

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21-April 19): "An oar moves a boat by entering what lies outside it," writes poet Jane Hirshfield. You can't use the paddle inside the boat! It's of no value to you unless you thrust it into the drink and move it around vigorously. And that's an excellent metaphor for you to keep in mind during the coming weeks, my friend. If you want to reach your next destination, you must have intimate and continual interaction with the mysterious depths that lie outside your known world.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): The short attention span is now enshrined as the default mode of awareness. "We skim rather than absorb," says author James Lough. "We read Sappho or Shakespeare the same way we glance over a tweet or a text message, scanning for the gist, impatient to move on." There's a problem with that approach, however. "You can't skim Shakespeare," Lough says. I propose that we make that your epigram to live by in the coming weeks, Taurus: You can't skim Shakespeare. According to my analysis, you're going to be offered a rich array of Shakespeare-level information and insights. To get the most out of these blessings, you must penetrate and marinate and ruminate.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): "There are situations in life when it is wisdom not to be too wise," Friedrich Schiller said. The coming days may be one of those times for you. I therefore advise you to dodge any tendency you might have to be impressed with your sophisticated intelligence. Be suspicious of egotism masquerading as cleverness. You are most likely to make good decisions if you insist on honoring your raw instincts. Simple solutions and uncomplicated actions will give you access to beautiful truths and truthful beauty, especially if you anchor yourself in innocent compassion.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): To prepare you for the coming weeks, I have gathered three quotes from the Bulgarian writer Elias Canetti. These gems, along with my commentary, will serve you well if you use them as seeds for your ongoing meditations. Seed #1: "He would like to start from scratch. Where is scratch?" Here's my addendum: No later than your birthday, you'll be ready to start from scratch. In the meantime, your task is to find out where scratch is, and clear a path to it. Seed #2: "All the things one has forgotten scream for help in dreams." My addendum: Monitor your dreams closely. They will offer clues about what you need to remember. Seed #3: "Relearn astonishment, stop grasping for knowledge, lose the habit of the past." My addendum: Go in search of the miraculous.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): "There are friendships like circuses, waterfalls, libraries," said writer Vladimir Nabokov. I hope you have at least one of each, Leo. And if you don't, I encourage you to go out and look for some. It would be great if you could also get access to alliances that resemble dancing lessons, colorful sanctuaries, lion whisperers, prayer flags and the northern lights. Right now you especially need the stimulation that synergistic collaborations can provide. The next chapter of your life story requires abundant contact with interesting people who have the power to surprise you and teach you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): "Perfection is a stick with which to beat the possible," says author Rebecca Solnit. She is of course implying that it might be better not to beat the possible, but rather to protect and nurture the possible as a viable option — especially if perfection ultimately proves to have no value other than as a stick. This is always a truth worth honoring, but it will be crucial for you in the weeks to come. I hope you will cultivate a reverence and devotion to the possible. As messy or maddening as it might be, it will also groom your powers as a maker.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): An invigorating challenge is headed your way. To prepare you, I offer the wisdom of French author André Gide. "Through loyalty to the past," he wrote, "our mind refuses to realize that tomorrow's joy is possible only if today's joy makes way for it." What this means, Libra, is that you will probably have to surrender your attachment to a well-honed delight if you want to make yourself available for a bright new delight that's hovering on the frontier. An educational blessing will come your way if and only if you clear space for its arrival. As Gide concludes, "Each wave owes the beauty of its line only to the withdrawal of the preceding wave."

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): "How prompt we are to satisfy the hunger and thirst of our bodies; how slow to satisfy the hunger and thirst of our souls!" Henry David Thoreau wrote that, and now I'm passing it on to you just in time for a special phase of your long-term cycle. During this upcoming interlude, your main duty is to FEED YOUR SOUL in every way you can imagine. So please stuff it with unpredictable beauty and reverent emotions. Cram it with mysterious adventures and rambling treks in the frontier. Gorge it with intimate unpredictability and playful love and fierce devotions in behalf of your most crucial dreams. Warning: You will not be able to rely solely on the soul food that has sustained you in the past. Be eager to discover new forms of nourishment.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): "Here's how every love letter can be summarized," says Russell Dillon in his poem "Past-Perfect-Impersonal": "What is it you're unable to surrender and please may I have that?" I bring this tease to your attention because it may serve as a helpful riddle in the coming weeks. You're entering a phase when you will have an enhanced ability to tinker with and refine and even revolutionize your best intimate relationships. I'm hoping Dillon's provocation will unleash a series of inquiries that will inspire you as you imagine how you could supercharge togetherness and reinvent the ways you collaborate.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Fifth-century Christian theologian St. Jerome wrote that "it requires infinite discretion to look for gold in the midst of dirt." Ancient Roman poet Virgil on one occasion testified that he was "searching for gold in dung." While addressing the angels, nineteenth-century French poet Charles Baudelaire bragged, "From each thing I extracted its quintessence. You gave me your mud, and I made gold out of it." From what I can tell, Capricorn, you have been engaged in similar work lately. The climax of your toil should come in the next two weeks. (Thanks to Michael Gilleland for the inspiration: tinyurl.com/mudgold.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): "At this time in my life," says singer Joni Mitchell, "I've confronted a lot of my devils. A lot of them were pretty silly, but they were incredibly real at the time." According to my reading of the astrological omens, Aquarius, you are due to enjoy a similar grace period. It may be a humbling grace period, because you'll be invited to decisively banish worn-out delusions that have filled you with needless fear. And it may be a grace period that requires you to make strenuous adjustments, since you'll have to revise some of your old stories about who you are and how you got here. But it will also be a sweet grace period, because you'll be blessed again and again with a visceral sense of liberation.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): More than halfway through her prose poem "A Settlement," Mary Oliver abruptly stops her meandering meditation on the poignant joys of spring's soft awakening. Suddenly she's brave and forceful: "Therefore, dark past, I'm about to do it. I'm about to forgive you for everything." Now would be a perfect moment to draw inspiration from her, Pisces. I dare you to say it. I dare you to mean it. Speak these words: "Therefore, dark past, I'm about to do it. I'm about to forgive you for everything."

HOMEWORK: What's the one thing you would change about yourself if you could? And why can't you? Go to Relastrology.com and click "Email Rob."



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I SAW YOU

FINGERHUT CATALOG

Wheres my page
3 plus size
1 in a daze
Black dress or blue
Damn

GOLDEN EYES

Golden Eyes, Prairie Grass...Constantly Shirtless Gardener. Bicycle Rider, Wearing Underwear Only(?)... You Are Driving Me Mad.

I SAW YOU

entering REI and you smiled at me. You looked to be in a rush, but you had time to make eye contact. You were a vision in a black dress. I wore my Argentina soccer jersey. I have had your image in my mind ever since.

PROPER COME HOME.

I trust in your loyalty. You needn't be frightened. My love is vast, time is short. Scent dogs are looking for you son. Make the effort so I can recover and praise.

SPEEDY

you're my best friend AND I'm in love with you (double whammy!) but you don't know that yet because I'm too nervous to tell you so wish me luck ok

A FOND FAREWELL

to our fair city and the damn fine folks we call friends. We will sorely miss all of yous. Come visit our traveling home any time you like. xoxo

TO MAGGIE AND BRAD

Thanks for being so **RAD**. I speak for all of Eugene when I say, you always brightened the day. You and your pups will be sorely missed. But with the **ROAD** your new home, it's on your **ADVENTURES** that we subsist.

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