



**COSMIC KARMA**—Understanding Your Contract with the Universe by Marguerite Manning; Llewellyn Publications, 2143 Wooddale Drive, Woodbury, MN 55125-2989; 2007, paper, 189 pp. (7" x 7"), \$15.95, ISBN 978-0-7387-1054-9.

You can order your copy today at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Astrologers bring a variety of backgrounds with them when they first begin exploring the horoscope. The more academic astrologers tend to be interested in psychology and see the planets as representing archetypal patterns that can be gainfully explored to facilitate therapeutic insights. Many astrologers have found that the horoscope reveals spiritual truths, and that by studying the various placements, one can recognize one's path toward enlightenment or, at least, out of self-destructive patterns. And among the spiritual astrologers, the concepts of karma and reincarnation frequently play central roles.

In *Cosmic Karma*, Marguerite Manning states that before we were born we made a contract with the universe, which is encoded in the natal horoscope. This is more than a belief; she states this as a fact of our existence and explains this worldview in the introduction. Viewing the horoscope from this perspective takes the astrologer away from therapy and more towards self-improvement through introspection and understanding of one's soul. Difficult situations can be seen as karmic residue, rather than anything that happened between you and your parents while you were growing up. With this book, you won't need a professional astrologer to guide you through your horoscope. Anyone who has a copy of their natal horoscope and can find their Sun, Saturn, Neptune, and Pluto will benefit from reading this material.

The incredibly accurate descriptions of the Sun in the twelve signs and houses reveal your primary contract with the universe. The Sun is the part of you that shines with experience, and that can show others how to advance. For example, the Sun in Cancer is here to show the rest of us how to cherish and preserve the emotional sanctuaries of home, family, and maternal care. The Sun in Cancer is an emotional mirror, and it reflects the subtle impressions in the immediate environment. The challenge to the Sun in Cancer is—and this is in the cosmic contract—that Cancer is not allowed to ignore emotional boundaries or to obsessively cling to old objects, resentments, or memories. Having a cosmic degree in Cancer means the path to fulfillment is in nurturing others—and sometimes yourself.

With tremendous wit and insight, Ms. Manning then goes on to describe the Sun in the twelve houses. The Sun in a particular house describes exactly where you "promised to hit a spiritual home run." And you can't expect to find fulfillment if you do nothing about the affairs of this house. You are expected to do the hard work associated with this house, and, if you don't, the universe takes it personally. Your life goes into a dive, and you won't get the rewards and success that were otherwise promised. What a marvelous way to present the astrological meanings of the Sun in the twelve houses! You don't get a dry, this-equals-that kind of description, but rather you get choices, and you succeed or you fail according to how well you make those choices. In this way, astrology offers you a roadmap of what you need to do to

maximize your potential. In this system, you're not treated like a neurotic or a clinically depressed psycho, but someone who is a significant player in the game of life.

In Chapter Five, the reader finds out about his/her cosmic lesson, which is shown by Saturn's position, both by sign and house. Brief descriptions of Saturn in the signs fill up one page, but then the rest of this chapter is devoted to more detailed cosmic analysis of Saturn in the houses. Here, you find out exactly what's holding you back from being yourself, from shining as you might want. Saturn can't be ignored, just as your karmic lessons can't be avoided. It may take twenty-nine years to get it right, if you work at it.

The concluding chapters include material on Neptune and Pluto in the houses, as well as the conditions in your twelfth house, known here as your karmic closet. What I like about this book is that it shows how individually we are all connected to a larger whole, some kind of universal intelligence. All the significances given to each planetary placement make perfect sense, especially when considering the Big Picture. Nothing happens by accident, and the people we have constellated around us reflect our own karmic lessons and life purpose. We are here to learn and grow, and those who feel trapped or stagnant just aren't paying attention to their astrological map, which is our contract with the universe.

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