

A Series of Fortunate Events

(An Astrological Publishing Tale)

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It Was Never About The Money is available from www.levanapublishing.co.uk

The first eighteen months of my training as a chartered accountant remain, more than 40 years later, a foggy haze. During the initial four week course I sat next to a law graduate who had picked up a basic understanding of bookkeeping from who knows where and who, annoyingly, seemed to score top marks in every test.

Her neat, methodical workings produced perfectly balanced accounts which scored top marks in every test while my spidery scribbles only ensured that I just about crept over the pass line enough times to guarantee the continuance of my contract. A degree in English was not the obvious precursor to this career.

By the time the mist began to clear (transiting Neptune having moved past its opposition to my natal Sun...) I had, somehow, passed my first set of professional exams. As my basic financial proficiency improved, an enduring interest arose into the way people behaved in respect of money. This can be traced to the audits in which I was engaged of various West Midlands metal bashing companies where I encountered numerous colourful characters.

My first serious encounter with astrology came eleven years later. The initial learning this time was hard graft rather than confusion (Saturn, rather than Neptune, was now opposing my natal Sun) as I got to grips with planets, signs and houses and came to regard astrology as a natural progression (no pun intended) of accounting.

As the years went by, I felt the need to gather my thoughts about human behaviour around money into a coherent form and began writing ***It Was Never About The Money*** in 2007. This was a development of some articles which I had published in ***Caduceus*** magazine in the mid 1990's about the psychological and spiritual aspects of money as well as material from workshops which I had run on these themes for a number of years.

The book is only marginally concerned with astrology (a couple of paragraphs in the final chapter) but, since I have lived with astrology all these years, it was almost inevitable that the Celestial Art should make its presence felt in a creative project of personal importance.

Due to ongoing business commitments - which I needed to experience in order to write much of the later part of the book – completion of the manuscript and publication of the book had to wait until 2019.

In my articles on ***Uranus and the Early Balloon Flights*** and ***Uranus and the Early Space Flights*** (*Astrological Journal*, January/February 2017 and March/April 2017) I noted how particular degrees of the Zodiac echo through the charts for the individual events which are part of a larger sequence.

This phenomenon was brought home to me on a personal level as the process of publication of the book was completed. During the later stages of preparing the book I made a note of the times of various key events and found that the charts for a number of these moments showed echoes with each other. They also showed strong connections with the natal charts for myself and my wife who was deeply involved in the mechanics of producing and publishing the book.

“First Saved” is a chart set for the moment the opening chapter was saved for the first time. I usually write for about an hour and a half to two hours in a session so I could make a reasonable guess at the time I started writing and cast a chart for that. However, I have preferred to use the time the chart was saved as that is when the book first had a retrievable form.

I am signified by the Libra Ascendant, its ruler Venus and the Moon while the book is shown by the fifth house of creativity, Aquarius on the cusp and Saturn, the traditional ruler of Aquarius.

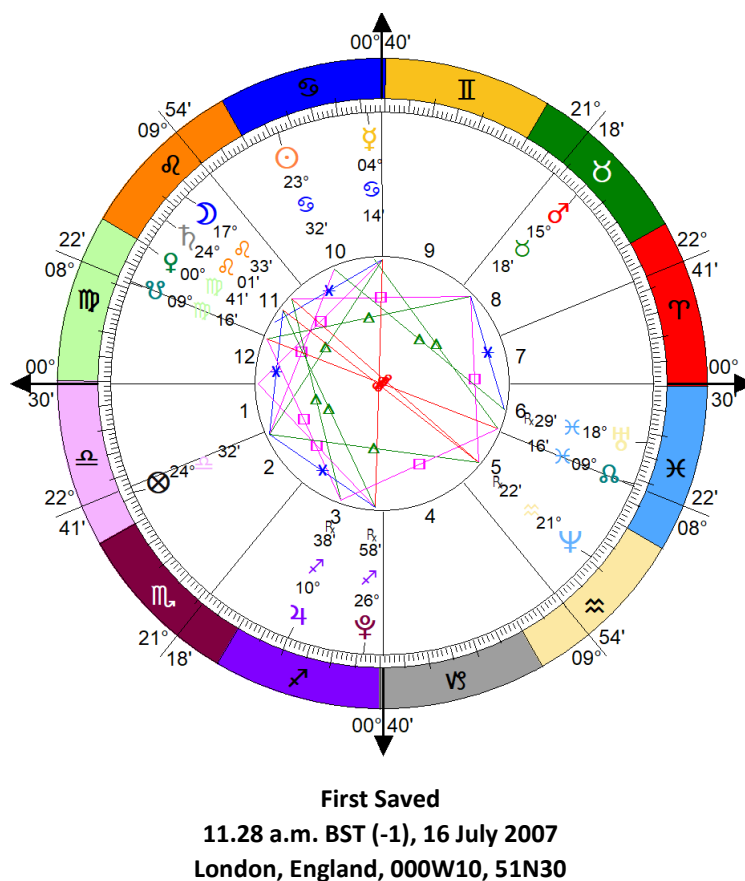
The early ascendant of 0°30’

Libra clearly describes the beginning of a project with the ruler, Venus, in the first degree of Virgo (the perfect sign for a book about money, the source of which is my experience as an accountant and financial adviser) which says the same thing.

Saturn’s partile conjunction with my natal descendant – opposing my ascendant – suggests this is going to be a lengthy and arduous project. Further connections with my natal chart are shown by Mercury exactly in the middle of my close Mercury-Jupiter conjunction and Mars within one degree of an exact sextile and trine with my Nodal axis - this book needs to be written.

I wrote about 20,000 words during 2007 and then it got stuck – partly because I was heavily engaged in business activities and partly because I was not sure how to fill the remaining chapters despite knowing the exact schema of the book.

My business commitments reduced significantly in 2014/15 and - after a number of rather half-hearted attempts at resuscitating the project – I finally resolved that 2018 was the year



in which I would finish the book. Accordingly, I set myself various targets and a reasonable body of work existed by the early autumn of that year.

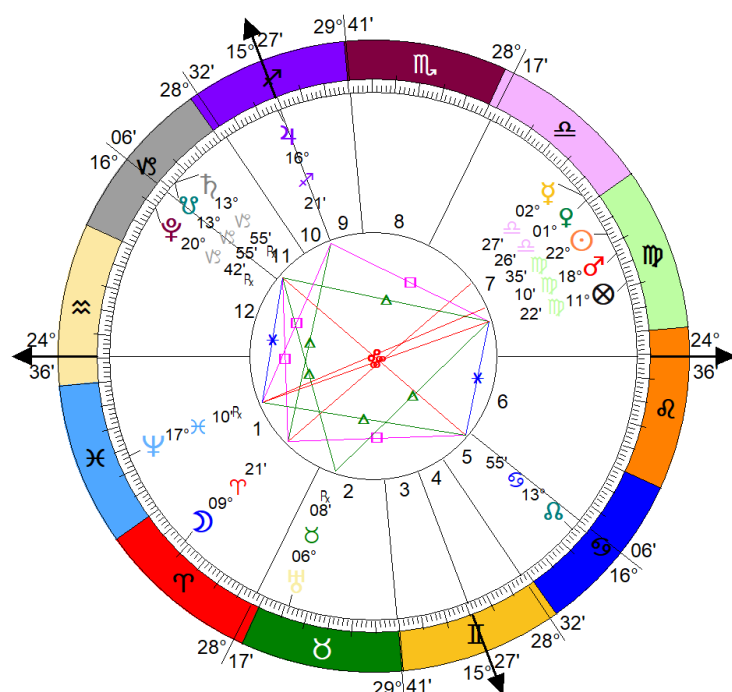
Choosing a publisher or agent was the next task after I finished (so I thought...) editing but finding the right person was going to be a challenge for a book which is a little difficult to categorise. What starts off as a series of stories about various financial issues ends up by proposing a metaphysical model for humanity's behaviour around money. Should I go for a "mainstream" or "alternative" publisher?

After pursuing various leads and contacts which led nowhere I began to face the fact that if I wanted to see this thing in print then I would have to self-publish despite the naggings of my Leo Moon that it did not really count if you could not sell the book to a publisher.

An exercise in Life Planning in 2014 had clarified for me that the writing of this book (or something close to it) was a major life goal. Once the book had a physical form, I would have to trust that ways would arise for me to publicise and sell it. The commissioning of this article and review was one of a number of – literally – heaven-sent opportunities that arose completely out of the blue.

As I began to research the field further, I found that the back street reputation which had surrounded self-publishing in years gone by had disappeared and it was now a thriving and respectable industry.

So far so good but the typescript would need to be formatted and, in truth, I had dodged the editorial review from which it would have benefitted.



Edits Finished
6.20 p.m. BST (-1), 15 September 2019
London, England, 000W10, 51N30

publishing – it could not have arrived at a better time.

Then, one day in the spring of 2019 (exactly which, is unfortunately lost for the sake of astrological research), my wife suddenly announced that she would be happy to take on this task. It had never occurred to me that she could spare the time from her other activities or have the interest so the typescript was promptly emailed from one home office to another and the editing got underway. A sun sign Virgo undertaking an editorial role for a book on money – perfect!

A few weeks after this process started we received the May/June 2019 edition of the *Astrological Journal* with Frank Clifford's excellent guide to self-

After the insertion of many commas in the typescript, the removal of many superfluous words and a few extremely tactful suggestions about content from my editor, we arrived at the point in mid-September where the edits and alterations were agreed by us both to be complete. The real book now existed – on the computer even if not yet physically - and the second chart shows this moment.

The Ascendant in this chart is exactly conjunct my natal ascendant. Saturn's conjunction to the South Node seems to speak of the fatal nature of this work and that it deals with a part of my life which has more or less drawn to a close. Mercury, ruler of the fifth house signifying the book, is at 2°27' Libra – just two degrees away from the ascendant degree of the First Saved chart and conjunct Venus at 1°26' Libra.

After much work on the cover design, layout and formatting of the file we ordered two proof copies which arrived at 10.10 a.m. on 7 October.

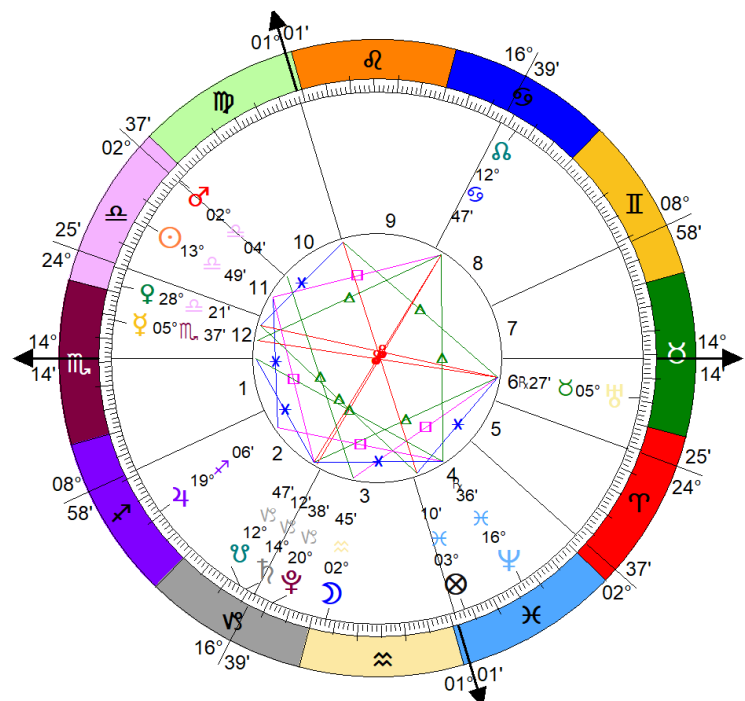
The ascending degree of 14°14' Scorpio is less than one degree away from my wife's natal Moon while Venus is one degree from her natal Venus suggesting her deep connection with the artistic layout and design of the book.

The Moon lies exactly trine to Mars, the fifth house ruler, which signifies the book and which is at 2°27' Libra - the early degrees of Libra are a theme running through these charts.

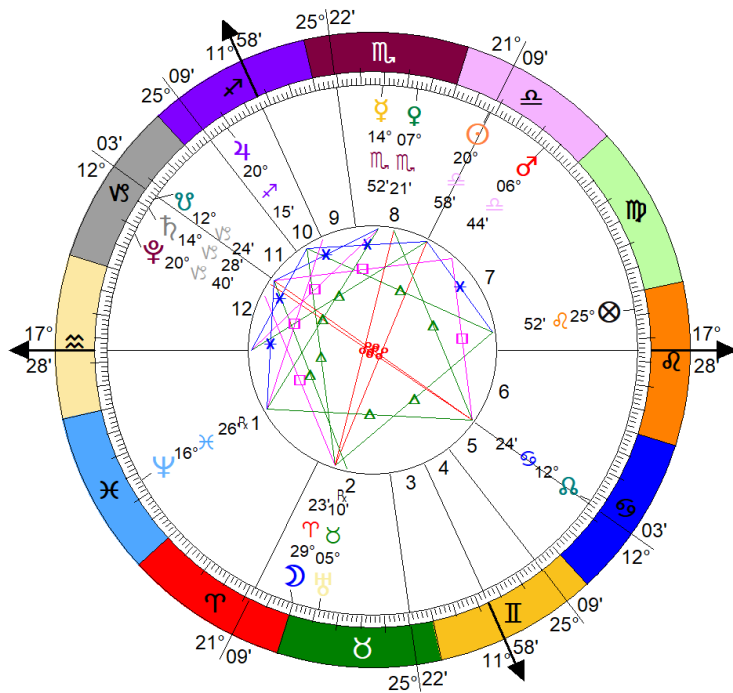
The proof copies were fine and we duly placed an order for the first batch of books. The carrier attempted a delivery on the morning of 14 October but we were not at home and were only able to collect them in the afternoon.

We were clearly not in control of this process as the moment we collected them produced a chart which, once again, had strong resonances with other charts in this collection and which we could not have chosen better if we had tried.

Mercury – a natural signifier of books and printed material is now placed at 14°52' of Scorpio – not just in the same degree as the ascendant on the previous chart but one minute of one degree away from my wife's Moon. This book is certainly hers as much as mine.



Proof Copies Arrive
10.10 a.m. BST (-1), 7 October 2019
London, England 000W10, 51N30



First Consignment Collected
4.11 p.m. BST (-1), 14 October 2019
London, England 000W10, 51N30

The ascendant degree is seven degrees away from my natal ascendant. Given the other close correspondences, I was a little surprised it was not closer to my ascending degree of 24° Aquarius but there was a closer connection with another chart which I had not realised until I started digging through the archives of my life.

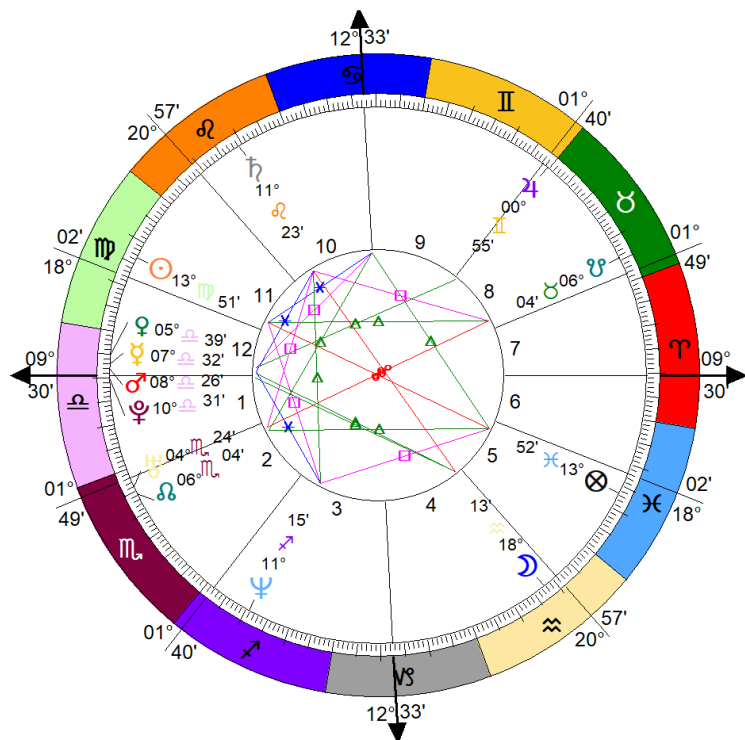
Just for the fun of it, I put up a chart for the beginning of my first day in accountancy training – most accountants will know this date by heart – it sort of goes with the territory...

This was the professional career which had been instrumental in my even being able to write this

book and there was the Moon at 18°13' Aquarius - less than one degree away from the ascendant on the chart for the moment we had received the first consignment of ***It Was Never About The Money***.

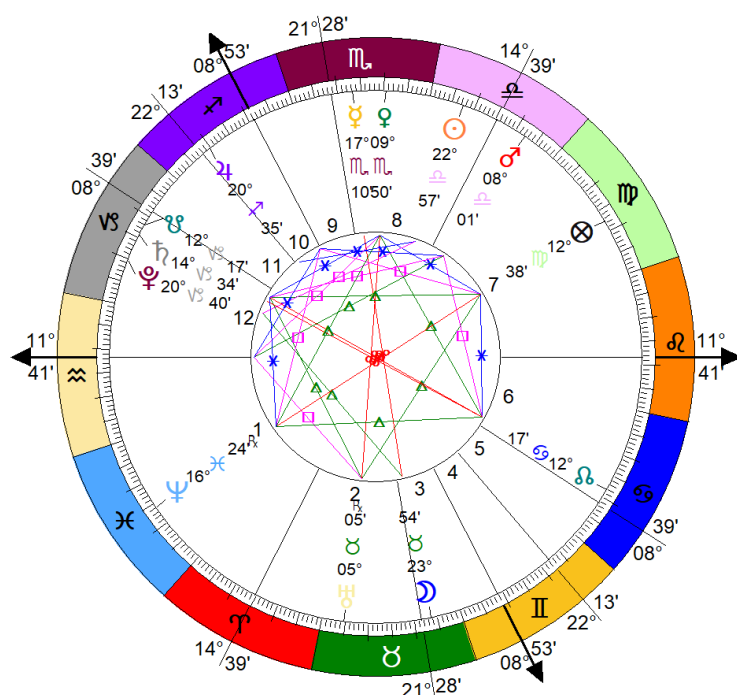
By this stage we realised that, at the very least, the planets were expressing their sense of humour through the number of co-incidences between our natal charts and those of key moments in the publication of the book.

We now had books in stock and the website was ready to go so the question was when would we make the first sale? I knew that I would be taking copies of the book with me when we met friends on the evening of 17 October so that was the obvious favourite from a logical point of view. Despite the Moon being in Gemini, my natal sun



First Day of Work
9.00 a.m. BST (-1), 6 September 1976
Birmingham, England 001W55, 52N30

sign, that evening the correspondences were not particularly strong. Would we somehow make a sale before that?



First Sale
3.50 p.m. BST (-1), 16 October 2019
London, England, 000W10, 51N30

I announced the availability of books on social media on 15 October but, despite one or two immediate endorsements and threats or promises to buy the book, the website remained untroubled for nearly 24 hours.

The email notifying us that the first sale had been made was timed at 3.50 p.m. on 16 October, appropriately enough when we were on the way to meet one of the people whose work is acknowledged in the book as an inspiration. The strongest connections in this chart again reach back to the day I started my accountancy training.

In the First Sale chart Mars, ruler of my second house of money is at 08°01' Libra – within 0° 25' of its position in the first day of training chart where it sits on the ascendant.

The last 26 years of my financial career had been on a self-employed basis and I had prepared my final set of accounts as a full time financial adviser for the year ended 30 June 2016. On that day the progressed Sun from the First Day of Work chart had reached 22°54' Libra and now, in the chart for the sale of the first copy of *It Was Never About The Money*, the Sun sat at 22°57' Libra – it does not get much closer than that. The experience gained from forty years as a full time professional accountant and adviser was reflected in the book.

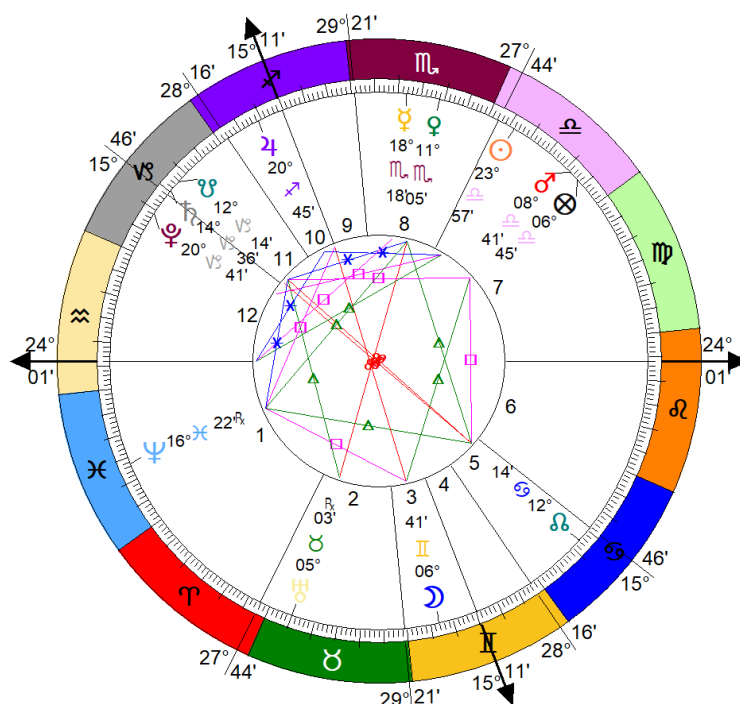
I may have had £14.95 in my Paypal account on 16 October but the transaction was only complete once the book had been despatched. The time of despatch was not engineered deliberately but came only after other - and urgent - errands had been run during the day and even a queue in the Post Office would have stopped us from making the despatch at a pre-planned moment. In the end the first book was despatched at 4.13 p.m. on 17 October.

The ascendant of the First Despatch chart— almost inevitably - lies at 24° Aquarius, my natal ascendant and the ascendant of the chart for Edits Finished. The IC of 15°11' Gemini is less than two degrees away from my natal sun which seems to signify the completion of the project of getting the first book sold and the beginning of a new phase in the life of the book.

Mars remains in exactly the same degree as it was when I started my accountancy training 43 years earlier as the book was despatched the day after payment was received.

What intrigued me even more than the connections between the charts for the events in the publication process and our natal charts were the connections from those event charts to the chart for the time I started my accountancy training, 43 years earlier.

I have already noted the connection of Mars in the same degree of Libra in both charts but the connections go further than that.



First Despatch
4.13 p.m. BST (-1), 17 October 2019
London, England, 000W10, 51N30

Two days after I started work in 1976 Mercury - at 7°32' Libra and within one minute of an exact square to my natal Mars in Capricorn - turned retrograde. Using a day for a year progressions, 40 years later, when I completed my final set of accounts on 30 June 2016, Mercury had progressed to 8°09' Libra – the same critical degree occupied by Mars in the chart for the First Day of Work and the First Sale and First Despatch charts. It is almost as though Mars has come full circle as well as Mercury.

There are other correspondences in the First Day of Work chart progressed to 16 October 2019 – the progressed North Node is in partile conjunction with my natal Saturn and progressed Mercury is in partile trine to my natal Sun.

Surely these cannot all be just “co-incidences” – the circumstances surrounding a career and subsequent book about finance all feel to be what I can only call (part of) my fate. Various events seem to point to this proposal.

Accountancy was not an obvious choice of career for a graduate in English - *The Birmingham Post* even published four satirical poems I wrote on that subject in 1984. However, every other career option I had at the time I was graduating closed down for one reason or another and I found myself the grateful – and unlikely - recipient of a training contract with a top accountancy firm.

I was also both lucky and precocious in becoming financial director of an engineering company employing 600 people at the age of 30 - my physical resemblance to the Managing Director's nephew was a help, apparently - and my exposure to so many different

aspects of finance through the years made it feel as though my life was almost a financial training course in itself.

My “Grand Project” of setting up a business as an employee led partnership was something which had been in the back of my mind since my student days. It eventually manifested as a financial services business in 2008 and more than one astrologer has attributed my career choice to my eighth house Saturn in Scorpio.

The completion of the book felt like the completion of no other project. For some people their fate may be clear from a young age – something to which they can consciously aim throughout life. What has happened in my case was the drawing on, step by step, towards the place I reached with the publication of ***It Was Never About The Money***.

For a few years after ceasing full time work as a financial adviser I carried out a small amount of accounting work but no longer felt any compulsion to be involved further in the world of finance.

I do not think I could have predicted these outcomes from the chart for the day I started work and perhaps that is a good thing. Much of the benefit of this journey has been the necessity of not knowing what lay ahead but proceeding one step at a time. What better than experiencing life as a kind of cosmic treasure hunt in order to keep this sun sign Gemini amused and engaged with the process?

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