

Boy misses his older brother

Dear Annie: I am a 12-year-old boy with a problem. My dad died when I was a baby, so it's just my mom, my 22-year-old brother "Jason" and me. Mom works two jobs, so I don't see her that much. Basically, Jason has taken care of me.

Jason is my hero. He helps me with my homework, takes me places and protects me. He planned his college classes around my school schedule, so he could drop me off and pick me up every day. He gave up many nights with his friends to stay home with me when Mom had to work an extra shift.

Jason graduated from college in June and was accepted to an overseas program. I told him I would be OK with it. He left a month ago and I really thought I would be fine, but I am not. I miss him so much there are days I actually feel sick.

I said something about it to my best friend at school, and he just laughed at me. Then he told everybody and they started teasing me about it, so I said I was only joking and that I'm glad my brother is gone, which made me feel guilty.

Now I am afraid to say any-

Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



thing about how I feel. If I tell my mom, she will worry. Jason and I email every day and Skype a few times a week, but it's just not the same as having him here. Is there something wrong with me? What can I do to make it stop hurting so much? — *Love My Brother*

Dear Brother: There is nothing wrong with you. Jason has been a father substitute and it is perfectly natural for you to miss him terribly when he is so far away. But it's obvious that you want what's best for Jason, and that involves a bit of sacrifice on your end.

Some of your heartache will lessen with time, provided you focus less on Jason's absence and more on what is happening around you. Spend more time with your friends, get involved

in school activities, and consider tutoring someone in a subject you are good at. (Helping someone else can take your mind off of other things.) Please don't be afraid to talk about how much you miss your brother — not to your friends, who are too immature to understand, but to your mom, a grandparent, aunt, uncle, school counselor, favorite teacher or other understanding adult.

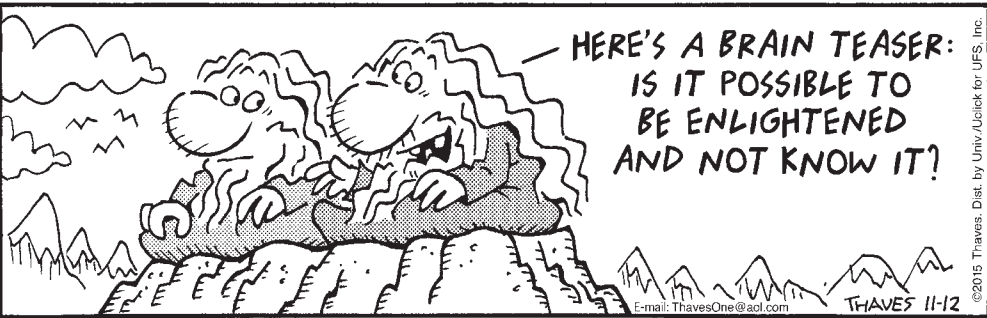
Dear Annie: I am a widow in my 60s. My husband passed away several years ago.

I often find I have to introduce myself to someone who knew my husband, but not me. If I say, "I was married to John Doe," it sounds as though we were divorced. But it also doesn't sound right to say, "I am John Doe's widow."

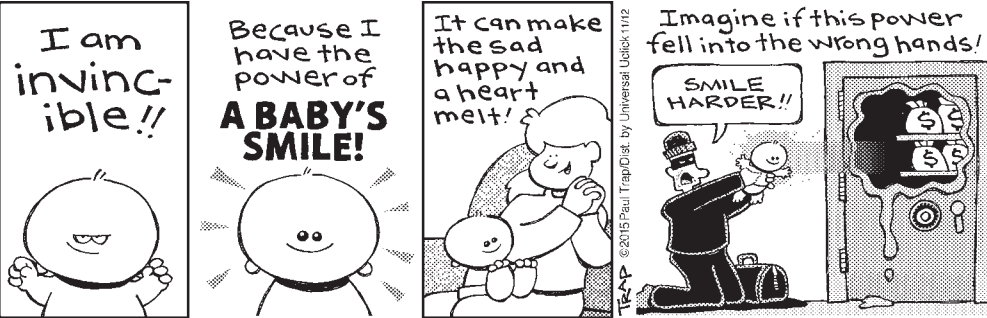
Any suggestions? — *Anonymous, Please*

Dear Anonymous: You can, of course, simply introduce yourself as you are and those who knew your husband might ask whether you are related to him. But otherwise try this: "Hello, I'm Mary Doe. I believe you knew my late husband, John."

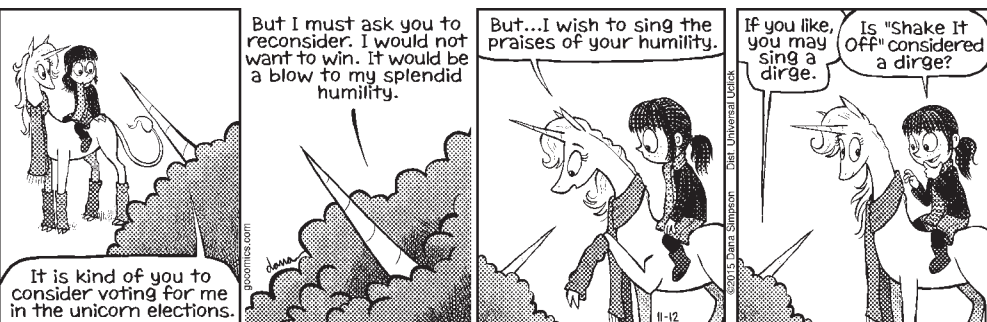
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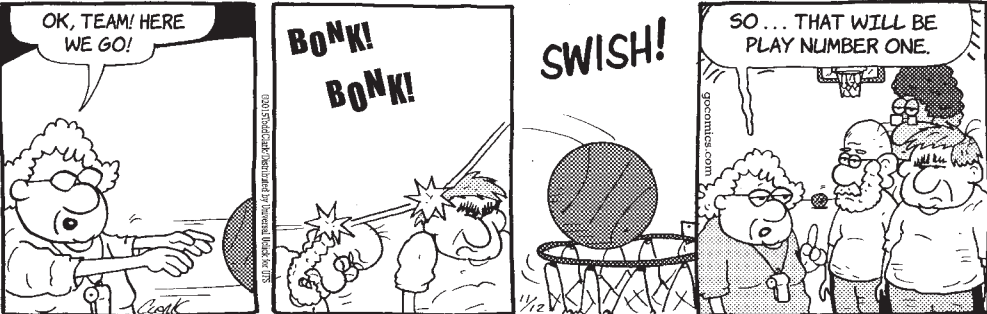
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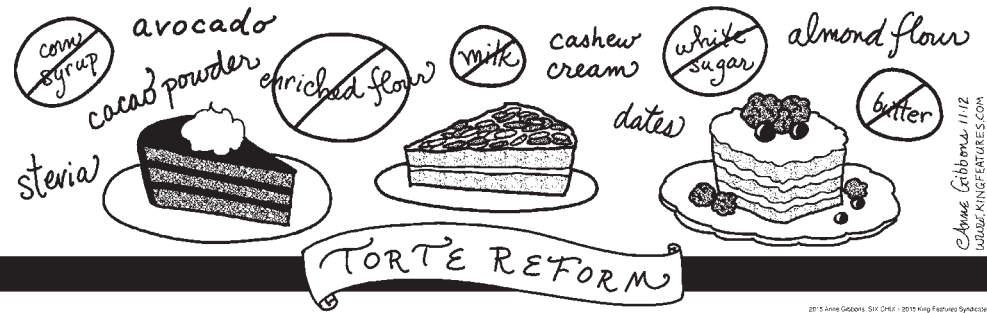
PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



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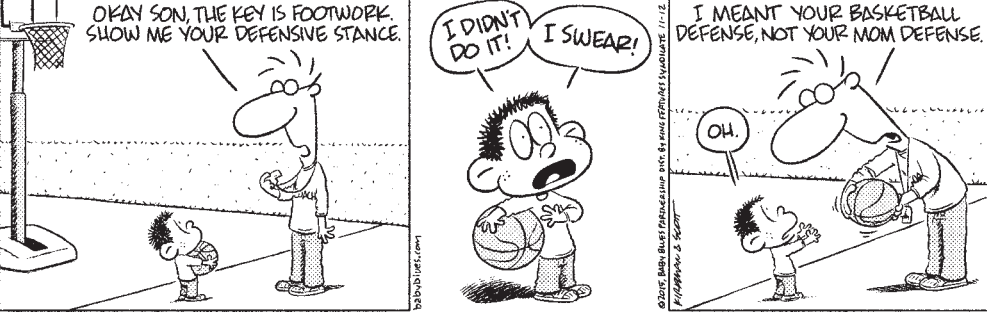
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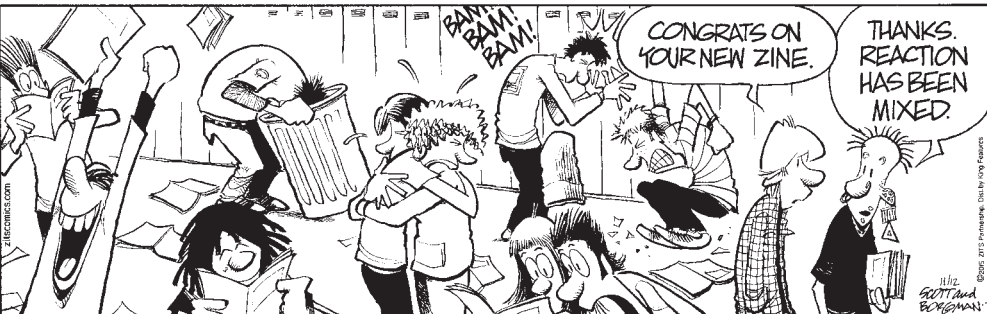
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Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Finding one answer will open the door for many new questions. For this reason, it's very important that you send your curiosity down a path you truly want to be involved with for the long haul.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). While today's circumstance isn't the best you could have hoped for, it's also not the worst you've known. The next step is to determine what is necessary, do that and only that. Moderate action will bring success.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The fear of rejection is practically universal. That's why people admire those who are willing to put themselves on the line. That's the kind of person you are today.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The two things you most need from today's endeavors — joy and challenge — may come from the same activity. Go where you feel encouraged to work and play harder than usual.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). What you can do yourself you will do yourself. It's the fast, efficient, empowering way. It's not right for every day, but your confidence and energy are high so make the most of it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There's no reason to approach relationships the same way you did yesterday. Put a twist in it. You've already proven you can be consistent. Now prove you can be fun.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Here's a way to stay stress-free: Plan for mistakes. Leave early in case the directions are wrong. Make a contingency kit in case the others don't show up with all the supplies they are supposed to. Preparation will make life eas-

ier.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll play off the energy of others — that is, as long as you're around people with the kind of energy that makes you playful. And if you're not, why is that?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Some questions lead to quick fixes, errands accomplished, problems solved. Other questions are rabbit-hole portals to entire alternate universes. Alice was never trying to go to Wonderland; she just landed there.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When your friend is excited about something, you try to find something in it that you can be excited about, too, even if the subject isn't initially that interesting to you. That's the kind of friend you are.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Before you try to fit in with a group, make sure you know why they are a group in the first place. What are their common bonds and values, and do you share them? If not, do you want to?

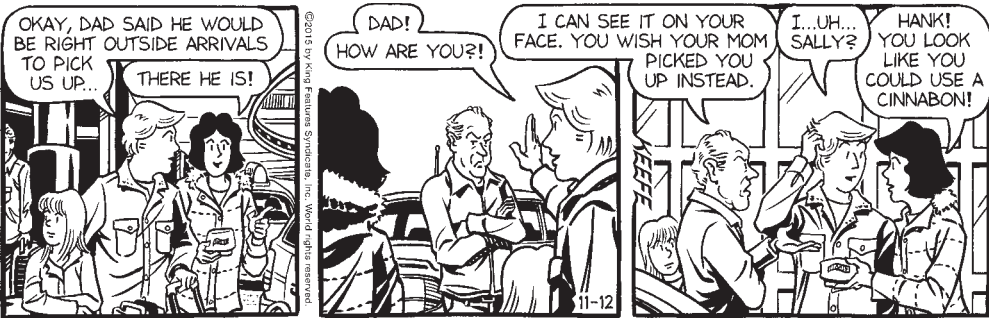
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You want to share creativity, laughter and love, so go where the social energy is warm, if a little off-kilter. You could cause a stir in a fun group of misfits.

FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 13). This year you're a fix-it expert in relationships as well as in domestic and career matters. You'll let go of one job to pour your heart into another for the rest of this year. January brings a prize. A renovation begins in February. You'll travel in the spring and your options will expand because of this. Virgo and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 30, 38, 42 and 1.

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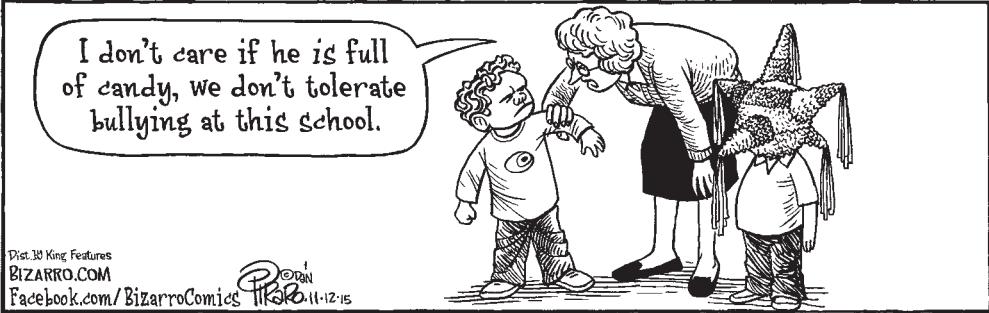
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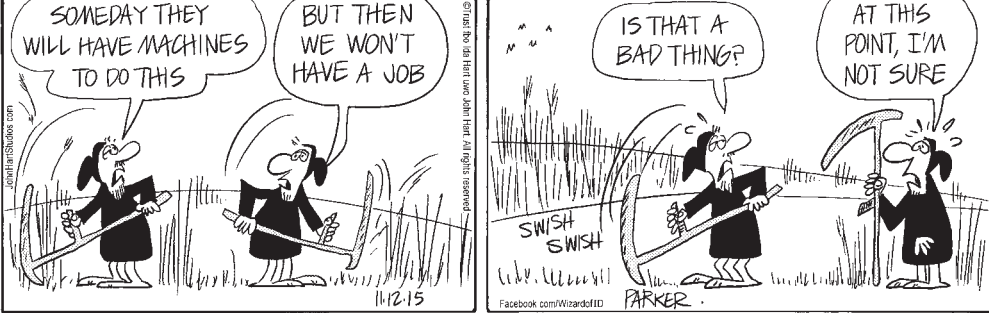
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ROSE IS ROSE

