

The one who got away?

Dear Annie: My wife and I are in our late 50s and met in high school. "Barb" was the girl of my dreams, a cheerleader, popular and athletic. We began dating as seniors and married after I graduated from college. After we married, I noticed that Barb had little interest in sex. I was always the initiator, and this seemed to irritate her and made our intimacy rare. I decided to bury myself in my work and ignored the issue. Today we are happily married and have children and grandchildren, and she is still my best friend. Sex isn't as much an issue, as I am older and have ignored my sexuality for years anyway.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
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While we were dating back when, there was another girl, "Helen," who made it obvious that she was interested in me. Helen was easily the prettiest girl I had ever met, but I ignored those feelings and stayed true to Barb. I would see Helen at reunions — the five-year, 10-year and 15-year — and it took me a few months each time to get over the feelings that I had for her. We stopped going to these reunions, partly because we

had moved to another state and it was inconvenient to travel.

The most recent reunion was arranged over social media, and I kept seeing pictures of Helen. She is still gorgeous, married with children and grandchildren. Three years later, I am still compelled to Google her to learn everything I can about her. This has turned into a compulsion that I cannot stop. I haven't told my wife because this would only create havoc in our marriage. I am not interested in speaking to a psychologist. My question is simple. How many people suffer from such feelings — feelings that they may have made a mistake but must now live with it to save the feelings of another? — *Love Lost*

Dear Love Lost: I'm sure many people at some point indulge in a bit of "what if" daydreaming, whether it be about another person they might have married or a career path they might have taken. But we all know that the grass isn't really greener on the other side; it just seems that way to those unsatisfied with their lot. Your crush on Helen has more to do with your relationship with Barb. The fact that you've ignored your sexuality for years doesn't mean it's not an issue anymore. Though every marriage is different, it's important to share some form of intimacy. Redirect the energy spent Googling Helen into searching for ways to revitalize your marriage, whether through counseling or an open, noncritical conversation with Barb.

Dear Annie: I love your column; I never miss it. Thank you for your advice. You've printed some letters from people complaining about noise. I can relate. I'm an 89-year-old man. I hear very well, but with too much background noise, I get headaches. I like to go dancing at least twice a week — mostly to polka music. I avoid any bands that make a lot of noise.

Even just being in buildings with loud people, I cannot take it. So I have troubles and sound like an old grouch. This is life. — *Sam K.*

Dear Sam: Thank you for reading the column. It's great you get out dancing twice a week. It might be worth talking to your doctor about solutions to protect your ears so you can keep partying to polka indefinitely.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your powers of imagination are so mighty these days that they can be used as tools to overcome fear. A vivid picture of the future you're creating will magnetically override your trepidation.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You might feel compelled to explain, defend or justify your choices to that person who seems to think he or she is owed a response. But the thing is, no one is owed anything from you today. Maybe you should proceed in silence.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Emotions seem to visit you from everywhere: the passing clouds; the picture that triggers a memory; a baleful passage of song; or an exuberant melody. It's all ripe for inspiration.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). To put one's head inside the crocodile's mouth isn't bold; it's foolish. Maybe it's also foolish to put one's heart in the hands of another and hope for mercy. Unfortunately, it's love's nature.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). If you could put today's problem into a box, it would be a really tiny box. The key is to look at it as it really is, without letting your mind do fun-house mirror trickery on the situation.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). It's going to really take some time and a major effort for your current endeavor to be fruitful. Are you ok with having nothing to show for your efforts for a long while? If you are, you know that this is the right pursuit for you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Experience is the main goal, and a worthy one at that. When you do something for the sake of doing it, your expectations of yourself adjust accordingly and you can relax into the very fulfilling process of learning.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Maybe you're the most qualified person to assess your situation, and maybe you're not. It would be wise to ask for other points of view. An outsider will help you understand something you didn't before.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It's not so hard to make the choice to be kind to yourself. Even if this is not your first instinct, you'll take to it and quickly understand why most progress is made by the self-encouraging.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You think anyone could do your job, but the truth is that it wouldn't be so easy to recast you. Even if someone proficient stepped in, it wouldn't be the same. Anyway, today it just has to be you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). This unhelpful thought you're having: Did you have it yesterday, too? And the day before that? Its recurrence isn't an indicator of its validity; it only means that it's more of a habit than a thought. Habits can be broken.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Don't be afraid to make the first move. As you make new friends you'll help others get together, too. Your good cheer will reduce people's social trepidation and fear of rejection.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (June 9). The start of this solar return comes with a feeling like you've landed on another planet. You've little in common with your surroundings and the beings who share them. There will be many benefits to learning this alien culture, and you'll cash in on what you know. August features promises exchanged. Capricorn and Aries adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 7, 40, 22, 15 and 38.

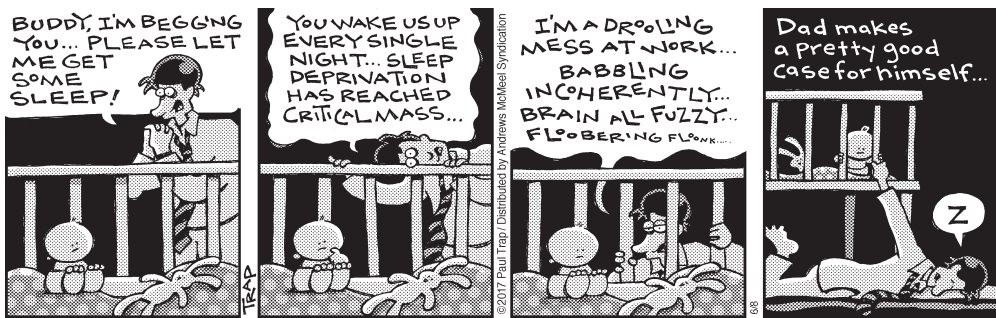
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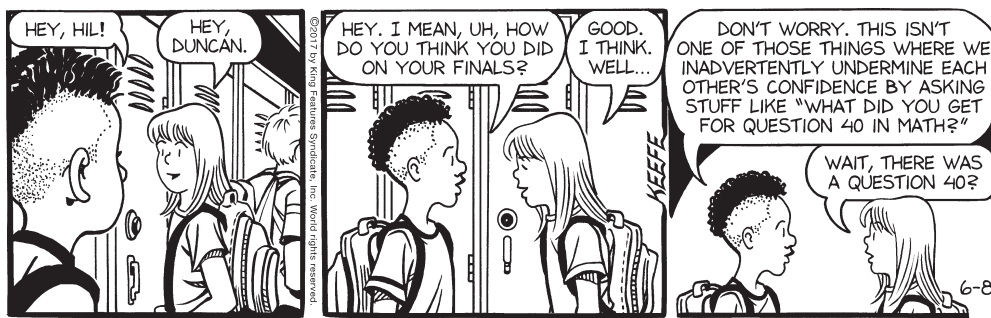
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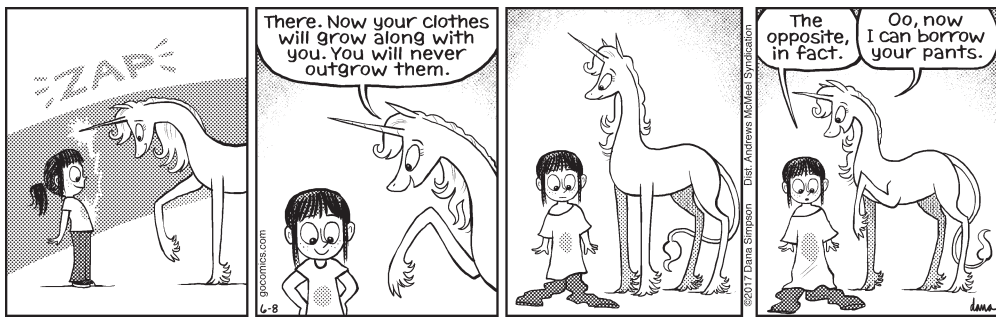
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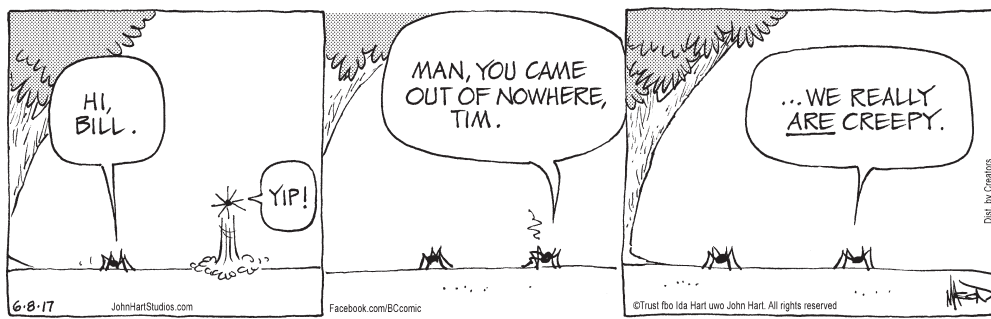
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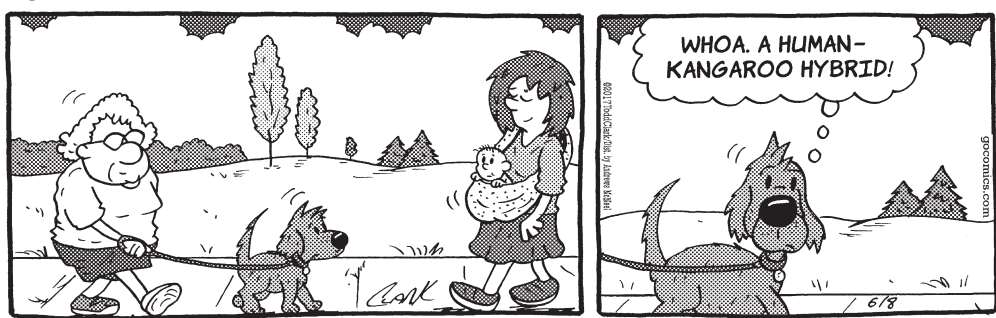
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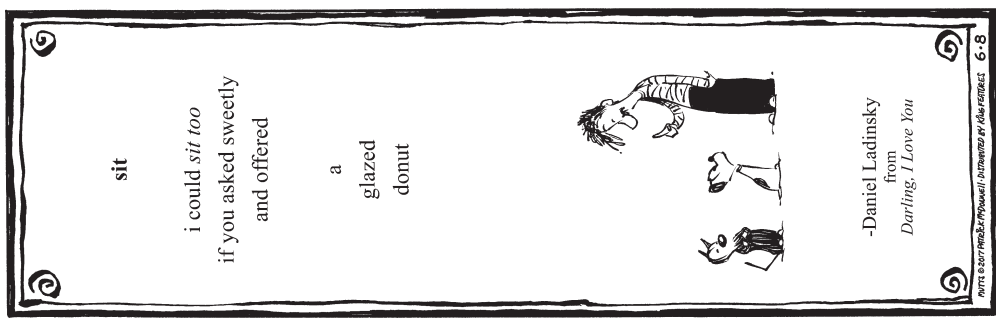
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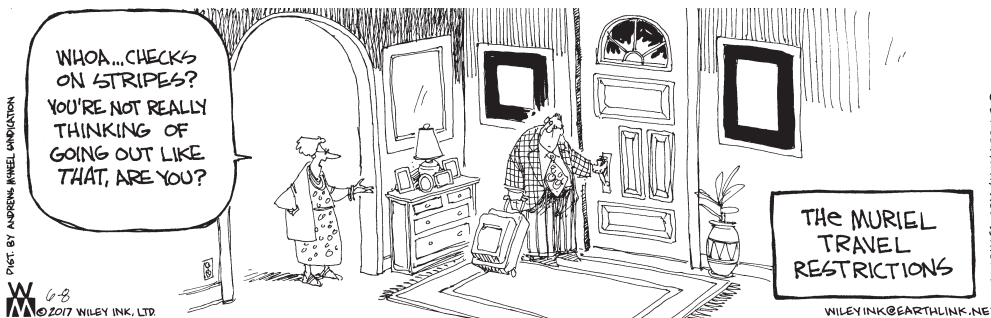
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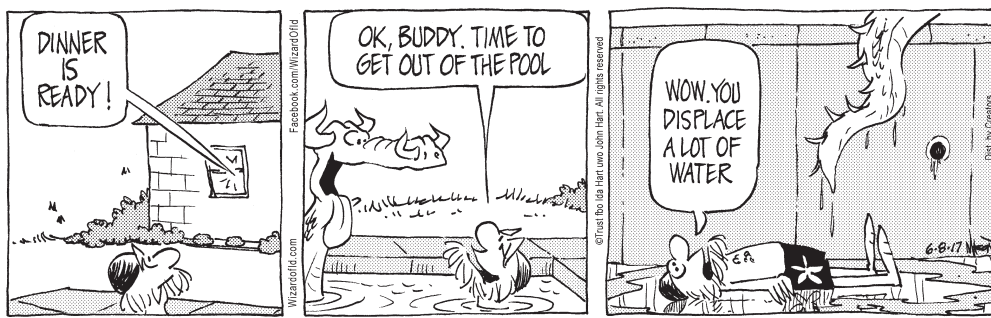
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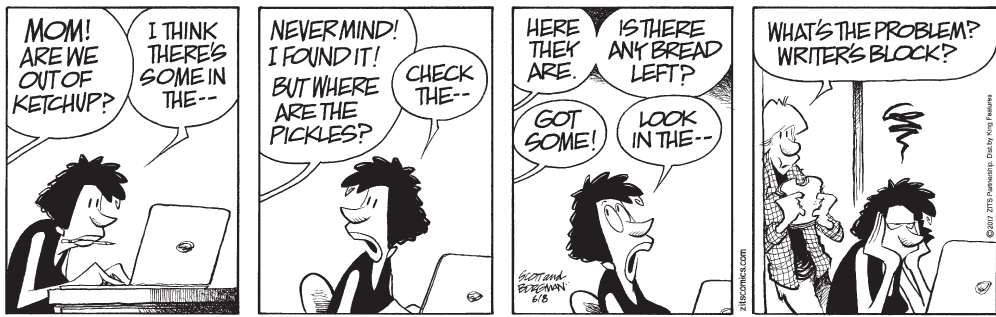
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