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Apts. for Rent

S. HILLS co-housing community has apt. for rent. Env. conscious, spacious and friendly. Avail. Jan 1. 431-0699.

CUTE, COZY very small 1-bdrm cottage. River Rd area. Private fenced yard, W/D. \$450/mo incl utils. Lease, first, last, deposit. 520-1842.

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GREAT DOWNTOWN 4-plex apt, 5th and Polk. New owners in process of ext cleanup and landscaping. Clean 2-bdrm, 1-ba. Patio and front yard. \$595/mo. 729-6308.

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FLORENCE: ONE Jazzy, bright, in town large 1-bdrm apt 4 blocks from river, close to ocean, big backyard, attached to two mile bike trail. W/D, fridge, cable included, \$675/mo. 541-607-1610.

Homes for Rent

CLOSE-IN country surrounded by nature. 4-bdrm, 2-ba flat and office on 11 shared, organic acres. Big rooms, huge kitchen, views, quiet, wood/elec heat. No smoking, dogs. Winter special, \$925/mo. Security. 342-5027.

SMALL, COZY 2-bdrm., 1-ba. River Rd. area. Lg. yard, no garage. Cat OK with dep. \$700/mo + utils. First, last. Credit check, ref. check. 484-9734.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): As I meditated on your immediate future, I got a vision of you making your way through an obstacle course – scurrying across booby-trapped terrains, shimmying through tunnels, climbing over barriers, leaping across ditches. Curiously, there was not the least bit of stress etched on your face. On the contrary, your eyes were wide and your expression was exultant. You seemed to regard this not as an ordeal, but as a welcome opportunity to expand your resourcefulness.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): In 1953, Ena Bridge got engaged to Tony Baker in their hometown of Kent, England. But they broke up and lost touch with each other until recently. Now they're engaged again, planning to go through with the marriage they shrunk back from 52 years ago. I regard them as your good luck charms, Taurus. Soon you, too, will be returning to the site of a long lost dream, or revisiting a desire you abandoned years ago, or exploring a potential union you gave up on in the past.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): I was born in Texas near a facility that manufactured nuclear weapons. When I lived in South Carolina, my neighbor was a bigoted Klansman. During my time in Philadelphia, I found a hand grenade on the sidewalk. I was shot in North Carolina and beaten up in Michigan. I've almost been arrested on fraudulent charges twice, once in New York and once in Washington. Despite it all, I love America – every part of it, the red states as well as the blue states. I love its loudness, unpredictability, extravagance, and contradictions. I'm intrigued by the bizarre myths at the heart of the public discourse and entertained by the hysterical tone of that discourse. Now, using my example as inspiration, Gemini, proclaim your appreciation for influences that sometimes drive you half-crazy.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): *Dear Rob: Whenever I'm beset by fear, I sleep with the shield I made for myself. It's a hubcap on which I've glued a bunch of protective symbols, like a million dollars in Monopoly money, the fragment of a mirror I stole from the hospital where I was born, the toothbrush of an ex-lover I'm still good friends with, 20 Tamiflu pills arranged in the shape of a peace sign, a notebook page on which I wrote my best dream ever (in which my mom and dad were Mother Teresa and the Dalai Lama), a library card from Princeton with both my name and Einstein's on it, a painting of a mutant butterfly dive-bombing a rainbow that's on fire, and a bumper sticker that reads 'Adrenaline is my drug of choice.'* – *Laughing at My Anxieties.* Dear Laughing: I love your shield idea so much I'm recommending it for my Cancerian readers while they're in their "I Love to Worry" season.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Of course I want to do everything I can to help you make your dreams come true. But right now there's a more pressing concern. You've got to dream bigger and hotter and wilder. You need to demand more from your imagination and conjure up more daring fantasies. Here, then, is a prescription from your soul doctor: In the coming week, spend at least ten minutes a day brainstorming at the outskirts of your understanding.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Passing a video store window in San Francisco, I spied a poster advertising a set of DVDs for all seven years of some old TV program. What show it was, I couldn't tell. Most of the sign was obscured. But the blurb at the very top promised that "You may never get up off the couch again" – presumably because you'd become so immersed in the world of the TV show that you'd have no need to actually go out and live your own life. While I don't usually recommend that you pursue this kind of escapism, Virgo, it's perfectly fine – maybe even healthy – to do so now. Please feel free to disappear from the grind for a few days. If necessary, flee into an alternate reality.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): "Every act of conscious learning requires the willingness to suffer an injury to one's self-esteem," wrote psychiatrist Thomas Szasz. "That is why young children, before they are aware of their own self-importance, learn so easily; and why older persons, especially if vain or impor-

tant, cannot learn at all." I hope this observation is a sufficiently gentle preparation for your assignment, Libra. Are you ready to make the entire world your classroom, to expand your capacity to be taught, and to master a slew of new tricks? I hope so. To pull it off, you must be willing to let your ego die.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Biologist Francis Crick (1916-2004) won a Nobel Prize for co-discovering the DNA molecule. Naturally, he didn't have any use for the religious right's pet dogma, Intelligent Design. But neither did he fully endorse evolution. That theory says Earth's first life forms arose from organic molecules, which in turn coalesced from inorganic matter. In Crick's opinion, that process was impossible because there wasn't enough time for such a stupendously complex series of events to unfold, given the fact that our planet is only 4.6 billion years old. To address the discrepancy, Crick favored the theory of "directed panspermia," which proposes that life arrived here via an advanced extraterrestrial civilization. Your assignment, Scorpio, is to do as Crick did: Carve out a middle ground between two competing perspectives, transcending the narrow definitions that each of them uses to frame the big questions.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): In her profile on poet John Ashbery in *The New Yorker*, Larissa MacFarquhar reports that his Manhattan apartment is deeply chaotic. "Everything needs to be open and nothing is ever closed," she quotes Ashbery's partner as saying. "Drawers. Cabinets. Closet doors. Everything! All possibilities must be available at all times." This happens to be my exact prescription for you, Sagittarius. Make your heart as innocent as possible. Suspend your opinions. Judge nothing. Be hungry for the raw truth and beauty that can be captured with the aid of naked receptivity. Oh, and keep all your cabinets and drawers open.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You might want to listen to "Doing the Unstuck," a song by The Cure. It could prod you to do what you know you should, which is expel yourself forcibly from the rut you're lodged in. "It's a perfect day for letting go/ for setting fire to bridges," the lyrics advise, "for rip-zipping and button-popping/ for dancing like you can't hear the beat." Maybe some of you are protesting, "But I want to use logic to think my way out of this jam." Here's what I have to say in response: You probably won't get unstuck with your rational mind alone, which is why you should do irrationally constructive things like singing liberation songs very loudly.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Did you know that the world has become dramatically more peaceful in the last 14 years? The 2005 Human Security Report documents how wars, coup d'états, and genocide have declined 40 percent since 1991. Weapons sales between countries have dropped 33 percent, and the number of refugees has diminished 45 percent. I hope this shocking data, which should have been trumpeted on the front page of every newspaper, will inspire you to throw yourself with rebellious exuberance into this week's assignment: Ignore the cynical masochists who preach doom and gloom, and take up the cause of zoom and boom. The astrological omens say this is your special time to explore the frontiers of pleasure, harmony, integrity, and freedom.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen has recorded 11 albums, including *Death of a Ladies' Man*, produced by the legendary Phil Spector. Spector used unusual methods to provoke Cohen's genius, like holding a gun to the singer's head and demanding a more emotional delivery. I don't recommend that you enlist the services of a nut like Spector, nor do I think you should resort to such outrageous goads. I do, however, hope you'll find ways to give yourself friendly shocks that will move you to raise your expectations of yourself.

HOMEWORK: What's the title of the book you'd like to write? What's the name of the rock band you'd be in? Testify at www.freewillastrology.com

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