

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21-April 19): I am in awe of your headfirst, charge-forward, no-distractions approach. In fact, I aspire to incorporate more of the Aries-style directness into my own repertoire. But I also love it when, on rare occasions, you flirt with a more strategic perspective. It amuses me to see you experimenting with the power of secrets. Your wisdom often grows at an expedited rate when you get caught up in a web of intrigue that exposes you to dark joys and melodramatic lessons. During times like these, you feel fine about not having everything figured out, about not knowing the most straightforward route to your destination. You allow the riddles and enigmas to ferment as you bask in the voluptuous ambiance of the Great Mystery. Now is such a time.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): I am pleased to inform you that at least 30 percent of what you think you know about love and lust is too prosaic. Probably too narrow and constrained, as well. But here's the good news: As soon as you agree to relinquish the dull certainty of that 30+ percent, you will open yourself to a surge of fresh teachings. And soon, I expect, dewy throbs and hot flows will awaken in all the erotic parts of your body, including your heart and brain and soul. If you're brave enough to respond, generous lessons in intimacy will keep you entertained for weeks.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Over the last two decades, well-meaning Westerners have donated a profusion of clothes to low-income folks in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Kind and magnanimous, right? Yes, but their largesse has had an unintended consequence: the demise of the textile industry in those African countries. With this as a cautionary tale, I'm asking you to take inventory of your own acts of benevolence and charity. Are they having effects that you approve of? If not completely, how could you adjust the way you give your gifts and bestow your blessings?

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Is it possible that you might flourish as a top dog after all the work you've put in as an underdog? Can you wean yourself from the worried fantasy that you've got endless dues to pay, and then harness your imagination to expand your confidence and build your clout? I believe you can. And in the coming weeks I will unleash a flood of prayers to the Goddess of Holy Reversals, asking her to assist you. Now please repeat after me: "I am a creative force of nature. I am a strong song of liberation. I am a wise animal with direct access to my primal intelligence."

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): The next two weeks could be smooth, peaceful, and bland. Is that the experience you want? Mild satisfactions, sweet boredom, and slow progress? There's nothing wrong with any of that. Please feel free to loll and loaf as you explore the healing charms of laziness. Grant yourself permission to avoid conflict and cultivate sunny self-protectiveness. This is one of those times when silence and stasis are among the best gifts you can give yourself. Welcome the rejuvenating power of emptiness!

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): It's time to replace banged-up, dried-out old obsessions with ripe, juicy fascinations. It's your duty to phase out numbing traditions and deadening habits so as to make room for exciting new rituals, customs, and sacraments. Can you summon the electric willpower to shed influences that are technically "correct" but lacking in soulfulness? I think you can. Do you love yourself enough to forswear pretty but meaningless titillations? I think you do. Now get out there and do the hard work necessary to bring more serious fun into your life. Homework: Write an essay titled "What I Can Do to Be More Playful."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Over the course of his or her life, the average British person says "Sorry" on over 90,000 occasions. The typical Libran Brit probably utters routine apologies upwards of 120,000 times. Libras from other countries may not reach that heady level, but many do specialize in excessive politeness. (I should know, as I have three planets in Libra in my natal chart.) But in accordance with the astrological indicators, I am authorizing you to be a bit less courteous and solicitous than usual in the next two weeks. Don't go overboard, of course. But allowing yourself some breathing room like this will help you get more rigorous access to your authentic, idiosyncratic, soulful urges — which will be very tonic.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Until 2007, Scotland's official slogan was "Scotland, the Best Small Country in the World." Deciding that wasn't sufficiently upbeat, the government spent \$187,000 on a campaign to come up with something better. "Home of Golf" and "Home of Europe's Fastest Growing Life Sciences Community" were among the proposed phrases that were rejected. The ultimate choice: "Welcome to Scotland." I bring this to your attention, Scorpio, because you're in a favorable phase to rebrand yourself. But I hope you will be more daring and imaginative than Scotland. How about "Smolderingly Alarmingly Brilliant"? Or maybe "Safely Risky and Unpredictably Wise" or "Home of the Best Secrets Ever"?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): I cheer you on as you attend to your difficult but holy duties. I send you my love as you summon the wisdom and resourcefulness you need to weather the gorgeous storm. Here are clues that might be useful: Whether you are partially or totally victorious will depend as much on the attitude you hold in your heart as on your outward behavior. Be grateful, never resentful, for the interesting challenges. Love your struggles for the new capacities they are building in you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The coming weeks constitute the harvest phase of your personal cycle. That means you have the pleasure of gathering in the ripe rewards that you have been cultivating since your last birthday. But you also have the responsibility to answer and correct for any carelessness you have allowed to affect your efforts during the previous eleven months. Don't worry, dear. My sense is that the goodies and successes far outnumber and overshadow the questionable decisions and failures. You have ample reasons to celebrate. But I hope you won't get so caught up in your rightful exaltation that you'll neglect the therapeutic atonements.

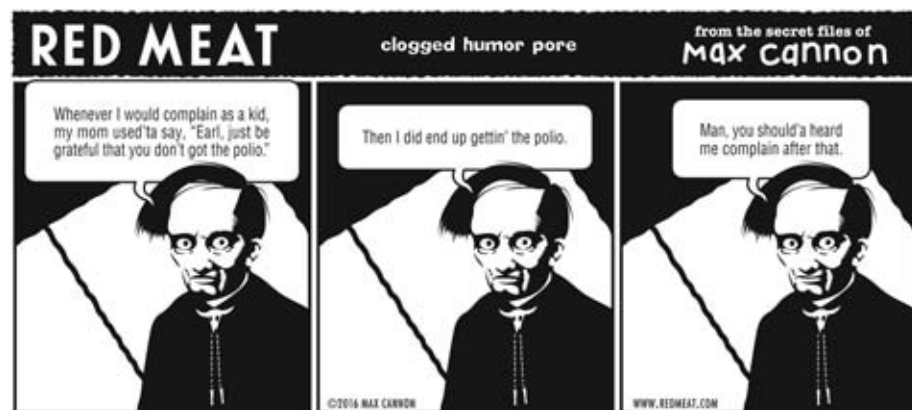
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Like England and Spain, the Netherlands has a royal family, including a king, queen, prince, and princesses. They're an egalitarian bunch. The young ones attend public schools, and the previous queen's birthday is celebrated with a nationwide flea market. The king's crown is attractive but quite economical. Its pearls are fake, and other "jewels" are made of glass, colored foil, and fish scales. In accordance with the astrological omens, I propose that you create a regal but earthy headpiece for yourself. It's high time for you to elevate your self-worth in an amusing and artful way. What fun and funky materials will you use in your homemade crown?

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): In her book, *A Natural History of the Senses*, Diane Ackerman reports on the eccentric methods that professional writers have used to galvanize their creative process. Poet Amy Lowell relaxed into her work day by puffing on Manila cigars. Novelist Colette plucked fleas from her cat. T. S. Eliot's poetry thrived when he had a head cold. Novelist George Sand liked to jump out of bed after making love and immediately begin writing. Novelist William Gass, who is still among the living, wanders around outside taking photos of "rusty, derelict, overlooked, downtrodden" places. As for D. H. Lawrence: climbing mulberry trees naked energized his genius. What about you, Pisces? Now is an excellent time to draw intensely on your reliable sources of inspiration — as well as to seek new ones.

HOMEWORK: Compose a sincere prayer in which you ask for something you think you're not supposed to. Testify at Freewillastrology.com.

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I Saw You

IT'S FREE TO PLACE AN I SAW YOU! EMAIL: ISAWYOU@EUGENEWEEKLY.COM

I SAW YOU

DUDE STOLE MY WEED

Hey Stardog, Your "Nug Run ACDC" was a big hit last spring, except you didn't pay the grower for the second pound of flower. Pay your debts, Korn-holio!

GIRL WHO LOVES PANDAS.

You're a great person and friend who will do wonderful things, so stop doubting yourself. Balloons rising always. I love you!

MAYBE

But glad for you to notice. What's extraordinary is, how you say? Utter wonderousness. Love it.

SIX SECONDS

It was a sweet Fall day
Were we really up to our ankles in mud?!
Children all around excited and chattering
Who would have guessed we would duck
behind the grape arbor for an amorous
kiss?

I SAW YOU

for the first time in several years, but I wasn't sure what to say. I hid in the travel book section petting the shop cat. I didn't see you wearing a wedding ring, so maybe it's not too late.

CHECKOUT WOMAN LOWES

You were the very bright smile at the checkout. I purchased a hat and left. Kicked myself the entire ride home.

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