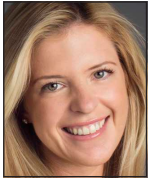


Medicated and changed

Dear Annie: My wife and I have been together for four years. She's always been a little absent-minded. At first, it was cute, but then it started to become more of an issue. After we got married and moved in together, I noticed it more. For example, I came home a few times to find the stove on with nothing on it. This concerned me because her faulty memory seemed to be becoming a safety issue.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

I encouraged her to talk to her doctor about her forgetfulness, thinking it could be caused by a vitamin deficiency. I had no idea that the doctor would end up prescribing her an amphetamine medication for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It's helped immensely with the space cadet-like behavior. She is far more efficient and organized. The medication pretty much transformed her into a Type A over-night. But in addition to all these "positive" effects, there are a slew of negative ones. Her personality has changed. No longer is she the sweet, funny and relaxed person I fell in love with. Now she is always laser-focused on her work around

the clock and acts cold toward me. She works from home as a graphic designer, which allows her to get away with the erratic hours.

This has been going on for six months. I'm worried about her health. Two weeks ago, she did mention to me that she might like to try cutting back on the medication, but then she was right back to the all-nighters.

On the days she doesn't take it, she's her sweet old self, but she also sleeps and eats a lot, almost as if she were hibernating. I know it can backfire if you try to force someone to get help that she doesn't think she needs. What should I do? — *Missing My Space Cadet*

Dear Missing: From the sound of things, your wife may be abusing her medication. Signs of amphetamine addiction include decreased appetite, disturbed sleep patterns, rapid rate of speech, irritability, paranoia and withdrawal from friends and family, among many other undesirable symptoms.

It's crucial that you talk to her as soon as there's an opportunity to do so while she isn't on the medication. She made comments about

wanting to cut back, so you can use that as a starting point. Ask how you can support her. Stress that you're not coming from a place of judgment but rather concerned for her health. The less accusatory your tone the less defensive she's likely to be. You might go to her next doctor's appointment with her so the three of you can talk about the situation. For more help, call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's help line, at 800-662-HELP.

Dear Annie: Could you put something in your column urging children of all ages to call their parents? I know they don't realize how important hearing from them is to old parents. (I know I didn't either when I was younger.)

My husband and I are in our 80s and housebound. About the only thing we have going each day is anticipating hearing from our kids. If you use this, please don't print a name. Then every person reading this can think it came from his mom! — *Anonymous*

Dear Anonymous: On behalf of parents everywhere: Children, please call your parents. One day, you won't be able to, and you'll wish you'd done so more often while you still could.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Drama will bring a momentary escape into another person's life. It's a time when you need such an escape — a good story to pull you into a world you hadn't thought existed.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Whip up enthusiasm; rally the forces; ignite the passion; unify the group. If you skip this step, forward movement will be drudgery, if you're able to achieve it at all.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The key to getting more out of life isn't getting more stuff, money or even time. The key is in having experiences that are better, richer and stimulating on deeper levels, touching your soul.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Bottom line: Your mind is happy when it is thinking happy thoughts. There's not much complexity or science to this today, though it does involve forgetting and remembering strategically.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). For the most part, places are primarily designed to meet the needs and wishes of the people who live there, and not necessarily the people who visit. Design your place this way: The visitors will be mystified and charmed.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Some will succeed with very little; others will fail with so much. On the surface it may seem like there's no rhyme or reason to it, but this isn't so. What counts is the principle and the purposefulness of each effort.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's one of the most basic rules of economics, not to mention one of the easiest to fulfill: Scarcity drives up demand. You'll find yourself in limited supply of something today. Highlight and celebrate this.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There's nothing to chase. Well, there's lots that you could chase — but were you to do so, your reserves of energy would be squandered in fruitless pursuits. Work instead on your powers of attraction. Everything starts there.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). One way that people indicate they are up to something, lying to you or being manipulative is that they go out of their way to tell you something you didn't ask.

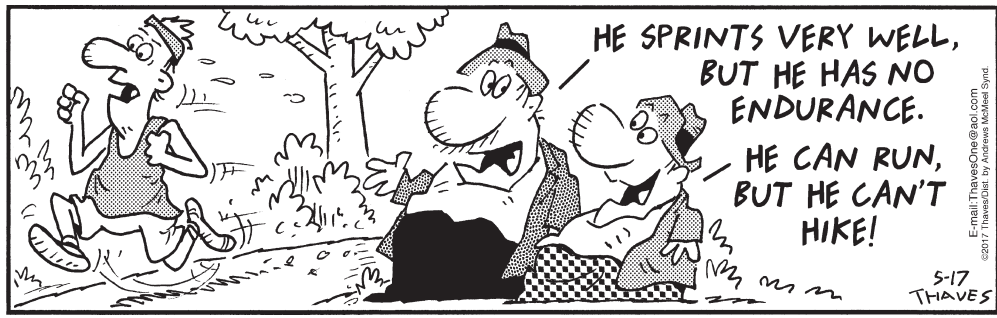
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). A found item will become significant to you, not a treasure exactly, but a memory for sure. And if you can return anything to its rightful owner over the next three days, the act will bring you exceptional luck.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Follow in the path of one you admire greatly. There have been many masters who went before you and opened the doors so that you could cross the thresholds you'll be crossing shortly.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You can only see things how you see them. Merely observing alongside someone with fresh eyes will be all it takes to shift the picture. One of the most productive things you can do today is shake up your perspective.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (May 18). You've never been more available to excitement, risk and monumental fun. With this attitude you'll go far toward manifesting the experiences you've dreamed of. Money is made creatively in June and September. Romantic sparks fly in October. You'll quickly double your money with a November investment. Taurus and Gemini adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 33, 7, 10, 40 and 11.

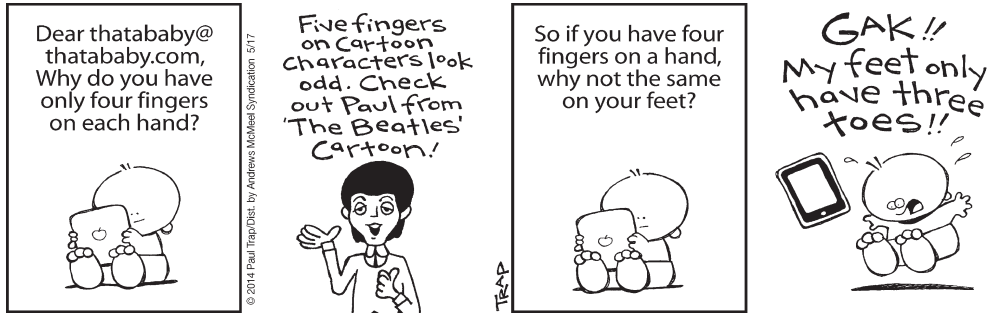
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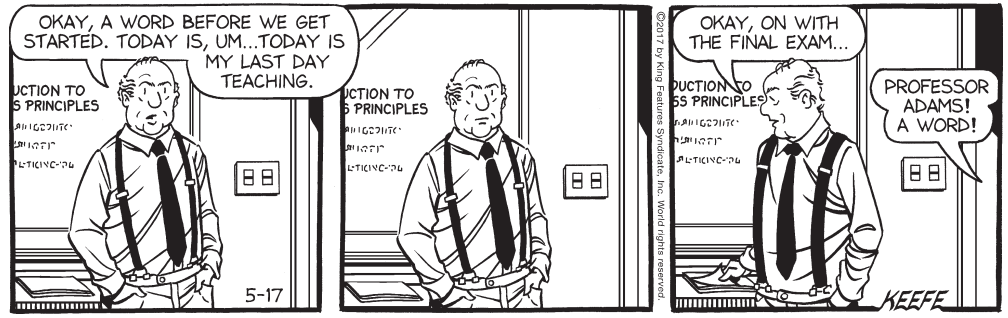
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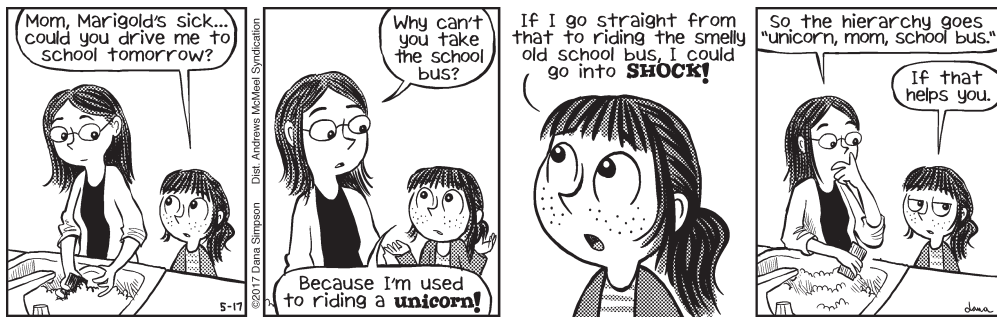
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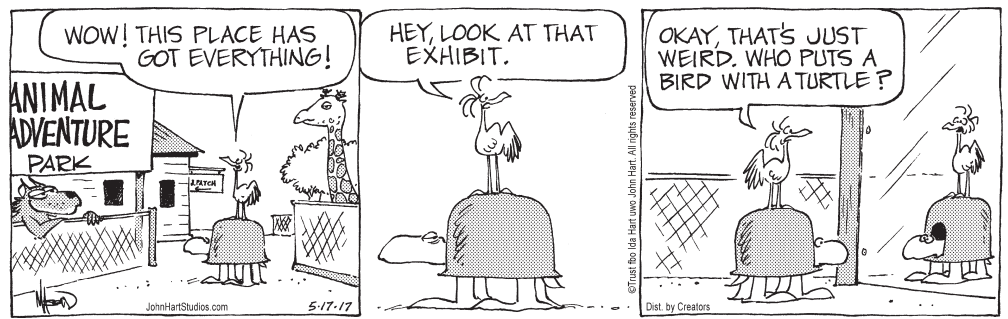
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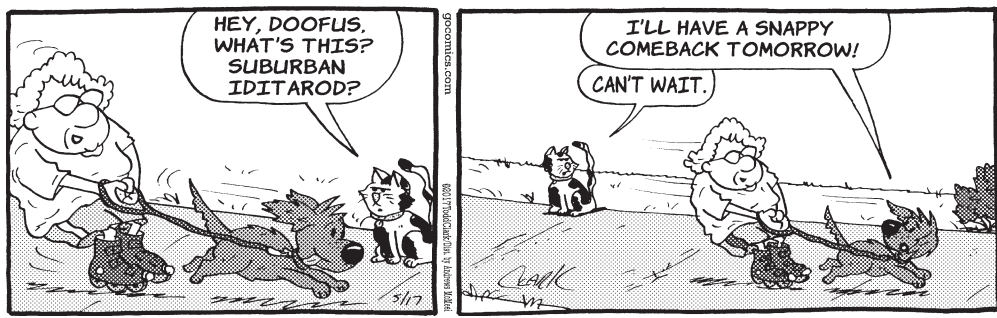
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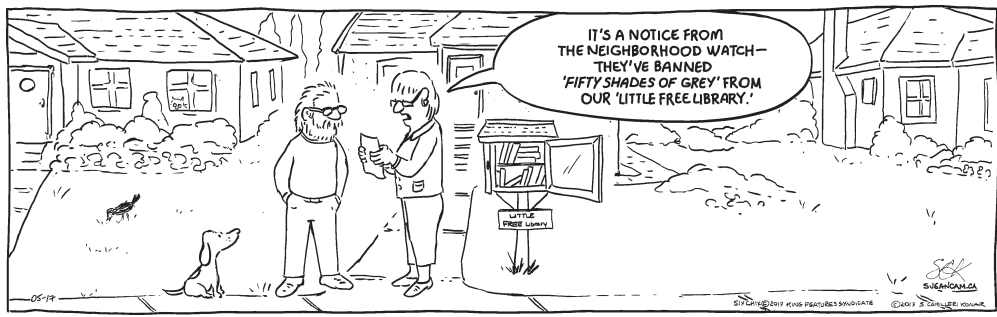
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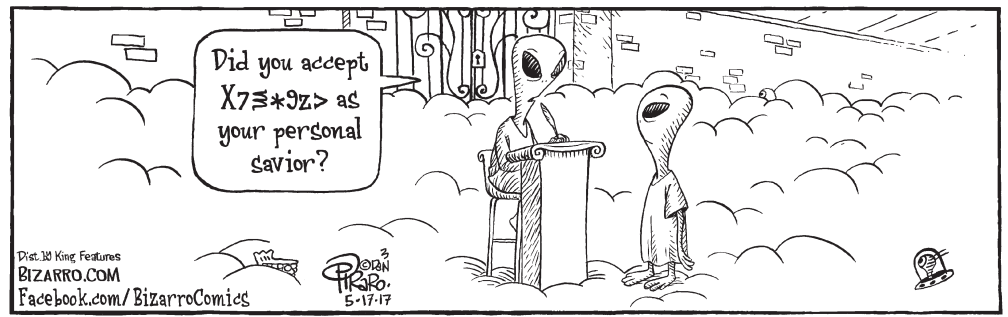
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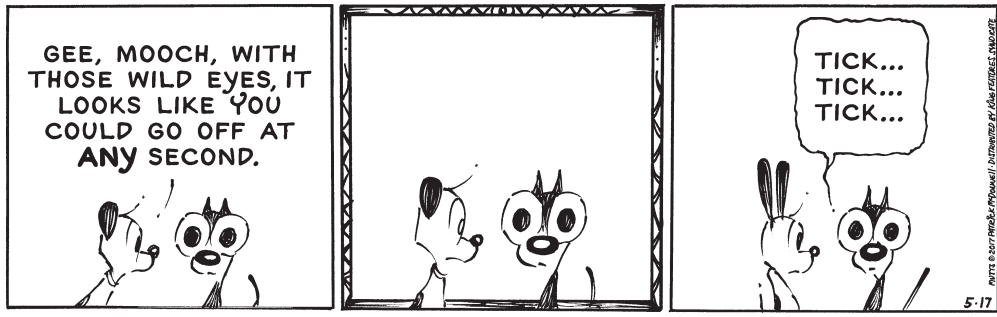
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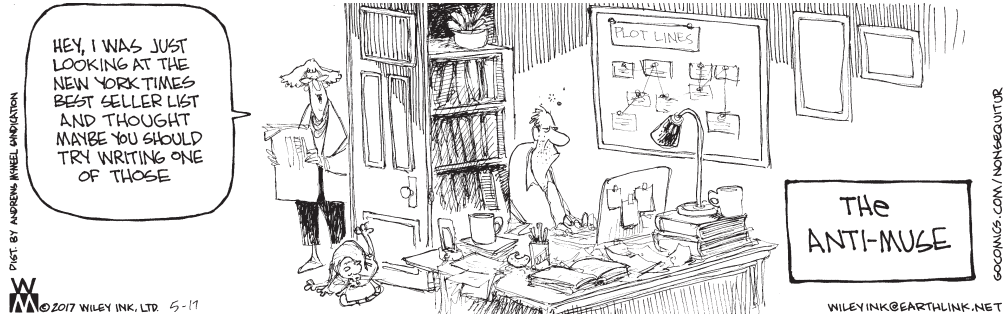
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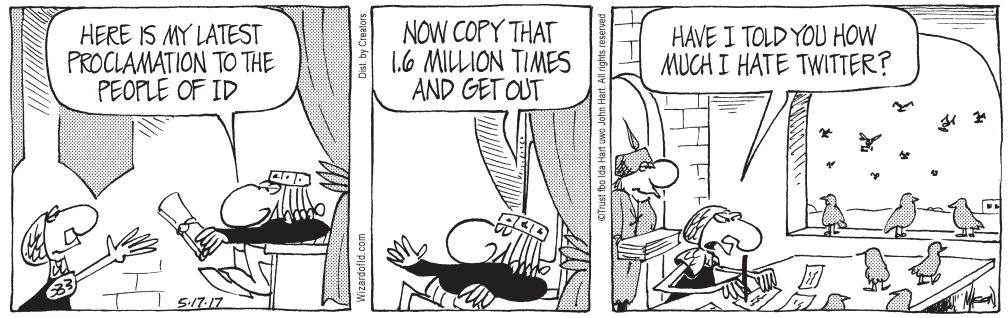
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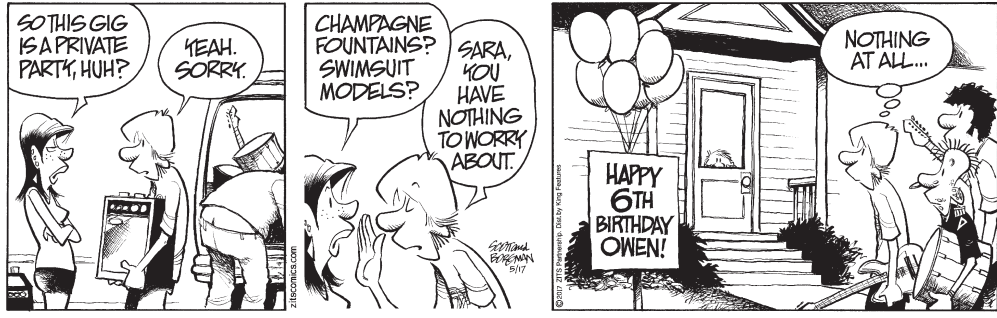
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