

Where's the wedding money?

Dear Annie: I am here wondering: How many times do you go out to eat and expect a free meal? Never, right? So I am really baffled by how someone could attend a wedding (either single or with a date) and find it acceptable to leave a gift of just \$100 for two people, let alone \$0.

Sure, there are certain financial circumstances that may hinder someone's ability to contribute. But here is my stance: If you can't afford to cover your plate, why go?

A wedding is intended to be a celebration unifying the new couple's lives together. It is not a foundation they set up to make donations for their guests and give them free meals. It's expensive; everyone knows this. Regardless of who pays for the event, I find it appalling that so many adults would not properly contribute in any fashion — and not even feel embarrassed about it! Maybe their parents fell short in the manners department when raising them. After being a part of several weddings, I am seriously perplexed by this lack of etiquette. It's very disappointing.

I'm now planning my own wedding, and I find myself left with the dilemma of not wanting to invite certain individuals because I know they wouldn't give any sort of gift. The most upsetting part is this happens to be the case with several of my family members (who are in good positions financially). I know I really can't address it among them, but this has happened at two of my siblings' weddings, and I know it would occur for mine. I don't want to cut family members off, but if they wouldn't contribute, then I feel that I am left without a choice. What do I do? — *Tired of Wedding Freeloaders*

Dear Tired: Are you planning a wedding or running a business?

It's common courtesy to bring a gift to a wedding, sure. I agree with you 100 percent. But you can't be so concerned with the return on investment. Invite your loved ones because you love them and want them at your wedding, not because you'll get your money's worth. Ultimately, taking the high road will make you feel like a

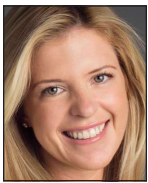
million bucks.

Dear Annie: I believe the advice you gave to "Very Disappointed Mother-in-Law," who has concerns about her daughter but feels shut out by her son-in-law, was pretty accurate in terms of what she was looking for. But I feel that you missed one thing in your response. You didn't address the part where she said she believes that her daughter is manic.

As someone who suffers from bipolar disorder, I know firsthand that if someone is manic — especially someone who is alone with children — it needs to be addressed immediately. When you're manic, your behavior can be very erratic and dangerous. If she truly suspects that her daughter is manic, she needs to get her to her physician to be examined and put on medication if necessary. Her daughter may even need to be hospitalized to get this under control and her mental health properly assessed. — *Bipolar in Kentucky*

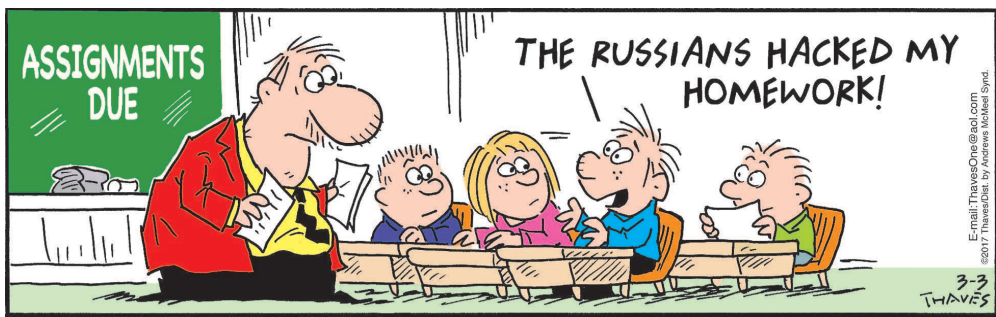
Dear Bipolar: Thank you so much for raising that concern. I'd like to echo that sentiment. Anyone experiencing symptoms that indicate the possibility of bipolar disorder should talk to his or her doctor immediately.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

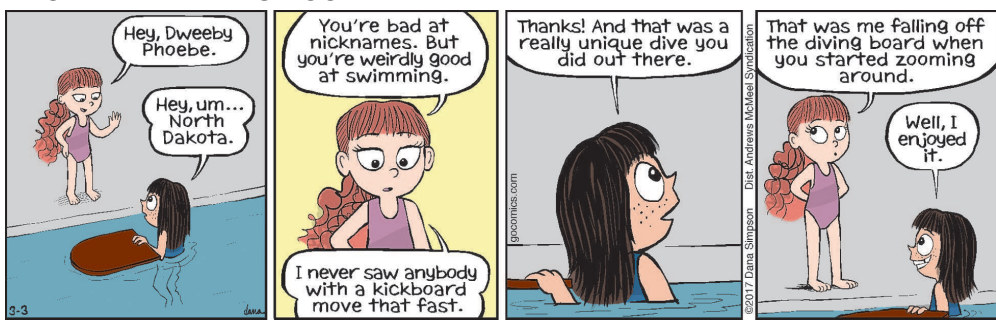
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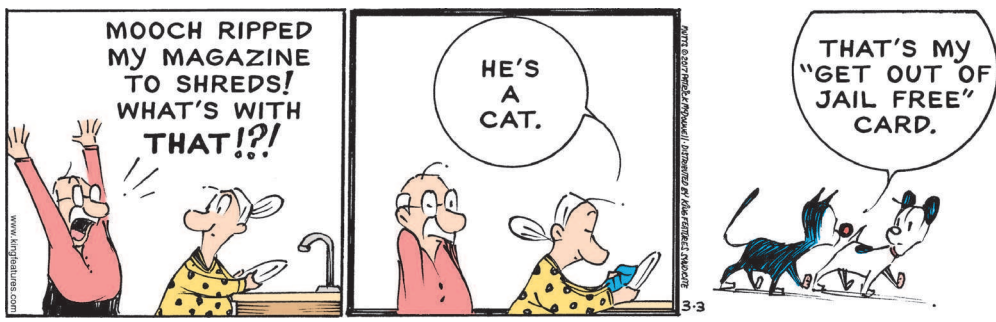
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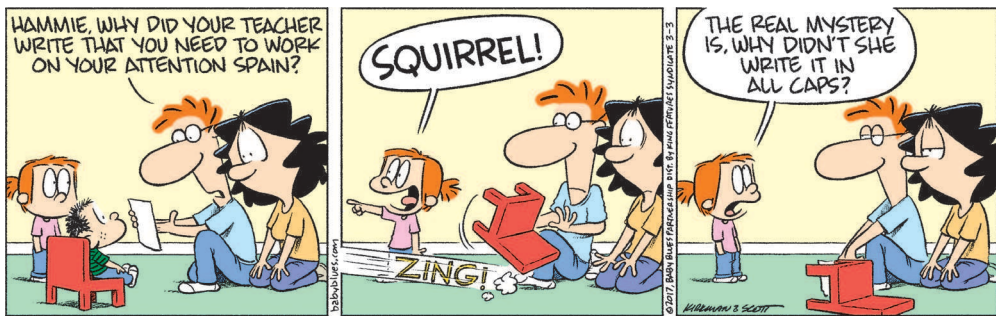
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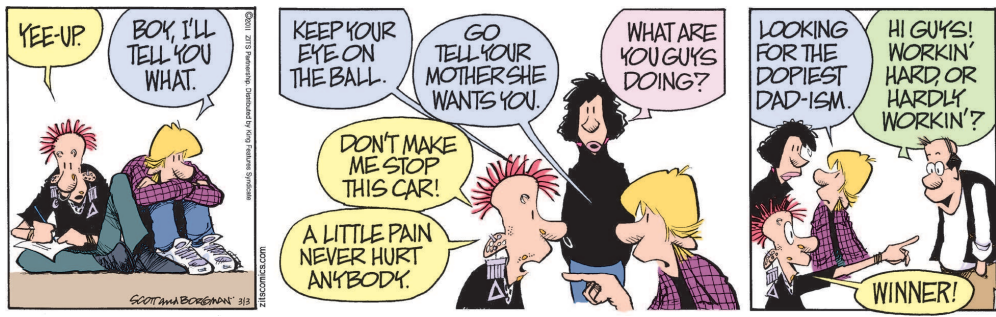
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TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Problems get solved today by devoting full attention to them in a creative way. An intense focus without any new ideas won't work. New ideas without intense focus won't work. You've the capacity for both; apply it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). It will be liberating to be around people who don't have a lot of rules attached to their friendship. Seek the company of those who are accepting, unthreatened by your talents and assets, undaunted by your shortcomings.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If you let your thoughts wander today, there's a tendency to brood. It's human nature, which has a strong negativity bias, exacerbated by the current cosmic lineup. Counteract it with a busy day of distractions and delights.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll benefit from thinking of the "self" you show the world as verb instead of a noun — as a manner of assembling the attributes and opinions handed to you early on. Also, you can arrange this differently whenever you want to.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Some of the humans you'll interact with today are so sensitive to emotion and tone that you may wish you were interacting with a robot who responds to specific commands without attaching any emotional baggage.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Trying to hide what you're feeling will lead to energy blockages that inhibit your performance. However you're feeling, it's right. Let energy flow through you so that it can either dissipate or activate your intention.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). We live in a world of symbols, very few of which stand for what

they actually are. Your thought into what things symbolize will help today's interactions.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Of all the tests you could be offered, it's the tests of patience that will do the most to expand your consciousness and mature your soul. To breathe, relax and be reasonable when the tension is high — this is evolution.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). As you move quickly through a problem, the rest may seem to lag behind. There's much to be gained from honoring the pacing of others. Observe and learn instead of distracting yourself away from the business at hand.

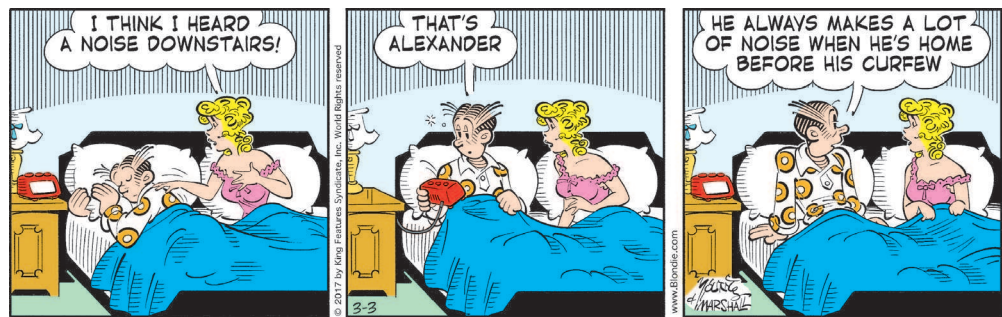
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Can there be thoughts without a thinker? Some say it's possible, even optimal. And though they condemn the ego, you can bet there's much in yours that would be missed were you to join the ranks of the enlightened today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll project yourself rather cleverly and be well accepted. If you also happen to be having fun with this, and are not too concerned about what others are thinking, you're winning all around.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). More art than science, history is colored by the values and beliefs of the teller. What you believe about the past will direct the future. Be open to hearing more than one account of what happened.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 4). New reserves of determination open in you. You stop looking for opportunities and start creating them. Going on the premise that conditions will never be perfect, you'll push forward and build major success through your efforts. Next month seals a deal. Gemini and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 28, 6, 40 and 17.

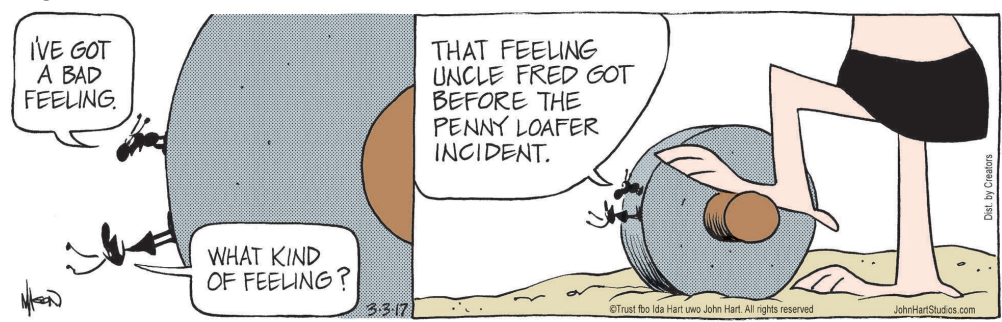
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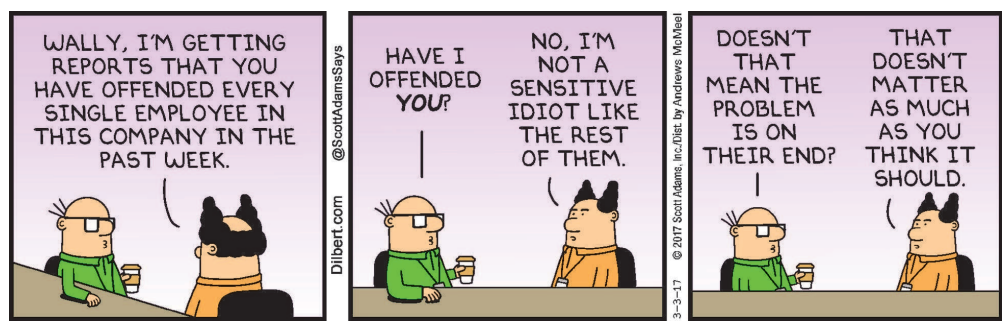
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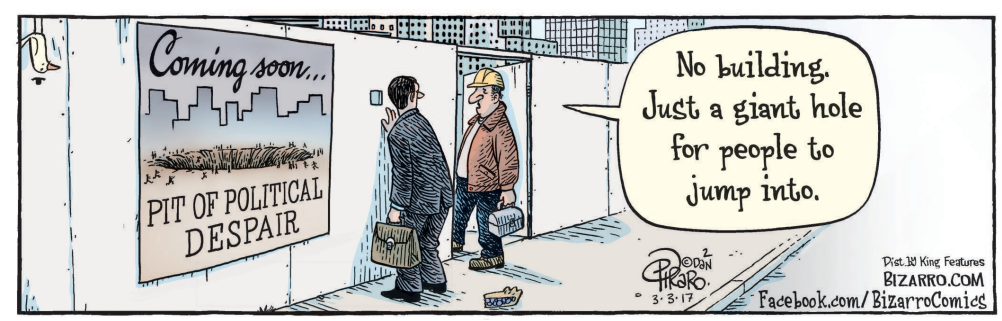
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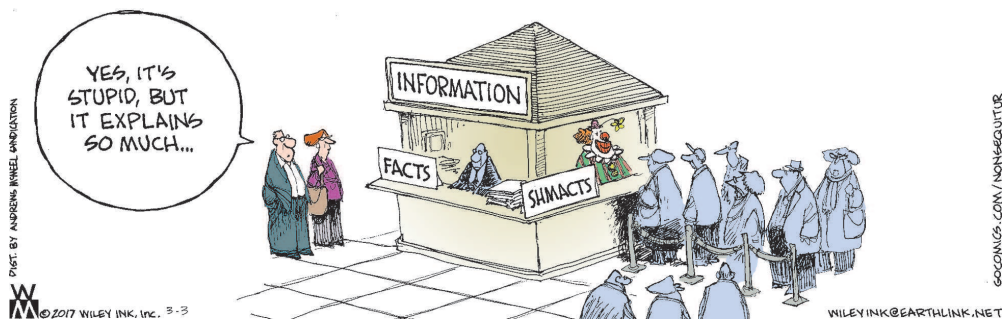
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