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## ENDPAPER; The 13th Sign

By CATHLEEN SCHINE FEB. 19, 1995

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Saturday. Yesterday I was an Aquarius. Today, I'm lost. A friend called to tell me that Jacqueline Mitton of the Royal Astronomical Society has announced the existence of a 13th astrological sign and the year has to be divided up differently and we've all been dislodged. Who am I? And what is my birthstone? Sunday. Maybe I'll have to go to a singles bar and pick myself up, put my hand on my arm and say to myself smoothly: "Hi! What's your sign?" Do they still have singles bars? I'm too busy to go to a singles bar: I have to watch Court TV. I have an obligation. Should I become a "Citizen for Court TV"? There's a special number to call to become a Citizen for Court TV. "An idea as old as America," says the ad. I'd better call. After all, astrology is even older than America, and look what happened to it.

Monday. When I was an Aquarius, I was intelligent, zany, iconoclastic, humanitarian, individualistic and unconventional and sought truth and knowledge. Like Lana Turner. Now that I'm a Capricorn I have to be dour, dutiful, driven, tenacious, plodding, persevering, organized, austere, scrupulous, cautious, economical, practical and uninspired. Like Richard Nixon. And Danny Thomas. Tuesday. My favorite judge, Elliot Wilk of State Supreme Court in Manhattan, has been on Court TV for months presiding over a dramatic and disturbing wrongful-death case. Sometimes I turn to Channel 51, hoping against hope to see his impassive

face. But the trial is over. I miss Justice Wilk. I wonder what sign he is. If he's been demoted to Capricorn like me, I would feel a little better. It's exhausting being driven and organized and dutiful. Justice Wilk would be a good role model in this confusing new order. He is my hero, for Justice Wilk is the ideal mother, and I want to be an ideal mother. In his last case, Tom Moore, described by the press as "flamboyant, fiery and determined," was the attorney for the plaintiff. Luke Pittoni, described by the press as "flamboyant, fiery and determined," was one of the defense attorneys. They both bear an eerie resemblance to my children. "Ju-udge, he's talking when I'm talking. . . . Ju-udge, he's doing it again, and you told him not to. . . . Why am I being sanctioned? I didn't do anything." "See you all Thursday," Justice Wilk says calmly in reply. He must have taken one of those Parent Effectiveness Training courses. And he doesn't even wear a robe. Wednesday. I can't get used to being a Capricorn. I keep having these secret zany and intelligent feelings. They creep up on me. I'm really trying to be a Capricorn, but sometimes I have an almost unbearable iconoclastic urge. I'm sure Justice Wilk is in the same position. I feel a bond. I wonder if Justice Wilk ever leads PET workshops. I want to sign up. I want to sit high above my children, intelligent and iconoclastic once again, listen, nod my head the slightest bit and say evenly, "See you all Thursday." I want my children to call me Judge. But I want a robe, too. Thursday A.M.: Where do you buy judges' robes? It's not so easy following in Justice Wilk's footsteps. "You may answer," I say to one son. "Do you want me to have to call a recess?" I ask the other, firmly but without anger. Then I remember that I'm now dour, tenacious and plodding, and I sulk in a dour, tenacious and plodding way for a while. But then I start yelling and chasing everyone around the house with a rolled-up newspaper. I'm confused. My new personality is no help at all. What am I going to do? P.M.: I watched the British comedy "Absolutely Fabulous" on Comedy Central, and I think it's possible that Edina, the outrageously irresponsible mom, might be a little easier than Justice Wilk to emulate, whatever my sign is. Drugs, drink and designer clothes! "Sweetie, darling," I drawl to the children, admirably imitating Eddie's accent, my aching head on the kitchen table. "Get Mummy some coffee." Friday A.M.: Got the mail. Invited to a reading by William Kunstler. He's written a book of poetry. I bet Justice Wilk is a better poet. I miss Justice Wilk. That O. J. (Battered Man) Simpson is on Court TV again. Maybe in Los Angeles, Judge Ito passes for a maternal role model, but New Yorkers would never attend his PET seminar. Sometimes in the New York trial, the lawyers actually

pushed each other. Those L.A. lawyers don't push. Or yell. Not loudly, anyway. They just stand there. Like sticks. Dapper, smarmy, slick defense sticks; droning prosecution sticks. What are they, a bunch of Capricorns? Don't they know how lawyers act? They're from Hollywood! Don't they go to the movies? Don't they know anything about trial law? Maybe they just haven't been notified of their new signs yet. I hope they've all been changed to Sagittarians -- philosophically inclined chatterboxes, boisterous and flighty know-it-alls with big thighs searching for wisdom in a friendly and outgoing manner. P.M.: Looked through Kunstler's book of poetry. The Hallmark 7? There's even a sensitive rhyming ditty about O. J. The Lana Turner in me is offended. Where are we headed, America? Has our legal obsession really gone too far? I'm frightened. If my kids ever push their glasses up on their heads and write sonnets to the Central Park Jogger rapists, I'll have to adjourn for good and get my own coffee. See you all Thursday.

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