



THE SUN
IS WHERE YOUR
HEART IS

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The Sun is Where Your Heart Is

by April Elliott Kent

Growing up in the pre-DVD era, watching *The Wizard of Oz* on network television was a much-anticipated annual event in our household. I'm referring, of course, to the classic movie starring Judy Garland as Dorothy, a Kansas farm girl who is magically transported to the extraordinary Land of Oz. There she meets a trio of friends who accompany her to see the Wizard, who they hope will grant their wishes.

As an astrological metaphor, it's tempting to think of this sweet story as a lunar tale, since young Dorothy spends most of the film looking for a way to return home. But I see the story a little differently. Maybe it's just those shiny, ostentatious ruby slippers that got Dorothy in so much trouble with the Wicked Witch, but I prefer to think of *Oz* as a story about the astrological Sun – a story of wishing to be something more than we think we are.

In astrology, the Sun symbolizes aspiration, the desire to reach our ultimate potential. But rather than earning our Sun sign's gifts from the outside world, what if we carry the seeds of their potential within us from the moment we're born? In *Oz*, Dorothy and her companions each wish for the very qualities that they already possess. The lion laments his lack of courage, but shows bravery despite his fear; the wise scarecrow doesn't believe in his brains, or the sentimental tin woodsman in his own tender heart. And Dorothy, of course, longs to return home to Kansas, unaware that the ruby slippers on her feet could take her there with three clicks of her heels.

Dorothy and her friends are far from alone in failing to recognize their innate gifts. How often have you heard someone say, "I'm not at all like my Sun Sign"? It's true that there's much more to astrology than the Sun's sign at your birth, and many other factors in your birth chart can overshadow the characteristics of that sign. But another reason it's often difficult to relate to Sun Sign astrology is that we're not necessarily born knowing how to "be" our Sun Sign! It can be helpful, then, to think about your Sun Sign not as a description of your personality, but as a blueprint for what you can potentially become.

The Tall Poppy

We live on a planet that owes its existence to the Sun, and our spirits open up to its warmth as a flower blooms on a sunny day. In yoga, we salute the Sun as the force that animates all life on earth. And in astrology, the Sun holds a similar status: it is the animating force of the birth chart – and the sign it occupied at your birth tells us *what brings you to life*.

Some are born with a natural ability to celebrate the Sun's energy in their lives. Their dispositions are "sunny," open and welcoming. Others cluster around them as they might surround a crackling fireplace on a cool evening.

But many of us are raised to think that calling attention to ourselves is selfish and unattractive. Where my husband comes from, they call this the "Tall Poppy Syndrome." Sometimes when people feel frustrated in their own lives, they try to "chop down" anyone else who succeeds in standing out from the crowd (the "tall poppy").

If you spent your life among smaller poppies, it might have been difficult for you to develop and embrace "solar" energy in your life. So look to the Sun's sign at your birth as a map to hidden treasure. Your Sun sign's best qualities are already yours – just waiting, like Dorothy's ruby slippers, for you to step into them and walk the path with heart.

Aries (March 21 - April 20): If I Only Had the Courage

Aries is usually described as assertive and courageous. But what if you're an Aries who is a little shy, or who has trouble initiating action? Or perhaps you've known an Aries who covers up fear with aggression and bullying.

The most common misconception about courage is that brave people are not afraid. Of course they are; if they weren't, there would be no need for courage! As Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "You must do that which you think you cannot," and that is especially true if you were born with the Sun in Aries. To follow the path with heart, you must seek opportunities to test your strength, courage, and ability – and you need to do it every day.

You may, however, need to expand your concept of bravery. Courage is certainly found in soldiers, warriors, and firefighters, but it's not confined to the battlefield or to burning buildings. Courage is found, for most of us, in less spectacular but still difficult situations, such as the awkward conversation you're afraid to have with a co-worker. Go ahead and have that conversation; you'll find you are braver than you think!

Taurus (April 21 - May 20): If I Only Had the Bucks

Wealth, comfort, and ease: Taurus is symbolized by the contented, well-fed bull. If you're struggling on your Taurus path, however, you may feel poor, even if you're not. You may deprive yourself of life's pleasures, or overcompensate by enjoying them too greedily.

It can be hard to appreciate all that we have; there always seems to be someone else who has more. Yet each of us came into the world with nothing at all, not even a stitch of clothing, and still found a way to get what we needed! You would think that transcending these humble beginnings would give all of us confidence – but the truth is, we misunderstand wealth. We imagine it lies in things that we can gather and use, but in fact, that path only leads to more cravings.

For Taurus, the path with heart celebrates the natural bounty of the physical world and the satisfaction of simply being alive. When you're feeling deprived, enjoy a beautiful painting. Listen to the song of the ocean's waves, enjoy the touch of a cat's fur, savor the taste of a chocolate bar, or let your nose linger over an obliging peony. No matter what your bank statement says, you are much wealthier than you know.

Gemini (May 21 - June 21): If I Only Had the Words

Gemini is known as the chatterbox of the zodiac, with an insatiable urge for information, new experiences, and fresh ideas. But what if you're a Gemini who "never has anything to say," hates talking on the phone, and rarely picks up a book?

In fact, some people born with the Sun in Gemini do talk a lot; but it's worth remembering that Gemini is the sign of *communication*, which requires listening as well as talking. Many the Gemini is happiest sitting quietly on the sidelines at a party, observing everything and listening to every conversation at once, all of which they share with a dazzled partner on the drive home.

For Gemini, storytelling is the path with heart. You were born to listen to the world's stories and to retell them, and to pollinate the world with ideas as a hummingbird tends to a garden full of flowers. If you think you haven't got much to say, just open your ears and heart and listen to the world's stories; they will give you all the words you need.

Cancer (June 22 - July 22): If I Only Had a Home

The Wizard of Oz's Dorothy was, without a doubt, a home-loving Cancerian. Dorothy spends the entire film caring for her friends and her dog, and missing her aunt and uncle back home. Meek and timid, she only gets riled up when someone she loves is threatened.

You may be a Cancer like Dorothy, clinging to the familiarity of home and loved ones. Or you may be one of the rare Cancerians who makes do with rented furniture and microwaved meals. The truth is, while we think of home as a place where we live and people who share that place with us, that's only part of the story. For a Cancer who is filled with the energy of the Sun, "home" is a state of being, and a quality of mind.

For Cancer, the path with heart lies in *being the home that you're looking for*, and giving others the comfort you seek. Give all that you can; the size of your home is limited only by the size of your heart.

Leo (July 23 - August 22): If I Only Had the Nerve

"Courage," was the wish of *Oz's* cowardly lion. And while courage naturally belongs to Aries, it takes nerve – boldness and pure spunk - to follow Leo's true path: being true to yourself. "Oh, I'm not a typical Leo at all," you might protest. "I don't like all that attention." On the other end of the spectrum are Leos who take the negative stereotype of their sign to ridiculous lengths, preening and hogging the spotlight.

But limelight-hungry egotists and shy pussycats are miles from their hearts' true path. Leo shines when he is inspiring others through performing, creating, or simply by being the life of the party. Leo gives heart to every timid person who watches and thinks, "Hey, if she can do it, maybe I can, too." Watch a loving Leo on her heart's path, and you'll notice she spends as much time shining the spotlight on others as basking in it herself.

So do what you love. Do what makes you feel alive. You really do have a lot of nerve, Leo – celebrate it!

Virgo (August 23 - September 22): If I Only Had a Brain

"If only I were smart," bemoans the scarecrow, the wisest, most resourceful fellow in Dorothy's merry band. Likewise, Virgo is often blind to his own sterling qualities. "I'm not a proper Virgo," declares my friend Beth. "My apartment is a mess, and my checkbook is never balanced." But an untidy Virgo often just has unreasonable standards of perfection, and grows disheartened when they can't be met. Why clean, when things will just get dirty again? Why tackle your checkbook if you can't balance your account to the penny?

If you're a Virgo who is too focused on life's imperfections, you may overlook your greatest gift: the ability to fix and sooth a broken, troubled world. It's true you have to notice problems before you can fix them, but you also need to know when to stop cataloguing the problems and start rolling up your sleeves! For Virgo, the path with heart lies in fixing problems. It takes a lot of skill, resourcefulness, and yes, brains to keep the world operating smoothly. Roll up your sleeves and tackle the problems one by one, and you'll find you're usually the cleverest person in the room – and a "real" Virgo after all!

Libra (September 23 - October 22): If I Only Had a Partner

Libra, the sign of relationship, has a sweet, refined, and harmonious reputation that is not entirely deserved. Because more precisely, Libra is the sign

of *balance* - and one cannot balance sweetness with more sweetness. Behave too politely around a Libran and you're just begging for a fight.

So what if you're a Libran who has had trouble finding or maintaining a romantic relationship, business partnership, or even close friendships? Does that mean astrology is nonsense, or that you've failed as a Libra?

Neither – it means the key to having strong relationships is to know yourself first. Libra's heart path lies not in niceness, but in collaboration! An ideal relationship is one in which the partners' strengths are complementary, with each yielding gracefully to the other and neither feeling like a doormat. This balancing act requires a strong sense of self – so anything you can do to know yourself better (and spending time alone is a good place to start) is a step along your heart's true path. Your ideal partner is out there – and when you've embraced your true self, you will be able to recognize one another!

Scorpio (October 23 - November 21): If I Only Had the Strength

Interestingly, those born with the Sun in Scorpio nearly always announce that fact with pride, relishing their sign's racy reputation for intrigue, sexual magnetism, and emotional drama. Scorpios who don't reveal themselves are equally easy to identify, because they're the ones who refuse to tell you when they were born. Both reactions are usually born out of a desire to seem invulnerable and "cool."

But is that what Scorpio was born to be – a sexy, mysterious stranger with a pet snake and a full complement of body piercings? Or someone who turns up their nose at all that is mysterious and magical in life, claiming that they're "not into all that stuff?"

For Scorpio, the path with heart lies in developing true strength, not just outer toughness. It takes fearlessness to merge in sexual and emotional intimacy with another person, to stand up for the weak and stand up to the strong, and to look mortality straight in the eye and say, "I'm not afraid of you." How can you

move beyond your tough façade and develop inner strength? Simply by being as willing to confront your own normal, human weaknesses as you are adept at exposing the frailties of others - that is your heart's path to real strength.

Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21): If I Only Had the World

Though President John F. Kennedy (Sun in Gemini) was a wizard with words, a trip to Germany found him with his foot planted firmly in his mouth. "Ich bin ein Berliner," he declared, intending to show solidarity with the people of Berlin by claiming to be one of them. Unfortunately, he later discovered that "Berliner" was a colloquial expression for a kind of doughnut.

Such are the risks of treading upon foreign soil! You don't know all the cultural subtleties that betray foreignness. If you were born with the Sun in Sagittarius, the sign of foreign lands, you should appreciate that laughter, not embarrassment, is the only correct response to having made a faux pas like President Kennedy's.

Your heart's true path, Sagittarius, is to become a full-fledged, passport bearing world citizen. You are designed to shine brightest among people who do not share your nationality, race, religion, creed, or political beliefs. Develop your spirit of adventure and ease with the unfamiliar by eating exotic foods, sampling cultural festivals, or learning a new language. Don't settle for a little corner of the world, when it's your birthright to enjoy the whole thing!

Capricorn (December 22 - January 19): If I Only Had Respect

Do you have a problem with authority figures? Are you constantly furious about the strict rules of your workplace and fed up with society's cruel and arbitrary laws? That kind of rebelliousness is fine if you're an Aquarian. But it's not quite right for you, Capricorn – because you were designed to be in charge.

I've known people born with the Sun in Capricorn who walk into a store to purchase something, only to get approached for help by fellow customers who assume Capricorn is the boss! You are designed to be looked up to, to remind

others of our responsibilities, and to point out the ways in which we limit ourselves. Your heart's path is to be treated with respect.

To move toward your heart's path, build your authority and credibility. You do this every time you offer good advice, take the high road, and keep your word. So do these things without fail, in matters large and small; demonstrate respect for yourself and others, and you will find you receive all the respect you could hope for in return.

Aquarius (January 21 - February 18): If I Only Had a Friend

Aquarius is the odd flower in astrology's garden - a bird of paradise, spiky and colorful. As any gardener knows, the bird of paradise is also desperately hard to remove once it's taken root. Aquarius is considered eccentric and unpredictable, but here's his secret: Aquarius may enjoy shaking things up in *your* life – but he prefers to avoid too many changes in his own routines. And here's another secret: Aquarius wants to do things her own way, but she also wants to belong to a group of friends.

If you are an Aquarian who prides yourself on your collection of button-down oxfords, goes out of your way to be radical and shocking, or shies away from social activities, then you have wandered away from your true path. You're not like anyone else, and that's exactly what makes you like *everyone* else – because each of us is utterly unique. For Aquarius, the path with heart lies in making *everyone* feel that they "fit in." Celebrate your weirdness, and love everyone else for theirs; that is the essence of friendship – and the surest way of making friends.

Pisces (February 19 - March 21): If I Only Had a Heart

There is, sadly, a certain kind of Pisces who gives up on life much too soon. It's all too difficult, the world is too rough a place, and they read once that Pisces is "supposed" to just drift through life and be spacey. And there's another kind of Pisces, too – the kind that is determined never to show even a moment's

weakness, sensitivity, or vulnerability. “*Everyone* is a victim,” growls this species of fish sarcastically, impatient with weakness in himself and others.

But Pisces, drifting and insensitivity carry you far from your heart’s true path. You shine brightest when you love the world – nothing more, nothing less. It takes a lot of courage and heart to love everything and everyone; it’s a tall order indeed. But like the tin woodsman, alleging his lack of a heart while rusting from his own tender tears, open the floodgates of emotion and you will find that you have all the heart anyone could hope for. Yes, it’s scary – you may feel as though you’ll drown in your own tears. But after all, you have fins to help you navigate the floodwaters – and a heart that is more resilient than you know.



About the Author



April Elliott Kent has been a professional astrologer since 1990. She is the author of *Astrological Transits* (Fair Winds Press 2015), *The Essential Guide to Practical Astrology* (Alpha/Penguin 2011), and *Star Guide to Weddings* (Llewellyn 2008). Her astrological writing has also appeared in *The Mountain Astrologer* and *Dell Horoscope* magazines, the online journal *MoonCircles*, and *Llewellyn’s Moon Sign, Sun Sign and Sabbats Almanac* annuals. April, a Leo, lives in San Diego with her husband and their two cats. Her website is: <http://www.bigskyastrology.com>.