

She seeks help with gender

Tomorrow's horoscope

Dear Annie: I've lived my entire life feeling as though I was born the wrong gender. Transitioning is not an option. I was born female and look it. I would have a hard time passing as male. Also, I have heard nothing but horror stories regarding the surgery.

There appears to be resources galore for those changing from male to female, but everything I've read about my situation seems to assume I must be a lesbian. This is not the case. I am attracted to men. If I transitioned to male, I would be a gay man.

I'm not really sure what to call myself. Because I will not be transitioning, "transgender" doesn't fit, and "transvestite" doesn't cover it. I realize I am still a female, but I feel humiliated wearing dresses and skirts. I don't find anything sexy about women's clothing, as a transvestite might.

There seems to be no place in the LGBT community for my situation. My peers have told me that I am gay. Others say I will never find someone to love unless I become more "feminine." All of this indicates that my personality doesn't matter. I have done extensive therapy for bipolar disorder in the past, but it hasn't been helpful. One therapist actually told me my aversion to dresses means I had been sexually abused, even if I have no recollection of it.

I am on medication for bipolar disorder, but only recently have I admitted to myself that the root of my problem is

Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



probably my gender dysphoria. I wake up every morning disappointed that I am still trapped. Are there any resources for my specific dilemma? — *Forever Trapped*

Dear Forever: We are sorry you have had so much difficulty finding support. There are several organizations that help the LGBT community. We also know that many surgical outcomes for transitioning female to male have been successful. You can find resources and information through The Community of LGBT Centers (LGBTCenters.org), the Human Rights Campaign (hrc.org) and PFLAG (pflag.org), as well as GLAAD.org, femaletomale.org, ftmguide.org and the GLBT National Help Center (glbntionalhelpcenter.org).

Dear Annie: My breasts have very obvious veins visible near the surface of the skin. The left and right breasts have very different vein patterns.

My boyfriend says the veins should be symmetrical or nearly so. (My left

breast is larger, but I don't see how that would affect the veins.) What should I do? — *Both Sides Now*

Dear Both: According to our medical experts, there is no reason to be overly concerned. As one physician put it, "Breasts are sisters, not twins," meaning the size and vein patterns aren't symmetrical. Instead of letting your boyfriend diagnose you, please talk to your doctor about this.

Dear Annie: My heart went out to "Desperate for Answers," who said her parents compared her to her sibling, and she came up short.

In junior high, I felt inferior to my siblings because they got good grades, but no matter how much time I spent on my homework, my grades were never as good. I rarely saw them working at all, and here I was, trying so hard.

Years later, I discovered I was dyslexic, and reading was complicated and difficult for me. Also, when I was in the ninth grade, an observant science teacher told my parents I needed glasses. I thought everyone saw things the same way I did. I was shocked when I walked out of the optometrist's office.

"Desperate" should have her eyes checked and also see whether there are any hidden learning disabilities. It was too late for me when I made my discovery, but hopefully, it won't be too late for her. — *Been There, Done That*

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Anything you do to increase your powers of self-control will have long-term benefits. If you can control yourself, you will have greater influence over others.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Why waste your time on pursuits that most people can do? There are benefits to specialization. Pursue the things you are naturally best at. Evening will bring a moneymaking opportunity.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You've been going nonstop. You need a period of rest to recharge and get inspired again. If you can't make it happen today, at least you can plan and prepare for a time in the near future.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). All progress will start with acceptance. Acknowledge the reality and accept everything about it. Once you do, you will be able to begin working with what you've been dealt.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). When you feel afraid, you don't need to run away to find relief. Just wait and let the relief come to you. It will, and much more quickly than you think. You're stronger than you know.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The day calls for kindness and compassion from you to you. Make yourself comfortable. If you can't figure out how to do it, experiment with possibilities until you find what works.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The completion of an important project is near. It's important to have something in the works for when this is finished to minimize the sense of loss that accompanies such endings.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It turns out that "happily ever after" is created

one happy moment at a time. The special thing that happens this week is that you recognize contentment when you experience it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The opportunity available to you is great only in proportion to your ability to make use of it. For now, focus on educating yourself so that when the truly prime opportunity arises, you'll know exactly what to do.

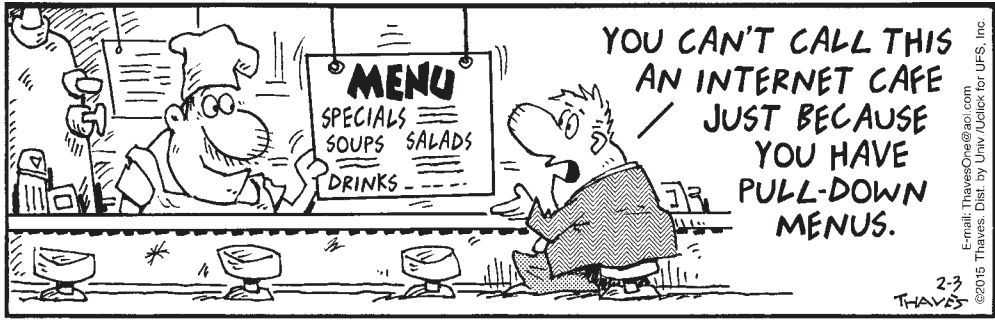
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). How you get there may be just as important as what you do when you arrive, except that no one other than you saw that part. You have to feel good about your methods, but at the same time, you don't have to broadcast them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Children are magical. It may take some time for the magic to emerge — after all, they do need special care — but if you're lucky enough to know a child, it will be worth the trouble.

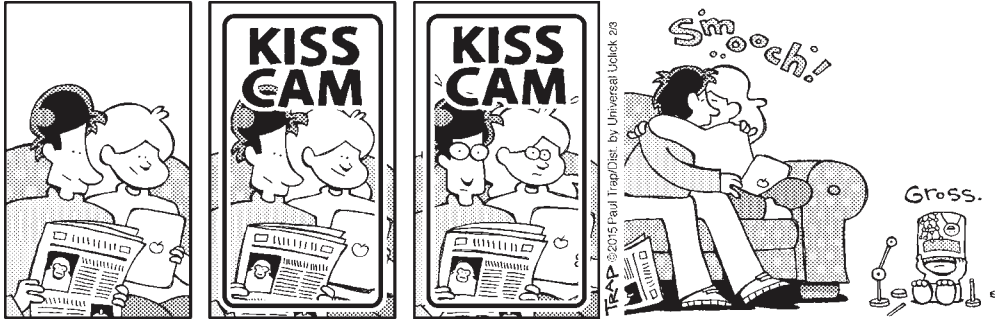
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Soon after you master a skill, you will tire of it. That's why it's important to have something new on the horizon to look forward to. You'll get ideas on the commute, in the shower or while preparing food.

WEDNESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 4). The theme is bravery and honesty. The truth will blow open a closed door. An exclusive club will let you in, a defensive person will let down the guard and a hard bargain will go soft. You'll meet someone special in March. Beautiful scenery in June could lead to a move. A breakthrough comes in August. Aries and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 14, 39, 2, 1 and 19.

FRANK AND ERNEST



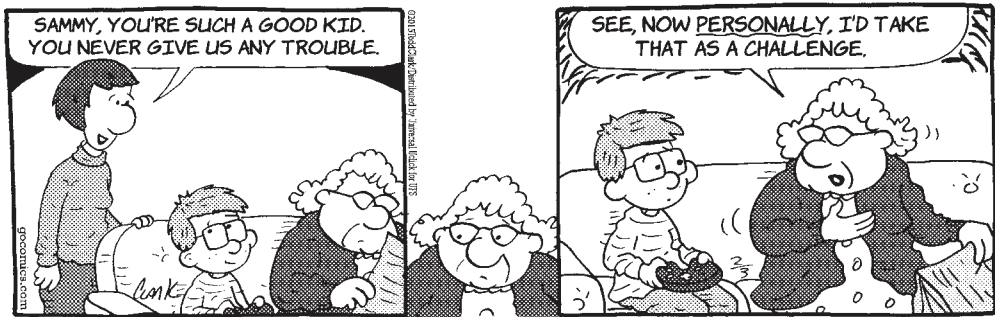
THATABABY



STONE SOUP



LOLA



SIX CHIX



MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



BLONDIE



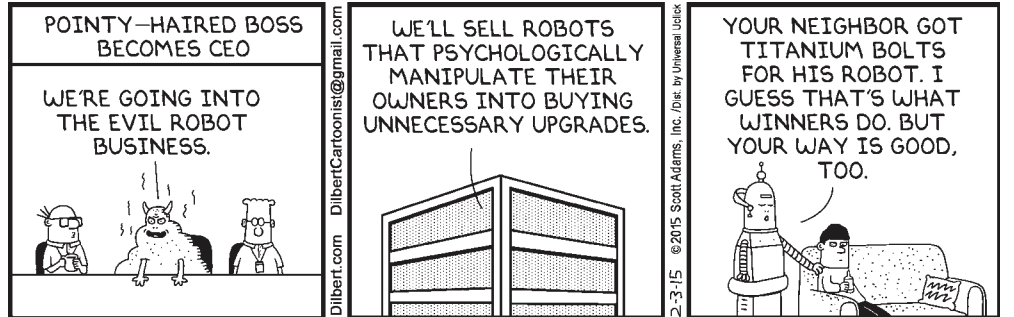
SALLY FORTH



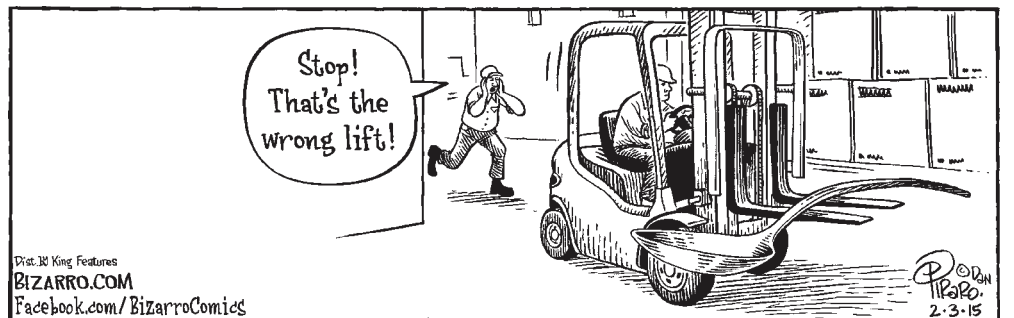
B.C.



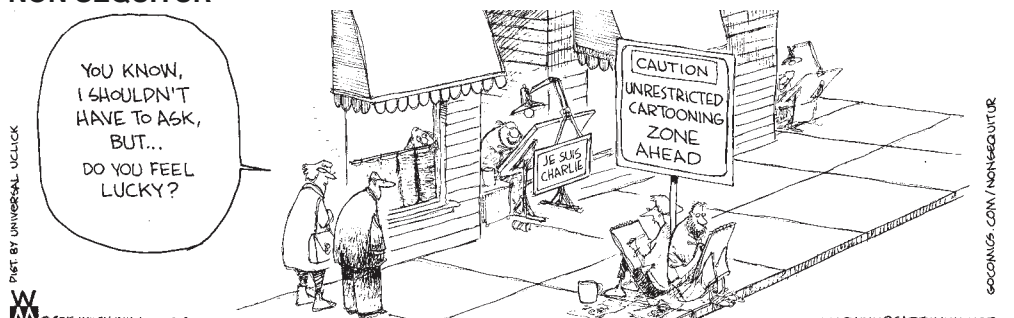
DILBERT



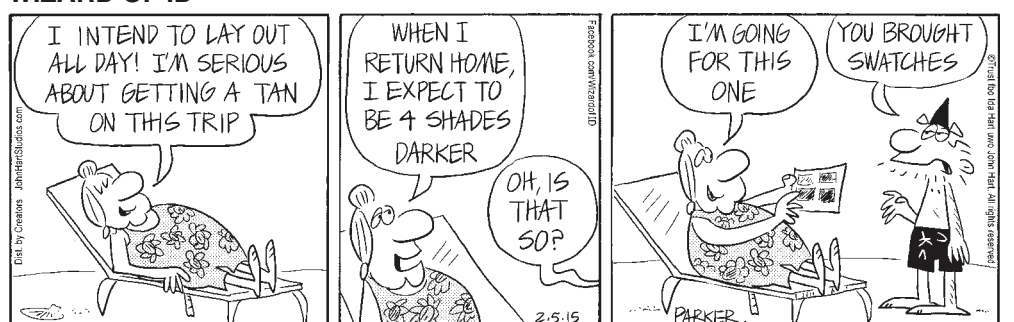
BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

