

FOUR EVIL HOUSES¹

THE DISJUNCT HOUSES - THE 2ND, 6TH, 8TH, AND 12TH.

The Significations of the Planets in these Houses as Given by the Astrologers of the Classical Period.

Translated from the Greek and Latin

by

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Preface

Contrary to the opinion of most late twentieth century Western astrologers, who have decided that there are no "evil" influences in a horoscope but only "opportunities" of different sorts, the majority of the ancient astrologers thought that the 6th, 8th, and 12th houses were evil, by which they meant that the planets placed in them were generally weak and that they produced bad effects instead of good ones. The 2nd house could also be evil, since good planetary positions in it were generally favorable, but bad planetary positions could range in their effects from annoying to fatal. There were, of course, a few exceptions to the rule, and some of the ancient astrologers were more optimistic than others, as we shall see below, but in general the 6th, 8th, and 12th houses and the planets in them indicated unfortunate events and conditions, and even the benefic planets in the 2nd house were not considered to be entirely good by some of the ancients.

The principal reason for the disfavor that these houses received is that they are "disjunct" from the ASC, i.e. they do not stand in one of the classical aspects² to the ASC. But a secondary reason is that three of the four preside over unfortunate features of life – illness, death, and secret enemies – and the 2nd house, which governs livelihood, can also indicate poverty and destitution. The usual significations of the four houses are as follows.

The 2nd house presides over the native's ability to stay alive, the most important factor of which is his income; hence, an unfavorable influence in the 2nd house reduces or even destroys his income and consequently his viability. The 6th house presides over the state of his health and over his social inferiors (in the old days, his slaves); hence an unfavorable influence in the 6th makes him unhealthy and brings him trouble from his inferiors. The 8th house is the house of death; hence, an unfavorable influence in the 8th brings an early, sudden, painful, or violent death. The 12th house is the house of secret

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² Sextile, square, trine, or opposition.

enemies and of restriction; hence, an unfavorable influence in it causes trouble from the native's secret enemies and also indicates the possibility of incarceration.

It should be noted that these four houses constitute two sets – the 2nd and the 8th, and the 6th and the 12th. Some of the ancient writers noted that planets in one house may also influence the affairs signified by the opposite house. The 17th century French astrologer J.B. Morin emphasized this fact, particularly in the case where one house is empty but the opposite house has planets in it. Hence, a malefic in the 2nd house may exert its malefic influence not only on the 2nd house but also on the 8th, thus signifying malefic influences on both the native's income and on the manner of his death. Conversely, a malefic in the 8th may indicate a malefic influence on both the native's death and his finances. Similarly, planets in either the 6th or in the 12th may influence the affairs signified by both of those houses.

Obviously, the malefics, Mars and Saturn, are worse than the other planets; but even the benefics are not invariably good, since their influences may cause loss or injury through an excess of their characteristic action.

The original Greek astrological works containing the significations of the planets in the houses were those of Nechepso and Petosiris in the second century B.C. There also seems to have been another old set attributed to Hermes. Some of the astrologers who wrote in the latter part of the classical period still had access to those old books, and much of their material is probably drawn from them, although each astrologer paraphrased or reworded the significations in the light of his own experience.

The ancients were agreed that the planets act most characteristically and forcefully in the cardinal houses and that their influences are weaker in the succedent houses and weakest of all in the cadent houses. The earliest astrological writer whose work is extant and who gives the significations of the planets in the houses is Dorotheus of Sidon, who lived in the first century A.D. But in his *Pentateuch* he only gives the specific influences of the planets in the angular houses.

The next writer is Vettius Valens of Antioch, who lived in Alexandria, Egypt, around 165 A.D. He gives perhaps the least optimistic account of the influences of the planets in the four houses under consideration. The significations from his book *Anthology* are given below.

Next comes the fourth century Roman senator Julius Firmicus Maternus, who wrote in Latin, but whose *Mathesis* is largely translated from earlier Greek astrological works. His account of the planets in the houses is very detailed. In addition to allowing for the difference between the benefic planets and the malefic planets, he also takes note of the sect¹ of the planets and in some cases whether they are matutine ("morning stars") or vespertine ("evening stars"). His significations are given below.

Perhaps a generation later is the writer Paul of Alexandria, whose *Introduction to Astrology* is certainly based on older books, perhaps including some work of Hermes. His significations, which are brief and more optimistic than the others, are given below.

¹ That is, whether they were of the diurnal sect (Saturn, Jupiter, and the Sun) or of the nocturnal sect (Mars, Venus, and the Moon). Mercury could belong to either sect, depending upon its relation to the Sun.

Last among the Greeks of the Classical Period is the early sixth century writer Rhetorius the Egyptian, whose *Compendium of Astrology*¹ gives two sets of significations of the planets in the houses. These were evidently drawn from two different earlier sources, one of which resembles the source used by Firmicus Maternus, although it is much briefer. His significations are given below.

Finally, there is *The Book of Hermes Trismegistus*, apparently a compilation made in the sixth century or later from several earlier Greek sources. The title is a misnomer, since little of it goes back directly to any work attributed to Hermes. Unfortunately, the Greek text is lost, and the book is only known through a 12th or 13th century Latin translation that has survived in a single 15th century MS (and a partial French translation of the 14th century). I have excerpted those paragraphs that specifically mention the 2nd, 6th, 8th, or 12th houses from the chapter on violent death.

We might also mention the *Yavanajātaka* (Greek Astrology!), a third century versification by the Indian writer Sphujidhvaja of a second century Sanskrit translation made by Yavanesvara (Lord of the Greeks!) of some unidentified Greek astrological texts. The *Yavanajātaka* is the fundamental Sanskrit work that introduced the zodiac and Greek horoscopic astrology into India. But its significations of the planets in the houses rely mainly on the nature of the planet rather than the nature of the house. The significations are not given here but may be read in David Pingree's edition and translation of the Sanskrit text.

A list of the published texts of the works referred to herein is given in the Bibliography. The translations from the original Greek and Latin that are given below are my own.

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¹ This is the name I have given to it. Its original title seems to have been the unwieldy *From the Treasury of Antiochus, an Explanation and Narration of the Whole Art of Astrology*. The reference is to a lost work by Antiochus of Athens, who seems to have written two books on astrology, one of which was called simply *Treasury*, but Rhetorius also used other sources.

VETTIUS VALENS

ANTHOLOGY

Book II

Chapter 15. *The Second House, Called the Gate of Hades.*¹

The one succeeding the ASC – in this sign the benefics help in nothing, and the malefics denote lazy persons, those liable to be injured, and those who are incapacitated, [with this condition] lasting throughout their lives down to the end. And if the Lot [of Fortune] is in the sign, with the malefics ruling the Lot [of Fortune] or the ASC, it produces guardians of the dead² spending their lives outside the gate.³ The [star] of Saturn then, posited in this house, ruling the Lot of Fortune, makes spiritless, sickly persons, and those having the experience of imprisonment extending from an appropriate time until they fulfill the times of the star. And when the [star] of Jupiter is in this house, they consume their property down to its end, so that nothing remains of it; children are indeed given [to them], but not fortunately. And when the [star] of Mars is in the house, if it rules the Lot [of Fortune] or the ASC, [it makes] those ready to take offense, likely to suffer loss, and who are hampered [in their actions], and some also become captives but are then released; and if the Lot of Fortune is assigned to be in this same sign, and they are in the same degrees or signs, it produces jailers who spend their whole lives in prison or living in prisons. And if the Sun is in the sign, ruling the Lot [of Fortune] or the ASC in its own domicile or in the places of Saturn,⁴ the native loses his sight in the time periods of Mars, and he is deprived of his paternal inheritance, and he will be a beggar. And if the [star] of Venus is in the sign and rules the Lot [of Fortune] or the ASC, it will denote some common, vulgar occupation, especially indeed if it chanced to be matutine in the orient. And if the [star] of Mercury was present in the sign, and if indeed it chanced to be under the Sun beams,⁵ it denotes foolish and illiterate persons, and, if it is the ruler of the second Lot (which is called that of the Daemon), it makes deaf and dumb persons; but if it is oriental, it produces petty persons trying their hand at things they have not learned, but capable in matters of learning. And if the Moon is present in the sign, with Saturn in the ASC, it produces one of these: the vision will suffer from cataract or some opacity of the eyes.

Chapter 11. *The Sixth House, of Mars.*⁶

If the benefics chance to be in this house, the native loses whatever he acquires and the property by means of which he survives. He suffers lesser losses as he advances into the old age portion of his life. And when the Sun is in this house and rules the Lot of Fortune

¹ Note that the ancient name of the 2nd house, *The Gate of Hades*, indicates its potentially evil nature.

² Cemetery watchmen.

³ Cemeteries were outside the city walls; hence, "outside the gate."

⁴ Probably he means the 'domiciles of Saturn'.

⁵ A planet is under the Sun beams when it is less than 15 degrees from the Sun, either before or behind. In this position it is generally invisible; hence, its influence is obscured or hampered by its proximity to the Sun.

⁶ The classical astrologers assigned each of the planets to one of the celestial houses (these assignments are the so-called "joys" of the planets). Mars received the 6th house.

or the ASC, it makes the native to be condemned by a great power, and if the [star] of Saturn [is there], he will be a vagabond and a person ready to take offense, and he will flee from his own country, managing to live [only] with difficulty. And if the [star] of Jupiter rules the Lot [of Fortune] or the ASC, he will lose his livelihood in [the pursuit of] public business; and if the [star] of Venus rules, matters involving women will give losses, and the [natives] also become unattractive to women, not having any pleasantness; and if the [star] of Mars [rules], it denotes injuries and sicknesses involving the part of the body denoted by the sign, and it also makes light-armed soldiers, beggars, ending their lives badly. and the [star] of Mercury ruling the Lot [of Fortune] or the ASC makes persons who are ill-advised, thieves, slanderers, and those who are reviled among the common people; and if the Moon is also there, he will be a slave and powerless, if indeed the rest are not with the Moon, for she can, when all the stars are well-placed, and [only] the Moon chances to be placed badly, make free persons and those of good rank.

Chapter 9. *The Eighth House of Death; Many Views.*

When the benefics are present in this house, they are ineffective, weak, and not productive of their own good things; but if they are also the rulers of the ASC and the Lot [of Fortune], they chance to be considerably more ineffective and abnormal. But if the malefics are there, ruling the Lot [of Fortune], the [natives] become vagabonds; and if they ever acquire anything, they lose it. But if the Lot [of Fortune] falls in this [house], with the malefics there and ruling the Lot [of Fortune], the native is needy, unable to clothe himself; and if they also rule the ASC, he will be miserable throughout his whole life. And if the ruler of the Lot [of Fortune] or of the ASC is also under the Sun beams, the native will hold out his hands and beg. But if the [star] of Mercury is alone in the sign and it rules the mind whence it is called *daemon*,¹ it makes fools and silly persons and those who are hindered in their speech and illiterate; and if the [ruler] of the Lot [of Fortune] is also there, along with the silliness he will be foolish and needy, especially if it chances to be under the Sun beams. And if, with all these positions thus, the malefics are [also] there, he will be deaf and dumb. And only the Moon, when she is increasing her light, seems to rejoice in this sign; but if the [star] of Jupiter is in the Good Daemon,² [he will be] fortunate, with good earning powers, and having many children; and if Jupiter is also the ruler of the Lot of Fortune, [he will be] rich and happy; and if the [star] of Mercury also comes together with Jupiter, [it makes] royal administrators and those who enjoy their children.

Chapter 5. *The House of the Evil Daemon.*³ *Many Configurations.*

If the malefics happen to be in this house, great injuries and disasters are produced, and especially if they are in their own proper face,⁴ and if the Lot of Fortune is there and one of them is its ruler, it will never of any help in these occurrences. For enemies are generated from the beginning from the natal [position]; similarly too, the benefics in this

¹ The Greek word means 'spirit' among other things. See the note below on the name of the 12th house.

² The 11th house.

³ The 12th house. The Greek word *daim *n* means 'god', 'spirit', or 'divine power'; hence, its meaning was extended to 'destiny', 'fate', or simply 'luck'. Thus, the Evil Daemon was the house of Bad Luck. Consequently, it was also the house of the malefic Saturn (cf. the 6th house, which was the house of Mars).

⁴ A planet is "in its proper face" when it has the same aspect to the luminaries that the signs it rules has to the signs (Cancer and Leo) ruled by the luminaries.

house do not apportion their good [effects]. And whenever the three stars fall in this sign,¹ viz. the ruler of the ASC and the rulers of the Lot [of Fortune] and the [Lot of the] Daemon, they make unlucky and miserable persons and those lacking their daily nourishment, and many are also holding out their hands.²

¹ Valens used the Sign-House system, in which the rising sign (ASC) is the first house, the next sign is the 2nd house, the one after that the 3rd, etc.; consequently, he frequently uses "sign" as an alternative term for "house."

² That is, they are beggars.

JULIUS FIRMICUS MATERNUS

MATHESIS

Book III

[Planets in the Second House¹]

When Saturn holds the 2nd house from the ASC, it makes grave illnesses and the greatest losses. It is also the killer of the wife and the children and the instigator of the greatest and most frequent disturbances, and it also dissipates both the paternal and maternal estates. But it makes the native more sluggish in all his actions, and it indicates continual bodily weaknesses. But if, with Saturn placed thus, Mars was in any angle of the nativity and aspected the Sun by square or opposition, or if it aspected the waxing Moon in a similar fashion, it will make wretched and destitute paupers and who injure their bodies with daily work. But if Saturn was in the 2nd house by day, slowly and gradually it will give increases to the paternal inheritance, but it makes the natives themselves to be concealed, unnoticed and poor in spirit, and always denying themselves something. But the means of livelihood are bestowed upon them by some aquatic actions or by some business involving dampness.

Jupiter posited in the 2nd house from the ASC denotes inheritances from non-relatives and it will make the native to be adopted by non-relatives; moreover, it will give ownership of great amounts of moveable property and the greatest possessions if Mercury is well placed and makes a good aspect to it. But if, with Jupiter thus placed, and thus configured with Mercury, Mars or Saturn aspects it from any part [of the chart], it will frequently change the status, and it will make it to be transferred from good actions to bad actions; and he who has Jupiter posited thus will always be changeable, beset by varied diversity throughout his whole life, so that now he is abounding in wealth, and now he is oppressed by the burden of poverty.

Mars posited in the 2nd house from the ASC, if it is found in this house by day, denotes the greatest evils and great misfortunes, especially if it is matutine; for it will make him to be alienated from his parents and from his own home and always wandering about in foreign lands. But if, with Mars thus placed, the waxing Moon is with it or is placed in opposition or square aspect to it, it will make sluggish, weak persons, who frequently receive wounds from iron; moreover, it will debilitate him from cold or from wounds received from quadrupeds. Moreover, it will make some of the natives to be exposed²; it often makes others to be captives or persons who are drawn from freedom into servitude; moreover, they will always be mentally agitated and placed in the most difficult situations. But if, with Mars thus placed, Jupiter makes a good aspect to it, and Jupiter is in its own domicile or its own terms, they will escape from all the dangers, or they are liberated from captivity, or they are released, and from servitude they are transferred again to freedom; but sometimes they will not have those things that are necessary to life.

¹ Unlike most of the other astrologers, Firmicus gives the significations of the planets in the houses in planetary order; i.e., he devotes a separate chapter to each planet and gives its significations in the several houses. I have reverted to the more usual house order here.

² This refers to the ancient practice of taking unwanted newborns to some public place and leaving them there "exposed" to the elements. They were sometimes taken up by persons who wanted a child, but they were sometimes eaten by wild dogs.

But if it was found thus by night, it makes soldiers or athletes, but it is accustomed to ensnare them readily in a continuation of dangers. Moreover, dangers approach in a similar manner [even] if Jupiter and Venus as we have said above are conjoined to it with a good aspect.

The Sun posited in the 2nd house from the ASC will make those who seek [to acquire] personal property through their own efforts, and in their whole life they are pleasant and good. But it makes these same persons listless and short-lived, and it will make them to be entangled in various misfortunes, and who are always in their own lives distressed by various consternations of terror. But if, with the Sun posited in this house, Venus and Jupiter make a good aspect to it, either by trine or sextile, or if they are placed together with it, it will give some sudden benefit and some substantial increase in happiness; for it will make low-lying and abandoned men to be given an increase in dignity. But this is denoted to them along with great labor and with the greatest hindrance, and with the voluntary sacrifice of their personal property. Therefore, whoever has the Sun posited thus should not strive after anything, should not dare to do anything, since he should know that with the Sun placed thus he is hindered in all things.

Venus posited in the 2nd house from the ASC, if it was found thus in a nocturnal nativity, makes discoverers of great arts and persons abounding in wealth, but who are frequently accused of infamous acts, and those on whom happiness is gradually conferred, and who are pleasing and delightful in [gratifying] their amorous desires. But if it was found in this house by day, it denotes the greatest difficulties and a late marriage; it also stirs up lawsuits with some woman; some are also made widowers by the early death of their wives. But if, with Venus thus placed, either the Sun or Saturn aspects it by square or opposition or is placed with it, they will make sterile persons and those who are inadequate in the performance of sexual acts, and who never marry a wife, and who are always involved in love affairs with boys. But these evils are denoted more strongly, if Venus is found thus in a diurnal nativity in a domicile of Saturn or Mars or Mercury or in their terms.

Mercury posited in the 2nd house from the ASC, if it was found to be matutine, will make obscure men with wicked minds, unsuited to the knowledge of letters, and a person who is deprived of every means of life. But if it was vespertine in this house and it is a nocturnal nativity, it will make money-lenders, businessmen, or those who maintain the care and management of other people's things. But if it was found thus in a diurnal nativity, it makes philologists or those skilled in laborious letters,¹ and those who do not want their nature to be compared with that of the rest of men; for they will aspire to everything that training derived from formal education has not handed down to them; nevertheless, it makes those whose lives are miserable and who always wear themselves out [dealing] with various kinds of deficiencies. But if Jupiter makes any kind of aspect to Mercury thus placed, or if Jupiter was found with it, and the Moon was associated with them in a good configuration, it makes those who are in charge of great and famous places but who do not have the supreme authority and in their actions are subordinate to the power of another person. Moreover, it makes those who are in charge of great affairs [e.g.] it makes those who control royal resources by means of their own direction and

¹ Probably those who are skilled in foreign languages.

who have all the royal revenues and treasuries entrusted to their own good faith and direction; but this happy situation of theirs will be terminated in a short space of time.

[Firmicus alone gives the special effects of Mercury and another planet conjoined in the same house. These follow.]

The Sun and Mercury partilely¹ posited in the 2nd house from the ASC denote an increase in personal property and a position of command over the acts of others.

Mercury posited together with Saturn in the 2nd house in a diurnal nativity will make herbalists,² physicians, and those through whom health is restored to men, but also rich and famous in their actions. Moreover, according to the quality of the signs, they will be orators or business managers of powerful men. But if they were found in this house by night, they will make beggars, destitute persons, lunatics, or temple servants; frequently too, they will be charged with crimes and placed in custody; nevertheless, they are always mourning and childless, and weak in some part of the body or suffering from some defects.

Mercury and Jupiter partilely posited in the 2nd house from the ASC in a diurnal nativity will make those heirs of the property of non-relatives, those who are adopted by strangers, those who are masters of many farms and of stored produce, and those on whom, with the passage of time, the greatest increases in good fortune are bestowed. But if they were found partilely by night in this house, they will make sculptors³ who do not have perpetual good fortune and whom the course of life very frequently disappoints.

Mercury posited together with Mars in the 2nd house from the ASC make the natives to be exposed, and if they are reared, they will make them fugitives for some reason; they frequently make exiles, sometimes also captives; generally, they will make them to be stripped bare by proscription.⁴ Some of them are afflicted with grave illnesses or serious bodily defects, they will make others to die violently if they aspect the Moon when she is full of light. If they were found thus by night, they will make those of bad mind, evil-doers, obscure and rash persons, and those who are deceived in all their actions, but it will make those who have many kinds of actions, for they will be either tax administrators or tax-collectors⁵ or spies. It makes some of unsound mind or madmen.

Mercury and Venus posited together in the 2nd house from the ASC in a diurnal nativity will make those transacting much business and those who are employed in noble actions but persevering for a longer time in these, delightful and pleasing person both in their lives and in their habits, but drunkards and lustful. But if it was found to be matutine in this house, it will make those seeking personal property through their own efforts, fortunate individuals, literate, and displaying some education in music, cheerful and

¹ The Latin text has *partiliter* 'partilely', i.e. 'conjoined in the same degree'. But this word seems to be often confused with *pariter* 'together', which is probably what is meant here and in the other sections that give the significations of Mercury with another planet in one of the houses.

² Probably a herb doctor is meant.

³ Reading *sculptores* with MS N rather than *stultores* or *stultiores* 'rather stupid persons' with the other MSS.

⁴ That is, they are declared to be enemies of the state and their belongings are confiscated.

⁵ Lat. *publicani aut vectigaliarii* 'tax administrators or tax collectors'. The tax administrator had the responsibility of seeing that taxes were collected, but he employed field collectors to bring the taxes in.

honest, and famous for the splendor of their charm. But if it was found to be vespertine in a nocturnal nativity in this house with Venus, it denotes great wealth, and with the passage of time it bestows increases of the greatest good fortune, for they will be princes of states, they will be in charge of laws, and those to whom the management of the largest provinces is entrusted. Others will find something from which they receive the beginning of good fortune; heredities of the greatest size are bestowed on others.

The Moon posited in the 2nd house from the ASC in a nocturnal nativity will make famous persons [involved] in notable actions, but luxurious and devoted to the delightful joys of pleasure, and those on whom, with the passage of time, a greater amount of wealth will be conferred. But if it was found in this house by day, it either kills his parents immediately, or it separates him from his parents, or it makes his parents to be separated by a divorce, and it diminishes the value of his personal property by various kinds of losses; others who have the Moon thus are occupied in continual travels, and they divide their own actions among many places; but it makes their lives to be such that they are subject to some [person in] power. But if it was in this house with little light and Saturn was posited in the degree or in the sign of the ASC, it causes blindness from sudden wounds to the eyes. But if, with the Moon posited thus, Mars was found in the degree or in the sign of the ASC, it will make pains in the joints, or dislocations, or fractures; others it debilitates with the continuous pain of hemorrhoids.

[Planets in the Sixth House]

Saturn posited in the 6th house from the ASC dissipates all the personal property, for it is always badly placed in this house. It also makes sicknesses, especially if the waning Moon is conjoined to it, or if while declining it aspects it by opposition, or if while declining it aspects it by a square; it will make unfortunate, disreputable, erratic persons, who can never remain in one place. Moreover, if Mars aspects Saturn posited thus by square or by opposition, or if it was with it in the same sign, it will make hidden pains in the body, or consumption, or dysentery, and, if no aspect from a benefic star mitigates them placed thus, it will make the natives to perish from these sicknesses.

Jupiter posited in the 6th house denotes the greatest evils, for it will frequently make the natives to be exposed, more particularly if, while posited in the 6th house, it was the ruler of the sign in which the ASC or the MC is placed, especially if it was in a nocturnal nativity, and if it aspected the Sun, or Saturn, or Mars by opposition, and if while thus placed it aspected the waning Moon by a square, or if the waning Moon was with it in the same sign. But if, thus placed without the malefic aspect of any star, it receives the light of the waxing Moon, those things that we have said will be mitigated to some extent; and it makes goldsmiths or those who decorate clothing with gold thread; and sometimes it makes silversmiths. But nevertheless, even if it has bestowed these arts, it will wear¹ these same [natives] away with frequent losses. For this house, i.e. the 6th, has its own prime signification of evil, and whatever star was in this house, i.e. in the 6th, will borrow the greatest powers of denoting evils from the fault of the house.

Mars posited in the 6th house from the ASC denotes many evils, for it will harm the [native's] children, and it will make unevenness in his life; [and] it denotes illnesses,

¹ Reading *desudabit* 'wear away' with MS N, rather than †*desubitat*.

namely in accordance with the nature of the signs, for in curved signs¹ it makes [the natives] to die early, sometimes [as] cripples and hunchbacks. In this house the defects of all illnesses are discerned, if, however, that house was found partilely,² and if Mars was partilely posited in that sign.

The Sun posited in the 6th house from the ASC denotes many evils, for it will always kill, and it will make serious and chronic illnesses. But if, with the Sun posited thus, Mars was found in the ASC, it will surely make public actions; and it frequently inflicts wounds by iron on him; and it will make his father to die a bad death, or to die early, or to be condemned for some reason; but it also makes all his assets to be lost in various ways if, with the Sun posited in the 6th house, no star was found in the 10th from the ASC, i.e. in the MC. For if, with the Sun posited in the 6th, any star possesses the 10th house, i.e. the MC, it will make opulent, wealthy, affluent persons, and those on whom the greatest good fortune is conferred by succession to their fathers. But if, with the Sun posited in the 6th house, no star was placed in the MC, but Jupiter and Venus were found with that same Sun in the 6th house, whatever evils were decreed are mitigated, and all the badness of ill fortune is prevented.

Venus posited in the 6th house from the ASC by day and by night will give wives of low social status, or widows, or crippled and never obedient to their husbands, if no star was found in the MC. But if a woman has the star of Venus in the 6th house of her own nativity, she will experience great difficulties and great dangers from childbirth; for either she will frequently abort or she will give birth with difficulty, so that from within her womb a cut-up fetus³ will be brought forth by the physicians.⁴ But if with Venus in the 6th house, and in a nocturnal nativity, any star was found in the MC, it will make pleasing, becoming persons who are humored by their wives, and those whose wives bring them good fortune, and everything that they want, they obtain. But if Venus was posited with no relation to the angles, and malefic stars that were posited in the angles make a strong aspect to the Moon, it will make those who were born to be exposed by their parents.⁵

Mercury posited in the 6th house from the ASC will make [the native] to acquire the greatest fortune for himself, either from the learned fluency of his own speech, or from the practice of law, or from business, or from gifts of the gods, especially if, with Mercury placed thus, another star was found in the 10th sign from the ASC. But if it was found to be matutine in the 6th house in a nocturnal nativity, it makes interpreters, fishermen, fowlers, [and] sculptors, if, with Mercury placed thus, any star was found in the 10th house of the nativity. But if it was posited matutine in the 6th house in a nocturnal nativity, and the 10th house from the ASC had no star, it makes ill-natured, malicious persons, authors of evil counsel, thieves, and those who desire other peoples'

¹ This is the only place in the *Mathesis* where "curved signs" are mentioned. In the other early writers, Vettius Valens applies that epithet to Capricorn, and Hephaestio of Thebes gives it to Scorpio.

² Something is missing in this clause.

³ Reading *fetus* 'fetus' rather than *pecus* 'animal' as given by the Latin text.

⁴ This refers to an embryotomy performed by the attendant physicians when the woman was unable to deliver the fetus.

⁵ Reading *malivolae stellae quae in cardinibus fuerint constituti* Lunam forti radiatione possederint, <eos qui nati fuerint> expositos a parentibus faciet [et statim faciunt]* with MS N, but the text is uncertain.

things with an envious ardor of mind, and those who rejoice in the misfortunes of other people, informers, and those who persecute their in-laws and their own relations with bitter hatreds; it makes slow-witted and mentally blind persons, and those on whom all kinds of malice is conferred. But if it was found vespertine in this house, it will make wise, serious, secretive persons, who are in charge of accounts, or measures, or granaries, or storehouses, or equipment, or business transactions, from which activities they derive great profit. But if thus placed it receives the conjunction of the applying Moon, it will make secretaries, either of judges, or of governmental authorities, or of the Senate, or those who hold a position with emperors and have some power of instruction, or who are appointed to manage the affairs of their own principal according to their own devices, especially if, with Mercury posited thus, the Moon or some other star possesses the 10th house of the nativity.

Mercury partilely posited with the Sun in the 6th house from the ASC will make ignoble persons, slaves, toilers, [and] sluggish persons, and those whose fathers are unknown, made orphans by the [death of] their parents, slow in their actions, and those who can accomplish nothing if no star was found in the 10th house from the ASC. but if any star was found in the 10th house from the ASC, the distinctions of riches, noble birth, and glory [on them], especially if a benefic star was found in the 10th house.

Mercury and Saturn posited partilely in the 6th and in the 12th house from the ASC denote the same things in similar fashion. For if they were found by day in these houses, they will make those who are knowledgeable about many subjects, strong in the knowledge of secret arts, and who want to know everything having to do with humans, but malicious and envious, and those who are involved in vices and illnesses. But Saturn and Mercury posited by night in the 6th and in the 12th houses will make authors of false documents, wicked, malicious, malevolent poisoners, but who are always involved in the greatest evils and the greatest difficulties. But if Mars, by day or by night, makes any aspect, either square or opposition, to Mercury and Saturn thus posited, it will make men involved in unavoidable evil who are punished by the reproach of a public death.

Mercury and Jupiter partilely posited in the 6th house by night and by day denote the same things in similar fashion if they are found to be matutine, for they will make those who, in all business matters, are capable and sensible, [and] who are in charge of either all sorts of legal cases or contests and revision of the public accounts or governmental accounts or financial transactions or some religious matters, so that they will have the greatest riches from the gifts of the gods, especially if, with these placed thus, there was any star posited in the 10th house from the ASC. But if the Moon is placed thus, so that it conjoins itself to them by aspect when it is posited in the 10th house from the ASC, they will be rich, affluent persons, lords of much money or much gold, and those who attain the greatest fruits of possessions, fortunate, prosperous, and those who arrange the actions of kings by their own intercession, superintendents of the royal grain stores or of treasury monies, those in charge of provinces and cities. But if it was a diurnal nativity and, with Jupiter posited with Mercury in the 6th house from the ASC, it will make those who are mediocre both in their life and personal property and actions. But if they were found thus by night, they produce interpreters of business transactions and fishermen or augurs or sculptors, or those who are always burdened with laborious tasks, or those performing servile duties, or those who are engaged in such occupations as those

involving offensive odors and squalid with heavy dirt, i.e. either fullers or tanners of hides or shoemakers or millers or woolen-workers or occupations similar to these.

Mercury and Mars partilely posited in the 6th house and in the 12th from the ASC denotes the same things in similar fashion; for if they were posited in these houses by day, they denotes illnesses and the greatest bodily defects. Moreover, they will make [the natives] both to be put in custody and to have some acquaintance with prison and to be condemned because of some accusation; for either they are seized or indicted or made liable to lawsuits from some false deceptions of accusations; for by slaves and through slaves, or by men of low degree, or by those who are placed in custody because of some crime, they are seized or indicted, and they perish with the greatest torments and the greatest violence and atrocity, especially if, posited in these houses, they aspect the Moon in some way. But if Mercury was posited with Mars in the 6th or in the 12th house from the ASC, it makes those entangled in many debts and in money loaned at interest; but they will make mental disturbance and [spells of] unconsciousness. They also produce persons who are sluggish in all their actions, and they denotes the greatest accusations and serious envies, but which arise either from slaves or on account of slaves. Others will be tormentors of slaves, so that they wear them out either with hunger, or traps, or tortures, or incessant demands for work. But those who have Mercury with Mars in these houses will never persevere in their actions, because they will transfer [their efforts] from one action to another.

Mercury found together with Venus in the 6th house from the ASC in a diurnal nativity denotes abundance of assets from accounts, or business dealings, or from calculation, or from education, or from a gift of the gods, especially if, with these posited thus in the 6th house, any star was found in the 10th house of the nativity; but they obtain a wife with difficulty, for they will be lustful and disreputable in some manner because of that. But if it was found matutine in this house with Venus in a nocturnal nativity, for the sake of matrimony, they will couple themselves with servant girls, or widows, or whores; but they will have laborious and servile actions and around water, if, with them placed thus, no star was found in the 10th from the ASC. But if there was one, it will make those who get many things by their own effort, for they will be travelers, businessmen, ship-captains, sailors, or fabricators of gold. But if it was found to be vespertine in this house with Venus, it will make wise, talented persons, musicians or organists, or dyers of [various] colors, or sellers of spices, or gems, or pearls; it will make some of them to be perfumers or discoverers of medicinal cosmetics; posited thus it will also frequently make those who are in charge of metals, so that from these activities they get the greatest foundations of wealth.

[Planets in the Eighth House]

Saturn posited in the 8th house, if it was located there by day, bestows increases in the [native's] fortune as his age increases; but for some, when it is posited in this house in similar fashion, if it was in a sign of Mars or in the terms of Mars, it denotes money from the deaths of non-relatives. But if it was posited in this house by night, it will make the loss of inheritance; if the Moon aspected it by square or opposite aspect, evil¹ if, with Saturn thus posited, the Moon posited in a domicile of Saturn aspects it with the

¹ Some words have dropped out of the Latin text at this point.

preceding aspects. But if Mars aspects the Moon thus placed with Saturn from any place [in the chart] by any aspect, it makes those dying a violent death. But if not Mars but Jupiter aspects the Moon and Saturn posited thus as we have said, it will make good men of good life and reputation, but always unstable in their relations with their wives. Moreover, a good aspect is a trine or a sextile.

Jupiter posited in the 8th house from the ASC frequently destroys the [native's] fortune and makes the greatest enemies, and frequently insurrections by the people, and [persons] always occupied in wicked acts; it also makes low-born persons and those displaying a foolish anger, preposterous persons and those whose madness proceeds to insanity, especially if, with Jupiter thus placed, a malefic star possesses any angle of the nativity. But if posited in this house it either has Mercury with it or aspects it with a trine aspect, and the waxing Moon conjoins itself to it with a good aspect, it will make either royal administrators or accountants, or those to whom the power of prosecuting¹ is granted; and they always die in the first age of life.

Mars posited in the 8th house from the ASC, if it was in this house by day, either denies wealth or it makes those who have it to be stripped bare by proscription. But if [the native] has the Sun and the Moon in opposition, it denotes blindness from his eyes having been put out. Moreover, posited alone in this sign, it will make penury, want, anxieties, disturbances, revolts, [and] dangers. But if, with Mars posited thus, the Moon was in the succedent of the ASC, i.e. in the 2nd house from the ASC, or with that same Mars namely,² and Jupiter makes no aspect to them, and is unrelated to them, and does not aspect the ASC, it makes those dying a violent death, but one in accordance with the nature and the substance of the signs. For, if it was posited, just as we have said, in human signs, he will be killed by men with a sword; but he who has Mars thus is killed by pirates or by highway robbers or by members of his own household; [and] he is slain, or, convicted of a varied diversity of crimes, he is killed by a sword in accordance with a sentence of judgment. Frequently, however, posited thus with Jupiter, just as we have said, without the testimony of Venus or Jupiter, it makes gladiators, but those who, with the public watching, perish from the cruel brutality of slaughter. But in terrestrial signs, it will make [the natives] to be killed in deserted places, having previously been troubled by a manifold continuation of dangers. But in quadrupedal signs, it will make those who are seized by beasts to be torn to pieces with a pitiful laceration. But posited in water signs with the Moon configured in the manner that we have said, it makes them to be drowned either in pools of water or in the sea, or slain by pirates, it makes them to be destroyed in waves and floods. But posited in fixed signs, it kills them by their having perished from falling. But posited in fire signs, it will make them to be burned up. But posited in this sign by night, i.e. posited in the 8th house from the ASC, it will make eager persons, involved in dangers, but sharp; however, it establishes those who have Mars thus in public or prominent actions, but nevertheless it denotes a violent or sudden death, such as people with apoplexy are accustomed to die. But if Jupiter aspects Mars thus placed with any aspect or if it was with it, those evil things that we have mentioned are mitigated for the most part. But if Jupiter was found partilely in the ASC, and the ASC itself is in a

¹ The 'power of prosecuting' can refer either to a public prosecutor or to some other official with the authority to draw up an official list of persons to be prosecuted.

² That is, or if the Moon is with Mars in the 8th house.

domicile of Jupiter, and the star of Venus conjoins itself to Jupiter with a fortunate aspect, and it obstructs Mars in that hostile aspect that we have mentioned, all these ruins of calamities are changed for the most part. For the lamentable accidents and the always wretched inconveniences of misfortunes decreed by Mars, both in this and in the other houses, are changed and made mild if the attacks of Mars are mitigated by the good testimony of Venus and Jupiter.

The Sun posited in the 8th house from the ASC will make the father to die soon. But if Mars or Saturn was found with it, or was opposed to it by a diametric [aspect], or was conjoined to it by square, they will make insane, crazy persons, or those suffering from dyspepsia or inflammation of the brain, but these defects of health are denoted in accordance with the nature of the signs. But if, with the Sun posited in the 8th house, the Moon was placed in opposition, not yet weakened¹ by the conjunction but full of light; or,² if it was found in conjunction with it in the 8th house, and Saturn and Mars were in opposition or were posited together [with them in the 8th house], or if they were conjoined with them by a square aspect, they will make the greatest illnesses and bodily weaknesses. For they oppress the [native's] head with bad humors³ and from fixed and chronic humors that are accumulated about the head, they will make blind persons and lunatics, or those who decline steadily with chronic spells of unconsciousness; also, they will make them to utter unintelligible words; they cripple the upper arms of others with serious injuries; on some they inflict leprous spots, impetigo, consumption, dropsy; they make others to suffer from elephantiasis, others crippled, others paralyzed; the [cause] the greater parts of the bodies of others to be amputated; but all these things are denoted in accordance with the differences and natures of the signs. For, posited in the 2nd house from the ASC and in the 6th and in the 12th and in the 8th, they make similar things, just as we have said. But if, with all of them placed thus, as we have said, Jupiter and Venus are conjoined with any aspect, or if they are posited together, or if they are in trine aspect, or if they are conjoined to the Moon, all these illnesses that we have mentioned will be such that they can be treated and cured. But if, with the benefic stars, namely Jupiter and Venus, placed thus, a malefic star receives the conjunction of the applying Moon, there will be some bodily defect and continual sickness, but also by the providence of some divinity the severity of the illness is mitigated. but if the star of Mercury is conjoined with all of these, posited as we have said, either posited with them or placed in sextile, it suppresses or mitigates those illnesses that we have mentioned, either by some remedy or by incantations, so that in every case by means of these remedies they are freed from the attack of illnesses, especially if the waxing Moon conjoins herself with Jupiter or the Moon with little light conjoins herself with Venus. But if, in that arrangement of the stars which we have set forth, the Moon always conjoins herself to the star of Mercury, and, placed with it, was aspected by benefic stars, either by trine or by sextile aspect, they will flee to the gods, and they will remain there, demanding remedies from them.⁴ But if the

¹ Reading *soluta* 'weakened' with the MSS, rather than Kroll's emendation *involuta* 'involved with'.

² The Latin text has *sed* 'but', but either it should read *aut* 'or' or else there are some words missing prior to that.

³ This may perhaps be a description of "cluster" headaches, which are often accompanied by vasodilation, and which the ancients may have ascribed to the accumulation of "humors" in the head.

⁴ In other words, they will go to the temples of the gods, take up residence in the temples, and demand that the gods heal them.

Moon is conjoined with the star of Mercury, with the Sun and Saturn and Mars posited thus as we have said, and Jupiter and Venus were found in disjunct and dejected houses, they will make insane persons, lunatics, and those afflicted by a daemon, and who are entangled in perpetual calamities from these bodily defects, so that they also perish by a violent death.

If Venus was posited in the 8th house in a diurnal nativity, it will give a wife slowly, and when it has given one, it will give either a low-class one or a widow or one disfigured with severe ugliness. But if Mercury was with it and some malefic star aspected Venus posited in this house together with Mercury either by square or by opposition, or if it was found with them in this house, all of the native's estate is dissipated, or he is stripped bare of it by some proscription. And his death is caused by *gonorrhoea*, i.e. by a flux of semen,¹ or by [bodily] contraction or by spasm or by apoplexy. But if Venus was found by night in this house, it will make wealthy men, and those on whom good fortune is conferred by the death of great women; but for the [natives] a quick death is denoted and one without pain or torment.

Mercury posited in the 8th house from the ASC, if it was found to be vespertine by day in this house, will make those who are sluggish and who dare to do nothing and want to do nothing, always stuck in laborious activities, foolishly malicious [and engaged] in no useful activities. But if when posited in this house it was in a domicile of Saturn or in the degrees of Saturn, it will make deaf and dumb persons, especially if, when it is thus placed, Saturn aspects it with any aspect. But if it was found to be vespertine by night in this house, it will make those who inherit from non-relatives and who find hidden wealth by chance; they will also be lucky and at the same time happy, but who are depraved and easily fatigued by continual spells of weakness. But posited in this house matutine, it will make those who are born thus to seek money without limit and desiring great actions

[The signification of the Moon in the 8th house is missing in the Latin text.]

Mercury partilely posited with the Sun in the 8th house from the ASC will make weak, depraved persons and those who are easily deceived; but . . .² posited in this house, they will make a violent death, and frequently they denote insanity.

Mercury posited together with Saturn in the 8th house from the ASC denotes increases in [the native's] personal property and honor with the passage of time; but some acquire property because of the death of a non-relative; however, they will incur illness either from bladder stones or from stomach trouble. But posited together in this house by night, they will make paupers, those who are proscribed, feeble or wrinkled persons, and those for whom humors . . .³ they will make, perishing from damage, if the Moon with little light is moving towards Saturn or when full of light towards Mars.

Mercury and Jupiter partilely posited in the 8th house from the ASC, if they were found thus in a diurnal nativity, will make those of moderate status in life and who get the means of life for themselves from some inventions. For they disgrace the youth of some,

¹ A literal translation of the Greek word, but the disease is characterized by a purulent rather than a spermatic discharge. Certainly a potentially fatal venereal disease is meant, but not necessarily the one we call gonorrhoea.

² Something may be missing in the Latin text.

³ Something is missing in the Latin text.

but with the passage of time they denote moderate increases in assets. But if they were found by night in this house, either they will discover something from which they can have the greatest support of life, or a sizable inheritance passes to them, and with the passage of time they are elevated to the greatest good fortune; but yet it will make them defective in body and sluggish.

Mercury partilely posited with Mars in the 8th house from the ASC, if it was found thus by day, will makes the sort of persons who can get nothing of those things that they desire, but persons beset by dangers who lose every bit of their personal property. but some of them will be insane and raging madmen, others are thrown into custody, or they will be condemned, and frequently they will end by dying a violent death. But if they were found by night in this house, they will acquired some resources from evil arts or from evil occupations, and those who day by day increase [their participation] in evil and nefarious actions. They will be thieves or house-breakers, or those who are accustomed to refuse things entrusted to them or credited to their own resolute trustworthiness, or those who invent and carry out criminal acts. For they will make torturers or executioners or traitors to their own people, and those acquiring the greatest amounts of good fortune and wealth from these arts; but death will come to them with violence or with some severe torments, or they will die while suffering from the defect of serious insanity.

Mercury and Venus posited together in the 8th house from the ASC when vespertine in a diurnal nativity produces ineffective persons making no progress, and who cannot do anything. They will also make industrious persons, always involved in business; moreover, they will be defective in mind and body and who marry with difficulty; they will be sterile and those who cannot generate offspring. Moreover, they will die, either as spastics or infected with gonorrhoea or from apoplexy or inflammation of the brain. But found together by night in this house, they will make those who are heirs to the estate of a non-relative or those who have the responsibility for managing the estates of non-relatives, but good, benign individuals, fathers of families, and those on whom very much is conferred by women or by their wives; some will invent something that will be sufficient for the sole support of their lives; but they will have an early death without pain or torment. But when matutine and posited in this house with Venus it will make those who learn many things and who know everything, also discoverers, and those who accomplish with ease whatever they want to accomplish, but who attain increases in personal property as they grow older.

Saturn posited in the 12th house from the ASC denotes crises from slave rebellions or dangers because of slaves, and whoever has it posited thus in his nativity is thrust into slavery; it will also make the greatest sicknesses, but also illnesses of more than the common severity, especially if, with Saturn thus placed, the Moon conjoins it in any fashion, and if no benefic star was posited in the angles of the nativity. For if, with Saturn thus place, a benefic star was found in any angle of the nativity, those evils that we have mentioned are mitigated to some extent; all of which will be milder and less grave if Saturn was found thus by day, but stronger and more violent if it possesses this house in a nocturnal nativity.

But with Saturn placed in all these houses,¹ inquire into its degree, so that you may find in what house and in what terms its dodecatemory² is posited, so that from the dodecatemory and from the terms of the dodecatemory you may find all the power of Saturn.

Jupiter posited in the 12th house from the ASC denotes the greatest misfortunes; it always makes powerful enemies and those who hinder him with frequent [applications of] power, especially if a malefic star holds the ASC partilely, or if, with Jupiter posited thus, Mars was found in the 7th house from the ASC.³ For if, with Jupiter posited thus, i.e. in the 12th house from the ASC, Mars was posited in the DSC of the nativity, i.e. in the 7th house from the ASC, it will without any doubt make those who die violently. Moreover, these evils will be greater and particularly powerful due to a stronger disaster if the Sun and Saturn aspect Jupiter posited in the 12th house by opposition. Moreover, they will be wretched paupers, if, with Jupiter thus posited in a nocturnal nativity, the waning Moon opposes it by opposition. But if neither the Sun or nor Saturn was in opposition to it, and they possess good house of the nativity, and the Moon with declining light does not conjoin Jupiter [with any aspect], it will make those who have Jupiter thus to be strong in some delicate art, or goldsmiths, or those embroidering garments with gold, or gilders, or workers in mosaic, or those making certain works of silver. Moreover, he is sought out and praised, whatever his art was, if the star of Venus conjoins Jupiter with a good aspect when it is posited thus.

In the case of Jupiter too, look into its dodecatemory carefully, so that you may ascertain its strengths from the dodecatemory in a careful manner.

Mars posited in the 12th house from the ASC, if it is found in this house by day, denotes the greatest sicknesses, and involves [the natives] in bad bodily defects, and stirs up frequent plots by slaves, and makes them to be such persons as the slaves always desire to harm, and they scatter manifold disgraces upon all of them through the agency of slaves.⁴ Frequently too, on account of confinement some are either put in custody, or else it denotes condemned persons, passions, anguishes, anxieties, damages, and dangers. But all these things are mitigated if Mars was found posited thus in a nocturnal nativity.

We should hope that in all nativities and in all houses Venus and Jupiter are always opposed to Mars by whatever aspect and from whatever house; for then his attacks grow faint to some degree, since by the testimony of these stars he is mitigated. . . .⁵

But so that you may collect the power of Mars more exactly, inquire diligently into its dodecatemory and the terms of its dodecatemory.

¹ That is, in any of the twelve houses.

² The "dodecatemory" of a planet is actually the position of a planet in one of the dodecatemories, which are the 2 1/2 degree subdivisions of the signs. For example, if Saturn were in 17 Leo, its "dodecatemory" would be in 24 Aquarius, which happens to be in the terms of Mars – not a favorable location! Firmicus evidently attached considerable importance to this consideration, since he repeats this injunction at the end of the chapter for each planet.

³ Here, *in VII. parte horoscopi* 'in the 7th part of the ASC' must mean 'in the 7th house from the ASC'.

⁴ Reading with MS N, *tales quibus omnibus eis*, 'such persons as all of them'.

⁵ The remainder of this section deals with Mars in the angles of the horoscope.

The Sun posited in the 12th house from the ASC will make persons of low degree and frequently slaves and captives, and it denotes the swift death of the father and the loss of all of his estate, also bodily defects and grave illnesses. But if a benefic star was found with the Sun in this house, it will still make [the native to have] the very lowest status. But if a malefic star was found in this house with the Sun, it denotes perpetual illnesses and the severest bodily defects and perpetual servitudes.

But inquire diligently into the dodecatemory and the terms of the dodecatemory, lest the teaching of that work escape your notice in anything.

Venus posited in the 12th house from the ASC, if it was found thus in a nocturnal nativity, will make [the native] to be tormented with the constant pain of sadness because of women. If Mars and Mercury aspect [Venus] thus placed with a strong aspect, it will frequently make treacheries from servant-girls involving him because of lust; it makes a turbulent mind, and it denotes the fires of shameful love from an instinct of lust; but some join themselves in wedlock with servant-girls; others unite in intercourse in the marriage bed with public whores, because of which the offspring of children is always denied. But posited in this house by day, it denotes murder because of women or the atrocity of a bad death according to the nature and quality of the signs, for this star has various powers of denoting [things], but which can be difficult to discover. For, just as in paintings the artist records the lineaments of the limbs from a varied diversity of mixtures and makes a certain form of the body from blended colors by an imitation of the likeness of the body, so also the conjunction aspect of the stars by the concord of their association when blended together borrows a certain force for itself in turn from the conjoined powers, and its substance for itself from the various color of fires depicts the combined fates of men in the manner of a picture with the equated government of their association.

For, that what we are saying is so is proved by these reasons. When Venus is posited just as we have said, if Saturn conjoins [her] with any aspect, it makes minds that are entangled with perverse faults and that are turned to no useful actions, especially if this conjunction of Venus and Saturn was found in a nocturnal nativity. But if while thus placed she was conjoined to Jupiter, she is freed from the assault of the preceding maliciousness; for [then] the greatest advantages are bestowed. For they will acquire increases in their assets by their own actions, and they will be removed from every defect of faults; that is, if the Moon had no aspect by opposition to Venus thus placed with Jupiter. But if the Moon was found in opposition, it will make persons of bad reputation, lustful, or lovers of boys; and it will make those sweating from their intercourse with women to be struck with the heavy disgrace of a bad reputation, for heavy disgraces from incests and debauches are denoted by this combination; for they are caused to have intercourse with their sisters or nieces or daughters or the wives of their brothers; but nevertheless, from that incest the greatest financial rewards will accrue to them, and [also] some reward of dignity. But always Venus posited together with the Moon or conjoined [with her] by square denotes the attractions of [sexual] love, or the defect of a bad reputation and a propensity to misfortune, or it will entangle [the native] in troublesome defects of mind, or it makes those who are perverted by impure or lustful desire, or it strikes them with a very bad reputation from their incestuous love affairs. For, just as we have said, they either have intercourse with their sisters, or if it is with non-relatives, they will join together in debauchery with two sisters that are known to them; or they will have intercourse with their daughters or with their mothers or with their daughters-in law or with the wives of their step-children; or they will burn with the fault of lustful desire around their brothers' wives, or they will have intercourse with their nieces or with their in-laws, or with the sons of their sisters. But if a woman has Venus posited thus, it will make her lustful and one who is involved in the promiscuous pleasures of [sexual] love, and always caught up in the disgrace of a bad reputation and burning for incestuous love affairs; for she will either have intercourse with her brothers or with her sons or with her parents or with the sons of her paternal uncles or with her daughters' husbands or with her paternal uncles or with the paternal uncles of her own

sons¹ or with her sons-in-law or in-laws; or she will call two brothers to one pleasure of the bed; but it makes some women desire the actions of men. But then it makes these things stronger if, conjoined with the Moon in that aspect in tropical signs² or in erratic³ or scaly⁴ or bicorporeal⁵ ones, [and] it was in that combination of aspects that we have mentioned. Which things will be stronger and more forceful if Mars or Saturn is in opposition or in square to both of them, i.e. the Moon and Venus, posited as we have said, or [even] to one of the two, or if one of the former two was posited together with one of the latter; or if the Moon joined together with Venus in that relationship or jointly posited in that relationship, were located in a domicile of Mars or Saturn, or if they were together in the signs of Mercury, or if one of the two posited in a sign of Mercury aspected the other by that relationship that we have mentioned. Venus posited in her vespertine rising, but posited in a good sign in a nocturnal nativity, if she was in a favorable aspect to Mars, denotes good increases of good fortune; for it makes powerful persons and glorious powers, and it bestows the greatest insignia of honors, and it bestows riches of opulent abundance. But if by day she conjoins herself by any aspect to Mars, it denotes misfortunes of many and great evils. For she rejoices by night if she conjoins herself to the Moon, Mars, and Mercury, and then she makes men famous for their very great good fortune, whenever she was conjoined with these in a nocturnal nativity by a good aspect. But if Venus was with the Sun in this house of which we are speaking, it is certain that she will be the most unjust of all prudent persons in her responses. For Venus is badly placed, if she is posited with it; for she does not rejoice in association with the light of the Sun; and whatever seems to be evil and wretched in human affairs, she denotes all of it when posited with the Sun. But she rejoices when she is posited behind the Sun, i.e. when she is matutine; then, whatever amount of good she has decreed will increase with a stronger augment of good fortune. But if she was found to be the ruler of the ASC, and she was the ruler of whole nativity, or if she decreed [the native's] life when posited in good signs and in favorable houses of the nativity, she bestows the greatest length of life. But if the giver of life was unfavorable to the ruler of the nativity or to the ruler of the ASC in a diurnal nativity, it subtracts eight years from that [length of] time of life that was decreed; and thus placed, she denotes defects, but such as do not stain [the native] with a severely bad reputation.

But inquire into the dodecatemery and the terms of the dodecatemery of Venus, so that you may discover the secrets of the things decreed by all methods.

Mercury posited in the 12th house from the ASC will make talented persons; if it was matutine, those established in great business matters, or it makes contractors handling public business,⁶ so that in some business transactions some of them are in danger, [but] in these same they have favorable results. But when it is vespertine and posited in this house, it will make those initiating business matters and inventors of many business

¹ That is, with her brothers-in-law.

² What are called today "cardinal signs" – Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn.

³ It is uncertain which signs Firmicus called 'erratic'; the only one that is certain is Aries.

⁴ Pisces is the only sign that Firmicus specifically identifies as 'scaly', but the significations of the signs Taurus through Aquarius are lost.

⁵ Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, and Pisces.

⁶ The reference is probably to private agents who collected state taxes for a percentage of the take. As Firmicus notes, this could sometimes be a risky business, although a profitable one.

matters.¹ For not without cause did the wisest men take note of this house, and not without cause did they put birth and the time of a woman's labor in this house; for the mother giving birth to offspring is assigned to this house. For the 6th house also affects the 12th, so that when all the other stars are posited in these houses they have sluggish actions; but Mercury found in this house will make learned persons, grammarians,² orators, geometers, school teachers, selling their own speeches and legal defenses by constant marketing [of them], or those who come to the aid of men in difficulty with the defense of their own speeches, defending them and liberating them from dangers; for they will be such as are seen by all to be very wise and persons on whom increases in all kinds of learning are bestowed. But then it makes this, either when it was conjunct Jupiter or when it was not afflicted by any aspect from the malefic stars. But if Mars aspected it by opposition or by square or if it was together with it, it will make accusers, concealers, deceivers, malicious persons, [and] evildoers. It will also make evildoers, poisoners, or those who make forgeries by some malicious artifice, so that they incur severe penalties on account of the malice of these crimes; for they will be condemned either as evildoers or forgers; moreover, it will make them falsify either documents or records or public records, or, having been condemned for this, it will make them die a bad death. But if the Moon, with her light increasing, conjoins Mercury and Mars placed thus, it will make those dying violently, but who are punished by judicial censure. But if the Sun was also found with them without any testimony of Jupiter, it will make them to be burned in flames. But all these things are denoted in accordance with the quality of the signs.

But because we have said that Mercury conjoins itself with all [the planets] in an easy fashion, and is good with the good [planets] and evil with the evil ones, we ought to explain what it denotes when it is associated with each of them in nativities. Posited by day with Jupiter and the Sun in fortunate houses of the nativity, it denotes the greatest good fortune; but if it was found by day with Mars, it will make calamities of the greatest bad fortune. And by night it is altered in similar fashion, for it is good with Venus and the Moon and Mars, but with the sun it denotes the greatest evils and bad fortune. And, so that we may teach this more clearly, we ought to explain all of it in detail. But first [you should] inquire diligently into Mercury's dodecatemery, so that you can arrive at all the secrets of the nativity.

Mercury partilely posited with the Sun in the 12th house from the ASC in a diurnal nativity will make paupers, unfortunates, [and] slaves, who always perish while traveling.

Mercury and Saturn partilely placed in the 12th house from the ASC denote that which we have more clearly set forth for the 6th house.

Mercury and Jupiter posited together in the 12th house from the ASC, if Mercury was matutine, will make secretaries of the king or of the senate or short-hand recorders of princes, or those who administer the greatest states, but who greatly and frequently offend and who are weighed down by the burden of misfortune in the last part of life, or who perish by a violent death if they are posited thus in a nocturnal nativity. For in a diurnal nativity they persist in these actions and these duties even to a small extent, and

¹ Probably what we would call 'deal makers' and 'entrepreneurs'.

² Those skilled in language, such as literary scholars or philologists, or high-level handlers of written documents.

they seldom offend. But when vespertine and posited in this house with Jupiter, it will give more deliberate actions and an unfavorable fate, but some will be involved in public or laborious actions.

Mercury and Mars posited in the 12th house from the ASC may make what the 6th house specially shows.

Mercury posited with Venus in the 12th house from the ASC, if it was found thus by day, will make lovers and those laboring under some fault of love affairs, but open and known for all these faults; yet, it will make them to be reported because of this, and compelled to be condemned as a result of that report; it will [also] make them die a violent death on account of those faults of mind that we have mentioned. But if they were found by night in this house, it will make many prosecutions by women of low degree, or those who are driven by the impulse of love to couple themselves with a whore; but it will [also] make mechanics¹ and those who seem to be occupied in various kinds of these actions; but who frequently depart from tradition and who in their actions and business dealings or by their own abilities are usually deceived in frequent fashion.

The Moon posited in the 12th house from the ASC in a nocturnal nativity denotes a short time and space of life; but if Jupiter or Venus or one of the two were found partilely in the ASC and the Moon was posited thus as we have mentioned, and it is a nocturnal nativity, it denotes the possession of some authority along with good fortune. But if, with Mars and Saturn partilely posited in the ASC, or one of the two, the Moon possesses the 12th house of the nativity, it will make many and evil misfortunes and serious accidents and illnesses et bodily defects, both for the native and for his mother. But if, with no [star] in the ASC, the Moon was found alone by day in the 12th house from the ASC, it denotes the loss of personal property, miserable accidents, and travel. But if it was found in similar fashion in this house by night, it will make wretched impoverished persons of either poor or servile origins to be born, and toilers and those who are always occupied in inglorious actions, and whose body or mouth is dirty with the foulness of a bad odor, and who are accustomed to be frequently cheated and endangered, and who contract some bodily defect from the inconveniences of travel.

But also diligently inquire into the Moon's dodecatemory and into the terms in which the dodecatemory [is posited]; for whatever is concealed in the nativity from the general arrangement of the stars, all of that is made public and shown explicitly by the dodecatemories and their terms. For, if you want to explain the entire substance of the astrological significations from the efficacy of the dodecatemories and from the terms in which they are found, you will not be mistaken; for the Babylonians attribute the supreme power of [astrological] decrees to the dodecatemories, but Ptolemy to the antiscions,² [but] we to both.

¹ Designers, builders, or maintainers of any kind of mechanism.

² This is one of the three places that Firmicus mentions Ptolemy. In all three, he says that Ptolemy favored the use of antiscions, which is false. Evidently, Firmicus did not have a copy of Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* and had taken that false statement from someone else.

PAUL OF ALEXANDRIA INTRODUCTION TO ASTROLOGY

Chapter 24. *Tabular Exposition of the Twelve Houses.*

The second [sign] from the ASC is called *Livelihood* and *Gate of Hades* and *succedent* to the ASC; sometimes too it signifies the topic of action through the harmony that exists because of the sinister trine from the MC. When the benefic stars are present in this house, they denote good fortune with the passage of time; sometimes too they indicate those who inherit from others (*sc.*, non-relatives), for this house is the giver of good expectations. But the malefics posited on¹ this house indicate loss of livelihood and losses of assets and generally those who are unsuccessful in acquiring property; sometimes too they make emigrants.

The sixth [sign] from the ASC is called *Bad Fortune* and *Punishment* and *before the DSC* and the *Bad Cadent*, being termed the *House of Mars*. It signifies the topic of injuries. In this house the star of Mars rejoices more than all [the other stars]. The remaining stars, when they chance to be on this house, show themselves to be idle and weak with respect to the force of their own astrological influences whenever none of the benefics is operative on the upper angle or in the succedent of the ASC.² In this house the [star] exhibiting the action becomes effective whenever it casts its rays partilely upon the MC because this³ house is harmonious and dexter [to it], standing in trine to the culminating angle. This house signifies the classes of female persons straining in service, I mean female slaves⁴ and cattle. But it also causes enmities arising from feminine persons, and also conspiracies and insurrections.

In this house, the Sun indicates one born of a father who is poor or dishonorable or ignoble or exiled; and sometimes too he is bereft of his father. But when the Moon chances to be on this house, it will make the mother a servant or a beggar or poor or dishonorable or very small [in stature]; and sometimes too it causes bereavement of the mother.⁵ In this house, i.e. the sixth from the ASC, Mars rejoices in a nocturnal nativity, and he summons [the native] into military service or military glory whenever he is found in a feminine sign and is trine to the Sun or Moon or to the [star] of Jupiter or when it chances to be with the [star] of Venus or else is in trine to her.

The eighth [sign] is called *Idle* because it is averted from and unconnected with the rising sign; it is also the succedent of the DSC; it signifies the event of death. This house was ordained to be unfortunate; and when the benefics chance to be in this house, they will make profit from deaths, for they give inheritances, and they indicate those who are benefitted by things having to do with death. Not only do the benefics show this moderately, but also the malefics, when they chance to be on this house, will make benefits from deaths; and

¹ Paul sometimes says 'in the house' and sometimes, as here, 'on the house'. This may be simply to avoid repetition of the same word, or it may reflect the idea of a chart 'on which' the planets are placed in the appropriate houses.

² The 2nd house.

³ The 6th. house.

⁴ Masculine slaves are denoted by the 12th house.

⁵ That is, the native's mother will die early.

certainly the Moon too, when it is adding to its numbers¹ and increasing in light, since, after making its course from the conjunction,² it is beheld in this house against the visible sky, therefore it too manifests the advantages [deriving] from death and grants inheritances, especially when it is moving up to the north.³

When the Sun chances to be on this house, it shows the banishment or injury or sickness or early death of the father, but in other matters it will be less active. And when the waning Moon chances to be on this house, and without the rays of the benefics, it will make paupers, wretched persons, those who are unsuccessful in acquiring property, and those who are emotional. But when the malefics chance to be here, out of sect, they bring on loss of livelihood and destruction of personal enterprises, and losses, and they cause extraordinary crises; sometimes too they become the causes of a bad death.

When Venus chances to be in this house, it will make the [contraction] of marriage to be delayed; and sometimes it indicates pederasts and sometimes passionate and lecherous persons.

When the [star] of Mercury chances to be on this house, it makes those who are fond of rest, silent persons, recluses, and sometimes thieves or forgers. And it will make stupid persons and those without understanding, or lazy persons whenever it chances to be under the Sun beams or is beheld by Saturn by presence or by the square or opposition position having more degrees than it.⁴

The twelfth [sign] from the ASC is called *Bad Daemon* and *rising before the ASC*, [and] it is the house of Saturn. In this house, the star of Saturn in diurnal genitures, holding a masculine sign, alone rejoices; and it will always make those who prevail over their enemies and suppress them and those who are occupied⁵ with their own affairs, for it indicates lords of a district and rulers and those doing mighty deeds and [who are] tyrannical⁶ in their behavior. This house also signifies the matter of sicknesses and childbearing and enemies and male slaves⁷ and quadrupeds.

The Sun happening to be in this house shows that the [native's] father will be banished or will die early,⁸ and it harms the father through sicknesses or injuries or exile, or it shows quite clearly that the father himself is restrained by poverty or ill-repute or low birth, and it indicates that the natives themselves are unostentatious and poor and needy.

But the Moon [here] shows that the mother is a slave or of little account or ignoble or banished. If it is beheld by a malefic star or if it has made its application to one of the

¹ That is, when its motion is swift.

² The new Moon.

³ When its latitude is north and increasing.

⁴ Presumably this means that Mercury is applying to the conjunction, square, or opposition of Saturn.

⁵ Reading *askholountas* 'are occupied' with MS M and the Gamma family, rather than *aukhountas* 'boasting' with MS Y and the Delta family.

⁶ The Greek word *tyrannos* 'tyrant' means someone who holds absolute power in a city or region, with the implication that he seized power rather than acquired it in what his subjects would have considered to be a proper manner. Here we have the adjectival form *tyrannikos* 'in the manner of a tyrant'. It probably qualifies the preceding word *iskhyropragmonas* 'doers of mighty deeds' to indicate those individuals who seize power in a totally ruthless manner.

⁷ Note that feminine slaves belong to the 6th house.

⁸ Lit., the native will become an orphan with respect to his father.

malefics, it indicates that the mother is very sickly, injured, or short-lived. It will make those who are being investigated¹ to be poor and wretched and continually in misfortune.

When the [star] of Jupiter holds this house, it will make uprisings of enemies and law-suits with inferiors and loss of the patrimony; however, in the case of slaves and quadrupeds, it is fine and helpful, since it has [influences] very suitable for that case.

The [star] of Mars chancing to be on this house harms the matter of slaves and quadrupeds, and it produces ambushes and plots² by servile persons.

When Venus chances to be on this house, it will make those who are made sad by feminine pretences and those who are disturbed by diseases of the soul, i.e. erotic individuals. And they have sexual relations with slave girls or old women or whores, for the sake of whom they remain in [a state of] childlessness. But if the [star] that receives the star of Venus is configured angular, it will make those who have intercourse with slaves and bad marriages, and sometimes too those who are panderers of their own wives.

When the [star] of Mercury holds this house, it denotes thieves, robbers,³ slanderers, evil-doers, collusive plaintiffs, deceitful persons, and hypocrites; sometimes too it will make secretaries⁴ or elementary school teachers or interpreters or lawyers.

RHETORIUS THE EGYPTIAN COMPENDIUM OF ASTROLOGY

Chapter 57. *Tabular Exposition.*

The Second House.

The second house is called *livelihood* and *Gate of Hades* and *idle* house. The benefics dwelling in this house are more idle; however, they denote fine things that are hoped for, and they grant hopes from things of the dead, since the house is established as the succedent to the ASC. But when the malefics are present in this house, they make impractical and lazy individuals and injuries around the eyes. And if the Lot of Fortune is there and if its ruler and the ruler of the ASC, and these are malefics, behold the house, they make guardians of the dead⁵ and those who spend their lives outside of town;⁶ and these also are eaten by dogs; sometimes too they are cast out by their parents.⁷

¹ That is, those natives who have this position.

² The Greek text has *aitias* 'causes', 'occasions', etc. But Heliodorus's *Commentary*, Chapt. 23, has *epiboulas* 'plots', 'treacheries'; Rhetorius, Chapt. 57, *epiboulais* 'treacheries'; and Firmicus, *Mathesis*, iii. 4. 34 has *insidias* 'ambushes', 'plots', etc. The idea is that masters will suffer violence at the hands of their slaves.

³ *aphanistas* 'those who make things disappear or 'destroyers''. Perhaps the *aphanistai* were what we would call 'robbers', 'looters', or 'pillagers', i.e. those who both steal and destroy, while the *kleptai* were 'sneak thieves'. The latter were more numerous and are consequently more often mentioned in the astrological literature.

⁴ Persons of authority in the government, like the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Defense.

⁵ 'Guardians of the dead' are what we would call 'cemetery caretakers'.

⁶ The cemeteries of ancient towns were outside the walls of the city. Guards were employed to ward off grave-robbers, both human and canine, for packs of starving dogs surrounded the towns. These caretakers were shunned by the citizens, and either chose to or were obliged to live outside the city.

⁷ This is not quite clear. The first phrase seems to refer to caretakers caught unaware and devoured by dogs, but the second phrase refers to the practice of exposing unwanted infants. These unfortunate babies

Similarly, when Saturn is present in this house and is the ruler of the Lot of Fortune and/or the ASC, it makes listless, sickly persons...¹

[When Jupiter is present in this house], ...,² or it will make receipt of money.

When the [star] of Mars is the ruler of the Lot of Fortune or else of the ASC and is present in the second house, it makes the greatest losses for the native; and sometimes too it makes injuries around the eyes. But if Venus is found in the house, he will also have injuries from women; and let the [particular kind of] evil be chosen according to the nature of the star whose sign it is. And if Mars is found in his own face,³ sometimes too they become prison guards or those who gain their livelihood from prisons.

If the Sun is present in this sign, ruling the Lot of Fortune or the ASC, partilely in his own face, with Mars in the ASC in a sign of Saturn, the native loses his eyesight in the period of Mars and he will beg, or else he will be deprived of his inheritance.

If the [star] of Venus is present in this house, ruling the Lot of Fortune or the ASC, the natives will leave their native country; or they will have acts having to do with wet things if she is matutine. But if she is vespertine, they take refuge in the temples of female gods, abounding in necessary things, or they preserve the mysteries of the gods and their rites. They will have a good old age.

If the [star] of Mercury, being under the Sun beams, is present in this house, he makes those who are uninitiated and unlettered. But if he is oriental,⁴ such persons are intelligent and inquisitive, and they take up those things which they have not learned about, and they become skilled in astrology.

If the Moon is present in the second house, and Saturn is in the ASC, such a one will have cataracts in his eyes.

If a malefic beholds the second house by square or opposition or conjunction,⁵ it signifies the loss of livelihood for the native. And if the second house is the domicile of Venus, such a one will sustain losses for the sake of women or through the agency of women. And if [it is] the domicile of Mercury, for the sake of learning or calculations or inheritances or separations. And if [it is] the domicile of Jupiter, he will have his loss from magnates or public affairs. And if [it is] the domicile of Mars, say that the loss is from military affairs or suchlike persons, or from war, or burning, or a fight, or from robbery, or from highway robbers.⁶ If [it is] the domicile of Saturn, say that the loss is from old people or slaves or freedmen, for the sake of land or inheritance, or from tombs, or the affairs of the dead, or from worthless persons. If it is the domicile of the Sun, it will make the loss to be from the father, or from paternal relatives or elders, or on

were carried out into the cemeteries and abandoned, where in some cases they were promptly seized and eaten by dogs.

¹ The Greek has *nekropsychous* 'dead-spirited', probably referring to acute depression. The rest of the signification of Saturn is lost (Vettius Valens, *Anthology*, ii. 14, says they will experience imprisonment) as is the beginning of the signification of Jupiter.

² Something is missing in the Greek text.

³ 'Face' is another name for 'decan'.

⁴ Literally, 'rising', but everything in the second house is rising. Valens has 'oriental' and Firmicus has 'matutine', which amounts to the same thing.

⁵ Note here that the aspect is not to a planet in the house but to the house itself.

⁶ I have so translated *e lestrikon e ephodikon prosopon*, lit. 'or robbing or traveling persons'. The roads were not secure in ancient times, and travelers were frequently assaulted by roving bands of robbers. Cf. Cumont, *L'Egypte des Astrologues*, pp. 65-68.

account of loans, or some monies, or business affairs. And if it is the domicile of the Moon, on account of the mother, or the maternal kindred, or the step-mother, or suchlike persons.

And it seems to me¹ that in each domicile and house that is damaged by a malefic that the loss is shown forth by the nature of the ruler of the sign, if it is a malefic, and the significations from the house. And if you want to cast the Lot of Livelihood, according to Dorotheus, take always by night and day [the distance] from the ruler of the second house up to the second house itself,² and cast the result from the ASC; and wherever it leaves off, [there is] the Lot. Look at the ruler of the Lot and the sign itself in which the Lot fell. And if the Lot and its ruler chance to be in a good house without any aspects from the malefics, say that his livelihood will be good. But if the ruler of the Lot is found making its morning setting seven days after the birth...³ but if [instead it is in its] morning rising, it will make hidden and secret wealth.

If the Ascending Node is found in the [house of] livelihood, and Jupiter and Venus and the Sun and Mercury happen to be there, he will acquire property, and he will be trustworthy and fond of money. But if Saturn and Mars and the Moon behold them, he will be unstable in youth, and he will reverse himself, and he will be in a bad state until he comes to his 35th year, after which he will be delivered and will acquire property. But if Saturn and Mars happen to be there alone without the aspect of Jupiter and Venus, he will be unlucky; and sometimes too, ill-fated in his end. But if the Descending Node is found in [the house of] livelihood, he will be very bad for his father, for he will have penalties and false accusations. But if Saturn and Mars happen to be there, it is the best configuration, for he gets property for himself from unpleasant activities, and from murders, and from activities having to do with the dead or from the destruction of a house by some unexpected action. But if Jupiter and Venus happen to be there, whatever he gets will be bad luck for him.

Saturn⁴ happening to be in the succedent of the rising sign [by night]⁵ will make the loss of children, and not small disturbances, and the reduction of livelihood, and being put to shame,⁶ and the loss of the paternal and maternal [inheritance]; and it prognosticates those who are lazier in their actions and also some who are stricken by bodily illness. But by day it prognosticates those who experience increase in their livelihood with the passage [of time], but who are undistinguished and poor in spirit, and some who are getting their living from watery things.

Jupiter chancing to be in the succedent of the ascendant by day or by night prognosticates inheritances from other than his family, and those who are adopted by someone, and lords of lands and buildings.

When the [star] of Mars chances to be in the [house] of livelihood by day, it makes

¹ Rhetorius himself is speaking.

² That is, count the signs from the planet to the 2nd house, and then count off the same number of signs from the ASC. All of the lots were originally determined by counting the signs from one point to the other. Counting from the degree of one point to the degree of the other was a later development.

³ The effect produced by this configuration is missing.

⁴ And here Rhetorius begins a second set of significations for planets in the 2nd house. He does this for each house, evidently having found two different sources for the significations.

⁵ Added by Cumont, having compared Firmicus, *Mathesis*, iii. 2. 4, which also omits "by night," but gives the effects of the day position in iii. 2. 6.

⁶ Cf. Vettius Valens, *Anthology*, p. 43, line 26, et al.

estrangements from one's own [country] and dwelling abroad; and it makes injuries and cuts from iron for the natives. But if the Moon happens to be in an angle or in a succedent, it will injure the natives by a fall¹ from a height or from a quadruped; but [it makes] some who experience exposure² or captivity or enslavement; they also become abandoned and in straitened circumstances, not in anything favorable. But if the [star] of Jupiter or the [star] of Venus is bearing testimony to this [star], the ensuing dangers are traversed [safely], and they escape [from their] enslavement. They will not lack the necessities of life, but sometimes they will have [them], and at other times they will be pinched. But by night the god³ is ready for military campaigns and for combat, but it also prognosticates dangers for them in these activities and glories(?).

When the Sun chances to be in the succedent of the ASC, it prognosticates private owners [of property] and a pleasant existence.

When Venus chances to be in the [house] of livelihood by day, it prognosticates contrarieties and or late marriages and disputes with female persons; but some also see the death of their wives; however, it does not bring about living poorly in old age. But by night, it signifies those who are both more prosperous and who with the passage of time are more fortunate, and who are delightful in making love and are [generally] pleasing.

When Mercury chances to be matutine in the [house] of livelihood by night, it will produce foolish persons, those who are devious, strangers to letters,⁴ and lacking [a sufficiency] in their livelihood. But when it is vespertine by night in this house, it will produce money-lenders, merchants or managers of others' [property], [and] clever trustees. But by day, those fond of learning or single-minded or peculiar [in some way], learning those things which they have not been taught, living in filth, and those who punish themselves. If the ruler of the preceding conjunction chances to be in this house, it makes losses of livelihood.⁵

**and he will encounter sickness, and he will be in straitened circumstances. But if Saturn and Mars happen to be there and they bear witness to the house, he will suffer severely in youth, and after that he will be in good [circumstances], getting possessions from princes and kings, and he will be notable and a tyrant. And he will be a worthless sort of person and he will not consider anyone because Mars and Saturn rejoice in [conjunction with] the Descending Node. But if Saturn chances to be there with Venus, he will be unstable in [his relationships with] women. And after this, he will be in fine [circumstances], and he will live 70 years.⁶

¹ Reading *ptoseos* 'fall' instead of *phyxeos* 'flight'. Cf. Valens iii. 9, (43,6 etc.)

² That is, exposure as an unwanted infant.

³ Mars.

⁴ That is, 'only half-literate'.

⁵ Cumont thinks the sentence 'If the ruler livelihood.' is an interpolation.

⁶ In MS P, this last paragraph is found in place of the latter part of the preceding paragraph (from 'But by day, those fond of...livelihood.'). It does not appear in MSS A and V (nor in Firmicus). Cumont says it may belong to the section on the Moon in the 2nd house, although it is not found in Firmicus. I think not. It mentions the Descending Node, and therefore belongs to one of the sections detailing the influence of the node in the houses, since I think the Node is never mentioned in either of the sections that specify the influences of the planets in the houses.

The Sixth House.

The sixth house is called *evil*, *cadent*, and "pre-DSC," and "first to fall," and *metacosmic*¹ and *Bad Fortune*. It has signification of injuries and slaves and enemies and quadrupeds, sometimes also of actions because it is in right trine to the MC, but it is also the house of the feet and of sicknesses involving the feet. The malefics there make sicknesses or injuries involving the feet and the loss of money.

The Sun there, [the native] will be oppressed by superiors, and he will be in subordination; wherefore, it makes the father a slave or low-born or crippled, always a foreigner, especially if in addition the ruler of the Sun is there or the Lot of the Father or the dodecatemoron of the Sun or the triplicity rulers of the Sun. For these configurations indicate that the parents are low-born, or crippled, or banished, or they are foreigners. Understand the same things from the Moon in the case of the mother and from its ruler and dodecatemoron. And especially if the luminaries happen to be in the Descending Node, say that the parents will be ill-treated. And if Saturn is also present in the house, it makes wandering and losses [and] the native leaves his things [behind] with sorrow.

Jupiter there, he will suffer loss in civil affairs.

Venus [there], he will suffer loss because of a woman or for a woman, and he will have disputes over birth; he has intercourse with slave-girls or servant-girls² or cripples, but they will be lacking in desire and charm.

Mars there makes injury to the feet, and it is also harmful in matters concerning slaves; and it gives uprisings of enemies, and dangers abroad, and injury [in the part of the body ruled] by the sign Mars is in. Mercury there [gives] ill-advised persons, thieves, wanting other peoples' possessions, slanderers, incompetents, and those who get a bad reputation.

The Sun and the Moon in conjunction there [make] madmen, epileptics, deranged persons.

Saturn there makes injury and sickness arising from wetness and cold and black bile, sometimes too paralysis, gout, gout in the hand,³ wounds in the hands, according to the nature of the sign, especially by night.

Mars there makes cuts, burns, those bitten by wild animals, attacks, wounds, attacks by robbers, especially if it is matutine; but if it is under the Sun beams, [it makes] hidden sicknesses in the internal organs or hemorrhage according to the [nature of] the sign, and more so by day.

Jupiter ruling the 6th, impeded by Saturn or Mars, badly posited in the 6th or in the 12th, makes those suffering from liver complaints and impairments from wine.

Venus ruling the 6th, badly situated and aspected by Mars or Saturn, will make those who are mad for women, but if [Venus] is in a masculine sign, lovers of boys who suffer many bad things because of this. And they will have sickness in the lungs.

¹ This term (lit., 'after the cosmic'), which is also applied to the 3rd, 9th, and 12th houses, seems to be nothing more than a synonym for 'after the angle' or what we would call 'cadent'.

² Hired servants, not slaves.

³ The Greek word *podagra* 'gout in the foot (lit., 'foot-trap')' and its companion *cheiragra* 'gout in the hand' refer to painful inflammation of the joints of the foot or hand, not necessarily due to the specific disease that we call gout. The common modern term for this condition is 'arthritis'. When the classical astrologers mention 'gout', we should probably understand 'osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, or gout', and in the case of the hand 'carpal tunnel syndrome' is also a possibility.

Mercury ruling the 6th, aspected by Saturn or Mars, will injure the hearing or the speech or the throat.

The Sun, Mars, and the Moon badly configured [and] situated there damage the vision.

The Moon also makes those diseased in the spleen. The full Moon moving toward Mars [makes] lame persons and those with club feet or bandy legs.

The Sun there in the domicile of Venus will injure [the native] through a woman.

The [ruler] of the 4th in the 6th, or the [ruler] of the 8th or the [ruler] of the 9th [in the 6th], [makes] wanderers who die abroad. The ruler of the 7th in the 6th, or the Lot of Marriage or the ruler of the Lot of Marriage, they have intercourse with slave-girls, cripples, or wretched women.

Saturn, Mars, and Venus together there destroy the wives in some evil fashion.

The ruler of the 3rd in the 6th cause ill-treatment [of the native] by his friends or brothers, or it injures the brothers.

The dodecatemoron of the Moon in the 6th injures the native, and says that his mother is low-born. But the Sun also does the same in the case of the father.

The Ascending Node being in the 6th with Mars and Saturn, or aspected by them, [the native] will fall into water or into a well, or it injures his bones. Jupiter, the Sun, and the Moon there, [or] if they aspect Saturn or Mars there, they deliver [him] from all evils; however, let him guard himself up to age 26 and [again] up to age 35, and then he will be free from fear.

The Descending Node in the 6th, he will be seriously ill in his youth. Jupiter and Venus there, he will have a hidden sickness. But if Saturn and Mars [are there], he will be delivered from evils; however, they injure some part of his body.

Saturn there by night will bring about the extinction of the inheritance, and it will make dangers and plots for the sake of slaves; and some are also injured. But by day, the evils will be moderate. And if it is square or opposite the Moon, it makes unsteadiness and consumption.¹ But if Jupiter is in aspect with either the Moon or Saturn, it will help to some extent, but it still makes sickly persons.

Jupiter in the 6th makes fights and disputes with those in authority. And Jupiter always become evil in the 6th and 12th, especially by night.

Mars in the 6th makes sicknesses and injuries and dangers and plots on account of slaves or of persons convicted or arrested, especially by day. Mars being angular by day in general produces those in danger of [sudden] death.

The Sun in the 6th makes the father die miserably or be condemned, and it injures [him] and destroys his property, if indeed there is no star in the 10th; but if one is found in the tenth, it makes those [receiving] good fortune from their parents.

Venus [there] by day and by night, [makes the native] have intercourse with lower-born women, or with widows or cripples; and it makes those who are treated unkindly by their wives, especially if nothing is in the 10th. But if the chart is that of a woman, she will have difficulties in childbirth or embryotomies. But if there is a star in the 10th, especially by night and in sect, it denotes fascinating and charming persons and good

¹ The Greek has *astasiai kai phthiseis*. Firmicus, *Mathesis* III ii. 12-13, has *erraticos...phthisicos* 'unsteady persons...consumptives', but the former epithet is due to Saturn in bad aspect with the Moon, and the latter epithet is due to Saturn in bad aspect with Mars. Rhetorius's text, as we have it, does not mention Mars. Perhaps there is a lacuna between the two Greek words.

fortune through women and [generally] successful. But [if Venus is] declining from the angles,¹ with the malefics holding the angles and impeding the Moon, it makes [the natives] short-lived or exposed.²

Mercury in the 6th by day [makes] those having some advancements and good fortune from talking, or speech-making, or business, or from [actions] of the gods, especially if any star happens to be in the 10th. But Mercury being in the 6th by night, matutine, makes interpreters, fishermen, bird-catchers, and carvers, if indeed any star is in the 10th; but if no [star] is there, it makes evil-minded, idle, unsuccessful, conceited persons. But if it is vespertine, [it makes] intelligent, sensible, discerning persons, [and] those in charge of offices, or banking, or storehouses, or documents, or merchants, and from which activities they prosper. And if it receives the application of the Moon, it makes public scribes,³ or instructors of kings⁴ or financial administrators, especially if there is a star in the 10th.

[The influence of the Moon in the 6th is missing in the MSS, which is all the more unfortunate because it is also missing in Firmicus.]

The Eighth House.

The eighth house is called *idle* and *epicataphora* of the ASC and *epikatadysis* and *dimming*.⁵ It is the sign that is turned away from the ASC; because of this, and because of its meaning of death, it signifies the turning away of life.

If then the Lot of Fortune chances to be there, and its ruler, and the ruler of the ASC, it makes misfortunes and irregularities. And if these [rulers] are malefics, the evil is worse, for it makes unfortunate persons, and if [they are] under the Sun beams, short-lived persons.

Mercury being ruler of the [Lot of the] Daemon, [and] being present in the 8th, [makes] unintelligent, and illiterate, and lazy persons. Mercury being ruler of the 8th or of the

¹ Reading *apoklinasa* 'declining from' instead of *prosklinasa* 'inclining towards'. (Firmicus, *Mathesis* III.vi.13, has *aliena...a cardinibus* 'alien to the angles'.) But Pingree, *The Yavanaj-taka of Sphujidhvaja*, II, 341, cites an explanation of the Sanskrit word *lagṇa-bhimukha* 'facing the ascendant' as referring to a planet in the 12th house, so perhaps also to the Greek mind 'inclining towards the angles' might be equivalent to 'declining from the angles', in which case the text is correct as it stands.

² The Greek text actually has *ekbolimous* 'ejected' or 'aborted' where we would expect *ekthetous* 'exposed'. (Cf. above, the Moon in the first house.) However, Firmicus, *Mathesis* III.vi.13, has *expositos* 'exposed'. The classical astrologers mentioned the exposing of children much more often than they did abortion, so the odds seem to favor 'exposed' over 'aborted'.

³ These functionaries prepared legal documents of various sorts – contracts, wills, etc., thus combining the activities of public secretaries, notaries, and lawyers.

⁴ Cumont, *L'Égypte des Astrologues*, p. 31. These were instructors or professors attached to the royal household. Cumont inclines to equate them with the functionaries who supervised the care of the royal children.

⁵ The two names I have left in Greek mean respectively 'falling down upon' the ASC and 'falling down upon the DSC'. The reference is to the setting of the stars as they move downward towards the western horizon. The reasoning behind the phrase 'epicataphora of the ASC' (if it is not simply a blunder) is the same as that applied to the term 'cadent from the ASC' that is sometimes applied to all the cadent houses – the ASC is the basis of all the other houses, and especially the angular houses; hence, a house that is cadent from the MC, the DSC, or the IMC could also be considered to be cadent from the ASC, although that is properly only true of the 12th house.

12th or of the 6th, being present in the 8th under the Sun beams with Saturn and Mars, [makes] deaf and dumb persons.

The Moon there by night adding to her numbers and light, especially if Jupiter is in the 11th, [the native] will profit from matters having to do with the dead and with inheritances.

The ruler of the 4th in the 8th, he dies abroad. The ruler of the 8th makes these same things when it is cadent.

Venus in the 8th makes miserable and shameful persons.

The ruler of the 8th in the 10th or the 11th or the 5th, [the native] will grow rich from matters having to do with the dead, especially in its own domicile or exaltation and not under the Sun beams and adding to its numbers. But if it is under the Sun beams, it makes an inheritance, but he immediately squanders it. The ruler of the 3rd in the 8th destroys the brothers first. The ruler of the 5th being there causes childlessness. The ruler of the 12th or of the 6th being there [makes] the deaths of enemies and slaves.¹

Mars there injures the vision, especially if the Sun or the Moon is in the ASC.

Saturn [and] Mars there without Jupiter [and] Venus make [the natives to be] banished.

Jupiter there in its own domicile or exaltation, adding to its numbers, [the native] profits from matters having to do with the dead, and especially without Saturn and Mars.

Mercury and Mars there [make] forgers.

Saturn, ruler of the 8th beholding destroys him [in some fashion involving] water or abroad, especially in a water sign or impeded in another [sign]; but if Saturn is in an earth sign, it destroys [him] on a mountain. In a word, examine the ruler of each sign of the 8th, in what sign it is, for that one becomes the [significator of] death.

The Sun ruler of the 8th impeded in the sign of another, if the 8th house itself is impeded, it destroys [by a fall] from a height according to the nature of the sign.

Mars ruler of the 8th, with the house impeded, makes those dying violently; sometimes too, huntsmen.² Mars aspected by the Sun makes a violent death [caused] by kings or enemies.

Venus ruler of the 8th impeded, and the 8th impeded, makes violent death from [too] much wine or from poisoning by women.

Mercury ruler of the 8th impeded, and also the 8th itself, makes death [caused] by slaves or by writings.

Jupiter ruler of the 8th impeded along with the house makes the death [caused] by kings or magnates, and, if [it is] in its own domiciles or triplicity or exaltation, in the same country, but if in other [signs], abroad.

If the Ascending Node happens to be in the 8th with the Sun, Mars, Mercury, [and] Saturn or if they aspect the house, it makes a bad death or a short-lived person.

If Jupiter and Venus [are] in the 8th alone, [it makes] an easy death and great good fortune.

If the Descending Node happens to be in the 8th and Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, and Mars [are] there, they make those dying violently.³

¹ As J.B. Morin points out in *Astrologia gallica*, Book 21, the 8th house is only the house of death for the native, so some of these aphorisms are inconsistent with the doctrine of derived houses.

² Literally, '(hunting) dog leaders'.

³ This paragraph is a condensed version of Rhetorius, Chapt. 77 "General Configurations of Those Suffering a Violent Death."

Saturn there by day denotes those acquiring [assets] with the passage of time, in order to assist others, but some [other natives] acquiring [assets] from death. Being there by night, it makes those who are banished, consumptives, and those dying a bad death.

Jupiter there by day and by night denotes acquisition and inheritance with the passage of time.

Mars in the 8th by day makes wants and disorders and dangers.

The Sun in the 8th makes the early death of the father, and some [of the natives] are madmen;¹ the stars that are with it or in aspect to it show the cause. But the Sun opposing the Moon, with the bond not yet broken,² injures the native,

Venus by day in the 8th [makes] those who marry late and those who have intercourse with lower-born women or widows or young girls. And it destroys the natives through gonorrhea³ or spasms or apoplexy. But by night, it denotes wealthy and rich persons and those who benefit from the death of women. And it makes the death [of the native] quick and painless and easy.

Mercury in the 8th vespertine by day [makes] ineffective, unsuccessful, lazy, toilsome persons; but vespertine by night, those inheriting from unrelated persons, those deserving of windfalls, fortunate, but passive and who easily become sick. Matutine in the 8th, it makes increases of money and those who aim at great actions, and some who share in responsibilities, or fiduciary relationships, or managing, or legal documents, or even those who inherit from unrelated persons.

[The influence of the Moon in the eighth house is missing.]

The Twelfth House

And if the ruler of the nativity is found in the twelfth, say that the native is a slave, or low-born, or an outcast, or that he is injured. And if the ruler of the twelfth house is found with the Sun, say that the father is cheap or the patrimony is destroyed. And similarly also in the case of the Moon, for the things of the mother.

And if Saturn or Mars is found to be ruler of the twelfth house and it is in the ASC, it prognosticates those who are eaten by dogs or by wild beasts or those who are fond of hunting with dogs. And if the ruler of the ninth house is in the twelfth and if it is with Saturn, it makes shipwrecks for this one or dangers in the sea if a benefic does not aspect the scheme. And if it is found with Mars in the twelfth house, it makes attacks by soldiers or pirates against this one abroad or on the road.

And if the Ascending Node is in the twelfth house and the Sun and the Moon are found there with Mars and Mercury, he will fall into misery or a bone of his will be broken or he is blinded or he is burned in a fire or ill-fated in his end or he is destroyed by enemies, especially if Saturn is also with them. But if Jupiter and Venus are there, he is delivered to some extent from evils, but [he is] ill-fated in his end. But if Jupiter and Venus are there alone, he may not suffer the worst, but he [will] acquire cheap⁴ property or he will have good luck from slaves.

¹ In Greek, *phrenetikous*, a variant of *phrenitikous*, means someone suffering from inflammation of the brain. Here it refers to the noisy type of demented person – the raving madman.

² He means 'with the technical condition of "bonding" still in effect'. This usually means "within an orb of 3 degrees."

³ That is, through some sort of venereal disease, not necessarily the one we call gonorrhea.

⁴The text seems a bit shaky here.

If the Descending Node is in the twelfth house and Mars and Saturn are there or they aspect it, it will be best of all. For he will find a windfall, or he will be given a share in the property of others. And if Jupiter and Venus are there alone, without [any] aspect of Saturn or Mars or Mercury, he will be inconsistent [in his behavior] towards his wife and children, and he will have an internal injury or [one] in the spleen. And if the Sun and Mars and Mercury aspect each other and Saturn is found there, he will be very unfortunate in his whole life.

Saturn being in the sign of the Bad Daemon by night shows the loss of the inheritance and dangers and plots on account of slaves, and those who are [mentally] disturbed or perverts. But by day, the god¹ will be more moderate in these [matters]. And if he squares or opposes the Moon, it will be indicative of inconstancy and decline unless Jupiter aspecting either the Moon or Saturn causes a partial overturn of the rulers. And they experience severe illnesses, and they have internal pains.

Jupiter being in the sign of the Bad Daemon prognosticates fights and dangers and litigation² against superiors. And always this god in these signs³ is not benefic, especially by night.

Mars being in the signs that constitute the Bad Daemon is the cause of sicknesses and injuries. And they also experience dangers and treacheries, [and] not few [either] on account of slaves or condemned persons and associated persons, especially by day. But by night the evils become more moderate. For this god being angular in the IMC by day is generally destructive.

The Sun being in the sign of the Bad Daemon makes the parents lower-born or slaves or captives, and some experience injuries or sicknesses.

Venus being in the sign of the Bad Daemon by night makes those who are distressed by the pretenses of women, but, if she is aspected by Saturn and Mercury or Mars, those involved in mental illnesses, that is [those of an] erotic [nature]. Some of them too marry slaves or courtesans, on which account they remain childless. And being in this house by day, it signifies those who are badly and violently ruined by women, according to the physical nature of the signs. For the goddess has various and hard-to-find ways of doing business, through which also the affairs of life are guided.

And if Mercury chances to be in the sign of the Bad Daemon, it begets those who take care of major affairs or even employees of the state, those who are endangered by others' affairs but who also are happy in them. Being vespertine in this house, he becomes a busybody.

For not without cause and just as it happened, but rightly Hermes marked this house for childbirth, while the fate of the one giving birth was at hand, if she was pregnant [and] with the opposite sign sympathizing with it, from which house the stars in combination render the actions less effective.⁴

¹ Saturn. (It is interesting to note that this term was not altered by the Christian copyists of the middle ages.)

² The Greek term *krisiologias* is found only in this passage of Rhetorius.

³ That is, in the 12th house.

⁴ This paragraph is an interpolation, or at least it is misplaced, for it has nothing to do with Mercury's signification in the 12th house. However, it is found in exactly the same place in the *Mathesis*, so it goes back to the common source, presumably Antiochus of Athens. Two items in it are noteworthy. First, it attributes the assignment of this particular house rulership to Hermes, thus perhaps pointing to the origin of

The star of Mercury being in this house will produce grammarians, orators, geometers, [and] students that have used words, or those becoming benefactors of men in distress¹ through speech, and those who are considerably wiser than the rest. But if it is opposed by Mars, becoming evil, it will condemn [the native] on account of state-secrets or forgeries or [mis]management or on account of slaves, or it will force [him] into a judgment.

If the Moon is in the sign of the Bad Daemon...[the rest is missing]²

THE BOOK OF HERMES

Chapter 36. *Those Who Experience a Violent Death.*

[excerpts]

. . . . But if Mercury was in contact with one of these [Mars or Saturn] and aspected the Moon by square or opposition, they will make the [natives] forgers or poisoners or false administrators of the royal monies, thanks to which they will died violently.

Saturn and Mars in the 12th and the Moon in the 6th and the Sun in the ASC will make slaves, weak persons, and those dying violently.

Saturn and Mars in the 11th or in the 5th, and the Moon with Mercury in the 8th, and the Sun in the DSC will make those dying violently.

Saturn in the MC, and the Sun in the DSC, and the Moon with Mars in the 8th, will make those dying violently.

Mars and the Moon in the 12th, but the Sun with Saturn succeeding, will make those dying violently; but some, not yet emerging from the mother's womb, are rolled around by embryotomies or such a kind of death, especially when they are posited in the same sign.

Saturn and Mercury together in the 12th or in the 6th [will make those who are] placed over useless accounts, and they will be sluggish in carrying out their [duties] in connection with them.

Saturn and Mercury in the 12th or in the 6th, and Mars opposed or in square, will make evildoers, perjurers, armed robbers, forgers, traitors, *apparibiles*,³ and [persons] similar to those. Moreover, some of them are accused or put in detention on account of condemned persons or slaves, and [these accusations] are converted into judicial condemnations, especially if the Moon aspects [them].

this whole set of house rulerships. Second, the word *moira* 'part' or 'share' is here used in the sense of 'fate', common enough elsewhere but unusual in astrological Greek, where its usual sense is 'degree'.

¹ The Greek text has *homoion*, literally 'same', which could mean 'of the same rank'. But Bidez thinks *homoion* is corrupt, noting that Firmicus has *laborantibus* 'toiling' or 'suffering'. I have assumed the Greek should read *poneonton* with similar meaning. (Bidez suggests *kindyneuonton* 'venturesome'.)

² MS **P** preserves the beginning of this section; MSS **AV** omit the entire section.

³ The Latin word means literally 'capable of appearing'. It may be an adjective modifying the preceding 'traitors', or it may be used as a noun, but in any case its exact meaning here is uncertain.

Saturn in the 2nd or in the 8th, and the Moon in any one of the succedents, and Venus in contact in the DSC or in the 12th, and Mars in the DSC, makes cripples and wounded persons, [and] in general, those who die violently

The Moon and Mercury similarly posited in the 9th or in the 3rd or opposing each other, if the ASC will be Aries or Scorpio, with Mars in the 12th or in the 6th, and Saturn in the DSC, makes those who die violently.

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