

How to keep night-owl friend?

Dear Annie: I am a widow in my 70s. My husband and I had no children and not much of a social life. When he died a few years ago, I was desolate. I took on a part-time job and met a divorced woman close to my age and we have become good friends. It has been wonderful, as I have never had a close friend before.

I really like "Jeanette," and she has introduced me to a lot of other women who have become my friends. I love to go to lunch, to musicals and on day trips with my female friends.

The problem is, Jeanette likes to go out at night to dinner, concerts, etc. I do not have good nighttime vision and am not comfortable driving past sundown. I have explained this to her, but she thinks that I am being unnecessarily fearful. Any suggestions on how I can handle this? — *Fearful of Losing a Friend*

Dear Fearful: Being cautious about driving at night when your vision is poor is smart, common sense. But it probably sounds to Jeanette as if you are "too old" and she doesn't like it one bit.

There are ways around this — perhaps someone can pick you up or you can take a cab or use

Annie's Mailbox

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a service like Uber or Lyft. But you also can be firm without losing a friendship. When Jeanette wants you to drive at night, it's perfectly OK to say, "Sorry, my vision isn't good enough. I'll miss you, but I hope we can get together another time." Then invite her to a Sunday matinee she might enjoy.

Dear Annie: My husband is an alcoholic. He drank at least a case of beer a day, plus shots of scotch or whatever was on hand in the evenings. I tried counseling and a family intervention, to no avail. I attended Al-Anon meetings and so did he (briefly), but neither of us found them helpful. So I gave up.

Eight years ago, I found him on the bathroom floor covered in blood. It was fortunate that I was home, because he would have

died otherwise. At the hospital, he received several transfusions and had esophageal surgery. He was told he had cirrhosis of the liver and would die if he continued to drink. Amazingly, he stopped cold turkey. It was a blessing.

Unfortunately, it wasn't soon enough. He developed liver cancer, which we knew was a possibility. He's undergoing chemo now. The trips to the hospital, the overnight stays and the follow-ups can be overwhelming physically and emotionally, not only for him, but for our children and me. We're hoping he will get eligible for a transplant before he dies from the cancer.

To anyone who drinks and believes, "Well, I have to die eventually," or "I can handle my drinking," or "That will never happen to me," please listen. It can happen to you or someone you love. It is an expensive emotional roller coaster and a painful journey. — *Loving Wife*

Dear Wife: Our hearts go out to you and your family. We greatly appreciate that you have taken the time to warn others and try to help them. Please know that you are in our thoughts.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Should you seek support, or is that the costly, lazy, complicated way of solving the problem? If you can afford to try it out with little stress to your resources, you'll know straightaway. If not, you'll be fine (brilliant, even) on your own.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Everyone is too busy forming complaints to listen to the complaints of others. The trick is to get very busy with something better than being disgruntled. Do this and you'll stand out as remarkable.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). What starts out as a dilemma could turn into a contest, game or reason to survey dozens of people. Your curious mind will turn this puzzle into social amusement.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Normally you would sprinkle some fun in with your disciplined approach to work. Today you'll be more successful sprinkling your disciplined approach to work into your fun.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The inner and outer realities aren't meshing — how stressful! A dramatic expression will be cathartic, although best endeavored alone. You don't need witnesses in order to feel better.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Things that come too easily to a person will have very little value to that person, regardless of how high the public appraisal may be. This is just one more reason you need to stop giving your services away for free.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Sometimes it's more trouble than it's worth to take on strong-willed people, so you acquiesce to a role you never meant to play. Bottom line: If you don't like what they call you, stop answering to it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Power won't be granted, and you won't have to steal it. It's more of a summoning process. Direct your energy. Channel chaotic nervousness into one focused stream; (SET ITAL) that's (END ITAL) powerful!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Combine your bright ideas with the luminous insights of another, and then run and get your sunglasses — because together, you'll be dangerously brilliant.

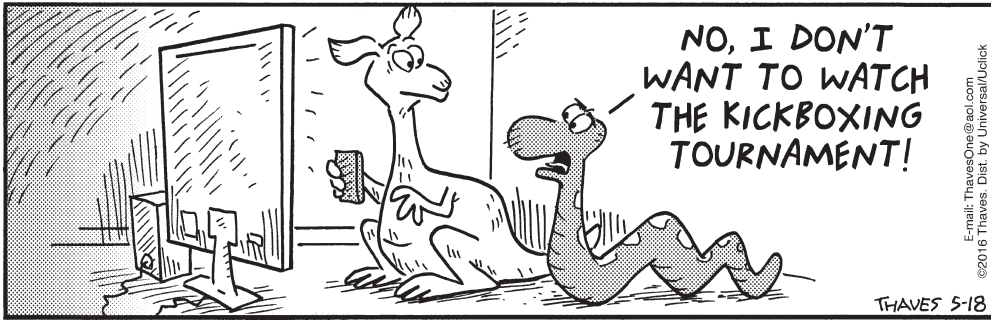
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your main concern has to do with handling business, not making friends. However, it is precisely because you behave in such a professional way that you attract social opportunities.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You consider yourself to be a kind of host of today's situation, and you'll mingle breezily, making sure everyone around you is having fun. Thanks to you, anyone who is capable of a good time will be having one.

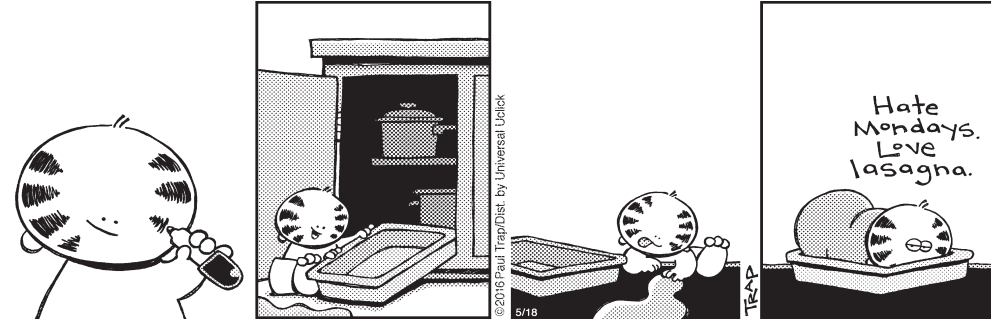
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your time has been valuable all along, though extra work and a stiff deadline makes every second seem to count even more. Discourage interruptions. Ask for the abbreviated version of every story.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (May 19). Your attention will jump-start something new in August. This will be a year when friendships get stronger, business ties grow more lucrative and romance inspires you. A remarkable accomplishment in July will raise your status and allow you to care for you and yours at a new level. September brings leisure and luxury. Pisces and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 11, 14, 21 and 9.

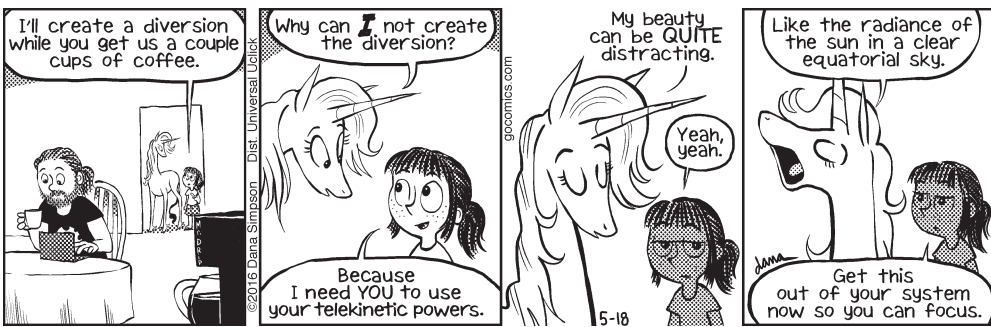
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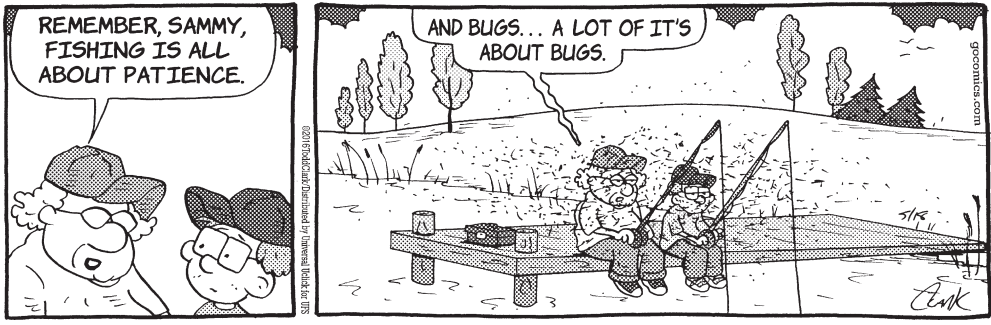
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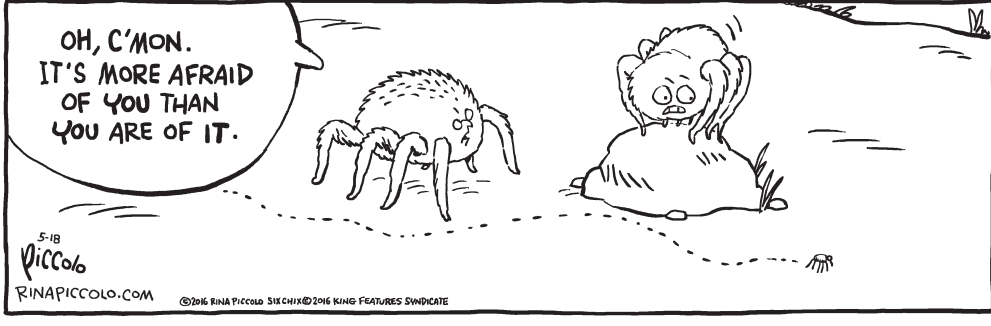
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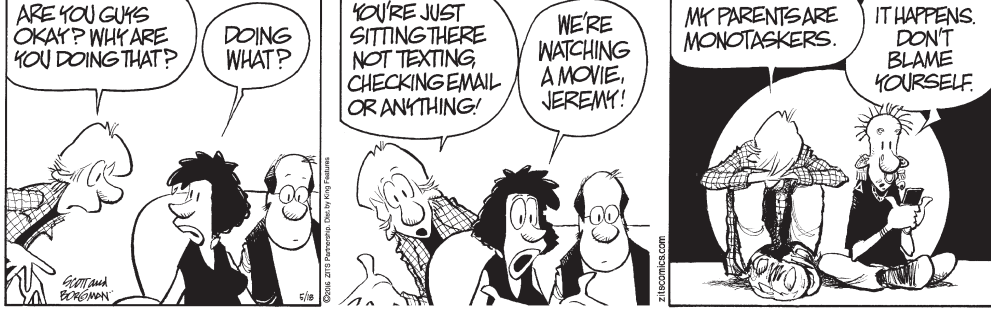
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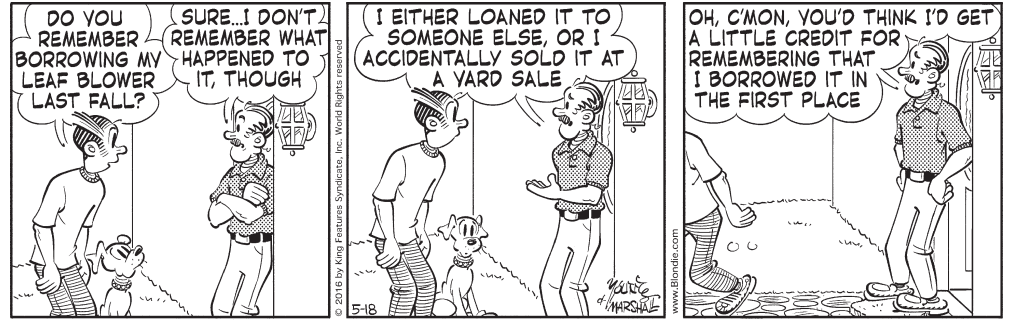
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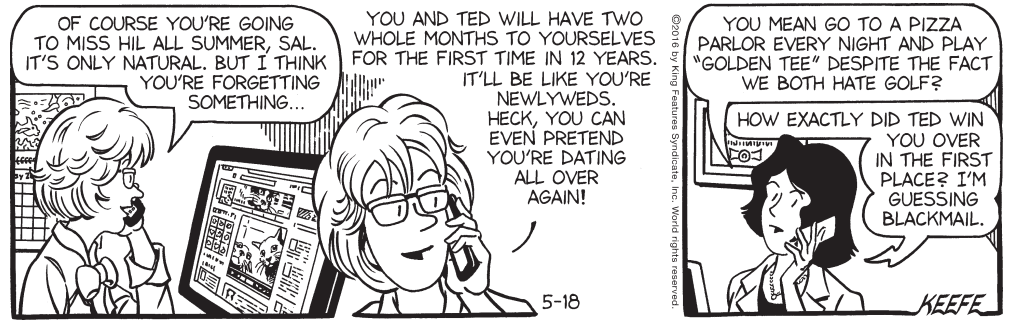
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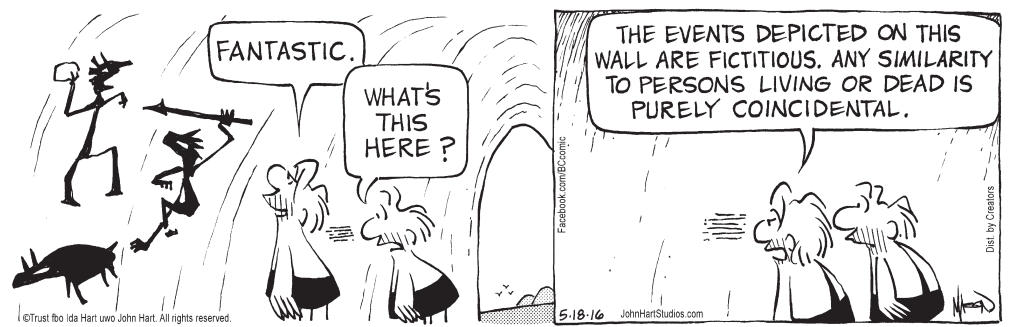
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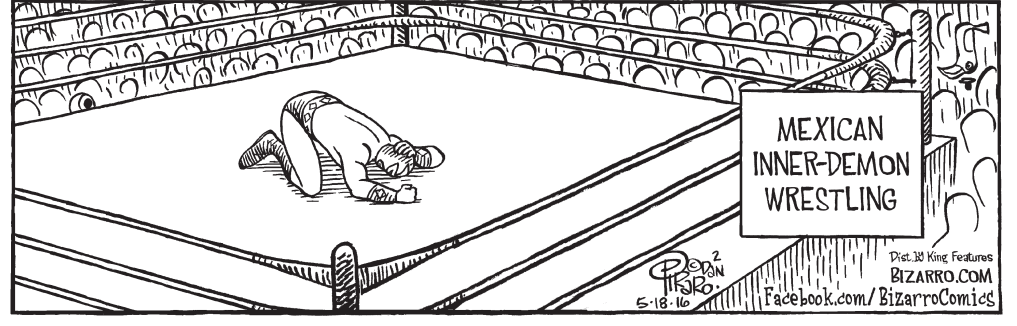
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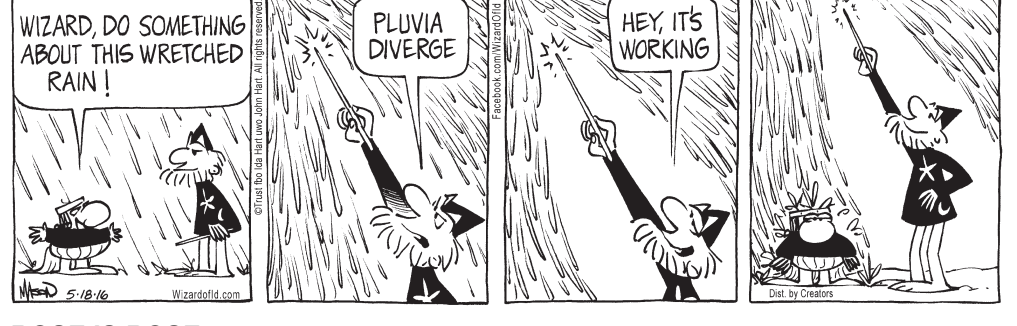
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