

The Nihilist's Horoscope.

by M.P. Fitzgerald

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THE NIHILIST'S HOROSCOPE

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injecting Gonzo into fiction

CHAPTER ONE

Aries/Pretentious "Y"



Mars is in retrograde, Pretentious "Y." Every passing minute and hour, this ancient, dead rock is hurtling farther and farther away from you. The actions and position of Mars has nothing to do with you. It is fifty-four *million* kilometers away from you, and you have never been more than four thousand miles from home. Your fortunes, romantic prospects, and ability to grow has nothing to do with this dusty icicle, and there is nothing you can do to affect Mars either. Mars does not even have a magnetosphere. Did you know that? It can't even influence a compass! *It can't even influence a compass.* How could its position ever affect you?

Today, you may have a strong craving for a candy bar, Pretentious "Y." There is also a strong chance that you will die from ingesting this confection wrong. While in a rush, or overzealous in your enjoyment of it, there is a strong chance that it will be lodged in your throat. You could suffocate. Then you could die. The name brand of the candy bar? Mars. There is no meaning behind this, except that, maybe, we as a species do not name things very creatively. There is no meaning, period. There is nothing. Mars was named after a god. Surely, God is dead.

Your Power Ball lucky number is 19.

CHAPTER TWO

Taurus/Rabbit Head



Fortune awaits you, Rabbit Head! The only thing holding you back is morals: the laws given to us by God. But what of these laws? Was humankind made for morals or the morals for humankind? Does it matter? GET PSYCHED! Want that promotion you have been sighting? The question shouldn't be how much harder you should work; it should be who you can throw under the bus to get it! That's not *just* a metaphor, Rabbit Head. You can throw a family member under a literal bus! If it looks it was the bus driver's fault, that's a lawsuit *and* a payoff!

GET PSYCHED! Fortune is yours for the taking! History will only look poorly on you if you don't have the money to re-write it. Hegel believed in the sanctity of history? WHO CARES?! He died poor. Coffee is for Closers, Rabbit head. Now you know who has the coffee! **Take it away from them!**

Have an emptiness that cannot be filled? GET PSYCHED! Money won't fill it, but drugs will make you forget about it! Drugs will make you forget about *everything*, Rabbit Head. Most especially the terrible things you are about to do to get them.

CHAPTER THREE

Gemini/Two



You have always known that you were not special, Two; you always knew that you were not unique. Your twin was physical proof of that. This was always comforting, though. While the rest of the world felt the terrible isolation that accompanies being distinct and different, you have taken solace in knowing that right beside you, there was another. Another just like you, enduring the harshness of life just like you.

But then, Two, you will find the cocaine snorted in your kitchen. *Your* cocaine. ALL OF THE COCAINE! It won't simply be in the kitchen. No, Two, it will *lead* from your kitchen. Its wasted and *expensive* trail leading to your bedroom. You will find that they did not even bother to shut the door. Inside, you will find your twin, with the same blemishes that curse your own naked body, on top of your spouse. Your spouse will look surprised, embarrassed even. They will call you by your twin's name. Your spouse made a mistake in identity, but your twin will be smiling. That smile will fade, and they will be as surprised as you to find that you have been carrying a five iron.

This week, there will be two. Next week, there will only be *one*. Next week, you will be special.

CHAPTER FOUR

Cancer/69



Family is always on your mind, “69.” Perpetually and ruthlessly on your mind. Specifically, and especially in the coming days, your father or mother will be on your mind. Sorry, did I say days? That’s true but also weeks, months, and years. As you grow older, as each passing day goes by, you will realize just how much of your parents you have become.

This was, of course, utterly inescapable. You are a slave to the same genes that restricted your parents. Your cheekbones will become more prominent, like your mother’s. Your hairline will recede to expose the top of your head like your bald father. Did I mention that those are both strong features of a skull? Death is behind every door, “69.”

Doomed to the same limitations and at risk for the same cancers, you will not break the cycle. No, you will continue the chain. Your children will be as doomed to be you as you are doomed to be your parents. Why would you do that to someone, “69”? If you can’t spare them from your traits, if you cannot free them of your genetic constraints, maybe you can spare them from your habits... Yes... maybe you can pick up a “trick” from your father. One-way Greyhound tickets are cheap, “69.” Maybe you can “go out for some cigarettes.” Maybe you can never come back.

CHAPTER FIVE

Leo/Weird Sperm



Your proclivity for romance will be very strong this next week, Weird Sperm. Dates will come to you easily and often! Once a week? Why aim low, Weird Sperm? You could be having dates every other day! Every night can be a new person, a new conversation, the same bar. You will connect with a lot of people, Weird Sperm; you will “connect” quite often. You will always be near and intimately close with more people than you ever thought possible. Then why do you feel... so alone?

So alone.

It isn't working. **It isn't working!** This empty hole cannot be filled. No, not *that hole*; that hole has been filled enough. You cannot fill this hole by filling other holes, Weird Sperm. The thrill of empty and anonymous sex will distract you for only so long. Each time the adrenaline is less, the “fix” less satisfying. Yet you will not stop. You *cannot* stop. Stopping means rest; stopping means *introspection*. You cannot bear to look at the mountain of broken hearts and meaningless sex. You have to keep moving forward. You cannot bear to spend the night by yourself. You cannot bear yourself.

At least you will have something in common with Friedrich Nietzsche at the ends of this, Weird Sperm: Tertiary syphilis.

CHAPTER SIX

Virgo/McFish



You will have a great opportunity to start your new workout regimen this coming month, McFish. There is no better time like the present to improve on your health! You will find new energy in working out, and it will be a good time to try something new. Kale is pretty popular, McFish. It is not too late to get on *that* bandwagon. At the same time, sticking to what you know and what you are good at is not a bad thing to double down on. Start running! We all know that you are good at running.

Running from your troubles? Check. Running from your responsibilities? Check. Running from your ever secretive, sordid and blighted past? *Double check*. You sure are good at running, McFish; you have been doing it your entire life. You might as well start doing it for your health.

It won't matter, though, for there is one thing you **cannot** run from, McFish. You cannot run from death. No matter how healthy or how strong you make yourself, death will catch up. So run. RUN! Run like your life depends on it **BECAUSE IT DOES**. If death is behind you, you might as well make him work for it.

Run. It is right behind you. Run! Feel your muscles atrophy and weaken. RUN! Remember your breathing! **RUN!**

Also, I hear quinoa is good too.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Libra/Parallel Horeshoe



Oh “Parallel Horseshoe,” the month ahead of you will be defined by looking for meaning in your relationships. This is a grand opportunity to move your relationships forward in ways that you were previously hesitant to do. What you once feared will come to you with ease. What you once thought was unobtainable in your relationship will suddenly be in your hand, willing and happy.

This month will *certainly* be defined by *looking* for meaning in your relationship. Of course, nothing has meaning, “Parallel Horseshoe,” ***nothing.***

“Are you okay?” they will ask when everything should be but for some reason isn’t. You will tell them, “Yes.” Later, they will ask, “Are you happy with me?” after you realize that nothing has changed. You will tell them, “Yes.” Later, after drinking your third glass of bourbon, and consequently your fourth hour refusing eye contact with them, they will ask, “It’s not me, is it? I am not holding you back or anything, right?” You will tell them, “No.”

All of it—lies.

You will do everything you are supposed to. You will get married. You will buy a house. You will have kids. It will all be shallow. After your tenth bourbon, they will ask, “Do you think our relationship has *meaning*?” and while you clean your gun, you will tell them, “Yes.” It is funny how much things change with a

pull of the trigger.
And you will be happy.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Scorpio/Fancy "M"



This upcoming month will not be a good time to share finances, "Fancy M," but that is not because your significant other or business partner cannot be trusted. On the contrary, these people in your life are exemplary. In fact, there could not be anyone else better to share your finances with! It is *you* who cannot be trusted, "Fancy M," and *we both damn well know why!* Oh, you thought that I had forgotten, that with enough time gone by my memory would fade. But my eyes are always open, "Fancy M"; **they are always open!**

So, go ahead, share your finances. Open a second bank account and move your relationship forward with this new step in trust and maturity. Then, when the letters come in, and the legal notices, then when you are served with a court notice, *then* you can tell them why you can't be trusted.

Then you can tell them why you are *both* being sued.

See how that treats you.

Or, heed my advice! This upcoming month will not be a good time to share finances, *and we both know why.*

CHAPTER NINE

Sagittarius/Anchor



Now is as good a time as any to get out on that open road, “Anchor”! Travel will be especially helpful to you this next month, and that bag you have kept packed is *screaming* to be used. How long should you travel for? Well, more than a week, and rent gets harder to pay, but you never have to pay rent *if you never come back!* Did I mention that there will be no moon next week? It is best if you leave with the cover of night. Not even the moon will see.

A different town a day, never staying long to get attached. The past is only your god if people know about it. No one will ever know you long enough to learn it. Just keep going. Keep moving. Don't ever let tomorrow's sun fall on your back in the same town. How many names do you know? You can use each one of them as your own for every new place! Doesn't that sound like fun?

It is more than just habit now, “Anchor”; it is compulsion. You have been doing this for so long that you don't even know if you *can* stay for more than a day. Your face was so young when you started this “road trip”; you hated it then, and you hate it even more now as it stares back at you through another motel bathroom mirror. You left behind all of your problems, all of your mistakes, and all of your responsibilities... but you could never leave behind yourself. You can **never** escape yourself.

Remember to pack light!

CHAPTER TEN

Capricorn/Jerry



A new career opportunity awaits you, “Jerry”! Extroverted? Good news! You will be working with people, almost exclusively. Introverted? Also good news! We’ll talk about those “people” later.

For the first time in your life, you will find that truly immersing yourself in your work will be utterly fulfilling. Dreading the hours spent at work will be left far behind you, and for once, you will feel like you belong. Your job, no, your *life* will have a purpose. I’m not going to lie to you, “Jerry”; this will freak you out a little at first. No, not because being happy for the first time can be overwhelming; we’ll talk about it later.

Of course, every job has a downside to it, and your new career is no exception. Sometimes people will be rude to you. They will lash out at you and blame you for many things that are not in your control. Those who are used to getting their way and are elevated by their social/income class will look down at you. These moments will not be good; I am not going to lie to you. There is good news, though! You will take it all in stride. You will not let it bother you. When you are the only mortician in town, *everyone* will be your “customer” eventually.

And you **will** get the last laugh.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Aquarius/Wavy Lines



It has never been easier to make friends, “Wavy Lines,” *never*. Think of them less like friends and more like opportunities, and you know what? There are a **LOT** of opportunities to be had ahead of you. With social media at your fingertips, making friends is as easy as hitting “send,” and you can’t spell “friends” without “send.”

Ninety friends? That’s impressive! Wasn’t that easy? But is that all you can make? Aim for two hundred! There you go! Don’t know them? That’s okay; they are only strangers because you haven’t met. Introduce yourself; hit “send.” My, aren’t we popular? Your friend list is in the thousands! Remember, you can’t spell “friend” without a digital keypad. Just keep clicking those friend requests until the sun burns out.

Have enough? Excellent. Execute plan “Dopple-Horse.” Paste those hurried and barely coherently written lines from your psychotic manifesto on top of screen grabs from your local news channel and post them onto your account immediately. Is any of it true, does what you have unleashed upon the world carry any weight in reality? It doesn’t matter; your fragile paranoid psyche has no way of knowing anymore. Now watch, watch the bubbles in your brain churn out “truths” for your “friends” to share. You will see your own haunted memes posted by people you don’t know; you will see lambs guided to the slaughter.

Then you will switch to a different social media service because that old one

just got too toxic, you know?

CHAPTER TWELVE

Pisces/Sort of Racist "Asian" font "H"



Oh wow! Um, okay ... "Sort of Racist 'Asian' Font 'H'"; let's hope you didn't get that symbol tattooed on you, yeah? Right. Moving on.

This next month will be full of energies beneficial to closure and healing. It—**Man**, that symbol is just really *aggressively* racist on a casual level, right? I mean, I know that it is *technically* an ancient Greek letter, but *damn* it just screams, "I have never met an Asian person," doesn't it? What? Oh, sorry, yes, back to the horoscope. Where was I?

This next month will be full of energies beneficial to closure and healing. It is important that during this transitional period, you take advantage of these energies and—and... Look, I'm gonna level with ya; I *cannot* get over this symbol. I know it is probably just me and that I am making "something out of nothing," but you *really* should not get this tattooed on your body, ya know? You want some real advice in your horoscope, there it is: **don't get this tattooed on your body**. You know what, while I'm at it, let's just make that a blanket statement about the entire zodiac. You know what a tattoo of a zodiac symbol really means? It means you are boring.

Boring and kinda racist.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Aries/Pretentious "Y"



Colossal amounts of mass crushed into burning fusion, the stars transmute their primordial states into elements anew. Their fires rage for what seems eternal, only to flick out in a darkness that WILL NOT remember them. At sixty miles an hour, it would take you more than 176 years to drive to our closest star, the sun, did you know that? Can you fathom just how much bigger the sun really is when it looks no bigger than a coin here, 176 years away? The stars in the sky are further, *infinitely* further, and those that are not already dead care not for your problems.

Damn, the ego on you, Pretentious "Y," the ego on you! *Sure* the most impressive and powerful objects in the universe that we can see dictate your month's luck. Your romantic problems, your fortune, your petty obsessions, I'm just *sure* that the gods made into specs in the sky have something to do with it. *The. Ego.* The only thing bigger than a star is your ego, Pretentious "Y."

So track them. Follow the stars. Make graphs. You are still just a mote of dust to an ocean of nuclear fire. If the stars could talk, I assure you, they would talk *shit*.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Taurus/Rabbit Head



I foresee plenty of opportunity for work this next month, Rabbit Head. Further, employment need not be the only requirement! Why discriminate against the unemployed? There is plenty of work to be done outside of a job. Work around the house? Check, there is always a new thing that needs to be fixed or cleaned. Work around the yard? Check! When you are finished, why not plant something new so that the work does not end? This is a great month to keep yourself busy with work!

Of course, the things that need the most work are not external, Rabbit Head, and I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but there is a *lot* of work that could be done internally. Just off the top of my head, I know you could work on your deep and destructive trust issues. Your insecurities are so many it might be hard to figure out which one to work on, so here is a little help to get you started: all of them. Work on **all of them**. I'm sorry, that didn't help? How about you work on your paralyzing indecisiveness then? Then work on your insecurities about being indecisive, and then *maaaybee* you can start working on your insecurities about being insecure. Maybe. Your crippling depression might get in the way of that one, so, uh ... good news! You have crippling depression that you can work on.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Gemini/Two



Friends are an essential part of life who can help carry the burden, “Two,” and a helping hand is one that you should never turn away. A helping hand can help you get up when you are beaten down, an extra hand can help carry in the extra bags of groceries when your own are filled, and a helping hand can also carry a shovel. So reach out to your favorite friend this month, “Two”; don’t be afraid to ask for help, for you will find that who you ask will be far more amicable than you think. Favorite friend busy or maybe too mouthy? Loose lips sink ships; your quiet friend is just as good!

“We don’t need to buy a lantern,” your friend will say, “the headlights to my truck work just fine!” And you will agree. See? Collaboration is truly humankind’s greatest strength. Your friend was also right to suggest you wait until a day after it rains; now the soil is easier to strike into! So dig. Dig as fast as you can, but you won’t have to dig alone. Time will go by faster when the labor is divided and you have someone to joke around with.

With the duty done and the chore behind you, you will find yourself closer to your friend. Indeed, nothing brings two people together faster than burying a dead body. Nothing binds two people like a secret they must take to the grave.

Nothing.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Cancer/69



As this month comes to an end and energies renew your psyche, I want you to always “remember your roots,” 69. Much can be learned from them, and it is from your roots that you will learn of who you truly are and your place in society. They can remind you of where you came from and contain the values that have been passed down to you. *Always* remember your roots.

Remember them? Good. Now, and this is important, it is time to cut your roots—now that the vine has properly matured. It is important to grind your roots, down into a powder-like substance, and to prepare your roots for a boil. Have the other ingredients? Good. Despite what your local shaman says, you can do this alone. This ancient tea, no matter his religious expectations, is still just a high-powered hallucinogen after all. Now, boil your roots to make your ayahuasca tea and prepare your bucket for vomiting. This is going to be a wild ride.

See? Do you see of where you once came from? You can! In vivid and horrifying detail. The tea never lies, 69; the tea *never* lies. What is all of this blackness? **WHERE ARE YOU?!** What is this mad abyss? Why have your roots brought you here? Is it your soul, or is it an abyss representing that there *is no soul*? The roots are not interested in your questions with binary answers. You only leave with what you brought.

Always remember your roots. *Always*.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Leo/Weird Sperm



This month, love is in the air, Weird Sperm. Love is in the air.

Jesus Christ love is in the air! ***Don't you understand?! IT'S CONTAGIOUS!***

Love is a virulent pathogen, and it is *airborne*! It is only a matter of time before it is too late. You can't trust those pencil-necked bureaucrats at the CDC to keep us safe! *They probably synthesized it.* They've been planning on thinning out the population behind closed doors for years now, Weird Sperm. *For. Years.* It was only inevitable that they would pull the trigger. Love is in the air, *and we are all going to die!*

Unless you are in the mountains, it is better to bug-out. Grab your supplies and ditch the car. It will only hold you back as everyone else evacuating the city floods the streets into a deadlock. Forget the social contract; you need to worry about you and yours! Take before someone takes from you and head to the hills, the dry, dry hills. Viruses have a harder time in high dry elevation, but you tell everyone else otherwise. There is no need to compete if your competition goes in a different direction. Keep your knife close and ...

... Wait. No, sorry. My bad. This was just another paranoid meme farmed out

by Wavy Lines. Sorry. God damn Facebook.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Virgo/McFish



It's a good time for organization, McFish, a good time. Have a group of friends who love to read? Organize them! A book club will do you wonders and bring you all closer as you socialize about what you are passionate about. Like music better? Organize your friends into a band; you'll be surprised to see what creative energies you all share! Have a messy house? An *especially* messy house? Organize it!

Now organize it further.

Should the books on your bookcase be organized in the Dewey Decimal system or by the color of their covers? Try both! Just be sure to wipe them down, then again, and again. You can *never* clean too much. Your kitchen is clean, sure, but doesn't it look a little off to you? Move everything out of it and reorganize it by the dates you obtained each item! Then wipe it down three times. Make sure to get the corners, and the baseboards, and the ceiling, and the walls...make sure you get it all. Everything is dirty; ***everything is chaos!***

If you could organize it down to the molecule you would. OH YES, YOU WOULD! It's not fair that they get to jumble about like that, *like no one is watching*. But you are, oh yes, you are. You know that they can't stay in one place. Scrub. Scrub three times three times **three times**. *Someone has to organize!*

...Because the uncaring, chaotic universe sure as hell won't.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Libra/Parallel Horseshoe



Sometimes I just think that I take this whole nihilism thing a little too seriously, you know? Like, sometimes I just want to write whimsical stuff, like giraffe riding cowboys! *That's* a hit right there. But no. I can't. Because *you won't let me, Parallel Horseshoe!*

Today I wanted to sit down and write about the adventures of Cornegay and his mount Waffles. Don't argue with me there; Waffles is a perfectly good name for a giraffe. But you know what I had to do instead? *Your horoscope.*

So here it is: You are selfish, and you are ruining at least one perfectly whimsical man's life. Thanks, Parallel Horseshoe. *Thanks.*

CHAPTER TWENTY

Scorpio/Fancy "M"



No astrological movement is needed to tell you this, Fancy "M"; you can feel it in the air. This is a good time for bonding. Should you buy War Bonds? YES! Loose lips sink ships, and this man's army needs all the help that they can get! Should you see the new James Bond movie? YES! Not every movie has to be deep and groundbreaking; sometimes a popcorn flick is just okey dokey! Is it finally time to get some bondage going in your library of kink? YES! If done safely, some rope can go a long way to keep you both going for long!

This is a good time for bonding.

Why not just combine all three? Start a James Bond bondage band for benefiting the buying of bonds for bountiful battle? 'Bout time! Bonding is all around you; bonding is what you must do ...

...If you knew what that meant. I mean, besides the puns. I mean, they are fun and all, but... You hide everything behind puns because you thought that the quirky wordplay would bring you closer to your father. He was a novelist, and he was always so silent, so far away. You thought that you could bond with him by showing him that you, too, cared for his craft, that you, too, had a knack for words. But he never cared to pay attention to you long enough to notice your efforts. He never wrote about children, and you are just realizing now that he probably did not want any.

You can name the band “Bonds for Bonds.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Sagittarius/Anchor



"The more you know!" your old Saturday cartoons would announce after denouncing drugs to your impressionable adolescent mind. When the grand adventures of your colorful heroes was at its most satisfactory conclusion, the cast would gather before the credits rolled and would cheerfully and *heroically* tell you that knowledge was power. The more you know, Anchor, the more you know.

So, you made knowledge your personal crusade. You made learning your strongest tenant. Institutions of learning became holy, and books of knowledge became what you cherished most. Science? Oh yes, you learned much about that. It was good at first, nothing was more concrete than science, nothing was more certain. Until it wasn't. The deeper you learned, *the smaller* things got, the more abstract and impossible it became. How had science become so, so *Lovecraftian*? We don't have all the answers yet, but maybe another path of learning would do? *The more you know!* So why not learn more?

So, you turned to philosophy.

PHILOSOPHY.

The more you know. Except that only knowing that you know nothing is worth knowing. Except you can't rely on your senses, and thus the external

world could be some deceitful trick. Except even cause and effect is not a reliable conclusion, and there is no way to be certain of anything, ever. Ever. The more you know? *THE MORE YOU KNOW?! Except ignorance is bliss.*

You should have just smoked drugs; the results would have been the same.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Capricorn/Jerry



Let's talk about your goals, Jerry. It is important to have them, but of course you know that. It is important to strive towards them, something you also know well. Having one giant goal in life, then breaking it down into smaller, more obtainable goals, is the best way to manage and get what you want done without it seeming so daunting. This you know.

We are not here to talk about your time management. You are actually really good at this. We are also not here to talk about creating "vision boards" because you mailed me one unsolicited, so I know you are way ahead here. If I am being honest, I have no doubt that you will get your goals accomplished. *That* is the problem.

The "vision board" you sent me, the giant cork board littered with newspaper clippings, thumbtacks, and intricately woven yarn illuminating a web of deceit and lies, it's impressive. I will give you *that*, Jerry. Aside from the "research" you have been doing, I must admit that I did not think you were the "arts and crafts" kind of person. I am not at all surprised that you used these skills to create something paranoid instead of homely, but well, there it is. You are good at arts and crafts. But no matter how long I stare at it, I just don't see what you do. No, Jerry, I don't think the pope is personally selling drugs to children, and I don't think you should tell the press.

Besides, he'd have like a three-person buffer for that, **minimum**.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Aquarius/Wavy Lines



Good news, "Wavy Lines," your ability to excel in groups is at a cyclical peak! You will easily draw energy from others, and you will find yourself easily energizing them in turn. Join a book club, get a poker table going, maybe even a meditative group! *There is nothing that you can't accomplish as a group!*

Joined a group? Good. Now, and this is the key, *mercilessly make your way to the top of that group*. Good thing you're charismatic because now you are in charge.

Now it is time to grow that group.

Once you have new inductees, love-bomb them and gaslight the older members. Brew a culture of paranoia and betrayal. Declare yourself a prophet, the only one capable of enlightenment, and demand penance from the others. Once you have collected enough assets from the others, cut them off from their families and move them out to the desert.

You now have twelve brides, but there is no love. The bunker is complete, and no one questions you. No one questions you because no one wants to be questioned *by* you. You have built a toxic but *terribly efficient* cult. You have power, but you feel hollow, you feel empty. There is no truth, and you helped to kill it.

Next month will be a prime time to invest in real estate!

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Pisces/Sort of Racist "Asian" font "H"



Look, *Sort of Racist "Asian" font "H,"* it's the thing that you never thought you would ever see: *closure*. It was hard fought, and you had to push yourself further than you ever had before to get it, but it is there. Closure. Not all things end well enough to get it. Bitterness and endless thoughts on "what could have been" remain dominant when something ends, but you? You got that mythical ending, the one which lets you walk away with all of its threads tied at the end. I am truly happy for you.

HA HA! *Right*, like that's a thing you'd see in *this horoscope*. No. There will be no closure. There will be no threads tied; there will only be frayed ends. There will *always* be wondering, and there will *never* be an ending that is satisfactory. You will hold that puzzle box handed down to you, *never knowing* what secrets it hides, because tonight the old man dies, and the cypher with him.

You'll wonder if he did this on purpose. If he gave you this puzzle box before he died, *knowing that you could never solve it without his help*. You'll wonder if there is anything inside of it all. If maybe it is just a Sisyphian task to drive you mad. You'll wonder if he *knew* that you would be too prideful to admit that you needed help and then went and died laughing all of the way.

Here's a secret: *I* know what's in the box. *I* know how to open it. But what was the word of the day? Closure. HA HA HA HA!

Closure.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Aries/Pretentious "Y"



You have heard that first impressions are important. You have heard that they are often the deciding factor in an interview for a job, or for a date. You have heard these things, and you have internalized them. But you have yet to understand *just how important they really are*. The sheer *gravity* of a first impression has yet to weigh you down. Let's fix that, Pretentious "Y"; let's fix that.

Someone's perception of you and how they will judge you and your actions for the foreseeable future are based on what they first see. Yes, this is shallow, but it is unavoidable. They will not see the person who has struggled with addiction, who fought their inner demons and came out on the other side healthy and victorious. They will not see the years of toil and self-loathing you had to deal with to get to where you are now. They perceive you without any history; they perceive and judge you without any context but the present.

This is why when you started to chug the liquor like it was water at the end of a very long desert, they looked at you with dread. They did not see the years of temptation you had fought that you deserve credit for and then relapse *once*. No, they saw someone down *all of the liquor* and then say something *really racist* through slurred speech. Let's be honest, *no amount of context for your struggle with alcohol would have made a difference there*.

So, the first impression at that party was botched. At least the first impression at your new AA meeting will be better.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Taurus/Rabbit Head



The environment around you is toxic, Rabbit Head. *Very toxic*. Is this a product of your belligerent drilling to excavate the oil that is as black as your heart? Your entrepreneurship in the oil industry is an infamous one... but no, we aren't talking about *that* kind of environment.

No, we are talking about an environment that is toxic to your goals and ambitions. We are talking about an environment that is toxic to *you*. Your spouse? They avert your eyes whenever you tell them about all of the fracking you plan on doing in the National Parks. You listen to them when they rant on about things you don't care about but that they are passionate about. *They don't treat you right*. Those parks are for **everybody**, dammit, doesn't that include you?

Your father was quoted as saying that they were "disappointed" by the papers after that gigantic oil spill in the ocean. I mean, *come on*, that was *billions of gallons spilt*. Has he spilt a billion gallons of *anything*? No respect.

Your environment is toxic, Rabbit Head, because it is one that nurtures empathy, which is something you are pretty sure everyone has been lying to you about. I mean, what even *is* empathy? You need to drop these dead weights so that you can truly fly, Rabbit Head. Leave your family behind so that you can leave your mark on the world...

...A crude mark that kills everything that touches it.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Gemini/Two



This will be the perfect time to move, “Two”; it will be the perfect time to start anew. Nothing changes one’s life like a new set of neighbors, and this town? Well, *this town* is known for their neighborly habits. So, be neighborly, join the community! What could possibly... No, no never mind; we know better than that. Let’s just skip ahead then and tell you, shall we?

The cookies? Cooked to perfection. The lawns, trim and green and modest. The neighborhood watch? All white. All of them. They like potlucks, cute lemonade stands with cute backwards letters, and they like starched white sheets over their heads. You had no idea what you were moving to, and this Levittown? Well, they are pretty good about scrubbing their history off their Wikipedia page.

When I said it was time to move, “Two,” when I said it was a perfect time to start anew, I meant *right now and away from your neighbors*. Sure, you could have used this advice *before* you moved to this town. But look, this is a horoscope, okay? We can’t control *when* you decide to read them. Just move far away from your racist neighbors and don’t tell them that you left a bunch of bed bugs everywhere to spite them, okay?

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

Cancer/69



Hey “69,” how are you doing? Not financially, or even your health, not how your day has been or even “how are you doing *that?*” (I am *not* impressed with your magic tricks; pick a different hobby.) No. How are YOU doing? How do you *feel*? Hold that answer; really think about it because today we are talking about your *emotional foundation*.

Not used to talking about it? That’s okay, “69”; there are no judgments here. I mean, I’m pretty sure that “Rabbit Head” is a legitimate psychopath incapable of perceiving other’s pain, and I’m *pretty sure* that “Two” killed someone. So far, you’ve just freaked out on ayahuasca, which is *pretty tame* for *this* zodiac, so don’t worry; you can share.

Share anything you like.

But, how’s your *foundation*? Is it strong? Is it sturdy? Are you easily broken by your emotional struggles, or do you persevere and grow from them? This is important, “69,” *very important*. Think about it *long and hard*.

Ready? Okay, here’s your horoscope: You were adopted, “69.” It wasn’t because your real parents were in a tough situation; they just didn’t like you. Your adopted parents? They only kept you because they couldn’t return you, honestly; they thought they were going to get a different kid. Kind of an unfair

bait in switch from the agency if I am being frank. No one really loves you, and you will die alone ashamed of every moment of your life. You will face hardships that were not designed to be endured, and you will suffer through all of them.

So, again, how's that emotional foundation? Because it's going to need to be *sturdy as hell* for what's ahead of you.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

Leo/Weird Sperm



The moon is still there. We just checked; yup, it's still there. So, uh, this month is good for creativity? Yes ... That's totally what that means. Moon still exists equals creativity good.

As the month unfolds, creative energy will flow through you and your peers easily, "Weird Sperm." There will seemingly be an endless well of it ready to be tapped into. New projects like that novel you have been meaning to write, that painting yearning to be painted, or that film itching to be directed will flow out without resistance.

Now listen, because this is key: do not use this energy to create. Oh no, "Weird Sperm," leave that to your *peers*. You need that creative energy to *rob them blind of their intellectual property*. Remember that metaphor about the creative well? Why drain your own? Take a lesson from the oil barons of old *and drink their milkshake!* Tell them that they need an agent, tell them that only you can bring their masterpiece to the public, *make them sign the contract!* Use your creativity to *capture the dreams of artists and sell it to the public as nightmares*. I don't know what that means, but it sounds like your new company motto.

The good news? The moon is still there. *Every* month will be good for creativity, and Disney is always buying.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Virgo/McFish



With the astrological cycle on the move, it is now time to think about what you can do for others, McFish. This advice would be especially hard for some of the other signs, what with their *rampant* psychopathy and all, but service comes easily to you.

Is this because you are selfless? No. Is this because you understand that giving to your community only helps it grow? No. You are good at service, McFish, because you work in the service *industry*. Bartending, waiting, cooking ... these are the only things on your resume. You know how to work hard to get those tips! Maybe someday you will use them to put yourself through college, maybe someday you will move up in class and income, but right now? Right now, you serve tables, and you can *hustle* ...

But it is all for naught. You can never afford the rising costs of education, and your self-loathing and stress levels from dealing with entitled people mean you are now an alcoholic. Why invest in your future to better your day when you *forget* about your day? Why indeed.

Your finite time will be spent watching as your peers stay young, as they move up but you do not. You will be considered old in the industry before you even hit thirty. But there is good news, McFish! If you go extra hard with the liquor, you can kill your liver before you get too old.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Libra/Parallel Horseshoe



As the month comes to a close, I can sense that you are considering throwing out some things, “Parallel Horseshoe.” It is a natural feeling to want to “clean up” and get a fresh start. You have been eyeing items in your house you do not actually need, some tabletops that need scrubbing, and we both know that you have some emotional baggage weighing you down. Wouldn’t it be better to get rid of it, to lighten your burden?

No, “Parallel Horseshoe,” *no!* Oh please, by all means, throw out that old dusty stuff, but do not for a *minute* think that you can abandon that baggage. That is not an assessment of doubt. That is not me saying that you do not have the emotional quotient to rid yourself of those feelings. No, that is me saying that those feelings are *justified*. I *remember*, “Parallel Horseshoe.” I *remember*. You thought that I wouldn’t; you thought that the *drugs had worked*. But I know what’s in the narrow place between your walls. I remember.

You should not be defined by the past; you should not be a slave to your history. With this, we can agree. No, you should be *haunted* by your past. Haunted I say! That’s not baggage; it’s chains. CHAINS AND WEIGHTS!

Also: lemon juice is a good natural cleaner for tabletops.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

Scorpio/Fancy "M"



Something left unsaid, Fancy "M"? You met them both years ago and found them to be your greatest companions. The three of you were inseparable, and you would go on and on into the night with gleeful chatter. Too many times would the three of you stay up to see the sun rise again, but you never cared. Hanging out was effortless. Was there something left unsaid?

The wedding was small but intimate and happy. You had never been more happy. You looked forward to spending the rest of your years with your new spouse and were happy to see that your other friend still did not mind living with the two of you. You shared everything with them.

Of course, they were close too. *Too close*. When you found your spouse cheating with them, it was only surprising that you did not see the signs. Was there something left unsaid? Yes. Oh, yes. As you divorced and moved out, you laughed. *You cackled*. There was something left unsaid, and that something was that you were cheating too. You were cheating, *and you got herpes*. You shared everything with them.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Sagittarius/Anchor



You must learn about the moon if you are to learn about yourself, Anchor. The moon trines, it waxes, it wanes. You must study it. It is many things, Anchor. It is a symbol of fertility and of madness. It is a symbol of power and femininity. It is ghostly, it is dead, it is *beautiful*.

On the surface of the moon, on the face of this goddess is a plaque, a metal plaque depicting a picture of the earth. Inscribed on this plaque are the words: "Here men from the planet earth first set foot upon the moon, July 1969 A.D. We came in peace for all mankind." And those words shall remain far, *far* after civilization whispers away. Inspiring, isn't it? Well...

On that plaque is the signature of Richard Milhous Nixon, 36th president of the United States. It will remain there for posterity far after our greatest works of art fade. The crook and supremely sweaty Tricky Dick Nixon will be one of the last names of humanity left after humankind is dead. Our greatest legacy will be the signature of a crooked drunkard.

What is to be learned about yourself from this? Well, no matter what we think of Nixon now, his legacy is cemented on the moon. Nixon will get the last laugh. No matter what you do, achieve, learn, or strive for, you will be forgotten. Tricky Dick won't.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

Capricorn/Jerry



Fame and fortune, that's what's best in life, right, "Jerry"? It is the American dream, and it is in your crosshairs. Someday you will be a household name; someday you will be remembered forever ...

The problem is, and let's just be completely honest here, you are *lazy as fuck*, "Jerry." We both know that you are not going to pursue the skills, nor hone the talent needed for those things. The good news? You don't have to! Being famous in today's culture is as easy as being as shallow and ignorant as humanly possible without your ego collapsing in on itself from reaching some kind of critical mass singularity. All you have to do is audition for a reality TV show, and **BAM**: shortcut to your goal.

So, forget your world history, dabble in a conspiracy theory or **twelve**, declare that the Earth is flat and be as petty as physically possible. You're on TV now; all that matters now is your number of retweets and that *Greg's album flops*.

(Note to self: after sabotaging Greg on live television and making sure his album flops, release an album of your own and title it "Greg's Album Flopped.")

Hope is a social construct; make sure that everyone knows that when they see you on television. Make sure that they know that you being in the spotlight

is the final death knell to your culture. Fame and fortune is nice, but fortune and *infamy*? That comes with your own spin-off.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

Aquarius/Wavy Lines



A party clown once said, "Morality is the herd instinct in man," his breath hot with the scent of *your* whiskey. You weren't sure then if you should have paid him for services rendered, seeing that there were no less than three children crying from his act. You could not leave his gaze, however, and once he had your attention, he told you *many things you can never forget*.

While the other parents were consoling their children, while they did their best to mitigate the damage wrought by this "professional," you stood in silence as he told you about his day. He told you that clowns travel in pairs, that there is always two of them because there is safety in numbers. "You'd be surprised how many people corner clowns for prostitution," he offers when you didn't ask. He tells you about "clowncest," a word used in the industry when those who have paired up for safety end up hooking up, mostly in public. You can see, literally see the speed in his eyes. He tells you that it is a "helluva drug."

You will *never* forget the word "clowncest," no matter how hard you try.

When he left, when he was paid, he walked straight into the woods. Presumably where he lives.

What I am trying to say, "Wavy Lines," is that you should quit your job to

become a party clown. You know this to be true.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

Pisces/Sort of Racist "Asian" font "H"



A faith healer is in town, *Sort of Racist "Asian" Font "H,"* and he's looking for people to come up on his stage! You will feel conflicted about this at first, but then again, you have felt conflicted about things for a very long time now. It's time to go with the flow. "He's healed at the Reno Sports Dome," an audience member will inform you, "and the Tacoma Dome!" they will add. You will feel better about your decision. They don't let just anyone headline the Domes; you gotta be famous, like, uh, *Alien Ant Farm* famous.

You will watch as the faith healer calls a woman up to the stage and, with a prayer and flick of his wrist, cures her arthritis. You will see him call up an old man, yank him away from his cane and declare him fixed. You will see him do this to many people...and then it is *your* turn.

"What ails you, my child!?" he will ask with showmanship. You will look him directly in the eyes.

"Heal my faith," you will beg.

You have seen the abyss; you have derived from it no meaning. The foundation of your beliefs have been shaken, and the existential turmoil you have crawled through has left you jaded. "Heal my faith," you will beg.

He cannot. He is a charlatan. The abyss will haunt you.

Also, I hear that the Dome has pretty good pretzels. You know? The giant

kind? Domes *a/ways* have good pretzels.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

Bonus Chapter!

Except from *Existential Terror and Breakfast*.



To say that Malcolm Steadman was currently doing nothing would be erroneous. Yes, in the normal sense of the nomenclature Malcolm was doing "nothing", but in fact Malcolm was always doing something. At the moment he was sitting, he was staring into space and he was letting his breakfast cereal get soggy. Malcolm was breathing, and each breath he took burned a minuscule amount of calories and replenished his body with precious oxygen. If you asked Malcolm what he did with his morning he might look embarrassed, and as he would avoid your eye contact he would shuffle his feet and moan the word "nothing", but again, this was far from the truth.

Malcolm was not proud of his life, he considered it a vague failure and had a constant nagging feeling that if he did not do anything with it he would suddenly find that it was too late to start. He was constantly comparing his life to others. What they had and he didn't, whether it was a healthy and loving relationship with others, or more money and a better career, seemed to justify his notion that he had done nothing with his life. This did not motivate him to change it, though he might swear in the moment that he would, but it did make him sad. Malcolm was often sad. If he had taken the time to be less harsh on himself, and had considered just how miraculous his life was, maybe he would be less sad. But he won't. He would continue his habits and things *will* get worse. *So much worse.*

The miracle that was Malcolm Steadman was impossibly more wondrous than he would ever give himself credit for. As he sat and did "nothing" **86 billion neurons** in his brain worked together to create thought and consciousness. Malcolm's mind was a series of an immense number of cells working together to

create the world's most awesome natural computer. Even as he listlessly looked down at his soggy breakfast, doing "nothing" these 86 billion neurons were working on his subconscious level to work out a math problem he had merely glanced at earlier and had "forgotten" about. As he shifted his weight to be more comfortable in his chair, and continue to feel bad about himself, this network of neurons passed on information from his senses to perceive the incredibly complex reality in front of him and it would render this perception faster than any rocket could travel. Malcolm Steadman was a miracle, and he hated himself.

Yes, Malcolm would never be able to perceive the universe around him *correctly*. There would never be a single thing he would think about the universe that would be correct. Yes, Malcolm would never be able to perceive the universe correctly, **but he could perceive it**. That, in itself, was the greatest testament to Malcolm Steadman being great. The universe, as vast and confusing and random and chaotic and grand that it was could be *looked* upon. It could be judged and thought about and that was incredible. If Malcolm would take just a second to consider this, the trivialities of his worries could vanish. He won't though.

He felt as soggy and limp as his breakfast.

Of course, Malcolm had a right to feel this way. He had the right to feel any way he wanted. It's just a shame that he did. At his age, Malcolm Steadman had now lived longer than the majority of his ancestors. The bulk of them lived in fear and mostly just aspired to procreate and to be safe. Malcolm had the luxury to let his food slowly spoil in front of him in the comfort of his warm home and not have to worry when he would eat next. The fact that so many of his ancestors had survived long enough to produce young, and eventually him was staggering. Malcolm had the time to consider the universe around him, he had time to weigh complex mysteries and philosophize about them. In actuality, Malcolm was an incredibly lucky and blessed individual whose existence was impossibly miraculous! ...and he felt depressed.

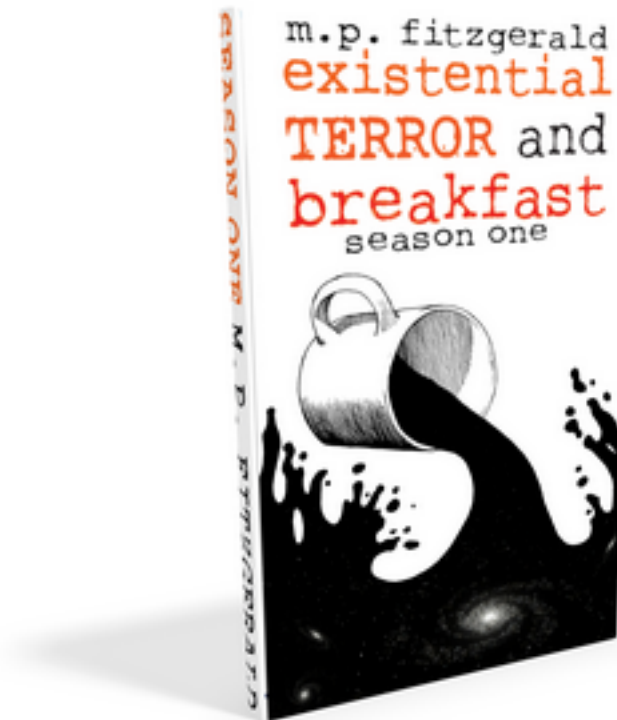
Malcolm was always doing something, and each and every moment he existed was immensely wondrous. Yet he perceived that he was doing nothing. He would continue to compare his life to others who were equally as wondrous, and he would feel bad about himself. He would never realize how divine he was. At this moment, Malcolm would miss an epiphany that was affirming and important: that he was, and always had been impressive. Instead, Malcolm would toss his unfinished cereal and march his way to a job that he hated. Instead, Malcolm would feel ashamed for being a waste.

Malcolm Steadman will dial the suicide hotline in 90 days.

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

Read More

Malcolm Steadman is a man drowning in his own mind. Also Pancakes



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CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

Thank you for reading!

M.P. Fitzgerald lives in Seattle and is dedicated to injecting the feverish Gonzo style into fiction. He is an author, illustrator, and an amateur mad scientist.

The author greatly appreciates you taking the time to read his work. Please consider telling your friends about his work, to help him spread the word.

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