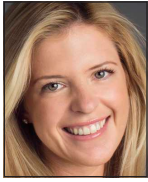


The blackest of sheep

Dear Annie: My sister and I have a lying, cheating brother who has bankrupted our elderly parents through his recklessness and greed. He coerced them to sign over everything to him for loans and personal guarantees for his business, which went bankrupt. He does not help with their care or managing their financial problems, which he created. Our dad now has sky-high legal bills to manage losing their home and farm. My brother also took all their savings.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Though our parents are still alive, I know that soon we will be facing both of their funerals, and I can't stand the idea of planning funerals with this brother or even seeing him there. I can't imagine my siblings and me sitting in church with him and all of us taking turns telling about our parents' lives when our brother ruined them. Could my siblings and I walk out if he demanded to speak at

the funerals? I hate to make a scene when the funerals should be about our mom and dad. — *Heartbroken*

Dear Heartbroken: If you haven't already spoken to a lawyer, contact one today to see whether you have any means of recourse to protect your parents and salvage some of their finances and assets from your brother.

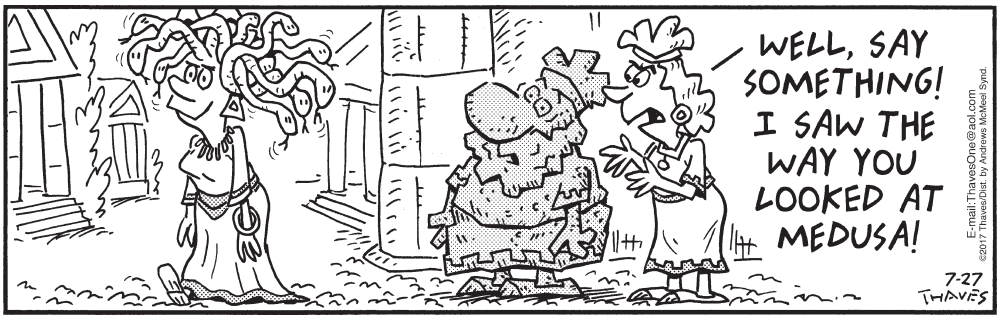
As for allowing your brother to speak at their funerals: Unless your parents explicitly say that they don't want him to, let him say his piece. What matters most is what your mom and dad want, and I don't think they'd want to see their children fighting at their funerals. Remember that whatever your brother has done, they've still always loved him as their little boy. Honor that by setting aside your (legitimate) issues with your brother, if just for two days.

Dear Annie: I am an

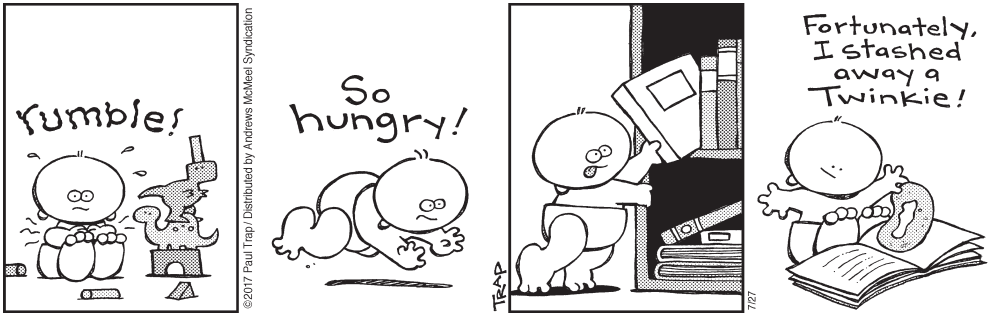
87-year-old widow with a common problem: estate issues. I have four children, two of whom are in moderate circumstances and two of whom are very wealthy. Many years ago, your predecessor said to divide the estate evenly regardless of the adult children's circumstances. I do not agree. I plan to leave everything to the two who are in moderate circumstances. I don't plan on having it be a surprise; I will tell all four of them very soon. What is your take on this? I know it can divide siblings. But I do not foresee problems. If I live 10 more years, they will all be about 70 when they inherit the money. — *Future Benefactor in North Carolina*

Dear Future Benefactor: Of course, it is ultimately your estate, and you're welcome to do with it whatever you'd like. But I have to side with Ann Landers on this issue as a general rule: Divide the estate evenly to avoid dividing your children from one another.

FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



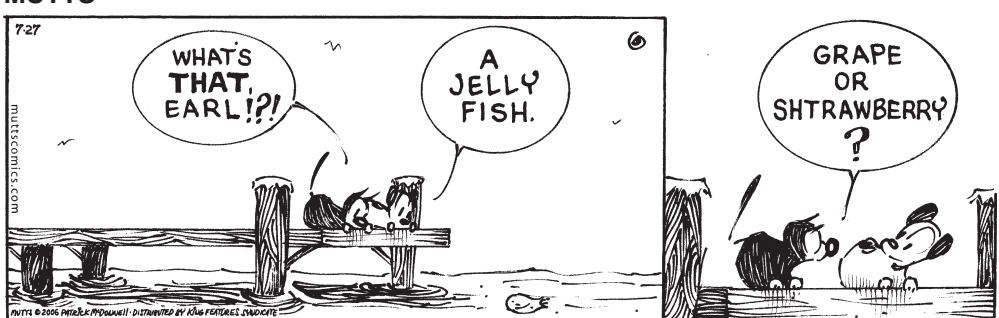
LOLA



SIX CHIX



MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Suffering, the impermanence of life, the absence of self ... what a buzzkill! But these concepts are unavoidable in the process of spiritual evolution. To mature as a spiritual being is to accept existential pain.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). There is little to be done to enhance or detract from good chemistry. It's a matter of natural fit, and it's largely out of your control. If it's good, count your blessings. If it's not, don't worry about it or take it personally.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The good old days weren't all that good, and the ideal future won't be either. But living a little while back there or up ahead can be mighty helpful in the construction of a present you can really appreciate.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). People who are always busy are either bad at time management or afraid of what will come up if they relax. Dare to surrender to idleness. Let it squeeze you. Ultimately, the best ideas come of this embrace.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). On this very social day, have a few conversational topics in your pocket before you go out. Or at least get clear on the subjects to avoid at all costs, including past relationships, politics, finance and religion.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You want one thing and you need another. You know a lot about the former and very little about the latter. When a need is filled that you didn't even know you had ... that's magic.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Don't waste time wondering whether you are the right person

for the job. You are. How do you know? Because you're in the position. Do your best and it will be more than good enough.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're like the lightning in the storm: a powerful force at the center of the action. Be careful about where you strike because your energy will change things.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Sometimes reciprocity comes around too slowly for your taste. That's why you appreciate the unfolding of this day so much. The fast boomerang of karma will delight you.

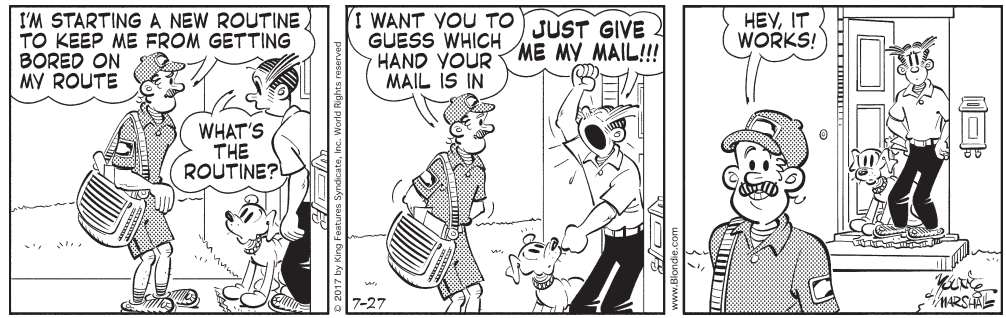
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Arguing isn't impressive. It doesn't take any special understanding to argue a point. Listening between the lines and understanding what's really going on is wisdom rare and true.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). There are times to think carefully about every choice, but today you're better off using the bowling method. Aim forward; let go; and see what kind of points you can score.

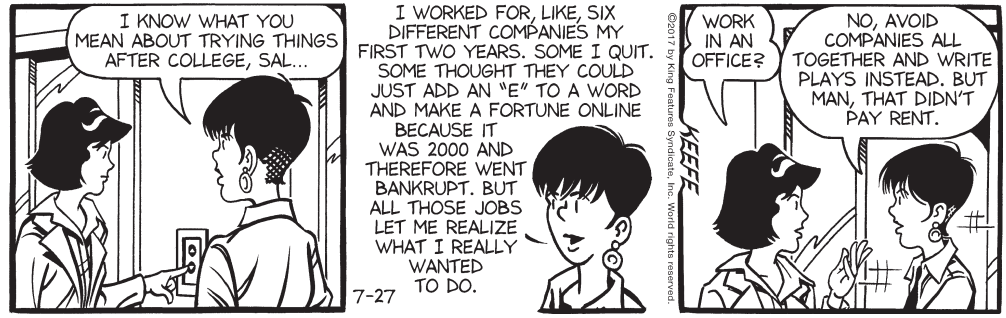
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Abstract goals lead to abstract results. That can be beautiful — like abstract art — though many people won't understand the appeal.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (JULY 28). Your full attention is the magic ingredient for success. You'll apply your heart, mind and soul to the small acts, and great things will come of that this year. Next month, what's right won't be easy, and what's easy won't be right, but you'll do right and win. There's a windfall in December. June features exotic locations. Cancer and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 39, 22, 28 and 16.

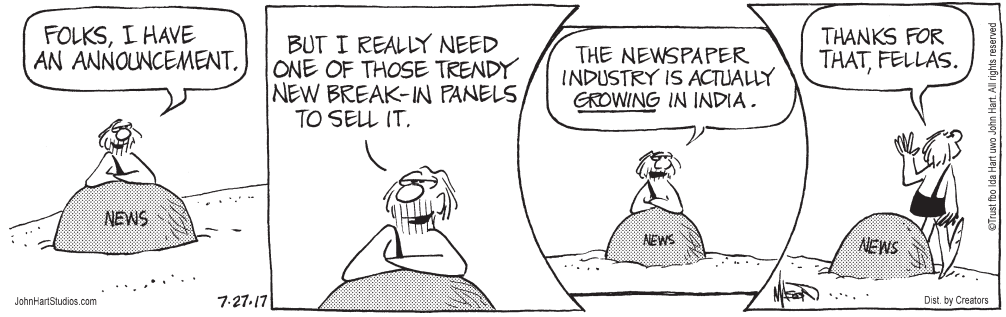
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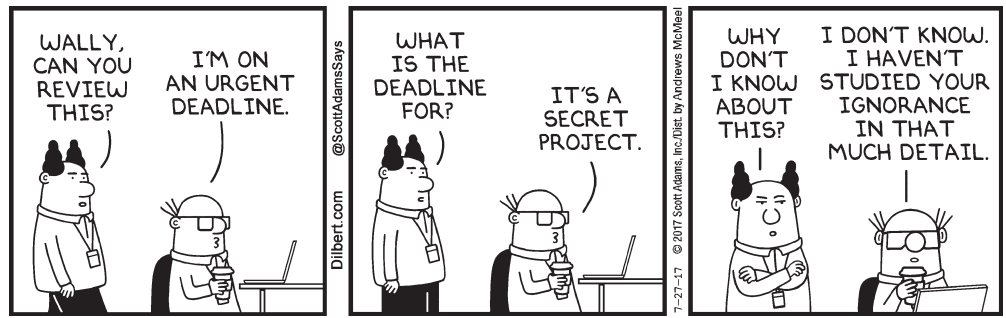
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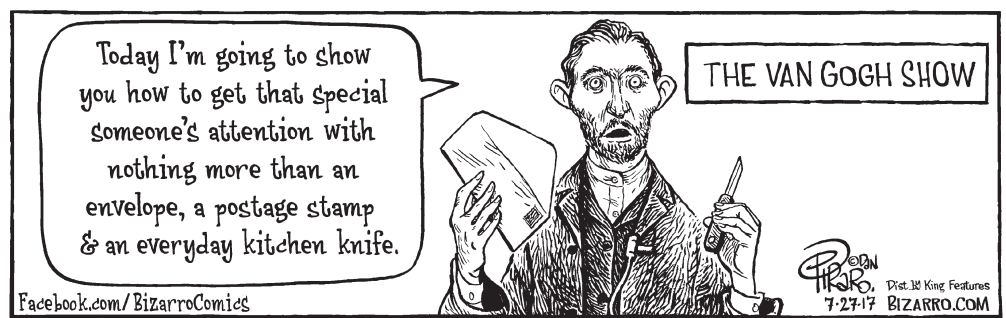
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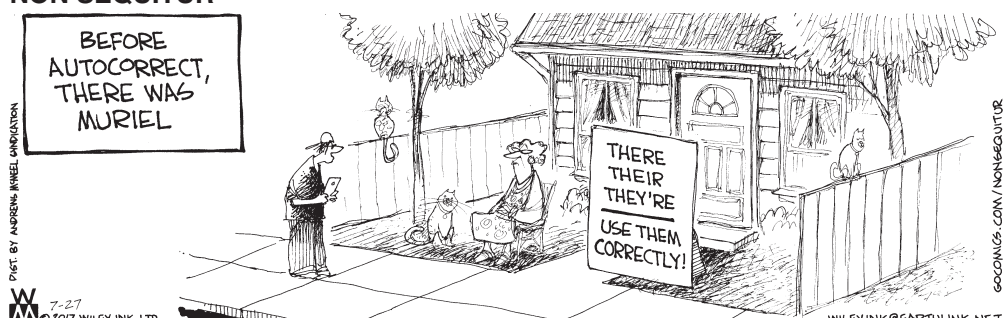
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WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

