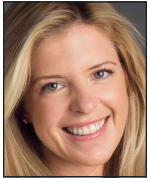


Baby sitter plans fall through

Dear Annie: I recently called a friend to see whether her college-age daughter, "Tiffany," could baby-sit for my 1 1/2-year-old granddaughter from 6 to 8 p.m. on a Saturday so I could attend a reception at a local club. I didn't hear back at first, but three days before the event, I finally talked with Tiffany, and she said that she would be available. We discussed exact times, and I asked what she would charge. She didn't have a set rate but thought \$10 per hour would be fine. Having not paid a baby sitter for many years (I'm a new grandmother), I said that I thought the rate should be \$5 per hour, but that I would check with my daughter to see what she pays. My daughter confirmed that the average rate today is between \$10 and \$15 an hour. Thus, I planned to pay the \$10 per hour (and thought I would probably give a tip, too), but I did not have a chance to call the sitter back until the morning of the event.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Her mother answered the phone and said that other plans had come up for her daughter, and the mother had told her to go with the "other plans" because I had not gotten back to her on the rate. I was hurt

and in total shock, not only because our families are very good friends, but also because I did not think that the rate was a deciding factor. My husband is in an assisted living facility, and I spend a great deal of time with him, which ties up most of my days, which they knew. The mother is forever telling me to take time off and have some time to myself, which I thought that I was doing. My questions to you are: Who is wrong? Should I feel hurt? Was I wrong to not get back to her until the morning of the event about the rate? I was disappointed and hurt that the mother had not advised her daughter to call me, because she is forever saying that she tries to teach her children how to be responsible. I feel that I was let down and can no longer trust this family. — *Heartbroken and Hurt Grandmother*

Dear Heartbroken: Three things are certain in life: death, taxes and flaky baby sitters. You must really make a point of expressly confirming details with your sitter. I don't blame Tiffany for thinking that you didn't want her to baby-sit anymore. Think of it from her point

of view. The last thing she'd heard from you was that her rate might be too steep and that you'd look into it. She probably assumed you'd found a cheaper sitter or decided not to use one after all.

In any case, I think you've taken the whole incident too much to heart. Your friend did not mean to hurt you. It seems as if this carried the weight it did for you because you were really looking forward to a night to yourself — a rare occurrence. I would encourage you to make such "me time" less rare. Get out and socialize. You can't be properly supportive of your husband if you aren't supportive of yourself and your own needs.

Dear Annie: Please do not use the term "golden years" when referring to a person's retirement. Do some research about ageism in our language and what to avoid saying in order to make progress in this area. There are articles on the subject online. Euphemisms are not helpful in making progress. — *An Oregon Reader*

Dear Oregon Reader: Thank you so much for bringing that to my attention. I hadn't realized how that phrase could come across as condescending, but you can bet I'll keep it in mind now.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Taking care of your soul is important work, and you're not the only one responsible for it, either. The ones you love and those who love you will pitch in with gusto.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Sure, some mistakes are avoidable. But if you didn't or couldn't, well, it's a useless regret. Anyway, mistakes are for the adventurous, a sign that you're trying something new.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The value of persistence cannot be underestimated today. Every time you are knocked down, get up and try and do and do and try. This is the only way to break through.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your imagination is so powerful that it will not only take you from here to there; it will take you beyond — to the "theres" that are brought into existence the moment you envision them.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). It's OK not to be right very often. Those who need to be right all of the time are living in a very small bubble of their own certainty. What scale do you choose? Maybe it really is a small world, but the universe is massive.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Mastery demands full attention. The barrier between you and the mastery you seek is atmospheric. There are others who need your attention. To get to the next level, go where there is no competition for your attention.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You don't always know the thing you do that gives value to another person. But once it happens, and that value is exchanged, you'll be onto yet another one of your talents. This one is worth cultivating further.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You experience your thoughts and feelings as separate from the rest, and yet you are in, of and all about the rest. There is no getting around it. You are part of this whole thing and this whole thing is part of you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Any chance to widen your circle of compassion will be wonderful for you. Yes, it's true that it won't always feel nice. Uncomfortable things will happen in the name of diversity, but diversity always makes us better.

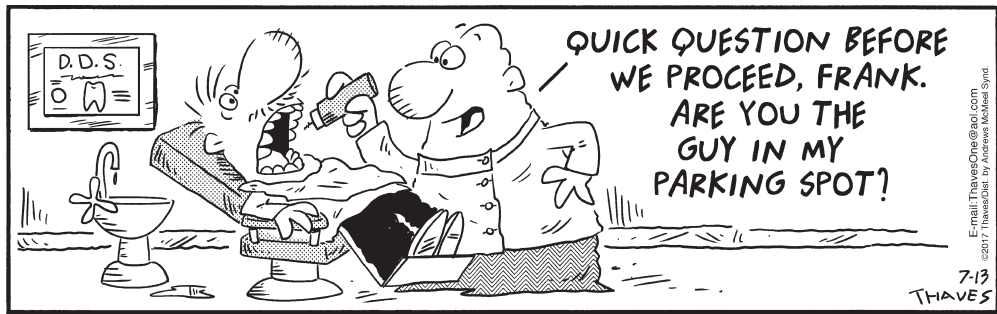
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You've exhausted a lot of the excitement supply of your own vicinity. Back to the drawing board. You'll be surprised at what you can see when you ask your mind to come up with a preview of coming attractions.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Every difficulty is an opportunity. No one ever grew up big, strong and wise by having what they needed handed to them on a silver platter. The best people work at it.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If the enemy is within (and the most formidable enemies always are) then liberating yourself from yourself is the warrior-like task that will both free and alter you.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (July 14). You're the ringleader of this circus with an extraordinary instinct for coming up with what's next in the grand show. Since you see the big picture with clarity, tend to broad lines and let someone else do the detail work. You'll be adored more than ever in 2018. Just soak it up. Invest and hold on in September. Libra and Taurus adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 12, 23, 27 and 14.

FRANK AND ERNEST



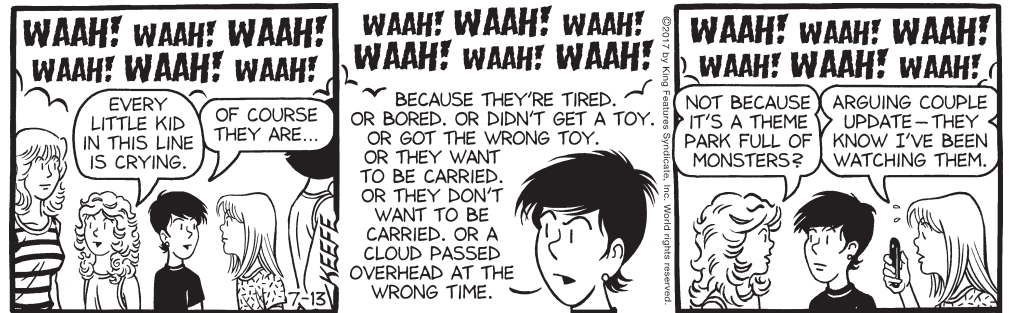
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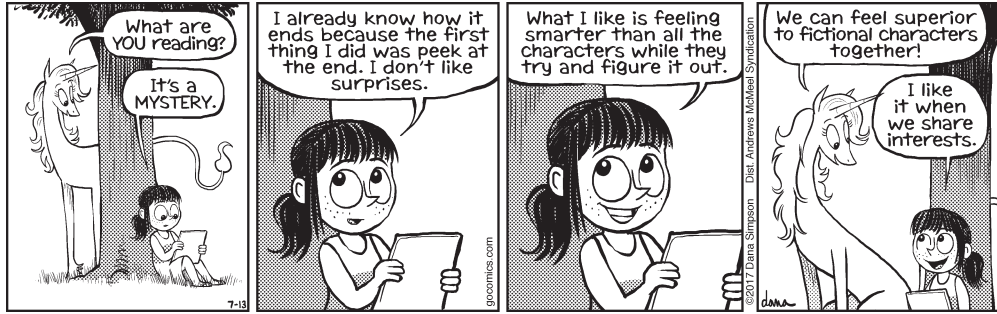
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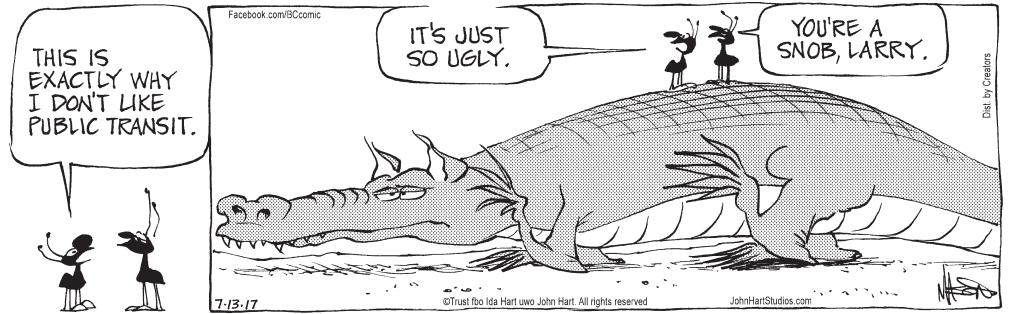
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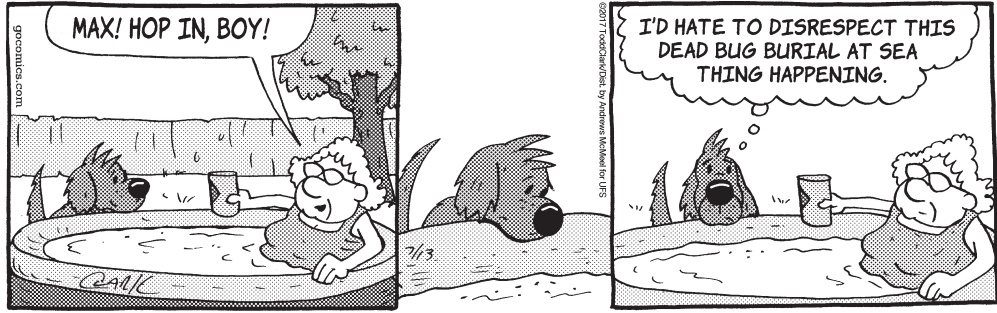
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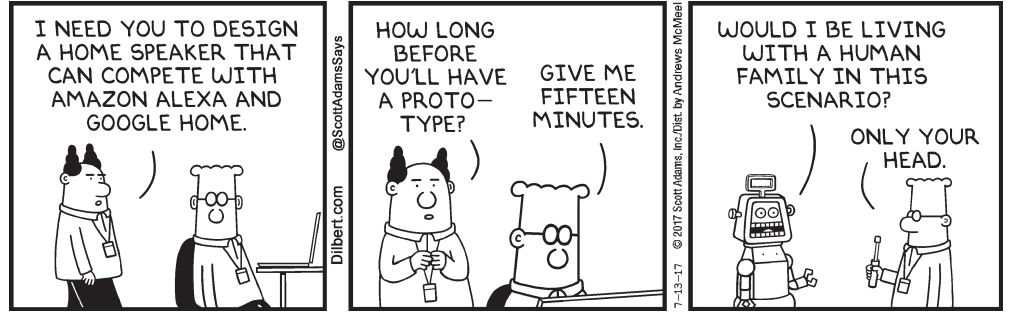
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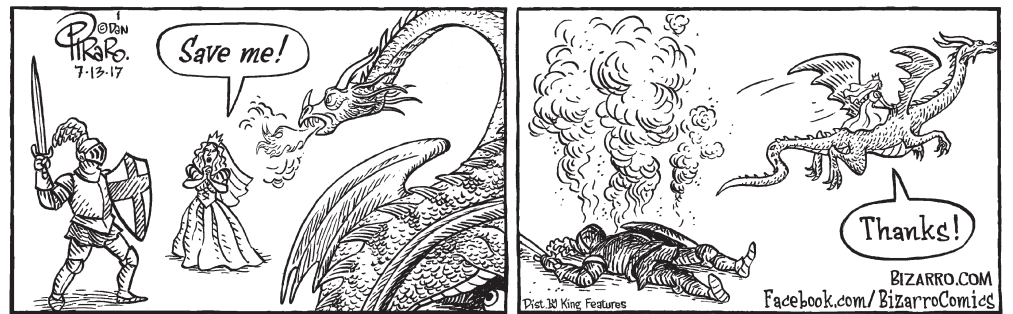
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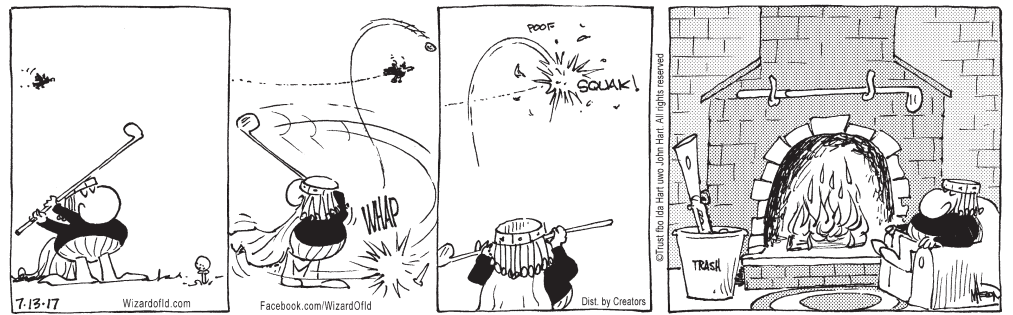
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