

Sister’s kids keeping her awake

Tomorrow’s horoscope

Dear Annie: I am close to my parents, and my husband and I love to visit them when we’re in town. We always stay in their home, not only because it is convenient for us, but because I know my mother would be upset if we didn’t.

The problem is my sister and her children. While we are at my parents’ house, she drops the kids off each morning, and they stay until nearly midnight (even on school nights). My sister does not work outside the home. She simply wants the time for herself.

One of the children plays a video game, loudly, all hours of the day. He screams obscenities at the TV and will not respond to our kind insistence that he turn down the volume. I have tried gently broaching this topic with my mother, to no avail. We have trouble falling asleep at night, as we have to listen to the sound of gunfire and obscenities from the guest room.

Is there a kind way to tell my mother that we would like to have child-free time without the grandchildren present? Is this overstepping our role as houseguests? — *Just Want Peace and Quiet*

Dear Peace and Quiet: You are not overstepping to want a good night’s sleep, but you have no say over Mom’s rules, such as they are. We are sure Mom loves having you, but she is not likely to make waves with your sister, who lives closer and with whom she needs to have a good

Annie’s Mailbox

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relationship. You will lose that battle.

Tell your mother you understand why she indulges the grandchildren, but from now on, you will spend at least one or two nights at a hotel in order to rest and will visit her during the day. Please be nice about it. Mom has enough aggravation. We feel sorry for her and especially for those kids, who are growing up with so little parental guidance. Your sister could benefit from some parenting classes, but it is unlikely that she will take advice from you.

Dear Annie: My husband and I have been married for 19 years. We have no children together, but we each have children from previous marriages.

From Day One of our marriage, he made it clear he did not want to pay for Christmas, birthdays, weddings, etc., on my side, which was fine. I’ve taken care of my side, and he’s done his.

We are now at an age where we need to put our affairs in order. He wants each

child to get the same amount from our estate. I disagree. I want the amount to be divided in half, and each half then divided between the children on each side.

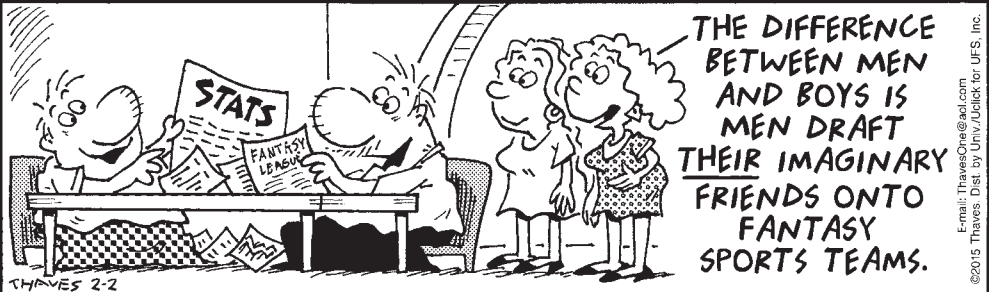
We have not been arguing about this. We just haven’t taken care of the arrangements. I will agree to whatever you say. — *Taking Care of Business*

Dear Business: Generally, we believe all children should be treated equally when dividing an estate, because otherwise, there is rancor between the children. However, if you brought vastly unequal assets into the marriage and the children were not raised together, the situation is different. Please discuss these issues with an estate attorney, who will help you sort through the possibilities and reach a decision that satisfies both of you.

Dear Annie: “Tired and Disgusted Other Half” wrote that her husband is disrespectful and puts her down in front of their children and friends. She said she’s been married too long to leave. Your response was good, but I was married to such a man. He refused to understand what the problem was and would not go for counseling, because I was the one with the problem.

There are men who will not benefit from counseling, nor will their wives or their relationships. I suspect it’s a high percentage of older men. I was married for 32 years, and I stayed too long. — *California*

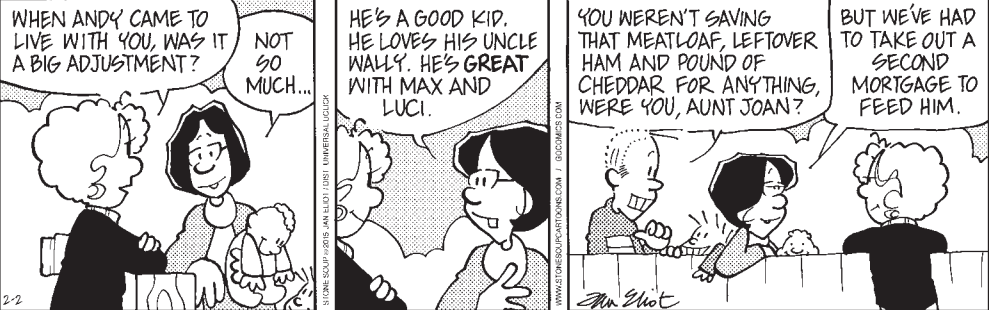
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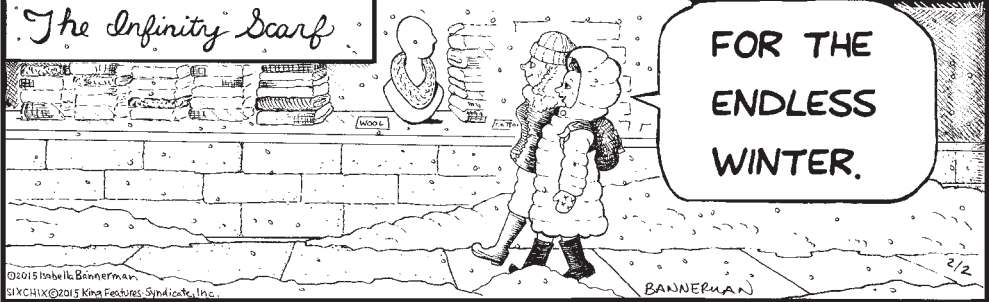
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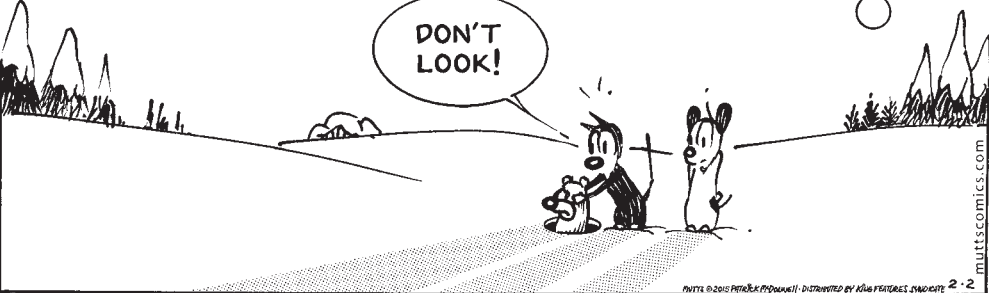
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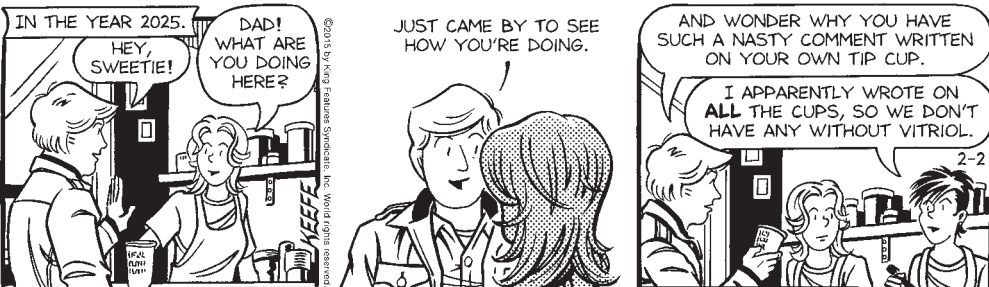
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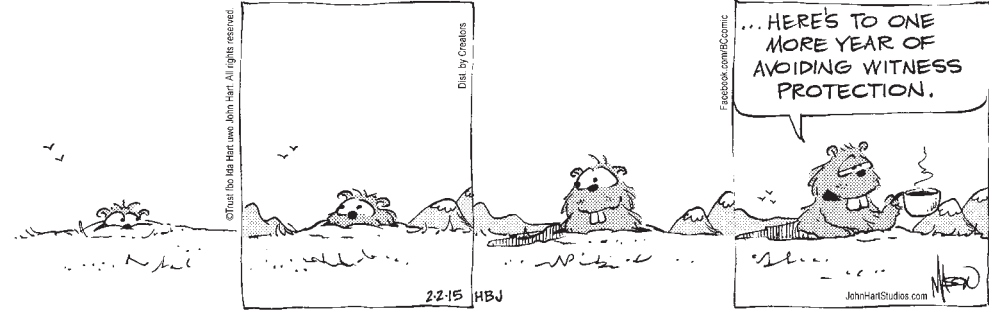
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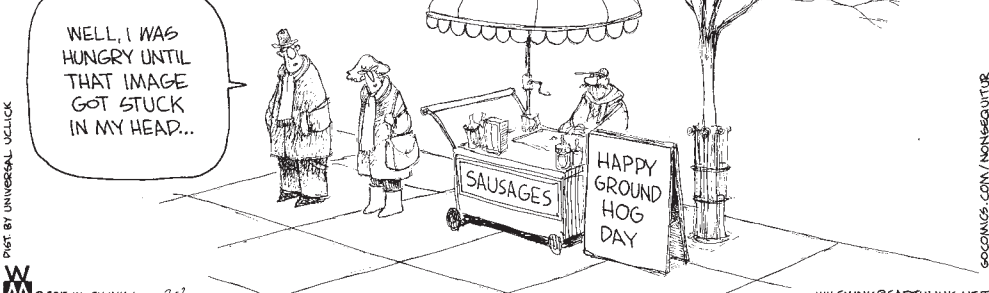
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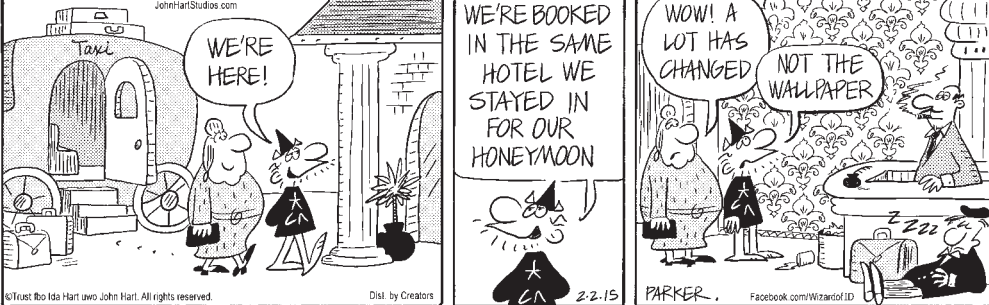
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