



By Grandma Zodiac



**ARIES:**

The theme for Goat People this month is, "Lighten up!". Come down from the mountain and graze with those you laughingly call normal. You'll still feel lonely and shunned, but at least you can lock horns and flirt. Stop leading for a minute, sit on the nude beach of life and watch what washes ashore.



**TAURUS:**

It's been long enough now. Put aside those self-induced disasters that turned your birthday into the usual horror. Sun in Cancer (the sign of home, psychotic secrecy, and body vermin) makes this your month to shine. Be even more bossy and domestic than usual. Bake a pie and bully someone into eating it.



**GEMINI:**

My, we've been busy lately, haven't we? The time for being a social gerbil has passed. Stay home and worry that you may have taken shallowness to new depths. When picking quarrels, be aware that, as the zodiac's resident schizophrenics, only one of you is right. Do your level best not to fall in love on the 10th. You'll only be toying with your affectations.



**CANCER:** Happy solar return. For once in your life, don't back in to your birthday. Yes, everyone loves you. No, they don't think you're a drag. The universe isn't existential, it's just playing hard to get. If you want to prime the pump, give somebody what they want, as opposed to what they need.



**LEO:** Not the month for solar kitty kitties to sit around waiting for applause. The deadline staring you in the face is no joke, booblah. Stop reading your press releases and write a few. Don't wait to be loved, love something. In fact, everything. Especially squirrels, sour mash whiskey, and reruns of Married With Children. Wash your windows on the 14th.



**VIRGO:**

Stop wallowing in reality. Who cares if everyone looks to you for stability. You and I know how hilarious this is. Embrace the unconventional. Take off your clothes someplace you shouldn't. Rub yum-yum oil on something you love. Avoid biplanes on the 12th. Near the full moon, you'll be invited out for sushi. Or, for those with afflicted Neptunes, you'll be mauled by a large squid.



**LIBRA:** A great time for settling grudges. Don't give an inch. The sleazy swine you're dealing with don't have the brains God gave a crowbar and leaving them alone would be an act of misplaced kindness. On the 8th, you'll be given a splendid chance to sit in judgment. Your motto this month: the Golden Rule's for saps.

**SCORPIO:** Business as usual for those born under the sign of vicious insects. You're skating on thin ice. The power trip you're running is about to blow up in your face. Limit yourself to one manipulative act per day. It's one thing to laugh at others' misfortunes and another to bring them about. The night of the 9th, you'll be approached by a Flamenco dancer who says she (or he) knows what you want. He (or she) will be lying.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Play time for Centaurs! Love, or a close facsimile, blossoms for you. As usual, it will tear your heart out and eat it. On the bright side, it won't take long. If you've got a brain in your head, you'll stay close to home. Wash your cat, fix the switch on your lava lamp, and ignore invitations to orgies. On the new moon, you're prone to accidents involving an accordion.

**CAPRICORN:** What's with you people? The sun's shining, the birds are singing, and you sit in the basement plotting a return to power. Some days, if it wasn't for hollow-eyed subterfuge, you'd have no life at all. Listen up. The paranoid fantasy you've built up around your neighbor's parakeet is absolute nonsense. And no, dynamite will solve nothing.

**AQUARIUS:** Not the time for big decisions. If you must take a flyer, try a different toothpaste. The madness of last month comes back in spades. A lawyer will tell you he told you so. Avoid spicy foods, plaid scarves, and anyone in a mariachi band. On the full moon, there's a chance you'll be extradited.

**PISCES:** Good for you, Fish People! All that morose mooning about finally bears fruit. On the 19th, you'll be whisked off by a fantasy to rendezvous with an illusion. On the full moon, you'll be starring in your own Edgar Allen Poe musical. Throw out the anchor and pull out the stops. If nobody's ever seen an electron, who says you can't dance with fairies?

**I was walking down the street the other day...**

...and there on the steps of the bank was an elderly gentleman and his middle aged daughter. It was an extremely hot day. He appeared heated, worn and slightly disoriented. I was dressed in the coolest piece of clothing I own - and was startled to see this old man dressed in a windbreaker, boots, leather gloves and a hat! No wonder he appeared dizzy!

The woman was speaking loudly in an exaggerated manner directly in her father's ear, "Dad, can you hear me? Dad. Dad! Can you hear me?"

Limply he nodded affirmatively and waved his hands to dismiss her questions - if only for a moment. Apparently she thought this was encouragement because she continued. "So, Dad - listen...this book says there's a great hotel in Newport. NEW-PORT. What do you think, Dad? Can YOU HEAR ME?" He again nodded. He rested his elbows on his knees and put his forehead to his hands.

I was an unseen observer standing behind them just outside the bank doors. I couldn't help but think back to the years in which I traveled the coast with my Dad who had Alzheimer's disease. Of course he could never keep the pace of which I was capable and I constantly found myself having to force myself to slow down. To listen to what my Dad wanted to do.

My thoughts wandered further to the scores of family that travel through town leading small children by the hand and on leashes in and out of stores. I thought of all the times I've heard the small ones crying, whimpering, screaming - simply (or demanding) pleading, "Can't we just go home now?"

Caring for family. An aged parent. A young child. Sometimes the line of difference seems thin between the two. I remembered questioning so many times if I were doing the best for my father. How could I best demonstrate respect for the man who had raised me when he, in fact, could not remember he was my father?

The loud question, "Can you hear me?" pierced the reverie I was experiencing regarding my own story with my dad. I realized I'd been standing there for several minutes and, to my embarrassment, the gentleman suddenly became aware of my presence. He turned his head to me and caught my eyes. Shaking his head slowly he said to me, "You know, honey, it's hell to grow old."

I smiled. At him. The daughter was still reading from the tour book and reciting aloud possible next destinations. She hadn't noticed me. Was the man just stating a truth - or did he somehow sense I would understand what he meant? I don't know. I do know that man reminded me of my dad. I do know that when he smiled back at me, he took off his hat and gloves and started cooling off a bit.

I walked in to the bank. Still drawn to the picture of them through the window, drawn to my own thoughts and memories I heard, "Can we help you, Mary Anne? Mary Anne?" I smiled. I wanted to tell the clerk, "Yes, I can hear you."

by mary anne radmacher-hershey

**Is America A Christian Nation?**

Why be concerned about the separation of church and state?

Ignoring history, law, and fairness, many fanatics are working vigorously to turn America into a Christian nation. Fundamentalist Protestants and right-wing Catholics would impose their narrow morality on the rest of us, restricting women's rights, freedom for religious minorities and unbelievers, gay and lesbian rights, and civil rights for all. History shows us that only harm comes of uniting church and state.

America has never been a Christian nation. We are a Jew nation. Anne Gaylin, president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, points out: "There can be no religious freedom without the freedom to dissent."

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Life is not orderly. No matter how we try to make life so, right in the middle of it we die, lose a leg, fall in love, drop a jar of apple-sauce.  
Natalie Goldberg

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