

Time to assess expectations

Dear Annie: My boyfriend and I have been together for seven years. We have lived together for nearly five years and been engaged for the past three years.

We are both in our late 50s. He has never been married and had no children. He has been very successful in his business. I have been married twice and have three children.

We get along great. We go to movies, eat out, go on vacation together, and we laugh all the time. He treats me like a queen and my children as if they were his own.

So here's the problem: Everything we have is in his name only — house, cars and motorcycles. If anything happens to him, I'm in trouble. His family would kick me out and take everything before his body was even cold! Every time I bring up setting a wedding date, he freaks out, telling me that we can't get married because I will lose my good insurance, and he can't afford to put me on his. He says that's the only reason for not getting married.

Am I just kidding myself and waiting for something that my never happen? I can't keep going

on like this. — *Hanging On By a Thread*

Dear Hanging On By a Thread: The real question to ask yourself is, "What are my expectations in a relationship?" For many people, being in a relationship where you get along great, laugh all the time and he treats you like a queen and your children like his own would be the gold standard.

He is probably a bit scared because he has never been married before. This will be your third time, so you have a bit more practice. Focus less on the potential loss of material items and more on your love and commitment.

Coming from that world of commitment, you can figure out a way to both have insurance if you marry. And once you are married, it's reasonable to ensure the house is in both of your names.

If he balks at this, then you have to decide if you want a great relationship without long-term prospects or if you want to start all over looking for Mr. Right.

Dear Annie: The days of preparing for and staying on a career

track are over. It's not even a choice as jobs are morphing at a hectic pace. Today's workers will change not only their employers but also their career paths multiple times over their working lives. Some project as many as five to six times. The "job" you retire from probably doesn't even exist yet.

It's never too late to change tracks, to grow and evolve. It requires a little sacrifice, though. You need to look at the changes happening in your desired field and start getting the training and experience you need to make the change to a better position. Whether you want to get "ahead" in your current field or change to a path that fulfills your dreams, it won't come to you; you have to take the initiative and leap into the future rather than staying in a rut! — *Call me Waiter-Teacher-Nurse-Purchaser-IT specialist-Retired*

Dear Retired: No wonder your last job is "Retired." I'd retire early, too, if the workplace were as crazy as you make it sound. Yes, technology is making tremendous changes in our lives, and it is true that the more we adapt, the more successful we will be, but living in a state of chronic anticipation of losing a position is no way to live.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). As the warrior of the zodiac, you're very careful to determine what's really worth fighting for before you even think about suiting up. Your time and effort are valuable commodities.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Shadows of the soul are easy to clear. You don't have to scrub or organize or manage anything. All you have to do is turn up the heart light (or just generally lighten up) and the darkness disappears.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Whoever told you that making yourself happy was selfish was sadly mistaken. It is, in fact, your job to make yourself happy. And when you follow your bliss, you inspire others to do so, too.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Relationships change in tone as you get to know people better. This will be a good thing — a delightful thing — as comfort breeds fun, laughter and interesting developments.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The problem with chasing rainbows is that you can never get to where they are. You arrive and they either disappear or move. It's the same with chasing other lovely illusions, but there's still a lot of fun to be had in the pursuit.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You may not be an instantaneous fit for a situation, but that doesn't mean it's not for you. Try it on. There's some tailoring that could be done, so to speak.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are many reasons why a person might earn the label of "difficult." A lot of times it's just because that person isn't conforming. And maybe the norm isn't worthy of conforming to.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your skills are getting sharper in the way that most things do — through friction. It's why you don't bemoan the challenges. They give you the practice you need to become great.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Things are being worked out behind the scenes while the stage appears to be nothing but a blank space in front of a curtain. Keep watching. You're going to like what happens when that curtain opens.

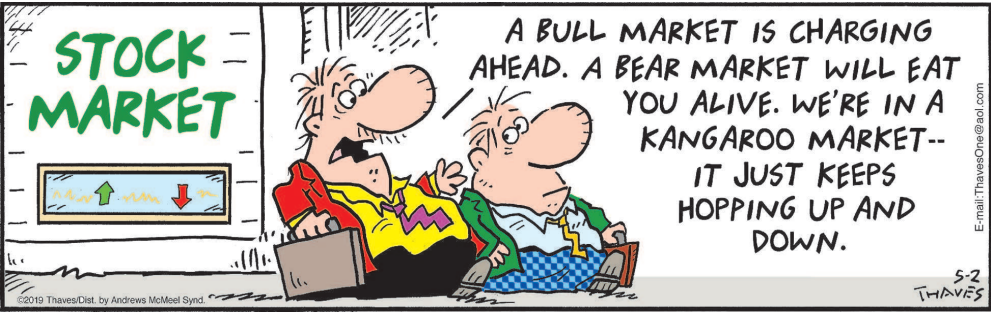
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your feelings will change quickly and completely, so it's better not to air them straight away. Give it time. Don't send the first email, text or letter. Sleep on it. Come back and look at it tomorrow.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). After a time of being indecisive and not very excited about your choices, suddenly something new drops in. You want it. You throw your best energy after it. Your aim is true.

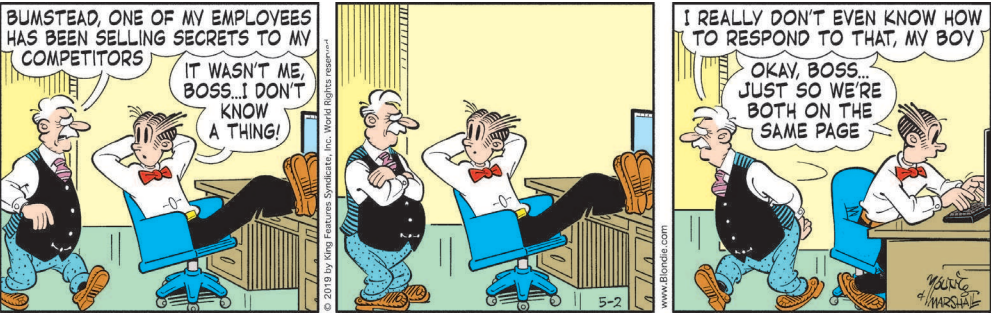
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Because you've been so warm and inviting, new relationships spring up like green shoots from the ground, a fresh change of your emotional landscape.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (May 3). Make big plans because your projections and calculations will be extremely lucky over the next 30 days. It's like you're writing some kind of computer program that reality will follow along and flesh out as it runs. A change at work will have you adding new skills. There's a test in September, and then you'll advance quickly. Cancer and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 2, 7, 13, 19 and 44.

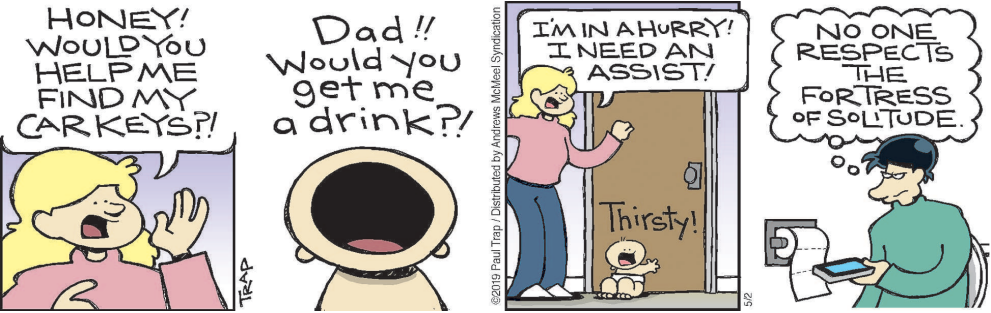
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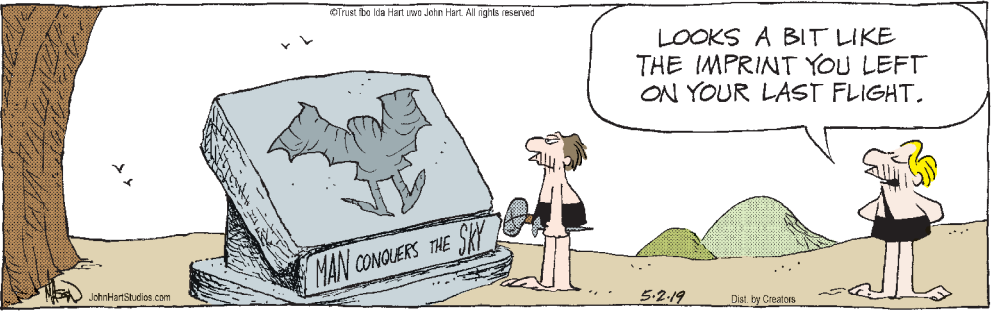
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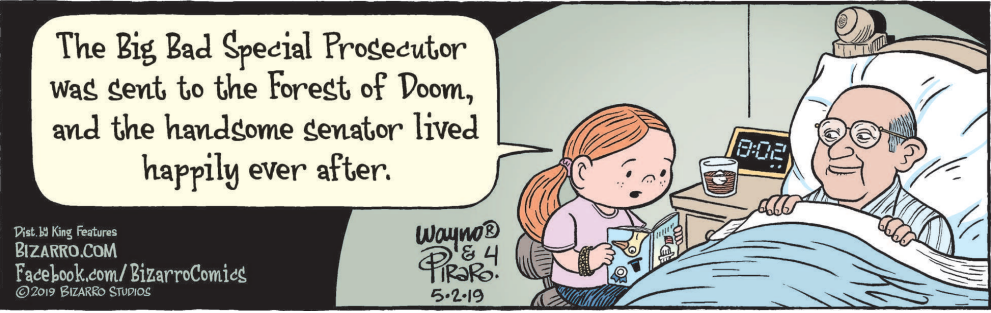
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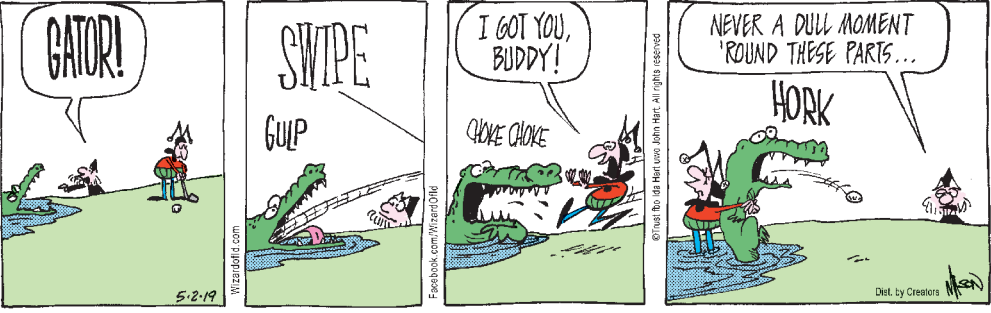
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