

Grandma is playing hardball

Dear Annie: Last summer, my 19-year-old college student granddaughter asked to rent my basement bedroom, with its own bathroom and access to my laundry room. I agreed and asked for a minimum rent to cover utilities. She attends school on a scholarship and works two full-time jobs, and I postponed payment of rent until her next student loan came through.

The problem was, her unemployed, single-parent boyfriend with no car or driver's license was here all the time. I offered suggestions of nearby job opportunities and the chance to work off his "rent" by helping out around the yard. But he always had an excuse as to why the jobs wouldn't work out and never seemed physically up to doing any yard work.

I did my best to make this situation work. However, they were having parties when I was away and trashing my home. After the second time we had words, they left, leaving most of her stuff here. She then decided to move in with her parents, although she was actually living with her boyfriend and his parents.

My son and daughter-in-law have not said or done anything about this situation. I think they are enabling their daughter. She came back once for clothing and then informed me that I could go in with the rest of her family for her Christmas present to furnish an apartment for her and said boyfriend. That was the last straw. I

Annie's Mailbox

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gave her a Christmas card with a note saying her gift is that she does not owe me the two months' rent and four months' storage of what is still in that bedroom.

My granddaughter and her mother are both upset with me. I feel she was deceitful, rude and disrespectful of my home and me. I am not handing out any more favors until she grows up. Am I wrong? — *Tough Love Grandma*

Dear Tough: Not at all, but you cannot expect your freeloading granddaughter and her enabling mother to agree with you. You do not owe anyone a furnished apartment. Do whatever you think best and ignore the rest. We're on your side.

Dear Annie: I read the letter from "Run Out of Ideas," whose high-school graduate nephew plays video games in his parents' house all day and seems to have no interest in growing up and being responsible. This nephew has lots of company.

Please address the "boy crisis" in this

country. Thousands of young men in their late teens and 20s are just like the nephew: "perfectly content not to go anywhere in life." Your advice wasn't wrong, but it ignored the fact that his nephew represents a social trend and a problem. Maybe you should explore what's wrong with our society that so many young men are so disinterested in being productive and pursuing success. — *Waco, Texas*

Dear Waco: There are plenty of young men who are productive, successful and responsible members of society. For the others, there are undoubtedly myriad reasons: difficulty in finding employment, poor wages and high turnover, substance abuse, mental illness, laziness and overly indulgent parents who issue no consequences for loitering. Studies show that job-hopping is no more excessive for this generation than previous ones. Parents have to insist that their kids be educated, find work and pay rent, or get counseling to achieve those goals. But decent employment has to be available, or recent graduates will float from job to job feeling undervalued, being underpaid and getting nowhere.

Here's a suggestion from one of our readers:

Dear Annie: "Run Out of Ideas" should have a local military recruiter visit his nephew "Peter." There is no better organization in the world to turn kids into adults. — *John Q. Public*

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You got to know a very pleasant person, only to later meet an extremely unpleasant person in the same being. This is the polarity of human nature. Right now, it's more useful to recognize it in yourself than it is to recognize it in others.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). One rule is that if you can lose it in a shipwreck, it was never really yours to begin with. Yet there are possessions in your care that you strongly identify with, and you'll spend hours maintaining and enjoying them today.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Feelings are not wrong or right; however, some resonate a lower vibration than others. The higher your vibration is the lighter and more joyful you will be. Choose thoughts that make you feel better.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Many people aren't ready for criticism, and when they ask for it, what they really want is encouragement. Encouragement helps them feel seen and understood, as well as giving them the motivation to go forward.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The pleasure of reading awaits you. Actual paper will be best, as that will be the most expressive medium for your soul. Besides, your eyes need a break from the glowing screens.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There are endless supplies of facts available to anyone on the Internet or in the library. Do not confuse information with education. Educate yourself by learning how to apply knowledge.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Misery is when you can't leave the party because you don't have a vehicle or when you can't leave the conversation because you can't find an out. Happiness is having your own (emotional

and physical) transportation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The difference between the things you keep and the things you throw away has to do with what you identify with and find useful in the moment of choice. Just be aware that a different moment may bring a different feeling.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Don't try to have the perfect conversation. It won't happen, because it doesn't exist. But for the most part, even a boring conversation is better than no conversation; it's that important to connect now.

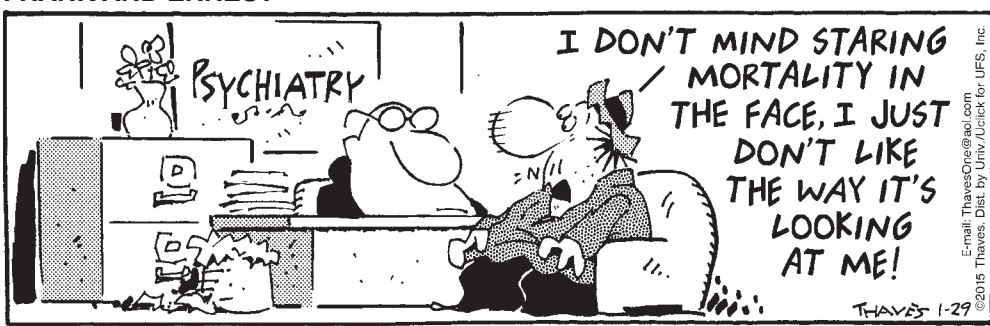
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Before you take out that credit card, remind yourself that "enough" is not always "more." In fact, often "enough" is found when you get rid of the excess that's causing you to miss the treasures in your possession.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). A loved one is trying to finish personal business and not so attentive to you as you would like. In fact, this person may be downright thoughtless or rude, but it's worth excusing for now.

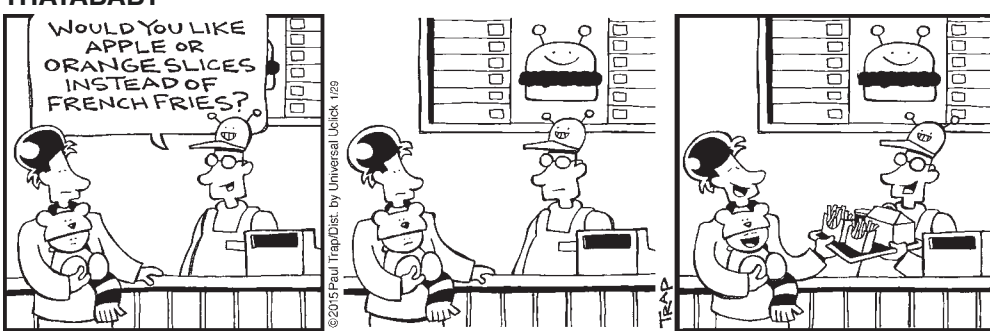
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). High expectations are the enemy of action. What if you lowered your aim by half? Halve it again; what does that look like? The point is to have such a small mental hurdle that you can baby step over it.

FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 30). The events of the next seven weeks help you realize what a wonderful life you have. You'll conspire with loved ones in March to improve your domestic environment. April boosts your reputation. A major deal is finalized in June. Create mischief with a fascinating someone in July. Libra and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 18, 3, 11, 27 and 45.

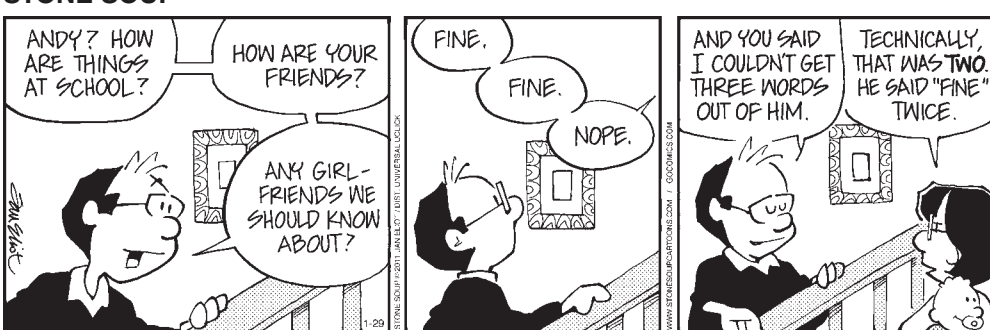
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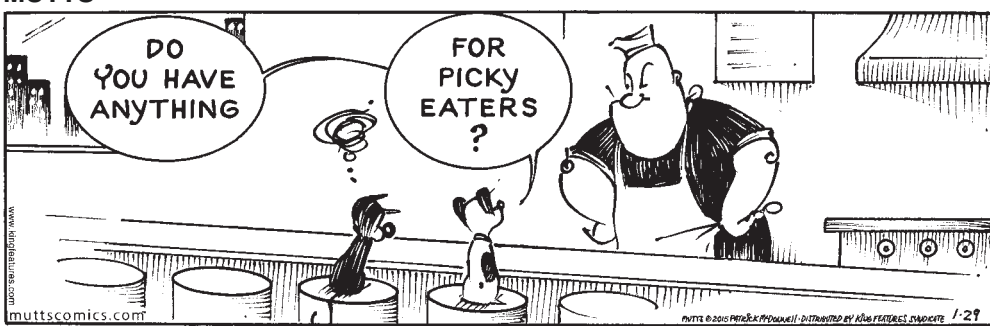
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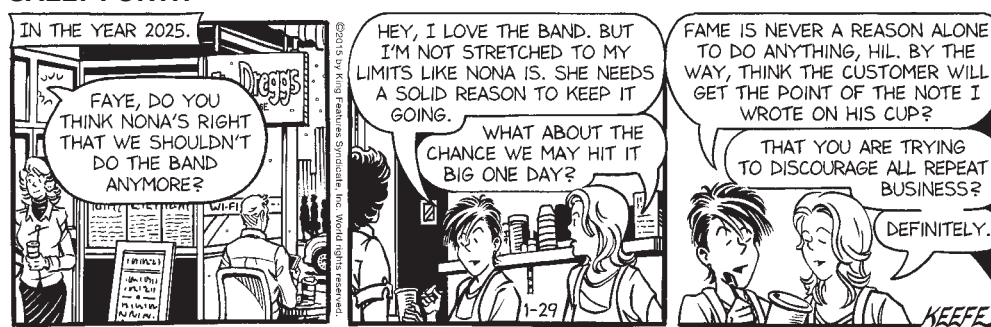
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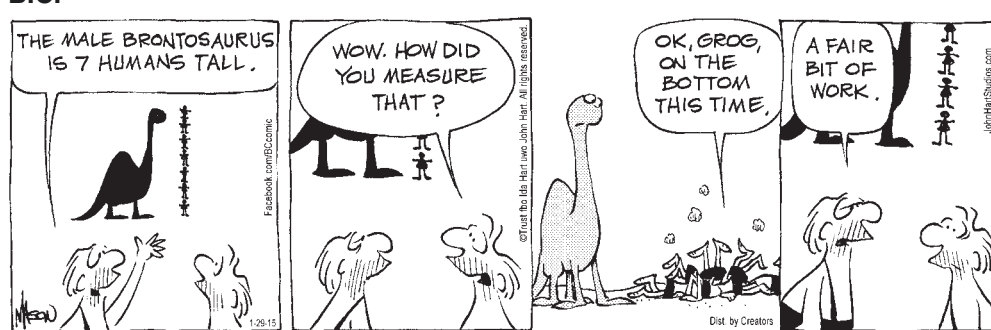
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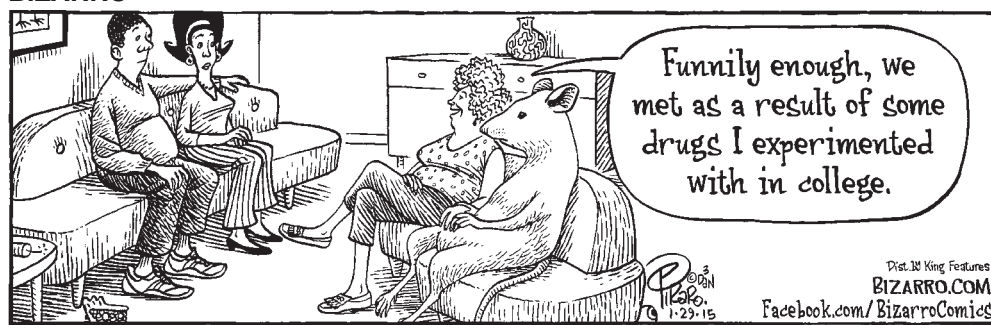
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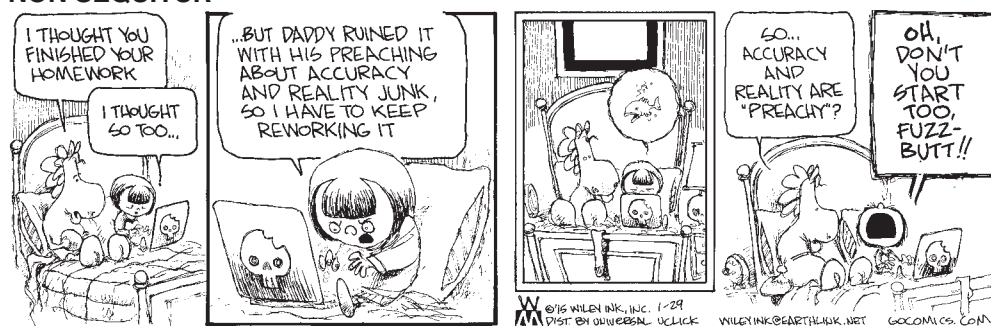
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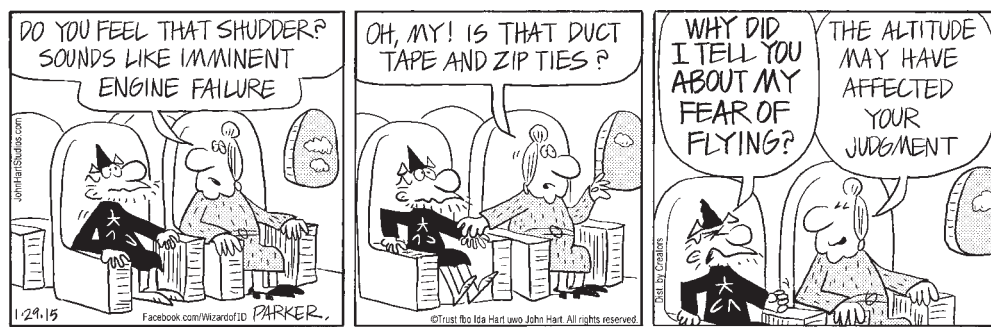
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