



Rob Brezsny's Astrology Newsletter
February 17, 2021
FreeWillAstrology.com

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The lesson that life constantly enforces is 'Look underfoot.' You are always nearer to the true sources of your power than you think. The lure of the distant and the difficult is deceptive. The great opportunity is where you are. Don't despise your own place and hour. Every place is the center of the world.

—Naturalist John Burroughs

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MASTER OF THE OBVIOUS

Today I am Master of the Obvious. I am a Simpleton Stating the Prosaic Truth. I am telling anyone who cares to listen that of course Western medicine and Big Pharma do bad and self-serving things.

You know who else does bad and self-serving things? Every system and organization on earth: corporations, religions, governments, the media, academia, publishing, the film and art and music industries, the big tech companies, the college football industry and all the other professional sports industries . . . and many, many more.

Toward all these bad and self-serving institutions, we develop a discerning skepticism, based on accurate evidence. We criticize them. We do what we can to reform them. And we acknowledge that they also do some good and helpful things that we're grateful for.

So we go forward, holding in our minds a poised understanding of their contradictions, as intelligent people do. We cultivate an awareness that everything is flawed and imperfect, and that many imperfect and flawed things (not all) also have value and beneficence.

We meditate on the psychological concept of co-emergence, which postulates that every beautiful, useful thing is intertwined with some challenging problem; that every challenging problem has some inspiration and education to offer us.

We meditate on what my daughter said when she was five years old, "There's nothing in the world that is either all good or all bad."

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PS: Of course scientists who develop vaccines are motivated in part by money and ego and personal bias, like everyone else on the planet.

Of course there are problems with things that are created by people under the influence of money and ego and personal bias.

But that's universally true. NOTHING ever created or offered is perfect. Everything and everyone is cracked or broken in some way. And we wander on, doing our best to cultivate equanimity, summoning as much grace and courage as we can under the influence of the Universal Blemish.

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To specifically apply this line of thought to the covid vaccines: No, they are not PERFECTLY safe and effective. Nothing is! Nothing on earth is perfectly safe and effective!

But the vast preponderance of evidence from knowledgeable scientists all over the world is that the covid vaccines are very safe and very effective.

Furthermore, they are our best hope for emerging from the pandemic. Again, the vast preponderance of scientific evidence supports that conclusion.

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PS: There's a lot about Big Pharma I dislike. And in general, the US health system, despite being marginally better in recent years thanks to Obamacare, is still an abomination compared to the health systems of virtually all other Western nations.

Bottom line: I passionately want universal single-payer health coverage for all in the US. Anything less than that is a travesty.

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On the other hand, I am also extremely grateful for Big Pharma and the US medical system as it is and has been. I would not be here if it weren't for them. I'd literally be gone from the earth.

They saved me. Thank you!

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TRY TO PRAISE THE MUTILATED WORLD

by Adam Zagajewski
translated by Clare Cavanagh

Try to praise the mutilated world.
Remember June's long days,
and wild strawberries, drops of rosé wine.
The nettles that methodically overgrow
the abandoned homesteads of exiles.

You must praise the mutilated world.
You watched the stylish yachts and ships;
one of them had a long trip ahead of it,
while salty oblivion awaited others.

You've seen the refugees going nowhere,
you've heard the executioners sing joyfully.
You should praise the mutilated world.

Remember the moments when we were together
in a white room and the curtain fluttered.

Return in thought to the concert where music flared.
You gathered acorns in the park in autumn
and leaves eddied over the earth's scars.

Praise the mutilated world
and the gray feather a thrush lost,
and the gentle light that strays and vanishes
and returns.

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PERFECTIONISM IS STUPID

Perfectionism is the voice of the oppressor, the enemy of the people. It will keep you cramped
and insane.

—Anne Lamott

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Perfection is a stick with which to beat the possible.

—Rebecca Solnit

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The perfect is the enemy of the good.

—Voltaire

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Excellence does not require perfection.

—Henry James

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THE FUNDAMENTALIST VIRUS

The fundamentalist person delusionally imagines that perfection is a desirable and possible goal.

The fundamentalist takes everything way too seriously and way too personally and way too
literally.

The fundamentalist divides the world into two camps, those who agree with him and those who
don't. There is only one right way to interpret the world, and a million wrong ways. Correct belief
is the only virtue.

To the fundamentalist, the liberated imagination is a sinful taboo. He not only enslaves his own
imagination to his ideology, but wants to enslave our imaginations, too.

And who are the fundamentalists? Let's not remain under the delusion that they are only the
usual suspects—the religious fanatics of Islam and Christianity and Judaism and Hinduism.

There are many other kinds of fundamentalists, and some of them have gotten away with
practicing their tragic magic in a stealth mode.

Among the most successful are those who believe in what Robert Anton Wilson calls
fundamentalist materialism. This is the faith-based dogma that swears physical matter is the
only reality and that nothing exists unless it can be detected by our five senses or by
technologies that humans have made.

Life has no transcendent meaning or purpose, the fundamentalist materialists proclaim. There is
no such thing as a divine intelligence. The universe is a dumb accidental machine that grinds on
endlessly out of blind necessity.

I see spread out before me in every direction a staggeringly sublime miracle lovingly crafted by a
supernal consciousness that oversees the evolution of 500 billion galaxies, yet is also available

as an intimate companion and daily advisor to every one of us. But to the fundamentalist materialists, my perceptions are indisputably wrong and idiotic.

Many other varieties of fundamentalism thrive and propagate. Every ideology, even some of the ones I like, has its share of true believers—fanatics who judge all other ideologies as inferior, flawed, and foolish.

I know astrologers who insist there's only one way to do astrology right. I know Buddhists who adamantly decree that the inherent nature of life on Earth is suffering.

I know college administrators who would excommunicate any psychology professor who dared to discuss the teachings of Carl Jung, who was in my opinion one of the greatest minds of the 20th century.

I know pagans who refuse to consider any other version of Jesus Christ beyond the sick parody the Christian right has fabricated.

None of the true believers like to hear that there are at least three sides to every story.

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THE ONLY WAR

Poet Diane Di Prima said, "The only war is the war against the imagination. All other wars are subsumed in it."

The delusional drive for perfection, which fundamentalism is driven by, is in one sense a war against the imagination—which just wants to be free to explore eternal variety and paradox.

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BITS OF WISDOM
FROM WENDELL BERRY AND EDITH HAMILTON

Unexpected wonders happen, not on schedule, or when you expect or want them to happen, but if you keep hanging around, they do happen.

—Wendell Berry

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"You mustn't wish for another life. You mustn't want to be somebody else. What you must do is this: "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." I am not all the way capable of so much, but those are the right instructions.

—Wendell Berry

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When the freedom they wished for most was freedom from responsibility, then Athens ceased to be free and was never free again.

—Classicist scholar and author Edith Hamilton

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Our word "idiot" comes from the Greek name for the man who took no share in public matters.

—Edith Hamilton

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Responsibility is the price every person must pay for freedom.

—Edith Hamilton

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Convention, so often a mask for injustice.

—Edith Hamilton

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THE UNIVERSE IS A SENTIENT, ENSOULED INTELLIGENCE

In his talk on February 5, mind-expanding astrologer and philosopher Richard Tarnas delivered the most inspiring and emotionally rich visionary revelations I've heard in many years: uplifting, inspiring, and soul-shaking in the best ways.

It was an emotionally rich explanation of how the universe is an ensouled, sentient intelligence that we now have an initiatory opportunity to get back into communion with, as indigenous people have enjoyed for millennia.

You can watch it here: tinyurl.com/mtq1am58

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TRUE VIRUS NEWS

If you'd like to read about the current state of scientific thinking about the covid vaccines, this is one of the best articles I've seen lately:

"What If We Never Reach Herd Immunity? Hitting the threshold might actually be impossible. But vaccines can still help end the pandemic."

tinyurl.com/yv2g9v7a

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The mistakes and the struggles behind America's coronavirus tragedy.

tinyurl.com/2vgl2zrt

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THE MISINFORMATION VIRUS

"All of science overturned by a single tweet. Random non-expert on the Internet proves new claim by tweeting it; all scientists in all fields abandon centuries of work." [Warning: Satire]

tinyurl.com/3gc2wlpk

"Honey, come look! I've found some information all the world's top scientists and doctors missed." [Warning: Satire]

tinyurl.com/52zmqwbz

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ACTUAL PROGRESS

The coronavirus vaccines are a triumph. They are saving lives today; they will help end this pandemic eventually; and they will pay scientific dividends for generations.

"Once the history of this is written, they are going to be referred to as some of the greatest achievements of science," Zeynep Tufekci, a University of North Carolina sociologist with a track record of prescience on the coronavirus. "It's the kind of thing you would have national celebration and fireworks and church bells ringing."

More: tinyurl.com/23yqd466

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MORE PRONOIA RESOURCES:

Sanctuary Containing 'Healthiest Coral Reefs in the World' Just Tripled in Size Thanks to U.S. Government Protection

tinyurl.com/1gyajl14

Nigerian Villagers Score 'Victory for Humanity' When a Court Verdict Slams Shell Oil For Liability After Years of Spills

tinyurl.com/o65qnfkd

One Simple Change Cut Accidental Albatross and Seabird Deaths by 98%: 'Absolutely amazing'

tinyurl.com/2fgmsee2

Pakistan Sees Record Drop in Terrorism Last Year, With Attacks Down 45% Compared to 2019.

tinyurl.com/qygm5mi1

Australia has Experienced One of the Most Astonishing Drops in Crime Ever Recorded by Any Country

tinyurl.com/42pmaybp

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For a lot more pronoiac resources and ideas, read my book *Pronoia Is the Antidote for Paranoia: How the Whole World is Conspiring to Shower You with Blessings*

Available at Barnes & Noble: tinyurl.com/PronoiaBN

Available at Amazon: bit.ly/Pronoia

A free preview of the book is available here: tinyurl.com/PronoiaPreview

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Please tell me your own nominations for PRONOIA RESOURCES:

Truthrooster@gmail.com.

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week beginning February 18

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PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):

Ancient Greek playwright Euripides was popular and influential—and remains so to this day,

2,400 years later. But there's a curiously boring aspect in five of his plays, *Andromache*, *Alcestis*, *Helen*, *Medea*, and *The Bacchae*. They all have the same exact ending: six lines, spoken by a chorus, that basically say the gods are unpredictable. Was Euripides lazy? Trying too hard to drive home the point? Or were the endings added later by an editor? Scholars disagree. The main reason I'm bringing this to your attention is to encourage you to avoid similar behavior. I think it's very important that the stories you're living right now have different endings than all the stories of your past.

ARIES (March 21-April 19):

Atheists like to confront religious people with accusations like this: "If God is so good, why does he allow suffering in the world?" Their simplistic, childish idea of God as some sort of Moral Policeman is ignorant of the lush range of ruminations about the Divine as offered down through the ages by poets, novelists, philosophers, and theologians. For example, poet Stéphane Mallarmé wrote, "Spirit cares for nothing except universal musicality." He suggested that the Supreme Intelligence is an artist making music and telling stories. And as you know, music and stories include all human adventures, not just the happy stuff. I bring these thoughts to your attention, Aries, because the coming weeks will be a favorable time to honor and celebrate the marvelously rich stories of your own life—and to feel gratitude for the full range of experience with which they have blessed you. PS: Now is also a favorable phase to rethink and reconfigure your answers to the Big Questions.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20):

Blogger Rachel C. Lewis confides, "I love being horribly straightforward. I love sending reckless text messages and telling people I love them and telling people they are absolutely magical humans and I cannot believe they really exist. I love saying, 'Kiss me harder,' and 'You're a good person,' and, 'You brighten my day.'" What would your unique version of Lewis's forthrightness be like, Taurus? What brazen praise would you offer? What declarations of affection and care would you unleash? What naked confessions might you reveal? The coming days will be a favorable time to explore these possibilities.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20):

It's a good time to become more of who you are by engaging with more of what you are not. Get in the mood for this heroic exercise by studying the following rant by Gemini poet Adam Zagajewski (who writes in Polish), translated by Gemini poet Clare Cavanaugh: "Read for yourselves, read for the sake of your inspiration, for the sweet turmoil in your lovely head. But also read against yourselves, read for questioning and impotence, for despair and erudition, read the dry, sardonic remarks of cynical philosophers. Read those whose darkness or malice or madness or greatness you can't yet understand, because only in this way will you grow, outlive yourself, and become what you are."

CANCER (June 21-July 22):

You're on the verge of breakthroughs. You're ready to explore frontiers, at least in your imagination. You're brave enough to go further and try harder than you've been able to before. With that in mind, here's a highly apropos idea from Cancerian novelist Tom Robbins. He writes, "If you take any activity, any art, any discipline, any skill, take it and push it as far as it will go, push it beyond where it has ever been before, push it to the wildest edge of edges, then you force it into the realm of magic." (I might use the word "coax" or "nudge" instead of "force" in Robbins' statement.)

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):

In her story "Homelanding," Margaret Atwood writes, "Take me to your trees. Take me to your breakfasts, your sunsets, your bad dreams, your shoes. Take me to your fingers." I'd love you to express requests like that. It's a favorable time for you to delve deeper into the mysteries of people you care about. You will generate healing and blessings by cultivating reverent curiosity and smart empathy and crafty intimacy. Find out more about your best allies

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LOVE YOUR LIFE!

How's your fight for freedom going? Are you making progress in liberating yourself from your unconscious obsessions, bad habits, and conditioned responses? Are you turning out to be the hero of your own life?

For assistance and inspiration, tune in to my EXPANDED AUDIO HOROSCOPES.

These forecasts are different in tone and format from the written horoscopes you read here in the newsletter. They're longer and more leisurely in tone.

To listen to your Expanded Audio Horoscope online, go to RealAstrology.com

Register and/or log in through the main page.

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The cost is \$6 per sign online. (Discounts are available for bulk purchases.)

You can also access them by phone at 1-877-873-4888. The cost is \$1.99 per minute. Each forecast is 4-5 minutes long.

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"Your expanded horoscopes get more personal and intimate with me than some of my closest friends. Thanks for the loving reflections."
—Ari Schlectman., Ann Arbor, MI

"When I listen to your audio 'scopes, my free will lights up."
—Alex Denares., Los Angeles

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VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):

You're about to reach the end of your phase of correction and adjustment. To mark this momentous transition, and to honor your ever-increasing ability to negotiate with your demons, I offer you the following inspirational proclamation by poet Jeannette Napolitano: "I don't want to look back in five years' time and think, 'We could have been magnificent, but I was afraid.' In five years, I want to tell of how fear tried to cheat me out of the best thing in life, and I didn't let it."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):

It's not a good time for you to be obsessed with vague abstractions, fear-based fantasies, and imaginary possibilities. But it is a favorable phase to rise up in behalf of intimate, practical changes. At least for now, I also want to advise you not to be angry and militant about big, complicated issues that you have little power to affect. On the other hand, I encourage you to get inspired and aggressive about injustices you can truly help fix and erroneous approaches you can correct and close-at-hand dilemmas for which you can summon constructive solutions.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):

"The most beautiful things are those that madness prompts and reason writes," declared author André Gide. As a writer myself, I will testify to the truth of that formulation. But what about those of you who aren't poets and novelists and essayists? Here's how I would alter Gide's statement to fit you: "The most beautiful things are those that rapture prompts and reason refines." Or maybe this: "The most beautiful things are those that experimentation finds and reason uses." Or how about this one: "The most beautiful things are those that wildness generates and reason enhances." Any and all of those dynamics will be treasures for you in the coming weeks.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):

The poet Nayyirah Waheed has some advice I want you to hear. She writes, "Be easy. Take your time. You are coming home to yourself." I will add that from my astrological perspective, the coming weeks will indeed be a time for you to relax more deeply into yourself—to welcome yourself fully into your unique destiny; to forgive yourself for what you imagine are your flaws; to not wish you were someone else pursuing a different path; to be at peace and in harmony with the exact life you have.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):

"The chief object of education is not to learn things but to unlearn things," wrote author G. K. Chesterton. He was exaggerating for dramatic effect when he said that, as he often did. The more nuanced truth is that one of the central aims of education is to learn things, and another very worthy aim is to unlearn things. I believe you are currently in a phase when you should put an emphasis on unlearning things that are irrelevant and meaningless and obstructive. This will be excellent preparation for your next phase, which will be learning a lot of useful and vitalizing new things.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943) ultimately became one of the 20th century's most renowned composers. But his career had a rough start. *Symphony No. 1*, his first major work, was panned by critics, sending him into a four-year depression. Eventually he recovered. His next major composition, *Piano Concerto No. 2*, was well-received. I don't anticipate that your rookie offerings or new work will get the kind of terrible reviews that Rachmaninoff's did. But at least initially, there may be no great reviews, and possibly even indifference. Keep the faith, my dear. Don't falter in carrying out your vision of the future. The rewards will come in due time.

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HOMEWORK:

Listen to and download my music for free. soundcloud.com/sacreduproar

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Submissions sent to Rob Breznsy's Astrology Newsletter or in response to "homework assignments" may be published in a variety of formats at Rob Breznsy's discretion, including but not limited to newsletters, books, the Free Will Astrology column, and Free Will Astrology website. We reserve the right to edit submissions for length, style, and content.

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