

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21-April 19): My Aries acquaintance Tatiana decided to eliminate sugar from her diet. She drew up a plan to avoid it completely for 30 days, hoping to permanently break its hold over her. I was surprised to learn that she began the project by making a Dessert Altar in her bedroom, where she placed a chocolate cake and five kinds of candy. She testified that it compelled her willpower to work even harder and become even stronger than if she had excluded all sweet treats from her sight. Do you think this strenuous trick might work for you as you battle your own personal equivalent of a sugar addiction? If not, devise an equally potent strategy. You're on the verge of forever escaping a temptation that's no good for you. Or you're close to vanquishing an influence that has undermined you. Or both.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You have caressed and finessed The Problem. You have tickled and teased and tinkered with it. Now I suggest you let it alone for a while. Give it breathing room. Allow it to evolve under the influence of the tweaks you have instigated. Although you may need to return and do further work in a few weeks, my guess is that The Problem's knots are now destined to metamorphose into seeds. The awkwardness you massaged with your love and care will eventually yield a useful magic.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): "Whether you love what you love or live in divided ceaseless revolt against it, what you love is your fate." Gemini poet Frank Bidart wrote that in his poem "Guilty of Dust," and now I offer it to you. Why? Because it's an excellent time to be honest with yourself as you identify whom and what you love. It's also a favorable phase to assess whether you are in any sense at odds with whom and what you love; and if you find you are, to figure out how to be in more harmonic alignment with whom and what you love. Finally, dear Gemini, now is a key moment to vividly register the fact that the story of your life in the coming years will pivot around your relationship with whom and what you love.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Congratulations on the work you've done to cleanse the psychic toxins from your soul, Cancerian. I love how brave you've been as you've jettisoned outworn shacks, inadequate theories, and irrelevant worries. It makes my heart sing to have seen you summon the self-respect necessary to stick up for your dreams in the face of so many confusing signals. I do feel a tinge of sadness that your heroism hasn't been better appreciated by those around you. Is there anything you can do to compensate? Like maybe intensify the appreciation you give yourself?

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): I hope you're reaching the final stages of your year-long project to make yourself as solid and steady as possible. I trust you have been building a stable foundation that will serve you well for at least the next five years. I pray you have been creating a rich sense of community and establishing vital new traditions and surrounding yourself with environments that bring out the best in you. If there's any more work to be done in these sacred tasks, intensify your efforts in the coming weeks. If you're behind schedule, please make up for lost time.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): "Necessity is the mother of invention," says an old proverb. In other words, when your need for some correction or improvement becomes overwhelming, you may be driven to get creative. Engineer Allen Dale put a different spin on the issue. He said that "if necessity is the mother of invention, then laziness is the father." Sci-fi writer Robert Heinlein agreed, asserting that "progress is made by lazy men looking for easier ways to do things." I'm not sure if necessity or laziness will be your motivation, Virgo, but I suspect that the coming weeks could be a golden age of invention for you. What practical innovations might you launch? What useful improvements can you finagle? (P.S. Philosopher Alfred North Whitehead attributed the primary drive for innovative ideas and gizmos to "pleasurable intellectual curiosity.")

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Would you have turned out wiser and wealthier if you had dropped out of school in third grade? Would it have been better to apprentice yourself to a family of wolves or coyotes rather than trusting your educational fate to institutions whose job it was to acclimate you to society's madness? I'm happy to let you know that you're entering a phase when you'll find it easier than usual to unlearn any old conditioning that might be suppressing your ability to fulfill your rich potentials. I urge you to seek out opportunities to unleash your skills and enhance your intelligence.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): The temptation to overdramatize is strong. Going through with a splashy but messy conclusion may have a perverse appeal. But why not wrap things up with an elegant whisper instead of a garish bang? Rather than impressing everyone with how amazingly complicated your crazy life is, why not quietly lay the foundations for a low-key resolution that will set the stage for a productive sequel? Taking the latter route will be much easier on your karma, and in my opinion will make for just as interesting a story.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Each of us harbors rough, vulnerable, controversial, or unhoneed facets of our identity. And every one of us periodically reaches turning points when it becomes problematic to keep those qualities buried or immature. We need to make them more visible and develop their potential. I suspect you have arrived at such a turning point. So on behalf of the cosmos, I hereby invite you to enjoy a period of ripening and self-revelation. And I do mean "enjoy." Find a way to have fun.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): For the next two-plus weeks, an unusual rule will be in effect: The more you lose, the more you gain. That means you will have an aptitude for eliminating hassles, banishing stress, and shedding defense mechanisms. You'll be able to purge emotional congestion that has been preventing clarity. You'll have good intuitions about how to separate yourself from influences that have made you weak or angry. I'm excited for you, Capricorn! A load of old, moldy karma could dissolve and disperse in what seems like a twinkling. If all goes well, you'll be traveling much lighter by July 1.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): I suggest you avoid starting a flirtatious correspondence with a convict who'll be in jail for another 28 years. OK? And don't snack on fugu, the Japanese delicacy that can poison you if the cook isn't careful about preparing it. Please? And don't participate in a séance where the medium summons the spirits of psychotic ancestors or diabolical celebrities with whom you imagine it might be interesting to converse. Got that? I understand you might be in the mood for high adventure and out-of-the-ordinary escapades. And that will be fine and healthy as long as you also exert a modicum of caution and discernment.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): I suggest that you pat yourself on the back with both hands as you sing your own praises and admire your own willful beauty in three mirrors simultaneously. You have won stirring victories over not just your own personal version of the devil, but also over your own inertia and sadness. From what I can determine, you have corralled what remains of the forces of darkness into a comfy holding cell, sealing off those forces from your future. They won't bother you for a very long time, maybe never again. Right now you would benefit from a sabbatical -- a vacation from all this high-powered character-building. May I suggest you pay a restorative visit to the Land of Sweet Nonsense?

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