

Gimme, gimme gimme!

Dear Annie: Just a word to alert people to something that must be common: greed in families. My dad has been crippled for many years. I have lived with him and taken care of him ever since the accident, after which he could no longer drive. My sister has basically ignored him except on Thanksgiving and Christmas, when her family usually gets thousands of dollars from him.

We live in the same town, but I don't recall a single time they invited him to go shopping — or anywhere. Twice, they tried to get him to buy them a new house. The last time, he was to sell everything to buy it — but not be allowed to live in it. I won't say where they were going to put him, except a lawyer I know called it barbaric. I'm sure it would have lasted only until the Medicare look-back period elapsed; then they would have moved him to a facility.

Dad was too smart to fall for that; I did not have to say a word. Nephews and nieces — they showed up when checks were handed out, but when the checks stopped, so did they. There is a lot more I've held in for years, but the point is that I definitely do not feel part of that family, and now that

Dear Annie



By Annie Lane

Creators Syndicate Inc.

my dad's time and mine are growing close, my will states that what I leave behind will go to hospitals for children. I feel no obligation to my sister or other relatives. It would be too late to change things now, nor do I want to.

I know they are expecting a shower of money and will be surprised. The point is that you should treat people as you would like to be treated, or at the end, you may just get exactly what you have earned. Would you advise any differently? — *Disillusioned*

Dear Disillusioned: It's wonderful that your dad could rely on you all these years. You should be grateful for the special bond you two have shared. Let that gratitude occupy more space in your heart than the resentment toward your sibling does. You will feel lighter.

Dear Annie: My niece lived with a partner who had small children. They were together for over four years, and our family came to love them all. When they broke up, she was not allowed by her ex to see the children or contact them. Those kids called her Mama, and we considered them family.

I know the breakup was bitter, and there were problems caused by both adults in the relationship. I just think about those kids all the time and how they must wonder what happened to their "cousins," "aunts," "uncles" and "grandparents" who baby-sat them and gave them love. I know that the biological parent makes the decisions, but I worry about the long-term effects to these kids. — *Heartsick*

Dear Heartsick: Sadly, most breakups mean saying goodbye not just to a partner but also to parents, siblings, friends and more. That there were children involved here makes it more heartbreaking. I hope the ex fully considered the effects and is helping them adjust. It's unfortunate, but you're right that neither you nor your niece has grounds to contact them at this point. Perhaps once the children turn 18, you could reach out and see how they're doing.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). If you pretend that it's your job to help the other person express himself, you will have a transcendent conversational experience (with someone you may not agree with, or even like).

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If only you could be a fly on the wall where she works or a shadow that follows him through his day, you'd know more about what matters to a certain someone. Casual and gentle interest will gradually open the relationship.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It takes courage to let another person help you with a problem. If you go into it pretending you have no problems, you're wasting time. There's something to be gained from handing over the flaw. Be brave.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). What fits the occasion today may not suit you at all next season, but that's something to consider later. Speak your mind. Live this moment. Better to do what you'll regret than to regret what you didn't do.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There are times when forgiveness is harder. You're not holding a grudge exactly, but there's a bit of justice to be served here, and it feels you'd be doing all a disservice if you were to simply let it go.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You prize yourself on being useful in a crisis, but you're even more useful in avoiding such things. They may never know or appreciate what you do to steer clear of the drama today, but you should feel really good about it!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There's a difference between listening to what others are saying so you can use it and build on it with your own story and listening to help another person articulate what's on his or her mind and heart.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The way you're acting — they'll swear you have a secret. Of course you do! And no matter how badly they want to know, they'll have to settle for reveling in the delicious air of mystery around you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Before you endeavor to resolve a discrepancy, settle a dispute or dispel a doubt, first consider why you need so badly to fix it. Also, is it yours to fix? Lastly, might there be a benefit to leaving it broken?

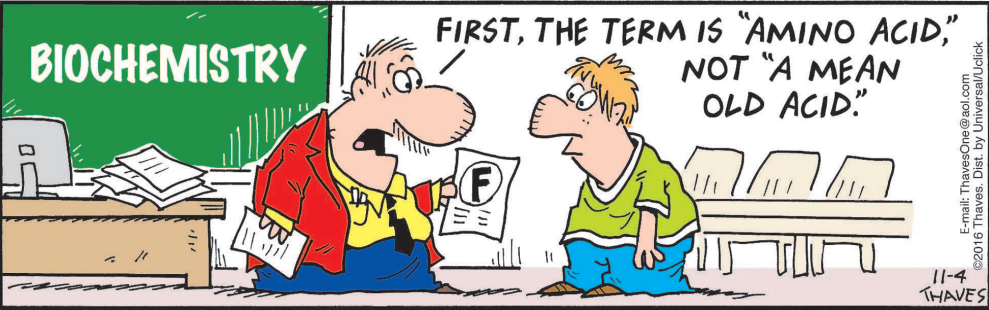
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Whatever a quality lifestyle is to you, you can bet there are others who share enough common elements in the Venn diagram to warrant you making a serious go at combining your efforts and forming a relationship.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You seek greater control over your life and feel driven to start with your body. Be gentle and kind in this regard. Doing too much or restricting too much will be counterproductive.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Those who support you best may turn a blind eye to the things you do to sabotage your own success, instead focusing on all the things you do right. Get on your own support team. This method may just work.

SATURDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 5). Exaggerated circumstances will bring out your best at the end of the year. There will be a confetti "Bang!" feeling to the beginning of 2017. Freedom will come in the form of financial luck. Adorable influences come to your realm in April and your nurturing instincts take over. You're so productive in May. Gemini and Aquarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 50, 3, 25 and 16.

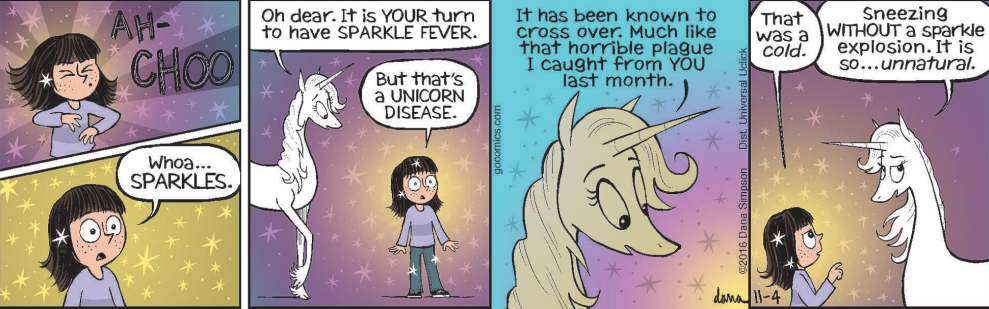
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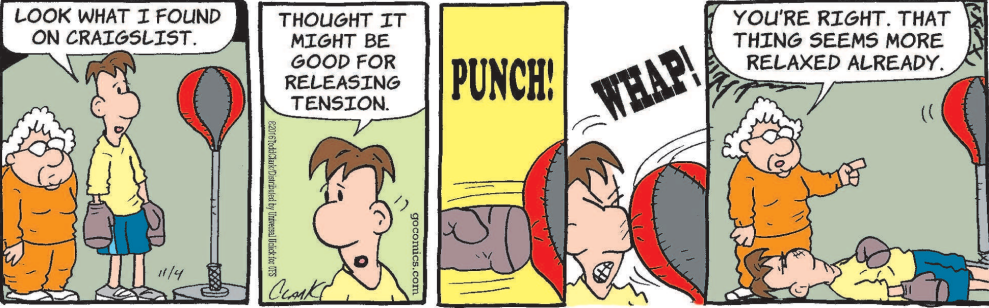
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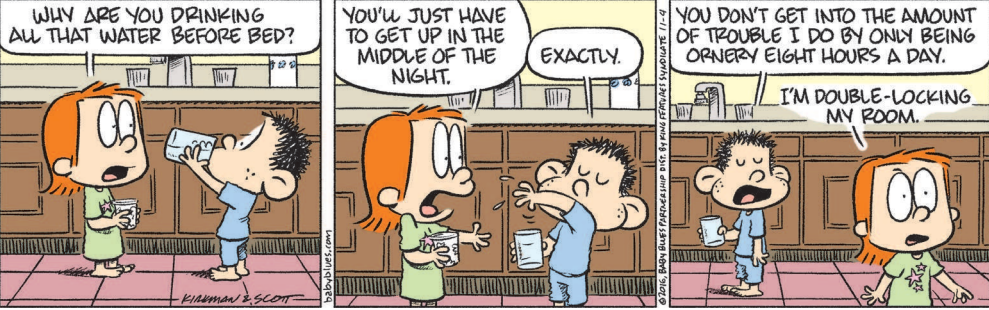
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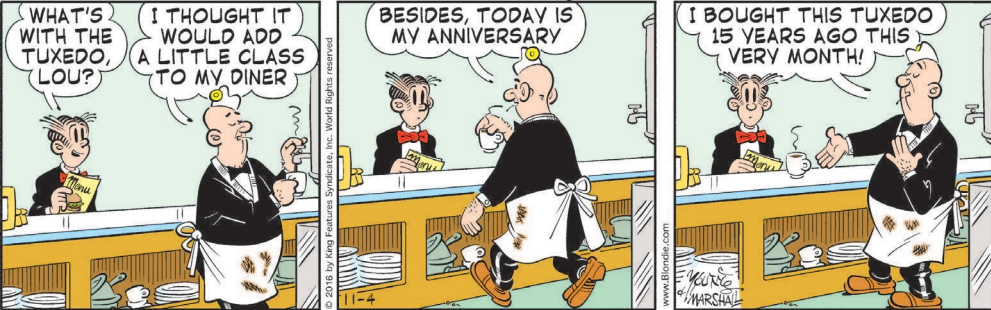
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