

The Rosarium

Spring Equinox 2024



VENUS ROSE CLUB

www.venusrose.club | [@venusroseclub](https://www.instagram.com/venusroseclub)

Step into the
ROSARIUM

Edition 02.

Friend, welcome to our next issue of The Rosarium.

Though this is a written publication, we wish to enliven all of your senses. We need a new language, a new way to engage with the natural world. A bio-(al)chemical magic and somatic myths that Mother Nature has known for immeasurable time. Us humans are just playing catch-up.

Touch the Sun, feel the cool light on your tender skin. Let the Full Moon Lunar Eclipse raise the hairs on the back of your neck. Sing along with the garden's birdsong. Taste the warming light at dawn. Soon we will hear the rhubarb crack and the rose-buds emerge.

We hope this is a beautiful, multi-layered way to honour the seasons and celebrate the spring equinox together. With love and gratitude,

Fierce Grace Swan
AKA Lorna Howarth

Jemma Jackson
VRC Founder + Astrologer

ARE YOU READY



TO IMAGINE?

Just before the seasonal tides turn, the Sun lines-up with the most distant major planet, Neptune, some 2.5 billion miles away.

The trident carrying crown who rides the furthest cosmic seas is associated with oceanic deities - Neptune being the Roman version of the Greek sea master, Poseidon.

Though these are male gods in the mythos they belong too, I feel Neptune is more feminine in nature.

Known as the 'higher octave' of Venus, it elevates beauty to enchantment, sensuality to bliss, human desire to divine love.

Oceanic goddesses from various cosmologies like Sedna and Salacia, and the primordial goddesses who birthed the universe like Eurynome, Aditi, and Nu, all feel very Neptunian to me, as the blue planet orbits at the very edge of the early solar system. →

New Imaginings

As the Sun moves from Pisces to Aries, it resets the zodiacal wheel. A new cycle begins.

And as we're experiencing a Neptune in Pisces (2011-2026) it's only fitting the Sun would pass through the trident gates at the end of Pisces, the sign that Neptune rules. This emphasises and amplifies the Piscean energy before the Sun reaches the equinoctial point on 20 March.

I've appreciated through my studies of Caroline Casey's work that Neptune is pure imagination. Casey says 'Neptune is the imagination that lays the tracks for the reality train to follow'.

Shortly after I first heard her say this I found myself in a field with a railway next to it, I watched a freight train pass by and I had, what you could call, a 'breakdown' (very Neptunian too). I said out loud: "That's us, isn't it? We're all on a train like that, just being pulled along. Everyone is on a train. I do not want to be a freight on that train. I do not want to live my life like that!"

Slightly judgey, I know. But this was such an important moment for me personally.

We can use both our literal and mythic minds here: 'the imagination that lays the tracks for the reality train to follow'. We also have Saturn in Pisces at this time. If Neptune is imagination, then Saturn for sure is the reality train.

We need both to make our way.

And yet we find ourselves for the most part in societies, economies, and education systems that tend to favour reality over imagination. Order over creativity. How often do we give ourselves permission to imagine?

Just imagine what would happen if you did.

Neptune holds this spectrum, or perhaps it's a spiral. One way we have imagination, dreams, fantasies, sublime creativity and beauty, arts of all kinds including the spiritual and healing arts. And the other way we have nightmares, escapism, idealism and illusion, even delusion, and the darker shades of indulging, over-dosing (as in, too much of one thing) and misuse.

Here we have addiction as the absence of spirituality.

As the Sun passes Neptune, there's a renewal even before the equinox. The distant planet is reborn by the Sun, it falls into the cracks between space and time at the final degrees of Pisces.

There's death before the rebirth. A release before the revival.

As the solar cycle passes by, what does it bury in the metaphorical ground as it ingresses in Aries?

And what from this fertile soil is seeded, to grow anew through the freshness of spring?

I've said this in a few newsletters to date: for us to receive newness, we first must have space to do so. And we create space by clearing and releasing - intentionally and ritually.

What can you clear now so that you can tune-into your imagination and dream anew?

Neptune is also associated with intuition, the subtle body, and I'd even add the psycho-somatic nature of our bodies (as energy beings) that we have only just begun to understand.

Often, astrologers claim that Neptune can make things unclear or foggy, due to the cloudiness of the planets atmosphere. But since 2020 astronomers have shown how these clouds have lessened or nearly dissipated above the planet's surface. So what could this mean? Is now a time where our intuition is clearer to us than the last decade or so?

Will there be a dissolution of our world as we know it? As Neptune completes its cycle in Pisces before entering Aries in 2025/2026.

Look around you. I can confidently say - though with a wild mix of terror and hope - that the world around us is breaking down. It has to.

And it'll take all of our imaginations to create a worthy, honourable future and not repeat patterns from our patriarchal pasts. Let's dream.



Language that's alive

We need a new language. One that is ALIVE.

I've believed this for some time. Felt it in my heart and throughout my electric body. I confess, hopefully without sounding arrogant, that I'm here to recreate language in some way.

Words, theory, logic... they all feel pretty primitive compared to the sophistication or multi-sensory and multi-layered language of nature.

Dare I admit it, this feature is inspired by a phrase I heard during the new series 'Shogun', based on the epic by James Clavell.

*"...Have you noticed the different sounds of rain?" Mariko asks.
"If you really listen, then the present vanishes, neh? Listening to blossoms falling and to rocks growing are exceptionally good exercises."*

Listening to rocks growing... I love it!

To stick with the multimedia theme, Sky's recent 'The Sound of Nature' sees David Attenborough guide us through the loud cacophony of the natural world that's beyond human hearing. Having trained in Sound Healing myself, I'm not surprised that insects, fish, reptiles, birds, mammals and more use vibration to communicate a massive array of messages and moods.

Remember the Skittle's slogan? "Taste the rainbow". And the film 'Arrival' is one of my all-time favourites because of its exploration of language in a multi-dimensional way.

I appreciate these references are a mix of sci-fi, the latest science, and E-number filled sweets, but you get my point, right?

I believe our next language will be somatic, embodied, multi-sensory, textured, felt, subtle, and super conscious.

Imagine a global lexicon that could unite us all? One that did not discriminate or marginalise.

In the Rosarium, as a real garden, an intimate ritual and a meditative image, can you find a sitting rock and hear it grow? Maybe even have a full conversation with it...

Can you see the birdsong? Taste the sunshine and hear it reflect from the nearby stream?
Can you feel the clouds pass and smell the roses that haven't bloomed yet? What a gift it would be to live language in this way.





Suggestive image, not what the actual soup will look like!

Spring recipe suggestion

SPRING GREENS

Experience the essence of the Equinox

Walk outside and breathe deeply of the soil's fresh aroma, its long outbreath releasing winter's slumber in readiness for the inbreath that stirs seeds into growth; a breath that transforms Nature's colour palette from browns to greens and happens around the Spring Equinox.

And what greens!

Spring greens... there is a reason why so many spring greens are edible and nourishing – their sheer vibrancy is a signal to us that we can imbibe Earth's reviving energy through them.

Use all your senses to guide you to the place in your locale where these sparkling jewel-like treasures can be found. Blackbird song gives you a clue, for he too is energised by this vibration and where you find him, you'll find them. Similarly, follow the bees to the earliest of spring flowers, the blossom of blackthorn hedges, the wild daffodils, the celandines, for amongst these nectar-rich precursors of spring, you will find an emerging abundance of spring greens.

Perhaps you have come to a woodland, a copse or even a wide verge away from traffic and dogwalkers. What do you see? Is there a billow of acid-green froth, signalling that the alexanders are beginning to flower?

Once called Macedonian parsley and often likened to celery, alexanders were brought here by the Romans and planted along roads and ridgeways, to ensure their legions had something to eat on long marches. Gather both leaves and some stems from the upper parts of the plant.

Look more closely – are there wide, jade-green blades in the undergrowth, pushing through the dark Earth like eager children in the classroom, hands aloft, “me, me, me – I'm here!”

Pick a leaf and massage it between your fingers – if you can smell garlic then you have stumbled across true abundance – ransoms or wild garlic are a gastronomic treat par excellence.

As you forage, are your fingers warmly tingling from the dark green leaves of young nettles, not yet spiky and stringent enough to sting, but playfully warning that they're not to be tangled with. Their soft new growth can be nipped out without any harm to the plant or yourself, and the return for your courage will be a leafy vegetable full of iron and vitamins.

Or what about, the arrow-shaped sorrel – such a lovely name – whose leaves are almost translucent, a green that is tender, pliable, and clear. Sorrel has citrus notes of lemon and a tang of bitter chicory. It grows in small rosettes close the ground, but on a sunny day its leaves enact their arrow-shape and reach for the sky in upright clusters.

These four spring greens can be gathered now, at the Spring Equinox when they are most potent.

Take them to your cauldron (or your saucepan) and make yourself this incredibly tasty soup, which will enliven your cells, your circulation, your energy and your mood, because you will be imbibing all the goodness of the new season. What could be more delicious!

DISCLAIMER - please read

Wild foraging and collecting treasures from the garden is a beautiful, healing art-form, but it takes care, caution, and an expert eye.

For identification purposes we are sharing photographs of the wild plants listed in this recipe. If you're unsure, or want to do some research for yourself, do look up the greens with a search engine.

If you are uncertain about the identification of a plant, or the provenance of any foraged plant, then DO NOT cook it and DO NOT consume it.

This recipe is recommended with good intentions and love, but we would hate for anyone to feel uneasy about what they're cooking and eating. Listen to your intuition, do your research, and hopefully you can still enjoy this vibrant spring soup.

SPRING GREEN SOUP

- Wash your wild garlic, sorrel, nettle tops and alexander leaves in cold water, checking to see if there are any ladybirds or other critters that rise to the surface. If so, pick them out of the water and release them outside.
- Gently chop the leaves, not too finely.
- Then peel an onion and a clove of garlic and together with the washed stems of the alexanders chop into a small dice and fry on a medium heat in olive oil to allow caramelisation of the natural sugars.
- To make the soup a little thicker in texture, add a handful of red lentils and a generous glug or two of vegetable stock which can be made with a veggie stock cube or bouillon – though just plain water is fine.
- Simmer for ten to fifteen minutes to tenderise the vegetables and lentils adding more water if necessary.
- Then add the leafy vegetables and simmer for a further three to five minutes.
- For a heartier soup, you can also add some frozen garden peas at the same time as the foraged herbs. Season with salt, pepper and a squeeze of lemon.
- Whizz the soup up with a hand blender if you like a smooth consistency or leave lush and leafy if you prefer to savour individual textures.
- Serve with a dollop of crème fraiche (the oat-based non-lactose alternatives are excellent) and some warm fresh sourdough bread. Enjoy the taste of spring!



Wild Garlic (ransoms)



Sorrel



Alexanders



Nettles

BALANCE

Opposites, parallels, in-between & half-ways

In the North, the light is returning as we edge into spring. In the South, the sun lowers and gives way to longer nights.

Astrology, for what I know of it so far, always feels quite Northern hemisphere heavy. And yet, because of the Earth's orbiting stance and equinoctial dance, light and dark - whether day and night, or summer and winter - are present at the same time.

This is one of many seeming opposites that take place all at once. Parallels perhaps, instead of opposites? Feels less binary.

As I recently shared during a recording for VRCs mini podcast series The Mirror Cave, the zodiacal axes are also examples of such opposites and parallels. A continuous balancing act as we constellate the cosmic belt of signs and energies.

I think the human mind likes to solve and resolve things. We're not very comfortable sitting in-between paradoxes, are we?

But what if there is no resolution?

As I asked a client in a recent chart reading; what if there aren't any absolutes or answers?

Could we say that we're in the in-between right now? As old systems resist aggressively their demise, and new systems begin to plant their roots.

The tides are turning (surely!).

I begin in this enigmatic way to bring our attention to the equinox and the upcoming eclipses being half-way points in Astrology.

The nodal axis of the Moon - known as the North Node and the South Node - change signs every 18 months. Each node makes it way through opposing signs in a backward motion, beginning at the last degree (29° of a sign) and ending at the first degree (0° of a sign).

Maybe you've heard me mention this before: we currently have the North Node in Aries and the South Node in the opposite sign; Libra. This has been the case since July 2023, and will be present until January 2025.

Note: This is a collective transit where we're experiencing this globally. It becomes 'personal astrology' when you explore how this transit shows-up in your own birth chart.

See what I mean? This equinox is the mid-point.

- 12 July 2023 - nodes enter Aries x Libra
- 20 March 2024 - spring equinox (just over 9 months later)
- 29 January 2025 - nodes leave Aries x Libra (they complete their 18-months cycle, 9 months after the equinox)

So will we now see the energies shift too?

I feel like the polarities, paradoxes, and potentiality that the Aries x Libra axis presents will mature and intensify. Perhaps we're heading to a crescendo at the new year. →

Moving towards peace & justice

Partly out of hope, desperation, and Astrological awareness, I believe this intensification could lead us towards greater peace and justice.

We began this article with 'balance', and this is a theme associated with the sign of Libra, and it's symbol of the star-studded scales. The equinoxes and eclipses see us sit in the middle of these divine scales.

Libra is also the sign of peacefulness and harmony, of justice and fairness - all synonymous with a type of balance.

Aries, opposite, is not about disharmony, but being ruled by Mars it is associated with warrior-like energy. A dynamic that can rage, assert, and overpower.

During the back-end of 2023 and up until now, I think we can agree we have witnessed the rise of assertive, oppressive, conquering energy that has shaken our beliefs in humanity's morality to their very core.

It's not the Aries-like energy has been 'winning' per se, more that it's felt more present, hasn't it?

And yet, it's not so one sided. Parallels, remember.

To flip it, what if this time period has actually demonstrated our shadowy, lower-vibe Libran tendencies? Behaviours that intend to rupture peace, to deny fairness and basic human rights, to disrupt harmony and evade justice?

With the South Node in Libra, our deeply rooted - some say, karmic - lower patterns will come to the surface because it's time for them to be seen for what they are and, hopefully, cleared. We must break this cycle!

So as we shift into the 2nd half of the 18-month nodal cycle, could we also rise-out of the underworld depths?

The potential of the Libra South Node can be:

- **REFRAME PEACE:** not as a privileged word afforded to those who waged war in the first place, but as a protected harmony for populations who can finally be 'left in peace'.
- **RECLAIM JUSTICE:** for those who afflict pain and devastation without any regard for precious lives or repercussions are called to answer for their actions.
- **ESTABLISH EQUITY:** displacing poisonous hierarchies, or at the very least, showing them for what they are - archaic, prejudice, and de-evolutionary - so that we can find ways towards genuine equality and fairness.

All the while, the Aries North Node shifts too:

- **SELF-MASTERY:** seeing victimhood for what it is, letting it serve its purpose, and then reclaiming our personal agency and living intentionally. Being responsible for what we think, say, and do. Goodbye projections! (or at least, a collective awareness of when we're projecting).
- **SPIRITUAL WARRIORS:** pursuing a cause that's far bigger than us, while respecting each other as individuals with individual beliefs. Restoring the valour and virtue of 'the good fight'. Letting go of self-sacrificing behaviours, the need for a hero, or trying to be a saviour. We each need to save ourselves.

"Triple conjunction" North Node, Mercury and Chiron in Aries, at the Spring Equinox

STORYING

You are the ritual

Often this is called a "triple conjunction", though I use that term loosely because it typically applies to planets and objects, but the North Node is in fact an astronomical point. I won't go into the maths here 😊 but wanted to flag it.

WORDS ARE FREQUENCIES. SYMBOLS ARE SPELLS. VOICES ARE ACTIVATORS.

These are the wise words echoed by Mercury and Chiron at the new zodiacal year.

As the Sun crosses the equinox we're presented with an intense trio where the North Node, planet Mercury, and asteroid Chiron line-up within 1-2 degrees of each other in Aries.

If we treat the equinox chart like a natal chart then the next season is woven with these three energies:

- Mercury in Aries could mean thinking fast, speaking-out, or holding it all in. Mastering our own thoughts, and reviewing how we think about ourselves.
- Chiron in Aries beckons us forth to lead our own healing paths, to claim our identity and our full-selves, to recognise and use our personal agency.
- North Node in Aries points to this being a potential for all of us, and the balancing of the self with the other and the all.

Their invitation? A profound shift or realisation linked to your personal attitude. Being intentional about what you say and how you say it. Letting your voice activate the next stage of your depth process. Storying the next chapter of your self-healing saga.

I believe this triple aspect will also show the harsher potential of our voices and our words. As much as words can heal, then can also wound.

I've spoken about it a lot lately - because it's 'in the charts' - I feel the so-called 'cancel culture' or 'cancelling' someone has this double-sidedness. You may create respect, protection, and even healing for yourself and others when you speak-out in this way, but you most definitely wound people too. Both are present at the same time. I'm not projecting which is 'right' or 'wrong', more inviting an awareness when we're in this mode.

If you feel to journal as part of your equinox ritual, here are some self-inquiry prompts that could help you attune to this energy (with note pages overleaf):

- How can voicing something in an aware and intentional way serve your own healing at this time?
- What are you holding back or keeping within? And why?
- What thoughts do you have that are self-limiting, and prevent your fullest potential? How can you address these thoughts with gentleness, compassion and courage?
- How can you listen as actively or as often as you speak? Do others have a voice too?





ARIES

from 20 March

This is the sign where the eclipses will take place on 25 March and 08 April (incl. opposite sign, Libra). So Aries season may well be more intense and more fiery than usual.

Mercury will also go retrograde in this sign around the eclipse window... it's busy! So what and how we think, what we say, and how we say it, will be up for review. We may feel impatient and impulsive, as well as driven and courageous.

If your moods are swinging, your mind racing, or if life feels a bit surprising (WTF vibes), remember to pause and - as Lorna suggested - cycle a deep breath of the spring air. Eclipses are always markable moments. If we're living in alignment, it's still intense, and if we're not, the eclipses can bring the shifts we need to become more aligned - even if that's challenging.

Chiron, an asteroid between Saturn and Uranus, is also in Aries and will be on centre stage during the eclipses. Our capacity to both wound and heal may rise to the surface.

GEMINI

from 20 May

This will be the season where we're recovering from the eclipses and the Jupiter-Uranus conjunction. The Sun passes Jupiter at the end of Taurus before flying into Gemini - a mutable air sign, so it's not that things will slow down, but things may start to make sense if they haven't yet.

A Venus-Jupiter conjunction could bring love, art, and beauty into our lives in a big way at the season's start, just before Jupes himself moves into Gemini on 25 May after a year-long stay in Taurus.

Chiron's still in the mix as Mars meets-up with them in Aries, and Mercury makes their way through Taurus. This feels like we can start to make-up our minds; backing our decisions (esp with things we weren't sure about earlier in the year) with actions critical to our personal transformation (Chiron-Mars and planets in Gemini in dialogue with Pluto in Aquarius).

Though the sign of the twins is often flighty, flirty, and almost like a social butterfly, I'm hoping the Taurean energy of other planets will help centre and ground us. I'm personally asking the Universe for some clarity - please!

TAURUS

from 19 April

Taurus is usually a slow-down from Aries' launch into spring as nature's vibrancy puts on a show. But this year, the season of the bull kicks-off with a fizzling bang ✨

The long-awaited conjunction between Jupiter and Uranus - both in Taurus - is exact on 21 April, just a day after the season begins.

Though we would have been in this energy for some time because they're slow-moving, wide-orbit planets, the day they're exact is an electric moment ⚡

Anything from earth-shaking, ground-quaking, and time-shattering events to a surprising strike of luck. Especially if you have a nearby aspect in your natal chart!

There could also be a breakthrough or breakdown in the digital world. Something related to digital currencies, food distribution, or algorithms behind Taurus-related industries (agriculture, land, finance, global systems...) could shock us all.

CANCER

from 20 June

This serenades our waltz across the Summer Solstice.

Because the outer planets are on one side of the zodiac (Pluto in Aquarius, Saturn and Neptune in Pisces, Chiron in Aries, Uranus in Taurus, and Jupiter in Gemini), the astrology steadies somewhat.

That said, we will have Mars conjunct Uranus in Taurus on 15 July and "intense" may well be an understatement (sorry).

Given how devastating and militant the world has felt since the last third of 2023, warrior Mars next to shocker and rebel Uranus, could see these themes escalate. It has the signature of the original meaning of a 'freedom fighter', and with the Moon's nodes in play as other planets form aspects with them, I'm hoping this energy is directed towards peacefulness and liberation - for all.

Pluto would have already begun their retrograde on 02 May, and then Saturn joins the retro party on 29 June, as does Neptune on 02 July. Both of the latter are in Pisces, Cancer's fellow water sign, so there could be a heightened emotional culture. Could this energy cool the electric-fire of Mars and Uranus...?

Recommendations for the astro-curious

SPACE 'PORN'



If you don't follow him already, check out Andrew McCarthy @cosmic_background I use the image generating app Midjourney for Venus Rose's visuals, and Andrew's spectacular photography gives the AI art a run for its money, imho. His website has options to purchase prints, wallpapers and more.

And for the astro-curious wanting to further their understanding of the stars, I recommend you join the mailing lists of these peeps:

- Pam Gregory (YouTube, no mailing list, newsletters freely published on website)
- Adam Elenbass a.k.a. 'Nightlight Astrology' (YouTube, newsletter)
- Kelly Hunter (heliastar.com and Substack)
- Melanie Reinhart (website, plus YouTube conversations)
- Philip Sedgwick (website, newsletter)
- Ang Stoic (website - some free, some paid - and Substack)

THE ROSARIUM

a garden of imagination

The Rosarium is a dedication to planet Earth, and an invocation of her glorious plant queendom.

The plant realm is the bridge between Earth and Cosmos, enabling us to deepen into the microcosm of our bodies and the macrocosm of the Universe. We have filled the Rosarium with earthly delights to nourish and nurture you. We invite you to step into this sacred space.

Fierce Grace Swan (AKA Lorna Howarth) is a writer, garden-witch, herbal queen and dreamweaver. Her words are magic. She's been an editor of Resurgence, a publisher with Panacea Books, and she's co-authored and edited a number of books, including The Soulistic Journey. And she's about to launch her own novel, Sandpaper for the Soul, this season. Learn more at www.lornahowarth.com

Jemma Jackson is the founder of the VRC community. You can find more about her and her work at www.venusrose.club plus VRCs Substack, and at www.jemmajackson.co.

For the Rosarium, Lorna and Jemma are combining their passions and their natural knowledge in this beautiful creating. We're excited for how it will unfold. ❤️🌹

VENUS ROSE CLUB