

# Invitation with a price

Dear Annie: My friend bought a condo in Florida. She wants me to come stay for a week while she is there but thinks she needs to charge me \$350 to stay with her. Why would a friend need to charge you if she is there, too? If I chip in for some food, what am I paying \$350 for? Is this fair? — *Feeling Used*

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

Dear **Feeling Used**: It does not seem right to me to ask that of a friend. If it were a vacation rental and you were splitting the cost, sure. But this is a condo she owns, and she's invited you to come visit. Perhaps the strain of the cost of the condo was more than she fully realized it would be; that's the only plausible explanation I can think of for her charging a fee. Regardless, treating friends like customers is no way to pay the mortgage. If she is looking to make \$350 a week off houseguests, she should open a bed-and-breakfast.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Family Matters," whose son and daughter-in-law have not yet invited her to their new home, and I related completely. You are absolutely right; giving the benefit of the doubt is very important in this situation, and I love what you had to say. But time may not change much, either. I have a similar situation. My son and daughter-in-law spend virtually every holiday with her family.

I have also gotten very blue over this and felt very slighted and had my feelings hurt. But I finally decided that is completely pointless. Dwelling on hurt and anger breeds more hurt and anger. My husband and I have started our own tradition of combining Christmas and Thanksgiving and having a family dinner at our home between those holidays. We try to plan it early and give all of our family members time to work it into their

holiday schedules. I don't ever fix turkey and dressing, because it's a lot of work and everyone's had it recently. So the meal is simpler, which saves work and stress, leaving time to enjoy the day. I invite everyone to bring a dish, but I let everyone know it's not necessary.

My perspective has changed. I no longer focus on being slighted or alone with my husband during the holidays. It's our time to do what we want and give to others through charity or goodwill. Our dinner with the family is all about stress-free fun — enjoying the family, the grandkids and the day, guilt-free. I have a much better attitude, I get to host in my own home, and I get to make our own tradition. And there's a lot less work. It's fun, and I am all about fun at this age. Happy holidays! — *Working on Me*

**Dear Working on Me:** Your good spirit is contagious. Thanks for serving up some perspective with an extra helping of holiday cheer.

## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** If you can manage to delay the usual knee-jerk verdicts that humans love to form in the first 10 seconds of another's presentation, you'll set off a series of sweet events, all made possible by your act of listening.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Make sure you're on the same track with the other person; that way, you'll avoid the problems that come with making assumptions. Tonight you'll get the chance to show the team that you play fair.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** With most things you tackle today, the result will be better if you delay the payoff for as long as possible. It will work in everything from relaying information to governing your own willpower.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** There's so much you could say on matters, but since you're all too aware of the short attention spans that most people have, you'll aim your words toward a particular destination and leave out anything that doesn't fit the bill.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** You'll come across those who've yet to discover their own depths. Maybe they are afraid or haven't had any reason to dig deep. Or maybe they've lacked role models. Regardless, the relationship can only go as deep as the shallowest person.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** To suspect that you're the underdog isn't exactly an uplifting feeling, although you can take heart in the fact that everyone loves an underdog. Go forward in full faith that you have a chance at victory.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Humans love to assign reasons for things that happen, to bridge the gaps of logic and close every case. The trouble is that what follows is often praise or blame. And sometimes there really is no defini-

tive "responsible party."

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** No one ever influenced the world by being the same as everyone in it. But if you don't seem at least somewhat like the others, they'll mistrust you. Group acceptance will be required. Start with what you all have in common.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** It's as if you were designed for adventure. When the others are afraid to go first, your trailblazing nature takes over. March forward and the others will follow.

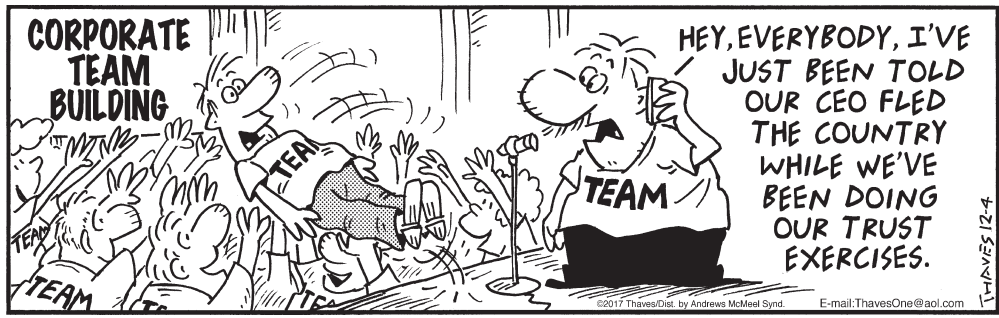
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** It's fun to be in unfamiliar places when you have a guide. But today there probably won't be a clear model, and you'll have to make due by observing the people around you who seem to know what they're doing.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Like a nice neighborhood that wants to preserve the peace, your life could use a few speed bumps — constructs you've put in place specifically to slow yourself down, thus preventing accidents.

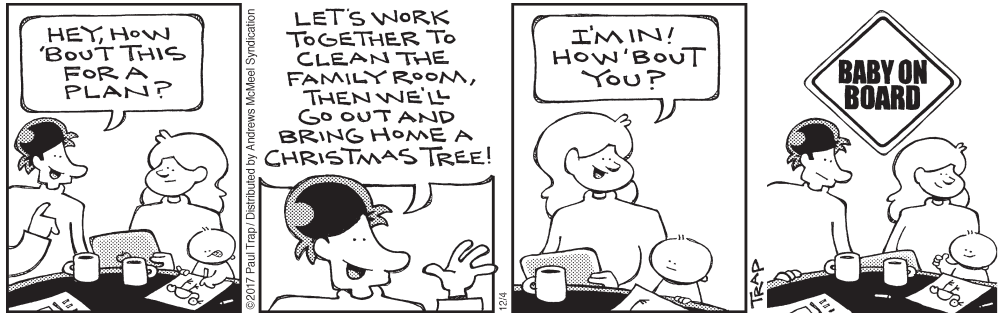
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** The scenario is fresh, and you're still deciding who you want to be. Consider what each role requires. For instance, winners take chances. Heroes take risks to help others. VIP's make others feel important.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 5).** Your cosmic gift is one of determined and exclusive focus on the things that are going to make your life better. You'll be freeing yourself of an anchor of sorts over the next three months. In March, family works together and all are lifted. In 2018 you'll take pleasure in the sale of something that helps people. Leo and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 10, 23, 40 and 11.

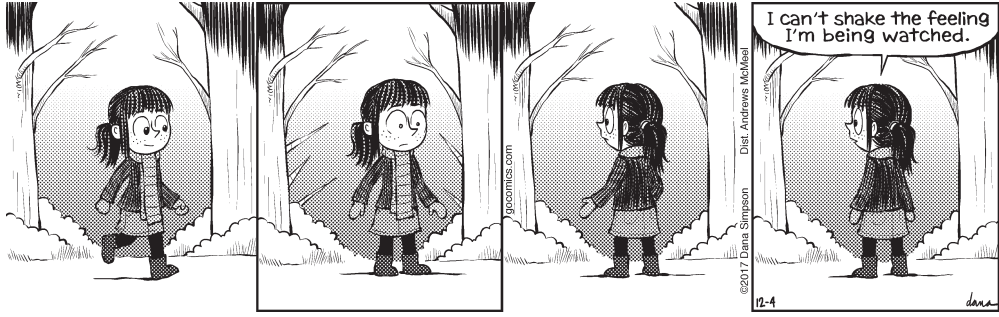
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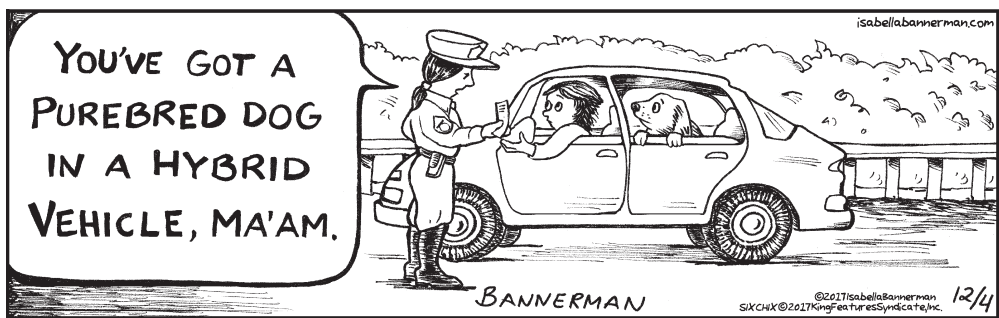
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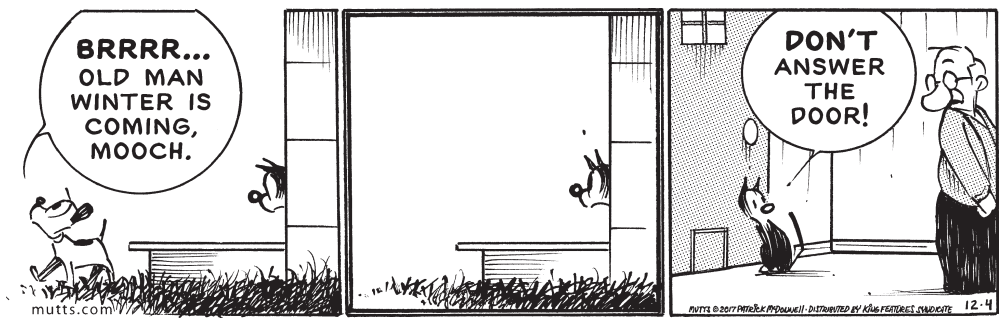
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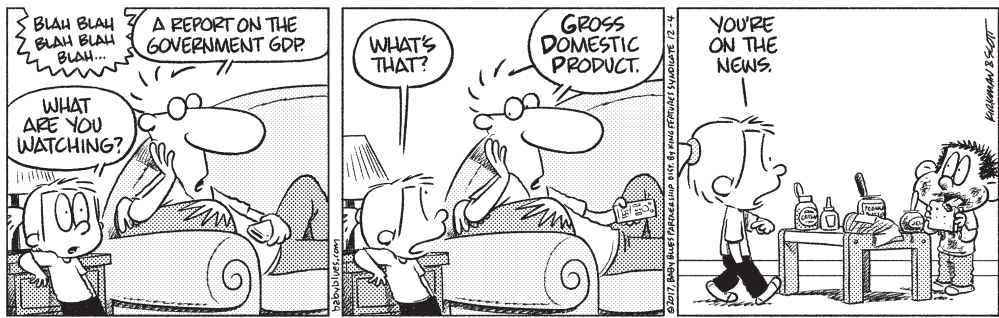
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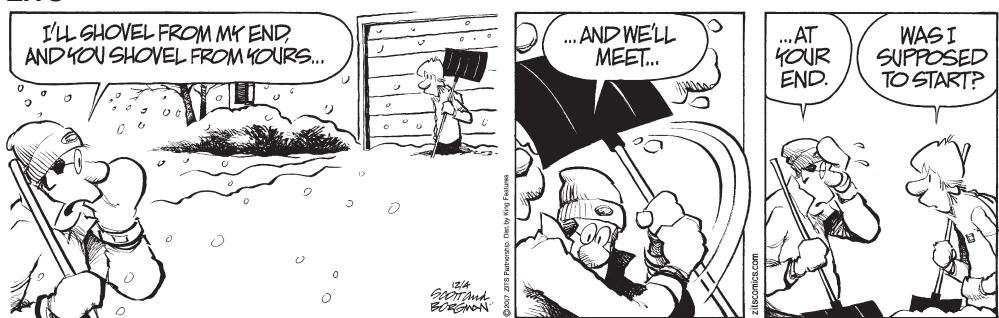
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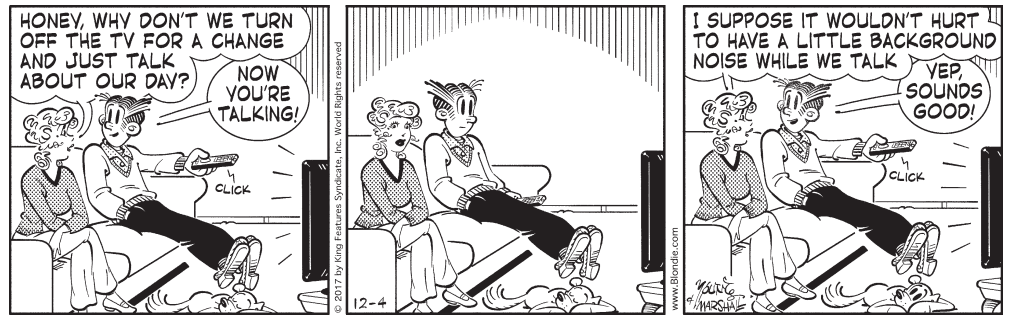
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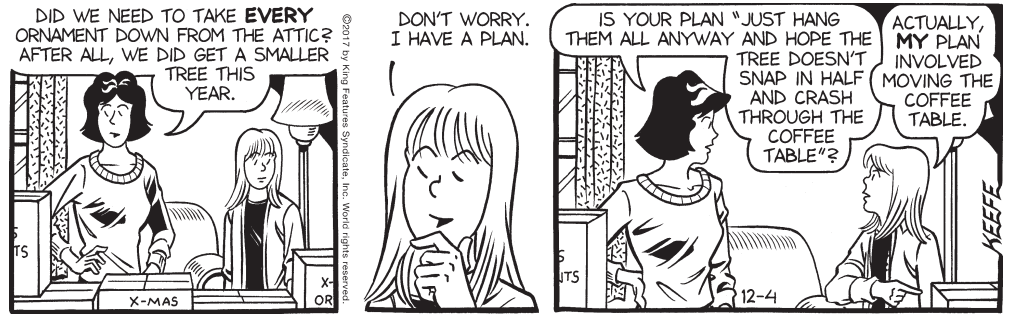
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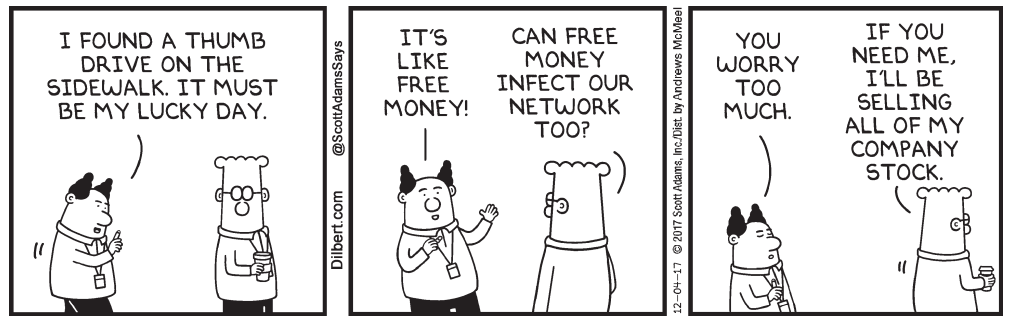
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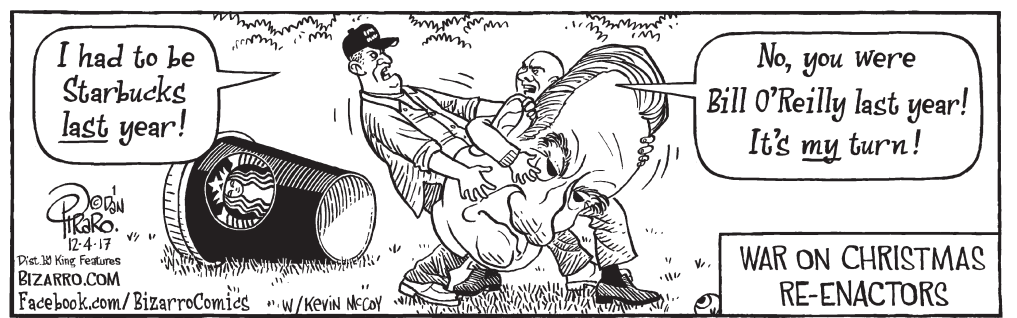
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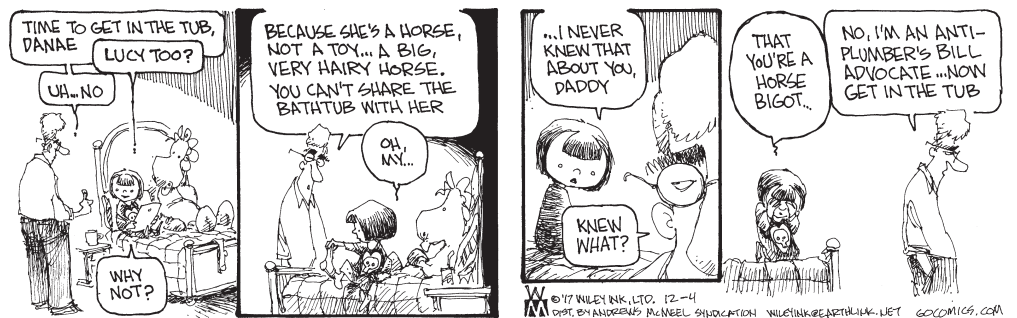
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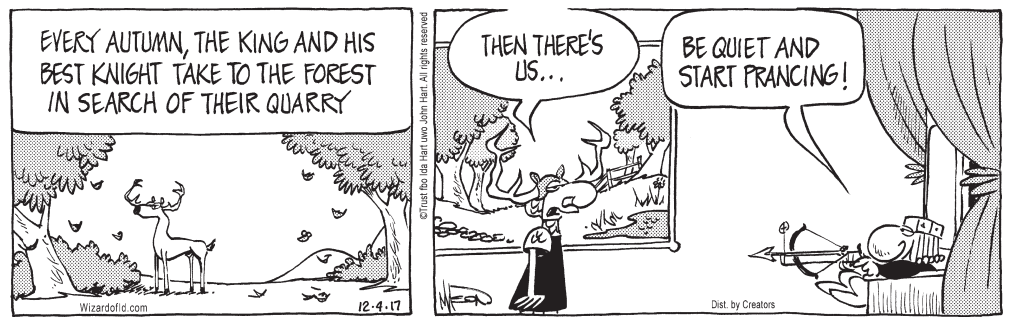
## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

