Husband needs to cut ties

Annie's Mailbox
Creators Syndicate Inc.
Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar

Dear Annie: About four years ago, after 17 years of marriage (no children), working full time, having a part-time cleaning job, doing 90 percent of the housework and doing 80 percent of the yardwork, I asked my husband whether I could quit my full-time job.

I was 42 and in good shape but was having painful back problems from the type of work I did. My husband had a good job, and with a little bit of corner cutting, we didn't need the money from my job. He agreed, but after a while, he began to seem distant and started talking constantly about a girl at work — how amazing she was because she worked full time and went to school while caring for her two children.

After months of this, I thought a second part-time job might make him treat me with more respect. Then my mother broke her arm, and my father needed treatment for prostate cancer. So I helped them, along with working two part-time jobs and doing the housework and yardwork. It didn't help. My husband hung out with that "amazing" girl. He also spent a lot of time with a guy who convinced him that I was a freeloader.

After a horrible vacation where he bought earrings for Ms. Amazing and presents for her sons, I found emails between them. He admitted he was in love with her but said nothing had happened. He eventually moved out and filed for divorce, but when he heard that I had moved to Hawaii, he tried to woo me back. After six months of promises that he had changed, I returned home.

I recently found a text from this same girl, asking when he'll be working with her again so they can go to lunch. I left the house. He says the girl has a boyfriend and I'm overreacting. Am I? — *Hawaii-Bound*

Dear Hawaii: You never actually resolved the issue with Ms. Amazing, so any contact your husband has with her is going to set off all of your alarms. The fact that he wooed you back doesn't mean he is no longer vulnerable to her charms. In order for your marriage to survive, he needs to stop all contact with this woman, not only for your sake but for his. Get counseling, with or without him, so you can move forward one way or the other.

Dear Annie: This is about the letter from "Miffed," whose 10-year-old grandson doesn't like to be touched.

I was the same. From age 9 through my teenage years, I hated it when people touched me, even my parents. Hugs and kisses were hard to tolerate. I think some of it was from being bullied so much at school, but mostly, it was just the way I was.

Touching is extremely personal, and I show my affection in other ways. In my family, we compromised by my greeting close relatives with a short hug and a peck on the cheek, and then they would leave me alone for the rest of the day. I wasn't crazy about doing it, but my mother insisted. I managed to buy my peace with a kiss. — *Didn't Like It, Either*

Dear Didn't: We're glad that you and your mother reached a compromise that was OK with you. But no parent should insist that a child hug or kiss anyone.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Sometimes you're the star; sometimes you're the extra. Today will bring another scene that requires respectful normalcy and blending in. After the director yells "Cut!" you can go back to being yourself.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). There's nothing shocking about today's events except that you know how most of them will turn up and turn out before they happen. Are you getting more psychic, or is your life getting too predictably routine?

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Many Gemini people are after success in business today. It's a matter of finding out where your customers are and going after them there. It's not so hard. In fact, it's a lot easier than trying to make them come to you!

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The best action is the one that has you feeling so powerful, engaged and interested along the way that it doesn't matter to you what the result of all this effort will be.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Truth: This endeavor you've taken on is not for the faint of heart. False starts, mistakes, long periods of recovery, more mistakes — so what? The only way to truly fail at this is not to try at all.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). It's becoming evident that you don't have an excellent plan. It seemed like a good idea, but if the efforts aren't paying off as expected, it's time to change your tactics.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Everyone has to start somewhere. Remind yourself of this as you look at those who have what you'd like to have. It may seem very far away at this point, but if you keep going, your day will come.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The best idea isn't always the one that gets implicated. Who has authority? Who's popular? It's that person's idea that is more likely to get traction. Think about this before you propose your idea.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The passersby appreciate what you add to the ambiance of a place, though most won't say it. So it's nice when a certain someone likes the song of your gypsy spirit and puts spare change in your tambourine.

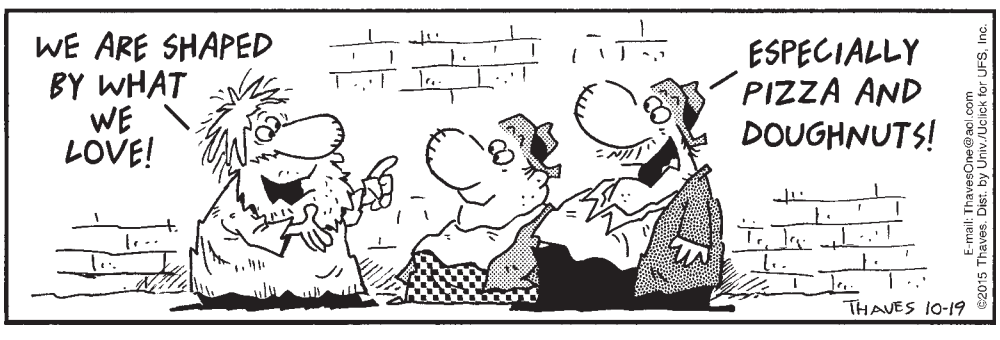
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Some talk in words strung together. You've heard enough of that. Today someone talks to you in meanings and feelings that move you to do something different from what you would have before the conversation.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Just because another person has cast you in a certain role in his or her life doesn't mean you have to take that appointment. You're A-list. You can pick and choose your projects.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll save yourself money and trouble by thinking forward as to what's coming up between now and the end of the year. There are certain events coming up that you will not be able to attend unless you make plans now-ish.

TUESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Oct. 20). Your amazing power to overcome adversity has gotten you where you are, and this year you'll use those skills to build a life very different from the one you knew. Wealth, status, advantage — you're not driven to possess them, and yet they'll freely be given because of the value you are able to offer others. Virgo and Sagittarius people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 22, 38, 1 and 18.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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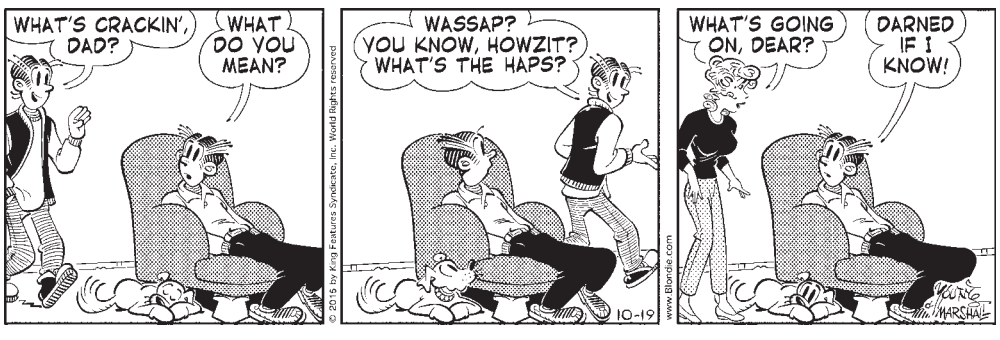

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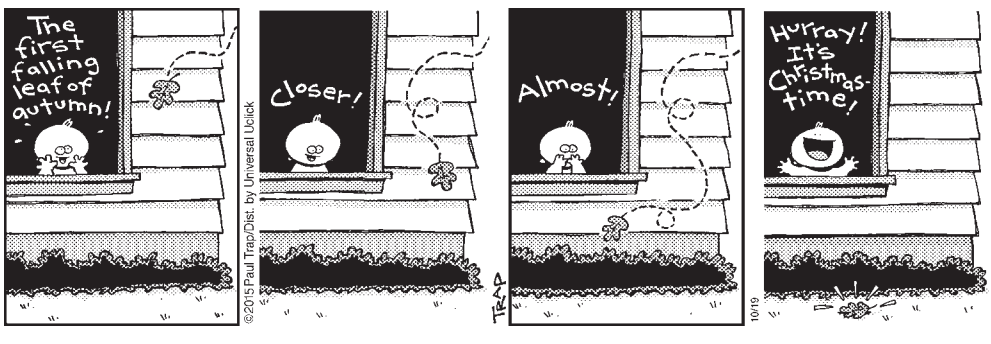

SALLY FORTH

PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN

B.C.

LOLA

DILBERT

SIX CHIX

BIZARRO

MUTTS

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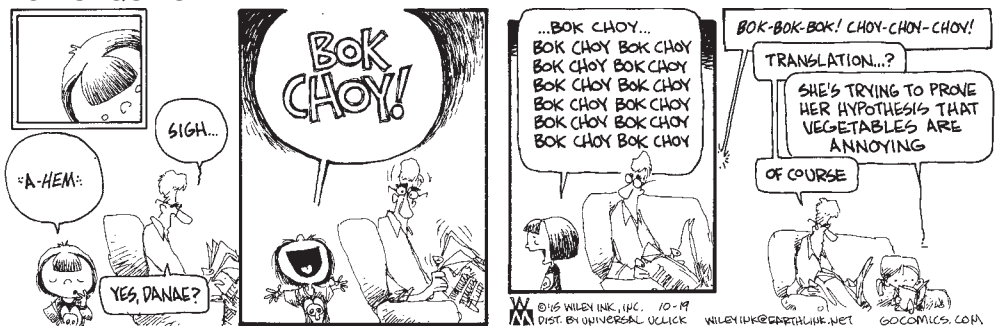

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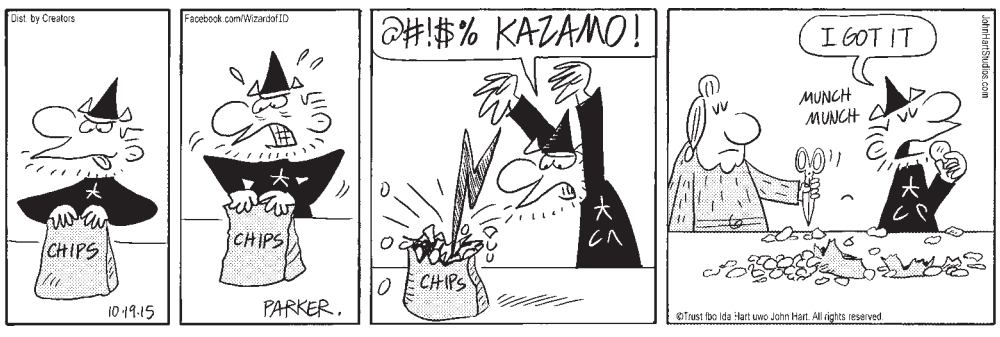

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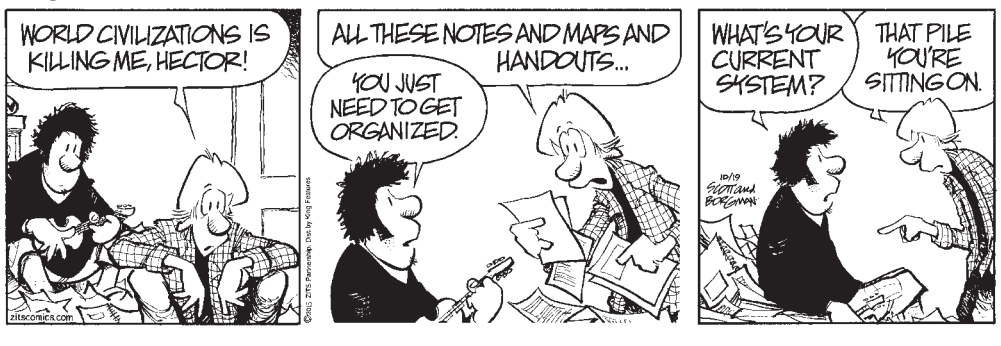
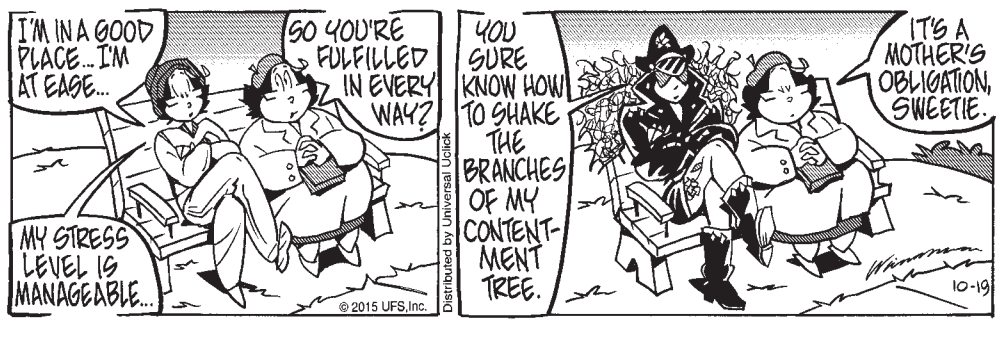
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