexpected'.

Pluto, Neptune and Uranus, are known as the 'outer' or 'transpersonal' planets. They are the furthest away from us in the solar system, and the slowest moving in terms of their respective transits through the astrological signs. They are referred to as 'transpersonal' because their influence in any given zodiac sign lasts a longer period of time than the planets nearer to us, and this influence is sometimes more apparent when looking at whole generations of people rather than the individual. Although these planets will have a bearing on the individual birth chart, they also appear to reflect 'collective' events in the outside world, and that is why they have been depicted in the story as external environments (the underground caves, the enchanted forest, and the stone circle under the starry skies).

He awoke sometime later, to find himself lying on soft green grass in a wild garden, full of the most exotic herbs and flowers imaginable. Finlo heard a gentle rustling sound, and from underneath a willow tree emerged a strong and gentle unicorn, with long soft lashes covering big brown eyes. "I used to be an ugly beast" said the unicorn, "but I learnt the art of healing, and by healing people I have learnt to heal myself too". The unicorn held his head high, and his golden unicorn horn glinted proudly in the sunlight. He shook his silver mane, and as he did so a silver key fell from his ear. He told Finlo to take the key, then kissed him gently and bade him farewell. Finlo rested just a little longer, before making his way out of the garden, wondering which way to go next. He decided to follow his heart.

The wild garden represents a place of healing. Throughout history, plants (including herbs and flowers) have been used for medicinal purposes. The Willow tree has a connection to healing as its bark contains analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties, used as a natural form of 'aspirin'. In Greek mythology, Chiron, who had been taught the art of healing by the god of medicine 'Esclepius', was depicted as a centaur (half man, half horse).

In the story of Finlo, Chiron is represented by the unicorn, which is a symbol of many magical things, including healing. In astrological terms, Chiron is an asteroid rather than a planet. It was discovered relatively recently (in 1977), but many contemporary astrologers choose to include it, and deem it a worthy point of reference in the birth chart.

In keeping with the associated mythology, the placement of Chiron represents a 'wound' of some sort, often of a more spiritual or karmic nature, and an indication of where, or in what way, we may feel insecure or inadequate – but it can also offer insight into our own healing powers and the ability to overcome these feelings of vulnerability.

In mythology, Chiron was known as the 'wounded healer', because ironically, he was unable to heal himself. In an astrological chart, Chiron symbolises both the 'wound' and the opportunity for healing, so in this story, the unicorn has learnt to heal himself, just as we can all potentially learn to heal ourselves.

The unicorn's 'golden horn' and 'silver mane' are a further reference to the integration of the sun (gold) and the moon (silver) – a blending of the conscious (sun) and the subconscious (moon), of light and dark, of day and night, of active and passive etc; opposing forces coming together in a place of balance and harmony. The key that falls from the unicorn's ear has a specific symbolic connection, not only because of the 'glyph' used to represent Chiron in astrology (which looks like a key), but also because Chiron is often thought of as being the 'key' to unlocking any unresolved past-life or 'karmic' issues, carried through into the current incarnation.

In this passage of the story, Finlo has taken time out to rest and recover from the turmoil of previous events. Immersing ourselves in nature is often very restorative, and here the natural world is symbolised by the wild garden. The unicorn is strong, kind and gentle, which is how we all need to be towards ourselves when undergoing any sort of 'healing'. The elements previously mentioned symbolising 'balance and harmony' (sun and moon) relate to the internal state of balance and harmony associated with holistic wellbeing. Finlo is now feeling restored, calm and balanced, and more in touch with his heart. A Sanskrit word for the heart is 'Anahata', which roughly translates to 'unhurt'.

After a while, he saw a big gateway coming into view. As he approached, he could see that it had huge pillars on either side, one black and one white, with an old man sitting at the foot of each. Both were many thousands of years old, and consequently very wise.

Here we meet the two planets, Saturn and Jupiter, in the guise of the two wise men. Both are 'teachers' of sorts, and both offer the opportunity for personal growth. In astrological terms, Saturn has often been referred to as 'the greater malefic', and Jupiter as 'the greater

benefic' – so by definition, Saturn has historically been perceived as being a somewhat negative (malicious) force, and Jupiter as a fundamentally positive (beneficial) force (signified by the black and white pillars). In contemporary astrology, Saturn is often associated with limitation, and Jupiter with expansion.

The first explained that before Finlo continued he must remember that digging for treasure involves patience and hard work; to remember the darkness and the shadows of the underworld; to remember the sea of mist that had nearly drowned him; to remember the lightning that had struck him down. Through challenges we grow stronger; with strength we can build; through structure we can transform chaos into order, and dreams into reality. He gave Finlo an old bone, to remind him of his mortality. He also gave him a small piece of lead; "You will learn, with time and practice, how to turn this lead into gold", he told Finlo.

This is the voice of Saturn, who is asking Finlo to remember the more 'negative' elements of his experiences (the darkness and shadows, drowning in the sea of mist, the lightning that struck him down etc) – but this is not about being negative, it is about being aware of, and prepared for, the possible pitfalls. The energy of the planet Saturn encourages caution, and a realistic, measured, structured approach.

This can sometimes feel slow or limiting, but ultimately, it is about laying solid foundations – doing the necessary 'groundwork', in order to gain the future rewards. The adage 'you reap what you sow', springs to mind.

Patience and hard work are key words associated with this planet, and the placement of Saturn in an astrological chart can indicate where there is work to be done on a karmic level, as well as in a more literal sense. This work will invariably involve overcoming challenges and sometimes hard lessons. It is often the most difficult times and experiences that make us stop and think, and perhaps re-assess our lives and learn more about ourselves. This relates to the alchemical symbolism of turning lead into gold – lead being dark and heavy (difficult times), and the transformation of this into something valuable - gold (enlightenment). Lead is the metal said to be 'ruled' by Saturn, and Saturn is also very much associated with our physical, earthly existence. The bone, given to Finlo, refers to the structure of our physical bodies, and is also a reminder of our own mortality.

Then the other wise man spoke. He told Finlo to remember the excitement of discovering the mysterious scroll; to remember the magic he felt in the enchanted forest; to remember the wonder of the universe – and above all, to remember his search. Through life we experience; through experience we learn; through learning we understand; through understanding we broaden our vision. He gave Finlo an old tin box, containing a handful of sand; "Did you know", he said, "There are more stars in the sky than grains of sand on the earth. Travel to far away shores, expand your horizons, and always be aware of the bigger picture".

This is the voice of Jupiter, who is asking Finlo to remember all the more 'positive' elements of his previous experiences (the excitement of discovery, the magic of the forest, the

wonder of the universe etc). The energy of the planet Jupiter encourages optimism, openness, a sense of adventure, and an ongoing quest for knowledge. This can manifest as a huge amount of excitement, enthusiasm and vision, but can also sometimes result in over-indulgence, exaggeration, and a tendency to promise more than is possible.

Expansion and opportunity are key words associated with this planet, and its placement on an astrological chart can indicate where and how there might be opportunities for expanding the mind, and broadening the experience of life's journey. Jupiter is very much associated with travel, but this can represent journeys of a mental or spiritual nature, as well as relating to the more literal meaning. The more we are willing to travel (on any level), the more we will broaden our horizons by experiencing things that may be out of the familiar 'comfort zone'. Tin is the metal associated with the planet Jupiter (Finlo is given a tin box containing sand), and although hard to officially quantify, it is believed that there are more stars in the sky than grains of sand on our earth – a good reminder of the 'bigger picture' (Jupiter).

Finlo put the bone and the lead in the tin box with the sand, thanked the wise men for their gifts, and continued on his way.

Saturn and Jupiter, although seemingly diametrically opposed in many ways, can work together as a great team - the 'vision' offered by Jupiter paired with Saturn's ability to 'make it real'. Both of these attributes are necessary to create anything in our physical world, to give structure and substance (Saturn) to our ideas and dreams (Jupiter).

In this part of the story, Finlo has met with these two very different 'teachers', and has gained an understanding of their respective 'energies', represented by their gifts, which are now combined within the tin box.

As previously mentioned, the first three planets in this story (Pluto, Neptune and Uranus), are described as 'transpersonal' planets. The 'personal' planets, which we meet in the next part of the story, are representative of the more 'personal' elements or motivations of our individual psyches. Saturn and Jupiter could be thought of as being links between the personal and the transpersonal – able to connect the earthly experience with the spiritual - which is why I chose to portray the two characters as 'gate-keepers'. Chiron is also sometimes described as being a 'gate-keeper' of sorts.

Eventually he came to the place where the land meets the sea. High on a hill was a huge rambling house, and his heart told him that this was the dwelling place of the High Priestess. The door was open. The atmosphere was cold and musty, and there was no sign of the High Priestess. Finlo stood in the hallway, feeling brave, but nevertheless alone. He made his way further into the somewhat formidable house to find himself in a long corridor which seemed to disappear round a dark corner. There were three rooms in view, and he entered each in turn.

The land (earth – the physical), meets the sea (water – the emotional and/or spiritual), high on a hill (sky/air – the intellectual) – this represents a place where the integration of these elements can take place. In psychological terms, a house is often used to symbolise the human mind, with different rooms representing different facets of the personality. The long corridor and dark corner are suggestive of hidden knowledge, yet to be discovered and explored.

In the first room was a huge raging fire in the middle of the floor. The walls and ceiling were adorned with battle-scarred animal skins. Finlo stood staring into the wild flames of the fire and he felt a flame ignite within his own soul. He felt energized - full of passion and of purpose. He remembered the darkness and the shadows of the underworld, and knew that he had nothing to fear.

The first room represents the planet Mars. In personal terms, this energy manifests as an expression of our more instinctive drives and motivations. It reflects our ability to assert ourselves and take action. It is the 'fire' of our passions and desires, and is very goal orientated. Ambition and competitiveness are also associated with the influence of this planet, and there can sometimes be a raw and aggressive quality to this energy if it isn't 'harnessed' and used in a positive, constructive way. We must remember that Mars (or Ares) was the god of war in classical mythology. The placement in an astrological chart can indicate how and where the individual will express their drive, energy, and the courage/ability to take the lead and make things happen. The influence of this planet encourages decisiveness, spontaneity, and a positive 'can do' attitude; but the negative expression of this energy may manifest as aggression, impatience and forcefulness, with a lack of thought or sensitivity to others.

In this passage in the story, Finlo is tuning in to his personal 'fire' – his sense of aliveness, his sense of himself as an individual, and his own personal power, inner strength, courage and confidence.

Mars is considered in astrology to be the 'lower octave of Pluto'. Both are powerful energies – but Mars operates on a more personal conscious level (being a 'personal' planet), and Pluto on a more universal and perhaps subconscious level (being one of the 'outer' planets). This is why, during his experience in the Mars room, Finlo is reminded again of the darkness and shadows of the underworld (Pluto's domain).

The second room was full of beautiful paintings and ornate objects. Colours and shapes and soothing music filled the air. Finlo felt an immediate sense of peace, as he was reminded of the sea of mist and the dancing wood nymphs. His heart felt as though it were brimming over with love. There was so much of it that he knew he could afford to give it freely to others, and still have enough for himself.

The second room represents the planet Venus, traditionally associated with aesthetic beauty and sensual pleasure. In personal terms, the influence of Venus can relate to our physical possessions, the things we value, and our sense of self-worth – but it is also aligned with the realm of love, partnership, and the urge to form relationships. In contrast to Mars, the energy of Venus (or Aphrodite, the goddess of love), is concerned with peace, harmony, balance and diplomacy. The placement of Venus on an astrological birth chart can indicate what a person will love, value and/or find attractive, as well as their approach and behaviour when interacting with others, within relationships or partnerships of any sort. The more negative expression of this energy can sometimes manifest as possessiveness, an over-emphasis on sensual/material gratification, a tendency towards self-indulgence and laziness/taking the easiest route, and being overly concerned with the urge to be loved, attractive, and to please others.

In this passage in the story, Finlo is surrounded by the beauty, peace and sensual pleasure that Venus has to offer – and he is tuning in to the realm of ‘feeling’ rather than the previous realm of ‘action’. He feels love, and the urge to share it.

Venus is considered to be the ‘lower octave of Neptune’ – both planets being concerned with love and union/merging – Venus on a more personal earthly level, within human relationships, and Neptune perhaps on a more spiritual level, relating to unconditional love, and the union of the individual with the universal ‘whole’. This is why, during his experience in the Venus room, Finlo remembers the dancing wood nymphs of the enchanted forest – an experience of universal love and connection with the spiritual realm (Neptune’s domain).

The third room was full of books – many, many books – and written in these books were all the things that had ever been inside Finlo’s head. He thought back to the infinite workings of the universe and the electric storm, and wondered at the workings of his own mind. He realised that his mind was responsible for the creation of his own universe, and that within it, as well as outside of it, were an infinite number of possibilities.

In the third room, Finlo meets with the symbolism of Mercury, representing the realm of the mind – thought, learning, and communication. In classical mythology, Mercury (or Hermes) is portrayed as the winged messenger. Quick thinking and adaptability are qualities associated with this planet, as well as curiosity and a thirst for knowledge, but the energy can also be somewhat changeable and inconsistent, in keeping with the meaning of the word ‘mercurial’. On a personal level, the position of Mercury in the astrological birth chart would be an indicator of the way our own mind may function, the way we receive and analyse information, the things we like to think about and talk about, and the way in which we communicate. The more inconsistent and changeable side to this planet’s energy can sometimes result in an inability to see things through, too many things on the go at once, and consequently a possible lack of focus or commitment.

Mercury is the 'lower octave of Uranus' – and both energies are linked to the realm of thought, ideas and inspiration. It is believed by many that our own thoughts create our own personal perception and experience of the world. There is also, within some philosophical/spiritual belief systems, the idea that our personal minds are 'satellites' of a greater universal 'intelligence'. In this part of the story, Finlo is making the connection between Mercury (personal mind), and Uranus (universal mind), when he remembers his earlier experience of the electric storm.

Finlo then ventured further down the corridor, to the corner where it disappeared. He was confronted with a door of gold and silver most elaborate in style. It was locked. He remembered the Unicorn Key and knew that it was time to use it. He unlocked the door and went inside. The room was like the sun and moon rolled into one. The edges were as black as night, but in the centre was a golden throne, surrounded by a disc of golden light. Beside it, water trickled over crystal encrusted rocks into a silver pool.

Finlo's heart told him that he had come to the end of his search. He sat down on the golden throne, and as he did so, the surface of the silver pool became a vast mirror. Finlo looked at his reflection in it, and looking back at him was the High Priestess. He showed the High Priestess the mysterious scroll that he had unearthed at the beginning of his journey, and asked her if she could explain it. The High Priestess replied, "It is the blueprint of your destiny; it is the seed of the flower that you are meant to become; it is your own personal story – and you must learn how to read and understand that story". Finlo asked her what he should do next, and the High Priestess told him, "Search for your own answers, be the person you are destined to be, and shine your light for all to see – and in doing so, you will encourage others to do the same".

In the last part of the story, we meet with the symbolism of the 'alchemical marriage' – the union between the Sun (gold) and the Moon (silver), as referenced earlier in the story when Finlo encounters the Unicorn. The Sun and the Moon also refer to the masculine and feminine principles that reside within all of us, and the associated symbolic polarities of day and night, light and shadow, visible and hidden.

In psychological terms, this represents the marriage of the conscious (sun) and the subconscious (moon) – described by the psychologist Carl Jung as the process of 'individuation'. The aim being that by this process of integration, we become whole, and in becoming whole, we are expressing ourselves fully, and not looking for completion or validation from other people or external sources.

The Sun and Moon are known as the 'luminaries' in astrology, and both are extremely important points on the birth chart. Their energies, depending on where in the chart they are positioned, may work harmoniously, or may be in conflict – and the 'marriage' or 'balance' of the two is necessary for our mental and emotional well-being. Both need 'nurturing' in their different ways.

The Sun in an astrological birth chart represents the personal identity and power, the 'ego', the 'will', the 'potential', the urge to express oneself – and is often seen as something that we 'become', as we grow and mature. The Sun can show us where and how we can shine our own individual light – and how we can express ourselves fully, authentically, and with confidence. However, if the Sun energy is not expressing creatively and positively, there can be a danger of egotism and hubris.

In contrast, the Moon in an astrological birth chart represents the person's innermost self, often only revealed to those closest to them. The Moon also has connections to family (roots and ancestors), and to past behaviour patterns (childhood or karmic). The Moon reveals our most personal feelings and instincts. Understanding the Moon part of the personality can help us to identify our deepest emotional needs, and the ways in which we can nurture and 'feed' our souls. If the Moon's 'needs' are not met, the energy can express as emotional insecurity or over-sensitivity.

The High Priestess represents Finlo's own inner wisdom, his intuitive side, which is often hidden in the more subconscious realm.

The mysterious scroll, as mentioned earlier, is Finlo's astrological birth chart. Astrology can help with the process of 'individuation' in terms of personal, spiritual and psychological development. The aim of looking at your own birth chart is to get to know your true, authentic self, and work towards the integration and balance of all the different and complex facets that contribute towards your personality, your personal expression and your experience of the world. Ultimately, this knowledge and wisdom can offer us the opportunity to learn to be our best selves, and the potential to create, experience and contribute to more harmony, understanding and positivity in the world.

And at that moment, Finlo awoke from his dream.

Finally, Finlo 'awakes' from his dream, meaning that he becomes enlightened. His eyes have been opened to a deeper more 'conscious' understanding of the inherent knowledge that is there for all of us if we choose to tune into it.