

Rude comment elicits reaction

Dear Annie: My sister-in-law always makes comments about what I am eating. I keep myself trim and am careful about what I eat, but I don't deny myself.

Last week, we went to lunch at a favorite place, and I ordered a cheeseburger and fries. It is a lovely restaurant, and the servings are large. I always take half of my meal home, as it is too much for me to eat at one time. My sister-in-law said, "If they put something like that in front of me, I would get sick to my stomach immediately."

I have put up with her comments for many years, but that one upset me, especially since she said it while we were eating. Afterward, I wrote her a note stating that I am a widow and those lunches are my biggest meals of the day. She has a husband and, of course, fixes their largest meal in the evening. She no longer speaks to me. Was I wrong, or was she? — *Sister-in-Law*

Dear Sister-in-Law: We think you are both too sensitive about inconsequential matters. Perhaps your sister-in-law is jealous that you can eat whatever you like and she cannot do the same. Perhaps there are other things about her that annoy you, and this was simply the last straw — or vice versa. We think a good relationship with a sister-in-law should be preserved. Please apologize to her (not as a matter of right or wrong,

Annie's Mailbox

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but simply to start over), and say you are sorry things became so bitter and you'd like another chance. Then invite her to go someplace with you — but perhaps not to a restaurant.

Dear Annie: For the past 20 years, my husband and I have gotten together with several other couples for one weekend a year to relax, play golf and share stories about our kids and grandkids. We rent a vacation house, and the few of us who live close to one another plan a fun game for the group to play on one of the evenings.

We recently held our annual retreat. On game night, we planned a gourmet dinner with cocktails, followed by the meal, followed by games. One member of our group noticed a couple from the house next door sitting on their porch, so he invited them to join us for drinks. As we were introducing ourselves, this same friend invited the couple to stay for dinner. After dessert, when we were

ready to play games, this friend and his wife left us to go next door to have a drink. We waited more than an hour for them to return.

Do you feel this is appropriate behavior? — *Old School*

Dear Old School: No. If your friends knew that other activities had been planned for that evening, they should have postponed the trip to the neighbors' place for when they had unscheduled time. This weekend had been reserved for your group. However, it also indicates that this particular friend was not terribly interested in the group game (or even the group company) and wanted to go elsewhere. After 20 years, it is not a negative reflection on anyone that things might need a new coat of paint. We suggest you poll the group and ask whether they'd like the activities to change. Others might have additional ideas.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Sad Mother," whose 25-year-old son is depressed and suicidal but refuses therapy. Perhaps she can get him help through his primary care provider's office. Many primary care offices now have integrated care and employ psychiatric consultants. I work in a clinic that has licensed clinical social workers and a psychiatric nurse practitioner. Many family practice clinicians are comfortable with starting patients on antidepressants. — *Kentucky*

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You will have greater than normal powers of discipline, but don't make yourself forgo the things you want and need. Go easy on yourself! Before you deprive yourself, decide what to use as a replacement.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You'll be tempted to say too much. When in doubt, hold back. You'll be admired for your discretion. Your action will say enough and bring results where words failed.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You have extraordinary powers of perception. You believe there is more going on than your eye can detect, and by the end of the day, a mystical experience will prove your theory.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Before you get busy, consider the possibility of doing absolutely nothing. Stillness can be deceptively productive. It is possible that you'll attract all you need through stillness.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You make better choices when a certain someone is there to encourage and support you. The love in your heart warms you from head to toe like hot chicken broth on a cold day.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll be asked to make a sacrifice in the name of love. It's probably a small concession, but it will set the tone for the future, so go carefully into this.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Think about all you've overcome. Things that used to bother you don't anymore. What used to scare you has no emotional charge to it whatsoever. Love has made you immune in some way.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Don't

waste your time dwelling on past mistakes. If you disappointed yourself, chalk it up to experience. You probably did the best you could under the circumstances, and next time you'll do better.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). When you have a feeling that the world is about to contradict your best expectations and validate your worst one instead, it's time to get rid of those expectations altogether.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You are self-sacrificing, but only for those few special people who have your heart. There is nothing you won't do to make them smile, and when they are happy, you are happy.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Avoid those who seem unapproachable or standoffish. It's not your job to warm everyone up today, and your time will be better spent on the genuinely nice people.

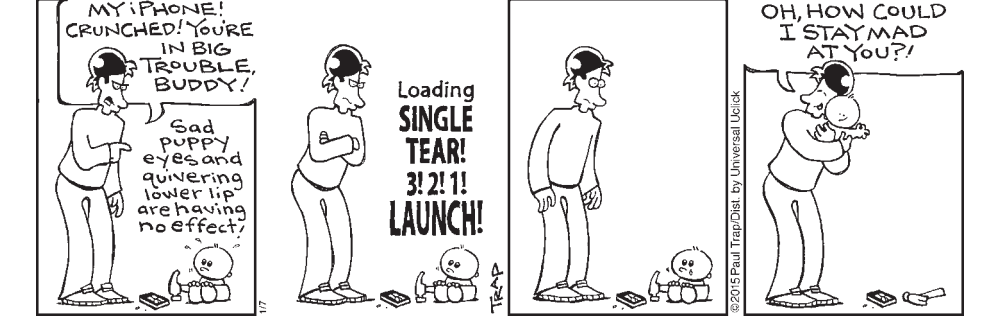
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll determine which sacrifices were worthwhile and which ones not to make again. Tonight, you really don't need anything from your romantic counterpart, and that is what makes the situation so appealing for both parties.

THURSDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 8). Your humor lights up the world for someone special this month. You produce a sensational piece of work in February. Invest your earnings in getting more certifications or training. Your personal life sparkles with new friendships in June. Family business will benefit all in July. Sagittarius and Gemini people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 24, 4, 29, 48 and 33.

FRANK AND ERNEST



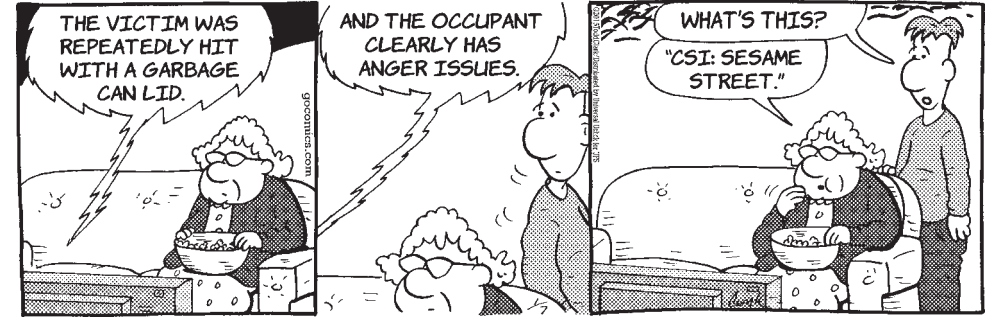
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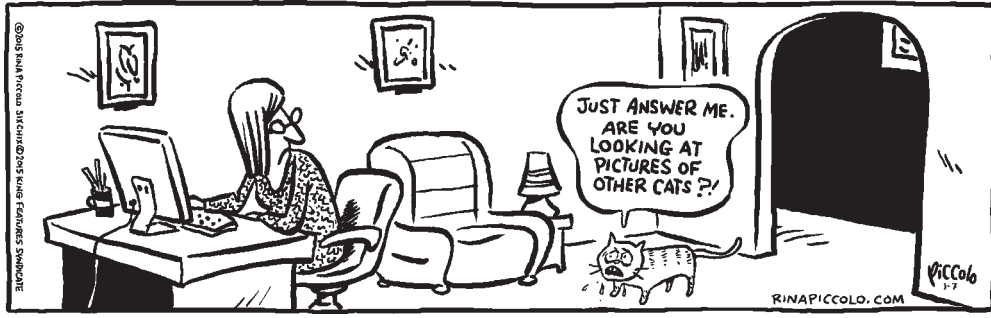
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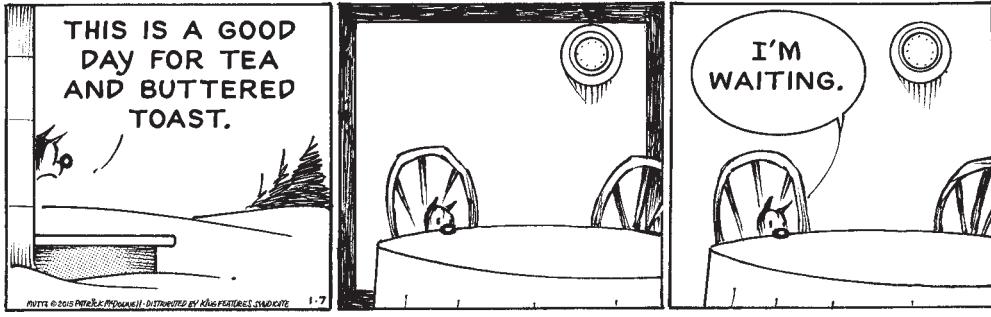
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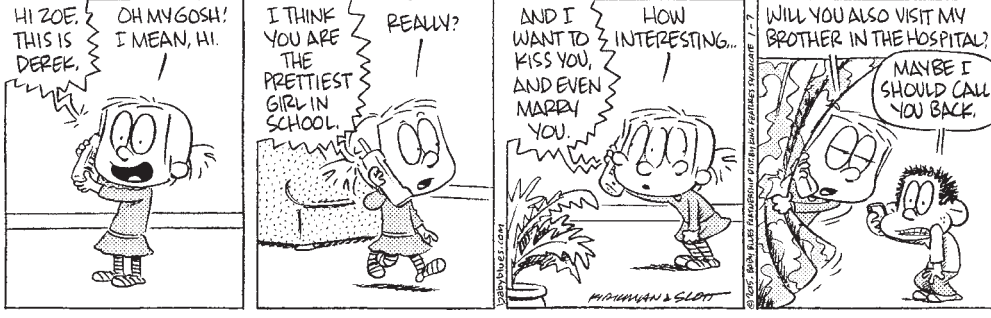
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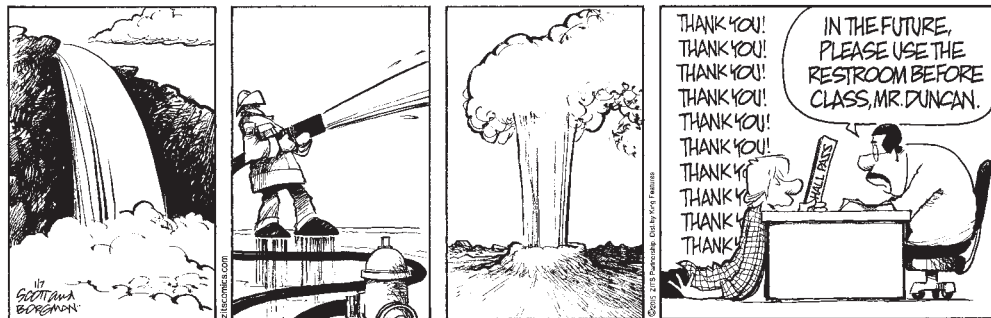
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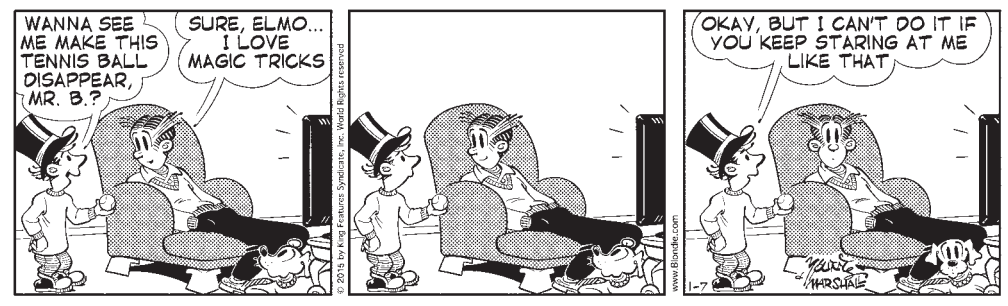
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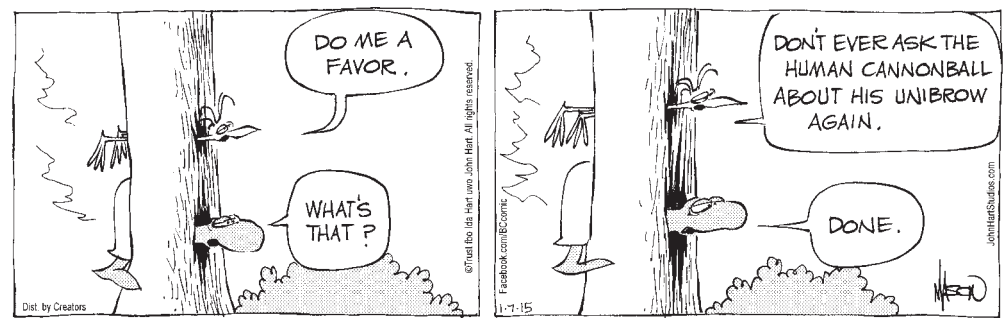
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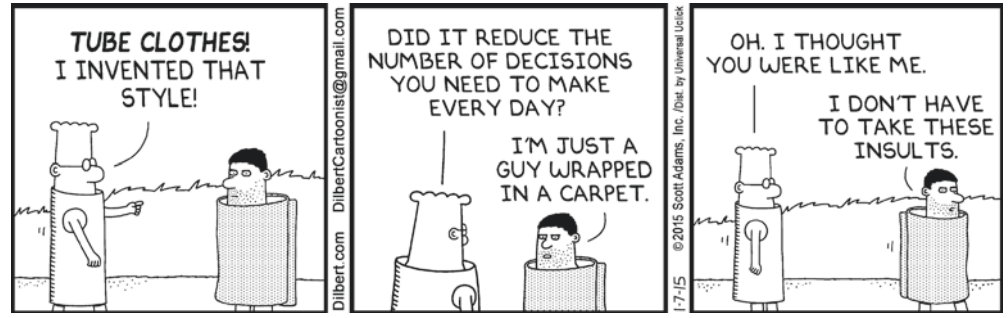
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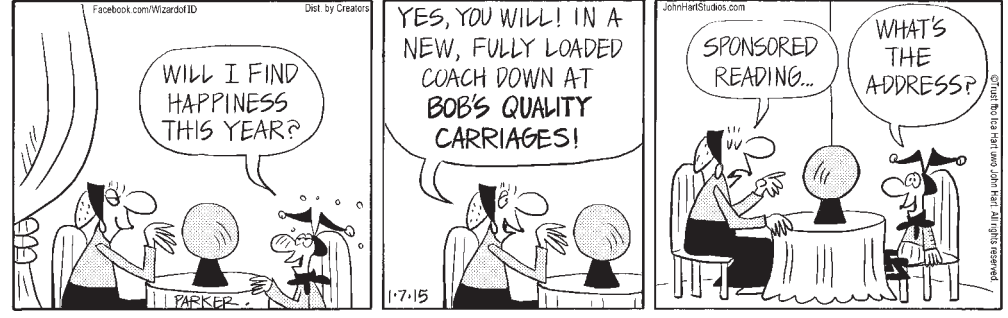
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