



the third house conjunct Uranus. Here we see the lord of the Ascendant in good essential dignity, ready to deliver on the realisation of the Primary Motivation; that is the need for emotional security via siblings, neighbours and personal truths. However, Mars has some difficulties: it is conjunct Uranus and is in opposition to a Jupiter-Neptune conjunction. Uranus brings instability, erratic and unpredictable expression and this ups the ante on Mars, making it a very volatile mixture. Adding to the mix, the Jupiter-Neptune conjunction opposing Mars-Uranus brings tendencies towards excess, idealism, creativity and naivety. This combination of naivety and idealism can be a cause of disappointment and as a consequence there is a tendency to retreat into a private and sometimes fantasy world. This becomes a way of self-preservation but it may sometimes result in losing contact with reality.

Mars-Uranus gave Hepburn an irrepressible sense of independence, adventure as well as physical prowess. As a child, she played sport and exercised a freedom of speech encouraged by her parents; they encouraged their children to think and debate on any topic they wished. Her parents were criticized by the community for their progressive views, which stimulated Hepburn to fight against barriers she encountered.<sup>1</sup> As an adult, Hepburn had a relentless energy and enthusiasm for life as well living an unconventional lifestyle. She continued playing golf and tennis right into her eighties.

Jupiter-Neptune brought Hepburn great creativity as well as a certain confidence which was expressed in her description of herself as having a happy nature, reasoning *"I like life and I've been so lucky, why shouldn't I be happy?"* A. Scott Berg knew Hepburn well in her later years, and said that while she was demanding, she retained a sense of humility and humanity.<sup>2</sup>

Having these two planetary combinations in opposition we have two very distinct portraits of Hepburn: the independent, active, uncompromising and potentially irascible person on the one hand and on the other, the private, idealistic dreamer.

## **Brother Tom**

With Mars in the third house, one could say that the realisation of Hepburn's primary motivation for emotional security is realised through siblings or the search for personal truths. Hepburn had a very close relationship with her older brother, Tom. They did many things together, competed against one another and were inseparable. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1921 this all changed when Hepburn discovered her brother's body, dead from apparent suicide. This had a profound effect on young Katherine. The family had experienced suicides on both sides of the family and these tragedies were never talked about. And thus it was for Tom. His name was never mentioned again. There was no mourning, as Hepburn later said: *"What you do is to move along, get on with it and be tough."* Kate's father had a phobia about depression and the damage it could cause. He called it a "contagious disease" and attempted to surgically

remove it from his family. *“It was so much more terrible because we were not just told not to talk about Tom but not to think about him,”* she said.<sup>3</sup>

## **A New Birth**

According to Charlotte Chandler’s book *The Real Kate: a Personal Biography of Katharine Hepburn*, the actress subsumed Tom’s identity within her own in order to keep him alive within herself. *“Because no one spoke Tom’s name I pledged to Tom and myself that he would live in my heart and mind as long as I lived. I decided I had to live my life for two. It was the only way I could keep my brother alive. I decided I would share my life with my brother. The real date of his death would not be until the day I died.”*<sup>4</sup>

Hepburn took over Tom’s birthday, November 8, as her own, discarding her birth date of May 12. Another interesting point is that brother and sister had Suns in opposition: Katherine’s at 21 Taurus and Tom’s at 15 Scorpio and it is conjunct Hepburn’s Ascendant at 7 Scorpio. Katherine literally and astrologically took on her brother’s persona: wearing his clothes and, although always a tomboy, began acting more boyishly than before. She cut her hair short and for a while even insisted on being called “Jimmy” in some strange tribute to the memory of her brother. Tom’s death also robbed Hepburn of her childhood. She leapt from being 13 into an adult overnight. Faced with mortality she responded by growing up.<sup>5</sup>

In later years she talked about how she adopted her brother’s birthday:

*“The sign for November 8 is Scorpio. When they heard about my November 8 birthday, people said, ‘You’re the perfect Scorpio.’ Well, of course. Why not? I never said a word. Except I was a fake Scorpio. It was an adopted sign. I wasn’t really that strong, but just as well not to tell anyone, and let them think what they wanted to. To tell you the truth, taking Tom’s birthday for my own was comforting.”*<sup>6</sup>

What we see here is the several things: one: the Mars-Uranus conjunction describing Hepburn’s independent, active and individualistic personality; two: Mars as lord of Ascendant in the natal third house describing her brother’s role as the realisation of emotional need; three: the Jupiter-Neptune conjunction opposing Mars-Uranus describing both the projection of her ideals and dreams on the idolised older brother and how his death caused her to create the fantasy that her brother ‘lived on’ in her.



Later she went on to college but having been away from the society of her peers for so long, she was unprepared for the social life of the all-girl college. Tom's death had changed her life irreparably, shaping her into the independent woman the world would come to admire. Hepburn discovered acting during her university years and the drive to succeed and the competitiveness as expressed by the Mars-Uranus-Node combination saw her create a distinct, definite, positive personality both on screen and in daily life.

Hepburn's brutal honesty, barbed wit and rapid assessment of her fellow actors' merits and failings are highlighted by the Mercury in Taurus in the seventh, trining the Mars-Uranus conjunction and conjunct the Descendant. Her tongue was her sword and she used it to both carve a niche for herself as well as for protection.

Katherine Hepburn is a complex character, as most people are and this essay is a small attempt to explore how a defining event in her life triggered the expression of certain aspects of her chart.

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<sup>1</sup> Higham, Charles *Kate: The Life of Katharine Hepburn*. New York City, NY: W. W. Norton. (2004) [1975].

<sup>2</sup> Berg, Scott A. *Kate Remembered: Katharine Hepburn, a Personal Biography*. London: Pocket. (2004) [2003].

<sup>3</sup> Norman, Neil. Katherine Hepburn's Secret Torment. Express, 10 June 2010. Source: <http://www.express.co.uk/expressyourself/180146/Katharine-Hepburn-s-secret-torment> accessed 27/2/17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Chandler, Charlotte. *I Know Where I'm Going: Katharine Hepburn, A Personal Biography*. Hal Leonard, Copyright © 2011

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.