

Mom makes good girl feel bad Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: I am 17 years old. I have a job that requires I work only a few times a month, and the staff can trade shifts if they choose. I have been at this job for two years, and I enjoy it.

During my first year here, I was taken advantage of quite a lot. People would constantly ask me to change shifts, but I would later find out they had nothing particular going on to require it. I learned how to say no, because I don't really trust some of them. I agree to change shifts with people who ask me in advance or tell me what's going on, but have become wary of those who ask at the last minute.

The problem is my mother. She always makes me feel as though I'm not behaving properly. When I'm asked to switch shifts for no good reason, she says, "Why didn't you say yes? You're supposed to say yes." I then get a lecture on how I need to be more responsible and more understanding when people have other things to do with their time.

I know that most people's intentions are good, but I don't want to be taken advantage of. Why doesn't my mother think I'm good enough? I don't drink, I go to church, I obey my parents, and I'm in the National

Annie's Mailbox

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Honor Society. People say my mother is lucky to have a daughter like me, but I don't feel that from her.

I don't mean to sound conceited, but I'm starting to get tired of always being good. I'm scared I may just stop trying. — *Not Good Enough*

Dear Not Good: Everyone needs to feel that their efforts are appreciated, and kids especially need to know that their parents believe them to be good people. We think your mother knows this, but she worries. She doesn't want you to alienate the people you work with, but you are right to set boundaries for yourself (as long as you are polite about it). It engenders respect.

But please don't use your mother's fretting as an excuse to go off the rails. Talk to her. Reassure her that you are not expected to say "yes" to every request. Let her know that she

has done a great job raising you and now must allow you to make your own decisions and live with the consequences, so you can learn to be the responsible adult she expects. Enlist her support and cooperation. Ask for her advice. It will make her happy to know you still value it.

Dear Annie: This is in response to the "horror stories" that women tell pregnant mothers-to-be. As an obstetrician (retired), with over 5,000 babies delivered, here is what I call Dr. Elfmont's Rule of Pregnancy:

Never listen to what people (your mother, grandmother, aunts, etc.) tell you about their pregnancies — you're too big or too small for your due date; you're carrying high (or low) and that means it's a boy (or a girl); you've gained too much or too little weight; they were in terrible labor for 197 hours, etc.

I told my patients that nobody in the history of human civilization had ever given birth to the particular baby they were carrying, that the odds were overwhelming for a normal labor and delivery, and if there were any problems, I'd be there to take care of them. — *Dr. John Elfmont in Redondo Beach, Calif.*

Dear Dr. Elfmont: Well said. Thank you for the reassuring words.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Come up with good reasons to believe in yourself, because there's much you can do when you have the confidence to dive in. Good qualities, skills, accomplishments — add them to your list.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Expect a minor glitch as two of your responsibilities conflict. You don't have to choose between them, but you will need to find someone to help cover one of them.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Get out and talk to people you don't know. A stranger looking at your life from the outside can see wonderful aspects that you are currently missing due to your inside, and overly familiar, position.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It's good to be prepared, though over-planning leads to proceedings that are forced and stiff. Trust your natural spontaneity. Tonight, people will feel brighter for having stepped into your sphere of influence.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Make sure everyone is taken care of, especially the low-profile types. If one cog in the wheel breaks, everything comes to a grinding halt. Most "cogs" you encounter today can be fortified with a little attention and good humor.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Open-minded people will try most things once. Adventurers will try them twice just to make sure nothing was missed or mistaken about the first time around.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Stay in sync with your team. Quick calls will keep you up to date. You'll have to be the one to control the conversations and keep them short, because everyone wants your attention.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Jokes are telling. Listen to what your loved ones say in jest and what they laugh at in conversation, and you'll get valuable insights. It's the kernel of truth that makes things funny.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The small kindness you extend will have an unforeseen larger benefit. The inconvenience you run into will also work in your favor. The good fortune of the day is a karmic payoff.

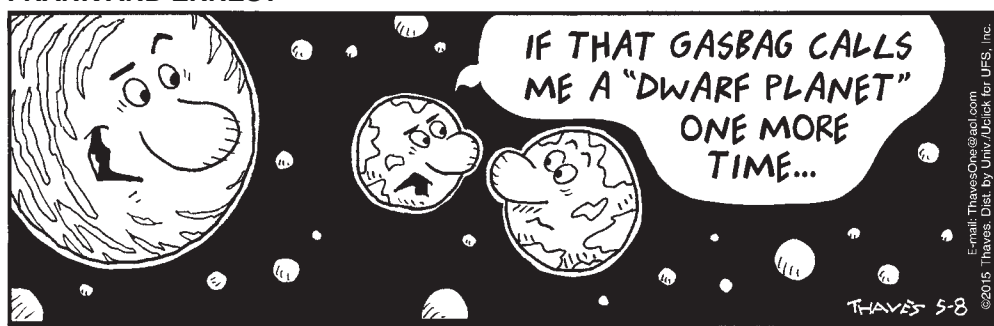
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Plans change, appointments get canceled, the financial bottom line isn't what you thought it would be. Your decision not to let any of this bother you earns you "cool" status in someone's book.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Make a checklist of what you want, not because you're likely to get everything on it, but because becoming clear about your needs, wants and priorities is a key step in the manifestation of your desire.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your creative work gets the focus today. There is a difference between being an artist and a craftsman, but one is not better than the other. Do you desire most to express yourself or to master your craft?

SATURDAY'S BIRTHDAY (May 9). You'll love the unpredictable turns this year takes. Connect with people from your past for a totally new relationship. A financial leap of faith is favored in June, and you could double your money. July's single-minded focus will give you a competitive edge, and you'll have the trophy to prove it by the end of the year. Cancer and Virgo people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 18, 14, 23, 40 and 9.

FRANK AND ERNEST



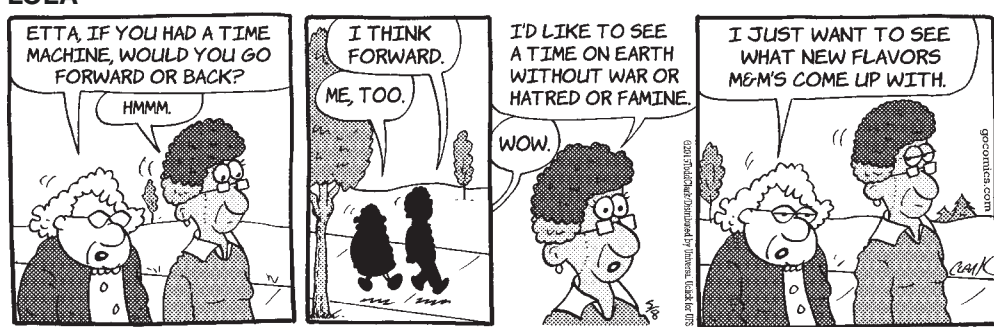
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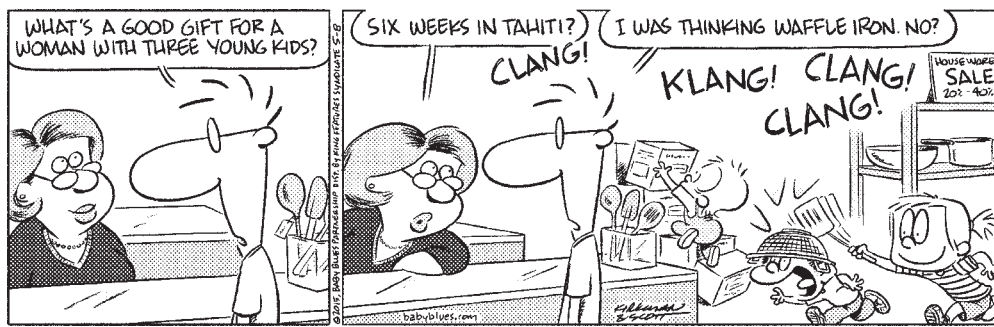
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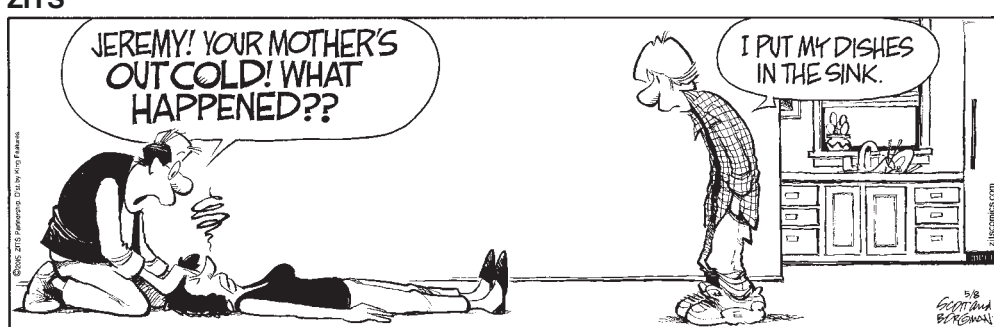
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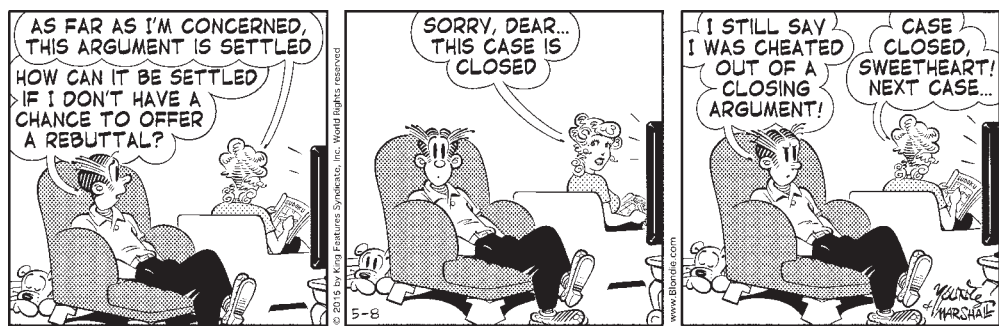
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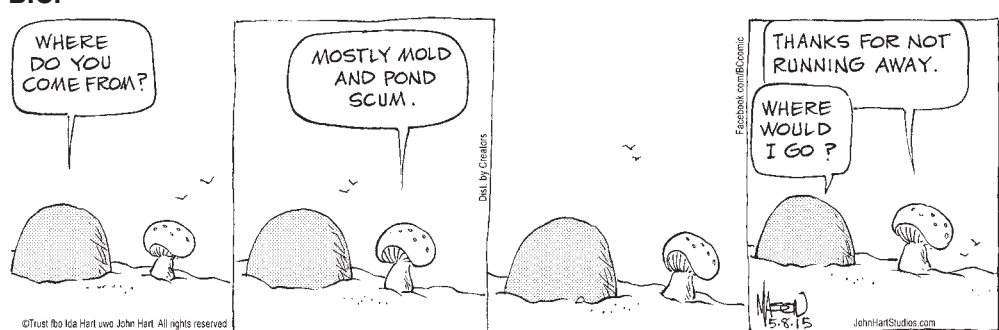
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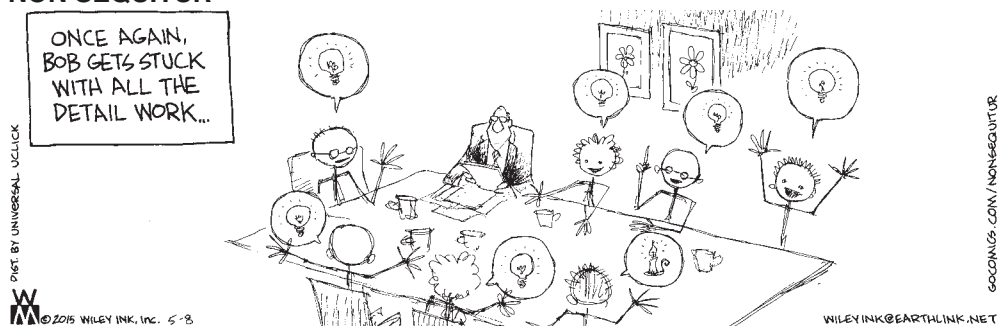
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