

Should grandma send gifts?

Dear Annie: My married daughter has decided to estrange herself from her stepfather and me. We have not spoken since she rudely shrugged me off at her son's graduation party last June. I recently began counseling to help me deal with the situation. The counselor thinks my daughter may have narcissistic personality disorder. The additional heartbreak is that she told my sister I abused her terribly when she was a child. My sister suggested she seek therapy, but my daughter said she was "over it." Annie, this abuse never occurred, and I am sick about the accusation.

I also have a son who lives in our area. He and his girlfriend recently had a baby, and my daughter told the girlfriend things that I supposedly said and did, and now this young lady does not want to associate with us. I have tried several times to talk to her, but she won't reciprocate. My son brings the baby over every few weeks on his own.

I am slowly coming to terms with my grief. My daughter has five children, four of whom live at home. The oldest, who is in college, is the only one who contacts us on occasion. My husband and I have always been supportive of both our children, making countless trips to visit. I don't see my daughter and I reconciling any-

Annie's Mailbox

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time soon, and I have given up on my son's girlfriend. Life is too short for so much stress. So, should I continue to send birthday cards and gifts to these grandchildren? I did not receive any acknowledgment for the presents I sent at Christmas. — *Confused and Sad*

Dear Confused: The grandchildren haven't been taught to send thank-you notes, and Mom obviously has no interest in encouraging them to correspond with you. However, sending cards (and gifts, if you like) is one way to maintain contact in an otherwise estranged relationship, so you might want to continue even with no expectation of acknowledgment. This type of situation is terribly sad for everyone.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "J.M." and your response mentioning the side effects of statin drugs. It did not cover seriously debilitating symptoms such as memory loss.

I went through the increasing frustration and puzzlement of not being able to find the word I wanted, forgetting everything from the name of my neighbor to vital current details, and it kept getting worse. I had muscle ache and joint pain in the feet, knees, legs and, most significantly, at the site of old inflammation and injury. I began to stumble on the flattest, smoothest surfaces.

When notified, my doctors insisted that blood tests show these are not the side effects that appear in the common warnings, and that you repeated in your reply. My doctor said she had not heard of my symptoms being connected to statins and only once had a patient reported "more irritability." Yet there are hundreds of such anecdotal reports by patients on the Internet. It is too easy for doctors to ignore situations like mine. Statins were turning me into a haggard, feeble, mentally incompetent woman at 64. I notified my doctor that I would rather die than live this way and got off of them. — *Mara*

Dear Mara: You may be right. However, sometimes it's not the statin alone, but rather the interaction between it and other medications (or even herbal supplements) that is causing the problem. Make sure your doctor knows everything you are putting into your system.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) You're not randomly choosing moods here. You're working on a problem all of the time — even when you're not aware of it. So be kind to yourself and allow for all kinds of feelings. They are informing you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) You'll come to a crossroads. Honestly, these two choices are not all that different from one another and may in fact lead to the same place. So don't agonize; just choose.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21) Music is powerful. Share the songs you love with people. And when the people you love aren't demonstrating that in the way you'd prefer, the songs you love will bring joy and healing.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) Human beings are the only known animals who publish their words and broadcast their ideas. To express yourself publicly is to exercise part of your humanity. Besides, you have a lot to say right now.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) The project you're tackling alone could die from neglect if you don't pick it up and run with it soon. Better yet, share your ideas, wants and needs with others: They'll help you stay on track if you ask them to.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) People who feel good about who they are generally don't need a lot of validation from the outside world. Comfortable in your skin, you suspect that you're doing great — but a compliment still makes your day.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) You'll be in the company of smart, aware people who will enjoy the mystery of trying to get to know you and maybe even impress you a little, too. For these reasons and more, bring your A-game.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21) It takes courage to demonstrate affection. Whether or not you can return a person's amorous feelings you'll appreciate the risk this person took in sharing that with you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) You're not going anywhere until you want to. You can't be pushed, persuaded or cajoled. You'll be especially resistant to anyone trying to influence you who hasn't taken the time to get to know you first.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Don't try to keep the peace at your own expense. Martyrdom isn't necessary either. Pause and step back. What do you want from this? That question will keep you from being a doormat or enabler in the situation.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Instead of demanding or even requesting that life greet you in your preferred manner, you accept what comes. To welcome the full spectrum of life, the good and the bad, is to live in wholeness.

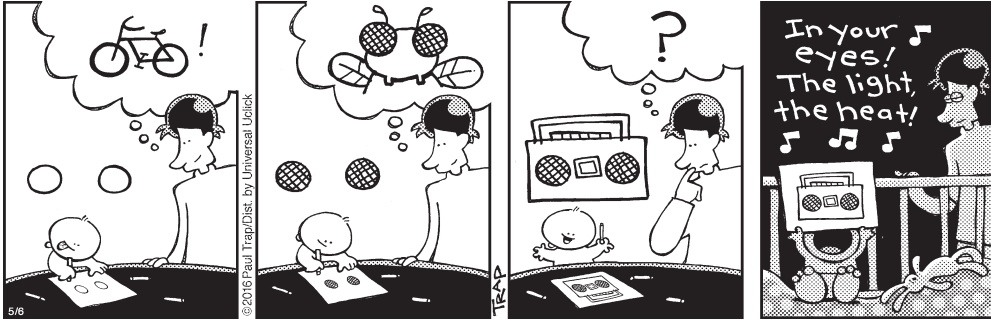
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Where there is sunshine there are shadows. If you run away in fear, they'll always follow you. Stay and play with the shadow aspects of life and you'll be quickly reminded of their illusive qualities.

SATURDAY'S BIRTHDAY (May 7) You've had some brilliant successes, but you know you're capable of more. You'll be asked to make a heartfelt commitment in the next 10 weeks. June offers you so many resources it would be easy to get lost. Let your original plan be your rudder. Family will keep you grounded, too. In November you're favored in kinds of games. Aries and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 29, 33, 30 and 11.

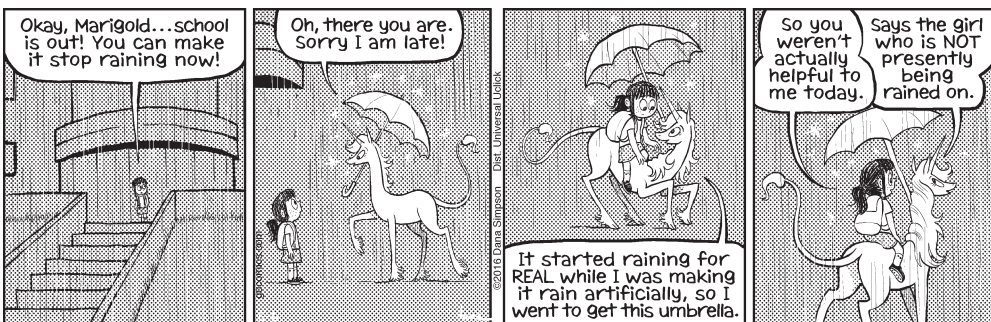
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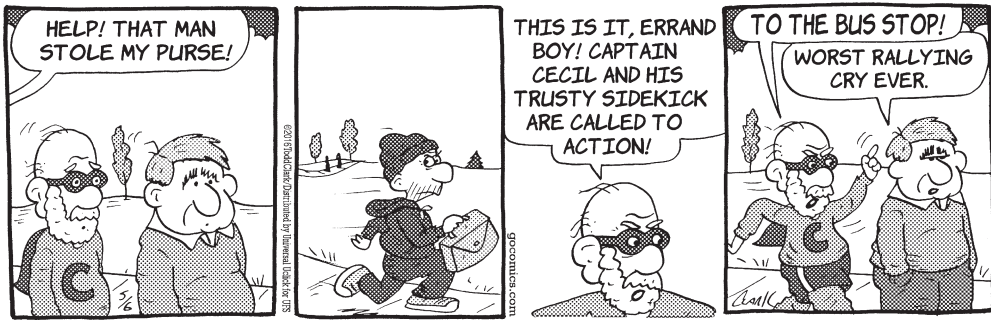
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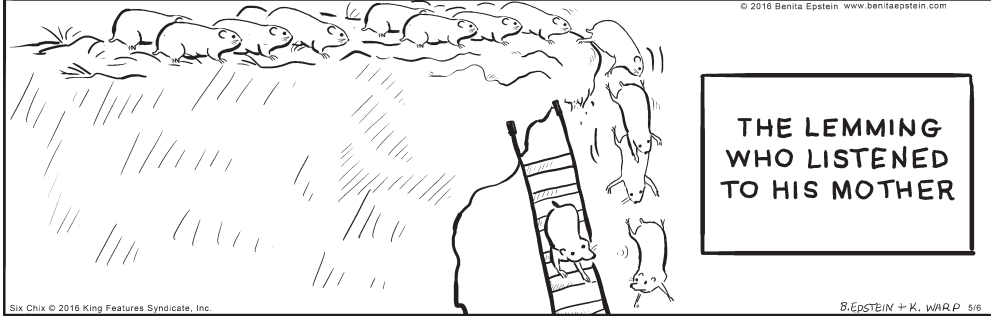
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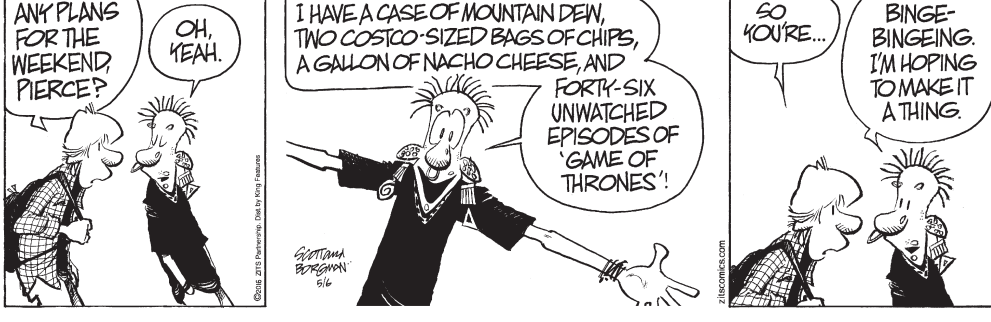
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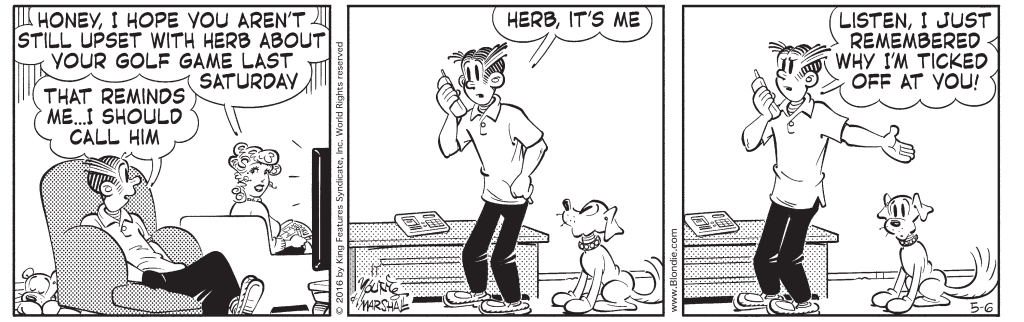
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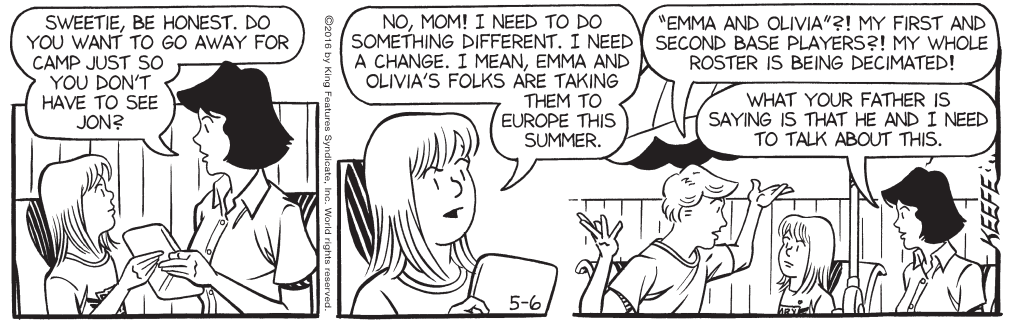
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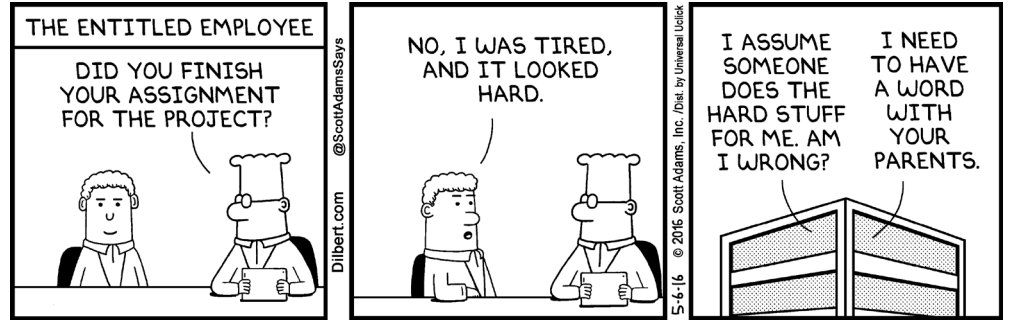
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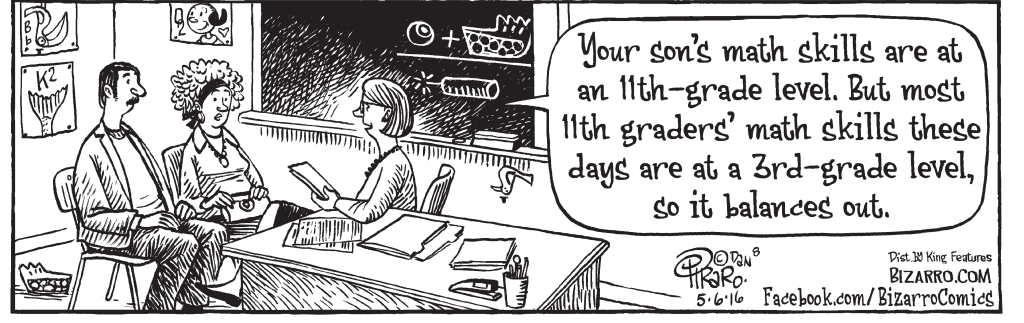
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