

genocide of the imagination." I railed against the "entertainment criminals" who barrage us with floods of fake information and inane ugliness, decimating and paralyzing our image-making faculties. For years, much of my creative work was stoked by my rage against the machine for its soulless crimes of injustice and greed and rapaciousness and cruelty.

But as the crazy wisdom of pronoia overtook me in the late 1990s, I gradually weaned myself from the gratuitous gratification that wrath offered. Against the grain, I experimented with strategies for motivating myself through crafty joy and purified desire and the longing for freedom. I played with ideas that helped me shed the habit of seeing the worst in everything and everyone. In its place I built a new habit of looking for the best.

But I never formally renounced my affiliation with the religion of cynicism. I didn't become a fundamentalist apostate preaching the doctrine of fanatical optimism. In the back of my wild heart, I knew I couldn't thrive without at least a tincture of the ferocity and outrage that had driven so much of my earlier self-expression.

Even at the height of my infatuation with the beautiful truths that swarmed into me while writing *Pronoia,* I nurtured a relationship with the awful truths. And I didn't hide that from my readers.

Yes, I did purposely go overboard in championing the cause of liberation and pleasure and ingenuity and integrity and renewal and harmony and love. The book's destiny was, after all, to serve as a counterbalance to the trendy predominance of bad news and paranoid attitudes. It was meant to be an antidote for the pandemic of snark.

But I made sure that *Pronoia* also contained numerous "Homeopathic Medicine Spells," talismans that cram long lists of the world's evils inside ritually consecrated mandalas. These spells diffuse the hypnotizing lure of doom and gloom by acknowledging the horror with a sardonic wink.

Pronoia also has many variations on a theme captured in William Vollman's testimony: "The most important and enjoyable thing in life is doing something that's a complicated, tricky problem that you don't know how to solve."

Furthermore, the book stops far short of calling for the totalitarian imposition of good cheer. I say I can tolerate the news media filling up half their pages and airwaves and bandwidths with poker-faced accounts of decline and degeneration, misery and destruction. All I seek is equal time for stories that inspire us to adore life instead of fearing it. And I'd gladly accept 25 percent. Even 10 percent.

So *Pronoia* hints at a paradoxical philosophy more complex than a naive quest for beauty and benevolence. It welcomes in a taste of darkness, acknowledging the shadows in the big picture.

TO READ THE REST OF THIS ESSAY, GO HERE: <http://bit.ly/HoneyVinegar>

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MAKE ROOM FOR MORE

Is your schedule too rigid to allow magic to seep in? Then mutate that schedule, please.

Is your brain so crammed with knowledgeable opinions that no fresh perceptions can crack their way in? Then flush out some of those opinions.

Is your heart so puckered by the stings of the past that it can't burst forth with any expansive new invitations? Then unpucker your heart, for God's sake.

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MORE PRONOIA RESOURCES:

A Woman in Trump's America: 5 Simple Ways to Support Your Sisters. Here's how to show other women you have their backs. <http://tinyurl.com/jyzoet>

Governor's Order to Protect State's Immigrants Is More Than a Moral Choice. Immigrants make up 17 percent of the state's workforce. If Washington's undocumented workers were deported, nearly \$14.5 billion in economic activity could be lost.
<http://tinyurl.com/grrk984>

In conservative America, small cities stand up for LGBT rights.
<http://tinyurl.com/heuk4yp>

(Note: I endorse these because I like them. They aren't advertisements, and I get no kickbacks.)

Please tell me your own nominations for PRONOIA RESOURCES:
Truthrooster@gmail.com.

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY
Week beginning March 30
Copyright 2017 by Rob Brezsny
<http://FreeWillAstrology.com>
Grammar key: Asterisks equal *italics**

ARIES (March 21-April 19): The dragon that stole your treasure will return it. Tulips and snapdragons will blossom in a field you thought was a wasteland. Gargoyles from the abyss will crawl into view, but then meekly lick your hand and reveal secrets you can really use. The dour troll that guards the bridge to the Next Big Thing will let you pass even though you don't have the password. APRIL FOOL! Everything I just described is only metaphorically true, not literally.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): According to legend, Buddha had to face daunting tests to achieve enlightenment. A diabolical adversary tempted him with sensual excesses and assailed him with vortexes of blistering mud, flaming ice, and howling rocks. Happily, Buddha glided into a state of wise calm and triumphed over the mayhem. He converted his nemesis's vortexes into bouquets of flowers and celestial ointments. What does this have to do with you? In accordance with current astrological omens, I hope you will emulate Buddha as you deal with your own initiatory tests. APRIL FOOL! I wasn't completely honest. It's true you'll face initiatory tests that could prod you to a higher level of wisdom. But they'll most likely come from allies and inner prompts rather than a diabolical adversary.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Since I expect you'll soon be tempted to indulge in too much debauched fun and riotous release, I'll offer you a good hangover remedy. Throw these ingredients into a blender, then drink up: a thousand-year-old quail egg from China, seaweed from Antarctica, milk from an Iraqi donkey, lemon juice imported from Kazakhstan, and a dab of Argentinian toothpaste on which the moon has shone for an hour. APRIL FOOL! I deceived you. You won't have to get crazy drunk or stoned to enjoy extreme pleasure and cathartic abandon. It will come to you quite naturally -- especially if you expand your mind through travel, big ideas, or healthy experiments.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Hire a promoter to create gold plaques listing your accomplishments and hang them up in public places. Or pay someone to make a thousand bobble-head dolls in your likeness, each wearing a royal crown, and give them away to everyone you know. Or enlist a pilot to fly a small plane over a sporting event while trailing a banner that reads, "[Your name] is a gorgeous genius worthy of worshipful reverence." APRIL FOOL! What I just advised was a distorted interpretation of the cosmic omens. Here's the truth: The best way to celebrate your surging power is not by reveling in frivolous displays of pride, but rather by making a bold move that will render a fantastic dream ten percent more possible for you to accomplish.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Endangered species: black rhino, Bornean orangutan, hawksbill turtle, South China tiger, Sumatran elephant, and the Leo messiah complex. You may not be able to do much to preserve the first five on that list, but PLEASE get to work on saving the last. It's time for a massive eruption of your megalomania. APRIL FOOL! I was exaggerating for effect. There's no need to go overboard in reclaiming your messiah complex. But please do take strong action to stoke your self-respect, self-esteem, and confidence.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Race through your yoga routine so you have

more time to surf the Internet. Inhale doughnuts and vodka in the car as you race to the health food store. Get into a screaming fight with a loved one about how you desperately need more peace and tenderness. APRIL FOOL! A little bit of self-contradiction would be cute, but not THAT much. And yet I do worry that you are close to expressing THAT much. The problem may be that you haven't been giving your inner rebel any high-quality mischief to attend to. As a result, it's bogged down in trivial insurrections. So please give your inner rebel more important work to do.

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YOU NEED MAGIC EVERY DAY

Every day, you have to wade through a relentless surge of soul-less facts. The experience tends to shut down your sense of wonder.

Every day, you're over-exposed to cynical narratives that have been sucked free of delight and mystery. That's why you have to make such strenuous efforts to keep your world enchanted.

I like to think I can contribute to the sacred cause of feeding your sense of wonder and enchantment. In fact, that's one of my prime motivations for offering you the free weekly horoscopes you read in this newsletter.

If you ever want more of that good stuff, and think it's worth paying for, please consider trying out my EXPANDED AUDIO HOROSCOPES. They're four-to-five-minute meditations on the current state of your destiny.

To listen to your Expanded Audio Horoscope online, go to <http://RealAstrology.com>.

Register and/or log in through the main page.

You can also listen over the phone by calling 1-877-873-4888.

The cost is \$6 per sign on the Web (discounts available for bulk purchases), or \$1.99 per minute by phone.

The Expanded Audio Horoscopes work on most smart phones and tablets.

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"Your Expanded Audio Horoscopes seem to have the effect of activating my inner teacher. Thanks!" - Eleanor A., Toronto

"Your expanded audio horoscopes are the next best thing to actually having you here next to me to remind me who I really am." - Alyssa R., Des Moines, Iowa

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LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Research shows that a typical working couple devotes an average of four minutes per day in meaningful conversations. I suggest you boost that output by at least ten percent. Try to engage your best companion in four minutes and 24 seconds of intimate talk per day. APRIL FOOL! I lied. A ten-percent increase isn't nearly enough. Given the current astrological indicators, you must seek out longer and deeper exchanges with the people you love. Can you manage 20 minutes per day?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): In a way, it's too bad you're about to lose your mind. The chaos that ensues will be a big chore to clean up. But in another sense, losing your mind may be a lucky development. The process of reassembling it will be entertaining and informative. And as a result, your problems will become more fascinating than usual, and your sins will be especially original. APRIL FOOL! I lied, sort of. You won't really lose your mind. But this much *is* true: Your problems will be more fascinating than usual, and your sins will be especially original. That's a good thing! It may even help you recover a rogue part of your mind that you lost a while back.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You say that some of the healthiest foods don't taste good? And that some of your pleasurable diversions seem to bother people you care about? You say it's too much hassle to arrange for a certain adventure that you know would be exciting and meaningful? Here's what I have to say about all that: Stop whining. APRIL FOOL! I lied. The truth is, there will soon be far fewer reasons for you to whine. The discrepancies between what you have to do and what you

want to do will at least partially dissolve. So will the gaps between what's good for you and what feels good, and between what pleases others and what pleases you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You should begin work on a book with one of the following titles, and you should finish writing it no later than April 28: "The Totally Intense Four Weeks of My Life When I Came All the Way Home" . . . "The Wildly Productive Four Weeks of My Life when I Discovered the Ultimate Secrets of Domestic Bliss" . . . "The Crazy Meaningful Four Weeks When I Permanently Anchored Myself in the Nourishing Depths." APRIL FOOL! I lied. There's no need to actually write a book like that. But I do hope you seek out and generate experiences that would enable you to write books with those titles.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): If you were a passenger on a plane full of your favorite celebrities, and the pilot had to make an emergency landing on a remote snowbound mountain, and you had to eat one of the celebrities in order to stay alive until rescuers found you, which celebrity would you want to eat first? APRIL FOOL! That was a really stupid and pointless question. I can't believe I asked it. I hope you didn't waste a nanosecond thinking about what your reply might be. Here's the truth, Aquarius: You're in a phase of your astrological cycle when the single most important thing you can do is ask and answer really good questions.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You now have an elevated chance of finding a crumpled one-dollar bill on a sidewalk. There's also an increased likelihood you'll get a coupon for a five-percent discount from a carpet shampoo company, or win enough money in the lottery to buy a new sweatshirt. To enhance these possibilities, all you have to do is sit on your ass and wish really hard that good economic luck will come your way. APRIL FOOL! What I just said was kind of true, but also useless. Here's more interesting news: The odds are better than average that you'll score tips on how to improve your finances. You may also be invited to collaborate on a potentially lucrative project, or receive an offer of practical help for a bread-and-butter dilemma. To encourage these outcomes, all you have to do is develop a long-term plan for improved money management.

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Homework: Carry out a prank that makes someone feel good. Report results at Truthrooster@gmail.com.

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NEED TO CHANGE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

To join or leave the email list for this newsletter, or to change the address where you receive it, go to:
<http://www.freewillastrology.com/newsletter/>

Once you join, check these points to ensure you'll actually receive the newsletter:

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2. Adjust your spam filter so it doesn't treat my address as spam.
3. Tell your company's IT group to let my address pass through any filtering software they have set up.
4. If my newsletters don't reach your inbox, look in your "Bulk Mail" or "Junk Mail" folder.
5. Problems could originate with your email provider. It may be using a "content filter" that prevents my newsletter from reaching you. If you suspect that's true, complain. Tell your email provider to stop blocking my newsletter.

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