

He wants deadbeat mom to step up Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: I am a 55-year-old man, divorced for the past 15 years. My daughter is 24 years old and married to a good guy, and they have two lovely boys. Although I have struggled with depression over the years, I try to live a good, honest Christian life. I raised my two children as a single parent, and my ex has become a deadbeat mother. My ex has married several times since our divorce. Each of her subsequent husbands has been an alcoholic or a drug user.

My problem is that my daughter and her mother seldom speak or see each other. My ex will see my son on occasion, but not much. She's the kind of person who cannot admit fault. When my ex was married to one of her drunken drug users, she let him kick my daughter out of their home because she broke curfew once.

I can see how much this estrangement hurts my daughter, and I want so much for her to reconcile with her mother. My daughter reaches out to my ex through mail, birthday party invitations and occasional voice-mails. Her mother never responds.

I recently texted both of them stating that I am sorry for my part in the divorce, hoping it would open up communication. I encouraged them to meet at a neutral location without

Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc. Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



finding fault in each other and just spend time together.

I feel that a large amount of responsibility has been placed on my shoulders due to my ex's refusal to be a decent parent. My question is whether or not I should say any more regarding this. I worry so much for my daughter. — Dad

Dear Dad: Your suggestion to meet in a neutral location is a good one, and we hope they will take you up on it. But please understand that you cannot force your ex-wife to be a better, more caring mother. And there is no way to prevent her behavior from hurting your daughter. What you can do, however, is make sure your daughter knows how much she is loved and valued by her father and others, and that her mother's lack of affection is not about her — it's about Mom's issues, and only Mom can remedy that. Help

her limit the hurt by accepting Mom as she is.

Dear Annie: This letter is in response to "Bob," who has the "misfortune" of knowing "Joe," who has Asperger syndrome and is invited everywhere within his circle of friends. I say "misfortune" because if Bob cannot see past Joe's lack of social skills to the person he is underneath, then Bob is the less fortunate person. Joe probably never had anyone in his life teach him the finer points of communication and friendship. For someone with Asperger's, these traits do not come naturally or through regular interaction with others. These traits, just like reading, math and science, have to be taught.

I am the mom of a 22-year-old "Aspie." My husband and I spent hours teaching our son social skills, and our hard work has paid off tremendously. Our son is still socially awkward and misses some of the finer social cues, but he is flourishing at university and has a diverse circle of friends.

If Joe were blind and constantly tripping over Bob's furniture, I'm sure Bob would not exclude him because of it. Bob could be a real friend and help Joe maneuver through social situations in a positive way. — A Mom Who Cares

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When you realize that it would be good to control your thoughts, it's a realization that signals a very high level of human evolution. So don't be too hard on yourself if you aren't able to follow through with it to your satisfaction.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Now that Venus is in your sign, you may find yourself asking more often, "What's in it for me?" And though it's a natural question that you'd be a fool not to ask, just be sure to follow it up with, "What's in it for them?"

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The moon in your sign has you feeling lucky, taking social risks and playing it loose. That's what makes you so fun to be around. People don't know what to expect.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There's an emotional volume to hit — a sweet spot that will resonate with your audience. It's why you don't feel the need to have strong opinions about everything.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Avoid trying to make a specific outcome happen, because everyone involved in today's scenario wants something different. Instead, be open to the natural compromise that is likely to occur with such varied input.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There are benefits to being an unofficial member of a group. Once they have accepted you as their own, they also trust you not to leave. So think twice before you endeavor to join.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). People generally become security-oriented because of experiences of insecurity they do not wish to repeat. With these types, trust can only be built with consistency over time.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Obsession is

rarely a positive state of mind, because the amount of focus that even a healthy obsession requires usually creates an imbalance. But at least obsession helps you figure out what you lack so you can actively pursue it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're usually in the mood to discover the far corners of the world; however, now you're more in the mood to discover the far corners of your couch. You need the rest!

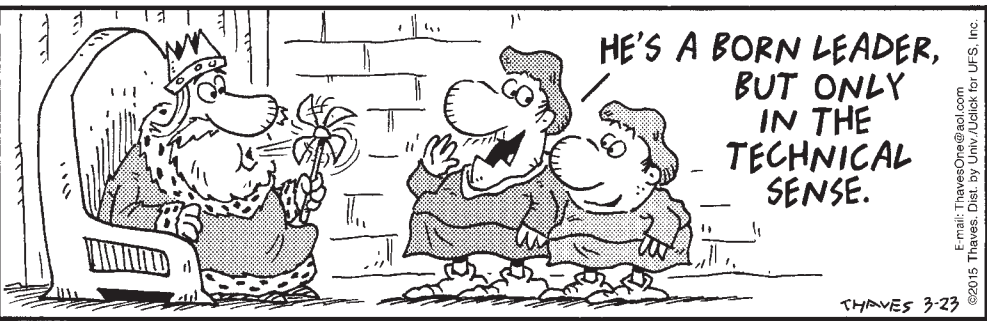
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The friendships that keep you entertained are worth more than gold. Your favorite people will make no effort to please you. It just happens naturally when they please themselves.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). While familiarity doesn't always breed contempt, it may breed blindness to the glory of all that you are. It will take an outsider to shake things up by noticing your wonderful qualities.

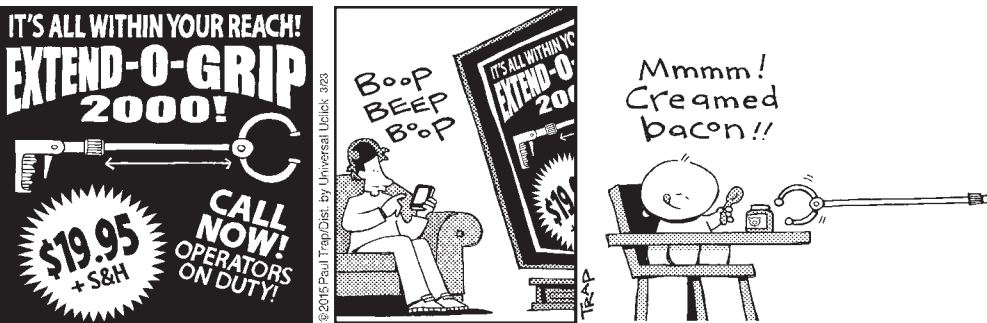
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're a very important person and should be cared for as such. So stop putting off the appointments that keep you feeling attractive, healthy and tended to.

TUESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (March 24). You know what you're working toward, and you'll be tenacious. You will become increasingly financially secure, and this stability translates into greater confidence in your personal life. April and May are for taking social risks, making new friends and learning the nuances of a fascinating culture. June cements a deal. Hopefully, you won't mind the worship and adoration coming your way in August. Leo and Sagittarius people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 30, 5, 14, 33 and 12.

FRANK AND ERNEST



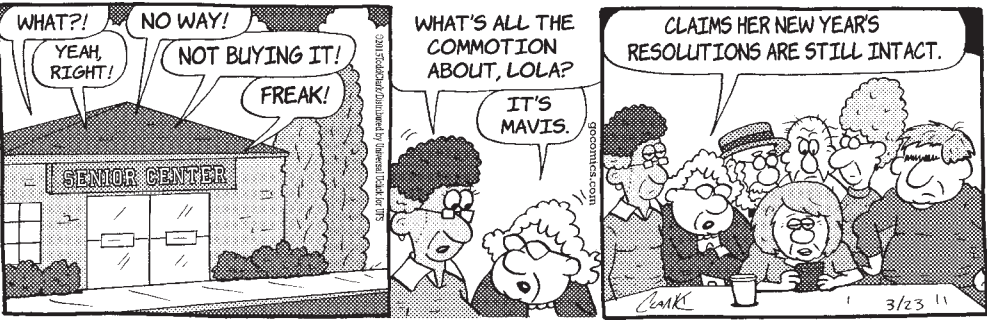
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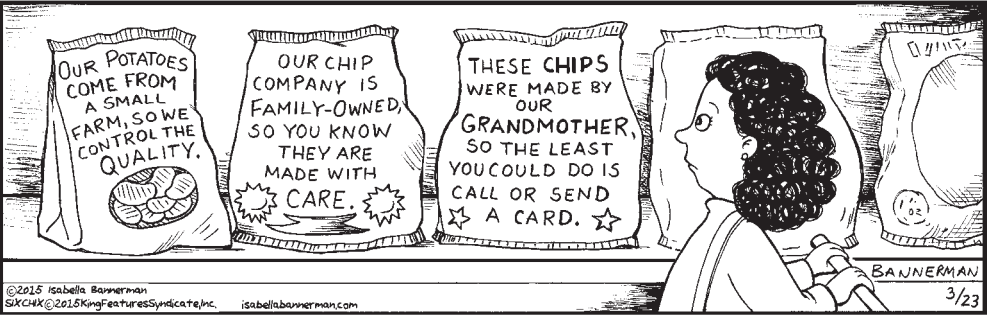
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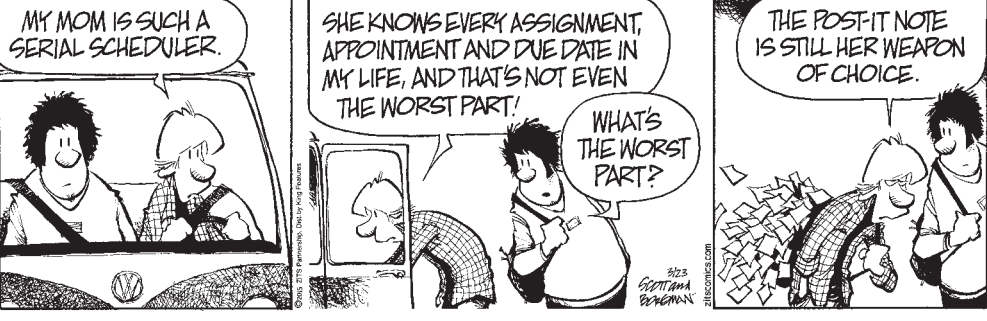
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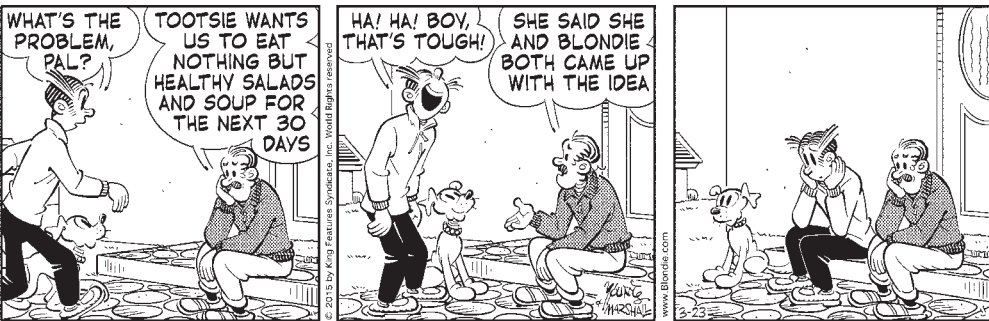
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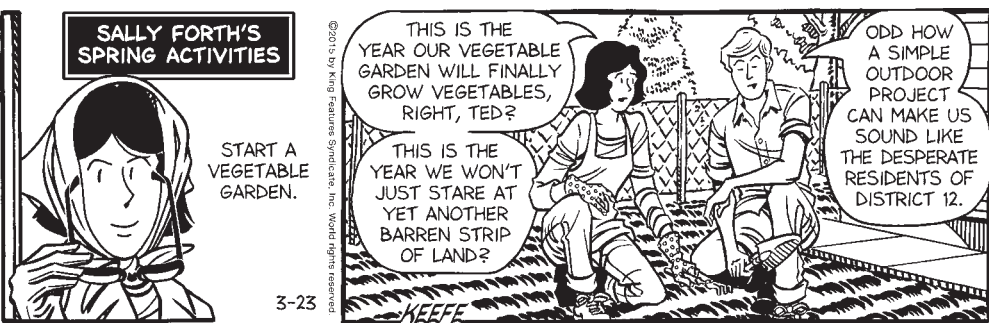
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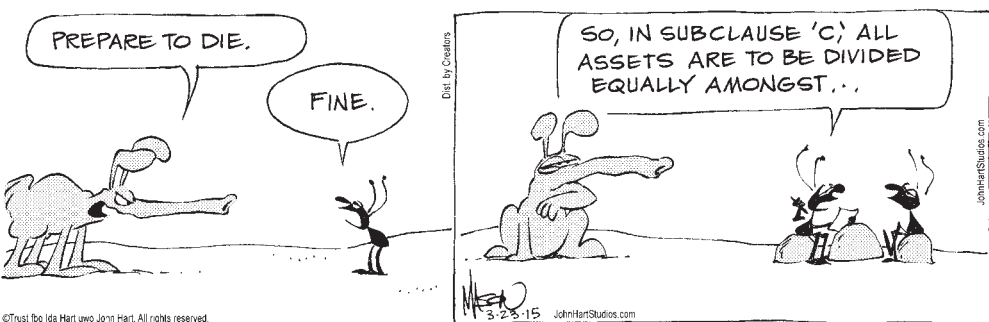
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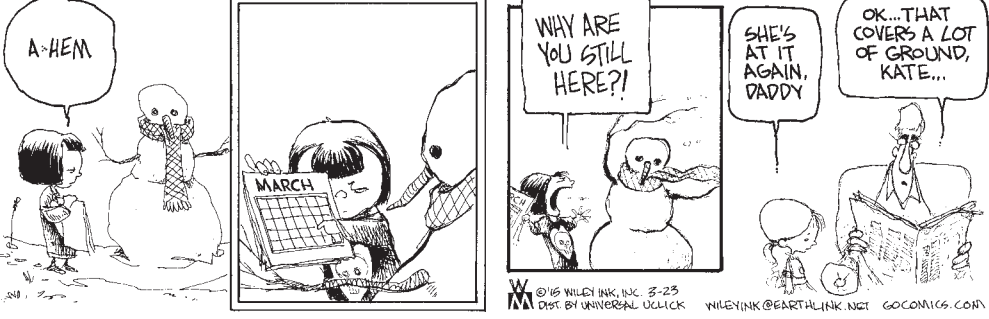
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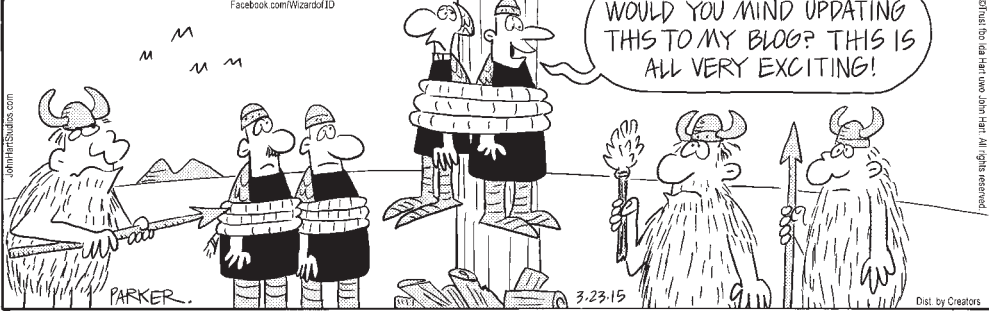
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