

free will astrology

BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Have you been dreaming of frogs, worms, and potted plants? Researchers have found that pregnant women have an inordinate number of encounters with those three things during their sleep-time adventures. And while you may not technically be carrying a developing baby inside you, you are at least gestating a brainchild. Like a woman who will give birth in the not-too-distant future, you're both delicate and strong, a bit lumbering but radiantly graceful, sometimes out of sorts but often wiser than you've ever been.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): As deputy defense secretary, Paul Wolfowitz was a key part of the team that planned America's invasion of Iraq in 2003. These days he's got a new gig, president of the World Bank, and prefers not to be distracted by the Downing Street memo and other ever-growing evidence that the war was built on faulty and deceitful assumptions. "There will be a time and place to talk about history," he has said, "but I really don't believe it's now." Wolfowitz should be your anti-role model in the coming week, Taurus. This is the time and this is the place for you to talk and think about your own personal history in exhaustive detail.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): According to author Truman Capote, "It's a scientific fact that if you stay in California, you lose one point of IQ for every year." I hope he was wrong, since it would mean my IQ has already declined 28 points since I moved to the West Coast in 1977. But even if his theory is correct, and you're a Gemini who lives in California, you'll be able to recover some of your lost intelligence in the coming weeks. That's because the current astrological configurations virtually guarantee that you'll be getting smarter, and probably wiser as well. As for you Twins living outside of California, you can expect to soar as close to the genius level as you ever have.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Emily Dickinson had a boundless imagination and an intense craving for privacy. She wrote nearly 1,800 poems, but kept them to herself, stashing most of them in a trunk belonging to her maid. Only seven of them were published while she was alive. Why did she hide the brilliant and prolific outpouring of her soul? No one really knows. Let's make sure you don't follow her example, Cancerian. In my astrological opinion, it's high time for you to begin revealing at least some of the incredible beauty that you conceal from the world. When you look back at this period of your life 40 years from now, maybe you'll say, "That was the turning point, when I stopped being such a closely guarded secret."

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): "The fact that some geniuses were laughed at does not imply that all who are laughed at are geniuses," wrote Carl Sagan. "They laughed at Columbus and they laughed at the Wright brothers. But they also laughed at Bozo the Clown." I bring this to your attention, Leo, because your bright ideas may be met with skeptical amusement in the coming week. Is that because they're in the Wright brothers' category or more like Bozo's? I suspect they'll actually be a mix of both – half-ingenuous and half-cracked. Your job is to be ruthlessly honest as you figure out which are which.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Last June in Ethiopia, seven men kidnapped a 12-year-old girl and held her in a remote wilderness for seven days. Then a miracle occurred. Three lions sprang out of nowhere and chased the abductors away. They protected the girl until a search team arrived, then slipped away. "The lions stood guard until we found her and then they just left her like a gift and went back into the forest," said one of the rescuers. I've told you this story, Virgo, because I believe it has metaphorical resemblances to an adventure you're in the middle of.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): There would be no apples if it weren't for the bees that pollinate apple blossoms. Likewise, chocolate wouldn't exist without the flies that pollinate the flowers of the cacao tree. In the coming week, Libra, I encourage you to imagine you're analogous to those bees and flies – a social pollinator who spreads good

influences from group to group and connects people who should be allies. In addition, I'd like you to imagine you're cooking up metaphorical versions of chocolate mousse and apple pie. In other words, make it your goal to generate delicious effects that are both gourmet and down to earth. You might also want to be like another pollinator, bats. They ensure the fruitfulness of agave plants and hence are responsible for tequila.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Pioneer cartoonist Walt Disney had no doubts about what inspired his greatest ardor. "I love Mickey Mouse more than any woman I've ever known," he said. My sculptor friend Rachel has a similar relationship with her art. "I don't have time for boyfriends," she told me. "Men just distract me from my work, which is the only thing that gives me unconditional joy." I suggest that in the coming weeks you make Walt and Rachel your role models, Scorpio. What form of creative self-expression inspires as much of your passion as your drive for romantic intimacy? Feed it with the same fervor you summon when you're infatuated with a new lover.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): A few weeks ago I went to the Warped Tour, an outdoor music festival featuring 80 rock and punk bands on ten different stages. Pummeled nonstop in mosh pits full of flailing dancers in the 100-degree heat, basking in the blasts of guitars, drums, and vocals roaring at jet-engine volumes, showered by saliva and sweat from the frenzied musicians, I had a religious experience. On the one hand, unbridled chaos seemed to be raging all around me. On the other hand, I felt perfectly safe and thoroughly entertained. I was also serenely amused by the knowledge that everyone was there primarily to play and have fun. That's what I wish for you in the coming days, Sagittarius: a knack for putting yourself in the enjoyable eye of the human hurricane.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): There are at least 20 different kinds of kisses, and the ancient Indian book Kama Sutra describes 10 of them. Loving gazes and caresses come in an almost infinite variety, and the 2,600-year-old book identifies a few of each. As for sexual positions, the Kama Sutra provides insight into how to perform 84. In the coming weeks, I suggest you explore the Kama Sutra or a text like it, Capricorn, because your astrological assignment is to be ingenious and experimental as you push past the frontiers of your sexual wisdom.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): My brother Tom is a real estate agent. Lately he's been noticing that a lot of people are suffering from what he calls IDD – Intention Deficit Disorder. They act as if they really want to buy or sell a house, but then never get past the first few fledgling steps toward that end. Their good intentions get derailed by modest challenges. I want to make sure that you Aquarians don't develop a case of IDD in the coming weeks. The astrological omens suggest that you could fall prey to wandering around aimlessly unless you add a large dose of steel to your will.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): In the 19th century, ketchup was sold as a medicine. Physicians prescribed "Dr. Miles Compound Extract of Tomato" and similar potions to cure a variety of maladies, including liver disease, baldness, athlete's foot, and depression. In this wacky tradition, I'm recommending that you eat lots of ketchup to cure what ails you. There's actually nothing wrong with you at all, of course. But you have been feeding a tiny delusion with so much worried attention that it has bloomed into a big bad hallucination. One of the best medicines might be ketchup, whose healing power is as imaginary as your fake problem, and which is therefore a likely cure for it.

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