

# HOROSCOPES

ISSUE VIII 2024



Cosmic Daffodil Journal

# HOROSCOPES

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**Cosmic Daffodil Journal: Horoscopes**  
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*“The magical thing about astrology is you are completely unique – no chart will ever be replicated again.”*

*Susan Miller*

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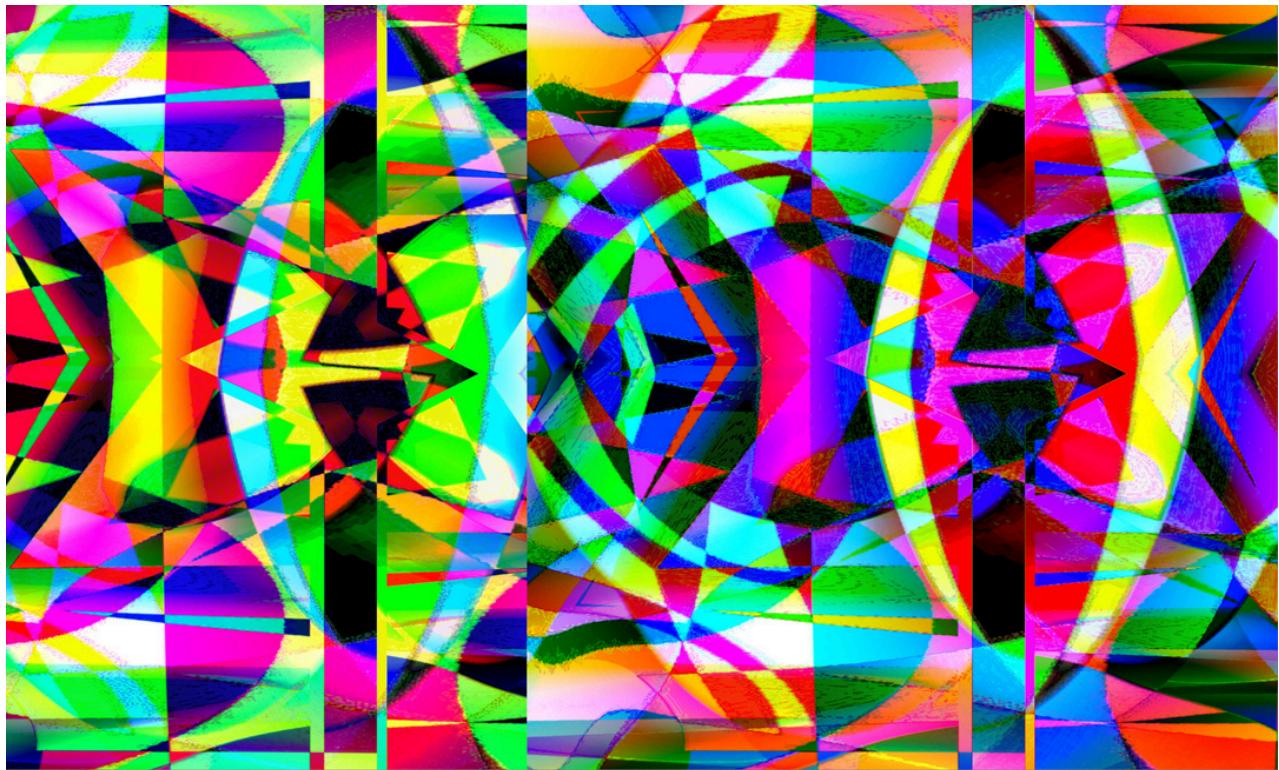
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• *Horoscopes* •

Edward Michael  
Supranowicz

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*Sunrise on a Distant Land 3*



## *Fire on her bowstring*

she is the daughter of wildfire and permafrost,  
fire in her blood, ice in her bones.  
she is the huntress of the lore;  
born of ashes on a numbing night.

bowstring tightens —  
one arrow fly, two slash sky  
three to pierce, four to die.  
solar flare, ice burn  
sweet juxtaposition.

a little birdie once broke the cage, said  
this world, this sky, this life is a voyage  
a destiny in flames  
a habit, a birthright.

the centauress of the legend had a two edged

## *Fire on her bowstring*

tongue —

one head gutted lies, the other was blunt.  
hair was of forest fire, galaxies for the eyes  
the centauress had embers in the chambers of  
her heart.

she is the sorceress, igniting blizzards on her  
way

she is every crimson coated heaven in hell  
she is gasoline, torched for life  
she is gold, a spectrum of her kind.

o fiery woman!

you have learnt to burn to live,  
your heart breathes in the softest flame ~  
when you swim in sky, when you run on ocean.

## *Fire on her bowstring*

the world houses your throne, but you are of no home

you are the roaming sun, dressed in orange wisdom.

so run! run as fast as you can!

keep the fire on your bowstring, keep the ice under your tongue.

## Scorpion

mom was born in late October  
the scorpion, eighteen years later

I saw it in the bath once,  
curled up blue under cesarean

she flinched when I said  
it was a pretty blue

*(a locked door, a girl's skin  
a man with needles, and permanence)*

July 26th

I never much felt like a Leo. Growing into my horoscope after having been the most painfully quiet person imaginable all throughout high school was never something I thought I could do. Confidence never came naturally; *fake it til you make it*, I was told, but what if I never learned how to feign a straight back and set shoulders to begin with? Charisma hit a natural one: I could be kind to people, but I never was well-liked for being awkward. *Seria* is how a classmate described me once, during a Spanish classroom activity. *Serious*. My arms always crossed for comfort atop my chest; how could anyone ever approach me? The center of the stage is where I abhorred to be; I would have rather become invisible than have hundreds of pairs of eyes boring through me, burning holes in my skin until I turned to dust. If I were

July 26th

ashes, nobody would look twice at me, wondering how I didn't wear makeup to hide the redness of my face or why I came to school in Miss Frizzle-style patterned dresses when I didn't want to be stared at.

I've since had my bones reshape into something new, the arched back of a lioness gracing my spine. Winged eyeliner sits at the corners of my eyes, sharp and imperfectly uneven, silver glitter lining my cheekbones. I want to feel like a fairy now, when I'm looked at. The patterns have stayed where they are, although they tend to be all black, and full of death. The skull on the back of a moth looks back at me from my skirt, smiling. If I look you in the eyes, it's all I can think about as you speak to me about the things you love. I want to listen. Nobody taught me that if I tell

July 26th

myself that I'm beautiful, I'd come to believe it, but through Aphrodite's aid, I've been able to see it. My head tilts upwards as I walk, untamed, even if the thought of a crowd still scares me to death. My loyalty lies at the foot of my heart, extended to those I care for unconditionally, but I don't take hurt from those who claim to love me. I've been blackened by matches before, and it shows in circular burn marks on the backs of my hands. I want to be worshiped: sung for my successes, known for my knowledge. *You're a natural*, I hear within the walls of my mind, and it rings louder than any doubts I may have had before.

If someone had told me I'd feel like a Leo someday— a shy and terrified little kid— I would have cried in their arms. I always

Leo

Emily Holman

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*July 26th*

wished I could be the person I am, now.

## *The Crab's Door*

A trembling claw, a rusted key,  
a creature in a gilded shell,  
dodging the ocean's undertow.

Scuttling sideways, wary and slow,

but courage is the price to pay,  
to plunge where lines and shapes will fade.  
The key turns in its hidden hold,  
for dreams, for love, an endless flow.

Beneath the brittle armor's guard,  
a frantic heart swells with yearning.

# • Horoscopes •

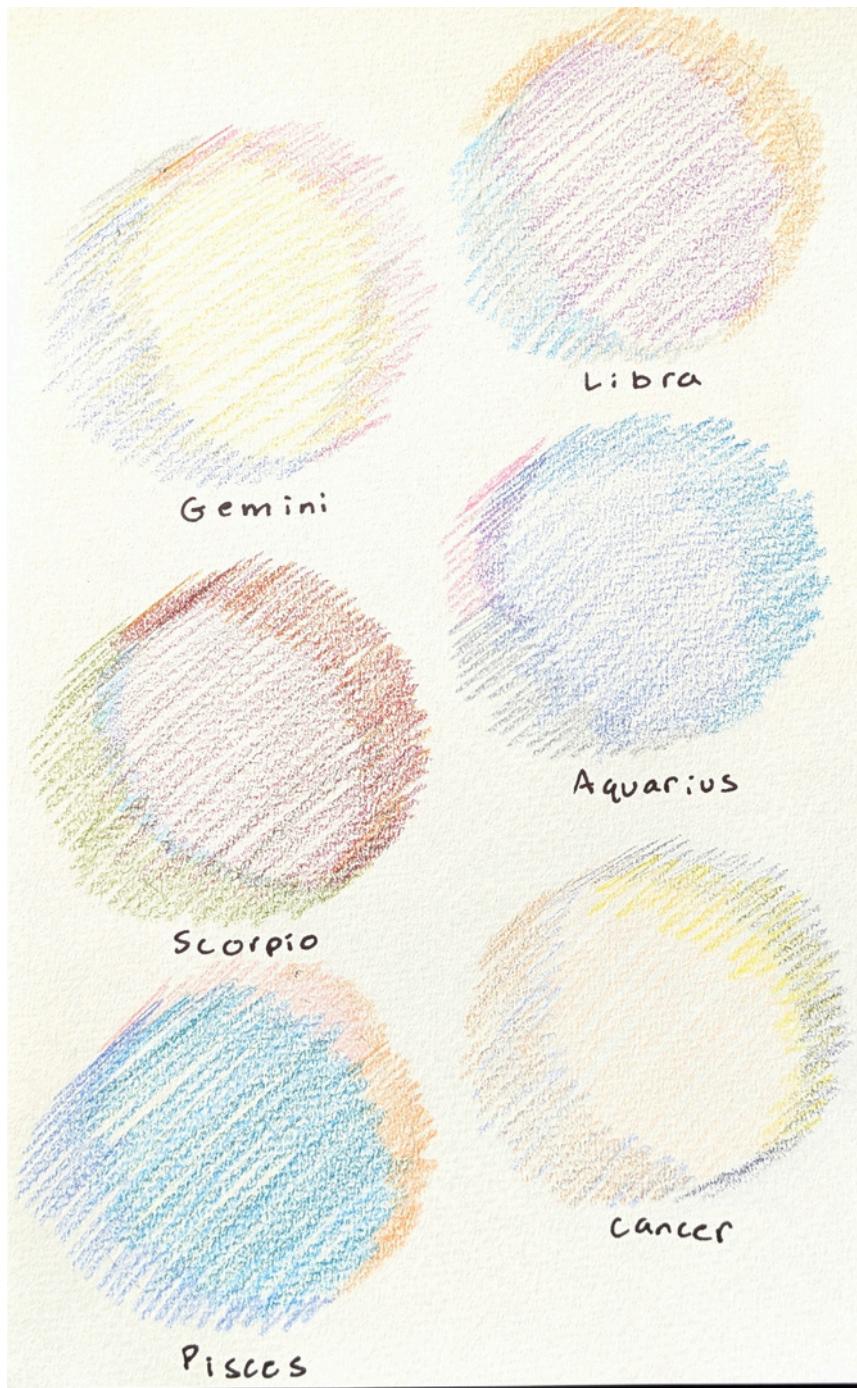
Rachel Turney

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## *Zodiac in Brief*



## Zodiac in Brief



## *Taurus according to the magazines*

Today, my horoscope says I should exercise my right to say *no*. I practice forcing the syllable through my vocal cords, stretching my lips around unfamiliar shapes, twisting my tongue to make the right sound. I'm contorting, and with every dislocated joint the *no* sounds less like *maybe* or *I'm not sure* until my body is a clove hitch and each time I open my mouth I roar refusal from my loosened lungs. My gums bleed. I spit my teeth out to make room for the sharp set pushing through, my neck cracked at ninety degrees, and I'm laughing. How liberating it will be to destroy everything I touch!

Today, my horoscope also says I should wear low-rise jeans. I say *no*.

## *Horroscopes*

*Cancer, you might find yourself thinking of exotic lands and traveling to them in the future.*

Mum always believed in astrology more than the Bible. When Mum was in her 'good place,' she'd read my horoscope as a bedtime story so I'd drift off to dreams of surprise fortunes or a handsome stranger I secretly hoped would be my new dad. But when Mum was having a 'duvet day,' she'd shout at me for holding her back, saying she should be traveling the world, not stuck in a damp council flat minding a two-faced Gemini like me.

*You might wonder about the people who live in those countries.*

## *Horroscopes*

When Mum heard Bob Geldof talking about the famine in Ethiopia on the radio, she jumped out of bed and started chucking our things into bags as if the bailiffs were knocking. "He's a modern-day saint," she said as she left. It was night by the time she got back and I was starving. Mum said, "I've been to the Salvation Army to donate our stuff so they can help those poor starving kids in Africa." So, I went to bed hungry, again.

*While romantic daydreams may tempt you, it's crucial to stay focused on your daily tasks.*

When she was younger, Mum had seen the Orient Express depart from Victoria Station, and she'd never forgotten how it held out a

## *Horroscopes*

promise of something better just down the line. When the lottery started, Mum used my child benefit to buy tickets, saying, "When I win, we'll go to Turkey on the Orient Express." I told her it had stopped going to Istanbul in 1977, and Mum made a noise like a worn-down brake and left. When she walked back in she didn't even say 'hello' just tore right into me as if we were still in the middle of the conversation. Then she put in a video about the QE2 and said, "When I win the lottery I'll sail to America but I'm leaving you behind."

***Read travel books and rent travel videos.***

When it was so cold our toilet froze, we'd go to the library. I lost myself in stories with

## *Horroscopes*

happy endings, and Mum settled in the Travel section. When the library closed, Mum would check out a Rough Guide video, and then at home, she'd put a tablecloth on the floor, switch on the bar heater, and say, "Come on, Shona, let's pretend we're in Lanzarote." Then, after a while, Mum, her eyes full of lists, would argue loudly with herself about the pros and cons of that destination for our next holiday. I'd creep away to bed, and in the morning, I'd find her curled up like a question mark on the sofa, surrounded by empty wine bottles.

*Meantime, you still have to get through each day.*

I've stopped reading fairy tales, but Mum still

## *Horroscopes*

likes to watch travel shows, or at least I think she does. After she was arrested for trying to stow away to France on a fishing boat, she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. I was taken into care. I get supervised visits and always bring a Rough Guide for us to watch together. Mum doesn't argue anymore, she doesn't even say very much, but when I read her horoscope to her today, she smiled.

*Gemini, it's important not to overanalyze every little detail of your situation now. You could be jumping to ridiculous conclusions based purely on circumstantial evidence.*

I think she's getting better, and we'll be able to move back home soon.

## *Ode to a Scorpio I Know*

‘My name’s S----  
that means Princess’  
she generously educates the room, again,  
full of  
friends and family, gathered for my bridal  
shower.

O Scorpio! O beautiful November,  
how you graced us with your presence—  
we must always remember  
You— O magnanimous giver of presents.  
‘Oh, how could anyone outgive you?’ your  
mother rhapsodizes.

You are so splendidly witty

## *Ode to a Scorpio I Know*

with your stories  
and your careful colossal constructive criticism  
— and eternal acts of pity—  
I never wore that coat again since—out of the  
kindness of your heart-(one of many glories!)—  
you mentioned within earshot that you wouldn't  
be caught dead looking like a fat trash bag.

O illustrious Princess, to whom not even  
Archimedes holds a candle,  
if you had not suggested we move the crafting  
beads from the counter  
onto the table, so all could reach—(a problem  
too advanced for our poor feeble brains to  
handle),  
we never would have finished our beaded  
bracelet charms, O surmounter!

## *Ode to a Scorpio I Know*

There are none among us able to mirror your mind— O herO!

O goddess of beauty divine, you are God's gift to mankind!!

Your mother does assure me—with your eyes and skin and hair—

no one is quite so fair; thou art *so* rare!

Your pulchritudinosity—radiant and enchanting—making mortal eyes go blind!

An adult child so golden—like those flowers in your hand—called daffodowndillies or *Narcissus*.

Here I am again, trapped in the sixth circle of Hell—

Her—

esy— like Dante. I will not immortalize your name, but your deeds will forever be

## *Ode to a Scorpio I Know*

remembered.

‘My name’s S----  
that means Princess’  
she generously educates the room, again,  
full of  
friends and family, gathered for my bridal  
shower.

## Today's Horoscope

Good news will come in not as good news but a challenge that will make you shudder from your tailbone to your eyelids. Try to not pass out, clutch your throat, fall to the floor in tears. It's *good* news. Just thought you should know.

Your moon (not to mention every other planet) is in an odd position (like always) and some large luminous extraterrestrial body is in retrograde. That's why you feel like jumping on your rooftop and pulling out your hair or setting it on fire. Relax, already. The spheres will sphere away.

Feel like lying? That is your astral body sliding into your corporeal one for an instant or two. That skinny minx is itching for a fight. Wow, and the things she makes you say. Amazing.

## *Today's Horoscope*

You will receive a voice message from an absent friend, and I mean, really absent. As in dead. When you hear it, it's real. Of course, no one will believe you and some will consider calling 911. But listen closely. She always said you were worth more. She encouraged the hard things. You've not believed or done either, at least, not until last week. She's probably wanting to congratulate you! Take notes.

A close relative will relate extraordinary news: someone is pregnant, finally. There is new employment on the horizon (about time). That will? Updated to include you again, despite the mess up with the Norway trip and all that bad blood over the nonrefundable cruise deposit. And we won't even talk about the novel you wrote that unpacked the family secret.

## Today's Horoscope

The nights will be short, your sleep even shorter. You will toss and turn in the bed that is now your own. You will look out the window and think: my street, my driveway, my tree, though the *my* in all is questionable. You will walk into the kitchen and make your coffee, the grounds at the bottom of the cup portending nothing but absent coffee.

Pet the black cat. Walk under the ladder. Break a mirror. The worst has happened, and look, here you are. You will continue to survive until you don't. Why not make it okay? Call a friend, ride a bike. Hope for tomorrow, which will be another day. Live into it anyway.

# Let's Set It On Fire



## *Fish*

A Pisces I swim in atoms:

scales tear off,

organs no longer piping  
blood's music  
rot and shed  
like upstream salmon.

For swimming, for this bliss,  
I die.

For a fin-dip in creation,  
I die.

My atoms rebear themselves,  
a second fish  
imperishable,  
making “die” a strange word...

## *Preemie Cancer*

Spinning yarns with stars on pincers  
I was made to walk with Tarf-torched feet,  
but I was meant to be a lion

porous heart builds homes on sea beds  
veinless pulse push vain mess head rush  
cold-blood brain freeze dreams of grandeur

I was born an almost leader  
hides in shell but holds no armor  
self-aware but can't move forwards

God, I want a house of love,  
since you robbed me of my backbone  
born too soon into the throat of my own  
emotion

does the moon light my path or

## *Preemie Cancer*

does the moonlight shatter my conviction?  
is there something more inside these stars?

cast my claws into the night, and feel  
that hurt for hands held far away  
sidestep wade for better days

windblown mane to seaborne prey  
I was meant for my marrow to soak in pride,  
but I was made to seek out second skies.

## *According To The Stars*

Starting in October 1997, from the 25th to the 30th of every month, I eagerly stopped by the mailbox on my way home from school, looking for my Seventeen, Jane, Teen, and Glamour Magazines. I anticipated the arrival of these glossy tomes for fashion tips, essays from girls "just like me," and suggestions about how to tame my wild curls. But more than anything, I couldn't wait to flip straight to the most essential information the magazine held, my horoscope.

Neither of my parents subscribed to any religion. My dad is a lapsed catholic, and my mom is an ex-Muslim. Astrology was something for me to believe in, something to make the confusion of adolescence make more

## *According To The Stars*

sense, especially concerning boys. In my freshman year of high school, the male gaze stopped feeling predatory and shifted into something I understood to be power. I would wake at 4am to style my curly hair with tricks Glamour was known for; the most important one for my hair type is it must be dried without heat. I sacrificed precious sleep to ensure my hair was something boys in my high school may want to touch.

It worked. Just as my horoscope for October 1997 indicated, I fell in LOVE by mid-month. The astrologer in Seventeen said Libras should "Get ready for a mysterious older boy to sweep you off your feet." My personal heartthrob was named Joe, a sophomore to

## *According To The Stars*

my freshman, and he was a fantastic first boyfriend until he cheated on me with my best friend. I should have seen a heartbreak coming, as I had been warned by the special summer astrology booklet tucked into the June 1998 issue of *Teen*.

After that double betrayal, Jane became my new bible. I was tortured and angry and moved into my sophomore year in true riot grrrl fashion. I was still checking my horoscopes in *Seventeen* and *Glamour* to get encouraging advice like "Change your messaging this month, and love may come your way." As a true believer, my new outgoing message on my private landline answering machine became "Spiderwebs" by

## *According To The Stars*

No Doubt, an idea I stole from Chuck, my unrequited crush. His song of choice was The Doors "Hello I Love You." I know because I called and hung up at least 97 times that fall and willed him to intuit it was me and call me back on my clear plastic corded phone.

January 6th, 1999, the stars aligned, and he called!

Having tamed my hair and found my style, I graduated from those lady magazine horoscopes to newspaper horoscopes from The Hartford Courant and The Daily Campus in college. Then, in my twenties, I moved onto websites like Astrology Zone and astrology.com to get guidance from the universe on what to do with my career and

## *According To The Stars*

love life. Now, I have six apps I devoutly check every morning while tucked into my soft teal throw with my first cup of coffee. I'm married and have had a solid career for 15 years. I don't NEED horoscopes anymore, but they provide comfort and guidance for my day that I don't want to live without. In fact, I'm writing this now because the Sanctuary app told me this morning to "Assert your ideas with confidence. The Gemini moon encourages the expression of your thoughts. If you have a writing project to work on, this is the day to do it. Words can flow with dynamic clarity." What do you think? Was my horoscope accurate today?

## *The Pseudoscorpion*

I was born in late October, Scorpio season; ruled by the scorpion, the snake, the eagle, or so I'm led to believe. I offer less burning sting, more soft synanthropic embrace.

I'm supposed to be sexy, sensual, sensitive but I'm only the last one, and in triple digit percentages. Watch the stinger aim for your heart and land in my own eye as you pass.

They say I'm cold, cruel, cunning, calculating, but math was always my worst subject. If I had two apples and you took one, I'd apologize for selfishly holding the other too tight.

I'm returned each late October to the list of expectations missed and deadlines past. The leaves change and fall in their yearly death dance, and I would sink to the soil

## *The Pseudoscorpion*

to hide in the browning hills of foliage to wait,  
to chance the moment I could work my way in  
to a belonging kind of place that won't care  
that I'm only a pseudoscorpion, all soft, no  
sting.

## *Horoscopes for the End Times*

*Aries* (Mar 21-Apr 19): Your anger is as justified as it is futile.

*Taurus* (Apr 20-May 20): It's in your nature to seek shelter— make it an underground bunker.

*Gemini* (May 21-Jun 20): Play both sides if you must, but know there's no way out of this.

*Cancer* (Jun 21-Jul 22): Not only is everyone mad at you, everyone's mad.

*Leo* (Jul 23 - Aug 22): You won't want to be at the center of what comes next!

*Virgo* (Aug 23-Sep 22): Now is the time to

## *Horoscopes for the End Times*

practice letting go of all the things you cannot change as well as all the things you can. Now is the time for giving up.

*Libra* (Sep 23-Oct 22): Find balance careening between all-out panic and the serene calm that comes with losing all hope.

*Scorpio* (Oct 23-Nov 21): There's an air of mystery left—let yourself dissolve into it like so much vapor.

*Sagittarius* (Nov 22-Dec 21): Be sure to cower in terror today.

*Capricorn* (Dec 22-Jan 19): Remember, no one likes a smart-ass at a time like this.

## *Horoscopes for the End Times*

*Aquarius* (Jan 20-Feb 18): You'll be fine, weirdly. But others will resent you for this. Proceed with caution.

*Pisces* (Feb 19-Mar 20): Find time to mourn the life we once had and the life we have coming. Cry your eyes out!

•Capricorn, Aquarius•

Maria Pianelli Blair

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# Desperately Seeking Saturn



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## *Sun/Moon*

His sun is my moon  
does that mean anything  
I do not know what his moon is  
because I cannot ask him  
when & where were you born

I cannot ask him anything  
I am two fish swimming in circles  
maybe he is the other fish  
& we are chasing each other's tails

I have five pisces placements  
sun rising mercury jupiter mars  
& a moon & venus in capricorn  
I'm a dreamer who overthinks

I am so practically  
impractical  
my fantasy's

## *Sun/Moon*

on a schedule

& here we are just swimming in the blue

My astrologist friend once read my chart &  
said

..... you're cursed  
but you're also the god of time  
darling  
I don't feel like the god of time

I feel like the god of  
bad logistics & yearning  
I feel like the god or no the  
poor cursed soul of  
fumbling social interactions

I feel so fucking silly  
like one of those fish

## *Sun/Moon*

those two fish with their mouths open  
gaping after each other  
haha so us

So us  
the failed plans the nothing said  
the damn infinity of the ocean  
when your heart is a labyrinth with no map  
looping back & back

I cannot get out of this pattern  
some loops were not made to be broken  
some circles of space & time  
were always destined to stay overlapping

Will I drown in my own dichotomy  
or will you ground me in my water  
will you be the shore to my sea  
will sun & moon ever meet?

## *Sun/Moon*

If there's a pocket of sky I'll share it with you  
if the stars align I'll walk them with you  
all the lights went out the day I was born  
& I see some of them in you.

## *I so wanted a Capricorn.*

Life can be capricious.  
How ironic.  
I really wanted my first child to be a  
Capricorn.

Capricorns are hard workers, ambitious.  
They are go getters, organised, no nonsense  
high achievers.

If you want your child to grow up to be a  
manager or professional then Capricorn's  
your bag.

I had high hopes.

Helen was pregnant and in the third  
trimester. It was Autumn.  
They said the baby was due at the end of  
December. Maybe even Christmas day. Oh  
joy I would get my precious Capricorn child  
on Christmas Day.

## *I so wanted a Capricorn.*

But pregnancy, especially the first, is fraught with uncertainty.

Due dates. Ha! What a fool I was to be taken in by their dates. They might as well have stuck a pin in a calendar blindfold.

Christmas and New Year came and went with no sign of the precious Capricorn child appearing.

Helen's waters held stubbornly tight.

I prayed to every god.

I wanted my little organised, steady as they go, safe pair of hands, Capricorn.

January made its lugubrious progress into the third week and a fearful prospect arose inside me that we were entering dangerously close to the “Aquarian Zone”.

## *I so wanted a Capricorn.*

I had to face the prospect my child would be born an Aquarian. Unlike Capricorns they are not steady or hardworking. They are not a safe pair of hands.

Aquarians get up to all hairraising stuff and dangerous pursuits. I feared my house would be set alight.

I knew of Aquarians who were fun, wacky and zany. I didn't want my child working in a circus. I wanted them working in a bank. I wanted a safe and steady business minded Capricorn.

I did all I could to avert the Aquarian birth. Did what I could to get Helen pushing sooner rather than later. There was still time for the Capricorn.

# *I so wanted a Capricorn.*

I took her for rides up cobbled streets to induce labour.

“Is it coming Helen, is our sweet, darling, dear Capricorn coming?”

Helen shouted “Yes!”

Finally, I drove like a lunatic to the hospital. There was not a second to lose.

We were on a cusp. A balance between Capricorn and Aquarius, between success and disaster.

They wheeled Helen into the delivery suite. I held her hand tight. She squeezed my hand so hard my fingers nearly burst. She swore splendidly throughout.

I didn’t care. Just make it in time for a Capricorn! If you love me Helen you’ll push like you’ve never pushed before!

## *I so wanted a Capricorn.*

Get that little goat out!

I glanced at the clock, it was nearly midnight.  
But the baby wouldn't come out  
Hele's waters stubbornly held. The matron  
tutted and said "He's just borrowing for time,  
borrowing for time". My dreams of a  
Capricorn baby dashed.

I thought typical, the Aquarian is not doing  
things to plan, being an individual. Messing  
things up.

The baby was born at 2:12 AM. Helen gave  
birth to a bouncing 6 lbs 6 ounce baby  
Aquarian!

I found it hard to smile. Inside I was  
mourning for my Capricorn child.

## *I so wanted a Capricorn.*

But then the Matron said to me, “Oh he’s an Aquarian. You know most of the scientists and Presidents have been Aquarians.”

And suddenly I started to warm to this little bundle of zany joy.

## *Constellations*

On days the stars  
conspire against me,

it hurts even when the wind  
brushes past my hair.

I get lost in the night sky,  
searching a way

for the stars to realign.

## *Carapace*

I've forgotten how to write, or so the crabby part of me whispers, politely.

Someone once told me horoscopes are nothing but gossip and tawdry  
Wishes, but isn't that the marrow of everything? And when I think of other July birthdays, of crabs walking sideways, Thinking they might get to the ocean safely; I think that I understand That fear.

I'm moody; I retreat under blankets Like the world proposes the other July birthdays do naturally. And, so, there's something in that space

Of all of us breathing for the first time  
On the same day and week and month  
That makes me feel –

## *Carapace*

Imagine walking sideways,  
Nowhere near the horizon,  
And still knowing where to go. Imagine  
crying as your first instinct,  
And the other signs being afraid,  
Of what you know?

And, because I'm a Cancer, I feel viscerally.  
Crabs hold onto discarded, water-laden  
seaweed like vices  
Putting them back –gently–  
eventually–

And, I'm glad I'm born in the days where you  
sweat  
Out promises long gone  
& worry about the way your hair curls  
Under pressure. I long to be sideways  
under you, holding a dandelion near my

## *Carapace*

thumbs

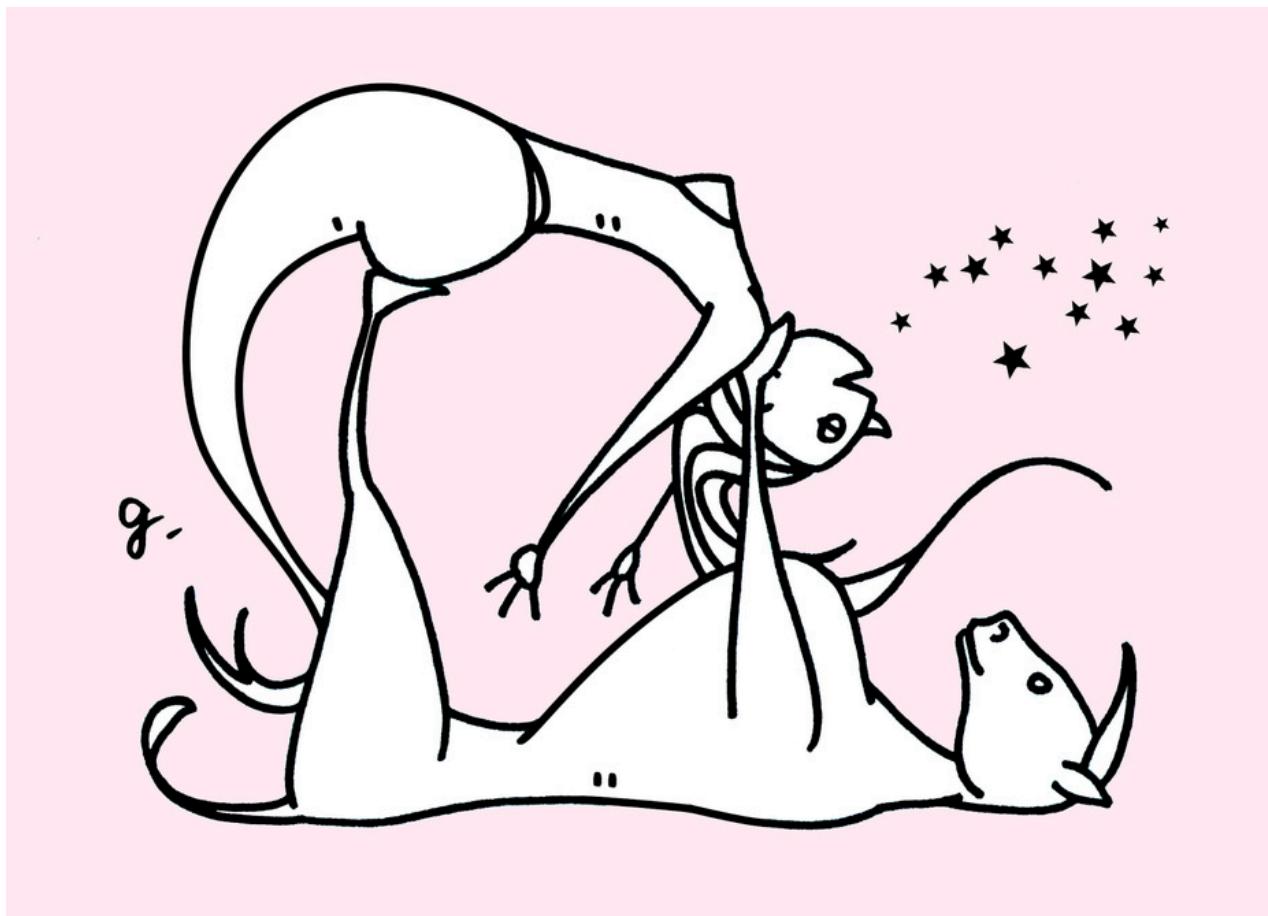
Until my chin turns yellow.  
Turning the sunshine inward,  
Folding into me.

•Taurus, Capricorn•

Garo Eng

Issue VIII 2024

## *Couples Yoga*



## *Empty Spaces*

The empty spaces of my lion heart filled in with courage, I couldn't kick loose between the dips in my moods and the major pains in my chest, it is easy to find myself but not always that easy to get you to see me.

# *A Cancer and an Aquarius Walk Into a Failed Marriage*

When my father's pitcher ran dry – all his hopes for divorce evaporated under my mother's steel grip – he bought her a beach house to shield her from his indifference.

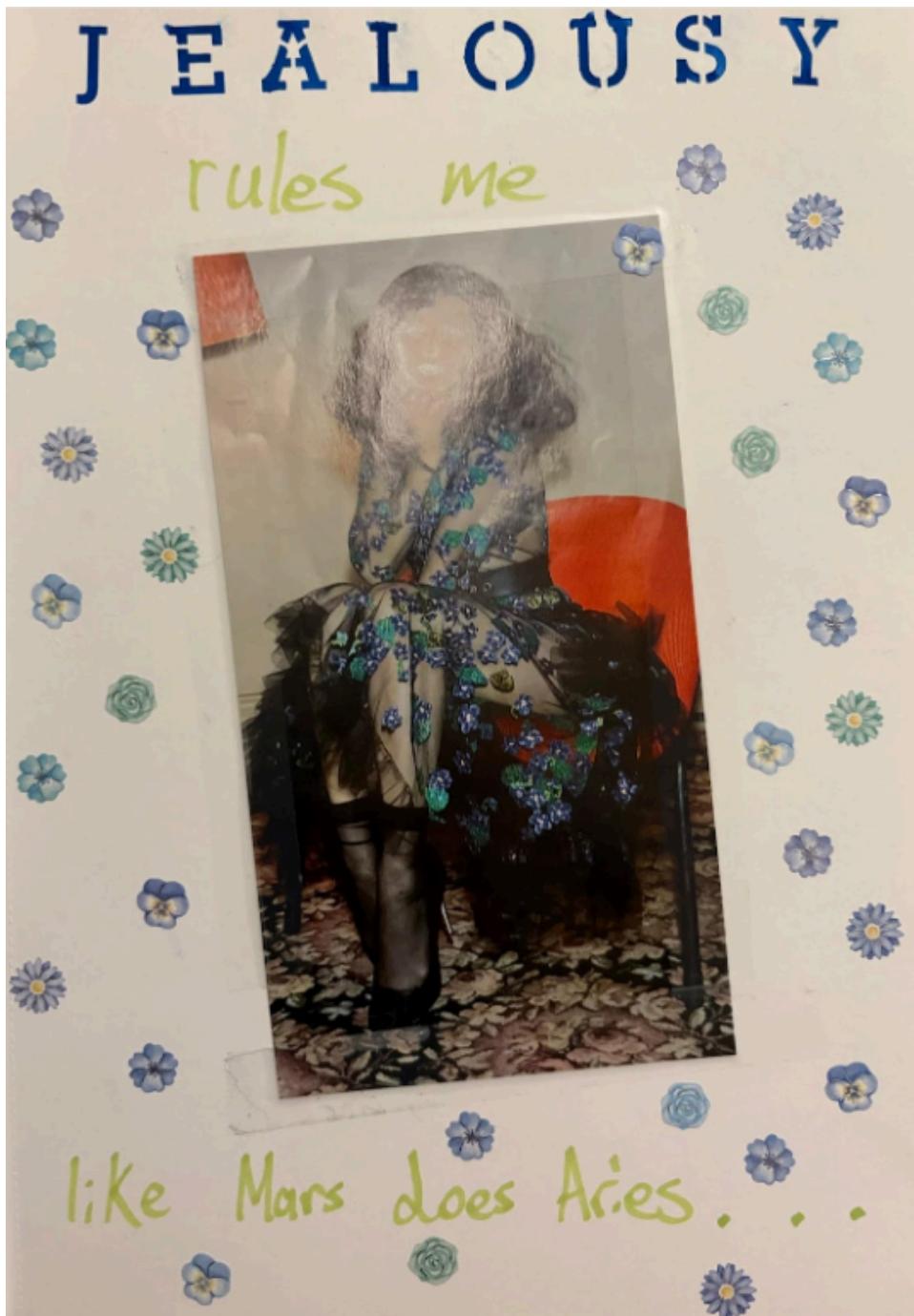
She keeps busy – a lavender garden to sow, a kitchen backsplash to tile, a host of empty children's rooms to furnish before summer break. Some nights, under a thick fog blanket, she calls and asks me to describe the stars.

I tell her of patient cupbearers and tender crabs, caretaking my caregiver who has no one left to peel back her shell and let her rest.

# *Untitled*

Mars in Scorpio:  
I transform anything I touch.  
Would you like to watch?

# Jealousy



## *On the Cusp*

Dear Edgar,

I wandered into the neighborhood by accident. Why now, two days before the birthday we share? January 19th falls within the Capricorn-Aquarian cusp. The cusp of mystery and imagination, according to astrologers. Perhaps our meeting was fated.

Once I saw that statue of you, I couldn't turn away.

It is called *Poe Returning to Boston*. The sculptor—her name is Stefanie Rocknak—must have been haunted by a vision. A vision of you.

You are striding along, your cloak billowing behind you. An enormous, bloated raven, talons out, precedes you. He has just escaped

## *On the Cusp*

from your open valise. He looks like a ferocious guide dog leading a blind man.

You look purposeful and angry as you return to Boston. The city you hated. City of your birth. Another connection we share.

I was born in the Midwest but conceived in Boston—a fact my mother shared with me. She later insisted I had figured it out for myself. Impossible. What kind of child would count back nine months from the date of her birth to pinpoint the moment her parents did the deed?

But I was an odd sort of child. A bookish good girl, on the face of it. But moody and a little aloof. Too often lost in my own thoughts, which often drifted to the dark side. And with an acquired taste for the macabre—thanks to

## *On the Cusp*

you.

Naturally, my parents deserve some of the credit. They were the ones who gave me that hardback volume of your collected works for Christmas. I was far too young for it. I sensed that, even as I devoured those stories. *The Tell-Tale Heart*. *The Pit and the Pendulum*. Fuel for the nightmares that infused my holidays.

But here is what most strikes me about the statue. A detail some might overlook. Those papers and manuscripts tumbling out of your valise and onto the sidewalk. Trailing behind you.

Edgar, you must have walked in and out of my dream! Two months ago, I had a nightmare about that very thing.

## *On the Cusp*

In the dream, I was wandering in an airport.  
Separated from my traveling companions.  
Struggling to carry my bags—until they began  
to multiply. Luggage begat luggage.

The airport began to flood. One of my bags fell open. Pages from yellow legal pads, my private notes, were trailing in the water.

I was spilling damp secrets into the world.

I had to set the bags down. I began to sort through the jumble. Like magic, two small bags appeared at the bottom of the pile. Old-fashioned valises. Carpet bags. I picked them up and continued my journey, leaving the rest behind. Just in time to catch my plane.

But now, with the vision I can't unsee of you,  
I am reminded of what happens at the end of

## *On the Cusp*

the journey, even when you believe you have let go of the burdens you no longer need.

The raven escapes the valise. You are still spilling secrets.

And a final hidden detail, visible only if you circle the statue and view it from behind.

That pulsating heart continues to follow you.

# *My Sagittarius Sign is a Shot of Ice Cream*

a former colleague once called my Zodiac

*a softer fire...*

i like that.

my Sagittarius sign is the arrow shot with a bow

covered in ice cream.

a sweet nudge;

not a mean stab. a soft serve; not a hard one.

I don't appreciate  
the specific stereotype

about Sagittariuses being non-committal. I only

appreciate the archetype  
of us knowing when

enough is enough. when we have had the right

amount of passion  
flavor in our cones.

when we know our tummy is full or can't take it.

when it's time  
to stop eating.

we're only non-committal to what doesn't serve

us well.

we want shivers

from a  
tender  
kindling.

## *Sign of the Times*

*I don't believe in astrology;  
I'm a Sagittarius and we're sceptical.*

**Arthur C. Clarke**

Lines in the newspaper sum up my life so elegantly, cut through all the problems, complexity and issues; I'd always dismissed horoscopes as generic and general, but here my life is played out in technicolour dreams:

*“The atmosphere at home could get turbulent,  
steer clear of dramas rather than get involved.”*

Even before the smashing of the glass, I am aware how my life has been predicted long before it happened. I wonder if all our lives are just following a pre-authored script, scribbled in a flurry of absence and sadness, an elegy to freedom.

*“Someone will make you feel guilty, don't have any of it,  
you've been put upon one too many times already.”*

## *Sign of the Times*

If someone had been watching and writing every word, they couldn't have described my life any better. I am caught on the pin, just another butterfly, sacrificed for Lepidopterology, just another specimen.

*“You need to stop being manipulated.”*  
This last line really hurt, cut me to the quick.

It's one thing to suffer in life, quite another for star signs to understand the deeper complexity more than us. Staring into the mirror I now see the endless sea --- an exhibit in the human zoo, waiting to read my future.

Prewritten, prescribed and prearranged, I wonder if freedom is just living in the tramlines? How can I presume to try to live my life, when all I have to do is read the star signs instead?

# *Famous Tauruses You Didn't Know Were Tauruses*

**The Pazzi Conspiracy**, an orchestrated assassination attempt of the Florentine leader, sponsored by the pope, in which the designated hitman was a priest who was to deliver his deathblow instead of Holy Communion, is a taurus.

On April 22nd, 1500 Portuguese explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral discovered a special land which was about to suffer in the hands of imperialism for centuries to come — meaning the great country of **Brazil**, and in fact the very act of **coming to Brazil**, are tauruses.

John Adams was sworn in as the first vice-president of the United States on April 21st, 1789, making **his vice-presidency** a taurus.

# Famous Tauruses You Didn't Know Were Tauruses

No veep has measured up since. When he was president, Adams founded the **Library of Congress**, which is also a taurus. There, you can find a copy of *Shrek (2001)*, universally agreed to be the greatest movie ever made and – guess what – a taurus.

**La Marseillaise**, aka the French National anthem about starting a revolutionary war over being hungry (and that goes extremely hard), is a taurus. The first **guillotine** was erected the following day, which means the coolest form of execution is also a taurus. So is the Brobecks' 2009 concept album ***Violent Things***. The **table knife**, supposedly invented by Cardinal Richelieu some decades prior, is a taurus (he did not live long enough to regret

## Famous Tauruses You Didn't Know Were Tauruses

arming the cooks, I'm afraid). Sidenote: is violence a form of hunger?

The **International Workers' Day** is a taurus. Unfortunately, so are **McDonald's** and **Mickey Mouse**. Speaking of mice, the first **computer mouse** for personal use (strange distinction and/or qualification) was a taurus (I'm assuming it's dead, rest in peace). Speaking of obsolete inventions, the world's first **postage stamp** was also a taurus!

The album ***Parklife*** by Blur, which many self-described “cultural critics” have declared unintelligible to anyone who’s not a British divorced dad who thinks they’re ‘Gen X’ even though that’s not a British thing, is a taurus –

# Famous Tauruses You Didn't Know Were Tauruses

and my dog's favourite album. She always gets excited when I shout “Park Life!”.

MARINA's (nee Marina and the Diamonds) second studio album, *Electra Heart*, harbinger of not-so-glamorous teen girl depression, is a taurus. So is the **electron**, discovered by Thomson on April 30th, a Friday in 1897 – hardworking man!

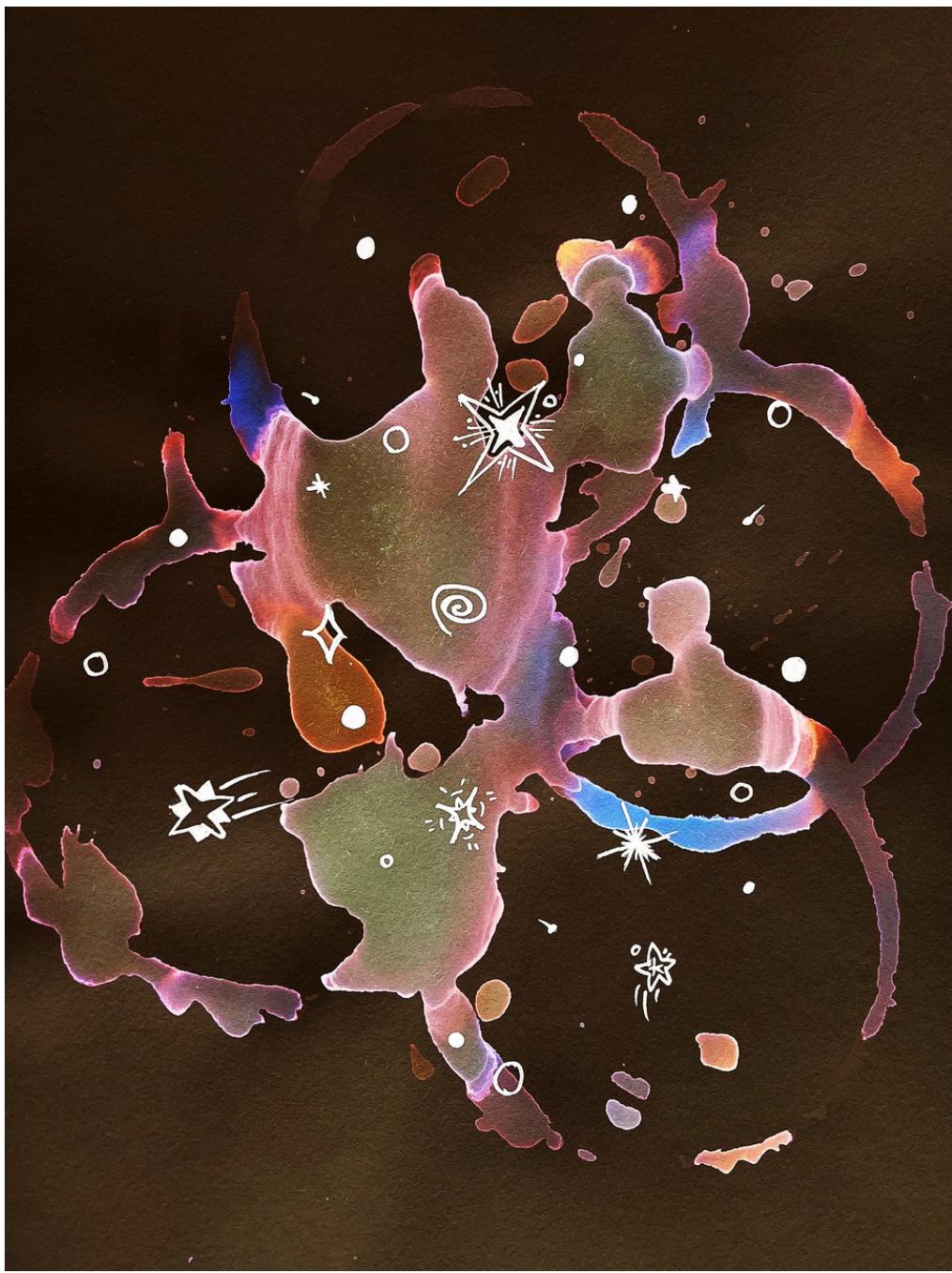
St. Vincent's greatest album, a jazz-infused triumph of quarantine times titled *Daddy's Home*, is also a taurus. The criminally underrated Vampire Weekend album *Father of the Bride* – my kindergarten class' favourite – is a taurus as well. Perhaps daddy's home on leave for the wedding? Sure, spring is a

# *Famous Tauruses You Didn't Know Were Tauruses*

taurus – or is taurus springy – in the northern hemisphere. In the southern one, autumn is taurus season.

**Deaths** that are tauruses: Hitler's, Mussolini's, Bin Laden's, James Earl Grey's... Nazi Germany surrendered to Soviet forces on May 2nd, 1945, meaning **the end of WW2 in Europe** is a taurus. It works metaphorically as the Fall and the Spring. Anyway, we were talking about why Taurus is the best sign....

# Polaris



# BIOGRAPHIES

**Edward Michael Supranowicz** is the grandson of Irish and Russian/Ukrainian immigrants. He grew up on a small farm in Appalachia. He has a grad background in painting and printmaking. Some of his artwork has recently or will soon appear in Fish Food, Streetlight, Another Chicago Magazine, The Door Is a Jar, The Phoenix, and other journals. Edward is also a published poet who has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize multiple times.

**Arani Acharjee** is an emerging writer from Kolkata, India. She has been passionate about writing since her pre-teen days. She writes about anything and everything life throws on her way! As a hardcore introvert, pen and paper are her best friend and it holds all her deepest and darkest secrets. Every now and then, she shares some glimpses of her notebook with the world (with butterflies in the stomach & all..) She has co-authored 12 anthologies till date, and published her own poetry book "Thirty times I felt like a human" in 2021.

**M. Klein** is a poet and artist from an Appalachian basement. Her work is tangled in hunger, and shaped like a promise. Her writing has been published by or is forthcoming with Pile Press, Not My Style, and Broken Antler. Klein's debut chapbook, Brentwood, was published in 2023. Find her online @ stone.spiral on Instagram / stOnespiral on 'X'.

**Emily Holman** is a queer, autistic author with a Bachelor's degree in English Literature and Creative Writing from California State University, Chico and is currently working on a Master's degree in Literature and Writing at California State University, San Marcos. She is also an editor at "The Infinite Blues" magazine. She has loved writing ever since she was able to speak. Even when she was too little to write, she was still excited to ask someone else to write her stories down for her.

**Maudie Bryant** is a multidisciplinary artist from the Pacific Northwest now living in the Southern USA. Her writing often explores the depths of human experience, surveying the disquiet that lurks beneath the surface. A graduate of the University of Louisiana Monroe with a M.A. in English, Maudie's work has appeared or is forthcoming in Anodyne Magazine, Susurrus, and Spellbinder.

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**Rachel Turney** is an educator and teacher trainer in Colorado. Her poems and prose are published in The Font Journal, Nap Lit, Pulp, Ranger, Through Lines, Blink Ink, Bare Back, The Hooghly Review, and Teach Write Journal. Her photography appears in Writers Resist, The Salt, San Antonio Review, Umbrella Factory Magazine, Prosetrics, Vagabond City, Dipity, and Ink in Thirds Magazine. Blog: [turneytalks.wordpress.com](http://turneytalks.wordpress.com) Instagram: @turneytalks

**Romy Morreo** (she/they) completed her MA Creative Writing at the University of Chichester. Her work often explores dark topics and queer themes. Her poetry has appeared in Transients Magazine and the Dark Poets Club, and she received an Honourable Mention for the Dark Poets Prize 2024. Several pieces of her short fiction have been accepted for publication. She lives in the UK.

**Adele Evershed** is a Welsh writer. Some of the places her work has been published include Grey Sparrow Journal, Anti Heroin Chic, Gyroscope, and Janus Lit. Adele has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net for poetry and has two poetry collections, Turbulence in Small Spaces (Finishing Line Press) and The Brink of Silence (Bottlecap Press). She has published a novella in flash with Alien Buddha Press called Wannabe and her short story collection; Suffer/Rage has recently been published by Dark Myth Publications. Find her on X @AdLibby1 and Instagram @ad\_libby.

**Ruth Irene (she/her)**, originally from Chicago, is a mother to three girls; an admitted undergraduate degree candidate at Harvard Extension School, Harvard University; a tea addict; and adores her editor, Atticus, the fluffiest Ragdoll cat on the East Coast. She is an editor-reader for poetry in The Periwinkle Pelican and has poetry being published by Persephone's Fruit, RedSheep, Haunted Words Press, Partially Shy, & others.

**Jessica Barksdale's** sixteenth novel *What the Moon Did* and short story collection *Trick of the Porch Light* were published in 2023. She's published three poetry collections: *When We Almost Drowned* (2019), *Grim Honey* (2021), and *Let's End This Now* (2024).

She taught at Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, California and continues to teach for UCLA Extension and in the online MFA program for Southern New Hampshire University.

She lives in the Pacific Northwest.

**Mirjana M.** (they/them) are a digital artist and writer from Belgrade, Serbia.

Their work focuses on exploring the juxtaposition of various elements through mixed media of photography, double exposure, textures and light. Their work most often explores concepts of duality and has appeared in "Gulf Stream Literary", "The Good Life Review", "waxing & waning", Vocivia, Broken Antler, Spellbinder, New Limestone Review magazines and other places. They authored 3 poetry collections.

At age 44, **Rebecca Collins** wrote in Italian and published her first book, *Tre raccolte poetiche* (Midgard Editrice, October 2022, reprints September 2023). Its free-form poems were mostly born in Perugia, Italia, where she lived on and off for almost one year and was transformed by the community and people who became family. Since September 2023, she has been living in Sakartvelo (the country of Georgia), which has further transformed her. She is working on another free-form book, *The inked side of my hand*, and a book of haiku, *Inner lake: haiku*. Three of her poems have been accepted by *Trampoline* for publication November 2024. Finally, she wrote the lyrics and tune for the Christian song "I Come to You" and is searching for someone who can write the music.

**Steven C. Wright** is a queer poet and prose author from Edison, New Jersey. His work has appeared in Cathexis Northwest Press, londemere lit, and BRAWL.

**Jianna Heuer** is a Psychotherapist in New York City. She writes Nonfiction and Fiction. Her work has appeared in Months To Years, The Inquisitive Eater, Across The Margin, and other literary journals. Her flash non-fiction has appeared in two books, Fast Funny Women and Fast Fierce Women.

Check out more of her work here: <https://linktr.ee/jiannaheuer>

**L.M. Cole** is a poet from the US East Coast. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming with The Pinch Journal, The McNeese Review, Stanchion and others. She can be found on Twitter @\_scoops\_\_

**Kelly Erin Gray** is a writer and instructor based in Boston. Her writing has appeared in Maudlin House, Up The Staircase Quarterly, The Shore, and The River. She can be found online @kelly\_erin\_.

**Maria Pianelli Blair** is a multidisciplinary artist based in New Jersey. Her collages, fashioned on everything from cardboard to playing cards, marry contemporary imagery, found vintage materials, and magical realism. Maria has been published in Contemporary Collage Magazine; FEELS Zine; Photo Trouvee Magazine; Moss Puppy; and Chill Mag, among other publications. Maria's work has been displayed in both galleries and virtual exhibitions and can be found on Instagram @sunset\_sews.

**Devon Webb** is a Gen Z writer & editor based in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her award-winning work, concerning themes of femininity, anticapitalism & neurodivergence, has been published extensively worldwide. She is a founding member of The Circus, a literary collective prioritising radical inclusivity in the indie lit scene. She can be found on social media at @devonwebbnz.

**Simon Collinson** is a writer from England. He seeks solitude and shadow.

**Ling Yuan** lives and writes in Singapore. She is a Chautauqua Janus Prize finalist and a Kinsman Quarterly Iridescence Award semi-finalist. She has attended fiction workshops at the Asia Creative Writing Programme and is currently working on a short story collection.

**Leslie Cairns** is a poet with two chapbooks through Bottlecap Press, and a Best of the Net Nominee (2024).

**Garo Eng** is a cartoonist from Canada.

**Megan Markham** (she/they) is a poet, playwright, and actor living in the PNW with their wife, dog, and cats. Making theater and art with family and friends is what gets them through the days. She has written and performed full-length immersive theater, short plays, and everything in between. Their work has appeared in Coffee People Magazine, Progenitor, Nifty Lit, Prospectus, and Rainbow Poems.

**Erin Matheson Ritchie** lives in California with her spouse and pet rabbit, Thor. She earned her master's degree in education at Stanford University, taught secondary English for seven years, and caught a piranha while fishing in the Amazon River at a research facility.

**Sunny Hill** (they/she/he/xē) is a queer disabled poet from New Jersey. Sunny uses poetry as a vehicle to examine the connections between the body, identity, and relationships and strives for every reader to feel less alone. They read tarot cards and post poetry on Instagram @fromsunnyhill.

**Jack Cariad Leon** (he/him) is a transgender writer and visual artist based in Brisbane, Australia. A fan of the avant-garde, he collects dolls and art books of certain genres. He also has a deep interest in the history and lore of flowers.

**Blair Kilpatrick** is a psychologist whose life was transformed by a chance encounter with the Cajun accordion. Her poetry has appeared in ONE ART, MockingHeart Review, New Verse News, Syncopation, littledeathlit, Book of Matches, Amethyst Review and The Orchards Poetry Review. She is the author of the memoir "Accordion Dreams" (U. Press Mississippi) and received the first annual SUA literary award for her creative nonfiction. She lives in Berkeley, California, where she plays in a Cajun band with her fiddler husband. Her website is [www.blairkilpatrick.com](http://www.blairkilpatrick.com)

**Maya Williams** (ey/they/she) is a religious Black multiracial nonbinary suicide survivor who was selected as Portland, ME's seventh poet laureate for a July 2021 to July 2024 term. Eir debut poetry collection Judas & Suicide was selected as a finalist for a New England Book Award. Their second poetry collection, Refused a Second Date, was selected as a finalist for a Maine Literary Award. Their third poetry collection, What's So Wrong with a Pity Party Anyway?, was selected as one of four winners of Garden Party Collective's chapbook prize in 2024. Follow her for more at [mayawilliamspoet.com](http://mayawilliamspoet.com)

**Peter Devonald** is winner Waltham Forest Poetry 2022, Heart Of Heatons 2023 & 2021, joint winner FofHCS 2023 and second Shelley Memorial 2024. Finalist Tickled Pink ekphrastic contest 2024, highly commended Hippocrates Prize and Passionfruit Review 2024, shortlisted OxCanalFest 2024, Saveas & Allingham 2023. Poet in residence Haus-a-rest, Forward Prize nominated, two Best Of Net and widely published inc. Broken Spine Anthology, London Grip, Door Is A Jar, Bluebird Word, Vipers Tongue, Voidspace and Loft Books. 50+ film awards, former senior judge/ mentor Peter Ustinov Awards (iemmys) and Children's Bafta nominated.

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**Beatriz Seelaender** is a Brazilian author from São Paulo. Her fiction has appeared in Cagibi, AZURE, Psychopomp, among many others, and essays can be found at websites such as The Collapsar and Guesthouse. Her novellas have earned her both the Sandy Run and the Bottom Drawer Prizes.

**Claudia Tong** is an artist and quantitative researcher based in London, creating at the intersection of physical and digital art. Her practice spans from landscape, architecture and illustrations to mixed media, visual computing and music. With a background in computer science and psychology, she has worked, lived and exhibited internationally.

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With love,  
*Madisen Bellon*  
Editor-in-Chief  
*Kelly Brocious*  
Managing Editor