

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Be extra polite and deferential. Cultivate an exaggerated respect for the status quo. Spend an inordinate amount of time watching dumb TV shows while eating junk food. Make sure you're exposed to as little natural light and fresh air as possible. Just kidding! I lied! Ignore everything I just said! Here's my real advice: Dare yourself to feel strong positive emotions. Tell secrets to animals and trees. Swim and dance and meditate naked. Remember in detail the three best experiences you've ever had. Experiment with the way you kiss. Create a blessing that surprises you and everyone else. Sing new love songs. Change something about yourself you don't like. Ask yourself unexpected questions, then answer them with unruly truths that have medicinal effects.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your past is not quite what it seems. The coming weeks will be an excellent time to find out why – and make the necessary adjustments. A good way to begin would be to burrow back into your old stories and unearth the half-truths buried there. It's possible that your younger self wasn't sufficiently wise to understand what was really happening all those months and years ago, and as a result distorted the meaning of the events. I suspect, too, that some of your memories aren't actually your own, but rather other people's versions of your history. You may not have time to write a new memoir right now, but it might be healing to spend a couple of hours drawing up a revised outline of your important turning points.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): One of the most famously obtuse book-length poems in the English language is Robert Browning's *Sordello*, published in 1840. After studying it at length, Alfred Tennyson, who was Great Britain's Poet Laureate from 1850 to 1892, confessed, "There were only two lines in it that I understood." Personally, I did better than Tennyson, managing to decipher 18 lines. But I bet that if you read this dense, multi-layered text in the coming weeks, you would do better than me and Tennyson. That's because you'll be at the height of your cognitive acumen. Please note: I suggest you use your extra intelligence for more practical purposes than decoding obtuse texts.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Ready for your financial therapy session? For your first assignment, make a list of the valuable qualities you have to offer the world, and write a short essay about why the world should abundantly reward you for them. Assignment #2: Visualize what it feels like when your valuable qualities are appreciated by people who matter to you. #3: Say this: "I am a rich resource that ethical, reliable allies want to enjoy." #4: Say this: "My scruples can't be bought for any amount of money. I may rent my soul, but I'll never sell it outright."

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): As you wobble and stumble into the New World, you shouldn't pretend you understand more than you actually do. In fact, I advise you to play up your innocence and freshness. Gleeefully acknowledge you've got a lot to learn. Enjoy the liberating sensation of having nothing to prove. That's not just the most humble way to proceed; it'll be your smartest and most effective strategy. Even people who have been a bit skeptical of you before will be softened by your vulnerability. Opportunities will arise because of your willingness to be empty and open and raw.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Since 1358, the city of Paris has used the Latin motto *Fluctuat nec mergitur*, which can be translated as "She is tossed by the waves but does not sink." I propose that we install those stirring words as your rallying cry for the next few weeks. My analysis of the astrological omens gives me confidence that even though you may encounter unruly weather, you will sail on unscathed. What might be the metaphorical equivalent of taking seasick pills?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): The Spanish word *delicadeza* can have several meanings in English, including "delicacy" and "finesse." The Portuguese word *delicadeza* has those meanings, as well as others, including "tenderness," "fineness," "suavity," "respect," and "urbanity." In accordance with current astrological omens, I'm making it your word of power for the next three weeks. You're in a phase when you will thrive by expressing an abundance of these qualities. It might be fun to temporarily give yourself the nickname Delicadeza.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Uninformed scientists scorn my oracles. Reductionist journalists say I'm just another delusional fortuneteller. Materialist cynics accuse me of pandering to people's superstition. But I reject those naive perspectives. I define myself as a psychologically astute poet who works playfully to liberate my readers' imaginations with inventive language, frisky stories, and unpredictable ideas. Take a cue from me, Scorpio, especially in the next four weeks. Don't allow others to circumscribe what you do or who you are. Claim the power to characterize yourself. Refuse to be squeezed into any categories, niches, or images – except those that squeeze you the way you like to be squeezed.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): "I have no notion of loving people by halves; it is not my nature. My attachments are always excessively strong." So said Sagittarian novelist Jane Austen. I don't have any judgment about whether her attitude was right or wrong, wise or ill-advised. How about you? Whatever your philosophical position might be, I suggest that for the next four weeks you activate your inner Jane Austen and let that part of you shine – not just in relation to whom and what you love but also with everything that rouses your passionate interest. According to my reading of the astrological omens, you're due for some big, beautiful, radiant zeal.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "There are truths I haven't even told God," confessed Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector. "And not even myself. I am a secret under the lock of seven keys." Are you harboring any riddles or codes or revelations that fit that description, Capricorn? Are there any sparks or seeds or gems that are so deeply concealed they're almost lost? If so, the coming weeks will be an excellent time to bring them up out their dark hiding places. If you're not quite ready to show them to God, you should at least unveil them to yourself. Their emergence could spawn a near-miracle or two.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): What are your goals for your top two alliances or friendships? By that I mean, what would you like to accomplish together? How do you want to influence and inspire each other? What effects do you want your relationships to have on the world? Now maybe you've never even considered the possibility of thinking this way. Maybe you simply want to enjoy your bonds and see how they evolve rather than harnessing them for greater goals. That's fine. No pressure. But if you are interested in shaping your connections with a more focused sense of purpose, the coming weeks will be an excellent time to do so.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): In Janet Fitch's novel *White Oleander*, a character makes a list of "twenty-seven names for tears," including "Heartdew. Griefhoney. Sadwater. Die tränen. Eau de douleur. Los rios del corazón." (The last three can be translated as "The Tears," "Water of Pain," and "The Rivers of the Heart.") I invite you to emulate this playfully extravagant approach to the art of crying. The coming weeks will be an excellent time to celebrate and honor your sadness, as well as all the other rich emotions that provoke tears. You'll be wise to feel profound gratitude for your capacity to feel so deeply. For best results, go in search of experiences and insights that will unleash the full cathartic power of weeping. Act as if empathy is a superpower.

HOMEWORK Do you have a liability that could be turned into an asset with a little (or a lot of) work? Testify at Freewillastrology.com

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I saw you there, blowing bubbles in-between uncontrollable laughter. Having the time of your life, and ending a night of magic with the tiniest little bubbles.
I appreciate your bubbles, Mr. Bubbler.

TWIRLED UP IN BEDSHEETS
ON A SUMMER MORNING
Black Sharpie pen in hand. Your face: a look of concentration. My skin: a blank canvass before you. You left: little black lines in the shape of a treble clef... and my aching heart for San Fran.

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