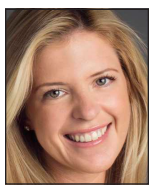
Facing down rejection

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: I am in my 20s and working multiple jobs. A few years ago, I began substitute teaching at the elementary school in the town I grew up in. For about two years, I filled in for many teachers and even worked long term a few times, but I was never a permanent employee at the school. It was fun connecting with the kids, and I even ate lunch with one student regularly after being his aide for a few weeks. Additionally, I worked as a supervisor for the school's summer day care program.

I aspired to work there full time but was not hired, despite interviewing multiple times. I decided I just needed a break from substitute teaching, so I did not go back until late in the year, and when I did, the classes I had were anything but fun. I tried to reconnect with the student I had lunch with, but his teacher would not permit me to do that again, despite thanking me for doing it previously.

I was so hurt after all of this that I decided to give up on teaching. Now I find myself missing the kids, and I want to get back to helping them do their best. But after this series of rejections, seeing the dark side of working with children and being away for so long, I find myself afraid to go back. A place I once enjoyed now makes my stomach turn when I think of going there. How do I conquer this fear and get over these disappointments? — *Feeling Like a Failure*

Dear Feeling Like a Failure: You applied to one teaching job, and you made it to the final round of the interview process. In my view, that's a win. Ask the folks who interviewed you whether they would be willing to provide some feedback. I'm not sure what your education level is, but it's possible that you need to complete additional schooling to be a viable candidate.

Today's job market is highly competitive, and hardly anyone gets the first job he or she applies to. You're probably going to have to apply to lots more, and that's OK. If teaching is what you really want to do — it sure seems as if it is — then you won't be happy until you've given it everything you've got.

Dear Annie: My dear neighbor "Susie" and I attend the same exercise class twice a week. She wants to alternate who drives to the class, but neither she nor her husband is a good driver. He has vision problems and had an accident, and she is a nervous driver, as well as a nervous passenger, calling out whether it is OK to proceed at an intersection. I really don't want her to be the driver. How do I diplomatically tell her that I would prefer to drive or meet her at exercise classes without hurting our relationship? — *Perturbed Passenger*

Dear Perturbed Passenger: People tend to get defensive about their driving skills, so you'll need to sugarcoat this bitter pill as heavily as you can. Bring it up at a calm time, not when you're in the car together, and present the issue as being more about you (e.g., "I get carsick easily if I'm not driving") than her. Tell her you'd prefer driving to the classes. If she reacts poorly, give her time to cool off, and start driving on your own. You cannot continue riding with unsafe drivers simply out of guilt.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You're a person who's not afraid of being wrong because you really want to know what's right, and so you'll meet even your own perception with some measure of doubt. This takes a secure person.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Familiar emotions, even negative ones, get comfortable. To feel a certain way might be nothing more than a habit. The more times you conjure up a feeling, the easier it will be to do so.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You may find yourself replaying a drama over and over, and it's certainly getting old. But don't worry: The addition of even one new friend is enough to shake up the whole dynamic.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The miners weren't the only ones to get rich in the gold rush. Those in the business of selling shovels did mighty fine as well. There's some kind of shovel-equivalent in your realm. Do you know what it is yet?

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). It's easier to be yourself when you're comfortable. Getting comfortable is the tricky part, especially in situations and around people very foreign to you. Settling in will take time and repeated exposure.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). If you knew you were going to get criticized for it, would you still do it? Better question: What if you knew that no matter what choice you made, it would get criticized? What would you do then?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). If you try too hard to forget something you'll remember it well, and if you try too hard to remember something you'll forget it. The answer is to write things down. Somehow this will magically help with both remembering and forgetting.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Anticipate boredom, and decide that you're going to do something about it beyond your phone. For instance, paying attention to something different in the scene will open the way to new insights.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). When others behave badly, it makes you want to do better. The misbehavior of others will cause you to check yourself to make sure you are not committing a similar offense.

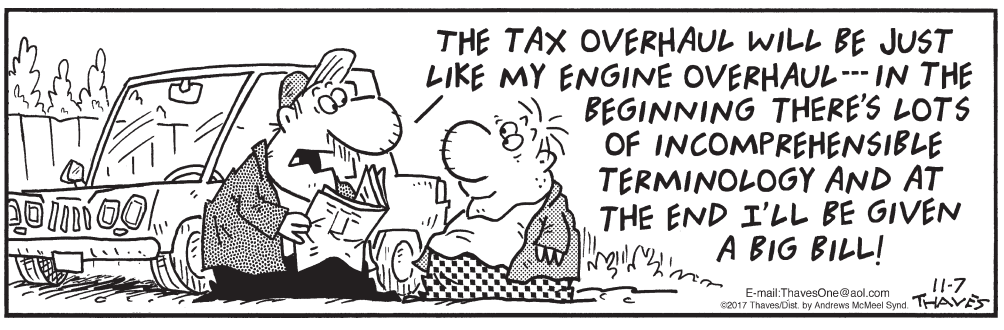
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your originality will shine through today. You'll be in the same situation as the others and take something totally different from it. For this reason, they need you and you need them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Occasionally, the social aspect of your work can go against your mood. But once you adjust and get into the flow, your mood will change for the better. There's a prize at the end of the interaction. This one is not to be missed.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll be drawn to neutral places and underwhelming experiences, because environments that lack excitement encourage imagination. In the quiet, you'll solve a problem.

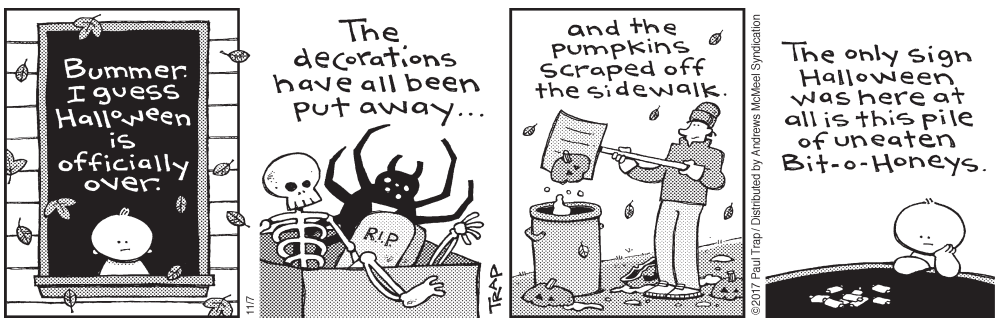
TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 8). You'll wield great powers of magnetism this solar return, some of which come from knowing what you want and being confident in your plan. You'll get a number of joiners before the end of the year. A special person will come back into your life. An out-of-balance exchange will become equal and just. Aries and Gemini adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 40, 16, 20 and 1.

FRANK AND ERNEST



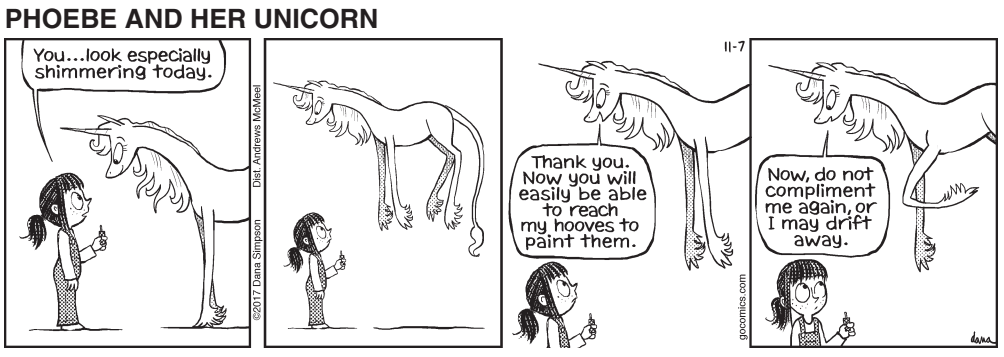
BLONDIE

THATABABY

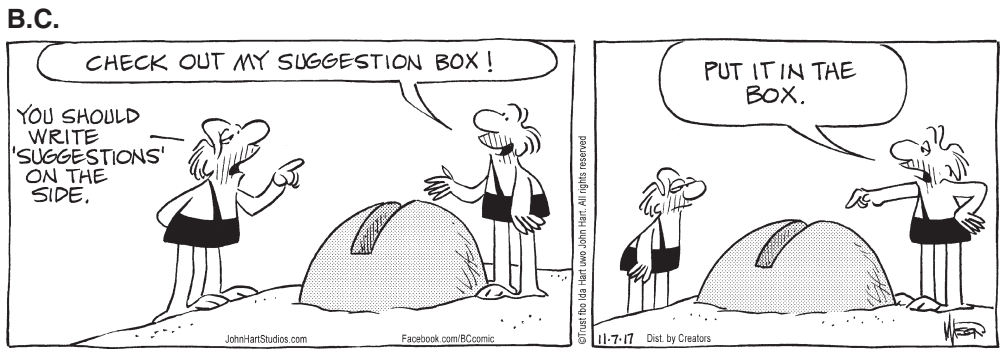


SALLY FORTH

PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN

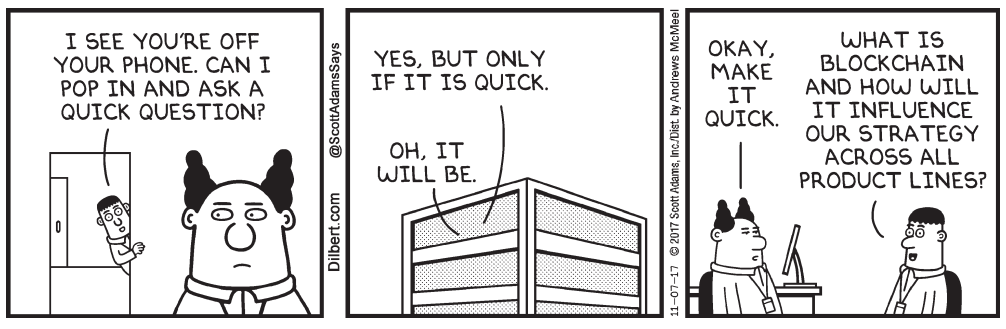


B.C.



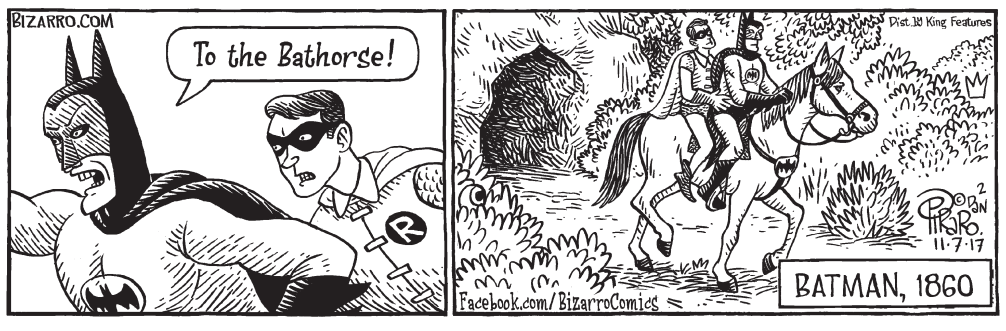
LOLA

DILBERT



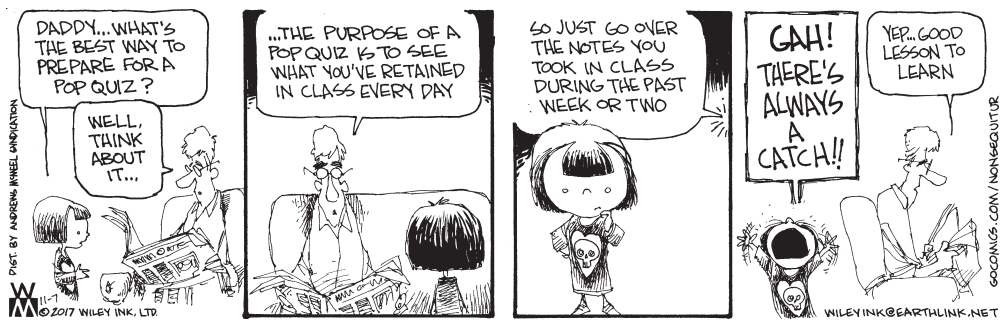
SIX CHIX

BIZARRO



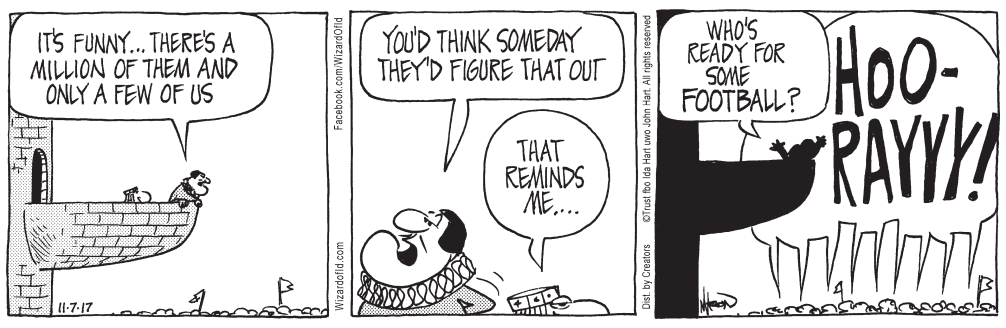
MUTTS

NON SEQUITUR

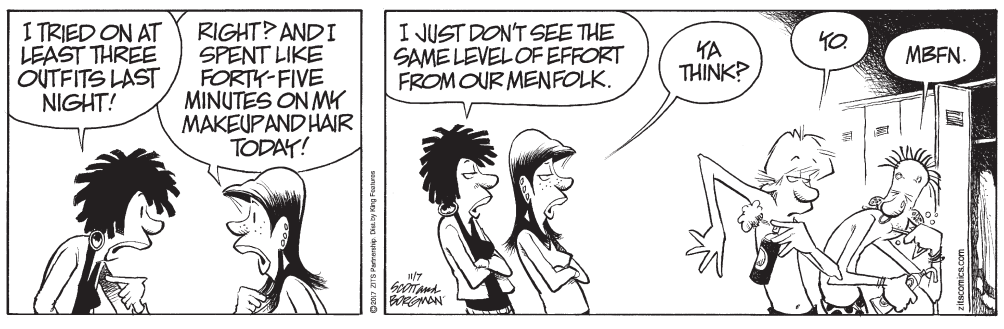
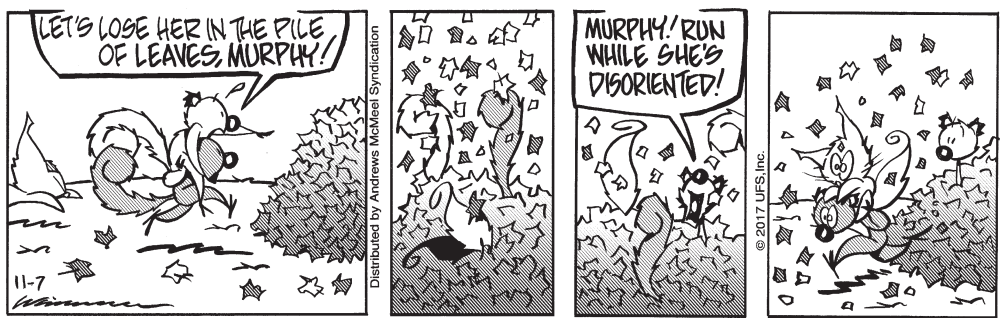


BABY BLUES

WIZARD OF ID



ZITS



ROSE IS ROSE