

Man misled by lady ‘friend’

Dear Annie: I am a divorced male in my mid-50s. A couple of years ago, I met a divorced woman through a mutual friend. We share a common hobby, which led to us spending hours of time together, often just the two of us. I asked my lady friend early on if she was interested in dating. She told me she had recently been through a bad breakup with her live-in boyfriend. She thought it would be nice to have someone with whom to go out for dinner, but she wasn't interested in a sexual relationship with anyone. I accepted that. As time went on, however, we became closer. Although there was never anything physical between us, we had what I considered "dates," where I would pick her up and we'd have dinner. I thought it was only a matter of time before our relationship became romantic and intimate.

I recently learned that, for the entire time I have known her, my lady friend had been having a sexual affair with another guy who already has a live-in girlfriend. When I confronted her, she neither admitted it nor denied it. Instead, she said her sex life was none of my business.

Annie's Mailbox

Creators
Syndicate Inc.
Kathy Mitchell
and
Marcy Sugar



I think I've been used for two years. I enjoyed our time together, but I never would have spent so much of it with this woman if I'd known she had a sexual partner. We are no longer seeing each other, and although that is probably for the best, it is awkward since we have mutual friends.

What do you think? — *Feeling Used*

Dear Feeling: We think this woman definitely took advantage of you, but we also believe you went into this with different expectations. The woman needed someone to squire her around for dinner and such, and could not do so with her already-attached boyfriend. You were a convenience, and she misled you. You, however, assumed there would be an eventual sexual relationship with a woman who told you upfront

that she wasn't interested (the reason is irrelevant). If you had instead considered her to be simply a friend, with no other agenda, you could have enjoyed dinners out and hobby time without feeling used.

It's time to let it go. You made a mistake getting involved with her, but it shouldn't shame you into avoiding your mutual friends. Hold your head up, be civil around her, and look for romantic companionship elsewhere.

Dear Annie: I thought I was being respectful by addressing ladies using the title "Ma'am." Recently, I said that to a woman and she responded, "My name is Mrs. X. I am not a 'Ma'am'!"

What do you think? — *Lafayette, La.*

Dear Lafayette: We think some people are too easily offended. We all have a preferred term of address, but we cannot expect others, especially strangers, to know what that is. One doesn't chastise a person for being polite. For those of you who have been unintentionally insulted and feel the need to respond, simply correct the person in a gentle manner so they will know for next time.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You appreciate the differences between yourself and others. Your sophistication of thought allows you to consider opinions you don't share. You'll land on a brilliant solution to a pressing problem.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You've already tried to solve the issue by applying your best efforts. Now try to solve it by doing, literally, the very least you can do. Relax. With a leisurely approach you may stumble onto the path of least resistance.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It is a talent to know when to stop and when to persist. When you heed the whisper in your heart, you won't stop short of a victory, nor will you continue down paths that lead nowhere.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). So, you'll hear "no" along the way — maybe more times today than you'd like. Reinterpret the response. Maybe it means there's something better for you around the corner. Or maybe it simply means "not yet."

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Try to rest — just try. Mercury coming for a visit in your part of the sky will rouse you from the recliner of life. Luckily, happiness and busyness go hand in hand now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There is plenty of time to visit with the people who are important to you, even if it feels like you're far too busy for that today. The break you take will invigorate you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You have a talent for dealing with reserved personalities. You don't expect these types to make the same efforts that others would. It will be up to you to draw these quiet souls out.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The bright ideas come to you first today, but if you don't act on them right away, they will flit like butterflies to the other colorful and open flowers around you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Freedom is a frame of mind. It is conceivable that the person with hundreds of opportunities still doesn't feel as free as the one with three choices.

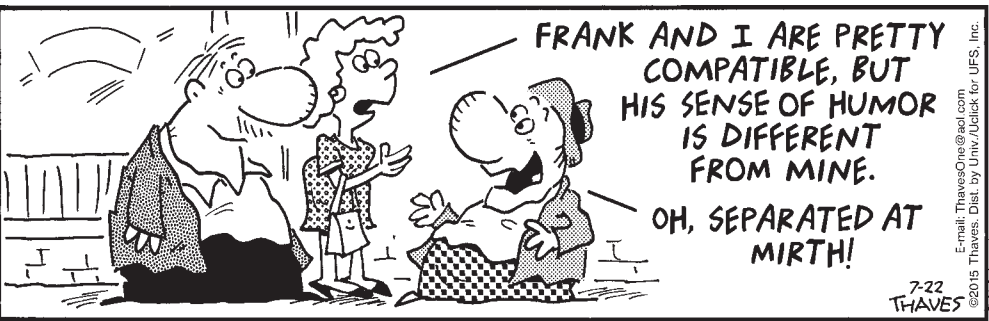
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Conflict is disagreement; confrontation is the expectation of disagreement. Avoid conflict, but embrace confrontation. When you ask nicely and without judgment, you'll likely get what you want.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). There are times to be open-minded about who you are, but not now. Stand strong. Maintain your own vision of yourself, and use it as a shield to keep the rest of the world from imposing their view of you.

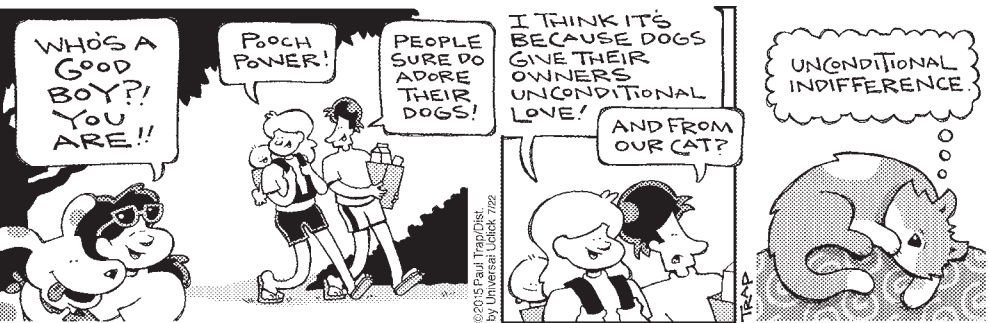
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Mountains sing songs. Rivers give dissertations. Buildings tell secrets. The landscape and environment will seem to speak to you. Trust your interpretation of this.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 23). Your attractiveness quotient is on the rise, and life gets more interesting over the next 10 weeks. Take extra measures to keep your career on track during this exciting period for your personal life. September brings a reunion. November is your chance at a prize you've had your eye on since childhood. Virgo and Sagittarius people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 1, 50, 33, 21 and 19.

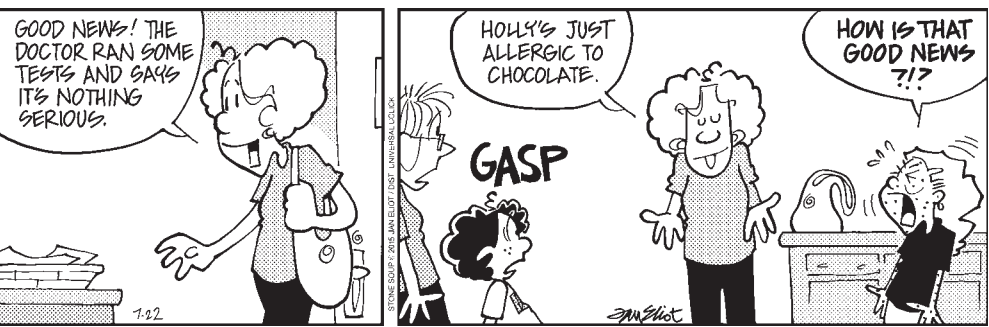
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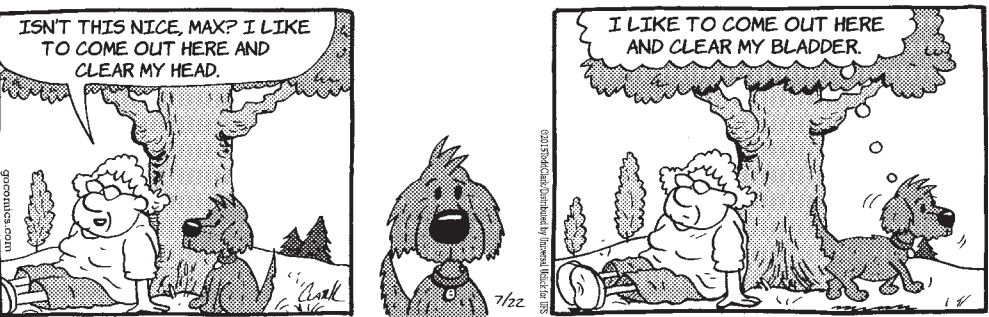
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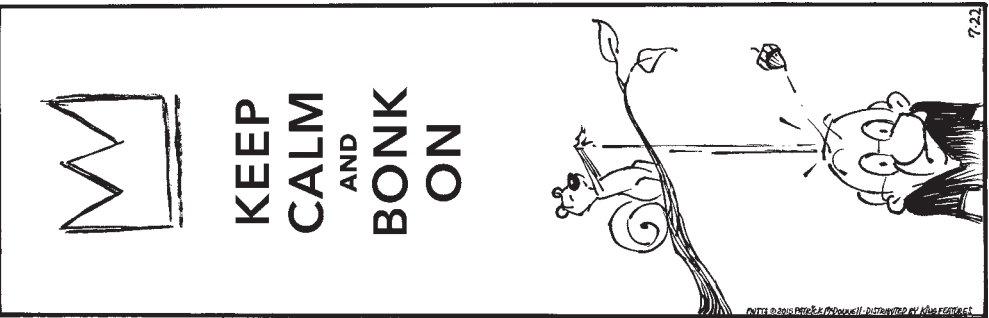
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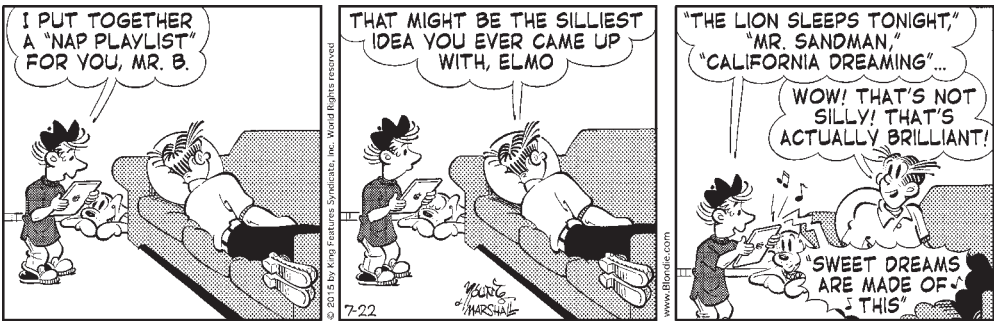
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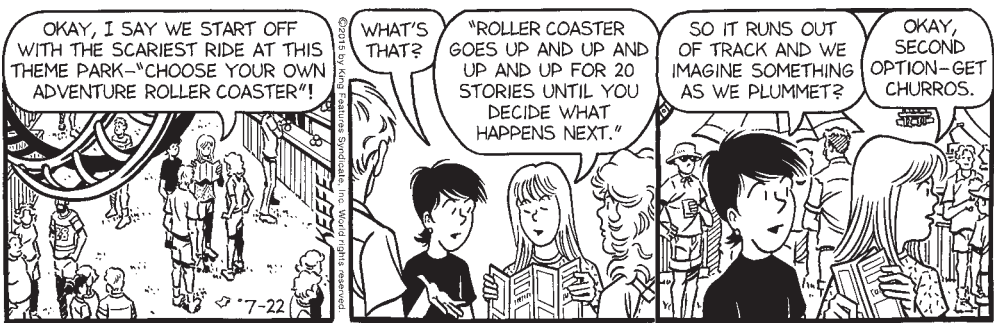
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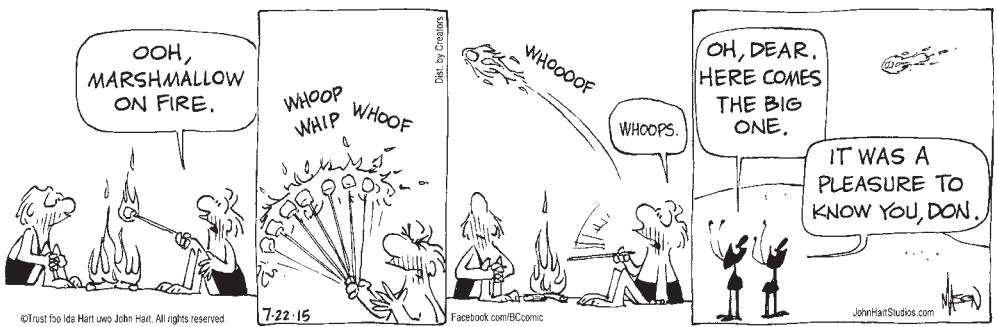
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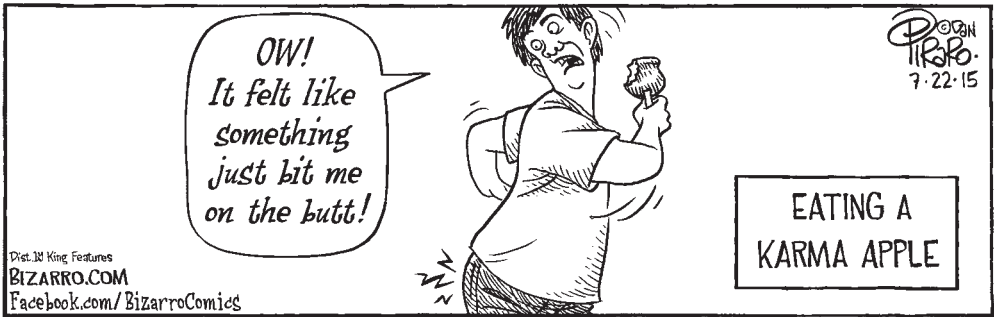
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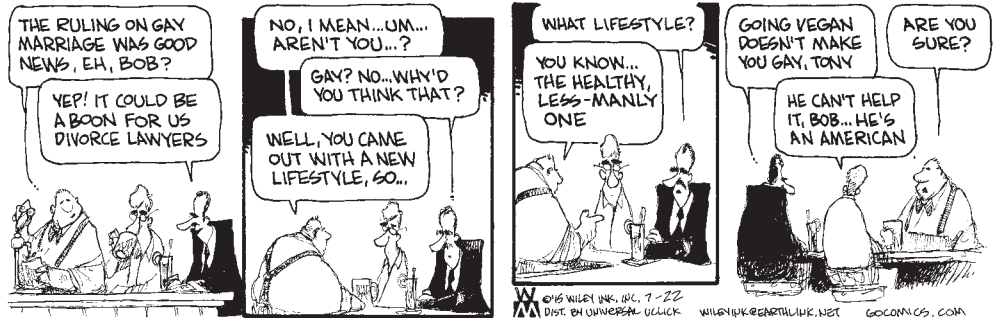
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