

She doesn't like being phased out Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: Eight months ago, I met the love of my life online. Everything started off great. "Jay" and I chatted every day.

However, at one point, a past lover of his intervened and warned me about some of his "issues." I became a little bit paranoid and asked Jay to explain his side of things. He didn't want to at first, but he finally relented, and we continued on. I told him I loved him.

Three months ago, Jay decided there was no way we could be anything more than friends. I struggled with just being friends, but eventually, I accepted it. Now, Jay seems to be making more and more friends and is phasing me out. One of my dearest friends died last week, and Jay hasn't bothered to provide any comfort. I would cease all communication, but it would be difficult because the Internet community we belong to includes many mutual friends and chat forums.

Should I remain so-called friends or just let him go? — *Confused Web Reader*

Dear Confused: Please let him go. Jay is not the love of your life. You have confused the excitement of your initial contact with love, but now you have seen Jay's true character. He isn't interested in

Annie's Mailbox

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Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



having a romantic relationship with you. If you think you can remain part of the same Internet community and not pine over him, fine. Try to ignore him as best you can. Otherwise, please expand your online presence so you aren't as dependent on this particular community of people.

Dear Annie: I dread going to my niece's first baby shower. At the last one I went to that included our family, there were older mothers who proceeded to tell horror stories about labor and delivery. No one needs to hear the in-depth details of their birth process, and especially not a first-time mother.

Some people speak before they think. How can I politely get them to shut up? — *Dreading Showers*

Dear Showers: If someone should start replaying the details of their birth experience, it's perfectly

OK to say, in mock horror, "Heavens! Please don't discuss that in front of all of us! A baby is a wonderful gift, and we all want 'Suzie' to look forward to the experience. I know you don't mean to be so negative about it."

They may insist they are only being informative, but new mothers are nervous enough without adding to their worries by relaying stories about what could possibly go wrong. Of course, some stories are funny or uplifting, and those should be encouraged.

Dear Annie: Thanks for printing the letter from Magi Linscott, encouraging kids not to smoke. I quit smoking more than eight years ago, and I am so glad. I now know what my late father used to experience after he quit and then smelled cigarette smoke: He got sick. I do, too. I cannot believe this is what I used to smell like.

My wife told me I stopped wheezing in my sleep within two weeks of quitting. And my VA health care providers are very happy with me. If you're still smoking, STOP! Don't say it's impossible. I smoked two packs a day for 40 years.

Thanks for letting me vent, Annie. — *Grateful Ex-Smoker in Campbellsville, Ky.*

ARIES (March 21-April 19). There's a difference between making a good impression and coming across the way you intend to. The opinion of an impartial and honest observer will help you communicate what you want to say.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). A friend may observe that you've changed. Well, of course you have! Hundreds and thousands of times. You love to experiment, grow and improve. It's who you are.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Don't assume that what you know is common knowledge. You have something to teach the people around you, especially if those people happen to be your children.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You can't be free if you believe that someone has control over you. And even if you secretly feel this is the case, never let the other person know. Take back your power.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your memory will go in its own direction, and the others may dispute the story. This is what makes for an interesting dialogue. Anyway, their memories are equally suspect.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). If you're having trouble concentrating, it's not your fault. Your creative mind needs more stimulation than yesterday's environment could provide. Forcing yourself to stay on task is silly when the task is beneath you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Most people would rather prove to the world the correctness of their thinking than change their mind. Luckily, you're not "most people." There are real benefits to being mentally flexible and open-minded now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You know what matters to you, and you want to concentrate your efforts there. Years of doing what it takes to fulfill your commitments has taught you to make fewer commitments.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You are a riddle wrapped in an enigma today, and a certain someone will be fascinated by you. Build the mystery, and you'll reap a benefit next week.

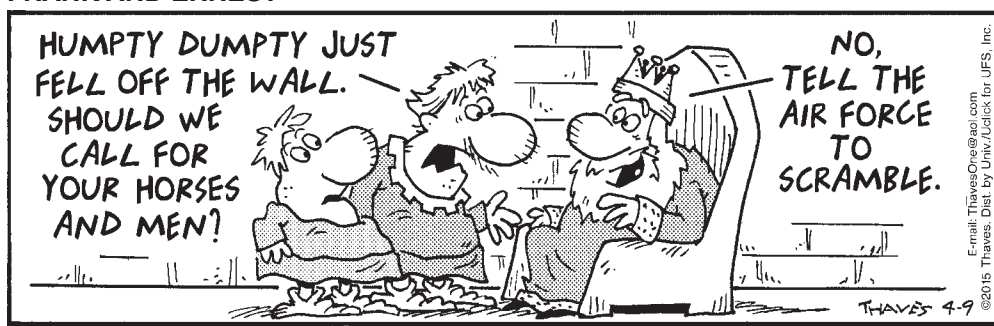
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). A project is getting to be far more costly than you anticipated. Budgeting your time and energy will be even more important than accounting for your dollars.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). There's a saying that "depression lies," but depression is not the only state that fills the mind with fibs. Elation can lie, too. The worst lies of all are perpetrated by the state of infatuation.

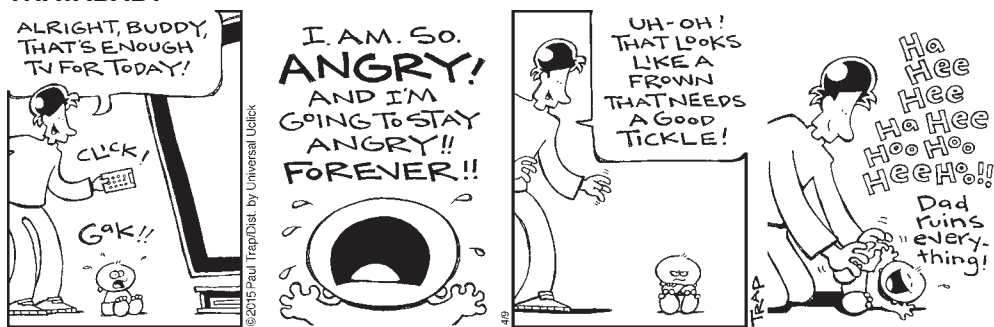
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You have the advantage. Once you recognize what it is, it's important to play it judiciously. Oscar Wilde said, "One should always play fairly when one has the winning cards."

FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 10). Many short journeys throughout the year will keep you excited, motivated and in love. You'll have the chance to be creative in many ways: professional, financial and familial. June and July bring the best business opportunities. Invest in formal training in September, and you'll develop skills to improve daily life. Taurus and Aquarius people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 40, 27, 15 and 11.

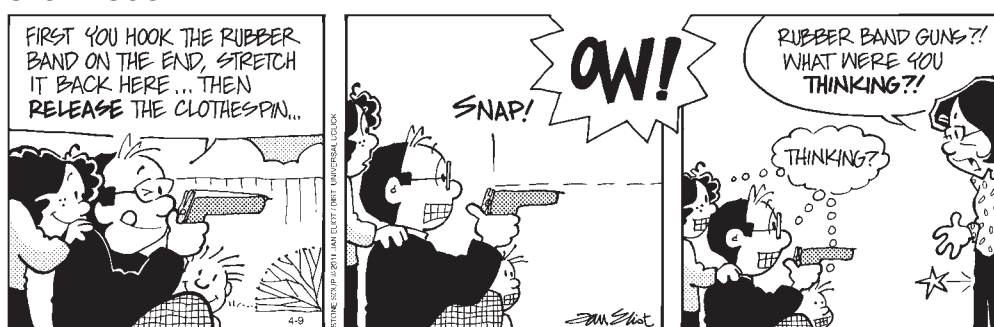
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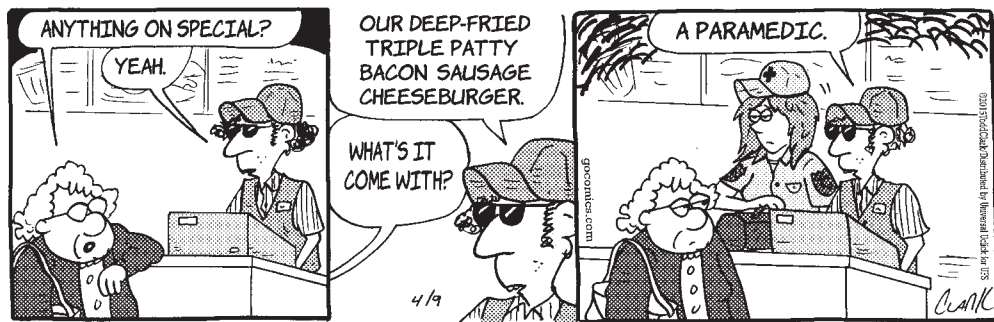
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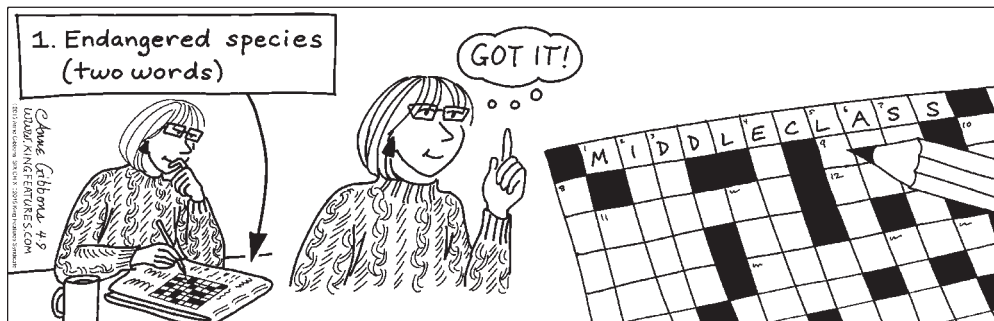
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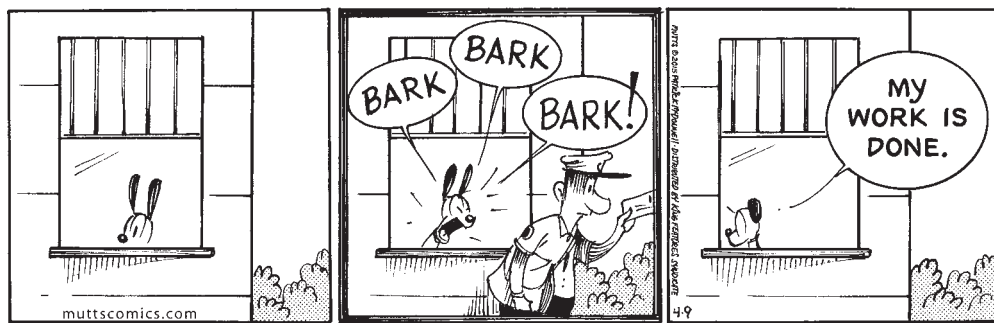
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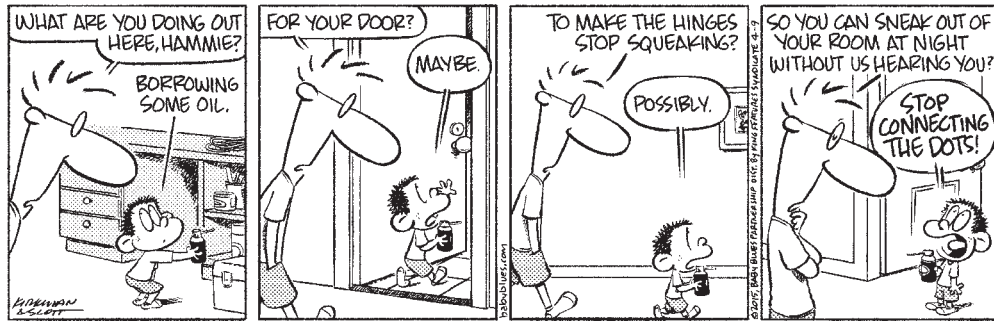
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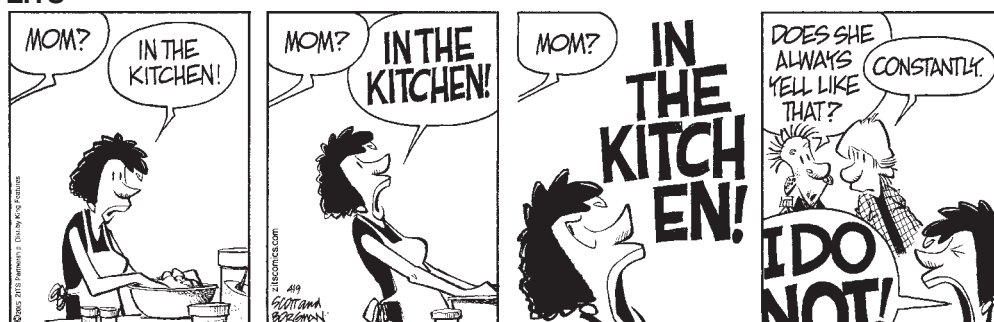
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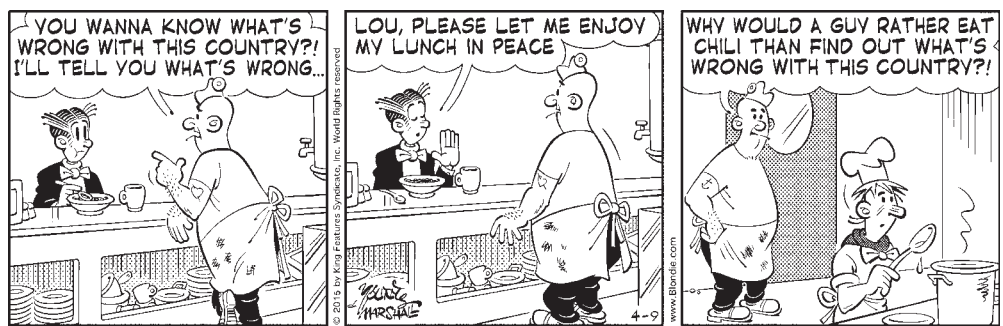
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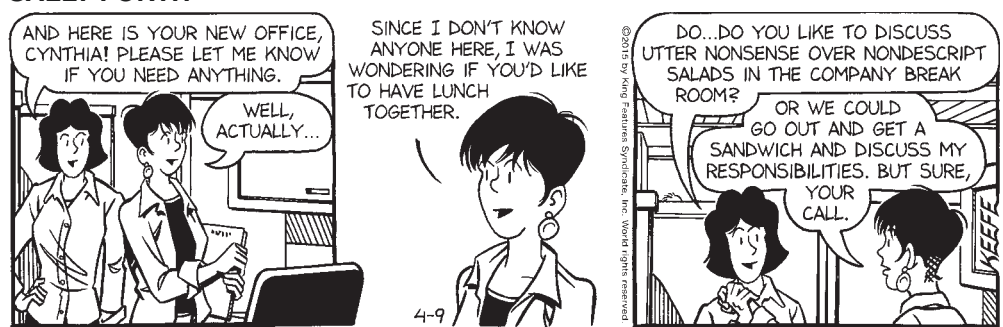
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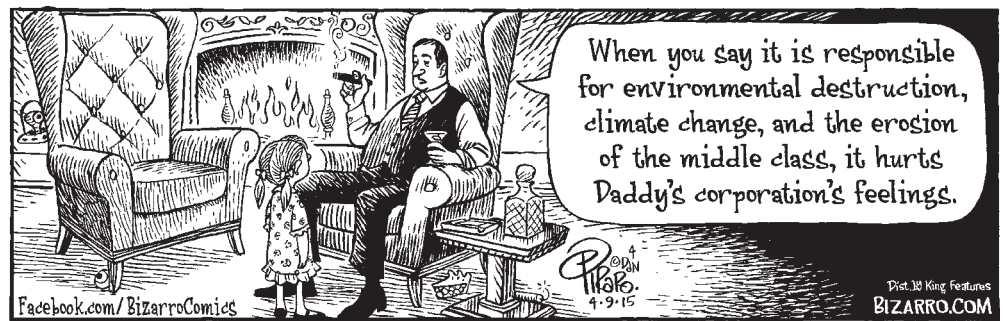
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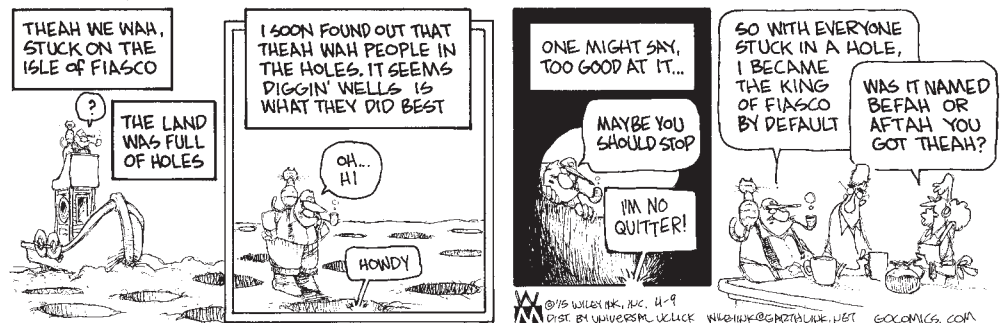
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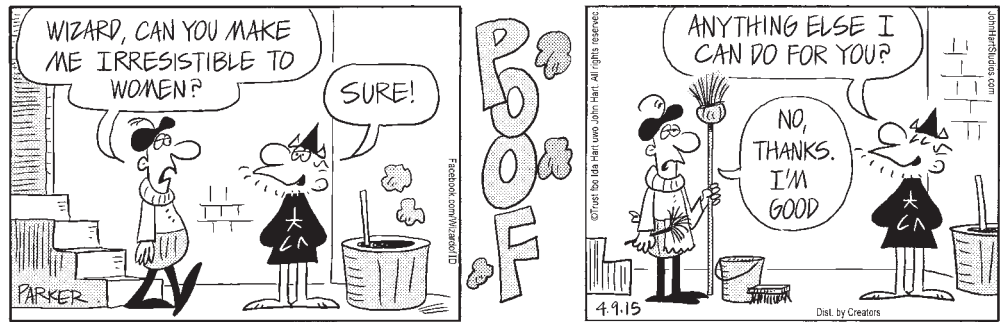
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