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## FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 6, 2021

BY ROB BREZSNY

**ARIES** (March 21–April 19): Created by Leonardo da Vinci in the 16th century, the Mona Lisa is one of the world's most famous paintings. It's hanging in the Louvre museum in Paris. In that same museum is a less renowned version of the Mona Lisa. It depicts the same woman, but she's unclothed. Made by da Vinci's student, it was probably inspired by a now-lost nude Mona Lisa painted by the master himself. Renaissance artists commonly created "heavenly" and "vulgar" versions of the same subject. I suggest that in the coming weeks you opt for the "vulgar" Mona Lisa, not the "heavenly" one, as your metaphor of power. Favor what's earthy, raw and unadorned over what's spectacular, idealized and polished.

**TAURUS** (April 20–May 20): Taurus poet Vera Pavlova writes, "Why is the word yes so brief? It should be the longest, the hardest, so that you could not decide in an instant to say it, so that upon reflection you could stop in the middle of saying it." I suppose it makes sense for her to express such an attitude, given the fact that she never had a happy experience until she was 20 years old, and that furthermore, this happiness was "unbearable." (She confessed these sad truths in an interview.) But I hope you won't adopt her hard-edged skepticism toward YES anytime soon, Taurus. In my view, it's time for you to become a connoisseur of YES, a brave explorer of the bright mysteries of YES, an exuberant perpetrator of YES.

**GEMINI** (May 21–June 20): In indigenous cultures from West Africa to Finland to China, folklore describes foxes as crafty tricksters with magical powers. Sometimes they're thought of as perpetrators of pranks, but more often they are considered helpful messengers or intelligent allies. I propose that you regard the fox as your spirit creature for the foreseeable future. I think you will benefit from the influence of your inner fox—the wild part of you that is ingenious, cunning and resourceful.

**CANCER** (June 21–July 22): "The universe conspires in your favor," writes author Neale Donald Welsch. "It consistently places before you the right and perfect people, circumstances and situations with which to answer life's only question: 'Who are you?'" In my book *Pronoia Is the Antidote for Paranoia: How the Whole World Is Conspiring to Shower You with Blessings*, I say much the same thing, although I mention two further questions that life regularly asks, which are: 1. What can you do next to liberate yourself from some of your suffering? 2. What can you do next to reduce the suffering of others, even by a little? As you enter a phase when you'll get ample cosmic help in diminishing suffering and defining who you are, I hope you meditate on these questions every day.

**LEO** (July 23–Aug. 22): The poet Anne Sexton wrote a letter to a Benedictine monk whose real identity she kept secret from the rest of us. She told him, "There are a few great souls in my life. They are not many. They are few. You are one." In this spirit, Leo, and in accordance with astrological omens, I invite you to take an inventory of the great souls in your life: the people you admire and respect and learn from and feel grateful for; people with high integrity and noble intentions; people who are generous with their precious gifts. When you've compiled your list, I encourage you to do as Sexton did: Express your appreciation; perhaps even send no-strings-attached gifts. Doing these things will have a profoundly healing effect on you.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23–Sept. 22): "It's a temptation for any intelligent person to try to murder the primitive, emotive, appetitive self," writes author Donna Tartt. "But that is a mistake. Because it is dangerous to ignore the existence of the irrational." I'm sending this message out to you, Virgo, because in the coming weeks it will be crucial for you to honor the parts of your life that can't be managed through rational thought alone. I suggest you have sacred fun as you exult in

the mysterious, welcome the numinous, explore the wildness within you, unrepress big feelings you've buried, and marvel adoringly about your deepest yearnings.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23–Oct. 22): Science writer Sharman Apt Russell provides counsel that I think you should consider adopting in the coming days. The psychospiritual healing you require probably won't be available through the normal means, so some version of her proposal may be useful: "We may need to be cured by flowers. We may need to strip naked and let the petals fall on our shoulders, down our bellies, against our thighs. We may need to lie naked in fields of wildflowers. We may need to walk naked through beauty. We may need to walk naked through color. We may need to walk naked through scent."

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23–Nov. 21): As Scorpio author Margaret Atwood reminds us, "Water is not a solid wall; it will not stop you. But water always goes where it wants to go, and nothing in the end can stand against it." According to my reading of the astrological omens, being like water will be an excellent strategy for you to embrace during the coming weeks. "Water is patient," Atwood continues. "Dripping water wears away a stone. Remember you are half water. If you can't go through an obstacle, go around it. Water does."

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22–Dec. 21): In a letter to a friend in 1856, Sagittarian poet Emily Dickinson confessed she was feeling discombobulated because of a recent move to a new home. She hoped she would soon regain her bearings. "I am out with lanterns, looking for myself," she quipped, adding that she couldn't help laughing at her disorientation. She signed the letter "From your mad Emilie," intentionally misspelling her own name. I'd love it if you approached your current doubt and uncertainty with a similar light-heartedness and poise. (PS: Soon after writing this letter, Dickinson began her career as a poet in earnest, reading extensively and finishing an average of one poem every day for many years.)

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22–Jan. 19): Now is a favorable time to celebrate both life's changeableness and your own. The way we are all constantly called on to adjust to unceasing transformations can sometimes be a wearying chore, but I suspect it could be at least interesting and possibly even exhilarating for you in the coming weeks. For inspiration, study this message from the "Welcome to Night Vale" podcast: "You are never the same twice, and much of your unhappiness comes from trying to pretend that you are. Accept that you are different each day, and do so joyfully, recognizing it for the gift it is. Work within the desires and goals of the person you are currently, until you aren't that person anymore."

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20–Feb. 18): Aquarian author Toni Morrison described two varieties of loneliness. The first "is a loneliness that can be rocked. Arms crossed, knees drawn up; holding, holding on, this motion smooths and contains the rocker." The second "is a loneliness that roams. No rocking can hold it down. It is alive, on its own." Neither kind is better or worse, of course, and both are sometimes necessary as a strategy for self-renewal—as a means for deepening and fine-tuning one's relationship with oneself. I recommend either or both for you in the coming weeks.

**PISCES** (Feb. 19–March 20): England's Prince Charles requires his valet to iron his shoelaces and put toothpaste on his toothbrush and wash all of his clothes by hand. I could conceivably interpret the current astrological omens to mean that you should pursue similar behavior in the coming weeks. I could, but I won't. Instead, I will suggest that you solicit help about truly important matters, not meaningless trivia like shoelace ironing. For example, I urge you to ask for the support you need as you build bridges, seek harmony and make interesting connections.

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