

Trouble finding friends

Dear Annie: I moved to New York City for work just over two years ago. Though I grew up in a smaller town in the Midwest and stayed close to home for college, I really love the pace of the city, and I'm starting to feel that I have my place here.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

About a month after moving, I was introduced to my now boyfriend, "Josh." We instantly hit it off and have a great, loving relationship. He is from New York originally and has a huge community nearby. Given all his family, co-workers and friends — childhood to college — there's a vast network of people whom I now feel connected with. NYC can be a difficult place to make friends, and Josh opened up a lot of doors for meeting new people.

Yet I still feel as if I'm "Josh's girlfriend" to most of them rather than my own person. True, we mainly see each other when Josh is around, but I'd like to move past that.

Josh's work is sending him to London for three months, and I don't want these friendships to disappear during that time, too. As a fully grown woman, I feel embarrassed to ask, but, Annie, how do I make friends?

— *Big Apple Blues*

Dear Blues: No need to feel embarrassed. In many ways, socializing becomes more challenging once we're "fully grown," as our lives fall into the routine of work, sleep, repeat. It's hard to make friends in the rat race.

But as you've recognized, your current network is an invaluable starting point. Try spending some time, sans Josh, with a few of his friends you feel you have the most in common with. They in turn can introduce you to other friends and groups, until you've branched out into your own space.

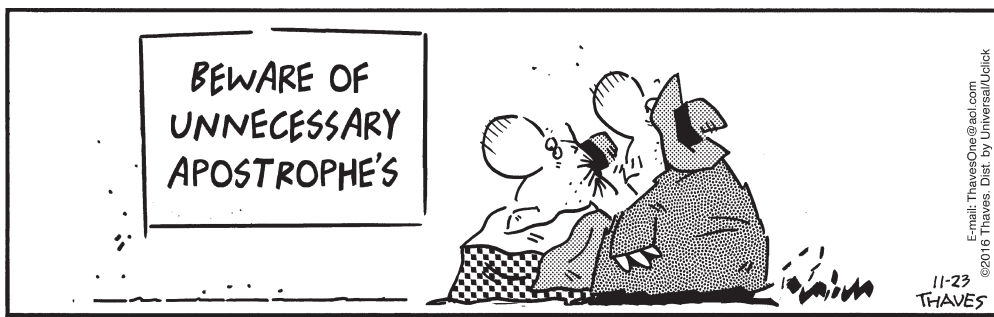
And get active in your community. I would also recommend joining a site such as Meetup, which connects people with similar hobbies and

goals — for example, running a marathon, writing a book, learning a new language or learning to cook. Visit <https://www.meetup.com> for more information.

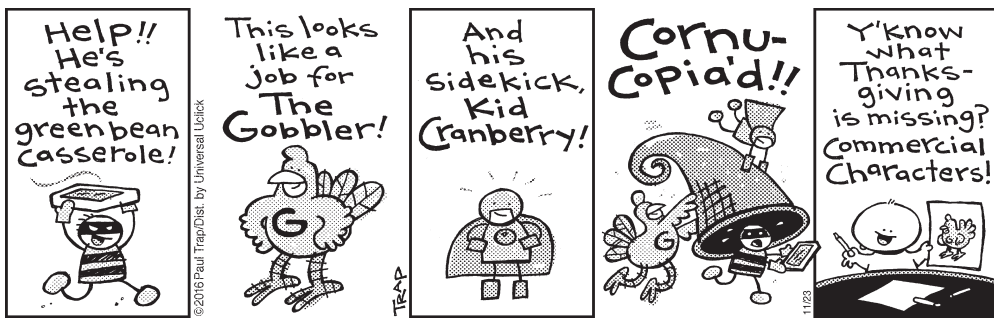
Dear Annie: I'd never felt compelled to write until today. The letter from "To Be or Not to Be" made me cry. My parents died within 13 months of each other. My father died from a lengthy illness, and my mother, who was several years younger, died suddenly a year later. I remember receiving checks from life insurance, annuities, the sale of her house, etc. Every time a check came in the mail, it reminded me of my loss. I would much rather have my parents than any amount of money.

So, "TBNB," if you're reading this: Don't do it! Your children and grandchildren don't want your money. They want you to be a part of their lives for as long as God allows. This is what your two grown children would tell you if you asked. Look at it from their perspective. — *Still Missing Mom and Dad*

FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



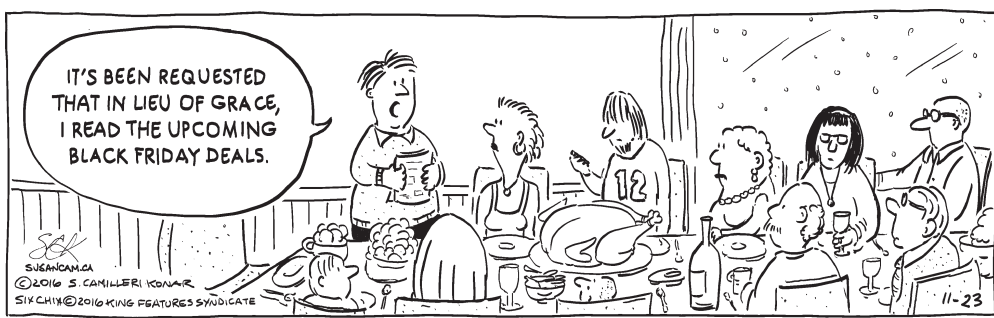
PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



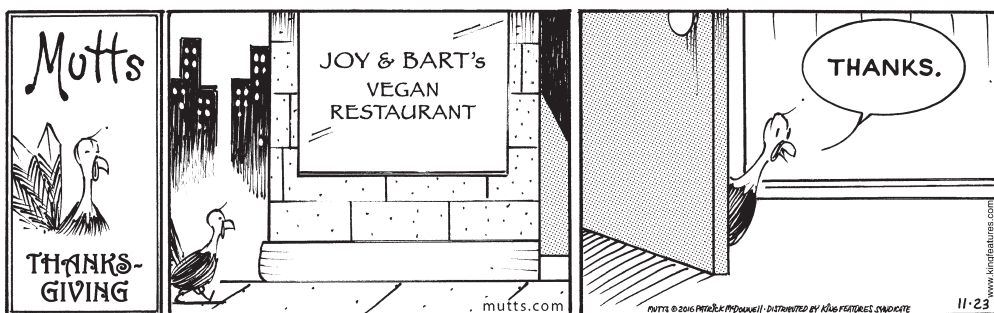
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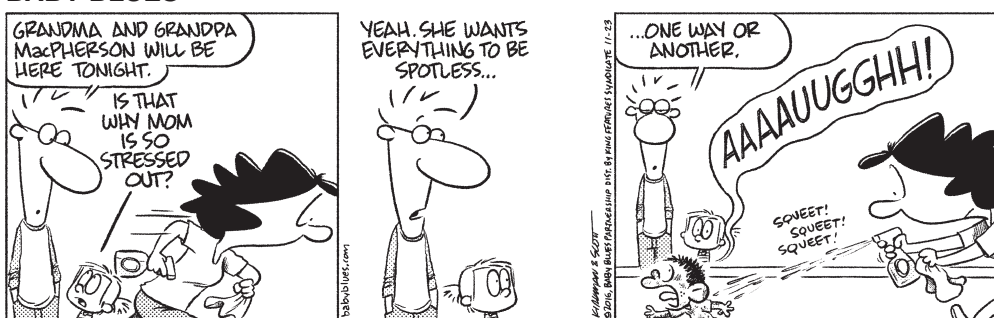
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MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Compassion is not just a word you read in books about popes, saints and the Dalai Lama. Compassion is an automatic response to your daily life. It's who you are.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). While there are detailed reasons why things must go as they do, in the broader sense, the circular nature of your business will bring with it a wallop of irony. "Crops are sold for money spent on food." — Heraclitus

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Gratitude will help keep you centered and focused on creating the experience you want for yourself and your loved ones. Your resources are abundant, and whatever you don't have will be yours for the asking.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It's heaven to be around people who get you, no explanation necessary. For these connections, intimate communication is subtle communication. You'll go right to the heart of the matter.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Finding a groove requires a bit of patience today, so don't expect things to work immediately. People need to get warmed up first, and that includes you. Breathe, smile, and get grounded. By noon all will sync up.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Don't let details bog you down, and avoid trying to prepare for every possible scenario. Most things will go right. Later, there will be more important things to tend to than the ones you were tempted to obsess over.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Team spirit is not the job of one team member; rather, it's a manner in which functions of the game are exercised. Your esprit de corps will be contagious. Encourage them to originate such a feeling, too, so it's not all on you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Stay out of the minutiae. Jump up to that perch that will give you the big picture view. This is the way to bring/have/make the most fun possible out of today's scenario.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're curious about people. Sometimes that curiosity kicks in years later, when it's too late to know. You're still wondering how certain things came to be. Now is your chance to ask and avoid future regret.

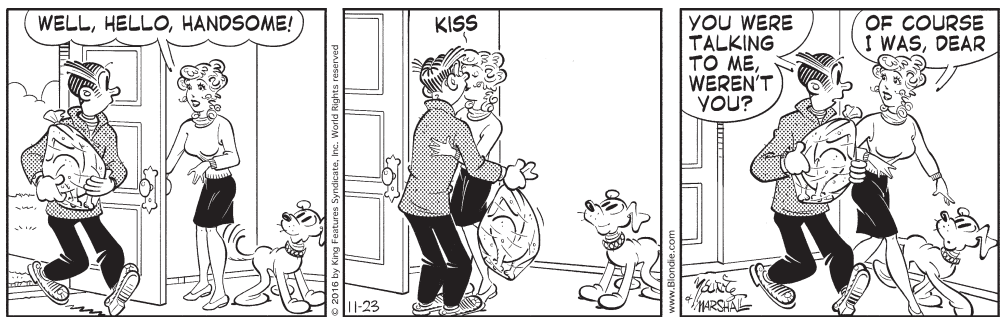
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There are many delights in your arsenal of social graces. Superb manners, exemplary humor, exceptional warmth — that's just the beginning. Wait till they taste your pie!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You and a loved one will understand one another perfectly as long as you're making the effort to communicate out loud. Because there's so much else going on today, your usual shorthand or telepathy with this person won't work.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're already the complete package. You're whole. You're perfectly you, just the way you are. Make this your mantra through the day. Sure, everyone can improve, but it's a choice, not a necessity. You're already worthy.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 24). They might not notice your fine character, but it will lead to extremely noticeable successes this year. There's an intense streak of work coming up, which helps you make a large sum of money by the end of February. April and beyond bring many opportunities for connection and closeness that shouldn't be taken lightly. Taurus and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 1, 24, 31, 18 and 43.

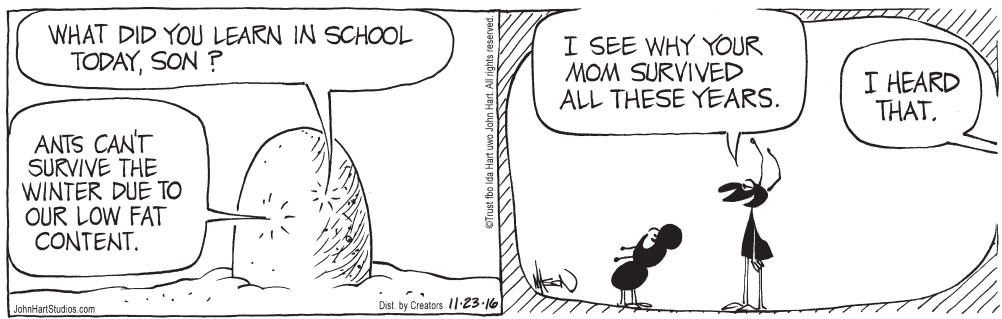
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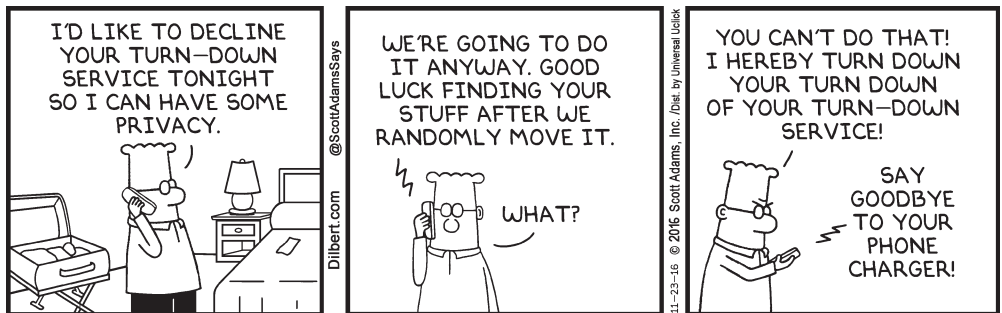
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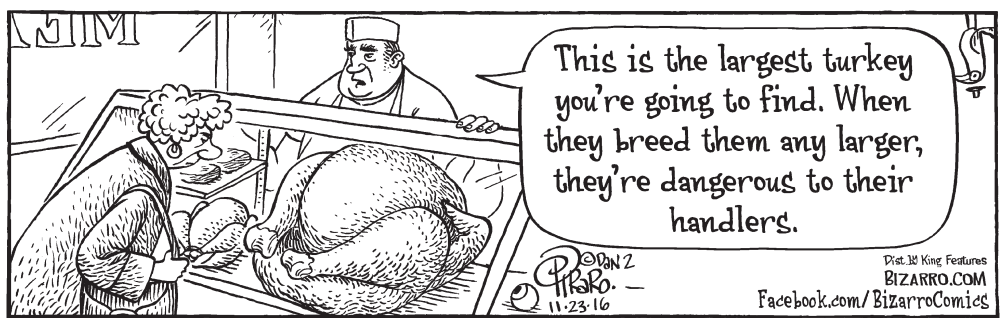
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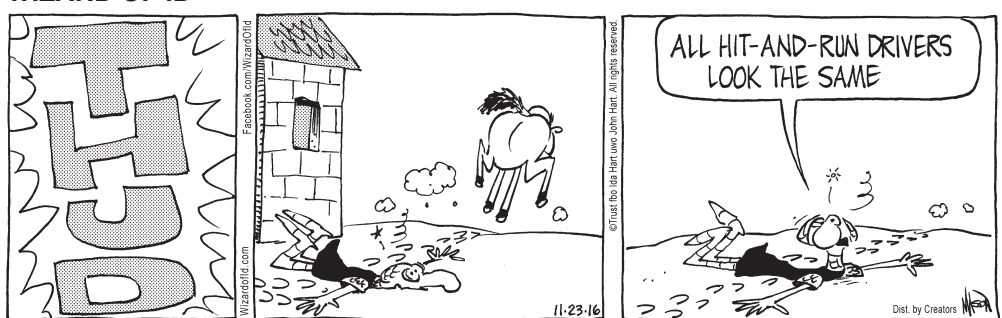
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WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

