



Roaming Pen Roger has a night to remember

In December 2009 I had to visit our local A&E with a broken wrist. I wrote about the fantastic staff and the treatment I received. On that icy day A&E resembled a war zone, people all over the place with various broken limbs. We all learnt the meaning of being patient but in the end we all got mended. Fast forward 20 months and on a late summer rainy Monday I had to go back, this time it wasn't my problem but a friend's. The bottom line is that he was fine and it was something of a false alarm.

But here again, A&E still looked like there had been a Bomb. No ice or snow, just rain and dozens of people. I was surprised, having expected it to be quiet. Obviously it never is.

There was quite an amazing cross section of the local community represented. In fact you could say that all human life was there. This time problems ranged from a pregnant woman with problems, one minor fracture, some elderly people with miscellaneous issues, a serious domestic violence case and someone under arrest. Both the latter attended by a selection police officers, at one time the waiting room looked like part of John Street Police Station. At that time in the evening there were few drunks but several rather obvious drug related issues. It was fascinating to see that some of our more nomadic local residents appearing to use the facility as a good place to rest, they knew all the staff and looked completely at home, perhaps this was as near to a home as they knew.

As before, the treatment and attention being given was first class despite some very aggressive behaviour from some of the less patient patients. The staff appeared to be under constant pressure but kept smiling, despite the total lack of respect being shown to them. One can only be impressed. I am in no way suggesting that you do but it could be regarded as an absorbing way to spend an evening, you get to witness at first hand a show that beats anything you could ever see on the television, time just flies by.

Have we lost all respect for each other? It seems that we have. We live in an age of 'whatever'; we do whatever we want, whenever we want, regardless of any offence it can cause to others.

I refer to little things like the compulsion of most 'children' between the ages of 10 and 25 have to put their feet on bus and train seats. Of course we talk on our mobile phones all the time, don't you just love it when someone is having a conversation whilst at a supermarket checkout, talk about respect for the staff member who is attempting to communicate with the customer.

I was on a bus recently where three people were simultaneously having loud conversations and two other were listening to their iPods turned up as loud as they could. A peaceful journey.

We park our cars on yellow lines causing inconvenience to others, we walk down narrow pavements in pairs completely ignoring others and forcing them into the road – this happens all the time, sometimes I think that I am invisible. We do endless favours for friends who seem to simply expect you to assist them without thinking about how the favour may impact.

Oh dear I sound like a grumpy old man, I'm not really, I am just sorry to see the loss of the simple good manners and respect for others that I think is a basic tenet of a civilised society. But thinking back I recall my parents having very much the same opinions about 50 years ago, nothing changes – much. In the words of Velma in the musical 'Chicago' set in the 1920s "Whatever happened to old values? And fine morals? And good breeding? Whatever happened to class?"

But let's not get too depressed, summer is nearly over, the Christmas shops are open, it's time to think about presents and puddings. There is so much to look forward too. Halloween. Bonfire night, Christmas, New Year's Eve and parties.

In the words of a song made famous by Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians in 1949 "Enjoy yourself, it's later than you think" Have a smile on your face and take a look at my website www.theroamingpen.co.uk

Take it easy out there!

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The stars are out - Sept 2011

★ VIRGO: The Virgin (24 Aug - 23 Sept)

'What is going on?' a question at the forefront of your mind as events seem inexplicable. People's reactions mystify you as well. Don't try to understand, just accept what is. Your birthday this month should provide a bright spot although parties are probably not your thing. Enjoy something more to your taste.

★ LIBRA: The Scales (24 Sept - 23 Oct)

The emphasis is on your birthday this month Libra – and you DO know how to party! Enjoy it to the full, surround yourself with friends and relax. You may have been taking life a bit too seriously recently and this will be a good break for you. Someone you meet this month may prove to be of more significance than either of you first thought.

★ SCORPIO: The Scorpion (24 Oct - 23 Nov)

You risk doing something silly at this time Scorpio, something with serious consequences if you don't think carefully before you act! You may feel hemmed in by circumstances and authority but keep your reactions under control. Be patient, the pressure will ease of its own accord. Water has significance.

★ SAGGITARIUS: The Archer (24 Nov - 21 Dec)

People are becoming a bit impatient with you lately and in truth they are justified. You need to shape up and show more commitment. An unexpected event could see you having to change plans swiftly. The letters A and M are linked to travel either for you or for someone you know.

★ CAPRICORN: The Goat (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

You are coming out of a period of tension around you and if truth were told you are still a little frazzled. You may have had to tell a few home truths but now is the time to begin the healing process. Patience and understanding are the keywords here. This is a time of new beginnings and adventures. Stay focused and positive.

★ AQUARIUS: The Water-Bearer (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

Seeing things in black and white could put you in a position of having to back down and you won't enjoy that, will you Aquarius? Look at the bigger picture and ALL the facts before you dig your heels in and end up making a fool of yourself. A change of air will help you see more clearly.

★ PISCES: The Fish (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

The pressure from work commitments is reduced at the moment which is just as well because you may need to adjust your circumstances after a loved one leaves you high and dry! This is mostly a period of new starts and opportunity. Reading something on a notice board will lead to an intriguing and exciting opportunity.

★ ARIES: The Ram (21 Mar - 20 April)

This is a period when you are going to feel more sensitive to criticism – real or imagined – especially from relatives who you feel are deliberately trying to wind you up. Take three deep breaths and count to ten before saying or doing something you will regret almost immediately. A European connection with money is well-starred.

★ TAURUS: The Bull (21 April - 21 May)

You SO need spoiling right now Taurus! The candle has been burning at both ends, hasn't it? If you ask nicely a loved one will help take the load while you give yourself some much-needed pampering. You will soon be back to full strength and ready to show your gratitude! The end of the week brings an exciting opportunity.

★ GEMINI: The Twins (22 May - 21 June)

The stars are not shining on movement at this time. Progress in almost any area will probably have stalled. Relax and enjoy the chance to just go with the flow. Nothing will be lost if you stop to smell the roses. Someone with the initial S will have an important message for you.

★ CANCER: The Crab (22 June - 22 July)

Mars is beginning to move out of your sign Cancer which will be a relief as you probably will have been rather confrontational recently and that is just not you, is it? On the plus side it will have shown others that you are not the pushover you can sometimes seem to be. The middle of the month will find you at your best.

★ LEO: The Lion (23 July - 23 Aug)

Wow! Wasn't August a full month for you? You are probably feeling a bit drained, emotionally and financially. Someone you met over this period will prove to be fun but don't rush into anything. There is a strong chance that someone with your sign will experience a major leap forward in fortunes this month! It could be YOU!

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