



The Real Scoop on Sagittarius!

As you probably know, we have just entered the time of Sagittarius. No sign in the zodiac so perfectly embodies the convivial, jovial spirit of holiday time like Sagittarius. According to the song, Age of Aquarius, when Jupiter aligns with Mars then peace will guide the planets and love will steer the stars. And that time is now! Mars is visible right after dark and Jupiter rises shortly before midnight, throughout November and into December.

(Sorry Aquarians, I'll write a blog later about when the Age of Aquarius began according to astronomers!)

If you're someone like me who allocates daydream time to what zodiac sign fictional characters are, when you think Ebenezer Scrooge or the Grinch, you might automatically think Capricorn. As a Saturn baby I have to say, UNFAIR! The fact that I got your Christmas gift the day after last Christmas when it was 98% off should make it extra special to you! And besides, The Grinch was "birthed" on November 24, 1957, and Dickens published A Christmas Carol on December 19, 1843. This makes them both, in theory, Sagittarians. "Well that makes even less sense than casting imaginary zodiac charts for storybook characters," you say. Maybe, but I can't think of a more Sagittarius-like scheme than trying to remove every icicle light and wrapped gift in one night using a sleigh pulled by a dog with a reindeer antler tied on his head. Anyone who does such a thing but at the end of the story is the guest of honor carving the Roast Beast, is most definitely a Sagittarius. Though they enjoy the festivities I would be willing to bet that Sagittarians struggle with the family expectations, overbooked schedules, and soupy emotions of this season. But like the Grinch, they'll come around in the end.

Scrooge? Well, he believed that he wasn't doomed to the fate that the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, showed him. He believed that if he made changes it would all be all right in the end. It's also possible that he wasn't giving out any more coal because, in typical Sagittarian fashion, even in 1843, he knew that coal was harmful for the air and had a better vision for cleaner heat sources in the future. So suck it up Cratchit, and put on a sweater!

Speaking of Sagittarius stories, its mythology is the most commonly misinterpreted in all the zodiac. It is often associated with the centaur, Chiron whom Hercules killed with a poison arrow. This however, is the myth behind the constellation Centaurus, not Sagittarius. The myth of Croton is actually the story behind Sagittarius. Croton was a satyr which means he had a human head and torso, and goat legs. He was a skilled hunter, who is said to have invented the bow according to Greek mythology. The word Sagittarius is from the Latin, meaning archer or sagitta, which means arrow. And, as Croton lived on mount Helicon with the muses and was the son of Pan, of Panflute fame, he was also a man of the arts and said to be a talented musician. It is easy to see how these myths became intertwined. Satyrs, like Centaurs have a reputation for being wild and lusty creatures with disdain for authority and a lack of dinner party manners. Croton, however, was different and was said to have a very gentle, peaceful nature.

In the night sky, Sagittarius sits facing Orion with his arrow pointed right at the red glow of Antares. Antares is the rubicund heart of the scorpion, or Scorpio constellation. In some stories Crotus is said to be protecting Orion from the scorpion and in other interpretations, he is protecting his friends the muses, from the often inappropriate behavior, and unwanted advances of Orion. In the wheel of the zodiac, it is Sagittarius that frees us from the darker, heavier time of Scorpio.

According to astronomers, the Sagittarius constellation sits at the center of the Milky Way where it is at its densest. The exact center of the galaxy is marked by a radio signal which is in fact called, Sagittarius A. This constellation was well known to ancient astronomers and was mentioned by the cultures in the Middle East as far back as the third century BC.

The Babylonian God, Nergal, was a satyr-like creature firing a bow. He was associated with fire and the sun and Sagittarius was his constellation. In the Mesopotamian epic of Gilgamesh, Enkidu was his close friend and companion and was said to be represented by Sagittarius. The Sumerians had a God named Pabilsag who was said to have a scorpion's tail, dog's head, and wings. His name can be translated as noble ancestor, or chief elder and Sagittarius is said to be his heavenly abode. Arab astronomers named several of the brighter stars of the Sagittarius constellation after bow and arrow elements, and body parts, suggesting they also thought of this constellation as an archer, or an unfortunate bow hunter vs. wood chipper incident.

If you want to check out the constellation for yourself you'll have to wait if you live in the northern hemisphere. It was visible this time of year thousands of years ago when the zodiac sign was attributed to it but the Earth's timing has shifted since then. Now you can only see it on summer nights, low on the southern horizon. Don't worry, I'll remind you. In the meantime you don't have to worry about cheerful Christmas lights obscuring your view!

Now that the holiday season is officially in full swing, I hope you're feeling less Grinch and more Crotus! Happy Holidays!

Until next time,

Lisa Burkhart