

# Time to tolerate the music

**Dear Annie:** I can't stand R.E.M. (the band, not the sleep cycle). I just never understood their appeal. I was born in the early '80s and went to college in the late '90s and early 2000s, so a lot of people around me loved the band. One insufferably "alternative" guy I went to school with had a giant R.E.M. tattoo on his back.

This hasn't really been an issue for me as an adult. The lead singer, Michael Stipe, stays out of the public eye, and when my satellite radio station puts on "It's the End of the World as We Know It" for the billionth time, I simply change the station to one that's playing a song by Taylor Swift, Drake or Adele. But this does become a problem sometimes — whenever I'm with my wife.

It's not what you think. She's not like some big R.E.M. superfan. I'm not sure I could have made that work. The thing is that her brother, who is my age, had a rough time in high school. He was depressed, even to the point of being suicidal, and claims that R.E.M. saved his life.

I know depression is real, and I am glad my brother-in-law is doing well (he's married with two kids), but I can't help myself. I still think R.E.M. is unlistenable. When they come on the radio, my wife turns it up and talks about how special the band is. Why

## Dear Annie



By **Annie Lane**

Creators Syndicate Inc.

does this bother me so much? — *Losing My Religion*

**Dear Losing:** What about finding some compassion? We all have our pet peeves. I'm not the biggest R.E.M. fan, either. But I want you to try — sincerely try — to put your grievances with the band aside for 5 1/2 minutes and listen to their song "Everybody Hurts." Imagine how someone who feels utterly alone might be comforted by its message.

Yes, it's hard to remember to be tolerant when annoying things flare up, but empathy works like a muscle; the more you exercise it the more it grows. You'll be stronger for the effort.

**Dear Annie:** It was my 25th birthday recently, and my fiance and I had a specific themed party on that day, but it was all of his friends who came over. I am on the shy side and didn't

wish to make my birthday a big deal, so I thought it'd be fun to have this party for the guys. After they all found out it was my birthday and showered me with positive vibes, one of the guys asked me why I wasn't out with my friends. He didn't mean anything harmful by it, and I didn't think too hard about the question in the moment. But later on, it had me thinking of the answer: "Because I have no friends." After graduating college, my closest friends all dispersed into the world, and I found myself no longer surrounded by them.

I do live with my best friend — my fiance. However, I feel a bit sad with the realization that I have no other friends. I love spending time with my guy, but I don't have a close-knit group like him anymore. His friends are great, but I want some, too. Am I silly for wanting this? — *Locally Lonely*

**Dear Locally:** You're not silly for wanting friends, but you are silly if you think they're going to magically appear at your doorstep.

Surely, some of your fiance's friends have girlfriends. Try reaching out to them. Say yes to more things. Become an active part of your community. Check out websites designed to connect people around specific interests, such as Meetup.

# Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** More than one high-priority concern will demand your attention, and you can get to each one before the day is over. Make a list and persist until all items are checked off. It's important.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Wanting the same thing as your equally matched opposition? This can't end well, even if you win. Like two atoms seek to occupy the same space, the result is cataclysmic. Do consider wanting something else.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Backing out may not seem like the heroic thing to do, but if it's the thing that will make your life better, smoother and more peaceful, do it. Remove yourself from the situation; seek sanctuary.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** It may seem, from your current vantage, that any place is better than the one in which you stand. It's not true, but you should move anyway, if only to get into a new position.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** There's no chance of the day getting boring. Part of the fun will include snappy banter with an attractive someone. By the way, if you keep this up you could accidentally make someone fall in love with you.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** From time to time, even the most exciting people get bored of their own stories and skins. Being around the people who love you dearly will help you see yourself with the adoring eyes that they see you through.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** The dangers of being overwhelmed are just as real as they are unnecessary. You can and will handle everything you need to. Start easy and make a list of the harder things. You'll deal with those when you're in a stronger position.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Owning too much makes you feel cumbersome and disorganized. You can upgrade by downsizing. Tonight, if you're in the mood to experience the mysteriously exciting side of love, it will be there for you.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Sometimes life happens (SET ITAL) to (END ITAL) you, but mostly it happens (SET ITAL) from (END ITAL) you. Even though you're not always in charge, it's empowering to see your life as a series of choices.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Turn off your self-censorship for a few hours while you brainstorm about how to improve your personal life. During this time, there are no wrong answers or threatening ideas. Ideas won't hurt you.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Morale is higher when everyone on the team feels at least somewhat powerful. If it seems someone has too much control while others have none, there will be problems. Seek balance.

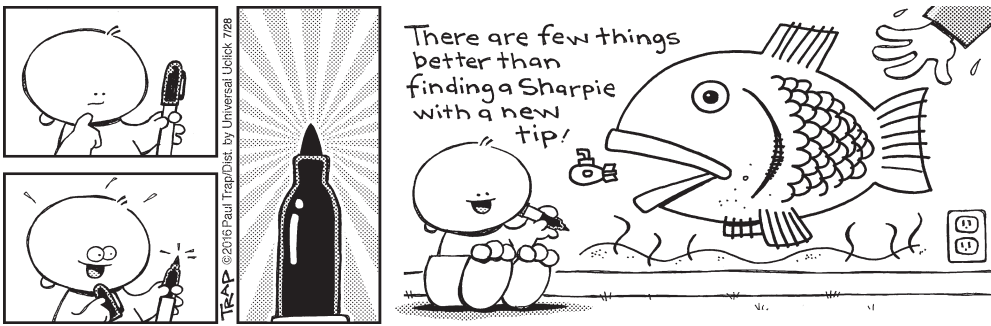
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Your thoughtfulness, combined with your generous spirit and refusal to deal in pettiness, inspires love to flow through your life in a big way. Someone is getting used to this and will soon be spoiled if you keep it up.

**FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 29).** A new income source opens to you in the next seven weeks. August features promises kept; new commitments will be made in September. October is one long celebration of friendship. Because you mostly care about doing work you can be proud of, your satisfaction is guaranteed in the last months of the year. Libra and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 12, 3, 33, 28 and 15.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



## THATABABY



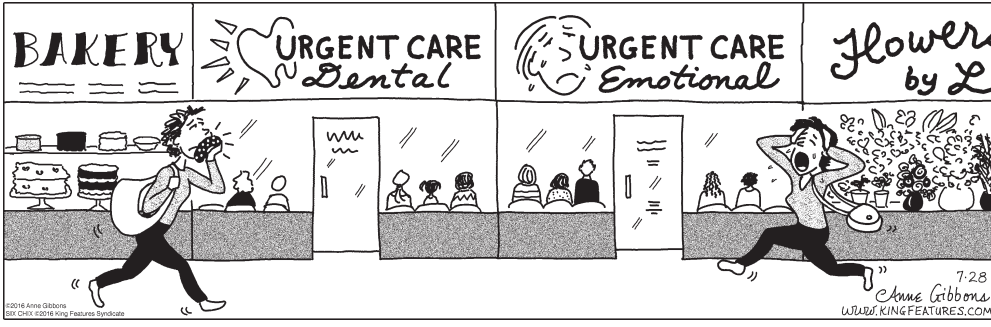
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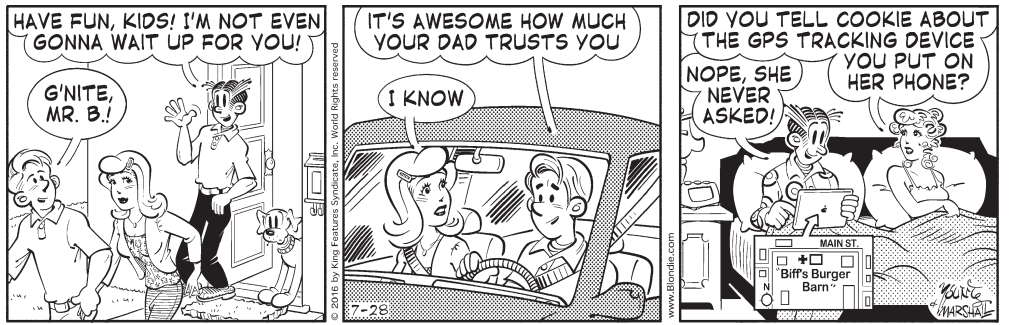
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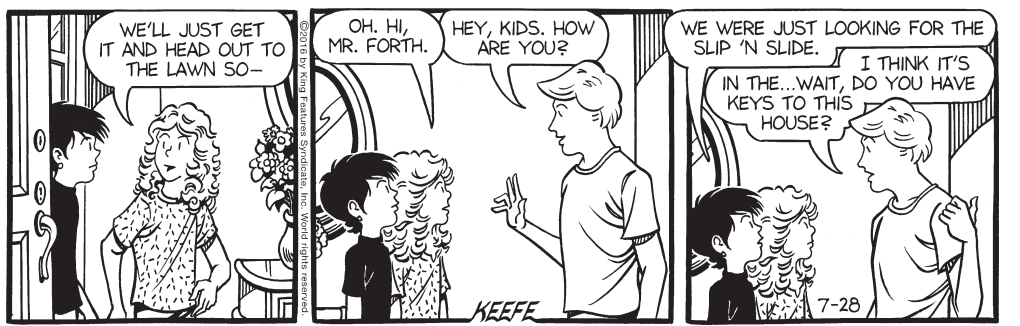
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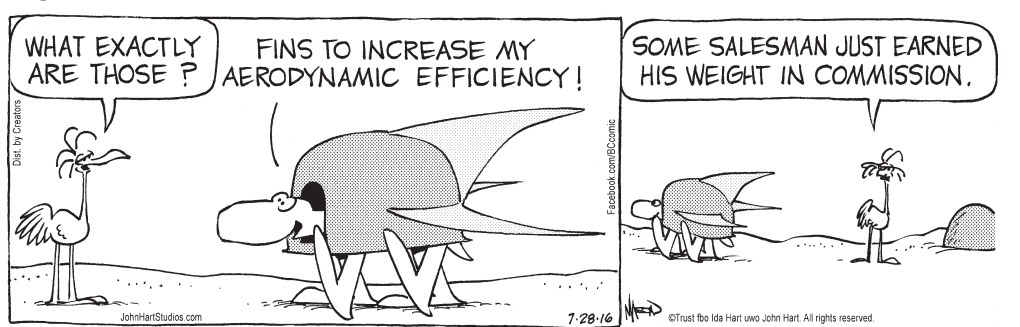
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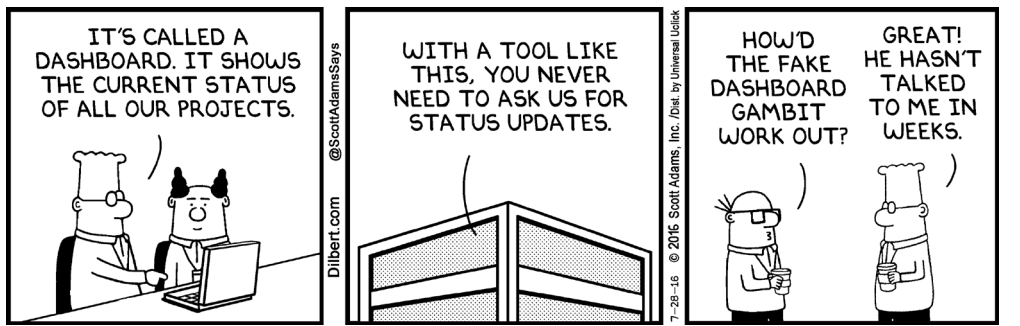
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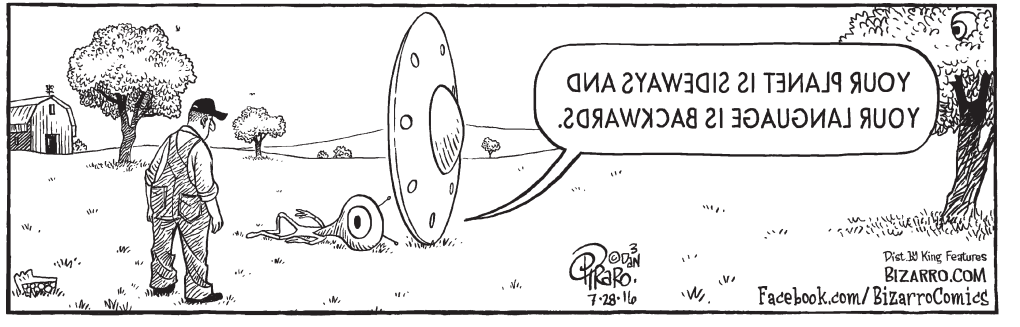
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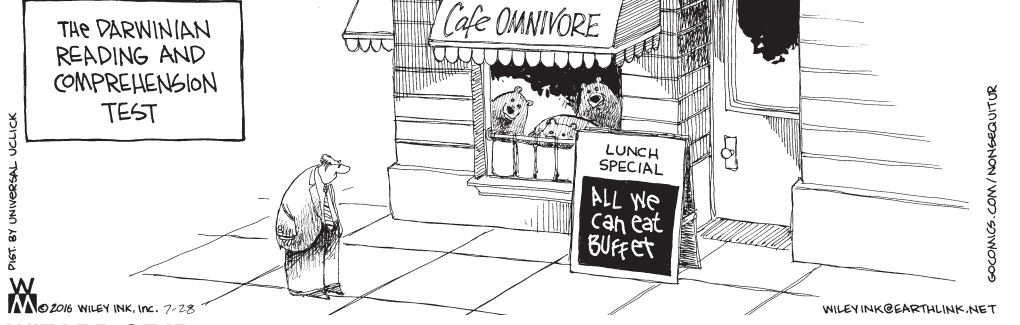
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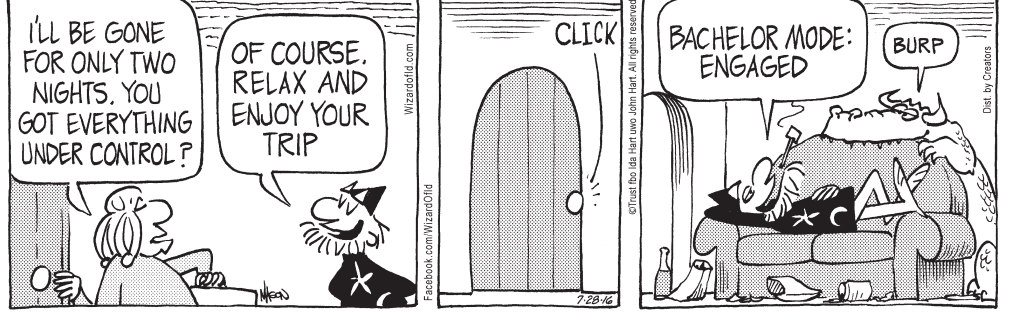
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