

Facing life changes alone

Dear Annie: After 24 years of marriage, my husband wants to split up. I have had health issues for a few years, and now he says he is tired of dealing with them. We have been living with his parents and our three kids for about a year and a half. I have been given a deadline to move out — alone.

I have been trying to find a place I can afford while staying near my elderly father. Moving in with him is not an option. I may have found a room in a house and am going to check it out tomorrow.

Suddenly, reality is hitting me. I won't see my kids every day. I won't have my cats, who are 9 and 13, because I can't find a place that allows pets. I have been crying all day. I'm trying to keep busy packing, but every time I see my cats, it starts up again.

I have a psychiatrist or counselor. I don't have time to see them before I leave but plan to make appointments soon after I move.

No one in my family is acting as if this major life change is a big deal. I'm just looking for some validation. — *Crushed in California*

Dear Crushed: You have 100 percent of my validation and then some. I'm so sorry you're going through this.

Dear Annie



By Annie Lane

Creators Syndicate Inc.

My husband and I didn't go to the wedding or the birthday party. I am upset but don't know whether I am being selfish for resenting that I would have had to run out and get a card and gift for an event we were invited to at the last minute. We are in our 50s. Is this the new way of doing things? Should we be more flexible and get with the program? — *Upset by These Little Things*

Dear Upset: Though your adaptability is admirable, you don't need to get with the program if it means leaving behind all expectations of common courtesy.

It is becoming more commonplace for budget-conscious couples to have "standby" guest lists. It's not ideal, etiquette-wise, but the tactic isn't so offensive if done discreetly. But inviting someone to your wedding three days before it happens? That's a faux pas in the first degree.

If you feel comfortable, perhaps ask each woman individually — without any accusation in your tone — whether there was a reason the invitation came so late. Each one may have a perfectly reasonable answer. But it's probable that neither will, and your question will at least prompt both of them to think of being more courteous next time.

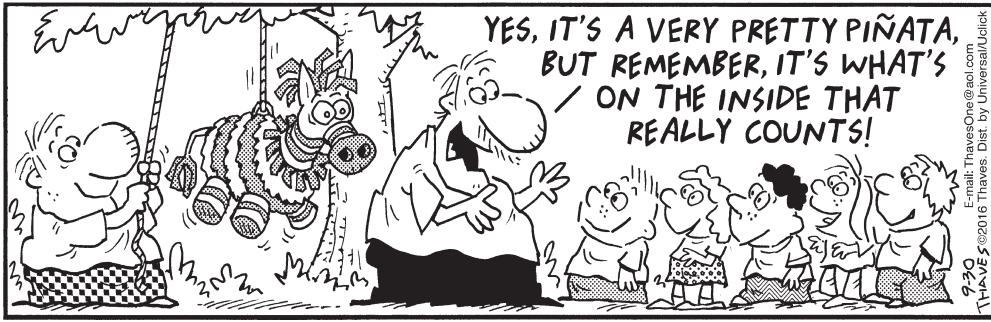
I would encourage you to keep looking for a place that allows pets. They can be so therapeutic.

It's especially important to take care of yourself during a major life trauma such as this, so I'm glad to hear you have a plan in place to see your doctor and therapist. It sounds as if you are taking all the right steps to build a healthier, happier life. Just give it time.

Dear Annie: Twice in two years my husband and I were invited to a family event at the very last minute.

We were invited to a wedding three days in advance and a significant birthday party 1½ days in advance. These invitations were from two women in my extended family, both of whom are in their late 20s. And in both instances, the women used email to ask whether we'd be attending.

FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



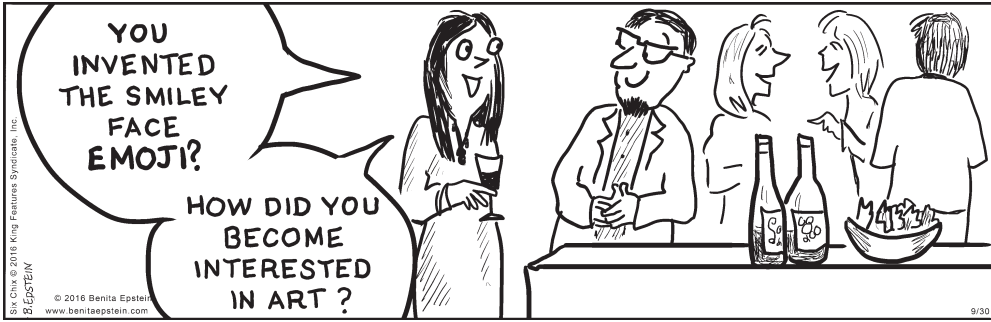
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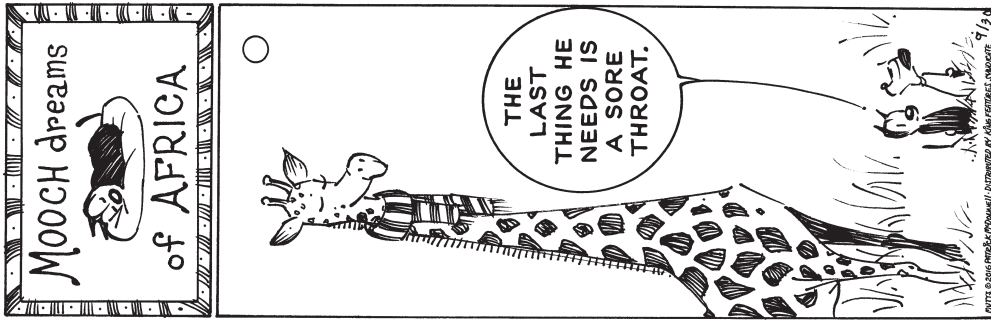
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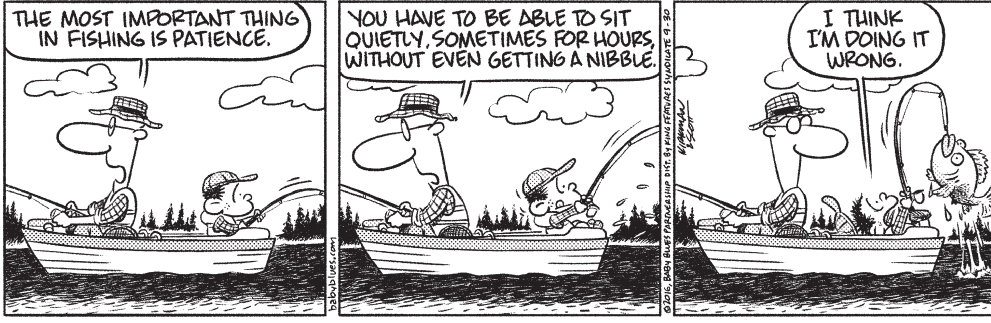
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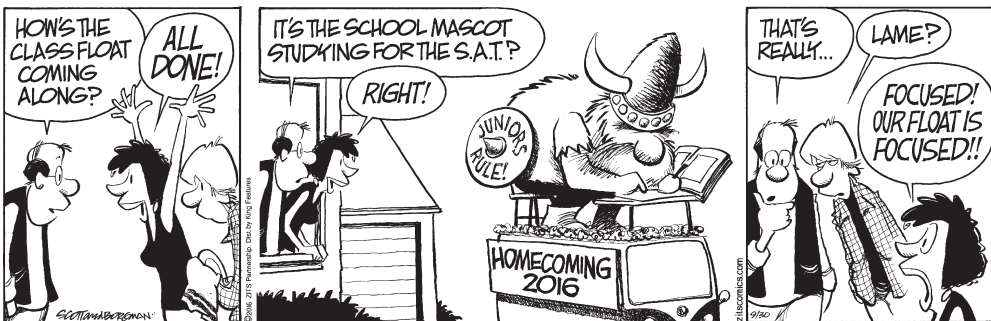
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Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Those who think that clothing doesn't matter much will think again. What you wear when you go out will play a key role in how you feel and who you are being in the situation.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Does it seem like other people's opinions are getting heard more readily than yours? Remedy this. Speak up. Bring a bullhorn if you have to, but make yourself heard; it will benefit all.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You could love something just because someone else loves it, and that will turn out to be as good a reason as any. Getting wrapped up in the spirit of things will be wonderful.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There's something complicated in your personal life that's about to get much less so. All you have to do is see the truth and notice it. You don't have to do anything about about it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The love of your life may be a person, or it may be a fascination. Either way, this great love will hold the lion's share of your attention this weekend. Partnering with a Libra in some way will be lucky.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You don't like the feeling that someone is checking you every move. However, right now there's something nice about knowing that there are those who are aware of you and "have your back."

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Maybe you don't care if your efforts get noticed or not; you're acting purely to refine your character and expand your heart as you go above and beyond what is being asked of you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). This is

a lucky day to make reservations, plan ahead, buy tickets and more. You'll land the best seats, the center of the meat, the prime spot for socializing with just the people who can help you the most.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Babies crawl before they walk: It's safer this way. From the hands and knees they don't have as far to fall. Do your learning in the order that strengthens and builds your skills organically.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). If the clothes don't fit or the sheets no longer stay on the bed, get rid of them. But if it's just a broken relationship — well, it's quite possible that can be mended with only a few words. And you're in just the mood to try it, too.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). As for the weeds in the garden of your social life, these pesky creatures seem intent on causing disorder among your well-tended base. Either chalk it up to "nature" or uproot that which offends.

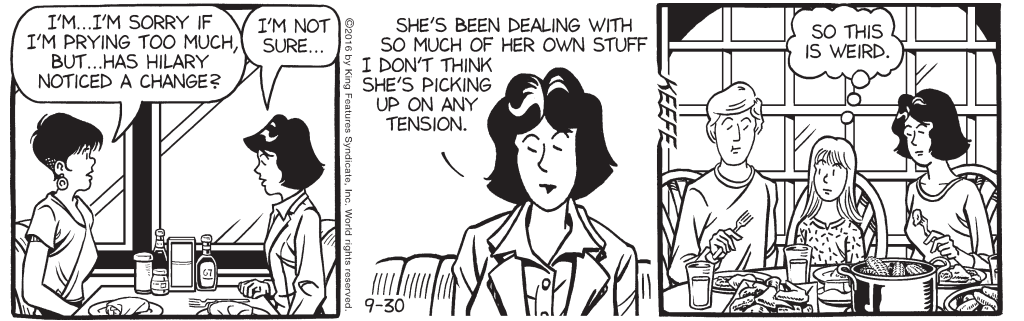
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There may be a surprise limitation thrown your way, but this will actually prove to be an advantage. If you're stuck between a rock and a hard place, there's nowhere to go but up.

SATURDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Oct. 1). You'll fly in your personal life — positively float by the things that weighed you down in the past. You'll conjure up an elixir of love in 2017 and use it at will to either deepen relationships or start new ones. What you'll learn in February will keep you more lucratively employed. July brings a trophy. Aquarius and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 18, 3, 35, 48 and 27.

BLONDIE



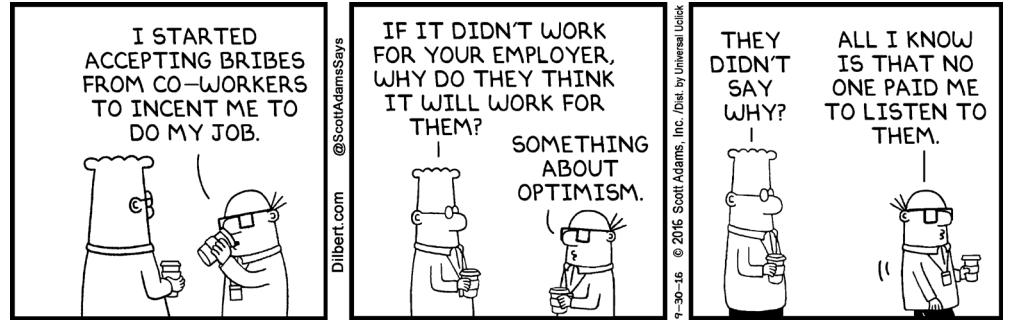
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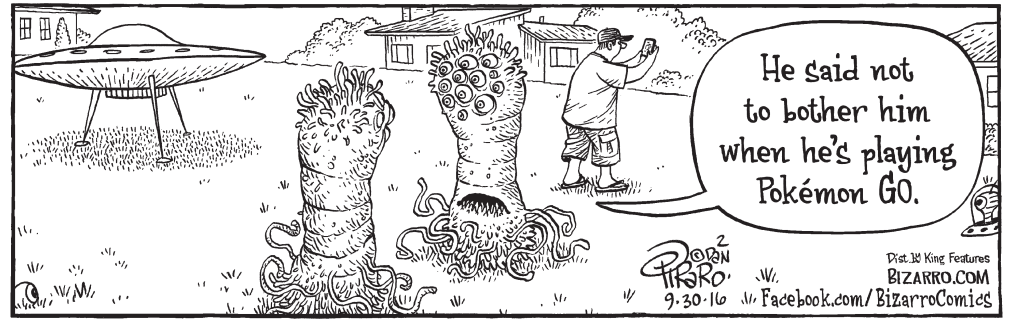
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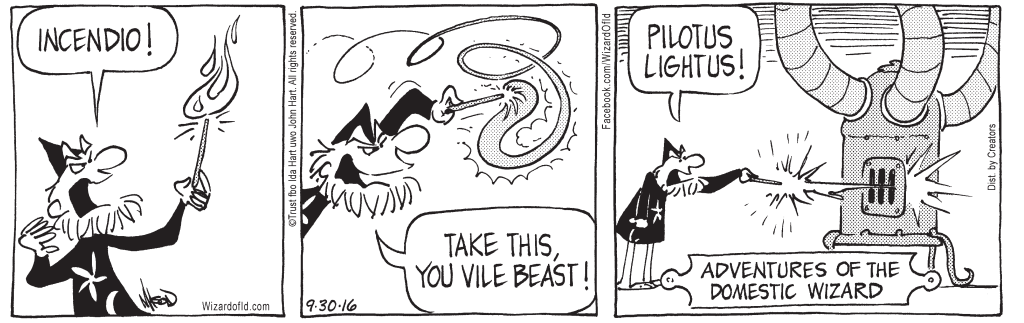
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