

HOROSCOPE



ARIES (MAR. 21-APRIL 20)

Avoid revealing any private information. Your chance of meeting that special person is high. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

Channel your efforts into breaking bad habits. You can make successful moves. Be careful not to hurt the ones you love. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



GEMINI (MAY 22-JUNE 21)

A loved one could be having problems. Love could develop at social events. Your health may have suffered due to neglect. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



CANCER (JUNE 22-JULY 22)

Financial affairs are not favourable this week. Self-improvement projects should be your key concern. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



LEO (JULY 23-AUG 22)

Don't make any hasty decisions. Get your work done on time. You are going through a period of questioning. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 23)

Be careful with your spending. Try not to let your emotions go astray. One sided attractions are likely. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



LIBRA (SEPT. 24-OCT. 23)

Put in some extra hours at work. Be careful when dealing with family. Make decisions about your future goals. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Children will keep you busy. Don't let infatuations get out of hand. Investments that deal with property will pay off. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Ease the anguish by offering assistance. Try not to overspend. Travel will initiate new friendships or love connections. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Communication will be your best bet. Someone you care about may not be too well. Don't hesitate to present your unique ideas. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Your devotion will be persuasive. Your determination will make your work look flawless. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



PISCES (FEB. 20-MARCH. 20)

You will earn recognition from work. You will enjoy socializing. Business or pleasure trips will be knowledgeable. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



LOVING AND LIVING WITH PLANTS BY LAILA KARIM



It has been about five months since I have been away from many things special to my life— from my plants, my books and songs. My regular life was halted for a while due to a family health crisis, from which I, along with my family members, have gradually recovered. I returned from the self-exile soon after receiving some beautiful bulbs of Tulips from my daughter, brought from the Shiphol Airport of Amsterdam. We know southern Europe is the home of this flower. Tulip is a spring flower— the vast tulip fields are one of the key attractions of those countries, especially the Netherlands.

I prepared myself to start it again— with my plants first. On one week-end morning, I sat with the pots and bulbs and suddenly realized that our house cat 'Halum,' a toddler, with all of his adventurism, was missing, probably after a failed attempt of climbing through the balcony bars, had slipped off and fell down right on the roof of the neighbour's shed.

We passed seven terrible days and nights— worrying over the little one's safety; not seeing him around the house was miserable. Finally, God listened to our prayers, and we rescued a panicked and devastated Halum from a difficult hide-out. A great relief! It reminded us to not take the presence of our near and dear ones for granted, as we often do. Perhaps this is the reason, God puts us into those situations to test our love and care for them. Life is really precious and beautiful with all of the Almighty's gifts.

Now, once again I see and feel the winter colours around me, calling me to join in the celebration. Today, I want to share some of my moments with plants



with my readers. During my hiatus, I shared some of those Tulip bulbs with the relatives, and a few I preserved in the freezer as they are from the extreme cold, this home environment comfort they needed. When I sat again with the bulbs this week, it was already late weather wise—

February is going to be harshly hot for the delicate Tulips. Anyway, I want to give a try. I noticed, that with some hesitation evident, the bulbs were sprouting into shy shoots! I hope they will be generous with their blooms too.

In the past two weeks, I also tried to grow some coriander in one of the round containers in the balcony. The seedlings were first soaked overnight before being moved into the container soil, and are now showing above it. I shall allow them to grow one more inch, then they will be ready for some extra feed— a pinch of fertilizer for a healthy green growth. Do we know that this tiny, everyday curry essential had a glorious past and history? It has travelled a long way! Some seeds were



recovered from the archeological site of Egypt— the tomb of Tutankhamen and coriander seems to have been cultivated in Greece since the second millennium BC! We need to treat this guest herb well.

Have you noticed the tiny body of the green chillies? The other day, I just spread some seeds saved from when I was cooking— see how the soil has lovingly nurtured them, with some help from the sun? Over the next two weeks I am planning to house the young saplings in proper pots to let them breathe and grow well.

I must confess that in the past few months I did not do justice to my orchids, they look worn out, pale and sad. I did not have enough time to change the one year old base— not even the charcoal, or give any special treatment to meet their needs. Despite those, they tried to make me happy with their blooms.

I am grateful to my readers who spotted my absence during the period— many of them asked me to return. Dear readers, thanks for your love for plants.

Please share your thoughts and stories and love for plants and green life with DS. Mail us at lifestyleds@yahoo.co and your letters will be forwarded to the columnist.

Photo: RBR