

Wife of 50 years wants out

Dear Annie: I have been married for 50 years and don't think I can stand one more day. The man I am married to was once everything to me. Now, as each day passes, I grow more resentful. I like him less and less, almost to the point of hatred.

He has always been a good provider. He worked while I stayed at home and raised our five children. Back then, I would never have expected him to come home and help around the house. But things are different now. It's just the two of us and our animals. We are in our mid-70s, and I am still doing all of the work inside this large five-bedroom house. He refuses to help with anything. He lies on the sofa and channel surfs while I do everything.

There is nothing physically wrong with him. His doctor says he's in great shape. He shows no sign of mental decline, either. Downsizing to a smaller home is not an option for him. He likes it here. I have told him how I feel time and again, and that I'd like his help around the house, but he just looks at me. Maybe he wants a divorce and is too cowardly to verbalize it. In any event, I am past the point of caring. I just want out. —

Annie's Mailbox

Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell
and
Marcy Sugar



Old and Trapped

Dear Trapped: Your husband may not want out. He may simply want to sit on the sofa while you do all the work. And you are doing it, so he sees no reason to change. You have some options: You can stop doing the cooking, cleaning and laundry for him, letting his clothes pile up and his food remain uncooked; you can look into hiring help; you can get counseling; you can seek legal counsel and leave, with or without a divorce. If your husband values the marriage, he will step up. If he doesn't, at least you will know and can plan your future accordingly.

Dear Annie: After reading the letter from "Need Some Relief," I thought I'd share how our family handles Christmas with four adult children and their spouses, 13 grandchildren and 3 great-grand-

children (and an occasional visiting in-law).

Dinner is at our house every year. Everyone participates by graciously bringing a dish. One son's family prepares the turkey, with mashed potatoes and gravy. Another brings all the drinks. We prepare stuffing, cranberry sauce and sweet potatoes. Others bring apple and pumpkin pies. Traditional!

We discuss dishes in advance, so there are no duplicates. It is such fun and each family feels good about sharing. New recipes are exchanged. We also decided to forego gift-giving and do a \$5 Christmas exchange. We all sit in a circle holding our "special number," anxiously awaiting our turn to pick the wrapped gift of our choice.

Even the little ones screamed with delight, not at the gift, but because everyone was laughing and clapping. What a joyous occasion.

Last, but not least, I insist on a group picture with everyone holding up their prized possessions. There is always a huge smile on each face. Because in the end it is being together that really matters. — *Happy in Florida*

Dear Happy: Your letter is refreshing. This is what holidays are all about. Or should be.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The moon warms your emotions and inspires you to reveal a little more about yourself than you normally would feel moved to do. Now the question is, how much should you share?

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). There are some gyms that claim to be a "no-judgment zone," thus catering to the self-conscious. You've a "no-judgment zone" around yourself right now. You don't feel the need to assess or be assessed by anyone.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If you get it right on the first try, that will make you happy. You'll have something to go on. If you get it wrong at first, don't despair. You will become smarter learning from what you do wrong.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Trust that the less you do, the more desirable you will be. This is a day to believe in your own magnetism. Lie back and make fewer efforts. Doing more will only make you less attractive.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Too many choices can be a bad thing for those who don't know themselves well enough to choose what's right for them. You do know yourself well, so it's no problem. Do what pleases you — others will be thrilled with your choice.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Understanding and compassion will go a long way. Someone will afford you the kind of graciousness that will inspire you to pay it forward. You'll have the opportunity very soon.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You don't have an ideal view for figuring out the problem yet. Astute observation usually requires a

different stance from the usual one. Either you need to take a step back or you need to rise above.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It may feel as though you are only loved when you meet a particular standard of achievement. This isn't true except for in certain (toxic) relationships.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Dreams of faraway places and exciting new scenarios fill your consciousness. Right now it's about the dream. Later you'll make it real. Your gypsy soul will soon go wandering again.

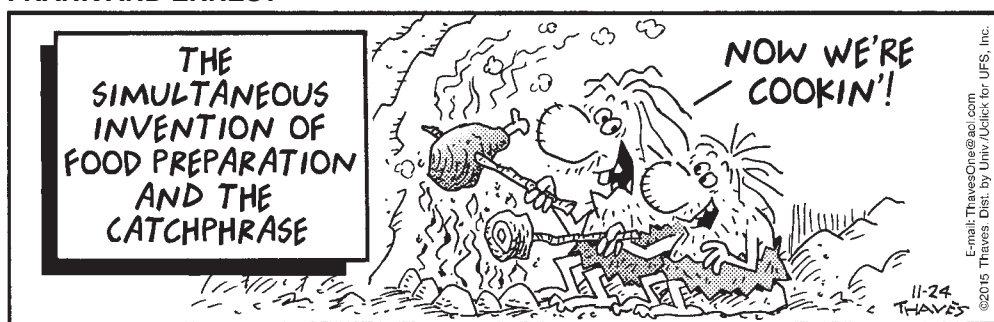
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You are in a brave mood today and might be willing to share the very thing you avoided talking about just last week. Unburdening yourself will feel terrific.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Things don't have to be dramatic to be meaningful to you. In a small and very personal way, this will be a day of reckoning. Your lucky associations will involve fellow air signs (Gemini and Libra).

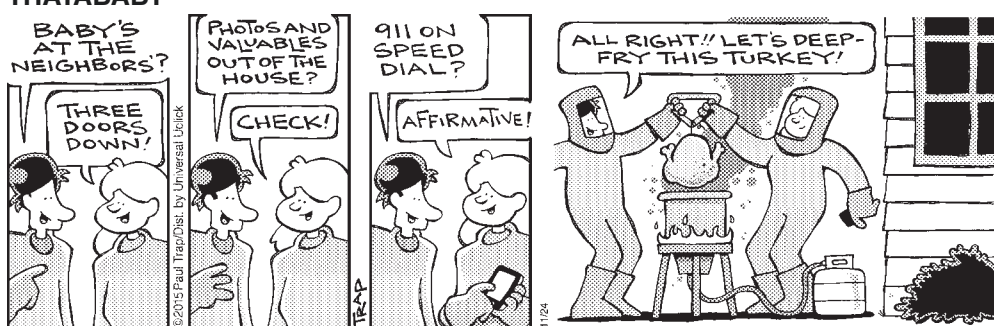
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There are so many things you could be doing, but none of them will appeal to you as much as relaxing with your favorite person. Truly, anything you do with your favorite will feel like living the good life.

WEDNESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 25). You're learning how to be true to yourself — to find out what you really need and want instead of being quick to settle into the roles that others cast for you. December and January bring financial opportunities. Taurus and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 22, 49, 15, 38 and 2.

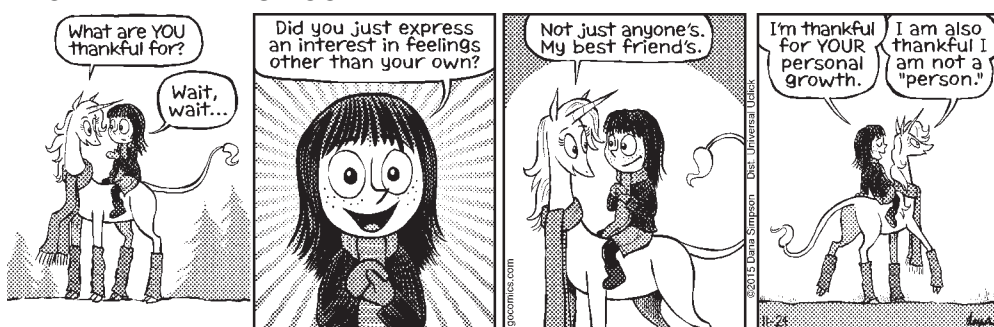
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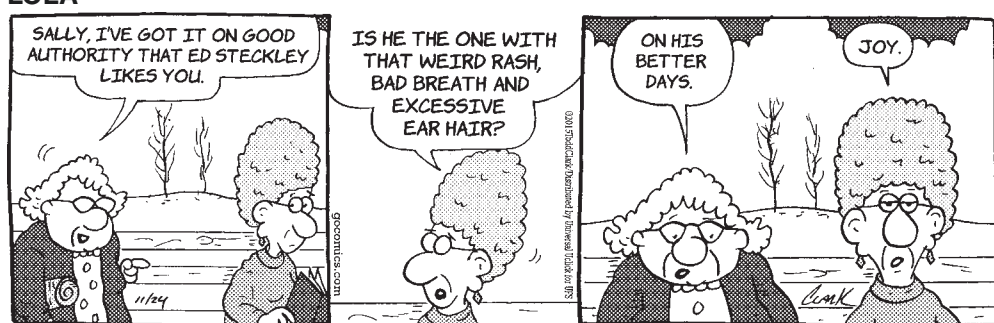
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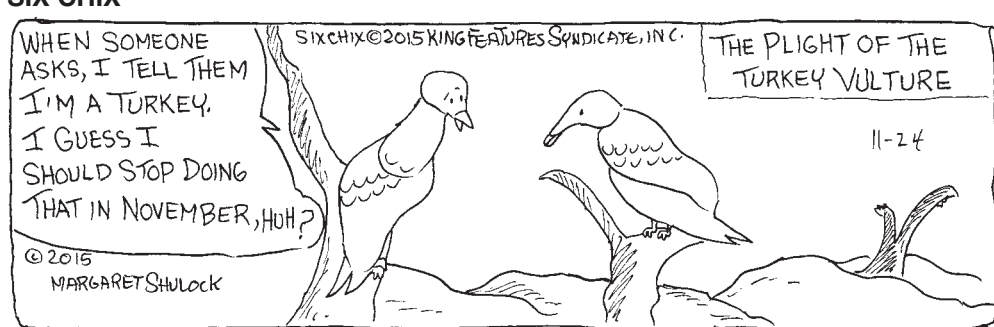
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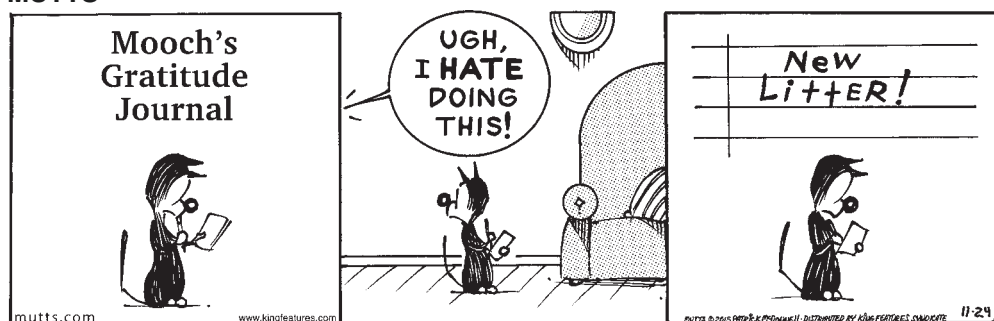
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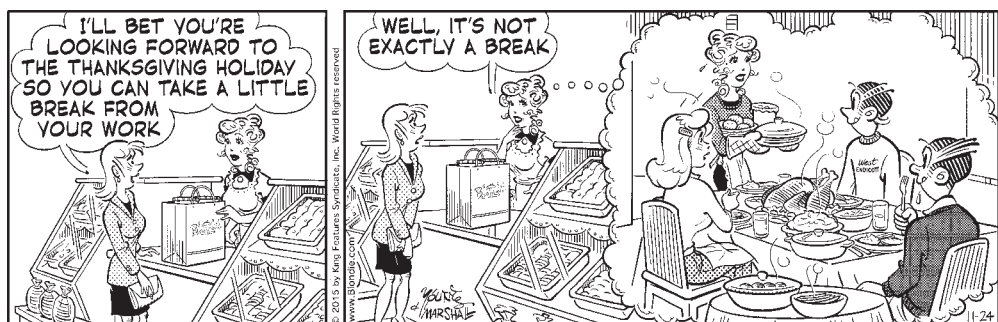
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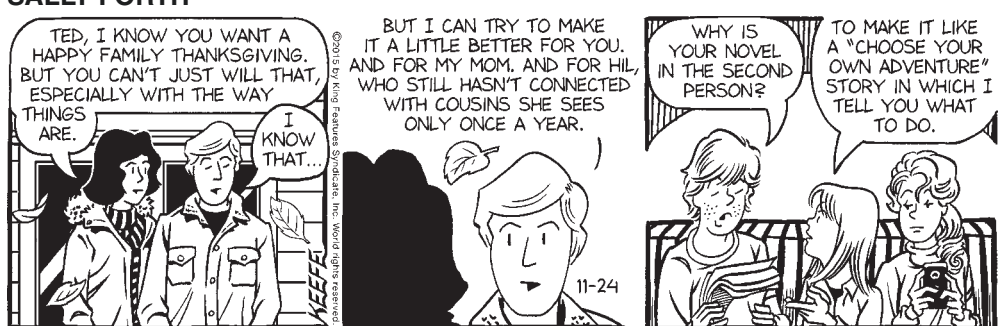
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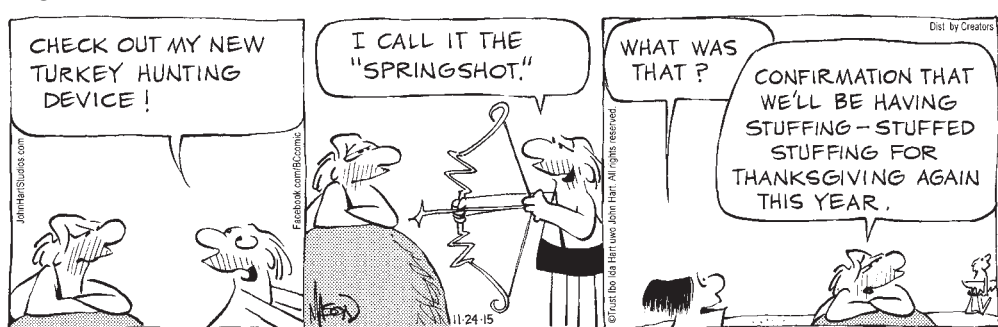
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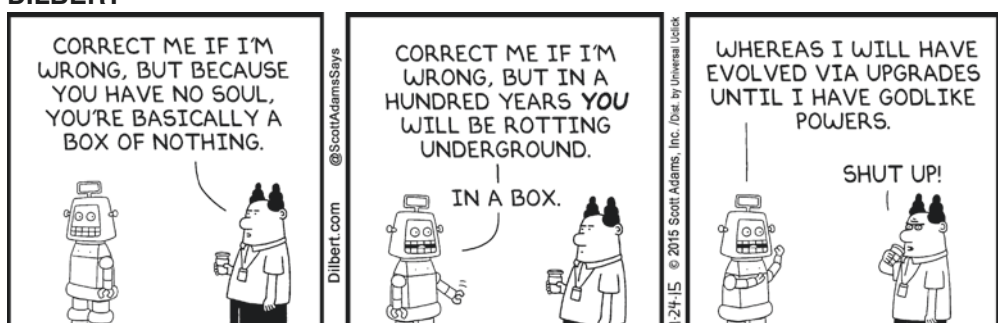
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