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ARIES (March 21-April 19): "Some people weave burlap into the fabric of our lives, and some weave gold thread," says Cosmo Doogood in his *Urban Alamanc*. "Both contribute to make the whole picture beautiful and unique." I would add that there are certain people who on some occasions weave burlap into the fabric of our lives, and at other times weave gold thread. You are such a person, Aries. At this particular moment, though, you're in one of your gold-thread phases. Honor your natural tendencies, please. Save your rougher gifts for later so you can concentrate on giving your grace and beauty now.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Green Day recently won a Grammy for best rock album, but their future was in doubt a few years ago. The band's three members weren't getting along, record sales were declining, and they no longer felt aligned with the bratty punk attitude that had originally been the core of their identity. They tried a variety of experiments to shake themselves out of their funk. Their best idea was to rebel against their signature style by recording a bunch of silly songs like polka ditties and dirty Christmas carols. A similar approach would be a good prescription for you right now, Taurus. Whether you're suffering from a mental block or emotional constipation, one possible cure is to play at being what you're not.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): "Always and never are two words you should always remember never to use," said semanticist Wendell Johnson. Though I almost always agree with his advice, I have to make an exception for you Gemini this week. This may be one of the most bigger-than-life, no-strings-attached interludes in many moons. Even the ordinary could become epic; the last might become first and vice versa. In the midst of blockbuster special effects and melodramatic plot twists, you might find that invocations of "always" and "never" are downright reasonable.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): "I used to have superpowers," the bumper sticker says, "but my therapist took them away." Does that describe you? Have you been overly normalized by the bland conventions of what constitutes psychological health? Has your spunk been sapped by the pressure to behave yourself in a civilized manner? If so, I have two bits of advice. They'll have a sickening effect if you apply them too liberally, but they'll be a wonderful tonic if you use them in small doses. First, here's some medicine from Thoreau: "Do not be too moral. You may cheat yourself out of much life. Aim above morality. Be not simply good; be good for something." Now try this inoculation by Rumi (as translated by Coleman Barks): *Forget safety./ Live where you fear to live./ Destroy your reputation./ Be notorious./ I have tried prudent planning/ long enough./ From now/ on, I'll be mad.*

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): There are a number of organizations whose specialty is dreaming up new holidays. With their

inventions added to the old standards, you now have the chance to goof off as you celebrate something or other on every single day of the year. I'll mention a few upcoming festivals that are perfect for you and your astrological needs. First there's No Housework Day on April 7. Avoid all humdrum domestic chores during that 24-hour period, and don't feel a trace of guilt. April 8 brings Take a Wild Guess Day, when you should entertain sudden inspirations and out-of-the-blue hunches. April 9 is Rebel against Your Past Day. Refuse to be controlled by what you used to be. On April 10, observe Fantastic Fantasy Day, a time when you should let your imagination run wild. April 11 is Wear Someone Else's Clothes Day, and April 12 is Be Big and Loud Day.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Though much of Iceland is covered with snow, glaciers, and lava plateaus, the town of Hveragerdi is graced with greenhouses where geothermal energy is harnessed to grow bananas. You remind me of this oasis, Virgo. Though you're surrounded by what might be described as a barren wasteland, you yourself are a warm, nurturing source of fertility. No matter how inhospitable it might get outside of your circle in the next two weeks, you should just keep growing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): When people need a major alibi to get out of work or explain their absence from an event they're expected to attend, one of the most frequently used excuses is "I had to go to my grandmother's funeral." While I'm definitely not predicting your grandmother will die this week, I am prophesying that you'll need an equally plausible reason to skip out on an unexciting task in order to enjoy a very pleasant adventure. A good surprise is coming, Libra, and you should do whatever it takes to make sure that a previously scheduled duty doesn't get in the way.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Inmates at a penitentiary in Washington have created *The Convict Cookbook*. Normal prison fare gets pretty boring, so they've improvised recipes that can be cooked in a jail cell using radiator pipes instead of a stove and plastic bags in place of bowls. Proceeds from the book's sale go to a children's museum. Judging from your temporary astrological omens, Scorpio, I think *The Convict Cookbook* could serve as an inspiration. While you're in nowhere near as tight a spot as those criminals, your style has definitely been getting cramped lately. Why not have fun while you're indisposed? Maybe you can even turn a profit and contribute to a good cause as you do.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): English poet William Wordsworth said that "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." By that definition, Sagittarius, you'll be a fount of poetry this week. For best results, though, don't immediately translate those spontaneous feelings into action. Let them have their way with you for a while before

you decide what they all mean. It's one of those frothy, dazzling times when you have no more important task than to honor your emotional riches with your reverent, patient attention.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Mahatma Gandhi said that "Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony." You are maybe as close as you've ever been to achieving that mythical state. I'm tempted to say that there's a cosmic conspiracy working to unify elements of your life that have long been at odds. Fragments are weaving themselves together as if directed by a power that's beyond your conscious awareness. Contradictions that have at times threatened to make you feel like a hypocrite are tantalizingly close to melting away. I urge you to drop everything, Capricorn, so that you may give yourself fully to an intense collaboration with this cosmic conspiracy.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Anne Sullivan (1866-1936) was a miracle worker who taught the deaf, dumb, and blind child, Helen Keller, how to communicate. Through Sullivan's efforts, Keller grew up to become a renowned author and public speaker dedicated to social reform. I believe most of us are visited at least once in our lives by our own version of Anne Sullivan—a teacher who offers us dramatic help in overcoming our limitations. For you, Aquarius, 2005 could bring the arrival of such a person. Will you respond or will you turn away, retreating to your comfortable ignorance? What happens in the coming weeks may be crucial in answering that question.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): I came across an interesting meditation in a *New Yorker* analysis of the film, *The Assassination of Richard Nixon*. Describing the main character, Sam Byck, played by Sean Penn, the reviewer observed that "Sam wants to be treated as an individual. But, living in a competitive and utilitarian society, he doesn't have sufficient talent to be treated as an individual." Do you agree with this statement, Pisces? Is it your belief that the more talented a person is, the more deserving he or she is of being treated as an individual? Think it through thoroughly. In the coming week, you'll be dealing with variations on this theme, and how you respond could have a big impact on your ability to express your own talents.

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