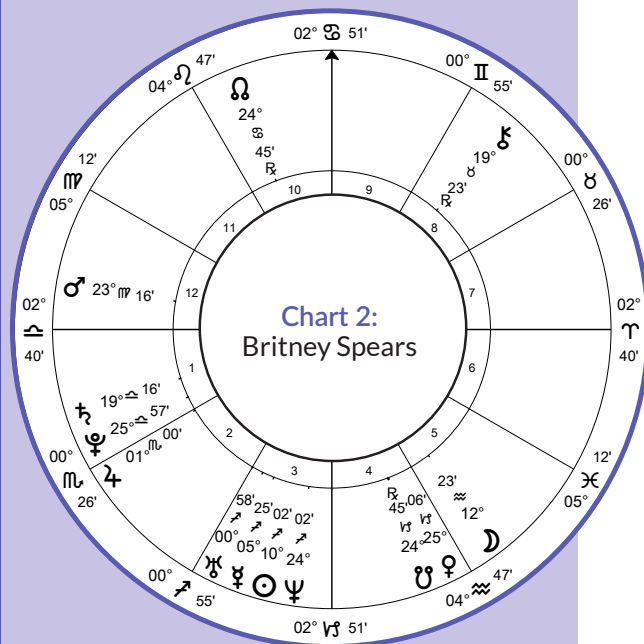
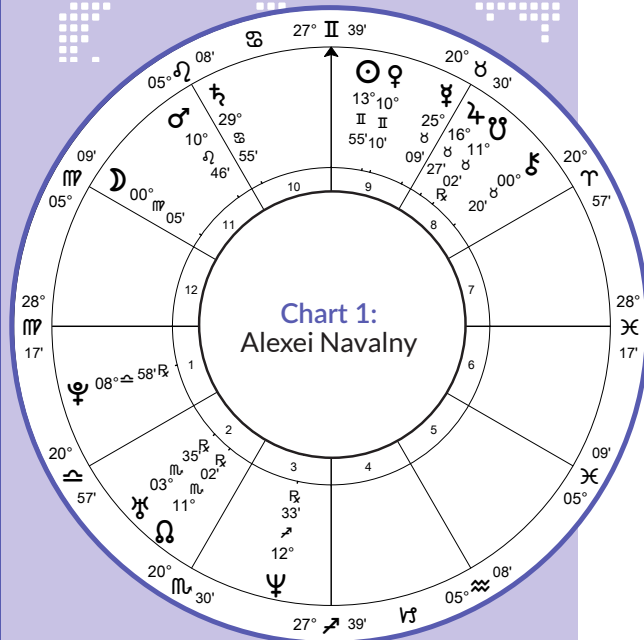


Charts in the News

with commentary by Elisabeth Grace



All charts use Placidus houses and the Mean Node.

Alexei Anatolievich Navalny, June 4, 1976; 1:30 p.m. BAT; Butyn, Russia (55°N36', 36°E57'); A: from memory

Of all the horror stories of 2020, Russian dissident Alexei Navalny's is especially chilling and surreal. On August 20, he collapsed on a flight to Moscow, having been poisoned with a novichok nerve agent. After an emergency landing, he was airlifted to Berlin and placed in a medically induced coma. Miraculously, he recovered.

Instead of staying in Germany, Navalny returned to Russia on January 17. In a harrowing arrival at a Moscow airport, which was broadcast around the world, he was arrested. On February 2, he was sentenced to two-and-a-half years in a penal colony, convicted on bogus charges that included failing to report to Russian authorities when he was in a coma.¹ As I type this on March 2, the Biden administration declassified an intelligence brief confirming that Russian operatives orchestrated Navalny's poisoning. President Biden has called for the release of the unjustly imprisoned nemesis of Vladimir Putin.²

Looking at Navalny's horoscope (**Chart 1**, at left), we see a majority of planets above the horizon. This powerful southern hemisphere emphasis is a focus on the Midheaven (MC). It represents someone who is easily "out in the world," but who may be pushed around by people and/or circumstances — even victimized.³ Navalny has been hounded by Russian authorities for decades: arrested, jailed, assaulted, and poisoned multiple times for daring to challenge those in power.⁴

With Sun–Venus conjunct in the 9th house, sextile Mars in Leo, trine Pluto in the 1st house, and opposing Neptune, we can see how he could become a charismatic visionary messenger with regal showmanship and millions of followers on social media.⁵ Perhaps that 1st-house Pluto reflects his astonishing ability to bounce back from each attack. Perhaps it is the romantic idealism of the Sun–Venus opposition to Neptune that inspired this shout-out to his wife (as he was being sentenced to prison), "Don't be sad! Everything is going to be all right!"⁶

Making things "all right" is the need of Navalny's Virgo Moon.⁷ At 0°, it is conjunct Regulus, a fixed star associated with honor and reputation.⁸ Navalny rose to international fame by organizing mass protests and running for office, advocating reform of a corrupt system. All four angles of the horoscope suggest fame, too, since they are within two-and-a-half degrees of the Aries Point (0° cardinal). Navalny is destined to attract attention, and when transits contact the ASC/DSC (Ascendant/Descendant) and MC/IC axes, he literally gets it from all angles. Life happens to him in giant waves.

Adding to the intensity is chart ruler Mercury, stationary direct and conjunct the fixed star Algol (the decapitated head of the Medusa). Upside: a mindset graced with an intensely raw and wondrous power (e.g., Mozart). Downside: all-consuming thoughts and passions that may attract misfortune, possibly even "losing one's head."⁹

Navalny's Mercury is sextile another challenged planet: Saturn at 29° Cancer. The last degree of a sign is called the anaretic degree, and represents a crisis point in matters of that planet.¹⁰ Here, the crisis might be one of feeling safe in the family and/or the homeland, especially with Saturn co-ruling Navalny's 4th house. Upside: He could masterfully maintain emotional control under pressure (!). Note that his Saturn-in-crisis is squaring Uranus, a sign of tension between responsibility and personal freedom.

Uranus stationed retrograde in Navalny's 8th house (of death!) last August, just arc minutes away from an exact square to 8th-house ruler Mars. Uranus in hard aspect to Mars suggests accidents, daring, and/or recklessness, and for Navalny, it's been in effect since last July, becoming exact on May 2, 2021. Meanwhile, at the end of 2020, he was under the influence of solar arc (SA) ASC = Mars, suggesting a period of "robustness"¹¹ (helpful when recovering from a near-death experience). On December 21, Navalny made his most "brazen move yet."¹² He released a recording of a phone call he made to a Russian intelligence officer, whom he tricked into revealing the details of the plot to kill him. Assassins had gained access to Navalny's hotel room and put the nerve agent into the seam of his underwear.

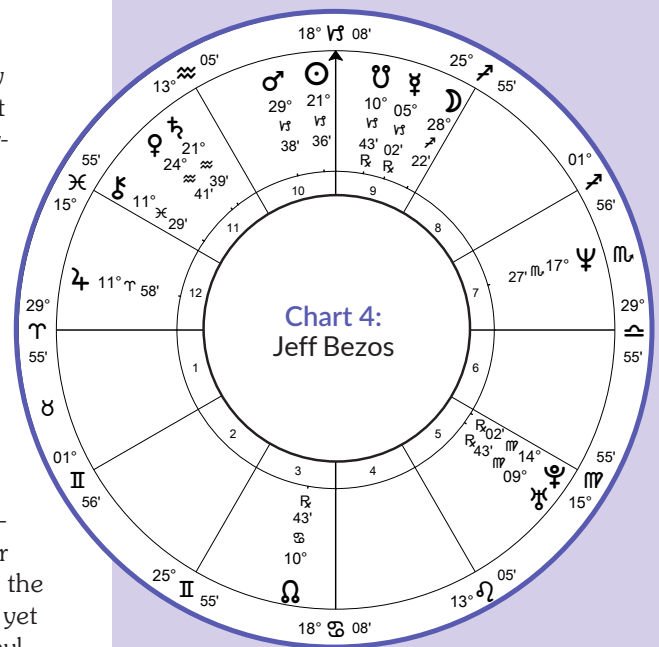
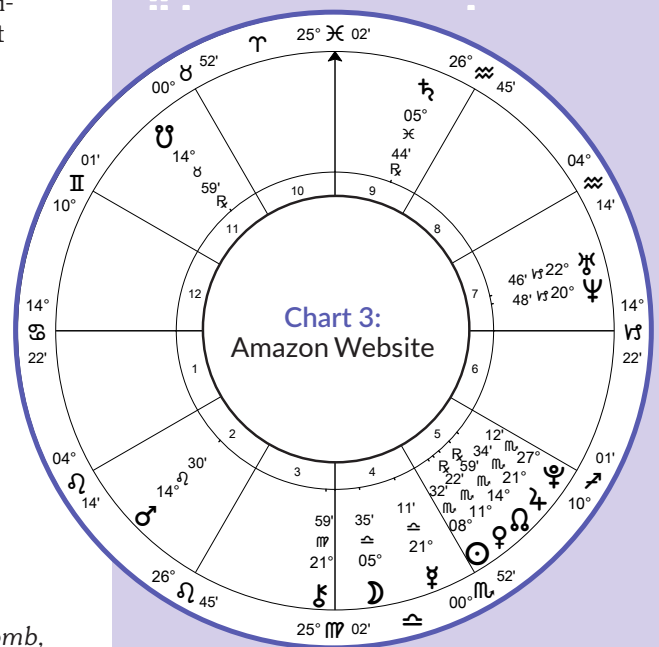
He flew back to Russia on the day Saturn exactly squared his Uranus. Two days later, on January 19, a documentary was uploaded to his website. *Putin's Palace* exposes the billion-dollar estate Navalny claims that Putin built with "the world's biggest bribe." Viewed by millions, the video (and Navalny's detention) sparked mass protests across Russia in which thousands were arrested.¹³ *Fun fact:* Navalny's Uranus sits on Putin's Ascendant; Putin's Mars is on Navalny's IC.¹⁴

On February 9, Navalny had SA Saturn = Neptune, i.e., "suffering as a martyr to a cause."¹⁵ On February 28, he was reportedly transferred to the penal colony.¹⁶ Though he may be held in solitary confinement, solar arcs and transits to Navalny's lunar nodes through 2021 are likely to keep him in the public consciousness. In effect now and exact in August is SA MC = Mars, suggesting "recognition; responsibility grows; a change of status."¹⁷

Britney Jean Spears, December 2, 1981; 1:30 a.m. CST; McComb, MS, USA (31°N15', 90°W27'); A: from memory.

Britney Spears was a hot topic in February, thanks to the documentary series *Framing Britney Spears*. It focused on her extraordinary celebrity and very public meltdown in 2007, which led a California court to honor her father's request to be appointed her conservator the following year. Since 2008, the 39-year-old superstar has not been permitted to make key personal or financial decisions without approval, even as her career has rebounded and her personal life seems to have stabilized. Fans are outraged by the imposition of these controls, sparking a headline-grabbing #FreeBritney campaign. Last August, Spears became estranged from her father and, as I write this on March 5, is challenging his conservatorship in court.¹⁸

Spears's horoscope has a concentration of planets in the northern and eastern hemispheres. (See **Chart 2**, previous page.) A majority of planets clustered in the north (focusing our attention on the IC) suggests a lifetime entanglement in a family drama that may feel like "unfinished business."¹⁹ A majority of planets in the east focuses our attention on the ASC. We would wonder about a defensive posture, likely developed in response to stress in the early home life.²⁰ Such a person may be extremely self-directed — yet find relationships challenging. Spears's relationships are famously tumultuous, like her parents' marriage. Her father is a recovering alcoholic, and



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her mother has written of the “verbal abuse, abandonment,” and “erratic behavior” his drinking inflicted upon the family.²¹

With four planets in Sagittarius in the 3rd house, Spears is born to be a boundary-pushing influencer, driven by an Aquarius Moon that needs to be unusual and socially significant. Noel Tyl notes that a Sagittarius Sun with Aquarius Moon may require “an anchor for the nerves.”²² Spears’s Mercury conjunct Uranus in the 3rd house could signify a brilliant mind and/or an erratic one. But an anchor? Hmm.

Neptune in the 3rd has creative potential, and its square to Mars in perfection-seeking Virgo adds seductive charm. Downside: escapist tendencies; magical thinking; assertive energy may be easily discouraged; susceptibility to drugs and/or scandal. Note that Mars rules the 7th house of significant others, and Neptune rules the 6th house, which includes illnesses. Think about how these Mars–Neptune themes have played out in her health and in her relationships, especially between 2006 and 2008, when the square was activated by Pluto and Uranus.

A Libra Ascendant needs to be seen as popular and fair. Look at the angles of this horoscope: all at 2° cardinal, close to the Aries Point.²³ Like Alexei Navalny, Britney Spears attracts attention, and transits, arcs, and progressions hit her “from all angles.” Meanwhile, chart ruler Venus is in achievement-oriented Capricorn, driven to extremes by a partile (exact) square to Pluto, supported by a trine to Mars. Hard aspects between Pluto and Venus suggest emotional and/or aesthetic overkill, persuasive power, and prominence (again!) — and note that transiting Pluto is activating her natal Venus–Pluto square *now*. Venus and Pluto are in hard aspect to the lunar nodes, too, and the Pluto–Node aspect nearly always depicts a power struggle with a parent. So does a hard aspect between Saturn and the nodes, which also applies. Hmmm.

Take a closer look at Pluto. Half-way between a high-functioning, exalted

Saturn in Libra in the 1st and “woman on a mission” Jupiter in Scorpio in the 2nd, it gives us the midpoint picture Pluto = Jupiter/Saturn. “Tremendous perseverance; dramatic thrust of self; control of the situation; fearless”²⁴ is how Noel Tyl describes the potential of this pattern in a natal chart — and by transit. Whenever Spears has crashed and burned, she’s always risen from the ashes. Maybe these Pluto patterns are the anchor her Sun–Moon combo requires. Thoughts? Pluto rules Spears’s 2nd house of money, values, and self-worth, and nothing screams “business!” like Jupiter and Saturn. Pluto’s contact with Jupiter and Saturn and chart ruler Venus makes Spears a potential powerhouse — and even more so in 2021, as transiting Pluto activates these natal patterns. The battle for control of her assets is an apt reflection of all this.

Spears has a court hearing on April 27, with transiting Mars at 2° Cancer on her MC and activating all angles. Mars rules her 7th house of lawsuits, partnerships, and adversaries, so this date is apt. For the rest of the year, transiting Saturn and Uranus will activate her Moon (in the 5th house of children and creativity), ruling her MC. Her current flame — whom she’s been with since 2016 — turned 27 on March 4, and he says he dreams of marriage and children.²⁵ What do you think? “Baby one more time”?

Amazon Website Launch, October 31, 1994; 9:00 p.m. PST; Reno, NV, USA (39°N32', 119°W49'); AA: timed official source.

Jeff Bezos, January 12, 1964; time unknown (noon MST used); Albuquerque, NM, USA (35°N05', 106°W39'); X: date without a time, from various Internet sources.

Do you own an ephemeris? When was the last time you looked at it? I ask, because it’s amazing to me how many students of astrology do not use an ephemeris to keep track of planetary patterns. They rely on computers and thus may only consider where planets are in a given moment, rather than where they’re headed or from whence they’ve come. Study your ephemeris and commit the paths of the outer planets to memory. You will improve your analytical skills!

In 2020, for example, you would have memorized the following traffic patterns:

- **Pluto:** 22°–24° Capricorn; stationing at 24° and 22°
- **Neptune:** 16°–20° Pisces; stationing at 20° and 18°
- **Uranus:** 2°–10° Taurus; stationing at 10° and 6°
- **Saturn:** 21° Capricorn – 1° Aquarius; stationing at 1° Aquarius and 25° Capricorn
- **Jupiter:** 6° Capricorn – 2° Aquarius; stationing at 27° and 17° Capricorn
- **Mars:** notable because it entered Aries on June 28 for the rest of the year, stationing retrograde (Rx) at 28° and direct at 15°
- **Venus:** worth noting because it was in Gemini from April 4 until August 7, stationing Rx at 21° and direct at 5°

Once memorized, you could glance at any horoscope and immediately see what’s hot. For the Amazon website launch, the eye is drawn to the Uranus–Neptune conjunction in the 7th house — and oh, wow, it’s at 20° and 22° Capricorn. (See **Chart 3**, previous page.) Mercury at 21° Libra is square to Uranus–Neptune. Instantly you know (because you memorized it) that Pluto, Saturn, and Jupiter will be making multiple hard aspects to this square in 2020. Think about the impact of those transits on this square of Mercury to Uranus–Neptune.

You’d see that the 8° Scorpio Sun was opposed by transiting Uranus twice in 2020, and you’d consider that hard aspects (e.g., a conjunction, square, or opposition) from the slower-moving outer planets are rare. The last time Uranus made a hard aspect to the Sun in this horoscope was in 1997, as Amazon launched its IPO. Fascinating. You’d do some research and find out that sales increased 838% that year.²⁶ Amazing — and quite disruptive, as Uranus transits can be.

How is Amazon doing under the current opposition (exact on May 31 and November 3, 2020 and March 22, 2021)? On October 29, profits tripled

in a blow-out third quarter.²⁷ Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama²⁸ are making an effort to unionize, with voting results expected in March.²⁹ Meanwhile, Jeff Bezos announced in February that he is stepping down as Amazon's CEO, segueing into an executive chair role on July 1.³⁰ Note that his Sun and Mars are at 21° and 29° Capricorn, respectively (see **Chart 4**, p. 11) — and consider what pressure those planets were under last year!

Now turn to page 97 of this *TMA* issue and look at the ephemeris for the week of July 11. What planets in the Amazon chart will be affected? What kinds of events might we read about in the headlines? That's your homework until next time.

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(All URLs were accessed in March 2021.)

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23. Her birth time is from her mother's memory; I wouldn't be surprised if it was a minute or two earlier, enough to tighten the conjunctions with the Aries Point.

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