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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

FOR THE WEEK OF AUG. 6, 2020

BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (March 21–April 19): In her book *Sticks, Stones, Roots & Bones*, Stephanie Rose Bird reports that among early African Americans, there were specialists who spoke the language of trees. These patient magicians developed intimate relationships with individual trees, learning their moods and rhythms, and even exchanging non-verbal information with them. Trees imparted wisdom about herbal cures, weather patterns and ecologically sound strategies. Until recently, many scientists might have dismissed this lore as delusion. But in his 2016 book *The Hidden Life of Trees*, forester Peter Wohlleben offers evidence that trees have social lives and do indeed have the power to converse. I've always said that you folks have great potential to conduct meaningful dialogs with animals and trees. And now happens to be a perfect time for you to seek such invigorating pleasures.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20): Author Joanne Harris writes, "The right circumstances sometimes happen of their own accord, slyly, without fanfare, without warning. The magic of everyday things." I think that's an apt oracle for you to embrace during the coming weeks. In my opinion, life will be conspiring to make you feel at home in the world. You will have an excellent opportunity to get your personal rhythm into close alignment with the rhythm of creation. And so you may achieve a version of what mythologist Joseph Campbell called "the goal of life ... to make your heartbeat match the beat of the universe, to match your nature with Nature."

GEMINI (May 21–June 20): Author Gloria Anzaldúa writes, "I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joining." She adds that in this process, she has become "a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meanings." I would love for you to engage in similar work right now. Life will be on your side, bringing you lucky breaks and stellar insights, if you undertake the heroic work of reformulating the meanings of "light" and "dark," and then reshaping the way you embody those primal forces.

CANCER (June 21–July 22): "Pleasure is one of the most important things in life, as important as food or drink," wrote Cancerian author Irving Stone. I would love for you to heed that counsel. What he says is always true, but it will be extraordinarily meaningful for you to take to heart during the coming weeks. Here's how you could begin: Make a list of seven experiences that bring you joy, bliss, delight, fun, amusement and gratification. Then make a vow—even write an oath on a piece of paper—to increase the frequency and intensity of those experiences.

LEO (July 23–Aug. 22): At times in our lives, it's impractical to be innocent and curious and blank and receptive. So many tasks require us to be knowledgeable and self-assured and forceful and in control. But according to my astrological analysis, the coming weeks will be a time when you will benefit from the former state of mind: cultivating what Zen Buddhists call "beginner's mind." The Chinese refer to it as *ch'u x'u n*, or the mind of a novice. The Koreans call it the *eee mok oh?* approach, translated as "What is this?" Buddhist teacher Jack Kornfield defines it as the "don't-know mind." During this upcoming phase, I invite you to enjoy the feeling of being at peace with all that's mysterious and beyond your understanding.

VIRGO (Aug. 23–Sept. 22): "Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you." Author Anne Lamott wrote that, and now I'm conveying it to you—just in time for the Unplug-Yourself Phase of your astrological cycle. Any glitches you may be dealing with right now aren't as serious as you might imagine. The biggest problem seems to be the messy congestion that has accumulated over time in your links to sources that usually serve you pretty well. So if you'll simply disconnect for

a while, I'm betting that clarity and grace will be restored when you reconnect.

LIBRA (Sept. 23–Oct. 22): Have you been saving any of your tricks for later? If so, later has arrived. Have you been postponing flourishes and climaxes until the time was right? If so, the coming days will be as right a time as there can be. Have you been waiting and waiting for the perfect moment before making use of favors that life owes you and promises that were made to you? If so, the perfect moment has arrived. Have you been wondering when you would get a ripe opportunity to express and highlight the most interesting truths about yourself? If so, that opportunity is available.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23–Nov. 21): "I learned to make my mind large, as the universe is large, so that there is room for paradoxes," writes Scorpio author Maxine Hong Kingston. That would be an excellent task for you to work on in the coming weeks. Here are your formulas for success: 1. The more you expand your imagination, the better you'll understand the big picture of your present situation—and the more progress you will make toward creating the most interesting possible future. 2. The more comfortable you are about dwelling in the midst of paradoxes, the more likely it is that you will generate vigorous decisions that serve both your own needs and the needs of your allies.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22–Dec. 21): "Some people will never like you because your spirit irritates their demons," says actor and director Denzel Washington. "When you shine bright, some won't enjoy the shadow you cast," says rapper and activist Talib Kweli. You may have to deal with reactions like those in the coming weeks. If you do, I suggest that you don't take it personally. Your job is to be your radiant, generous self—and not worry about whether anyone has the personal power necessary to handle your radiant, generous self. The good news is that I suspect you will stimulate plenty of positive responses that will more than counterbalance the challenging ones.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22–Jan. 19): Capricorn occultist Peter J. Carroll tells us, "Some have sought to avoid suffering by avoiding desire. Thus they have only small desires and small sufferings." In all of the zodiac, you are among the least likely to be like that. One of your potential strengths is the inclination to cultivate robust desires that are rooted in a quest for rich experience. Yes, that sometimes means you must deal with more strenuous ordeals than other people. But I think it's a wise trade-off. In any case, you're now in a phase of your cycle when you should take inventory of your yearnings. If you find there are some that are too timid or meager, I invite you to either drop them or pump them up.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20–Feb. 18): The people who live in the town of Bazoule, Burkina Faso regard the local crocodiles as sacred. They live and work amidst the 100-plus creatures, co-existing peacefully. Kids play within a few feet of them, never worrying about safety. I'd love to see you come to similar arrangements with untamed influences and strong characters in your own life. You don't necessarily have to treat them as sacred, but I do encourage you to increase your empathy and respect for them.

PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20): Your body naturally produces at least one quart of mucus every day. You might not be aware of it, because much of it glides down your throat. Although you may regard this snot as gross, it's quite healthy. It contains antibodies and enzymes that kill harmful bacteria and viruses. I propose we regard mucus as your prime metaphor in the coming weeks. Be on the alert for influences and ideas that might empower you even if they're less than beautiful and pleasing. Make connections with helpful influences even if they're not sublimely attractive.