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**Fixed Stars, Not Fixed Fates!**

**By Nancy R. Fenn**

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"What hogwash!" he said, only he used a different word. "When you screw up your life, you blame astrology, like you had no choice because you were born at a certain time." Now he was smiling. "The reason I do drugs and can't keep my fly zipped isn't because of any stars! Like my old man knocked up my mother when Scorpio was Rising and because of that I'm going to jail? I don't think so! I'm going to jail because I'm bad to the bone!"

This is a speech made by Edmund the Bastard in Act I, Scene ii of Shakespeare's King Lear. I brought it up to date.

Edmund plots to turn his father against his half brother, Edward, but the boys' father won't go for it. He excuses Edward's recent strange behavior by "these late eclipses in the sun and moon ...."

Edmund says he was born under the Dragon's tail, the South Node of the Moon. That could be in any sign. He's making a play on words. To be born under any animal's tale is probably a slur on Edmund's mother who was not married at the time of his conception.

Edmund's "nativity" or horoscope is under Ursa Major, the constellation where the Big Dipper resides. At the time of this play, most of the stars in Ursa Major were in late degrees of Leo and the first half of Virgo.

It's a funny coincidence (no such thing?) when Edmund speculates, what if he were born under "the maidliest star" -- because that's exactly when he was born. If under Ursa Major, then the influence of Virgo, the Maiden.

Edmund shows a mistake people sometimes make about astrology. You can't be born "under something", you have to be born when the Sun is "in something".

Edmund's character is used as a contrast to King Lear's very evil daughters, Goneril and Regan. King Lear is destroyed by their cruelty. While these girls are dark to the core, Edmund is openly, carelessly

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and light-heartedly villainous. Back then as now, some people are bad but some people are really evil. M. Scott Peck wrote a good book to help with this distinction, *The Road Less Traveled*.

Edmund actually has a pretty good handle on an important concept in humanistic astrology — way before Dane Rudhyar (1895–1985) wrote his books. It is our character that determines our fate, not our horoscope.

Thousands of people are born the same hour, day, year and even minute all over the world; yet no two are alike. The energy of the stars is neutral like electricity but there is a Soul lying beneath the horoscope which uses the energy for good or ill.

Charles Darwin was born on February 12, 1809 in Shrewsbury, England. Abraham Lincoln was born

on February 12, 1809 in Larue County, Kentucky. It was a good day for men!

There's nothing evil about being born in Virgo. In fact many Virgos are among the most gentle people. But 9 degrees of Virgo is a degree of homicide. Alioth of Ursa Major in Shakespeare's time was at about 7 degrees Virgo while Mizar and Alcor were at 12 degrees Virgo.

I think, too, that Shakespeare refers to the importance Ursa Major has always had in the northern hemisphere. It is one of the first things children learn to pick out in the starry night sky.

Ursa Major isn't part of the zodiac but its stars can be seen vividly at night. There are seven main stars, Alkaid, Mizar, Alioth, Megrez, Phecda, Merak and Dubhe.

The last two are special stars people use to site the North Star (Polaris). Mizar has a fainter companion, Alcor. As everyone knows, if you can see these two stars with your own two eyes, you have good eyesight!

Beginning astronomy students are taught to start from Ursa Major and "follow the arc to Arcturus"; then "spin on to Spica". Arcturus is the second brightest star in the spring sky, a fortunate star of the zodiac, while Spica is considered the luckiest star of all. Are you lucky enough to have a planet at 23 Libra? Email me at [parklanenancy@hotmail.com](mailto:parklanenancy@hotmail.com) and I'll let you know.

Mizar and Alcor have a love story in American Indian mythology. Not everyone can see Alcor, but she is the 7th sister of the Pleiades, the youngest sister, who fell in love with a mortal man. One night the Windsong lifted him up into the stars for her. His name is Mizar and they have been together ever since. All cultures speak of the Seven Pleiades, but that is why you can only see six of them.

Astrologically, the constellation Ursa Major is said to give a "quiet, prudent, suspicious, mistrustful, self-controlled patient nature, but an uneasy spirit and great anger when roused". Much like a bear, I suppose. The name Ursa Major (the Big Bear) comes from a myth about Zeus, the king of gods. Zeus raped a young nymph named Callisto. Callisto gave birth to a son named Arcas. Zeus' wife was so angry she turned Callisto into a bear. Callisto roamed the woods for 15 years. One day she ran into her son, who had become a hunter. As he drew his bow to shoot her, of course not recognizing that she

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was his mother, Zeus took pity on Callisto and turned her son into a bear as well. Then he took them both by the tail and swung them up into the heavens which is why their tails are so long. Zeus' wife became furious again and drug a promise out of the ancient ruler of the sea that these two constellations would never get their paws wet. To this day they do not set below the horizon of the sea as other constellations do.

The constellation has had other meanings. In Arabic, Mizak and Alcor are called the horse and rider. The rest of the constellation is seen as a funeral procession ... perhaps because of the slow and solemn motion of the figure around the pole.

The Babylonians saw a chariot in these stars and the Romans, seven oxen. In Ireland the constellation is called King David's Chariot; in Denmark and Sweden the Stori Vagn or Chariot of Thor. Similarly the Vikings, Poles, Germans and Medieval Christians saw it as a chariot for their gods.

The Plough, as it is called in the UK, is the bucket shaped figure on the back of the Bear, outlined by the stars Merak, Dubhe, Phecda and Megrez. The Three Horses pulling the plough are located in the tail.

Ursa Major has also been called the Wain by the Welsh, short for Charlie Wain or Charlemagne, while Arcturus refers to King Arthur.

The stars do not compel any more than there are chariots, bears and funeral processions in the skies. Most individual stars have Arabic names while the constellations in our northern hemisphere have names derived from Greek and Roman mythology. There was a time 2000 years ago when these worlds were all one — when shepherds sat alone on hilltops at night and stared into the sky. There was a time when desert caravans followed star maps reliably across the sands and sailors cried "By Jiminy!" to the constellation of the twins to keep them safe at sea. There was a time when astrology and astronomy were twins as well and I'm one astrologer who likes to return to those times every now and then.

Nancy R. Fenn has been a professional astrologer in the San Diego area for over 25 years. She's the astrologer who wasn't born yesterday.

## **Mortgage Loan Information – Know The Basics When You Refinance Or Purchase A Home**

**By Carrie Reeder**

If you are currently looking for a new home, chances are that in all the excitement you won't really give any thought to the type of home loan mortgage you take out, instead going with the first one offered to you. This could be a serious mistake - costing you thousands, if not tens of thousands. Make sure you know all about the different types of home mortgage loans before you starting looking for that new dream home!

Here are some of the basic types of mortgage loans:

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### Fixed-rate home loan mortgage –

As the name suggests, this is a plain-vanilla home loan. Basically you borrow a certain amount over a certain period at a fixed rate of interest. You then pay the same monthly installments for the life of the home loan. The benefit of a fixed-rate home loan is that you can easily budget for the repayments. The downfall of a fixed-rate home loan is that you could end up paying a higher rate of interest than everyone else - no one knows what interest rates will be in 15–20 years time!

### Adjustable-rate home loan mortgage –

Mirroring the fixed-rate mortgage is the adjustable-rate mortgage. Again, you borrow a certain amount over a certain period, however in this case the interest rate is not fixed, but is adjustable (or 'floating' as you may also hear it called). The upside to adjustable-rate home loans is that the interest rate at the start of the loan period can be lower than the fixed rate would be. The downside is that it is difficult to budget for, as the amount can change, and you are at the mercy of something outside of your control - interest rate fluctuations, which can change quickly.

### Hybrid home loan mortgages –

Trying to fill the void left with the downside of the fixed and adjustable/variable-rate home loans, the hybrid home loan lets you fix the interest rate over the first part of the home loan, and then switch to an adjustable/variable rate later. The upside of hybrid home loans is that they allow you to budget for your repayments during the expensive time when you first buy the home. The downside is that if floating rates are much higher than your fixed rate when the switch happens, you could find you are paying a much higher repayment each month.

To see a list of recommended mortgage loan companies online, visit this page:

– Carrie Reeder is the owner of ABC Loan Guide,

an informational website with articles and more about various types of loans.

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