

CHINESE NEW YEAR 2012 “THE YEAR OF THE RAIN DRAGON”

23 Jan 2012

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Kung Hei Fat Choi Everyone!

Time to pull the dragon costume and your finest silks out of the mothballs. The 23rd of this month marks the commencement of the Chinese ‘Year of the Water Dragon’, or Black Dragon, depending on your custom. The poetic name for this particular Dragon is the ‘Rain Dragon’, but lest we begin to think this will be a year of greater flooding and wild weather, just hold that thought for the time being. This Dragon represents so much more than flowing water, and some



pretty fabulous stuff has come out of Rain Dragon years, as we will see shortly. The Year of the Iron Rabbit was certainly memorable and we will review that in due course, but for those of us who may be a little shell-shocked from what has happened over the past few years – indeed, the past decade – 2012 looks to be an easier year. Yes, there will be major events and some unpleasantness, but there seems to be a pervading sense among people I speak with that there is cause for optimism in the Year of the Rain Dragon, and as this letter unfolds, I think we will be able to see why.

As we may have noted from past Chinese New Year letters, the years seldom turn out to be as they appear on the surface from their names – Oxen are not always predictable and stable, Rabbits are not always passive and cuddly, Pigs are not necessarily all about home and comfort – and this year will be no exception. The Dragon in Chinese astrology is usually seen as flamboyant and colourful, and they often can be - a real force in the world and some of the most original thinkers around. The Rain Dragon is not the usual sort of Dragon, if there is such a thing, but to get an idea of what the Dragon generally represents in Chinese astrology, the following points might prove revealing. (We will forego my usual animal story this year, as there is a lot to cover.)

The dragon is the royal emblem of China and for much of the Orient, in the same way the lion is the royal insignia in the West. Dragons are said to rule over moving bodies of water and the rains of heaven, with the bringing of rains (of life). They are said to reside in the heavens and to descend to earth bearing the blessings of heaven, and they govern the courses of waterways. It is a benevolent creature in Chinese lore and represents the essence of strength, goodness and blessings, whereas in the West dragons hold a more evil and sinister connotation, more retributive, if you will. In Chinese astrology Dragons are known for their great interest in the supernatural and the occult. They tend to be metaphysically inclined rather than religious and they tend toward disciplines which are mental in nature rather than devotional and inspirational. They do, however, gravitate toward ritual if there is an element of the theatrical in it. They have a certain flair for presentation and, along with Roosters, the sign has produced a long line of stage performers and cultural icons. The Dragon can have an extraordinary imagination and it is this imagination that puts them at the forefront of

whatever line of work they undertake. It is this same imagination that enables them to take an idea and ‘run with it’. Only the Monkey can match or outdo them in that capacity.

Dragons are good with the public and any sort of work that puts them in the public domain can be quite rewarding to them. They enjoy a good deal of praise and admiration and it is one of the keys to their motivation and success. If you ignore a Dragon they will be gone before you know it. Give them a good stroke every now or then or let them find success and they will be an undying friend, associate or confidant. Because of their appeal with the public and their love of adulation the Dragon is a natural actor or performer. They often have a sort of sixth sense about how things should be presented, but they can at other times be totally outrageous in their behavior. Even at that, their occasional perceived impropriety in presentation and social *faux pas* are often grist for the mills of fashion or cultural trends.

The Dragon in the year pillar (from Four Pillars astrology) has produced some great catalysts for societal change. The likes of John Lennon and Ringo Starr revolutionized popular music and culture along with the other Beatles. Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln are two of the most beloved leaders and agents of social justice in American history. They both bucked the trends of the day and both died for their efforts. (Some might say John Lennon did as well in his chosen line.) Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Nietzsche both revolutionized western philosophy. Louisa May Alcott and Pearl S. Buck were both renowned writers and advocates of social justice and suffrage. They both railed against some of the societal norms of their times. And lastly, astrologers will know well the legendary astrological figures of Evangeline Adams (who “had raised astrology to the dignity of an exact science”, as quoted from the judge upon her acquittal on charges of fortune-telling) and Nicholas Culpeper, the great 17th Century medical astrologer and contributor to modern pharmacology (accused of witchcraft in his day and alienated for his beliefs and practice),



In the eyes of the world and in their society (which the Year Pillar represents) the Dragon is often seen as a firebrand and a thorn in the side of people in authority or the established order. They never seem to quite conform to the accepted order. It is both their gift and their curse. In life, their rebellion tends to bring them difficulty with peers and/or the law. Posthumously, however, they are often adored and emulated. They are born into their societies as agents of change and circumstance forces their hand. Once the Dragon learns self-discipline, there is little that can stand in the way of their success so long as they do not run afoul of the powers-that-be in their world.

Many astrologers would associate the Dragon with the sign of Aquarius, but on close examination, I would have to place the sign equivalent with the Western Leo. My reasons for doing so are the love of attention the Dragon has, the propensity to self-discipline in the higher types or the sign, the fact that it is a ‘royal sign’, the fact that they are natural-born leaders and champions of causes, and the healthy dose of ego that can often accompany the sign. Dragons have to excel in some way. It is not enough to be different, though that can draw attention to them. They have to be the best at whatever it is they choose to do. It is why they do so well in the media, and as rulers.

As for the Rain Dragon, all the preceding applies, but those qualities are modified by the water element. The natural/native element for the Dragon is earth, which makes it yang earth, since the Dragon is a yang sign. As such, then, Dragons seek to make a mark for themselves in this world and to establish something tangible on earth – in their circle, in other words. From the controlling cycle in the five element system, however, we know that yang earth rules, or at least tends to rule, water.

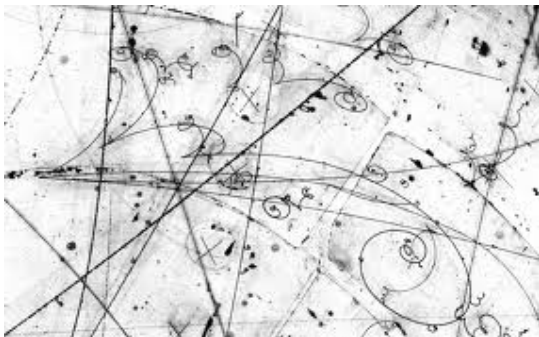
As a result, this particular Dragon has its ‘money element’ as its characteristic element. Metaphorically, then, this is a person who creates their own waterways in life and who can effectively channel their prodigious creativity toward whichever field of life they choose. Water in Chinese esoteric thought is ruled by the Water Planet – Mercury. Its colors are dark blue or black. Its direction is North, and it is said to rule over divination and to bring retribution over bad decisions.

In Chinese medicine water is associated with *jing*, or willpower, which resides in the kidneys and bladder. Yang Water is specifically associated with the bladder, and the official associated with it is ‘The Controller of the Storage of Water’. Water is said to be the end-phase of the transformation of energy in the system. It confers the ability to hold on to something, to be supportive and to contain the products of reflective thought (wisdom), subjectively considered. Yang Water confers skill in volition. It allows for the skilled and controlled release of inherited gifts and nascent qualities. What these latter paragraphs mean for the Rain Dragon is that it is a sign that brings results – original solutions to long-standing problems, the ability to divine what is needed in a given situation, a more patient approach to the vagaries of living and results that stand the tests of time. That is a pretty good track record, I would say. So, from the preceding perhaps we can see that this Year of the Rain Dragon has a lot on offer, and that it is perhaps a very auspicious note upon which to end this section of the Mayan calendar.

The Rain Dragon has certain key phrases associated with it, like all of the other animal/element combinations in Chinese astrology. However, the one that stands out the most is as follows:

There is much to be gained through careful and patient work.

This is not the sort of thing one would normally associate with a Dragon, as they can be impulsive and are not generally known for their patience. There are many examples of works wrought through patient and thoughtful application that have surfaced in Rain Dragon years, and some of the best examples have come to us through science and technology, though it applies in all walks of life. Consider the following:



1952: the first mechanical heart is used, the first woman to sail solo across the Atlantic (Ann Davison), the integrated circuit is first proposed, the bubble chamber is developed (our window into the subatomic world), the first moves were made toward the EU, the first open-heart surgery, the first H-bomb, the first separation of conjoined twins

1892: General Electric is established (Thomas Edison), the Sierra Club is established (one of the oldest environmental movements), the distillation and

discovery of argon (one of the noble gases, enabling modern lighting and modern production welding), the development of the dewar flask (the Thermos bottle, enabling widespread cryogenics), the first diesel engine patent, the development of reinforced concrete (enabling the modern building age and a huge advance in civil engineering), the Lorentz theory of ions (separating out the need for ether in science), Poincare’s exposition of celestial mechanics (the beginning of modern topology)

1832: the development of non-Euclidian geometry (Bolyai, marking the change in intellectual thought from the absolute to the relative), Faraday's laws of electrolysis (leading to electroplating), the electromagnetic telegraph, the first mention of El Nino

1792: the end of slavery in England, the isolation of nitrogen, the discovery of voltaic phenomenon (leading to batteries), the first blast furnace (enabling large-scale steel manufacture)

Our modern world and infrastructure would not be possible without many of the discoveries made or technologies put forward in Rain Dragon years – no high-rise buildings, no batteries, no computers, no large-scale lighting, no large-scale marine or heavy transport, etc. Of course, that is not to say those things would never have come about, but it is the result of the steady and persistent work of the thinkers, inventors and scientists that brought forward those discoveries in those years. As astrologers know, events do not come to pass unless conditions are right.

Since Rain Dragons have a special connection with waterways, one would also expect occasional trouble with shipping. We just saw a little incident in Italy, with the wreck of the Costa Concordia, too close to the start of the New Year to ignore (there is always a gray area when one switches signs, almost like a sign of things to come as the one sign fades and the next one waxes). There was also the Wasp/Hobson collision in '52, though there are maritime collisions almost every year. The one we just experienced was notable from the scandalous way the event was handled. When it comes down to it, there are disasters, storms, crashes, floods, earthquakes and the like every year, and one cannot really define a year through such events as a result. However, what is of real interest in a year are the results and events that come about because of the thoughts of people, hence science, art, politics and every other realm of human endeavor is what really defines a year.



The one warning bell I have for this year in terms of waterways is the Strait of Hormuz. There is a situation rapidly building there that could easily result in military conflict if Iran tries to shut off shipping there or causes too many problems. If that happens the US will act, especially if ships begin to get torpedoed by Iran. If we are to meditate for peace in this world, that is one area where we should definitely focus. Sanctions on Iran are beginning to bite and countries such as China that used to have a large trade with Iran have

begun to get oil from other sources. I was reading today that China has halved its purchases of oil from Iran. Actions such as that would have to hurt the Iranian economy. The leadership of that country is definitely a wild card. I do not think anyone can second-guess what will happen there. Patience and a long view is needed, whether opposing parties will adopt such means, but as we will see later in the letter, I feel that cracks will begin to appear in the Iranian leadership this year, especially if the populace there gets disgruntled.

So, in the realm of human thought, Rain Dragons carry a certain tone, as evidenced in the following quotes from Rain Dragons, one and all:

The secret of joy in work is contained in one word - excellence. To know how to do something well is to enjoy it.

When good people in any country cease their vigilance and struggle, then evil men prevail.

Truth is always exciting. Speak it, then; life is dull without it.

Pearl S. Buck, writer

I trained like an animal, but the thing is focus and concentration. When the bell rings it's like when the little red light goes on over the camera. And I can usually nail my lines on the first or second take because I'm right there.

Mickey Rourke, actor, boxer

People work harder when conditions are worse.

Jeff Goldblum, actor

I believed in myself. I never imagined myself as just an ordinary player.

Imran Khan, cricketer



Rain Dragons of note who turn 60 this year (or would have): Scott Hicks, Ron Moss ('Ridge', of *The Bold and the Beautiful* – an apt name for a show with which a Dragon would associate), Marilyn Chambers (porn star, *Behind the Green Door*, but who also graced 'Ivory Snow' soap boxes, baby in arms), Mr. T (born Laurence Tureaud - 'I pity the fool!' – and born-again Christian), Liam Neeson, Isabella Rossellini, John Goodman (not a bad 'harp' player, either), Tim Finn (of the band Split Enz), Dan Aykroyd (actor, winemaker, ufologist), Patrick Swayze (actor, singer-songwriter, pilot, now flying with the stars), Jimmy Connors (former US tennis #1), Mickey Rourke (actor and boxer, 6 wins, 4 knockouts, 2 decisions), Christopher Reeve (we miss you, Superman), Vladimir Putin (wannabe superman), Jeff Goldblum, Roseanne Barr (domestic goddess) and Gen. David Petraeus (current director of CIA).

Knowing all this, then, what do we expect to be in store for 2012? Well, before we go there, let's have a look at what was predicted for 2011 and see what played out. Then we will have a bit more confidence in what to expect for 2012, perhaps. What I predicted is in bold below. What happened follows:

- **Iron Rabbit years produce great inventors and some very life-changing inventions:** the first anti-laser, able to completely absorb a laser beam (obvious defence applications), the first determined theories on how to produce a tractor beam, nanostructures in metal that will revolutionize batteries, a nanostructure that can multiply the production of stem cells – enabling large-scale stem cell factories, optical invisibility in the visible light spectrum, the first phase-change memory – thousands of times faster than a conventional hard drive, light finally observed simultaneously as both wave and particle, a microprocessor that is capable of 'rewiring' itself (a major advance in artificial intelligence), the first acoustic cloaking device demonstrated, a graphene-based transistor array that is compatible with living biological cells and that is capable of recording the electrical signals they generate. In all,

then, major advances in nanotechnology, star-trek-like technologies and microprocessors. The mind boggles at the implications

- **There tend to be great floods in such years, too, as well as rail (Metal) and sea disasters along with more extremes of weather:** the 2011 Halloween nor'easter in the US, the 2011 Bering Sea superstorm, the Aug 2011 UK heat wave, the 2011 North American blizzards, 2011 Sindh floods, 2011 Tuvalu drought, the Japanese tsunami disaster, the July Thai floods, Zanzibar ferry disaster, the October Mekong floods, Tropical Storm Washi, the Wenzhou train collision (China), the Costa Concordia shipwreck



- **Social reforms and uprisings:** the continuing ‘Arab Spring’, crackdowns in Syria and Egypt, the Libyan revolution, moves toward monetary reforms in Europe, the end of the Iraq War
- **Regimes that lived by the sword or the iron fist (yang metal) will either have to greatly moderate their approach or give way completely:** Libya. Syria and Egypt still struggle. Osama Bin Laden finally met his day. Those were the major stories in that regard this year
- **Advances in surgery:** the first artificial organ transplant (a windpipe), a tiny artificial brain derived from rat neurons (had a memory of 12 seconds), a human heart is grown from stem cells (a major advance in personalized medicine – growing our own replacement organs), artificial sperm are produced from stem cells (infertility treatments), the first engineered (artificial) virus – a world first (for targeted treatment of cancer cells)
- **Don’t be at all surprised if you start hearing official announcements about UFOs:** I love this one:

“The White House states that the US Government has no evidence that any life exists outside our planet or that an extraterrestrial presence has contacted or engaged any member of the human race. It furthermore asserts that there is no credible information to suggest that any evidence is being hidden from the public’s eye. Although odds are ‘pretty high’ that there may be life on other planets, the odds of us making contact with any of them—especially any intelligent ones—are extremely small, given the distances involved”

This one reminds me of John Howard (former Australian PM) saying categorically that there would be no GST (goods and services tax), nor were there plans for one. We had the GST within ten years, or thereabouts. The media is filled with UFO stories. I have also received plenty of emails this year about impending disclosures. If the government denies, then you can just about bet there is something about to take place. That’s my take, anyway. We’ll see.

2011, then, lived up to expectations as far as I can see, except for the last bit. What do I see for 2012, then? To start with, from a political perspective, something has to give in Syria and Egypt. The Arab world and the world at large will not permit things to continue as they are in those countries. Obama will squeak through in the US elections unless something really major happens. The Iranian question will come to a head, or closer to one. Perhaps the reason we got out of Iraq is because the coalition has something else in mind? We are building up to something of a major

conflict within the next 2-4 years if I have my cycles right. There will be further reforms, though slowly, in Saudi Arabia. The major political battles in Europe will be over money, but I feel that people there are gradually coming to accept that there will have to be austerity measures in the region. The economy in the US will slowly start to turn around. There were not typically any great social movements in Rain Dragon years. People just got on with things. Weather moderated. However, the major things to come about this year will be in the realms of human thought, and that gives great cause for future expectations of happiness. Yes, there will be storms and the usual disasters, but we get those every year. How we respond to them will cause us to get down to work, though.

As Jeff Goldblum said, when times are hard, people get to work. Rain Dragon years are when the people get to work. Also, if we look at what transpired last year and the few years preceding, one could say that what the Iron Rabbit dreams, the Rain Dragon manifests. Riches are there for those who know where to look, who can work diligently and patiently, and who can think outside the box. Dragons and Monkeys are the best there is in the Chinese zodiac for that. The two signs get along quite well, too. What goes around comes around, too. In the 1832 Rain Dragon year Greece became a sovereign nation. Greece is a Rain Dragon nation, at least in its modern incarnation. It is time for Greece to reinvent itself yet again, and they can. Greeks are pretty good at making a crust and they have done well here in Oz. They may prove to be an example to the nations of Europe in the future. Let's just hope it is a good example. In that vein, we can all reinvent ourselves this year. Rain Dragons never look for handouts. They make their own destinies. They are people of vision. We can all hitch a ride on that star.



In technology I look for projects of daring and of excellence to show forth. I look for major advances in solid state and nuclear physics. Perhaps we find the elusive Higgs boson this year – a sort of holy grail for nuclear physicists. We have found thousands of extra-solar planets. I expect there to be more named minor planets in our own solar system this year. That will give astrologers something to chew on for a pretty good while. There are sought-after things in science, theoretical now, but strongly evidenced, that could very well become real this year – the unification of forces in particle physics, irrefutable evidence of extra-terrestrial life, commercially available computers that run at speeds beyond our dreams at the moment, commercial computers that can think for themselves, an end to the need for organ donation, the discovery of new elements (there should be another noble gas associated with the lanthanides, for instance, though it would be extremely rare), cures for cancer, HIV and the like in the mainstream, commercially viable space flight for the upper-middle class consumer, a cheap and safe way to pull CO₂ from the atmosphere aside from planting millions of trees, batteries that would make electric cars a viable proposition – and on and on. All these things are on the verge of happening, and so much more. Do we have any idea how revolutionary these sorts of things would be for our world? Within decades our societies and world could be completely transformed, and this is not some sort of fanciful thinking on my part. I see the possibilities. Do you? The technology already exists or is in place to be produced.

As for the dynamics of the year itself, we have the following:

Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 3 Yang Fire	Stem: 10 yin water	Stem: 9 Yang Water	Stem: 9 Yang Water
Branch: V Earth Dragon <i>Dragon the in Sky</i>	Branch: VIII Earth Sheep <i>Sheep in a Flock</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger Crossing the Forest</i>	Branch: V Earth Dragon <i>Rain Dragon</i>
Combined Earth <i>Sand and Clay</i>	Combined Wood <i>Pliant Wood</i>	Combined Metal <i>Bronze Mirror</i>	Combined Water <i>Flowing Water</i>

The above is the chart cast for universal time (UT) in London. The lunar year begins today at 07:39 UT (6:39 PM AEDT). The hour, of course, will change depending upon one's location. In general we see a preponderance of earth and water, with very little fire or metal and just a touch of wood. That makes for a year that will be expansive, bold, eloquent and adventurous. For London and points west (the Americas), the tetragram for the day reads:

Things unsaid in opposition often lead to impropriety.

For places east of London (the rest of the world), the tetragram reads:

At first there is opposition, but small cracks give way.

The other phrases associated with the Rain Dragon are:

Many benefits flow forth. Past plans now come to fruit and enjoyment comes at last.

From the preceding we see that there will be opposition to plans this year. In the East, including Eastern Europe, the indications are that although there is opposition, eventually cracks will appear in the defences of the opposing parties. Again, this will only happen through steady and sustained efforts at one's plans and arguments. It is a year of sticking to one's principles. In the Americas the situation is different. When there is opposition to plans, the onus is on the parties involved to speak up, otherwise situations will arise through miscommunication or lack thereof that will lead to unfortunate outcomes later.



In all, we have had a few rough years of late. There is everything to suggest in the astrology that things will begin to moderate this year. Weather patterns should be a bit less severe. The negotiation tables around the world should begin to show some positive results. Science and technology people should be able to give a solid anchor to long-sought solutions. And, in arts and letters? Well, we know the Dragon excels in those areas. I would expect to see some wonderful media and writing come out this year. The original *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* stories came out in a Rain Dragon year, as did *The Old Man and the Sea*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, *East of Eden*, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, and *The Deep Blue Sea*, to mention a few classics. There are many more of those, of course, but if we look at the qualities of thought

contained in those works we may get some idea of the influence of the Rain Dragon. And in film, we saw *The Greatest Show on Earth*, *The African Queen*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *High Noon*, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, *Moulin Rouge*, and *Ivanhoe* – and let's not forget *Bwana Devil*, one of the first feature-length color 3D films.



Above all, let us keep our eyes open for all sorts of opportunities. There will be something of real and lasting benefit for everyone in this year. All of the other earth signs (Ox, Sheep and Dog) by year will feel a little stressed, as the Dragon squares or opposes those signs, but even they should find doors opening. They are earth signs, after all. Of course, the water (Rat and Pig) and wood (Tiger and Rabbit) signs should find great benefits this year. Earth is wood's money sign, and water is the money sign of earth. I expect a lot around world finances will be worked out in 2012. Do not necessarily believe all the doomsayers about immanent financial collapse on

a global scale. It will not be easy, but we may well see some creative and lasting solutions to such challenges. Lastly, follow what is in your heart, but let the head have a say. The two are indispensable to each other, and the Rain Dragon blends the two effectively. May this be the year when you make your mark!

May all prosperity and happiness be yours,
Malvin
23 Jan 2012

The graphic and chart information in this letter is generated from *The Imperial Astrologer* software. There is a special on it at the moment along with bonus material until Feb 1st of this year. Go to: <http://www.esotech.com.au/products/TheImperialAstrologer.html> for details.