

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21-April 19): I predict that August will be a Golden Age for you. That's mostly very good. Golden opportunities will arise, and you'll come into possession of lead that can be transmuted into gold. But it's also important to be prudent about your dealings with gold. Consider the fable of the golden goose. The bird's owner grew impatient because it laid only one gold egg per day; he foolishly slaughtered his prize animal to get all the gold immediately. That didn't work out well. Or consider the fact that to the ancient Aztecs, the word *teocuitlatl* referred to gold, even though its literal translation was "excrement of the gods." Moral of the story: If handled with care and integrity, gold can be a blessing.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Taurus socialite Stephen Tennant (1906-1987) was such an interesting luminary that three major novelists created fictional characters modeled after him. As a boy, when he was asked what he'd like to be when he grew up, he replied, "I want to be a great beauty." I'd love to hear those words spill out of your mouth, Taurus. What? You say you're already all grown up? I doubt it. In my opinion, you've still got a lot of stretching and expansion and transformation to accomplish during the coming decades. So yes: I hope you can find it in your wild heart to proclaim, "When I grow up, I want to be a great beauty." (P.S. Your ability to become increasingly beautiful will be at a peak during the next fourteen months.)

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): "Manage with bread and butter until God sends the honey," advises a Moroccan proverb. Let's analyze how this advice might apply to you. First thing I want to know is, have you been managing well with bread and butter? Have you refrained from whining about your simple provisions, resting content and grateful? If you haven't, I doubt that any honey will arrive, ether from God or any other source. But if you have been celebrating your modest gifts, feeling free of greed and displeasure, then I expect at least some honey will show up soon.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't worry your beautiful head about praying to the gods of luck and fate. I'll take care of that for you. Your job is to propitiate the gods of fluid discipline and hard but smart work. To win the favor of these divine helpers, act on the assumption that you now have the power and the right to ask for more of their assistance than you have before. Proceed with the understanding that they are willing to provide you with the stamina, persistence, and attention to detail you will need to accomplish your next breakthrough.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): "Sometimes, I feel the past and the future pressing so hard on either side that there's no room for the present at all." A character named Julia says that in Evelyn Waugh's novel *Brideshead Revisited*. I bring it to your attention as an inspiring irritant, as a prod to get you motivated. I hope it will mobilize you to rise up and refuse to allow your past and your future to press so hard on either side that there's no room for the present. It's a favorable time for you to fully claim the glory of being right here, right now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): I'm not an ascetic who believes all our valuable lessons emerge from suffering. Nor am I a pop-nihilist who sneers at pretty flowers, smiling children, and sunny days. On the contrary: I'm devoted to the hypothesis that life is usually at least 51 percent wonderful. But I dance the rain dance when there's an emotional drought in my personal life, and I dance the pain dance when it's time to deal with difficulties I've ignored. How about you, Virgo? I suspect that now is one of those times when you need to have compassionate heart-to-heart conversations with your fears, struggles, and aches.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Do you absolutely need orchids, sweet elixirs, dark chocolate, alluring new music, dances on soft grass, sensual massages, nine hours of sleep per night, and a steady stream of soulful conversations? No. Not really. In the coming days, life will be a good ride for you even if you fail to procure those indulgences. But here are further questions and answers: Do you deserve the orchids, elixirs, and the rest? My answer is yes, definitely. And would the arrival of these delights spur you to come up with imaginative solutions to your top two riddles? I'm pretty sure it would. So I conclude this horoscope by recommending that you do indeed arrange to revel in your equivalent of the delights I named.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): "Don't try to steer the river," writes Deepak Chopra. Most of the time, I agree with that idea. It's arrogant to think that we have the power to control the forces of nature or the flow of destiny or the song of creation. Our goal should be to get an intuitive read on the crazy-making miracle of life, and adapt ourselves ingeniously to its ever-shifting patterns and rhythms. But wait! Set aside everything I just said. An exception to the usual rule has arrived. Sometimes, when your personal power is extra flexible and robust — like now, for you — you may indeed be able to steer the river a bit.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): "Dear Astrologer: Recently I've been weirdly obsessed with wondering how to increase my levels of generosity and compassion. Not just because I know it's the right thing to do, but also because I know it will make me healthy and honest and unflappable. Do you have any sage advice? —Ambitious Sagittarius." Dear Ambitious: I've noticed that many Sagittarians are feeling an unprecedented curiosity about how to enhance their lives by boosting the benevolence they express. Here's a tip from astrologer Chani Nicholas: "Source your sense of self from your integrity in every interaction." Here's another tip from Anais Nin: "The worse the state of the world grows, the more intensely I try for inner perfection and power. I fight for a small world of humanity and tenderness."

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Time does not necessarily heal all wounds. If you wait around passively, hoping that the mere passage of months will magically fix your twists and smooth out your tweaks, you're shirking your responsibility. The truth is, you need to be fully engaged in the process. You've got to feel deeply and think hard about how to diminish your pain, and then take practical action when your wisdom shows you what will actually work. Now is an excellent time to upgrade your commitment to this sacred quest.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The questions you've been asking aren't bad or wrong. But they're not exactly relevant or helpful, either. That's why the answers you've been receiving aren't of maximum use. Try these questions instead. 1. What experience or information would you need to heal your divided sense of loyalty? 2. How can you attract an influence that would motivate you to make changes you can't quite accomplish under your own power? 3. Can you ignore or even dismiss the 95 percent of your fear that's imaginary so you'll be able to focus on the five percent that's truly worth meditating on? 4. If I assured you that you have the intelligence to beautify an ugly part of your world, how would you begin?

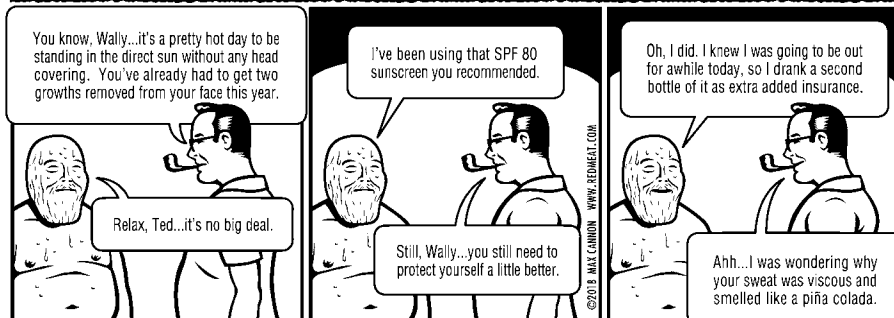
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): A scuffle you've been waging turns out to be the wrong scuffle. It has distracted you from giving your full attention to a more winnable and worthwhile tussle. My advice? Don't waste energy feeling remorse about the energy you've wasted. In fact, be grateful for the training you've received. The skills you've been honing while wrestling with the misleading complication will serve you well when you switch your focus to the more important issue. So are you ready to shift gears? Start mobilizing your crusade to engage with the more winnable and worthwhile tussle.

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VOTE FOR PEDRO! Much like Pedro from the movie, *Napoleon Dynamite*, this little Pedro is a kind & friendly guy. He is a 4mo. old, terrier mix. At around 8lbs, he's good sized, and hearty. He could use a little fattening up, but otherwise a wonderful little dog. Pedro is welcoming to everyone he meets. If you'll let him, he will smother you in delightful puppy kisses and roll on his back for a good belly rub. Pedro appears to have a basic understanding of potty training and will go to the exit door to be let outside. So far, he is staying dry in his crate, and only protests bedtime for a few seconds. He enjoys car rides, walking beside you as you explore the garden or backyard, plays short games of fetch, and has already begun to "sit" on command after a few training attempts. (He's a smarty!) He's not pushy, and minds his manners when meeting new fur friends. Interested in a Meet & Greet? Send us a private message or email, include some information about your present household as well as pets/children. Pedro is excited to meet you!

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