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He's making a list, He's checking it twice, He's gonna find out who's naughty or nice. Solstice Claus is coming to town. OK, maybe I'm getting into the holiday spirit of the wrong solstice. But given that this solstice occurs at the same time as a Sun-Mercury conjunction, we may all find ourselves better at list-making and getting things organised than we've been in a while. Not only that but, with the rest of this week's encouraging aspects, we're unlikely to be disappointed by what appears under our tree.

Aries Mar21-Apr20

When comedy writers look for an easy gag, they get their central character to declare, "You won't find me doing this ever again." Then, in the very next scene, we see them contravening their vow. So much for their self-control – or their luck! It's funny when we observe this happening to someone else, less amusing when it happens to us. But, as your ruler links creatively to Uranus ahead of the solstice, if you find yourself back where you once said you'd never go again, it may be something to smile about, rather than cry over.
The power of the solstice can be harnessed right now. Call **1900 957 223**.

Cancer Jun23-Jul23

A few weeks ago, you were twiddling your thumbs. Now, with Mars in your sign, you're able to use them to grip tightly to the handlebar of life's motorcycle, and hare down straights, and race round bends. You could break records for speed and efficiency as you make things happen, and deal with things that other people have made happen – which need to be put right! You've a lot on your plate but you can absorb and digest every last bit of it. As long as you take one step at a time. With the solstice arriving, those are giant steps.
The solstice can transform your world. Make the most its energy. Call **1900 957 223**.

Libra Sep24-Oct23

Nobody can do the impossible! But what about the "almost impossible"? Well, those things aren't actually impossible. They may be tricky. They may take luck, effort and ingenuity. But how do you know that something's impossible until, or unless you try? Don't risk everything on a crazy, far-fetched scheme – and if you perceive that it poses potential danger, keep well away from it. But, if the risk's small and the potential reward is big, with Venus encouraged by dreamy Neptune, ahead of the solstice, at least give it a try.
The power of the solstice can be harnessed right now. Call **1900 957 223**.

Capricorn Dec22-Jan20

If there's something you can't have, maybe you don't need it. The solstice marks the return of the Sun to your opposite sign and is a strong suggestion that you're being well taken care of by a kindly cosmos. Not only are the planets well disposed towards you, but people (who tend to act as agents of the cosmos) are inspired to assist with your most important endeavours. Don't underestimate your ability to charm the birds from the trees, knock the socks off a stranger... or perfect a solution out of a seemingly daunting difficulty.
The solstice can transform your world. Make the most its energy. Call **1900 957 223**.

Taurus Apr21-May21

The trouble with a "sense of security" is that we can never have one that's strong or deep enough. Even if we buy the best burglar alarm in the world, we'll still have a problem. What if someone sets out to steal it? As with physical protection, so with our emotional defence mechanisms. The more we try to protect ourselves, the more we find ourselves becoming vulnerable. One of the best ways to guard against unwelcome intrusion is to maintain a high level of openness. Be trusting as much as you dare this week.
How will the solstice transform your life? Call **1900 957 223**.

Leo Jul24-Aug23

Where's the guard, clutching the rifle, guarding the door through which you can never hope to pass? Are you sure it's even locked? And if it is, what's that key-shaped object lying on the floor? As Mercury combines with your ruler, at the solstice, you're being helped to see new possibilities, options, alternatives, and invitations. These aren't fanciful visions, intended to bring comfort in moments of frustration. They represent real chances, as long as you're willing to take them. But you need to stop doubting your abilities.
The solstice brings powerful positive change! For great news, call **1900 957 223**.

Scorpio Oct24-Nov22

There are times when we should give thanks for our problems. We should look at them, look at the trouble they've led us into, look at the steps we've been forced to take to get ourselves out of that trouble, and then recognise that we might never have wound up being so smart if we hadn't first been so dumb. Forget, this week, how or why a situation came about. Forget too, your feelings about whether it's been bad or good. The solstice brings the chance to just look at what it now has the potential to offer you. Be glad of that.
How will the solstice transform your life? Call **1900 957 223**.

Aquarius Jan21-Feb19

The heart is always quicker than the head. No matter how sharp our minds, they trail behind our gut reactions like tortoises following hares. And, because they go so much more slowly, they have more time to mull things over, question instinctive responses and come up with complicated caveats to explain what ought to be obvious. You can get into a long discussion now about the relative merits of an idea or a suggestion. But passionate Mars suggests that if you really want to make progress, don't ignore what you feel.
The solstice brings powerful positive change! For great news, call **1900 957 223**.

Gemini May22-Jun22

Jonathan told a story about a friend who hated washing dishes. She'd do all she could to avoid it. One day, he noticed that her sink wasn't overflowing with the usual crockery. He asked "Did you get help?" She said proudly, "No. I did it!", and explained "I realised that I loathed dirty dishes, even more than I disliked cleaning them." With your ruler opposite Saturn, a similar approach can be applied to a problem you're facing. Ask yourself which may be the lesser of two evils. You might enjoy what comes out in the wash.
Let the light and power of the solstice inspire you. Call **1900 957 223**.

Virgo Aug24-Sep23

What pleases Pat may anger Alex. What makes Jo jolly may sadden Sam. It isn't easy keeping people happy. It's particularly frustrating when we find ourselves trying to balance conflicting needs and mutually exclusive preferences. Perhaps you're thoroughly tired by all your efforts to pursue peace and harmony. You deserve to be applauded for even attempting this, yet it seems you just keep incurring criticism. Don't throw in the towel just yet. The solstice suggests that someone's becoming a lot more reasonable.
Capture the energy of the solstice. Call your in-depth forecast now: **1900 957 223**.

Sagittarius Nov23-Dec21

Few people deliberately spread misinformation. The vast majority of us have integrity and sincerity. But we also have a very strong, natural sense of faith. When we believe something to be true, we share that belief with evangelistic zeal. We want others to believe it, because we believe they'll benefit from knowing what we know. This is all fine unless we don't actually know what we think we know! Are you giving someone else's enthusiastic assumption a little too much credence? The solstice helps you get to the root of the matter.
Let the light and power of the solstice inspire you. Call **1900 957 223**.

Pisces Feb20-Mar20

This isn't a perfect world, and it might never be one, no matter how many solstices come and go. But it's not such a bad place, either. And our experience of how perfect or imperfect it is varies according to the mood we find ourselves, in or the attitude that we take. Now, I'm really not saying, "Imagine everything is fine and it will be fine." That's a justification for living in the kind of ignorance that rarely turns out to be blissful. But you really should now look more favourably on something you've previously felt inclined to resent.
Capture the energy of the solstice. Call your in-depth forecast now: **1900 957 223**.

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Test your knowledge

1 What book series features sisters Sunny and Violet?
2 What US city has the nicknames Fog City and the Paris of the West?
3 How many emirates make up the United Arab Emirates?
4 Which Beatles album features *Ticket to Ride* and *Yesterday*?
5 A bellwether is the leader of a group of what kind of animal?
6 What does the Japanese Toho Company produce?
7 Who wrote the 1970 book *Future Shock*?
8 Which cult-like religion was founded by L. Ron Hubbard?
9 The three items of the Japanese imperial regalia are a sword, gem and what?
10 Who designed the Guggenheim Museum in New York City?
11 In what year did modern Albania establish itself as a republic?
12 What was the name of Danger Mouse's timid assistant?
13 Who wrote the comic plays *Hay Fever* and *Design for Living*?
14 According to legend, the bite of what animal killed Cleopatra?
15 Lou Gehrig's disease is also known as what?
16 Which ice hockey team won the 2015 Stanley Cup Final?
17 *Definitely Maybe* is a 1994 album by which band?
18 True or false: country musician Keith Urban was born in Australia?
19 Which song by The Who is used as the theme for *CSI: Miami*?
20 Which artist painted *Judith and the Head of Holofernes*?
21 Which poet wrote *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*?
22 From which country does the video game Minecraft originate?
23 Cate Campbell is best known for her involvement in which sport?
24 In what year was Abraham Lincoln assassinated?
25 True or false: Daniel Ricciardo won the 2015 Melbourne Grand Prix?
26 Who wrote the novel *The Book Thief*?
27 What band released the album *The Downward Spiral* in 1994?
28 Wadi Al-Hitan, or Whale Valley, is located in which country?
29 On which Hawaiian island is Pearl Harbor located?
30 What is the name of the unit of electrical resistance?

Answers, this page

Today's Solutions

Quiz Solution

1. A Series of Unfortunate Events; 2. San Francisco; 3. Seven; 4. *Help!*; 5. Sheep; 6. Films; 7. Alvin Toffler; 8. Scientology; 9. Mirror; 10. Frank Lloyd Wright; 11. 1991; 12. Penfold; 13. Noel Coward; 14. Asp; 15. Motor Neurone Disease; 16. Chicago Blackhawks; 17. Oasis; 18. False; 19. *Won't Get Fooled Again*; 20. Gustav Klimt; 21. William Wordsworth; 22. Sweden; 23. Swimming; 24. 1865; 25. False; 26. Markus Zusak; 27. Nine Inch Nails; 28. Egypt; 29. Oahu; 30. Ohm.

Regular Crossword Solution

Across: 1 Socks, 4 Cossack, 8 Gulch, 11 Organiser, 12 Ingenious, 13 Krypton, 14 Beef, 17 Presto, 18 Apex, 20 Admits, 22 Ague, 25 Tardy, 27 Armada, 29 Kick, 30 Ogre, 32 Stopgap, 35 Nag, 36 Tequila, 37 Eddy, 39 Flee, 40 Shinto, 44 Chela, 45 Sari, 46 Safari, 47 Purl, 50 Unsold, 52 Fist, 54 Israeli, 57 Skew-whiff, 58 Phenomena, 59 Duped, 60 Germany, 61 Tatty.
Down: 1 Stock market, 2 Cagey, 3 Sanctity, 4 Cessna, 5 Scribe, 6 Aside, 7 Kegs, 8 Generation, 9 Lions, 10 History, 15 Exam, 16 Feud, 19 Pear, 21 Macaque, 23 Gadget, 24 Eased, 26 Regalia, 28 Beanie, 31 Glass, 33 Preliminary, 34 Disallowed, 38 Dour, 41 Half, 42 Nips, 43 Carry out, 44 Cursed, 48 Utopia, 49 Livery, 51 Steep, 53 Infer, 55 Eject, 56 Wing.

Cryptic Crossword Solution

S	U	S	P	E	N	S	E	D		T		
E		E		T			D	R	E	S	S	Y
R	A	D	I	A	N	C	E		T		I	
I		U		T			C	A	S	T	L	E
T	A	L	I	S	M	A	N		I		A	
E		L		E			O		X		E	
R	E	A	L	T	Y		C	H	E	R	E	S
	S		A		N			C		T		N
E	R		R		I	N	D	I	C	A	T	E
C	O	V	E	R	T			R		R		T
	M		B		S	E	T	T	L	E	R	S
D	E	S	I	R	E			S		T		A
	R		L		D	E	M	O	L	I	S	H

Today's Sudoku Solution

9	8	3	7	4	6	2	5	1
5	1	6	9	2	8	7	4	3
4	2	7	3	1	5	9	8	6
1	6	4	8	9	2	3	7	5
7	3	8	5	6	4	1	9	2
3	5	9	4	8	1	6	2	7
8	4	2	6	3	7	5	1	9
2	9	5	1	7	3	8	6	4
6	7	1	2	5	9	4	3	8

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