

DEAR ABBY

Write to Dear Abby online at dearabby.com or by mail at P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069



Dear Abby: I brought my 68-year-old immigrant father to live with me permanently with the intention of caring for him. He was completely dependent. Halfway through the year, I got angry, told him to move back and vowed to myself I would never ever care for him again. It wasn't that he did anything wrong; I don't know why I got so angry.

He wound up living alone, being helped by his friends. I visited him, but I became disconnected. I knew he was suffering, but I couldn't bring myself to bring him back to live with me. I was cruel, and it hurt him deeply. I let his green card lapse. He passed away two years later.

Since then, I have been overwhelmed with guilt. As a son, I should have cared for my father. I am depressed over my actions. I am a horrible son. I have been crying and asking for forgiveness. Please tell me how I can move forward.

— *Guilt-Ridden in the West*

Dear Guilt-Ridden: Performing the role of caregiver is an enormous undertaking. While it can be rewarding, it can also be exhausting, unrelenting and stressful. Caregivers have been known to lose their tempers because of the pressure, but because you had bitten off more than you could chew, your reaction was extreme.

If you are religious, talk about this with your clergyman. If you aren't, please consider scheduling some appointments with a licensed mental health professional who can help you more fully understand what happened between you and your father and help you cope with your guilt. And in the future — once you are able — consider atoning by

volunteering for a charity that serves the elderly.

Dear Abby: I have been married to a functioning alcoholic for more than 30 years. He was once funny and nice and a good dad. But over the years he has become unbearable. He doesn't shower or brush his teeth. He was always mainly a beer drinker, but now he is drinking hard liquor and stays drunk most of the time he is awake.

I told him I thought he was depressed and a severe alcoholic, and he should talk to his doctor, but he refuses. He walks around cursing under his breath, and nobody wants to be around him. I keep him off the road when he has been drinking, but I'm terrified he will hurt someone. I am pretty sure he is drinking on the job, and I'm scared he will hurt himself. I am ready to leave him, but afraid that if I do, he will be completely lost. Please guide me.

— *Lost in the South*

Dear Lost: You don't need me to tell you that your husband is in bad shape. I don't know what his job involves, but if he's interacting with others, I am surprised he can get away with having such poor hygiene and being stoned on alcohol.

Because he refuses to talk to his doctor about this, you should. I hope you are beginning to realize that, on the path he is on, you cannot "save" him. I have mentioned Al-Anon many times in my column. The organization is an offshoot of Alcoholics Anonymous and was started to help families and friends of individuals who are unable to control their drinking. You will gain insight about what to do next if you attend some of their meetings. Find one by going to al-anon.org/info.

YOUR HOROSCOPE *By Madalyn Aslan*

Stars show the kind of day you'll have

★★★★★ DYNAMIC | ★★★★★ POSITIVE | ★★★★★ AVERAGE | ★★★★★ SO-SO | ★★★★★ DIFFICULT

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021: Psychic, visionary and conceptual, you have a personal magnetism that comes out to shine this year, and, relying on your instincts, you're very successful — with a tidy fortune. If single, you're wary of attachment so you stay single until a move precipitates your change in 2022. If attached, your partner loves you just as you are. It's bliss, although you still need to get away. AQUARIUS is the most far-out.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★★ Today brings the gift of friendship. Get involved with groups; cultivate those whom you would enjoy as friends. Politics and community issues can be a catalyst for association. Enjoy life and put plans in motion for future dreams. Tonight: Take the night off.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★★ Today highlights public recognition and your career. Be alert to changes in your field. Keen competition is present. Dispel confusion by double-checking for precision and accuracy. Be diplomatic during discussions. Tonight: An uncharitable comment made would come back to haunt you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★★ Your natural cleverness is enhanced. It's a perfect day to begin writing a book, assembling artistic creations or selecting educational goals. Work incorporating music and art from faraway lands can elevate your spirit. Interactions with a child will be especially happy and comforting. Tonight: Relax.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★★ Financial obligations relating to others can be resolved. Sincerity is the best way to process and release old resentments. Get in tune with how you really feel and let others know. You overcome competition or other obstacles with aplomb. Tonight: A partner's perspective is grounded.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★★ Cooperation and tolerance are essential today. You'll be aware of the importance of upholding justice and maintaining balance. A deep awareness is present. Your intuition is wonderful. Heed those inner voices, and you'll be guided toward success. Tonight: Fun date night.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★★ The quiet and cool hours will have a rejuvenating power. A health challenge can be overcome. Adopt a live-and-let-live attitude toward others. Make few demands and seek no favors. Negotiate to avoid conflict. Tonight: An online meeting opens new doors.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★★ Today brightens your personal life. Your sense of style and people skills are also excellent. Network. Nurture a promising new relationship. Your artistic talents are in top form. Practice playing an instrument or create a drawing. Tonight: Speak your mind.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★★ There can be some stress involving family members. A residential move or change to your workspace is possible. Differences are resolved through a discussion or emails. Take sensible precautions and all will be well. Tonight: An elderly relative might need your assistance.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★★ Expect some interesting conversations. New ideas are suggested, and business joins gracefully with pleasure. Your energy level is enhanced. Romantic urges are pronounced, and you will express your love. Tonight: Natural magic will work quickly to intensify the relationship.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★★ Imaginative plans increase your income. A hunch as well as new developments in your field lead to worthwhile new opportunities. Be careful not to discard memorabilia and keepsakes impulsively. Tonight: Tense family situations from the past are resolved.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★★★ Today augurs a fresh start and brings a cycle of higher energy, leading to much accomplishment. Frustrations will melt away. Direct irritation into constructive venues, and the world will be at your feet. Tonight: Focus on what you want. Go for close and intimate.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Consider consequences and options first. Quiet the mind through meditation. Psychic communication with wild creatures will be especially lucid. Your creative talents shine. Use your imagination. A child or new friend inspires you. Tonight: You might just want to luxuriate and take a nap.

NBA | ALL-STAR GAME

Blazers' Lillard scores 32, vows with half-court bombs as Dame Time moves to prime time

BY JOE FREEMAN

The Oregonian

Dame Time took over prime time Sunday night.

After wowing Rip City for nine seasons with playoff buzz-beaters, remarkable individual scoring runs and too many clutch performances to count, Damian Lillard found another stage — one of the NBA's biggest — to unpeel another layer of his star power.

Lillard scored 32 points, including the game-clinching three-pointer, to catapult Team LeBron to a convincing 170-150 victory over Team Durant in the NBA All-Star Game at State Farm Arena. It was the most points a Portland Trail Blazers player has scored in the annual exhibition showcase, and Lillard delivered them in jaw-dropping fashion, mixing alley-oop dunks with half court three-point bombs while scoring his team's final 11 points.

Playing during a pandemic in a busy and condensed one-day event that also included the 3-Point Contest, Slam Dunk Contest and Skills Challenge, Lillard somehow managed to grab an oversized share of the spotlight.

"It feels kind of crazy," Lillard said. "I couldn't even dream up some of the things that have happened in my career."

Lillard, who just missed out on a starting spot in the game because of a tiebreaker, came off the bench to play 21 minutes Sunday, making 11 of 20 shots, including 8 of 16 three-pointers. But it was how the points came that turned heads.

During a pregame huddle on the sideline, Lillard said, he and teammates Stephen Curry and Chris Paul made a pact: They would all try to finish an alley-oop dunk and sink a half court shot before the night was over. Lillard kept up his end of the bargain in the first half, flushing a lob from Paul with 1:19 left in the second quarter and nailing a deep bomb roughly one minute later.



Craig Mitchell/der/AP

Portland Trail Blazers' Damian Lillard, here shooting a 3-pointer against the Golden State Warriors last week, scored 32 points and had the game winner for Team LeBron in the NBA All-Star Game Sunday.

It was merely a tease.

Lillard went on to make three three-pointers from near half court, including the game-winner, making one wonder if Logo Lillard will soon be modified to Half Court Lillard. He had threatened before the season to add the half court three to his arsenal, but had yet to try it in a game. An exhibition contest against the game's best players, it turns out, was just the place to dust it off.

"I wanted to test it out in some live action," Lillard said. "It felt decent, it felt fine, like a normal jumper. I was able to shoot it pretty easy."

Lillard, a noted long-range marksman who has extended his range to the logo in recent years, said he has been sheepish about attempting a

half court three during a game "out of respect" for his teammates. Why jeopardize a defensive stand with a haphazard low-percentage shot?

But it's something Lillard practices regularly and he trusts his accuracy, even from such distances. So now that's he's found success in an exhibition game, don't be surprised to see it in a real one.

"I think I'm going to," he said. "If I get it going, I'm definitely going to do it."

At the very least, he's earned the approval of a former critic. Paul George, whom Lillard famously bludgeoned with a 37-foot buzzer-beater to clinch a first-round playoff series in 2018, said he now regrets calling it a "bad shot" afterward.

On Sunday, in a postgame Zoom interview, George told

reporters that Lillard (and Curry) had developed "crazy" range and are making deep threes with such ease and accuracy, those shots are now "well in their range."

"It's a great shot," George said, chuckling. "Thumbs up."

But while Lillard's deep bombs drew plenty of buzz Sunday, it was his late-game scoring flurry that delivered Team LeBron a win. For the second consecutive season, the rules of the All-Star Game dictated that the game ends only when a team reaches 170 points. Lillard pushed Team LeBron to the threshold by scoring its final 11 points, completing a driving layup before swishing three consecutive three-pointers to end the game.

The last one came from — where else? — half court, as Lillard dribbled up the left side, took one step across the half court line and launched the clincher. As the play unfolded, Curry lingered back on the other end and prematurely waved goodbye to the 2,500 fans in attendance, effectively calling Lillard's walk-off shot.

After the dagger dropped through the net, Lillard raised his arms and tapped his wrist, bringing Dame Time to prime time.

Perhaps the only thing that eluded Lillard Sunday was the All-Star Game MVP trophy. That went to Giannis Antetokounmpo, who finished a perfect 16-for-16 from the field and scored a game-high 35 points.

Curry added 28 points, thanks to eight three-pointers, and he, too, delivered on the point guard pact to finish an alley-oop and hit a half court three.

Paul, who dazzled with 16 assists, made his dunk but never got a chance to attempt a shot from half court. It's about the only thing that didn't go right for Team LeBron.

"It was fun," Lillard said. "It's exciting just to run around out there with a guy like (Curry). That's what makes All-Star Weekend, All-Star Weekend."

NBA

Continued from A5

"We start on the road, back-to-back games, with one practice. That's a challenge in itself, right?" Sixers coach Doc Rivers said. "Then, obviously, not having those guys, that's a lot of points, our two best defenders. So, obviously, it would hurt."

Teams are used to it after a first half in which the unavailability of players and coaches because of health and safety protocols forced 31 games to be called off. For every team, the first big test of the second half is the coronavirus one that will determine who is good to

go upon returning from break.

Once that's finished, teams can look ahead to a busy and exciting stretch run. With many clubs bunched in the standings and another play-in tournament opening up additional paths to the postseason, even teams that weren't as sharp as they hoped in the first half have reason for hope.

That includes teams such as Miami and Boston — last season's Eastern Conference finalists — plus Dallas and Golden State, all at or barely above .500 but perhaps just one hot streak from a nice leap up the standings.

Or maybe Milwaukee, which

was running away with the best record in the East last year when the season stopped but has been inconsistent this season, can discover its old form. The Bucks will be fearsome again if Giannis Antetokounmpo shoots anywhere near the way he did in the All-Star Game, when he went 16 for 16 en route to MVP honors.

"I've got to keep working hard and I've got to keep enjoying the game of basketball, and hopefully more important things can come, and hopefully my goal is to be a champion one day," the two-time regular-season MVP said. "Hopefully we can hold the big trophy."

A number of teams could have a shot. The Lakers may have looked like a solid favorite to repeat when the season started, but Davis' health throws that into question.

Perhaps the Jazz can capitalize. They were the team whose coronavirus issues caused the season to stop last March 11. Now, they have three All-Stars and a league-leading 27-9 record.

"It's definitely been rewarding but at the end of the day we're not here to celebrate and act like we've done something and it's only March," Donovan Mitchell said. "I think we've got to continue to get better."

Ducks

Continued from A5

Not because of match-ups or seedings. But because I've watched Altman over the years as he's constructed a path to the Sweet 16. Sometimes it's because Oregon has better talent, but also because Altman can flat coach. He doesn't play to win games, he plays to peak while everyone else is wilting. Anyone who watched UCLA struggle with the Ducks' variety of presses in a 82-74 win on Wednesday knows what I'm talking about.

This Oregon team doesn't have the grit of Dillon Brooks-led outfits. It doesn't have the moxie of Payton Pritchard's junior or senior seasons. But it has Chris Duarte, who appears to be the newest program spirit animal, and it has Altman at the controls in some Oz-like twist.

Altman is 132-66 in conference play while the coach at Oregon. That's a .667 win percentage. But in the month of March vs. Pac-12 opponents Altman is a red-hot 71-28 — good for a .797 clip.

In the last seven seasons,



Thomas Boyd/AP/AF

Oregon Ducks men's basketball coach Dana Altman.

Altman has four Sweet 16 appearances. He has one trip to the Final Four and another season that ended in the Elite Eight. He hasn't been anywhere near perfect. The 2017-18 season ended in the NIT. He struggled with taking on too

many transfers for a stretch, and went through a period in which he gambled and lost on young players who weren't interested in playing more than one college season. But it's March again and Altman is back at the high-limit tables.

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Sean Miller's stained tenure at Arizona is bound to be a talking point during March Madness. Also, the Pac-12 is currently knee-deep in trying to pick the next commissioner. What I'm saying is, the conference needs an uplifting story on the court and right now, it appears to be Oregon or bust.

I will not soon forget the sight of Altman at that roulette table from across the casino floor. I can see it like it was yesterday. It was like seeing a vegetarian belted up at a steak house. Or a bald guy in line at a barber shop. But the more I think about it, Altman goes down as the biggest poker player in the house.

Don't bet against him this week in Vegas.