

From theguardian.com: **You be the judge: should my friend stop being so vengeful?**

When slighted, Phoebe seeks revenge – a belief Priya thinks ridiculous. You decide who should learn to turn the other cheek

### **The prosecution: Priya**

*She seriously considered planting Japanese knotweed in her former housemates' garden*

My best friend Phoebe is obsessed with revenge and it has driven a wedge between us.

Recently, on the way to the airport for a holiday in Greece together, we had a horrible taxi driver. He was rude and didn't help us with our bags when getting into the car. He was on the phone for half the ride and ignored us when we asked him to change the radio station. After we got out, Phoebe said she had secretly slipped half a punnet of blueberries into the door compartment to "get her own back".

When I asked her what the point of that was, she said it made her feel better and that he deserved it. Perhaps he did, but I don't get why she would actually do that. If we all went around doing what we felt like, the world would be chaos. Phoebe says I don't understand her because she's a Scorpio.

When we were 14 she egged someone's house after they were racist to her mum

Phoebe always thinks revenge is the best answer. When we were teenagers she hacked into her ex's MSN account and deleted it when she found out that he'd cheated on her. Another time, when we were about 14, she egged someone's house after they were racist to her mum. She waits, and then she strikes. I'm not saying her actions weren't justified, but I believe that walking away with your head held high is always the better option.

I am definitely calmer. I have to talk sense into Phoebe when her thirst for revenge clouds her judgment. One time she was living with some horrible people in a house share and had to move out after they'd bullied her. They owned the house, and Phoebe was seriously considering returning to their garden in the dead of night to plant [Japanese knotweed](#), a plant that is famously hard to get rid of and can even damage building foundations.

Obviously I didn't agree with how her housemates treated her, but I don't think they deserved that. I was also worried about Phoebe getting herself in trouble. I aired my concerns and eventually she gave in.

We are both 27 and should let go of obsessing over things that don't bring us peace. Phoebe says "revenge brings me peace." That notion is ridiculous.

### **The defence: Phoebe**

*I don't regret any of my actions. Some call it revenge; I call it karmic rebalancing*

I don't like being described as vengeful, but I do feel a sense of peace when I get my own back after someone has wronged me.

It's not like I go around plotting evil acts for no reason. But if someone is unpleasant to me, I brood over it for weeks. I can't let it go, and so I have to do something to snap myself out of it by readjusting the order of the universe. Some call it revenge; I call it karmic rebalancing.

When it came to the Uber driver, Priya also felt he was very rude, but she would never do anything about it because she's less confrontational. She also doesn't hold a grudge. I like that about her, but it

gets tiring always being the friend who has to stick up for us. It sometimes feels as if she judges me for doing it.

I tell Priya it's all because I'm a Scorpio – we are stubborn and loyal and we often seek revenge

I slipped a few rotten blueberries into the side pocket of the driver's car – so what? I'd do it again. It's not enough to just leave a bad review – people need to feel a little burn. Same thing with my ex who cheated on me. I don't regret my actions in any of these cases. I'd do them again.

I tell Priya this is all because I'm a Scorpio – we are stubborn and loyal and we often seek revenge. I appreciated Priya talking sense to me the time I was about to spread knotweed. She told me I would have got myself in trouble, and she was right. At the time I was upset and not thinking clearly.

It's just that sometimes, when I'm really upset, I get so consumed by the need to right a wrong done to me. They say that revenge is a dish best served cold, but I was white hot with rage.

Priya is a Virgo, so I just don't think she gets it. I would never act like this towards my family or close friends – it's just the people I don't know very well, those on the edges of my life or anyone who commit a colossal betrayal.

I guess I've always been like this. I could work on it a bit, as it can come across as childish. But we are all works in progress, aren't we?

### **The jury of Guardian readers**

#### **Should Phoebe learn to turn the other cheek?**

Housemates can be cruel and taxi drivers don't always want to chat. Everything doesn't always go your way and you have to relinquish control sometimes, otherwise you end up poisoning your own life.

#### **Myrtle, 32**

Phoebe is acting under the dangerous illusion of natural justice, but she's actually driven by vindictiveness. She speaks about karma, but her impulses are actually more Old Testament – and that's being generous. As a Scorpio myself, I'm also sick of our name being dragged through the mud. We're not all sting. If I were Phoebe, I'd be very worried for my karmic ledger. And if I were Priya, I'd be sleeping with one eye open.

#### **Bex, 37**

Too many people take life's punches lying down. A little bit of revenge can be immensely satisfying. OK, the Japanese knotweed was a step too far, but Phoebe was pulled back from the brink.

#### **Alan, 64**

They need to stop analysing these problems via their star signs! That aside, Priya is right and Phoebe is wrong. There's lots of analysis to show that societies are built progressively from sequential choices to take the higher ground, to recognise that others have struggles in their life and not carry out random petty acts of violence. Phoebe would find great peace in helping others in their life, rather than focusing on petty annoyances.

#### **Dan, 34**

Phoebe needs to change her ways. If you take revenge too far it comes back to bite you in a big way. That taxi driver could have had the worst day of his life, what does she know? Simmering with rage is bad for your health.

#### **Ron, 45**

### **Now you be the judge**