

The Faults In Our Stars

"The desire to be connected with the Cosmos reflects a profound reality. We are connected, not in the trivial ways that pseudosciences promise, but in the deepest ways. Our little planet is under the influence of a star. The sun warms us. It drives the weather. It sustains all living things. Four billion years ago, it brought forth life on Earth"

-Carl Sagan

For the first few years of our lives, we are the centres of our small worlds, revelling in the free trial of attention before we start having to fight for it. Then, a sense of the magnitude of the world sinks in and with it, a subconscious struggle to get back into the focal point of the universe gets underway. Belief in astrology is a common manifestation of this struggle.

Astrology owes its existence partly to the randomness rampant in life. Unlike when it comes to Game of Thrones, humans are always in a desperate hunt for spoilers for their lives. Living with the knowledge that their lives have no apparent order, purpose, or design in the grand scheme of things and that their existence could be wiped out and forgotten in the cosmic equivalent of a nanosecond can be quite a heavy burden. The early human beings, therefore, sought to relieve themselves of this burden by convincing themselves that their stories have already been inked and that the little dots of light up in the sky could foreshadow the next few pages of their book.

Astrology has come a long way since that noble inception. Like an unprepared student omits half the syllabus and makes use of his creativity and whatever technical keywords pop into his mind to fill the pages of his answer sheet, we have, for the most part, given up trying to decipher meaning from the stars.

There are just too many of them. Making it even more difficult is the fact that in the twenty-first century, a passing aeroplane or Google's satellite on a casual fly-and-spy could be mistaken for a celestial body, throwing off your calculations and leading you to think it's a good time to buy a new iPhone while in fact, Amazon's Great Indian Sale will see the prices drop in just a month. Humans have settled for more doable versions of the art, like mix-and-match generalisations in the daily newspaper. With fewer and fewer people reading the papers, astrology has progressed even further and carved out a niche for itself in social media as well, with vague character descriptions to make otherwise intelligent people go "OMG, that is so me" and tag their friends. This is not to belittle astrology as an internet fad; it is still a serious business that preys on the weak-willed parts of our nature to rip apart marriages and rip off believers.



Art by Devishi Lohit

Everyone knows, on some level, that there cannot possibly be any truth to astrology. Astrologers have failed every scientific test they have been put through, and there is no consensus or consistency even amongst their community about the "science". The fact that astrology proposes no mechanism for how celestial bodies could actually affect us makes it, at best, a pseudoscience. Of course, there was *some* truth in early astrology. The valid parts of this have, however, broken off and developed into an actual branch of science, astronomy, leaving astrology to carry forward the superstitions.

There is [evidence](#) for astrology's failure all around us. Twins, for example, are born under the same configuration of stars, yet many of them experience vastly different fortunes

and have entirely different personalities. It is amazing how easily we ignore the fact that nobody has ever got anything useful out of their horoscopes. How many of the one hundred and fifty-one thousand six hundred people who die every day have known about their fates from a forecast? Believers choose to not think about rational things like this, and they can't be blamed. The cocoon of comfort that comes with the illusion that our future is secure and part of some well-designed plan is not something that is easily given up. There is perhaps no reason to give it up at all, but a lot of people do manage to stay within this cocoon without giving in to fraudulent industries like this.

Space explorations and the Interstellar movie have served to give us a better understanding of the vastness of the universe. It is practically infinite, and with this being the case, it is an indication of immense self-centeredness to imagine that the planets and stars millions of millions of lightyears away exist solely to affect the life of a carbon-based life-form that even a lot of other carbon-based life-forms don't care about. There is a passive denial involved as well- a denial of facts and figures and a denial of reality, all stemming from the denial of our insignificance.

Being self-centered is perhaps quite natural. If the universe stretches to infinity in every direction around us, then we *could* very well be the centre of it all, could we not? We cannot experience the world as anybody else and so, as far as a person is concerned, they themselves are the world. Ultimately, the odd act of charity and the odd selfless lunatic aside, all we care about is ourselves.

Featured image- [Iconicbestiary](#)