

A family's religious divide

Dear Annie: My husband, who is serving in the Army, is loving and caring and is a wonderful father to his two children. He works hard for his family. He just has one flaw: He has a very strong contempt for the Roman Catholic Church.

My family raised me Catholic, but I left the church because of a lack of interest. I consider myself a part-timer (attending during holidays). When I brought up about how he felt about getting married in a church, he went into a tirade. I never brought up the subject again.

When our son was born, I considered having a baptism at my church because it's a tradition in my family — and he threatened to leave. I asked him why he has such strong feelings about this, wondering whether something happened in his past. He finally told me that when he was a child, he was close to a priest who ended up taking advantage of him. It was a shock. He requested that I not share this with anyone. I decided to honor his wishes.

Now I just had my daughter. His family and my family would like to have a baptism, but I do not want to

go against his wishes. Forget about having it in a non-Catholic way, because I'd end up disappointing my family. I am torn between what my family wants and what my husband wants. I hate being the middle woman and just don't want to do it at all. — *The Torn Middle Woman*

Dear Annie: Instead of considering yourself the "middle woman," you might want to think of yourself as the leader of the pack. Take it upon yourself to find a counselor with whom you and your husband can discuss this matter and with whom your husband might continue to meet one-on-one. He must address the anger and hurt that this horrible trauma inflicted on him. The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests offers many resources, from free downloadable literature to a directory of support groups. Visit <http://www.snapnet-work.org> for more information.

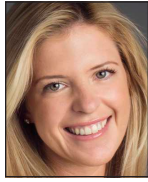
Dear Annie: I was disappointed in your response to the 25-year-old woman whose friend wants to go to parties given by men she doesn't really know. The friend admitted that she didn't know the peo-

ple throwing one party that well but said they would have "good beer and hot guys." You told the letter writer to "loosen up" and be "less judgmental." Do you not read the news or watch TV? Last night on TV, it was said that people are now encouraged to take a bottle opener with them and never drink from a container that is already open. It is too easy to slip drugs into a drink at a party, and you should be especially careful if you don't really know the people handing out the drinks. Too many young women are being drugged without their knowledge.

One of the new drugs cannot be tasted and can put you into a coma. One young woman showed up at the emergency room in a coma. She had been somewhere, drunk what she thought was a simple Mountain Dew and ended up in a coma. My advice is to never go to a party where you don't know the people well and only drink a drink that you have opened. Those were my rules for my kids. — *Safe Is Best*

Dear Safe: I agree that safety is paramount. However, I stand by my advice that "Murky Waters" ought not to dismiss her best friend's new friends out of hand, even if she doesn't want to go out to parties.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When you're grown, no one has to sign a permission slip for you to go on the field trip, you just go. Maybe you forgot this and you're still waiting for permission to adventure. Grant it to yourself and take off.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your desire to make other people's lives better will make yours better, too. Note that "easier" is sometimes better, but not always. Be careful not to confuse the two.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). They'll tell you that balance is a myth. They may be right. However, since each person is weighted differently (both psychically and physically) no one can define balance for another person.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). People feel as though you're confiding in them when actually what you're passing off as secret information is a carefully crafted message suitable for anyone. It's called political savvy.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Recent learning has you a little more aware of how the world works than you were yesterday. This doesn't make you feel cynical. On the contrary, it makes you feel empowered.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). If your self-assessment acts strictly in concert with external assessments, you're headed in a direction that can only lead to unhappiness, emptiness and confusion. To be sure this is not the case, shut out external assessments.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Though you thrive in neatness and order, consider that a messy and authentic existence might be better than the monotony that comes with having it all figured out.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Carefully consider the story you're presenting to the world. A minor reworking in the way you talk about yourself and/or your business will be the difference between creating attraction and neutrality.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). What stymies you in today's situation is that you have a motive at all. Recognize what you want out of this and then let it go. Decide instead that you simply want the best for all involved.

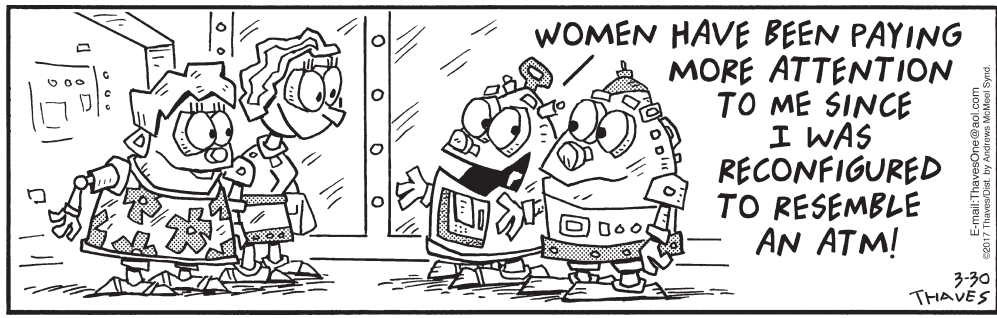
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Not everything is going to work, but something should! When one attempt after another lands in disarray, it's time to step back, look at the broad view and examine your motives in relation to this scene.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You don't know exactly what to do next and you don't have to know. You're aware that a change is coming though. The most productive action will be clearing space for something to grow.

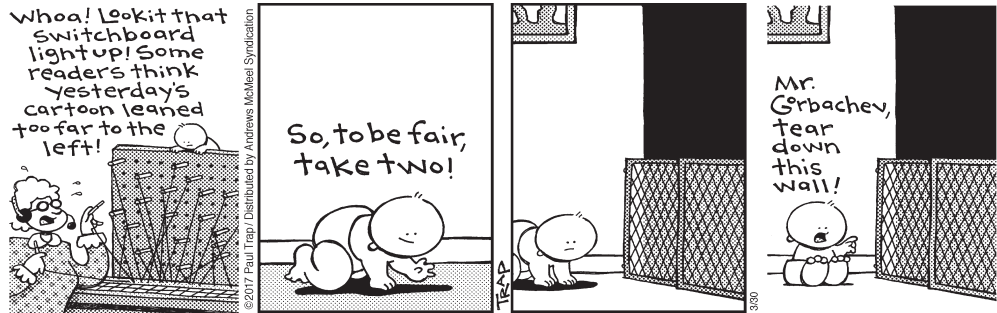
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). As the sign of the fish, you sympathize with the plight of sharks. Life is movement. You have to keep going to keep breathing. Water flowing over the gills gets oxygen (and in your case, inspiration) to that incredible brain.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 31). Over time, the breeze transforms the mountain, penetrates rocks, influences the growth of trees. With powerful gentleness you'll effect great change. May brings frivolous events that seriously benefit you. Your grateful heart attracts one who will spoil you. An August contract will augment your fortunes. Capricorn and Aquarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 30, 20, 22 and 1.

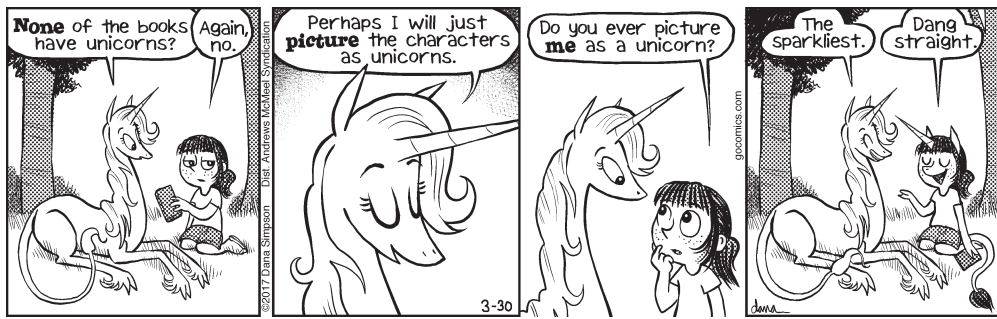
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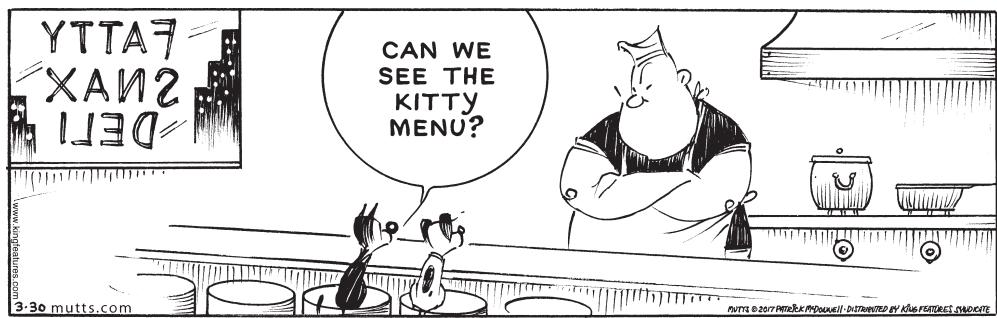
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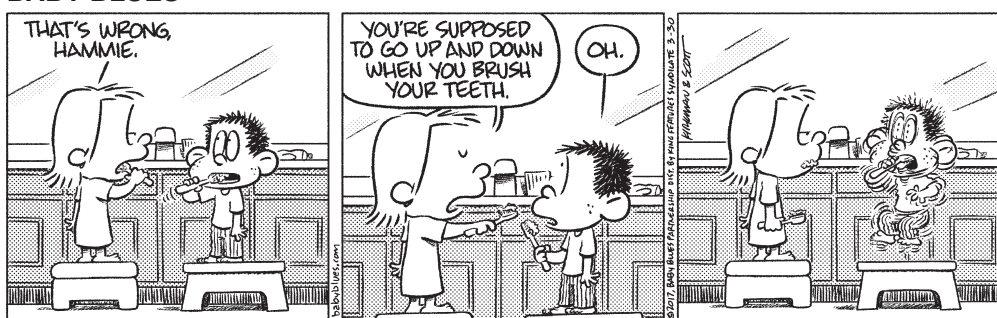
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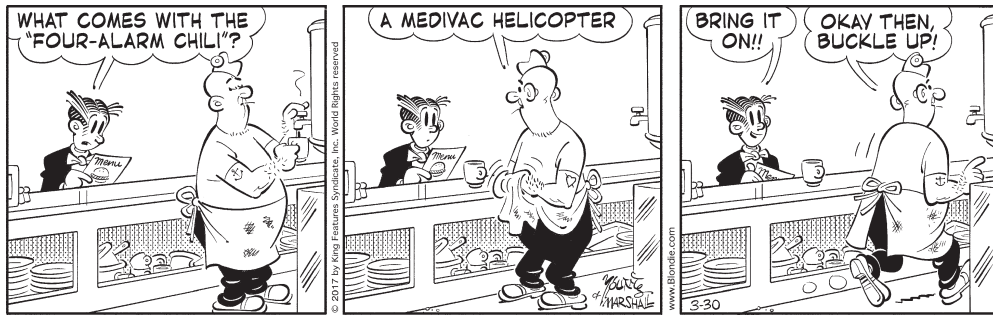
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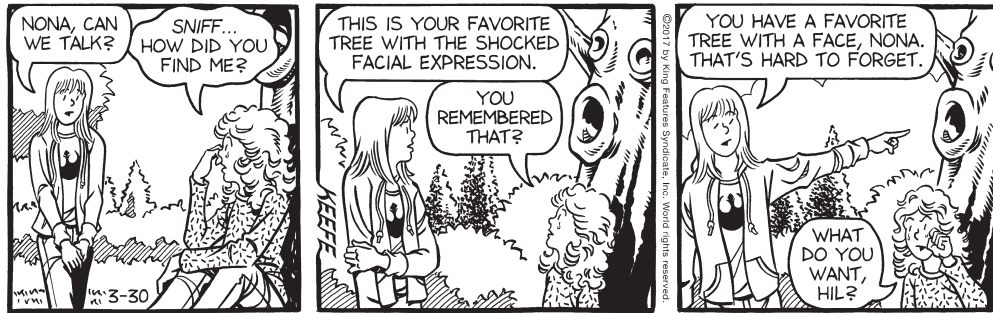
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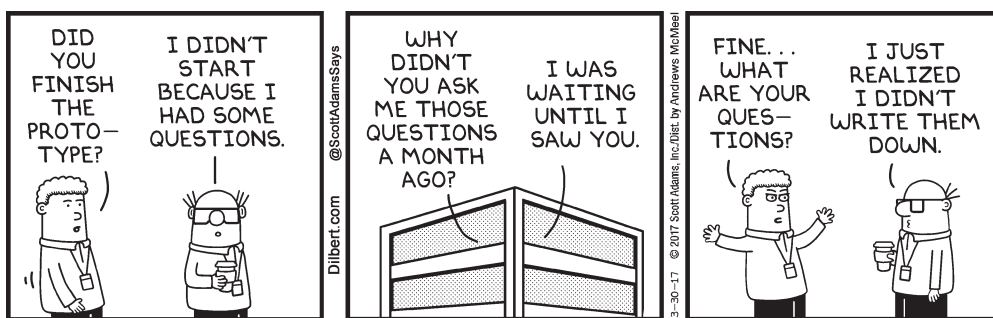
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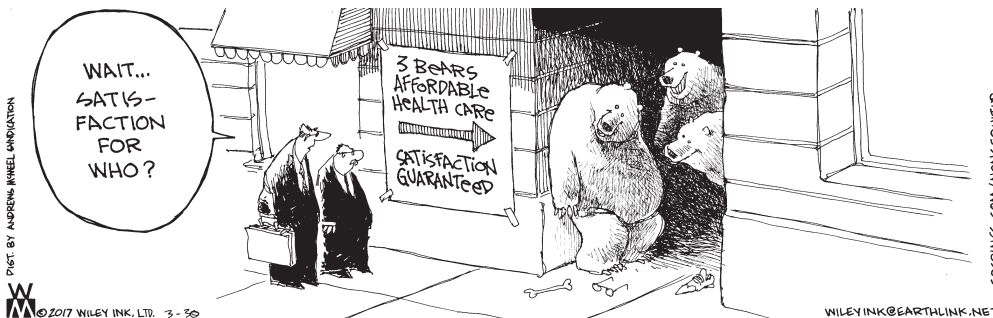
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