

Dating with autism

Dear Annie: I am a 36-year-old man living with my father. I also have autism, and because of this, I have had difficulty in dating women.

For a few years, I was on the dating website called I Love Your Accent (I had been on 10 other sites prior to that), which matches American and British singles, but nothing happened.

Then, last fall, I downloaded the app UK Social and became friends with a British girl from Birmingham. As it turned out, she was not trustworthy. She asked for money, and I had to end the conversation. My mother got upset and intervened.

Now I am starting a relationship with a girl around here named "Erin." There is a problem: She is somewhat nerdy and has the same condition I have. What should I do? Should I wait for the ideal girl to come around or stay with Erin and see what happens? — *Ethan in Hanover*

Dear Ethan in Hanover: There's no such thing as an ideal girl. There is only a girl who is ideal — or close enough to ideal — for you. Don't dismiss Erin

simply because she's "nerdy." If she's a nerd, that just means she has interests she's passionate about. Strong interests make people interesting. And if you both have autism spectrum disorders, you might find that you understand each other in a unique way. I say give it a try. You don't need to make any major decisions right away, but go on some more dates with Erin and see how you two get along. Good luck.

Dear Annie: Recently, you printed a letter from "Betty," who wrote about the death of a friend and how she was treated by family.

I loved her suggestions regarding caring for the dying. Back in 2013, my 92-year-old mother went downhill in a hurry. We called in the angels from hospice, and they talked us into using a hospital bed in a second bedroom. Even though I wished there were some way for her to continue sleeping with my dad, she became too fragile to move.

The day we were warned

that her struggle was not to last very long, my dad and I took up a vigil. Most of the time, we were both with her, praying the rosary and talking softly to her, reminiscing about happy times. Shortly after midnight, I needed to take a break and went into the living room with the nurse. Not five minutes later, I heard my dad's chair creak, and by the time I got to the doorway, he was kissing her goodbye. He passed me without a word and went to bed. I sincerely believe she was waiting until she could be alone with him before letting go.

When my dad and I had a chance to talk about it much later, he agreed that he was happy to have had alone time with her. I thought he needed my presence to bring him comfort. I think I should have given him more alone time with her. They had been married for over 73 years, and except for during World War II, they had very rarely spent bedtime away from each other.

— *Fortunate Daughter*

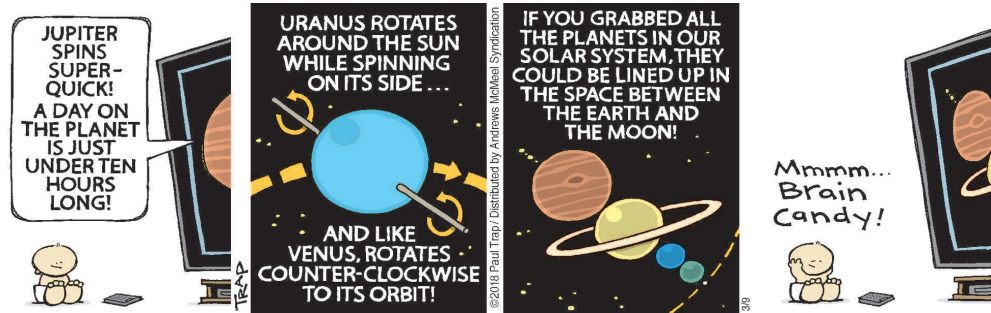
Dear Fortunate Daughter: I believe your letter will touch many hearts, as it certainly touched mine. Thank you for writing.



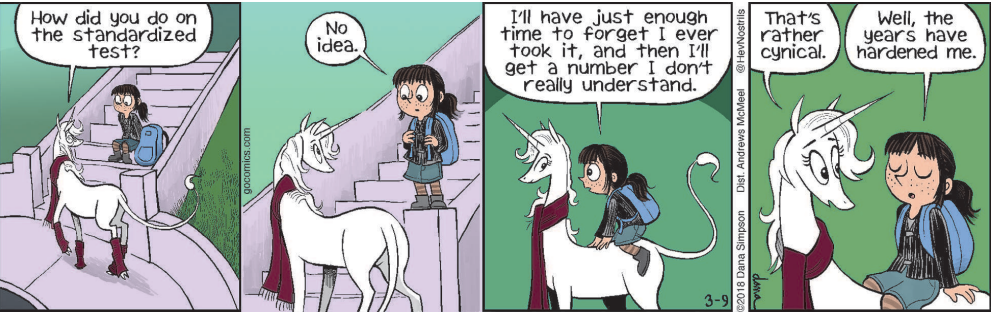
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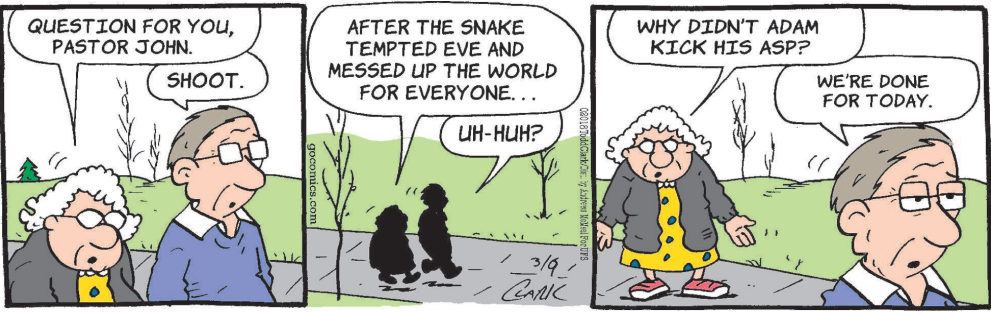
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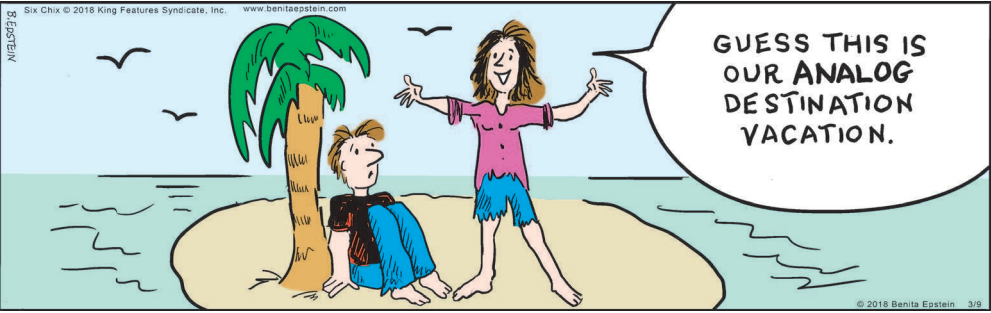
PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



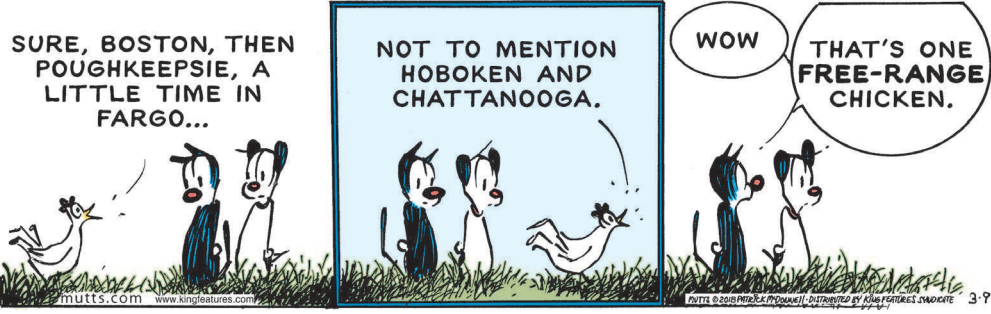
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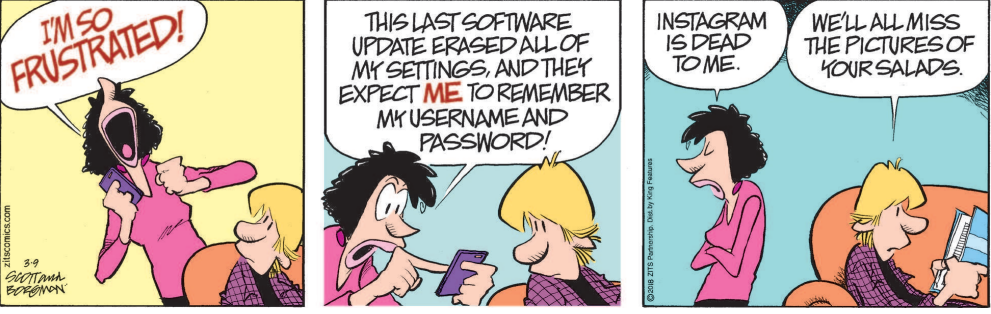
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BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The gurus suggest we drop all this suffering, but their methods are often confounding. And besides, there are little bits of it that might have something to teach (which is probably what's making it so hard to let go).

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). No one grows in one direction. The tree goes high; the roots go low; the limbs go wide. You're about to hit a breakthrough in one area of your life, and other parts of your life can't help but be affected.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). This is a labor of love. You'll be better off going with the assumption that you're not going be rewarded — that recognition won't come and neither will money. That way, anything good that happens from this will be a lovely bonus.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Today you're a bit like a shop owner who falls in love with inventory and wants to hang on to the best stuff even though it's marked to sell. Don't worry: There's much more where this came from.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). No one's opinion of you will matter today, not even your own. So don't worry what anyone thinks. Instead, focus on the energizing activities and people, while avoiding the drains.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Dependencies come in different shades. It can be difficult to tell the difference between the toxic kind and the kind that helps you have a good life. You judge it for you, and others will judge their own scenes.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). This is like a game of pin the tail on the donkey; you're trying to complete a picture that would be pretty simple to nail down were you not blindfolded and dizzy.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Though you wouldn't totally toss your beliefs just because something interesting came along, you will find yourself cobbling together some new theories based on new information that has come to light.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). A response is different from a reaction. Reactions are involuntary, and responses are thoughtful — some more so than others. Take your time in answering. You have all the time you need for this one.

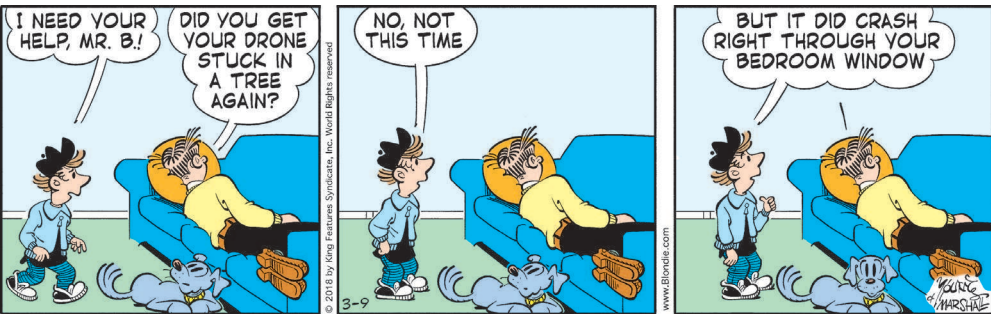
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It's not just that you're doing something right. You're doing most of the things right, and that's what's behind today's excellent push of progress. So don't credit luck. This is about you!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Which is the thing to do: hop to attention and try to fix it, or make a joke and shrug it off? This is really a matter of style. Just know that whatever you choose, you'll be setting up an expectation for the future.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Be careful not to volunteer without thinking. Take a day before responding. Do some calculations on the matter. Will you get a return on your investment? There's a lot that would be fun to do, but will it serve your bottom line?

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 10). People will work extra hard to make you smile. The next 10 weeks bring the completion of a project, followed by a new direction for your main work. Leisure isn't what's going to fulfill you, unless it involves hitting challenging goals and maybe some competition, too. You'll bring a vision into reality in August. Virgo and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 4, 22, 2 and 15.

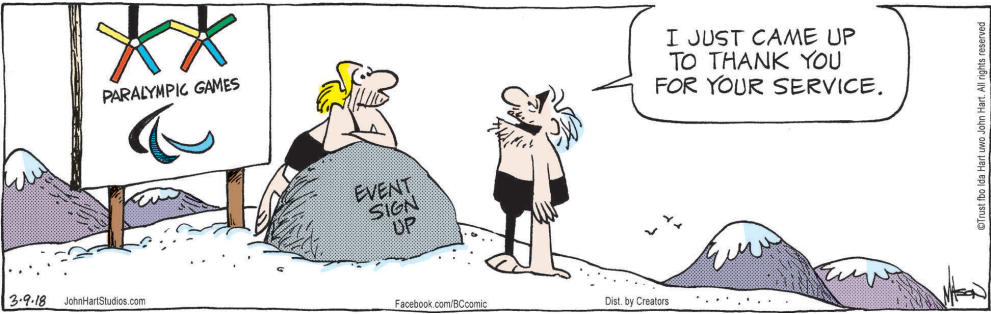
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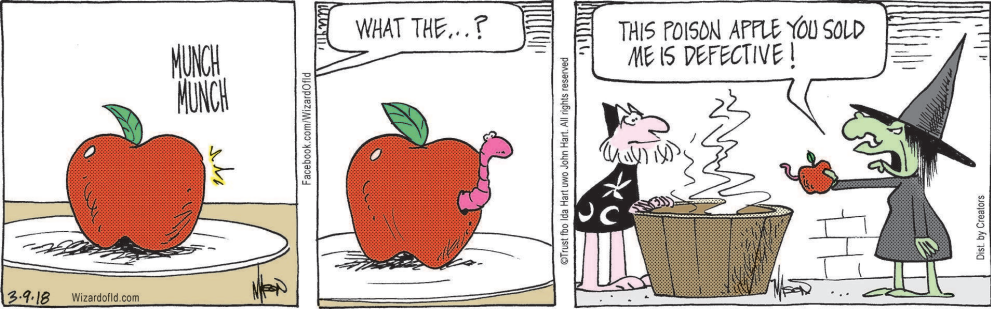
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