

# Wife getting badmouthed

**Dear Annie:** I am in a painful position with my mother-in-law. I was pretty sure my husband was talking poorly about me to her, so I asked him whether he had badmouthed me to his mother. He totally denied it, saying, "Absolutely not!"

Well, she was visiting recently, and I walked into the room and overheard them both talking negatively about me. I innocently asked what they were discussing and my husband lied outright, saying they were discussing a purchase. My mother-in-law looked like a deer caught in headlights.

After she left, I again asked my husband what they were talking about and he reiterated his previous lie. A few weeks later, I got a card in the mail from his mother saying, "If my son ain't happy, I ain't happy." I placed it on my husband's nightstand. He never said a word and acts as though he didn't see it. The card has since disappeared.

How should I address all of this with my husband and his mom? — *Wife on the Outside*

**Dear Wife:** Whether or not your mother-in-law likes you is beside the point. Your husband should not be agreeing with her

## Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



or worse, egging her on in a race to see who can insult you more. When faced with criticism of his wife, he should defend you. Even when you are in the wrong, he should not be badmouthing you to someone outside the marriage. It's an emotional betrayal, and it shows disrespect. And over time, it can erode the bonds of your marriage. Tell your husband this must stop and ask him to accompany you to a counselor. If he refuses to admit there is a problem, go without him and work on this.

**Dear Annie:** Often when my husband and I go out with friends, we will see another couple we know along the way. Of course, we politely introduce our friends to the couple. The next thing I know, the two couples are laughing, conversing and setting up a future time to get together. Meanwhile,

I'm standing there feeling like chopped liver. This has happened more times than I can count.

The people we've run into seem to think it's their right to take custody of our friends. If it hadn't happened so often, I wouldn't be so upset.

Is there a way to nicely communicate to people that this isn't OK? — *Annoyed*

**Dear Annoyed:** If it's the same people every time, we'd stop introducing our friends to them. If it is a variety of couples that poach your friends, you have two ways to deal with it: You can be flattered that others like your taste in friends and determine not to be upset by it. Friendships aren't winner-take-all. Your friends can enjoy the company of others without it changing their friendship with you.

The other tactic is to make a brief introduction and then say, "Sorry we can't stay and chat." Then escort the couple you are with to the car, down the street, and into the restaurant or wherever you are going. Your mistake is allowing their conversation to go on long enough for them to get to know one another and make plans, while you silently fume on the inside.

# Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** You've a unique kind of confidence. You trust yourself to provide something different than what the others around you know how to give. This will make for highly entertaining and useful interactions.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** You know what's in you — at least you think you know. Tiny doubts will cause you to seek confirmation from the outside world. Do they recognize who you are? The kindred spirits will.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** To avoid the stress of the unknown, some around you will make inaccurate snap judgments and ill-fated quick decisions. You'll have more patience. Tolerate the discomfort of the unknown and you'll be wise.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** There's a person near you who drains your energy in unexplainable ways. His or her company is unavoidable now, so this is a good time to obtain tools for emotional and spiritual protection.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** To avoid falling into an unwanted mood, be proactive. Consciously create the mood around you. Which do you prefer: festive, meditative or other? Put thought into the lighting, music and the scent of the air.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Try not to see a relationship as a fixed entity; rather, it's a co-creation that can take any number of interesting twists and turns along the way. Don't like the pattern? Change it!

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Occasionally life brings big change all at once. But most of the time, the big changes happen over the course of hundreds of small changes. Set a new intention, and the baby changes

will begin immediately.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** What's popular is not always right. You'll see something glaringly wrong with a path that many are following. Before you speak up, anticipate the backlash and formulate your arguments.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** The best way you can show your love today is through active listening — giving full attention through your body, mind and spirit. It's not easy, and that's what makes it such a loving gesture.

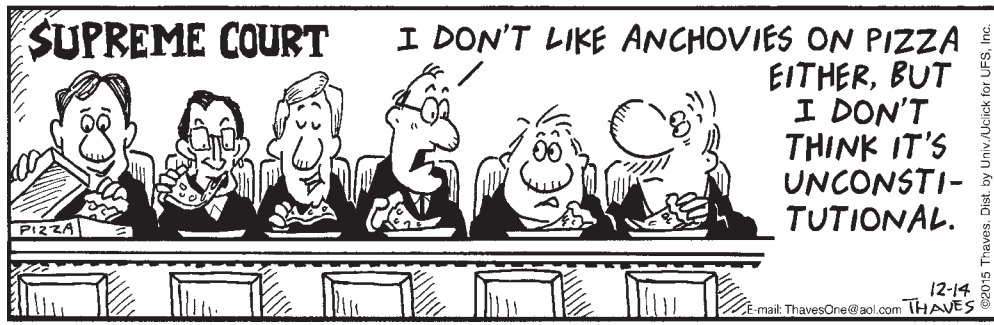
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** You have the raw ingredients to make magic. It's just like cooking; you can follow the recipe, or you can experiment. If you choose the latter, expect to fail until you figure it out.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** The hardest thing to rule is your own appetite (especially when you're in a place where it can be easily satiated), so celebrate every small win in this regard.

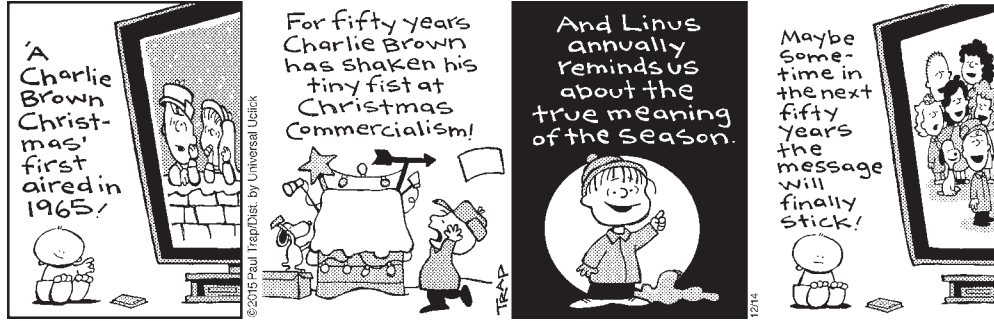
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** You feel partially responsible for how things turn out in your family, work group and community. As for your whole world — yes, you even feel partially responsible for that. Do try and be realistic about how much is really under your control.

**TUESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 15).** There was a time when you were just finding out about the things that come naturally to you. Now you're capitalizing on your innate talents and finding ways to put them in action, to do them on purpose and as much as possible. You'll make alliances in February. May brings a transformation of style. Libra and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 12, 29, 30 and 14.

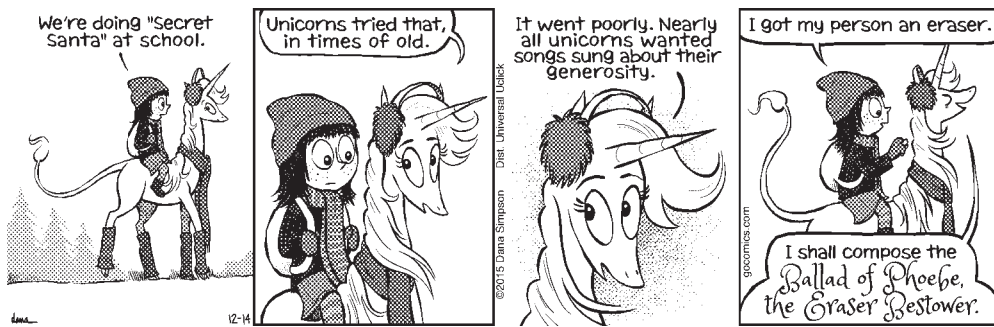
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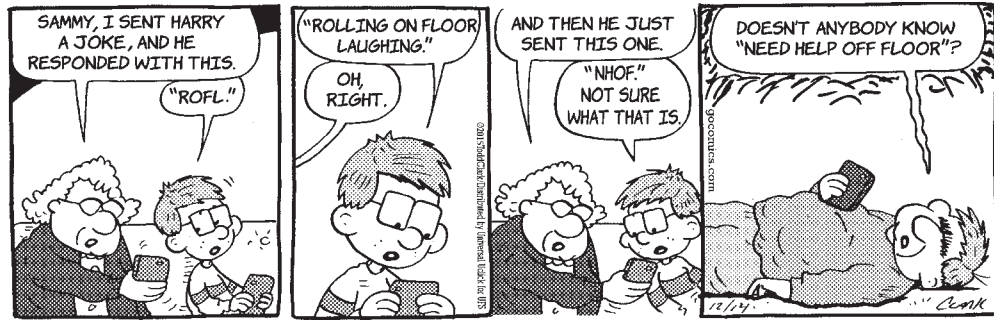
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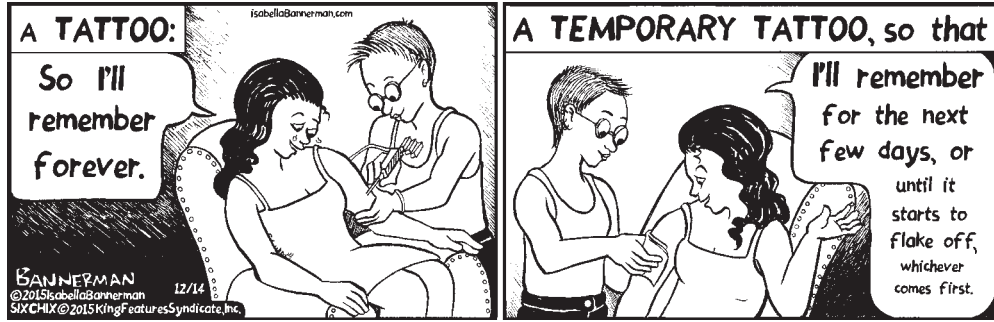
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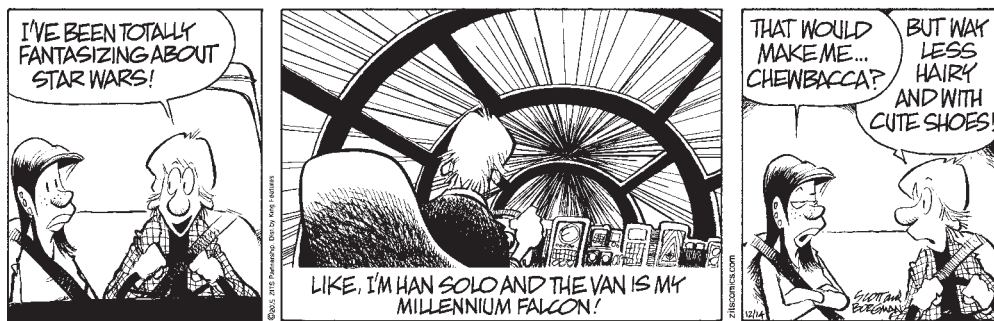
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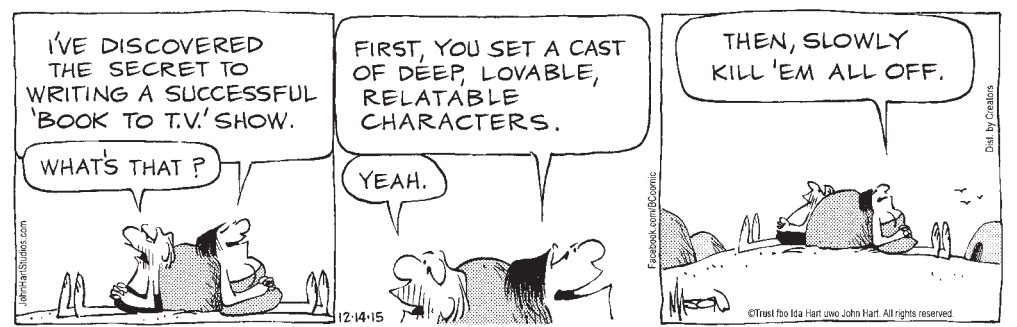
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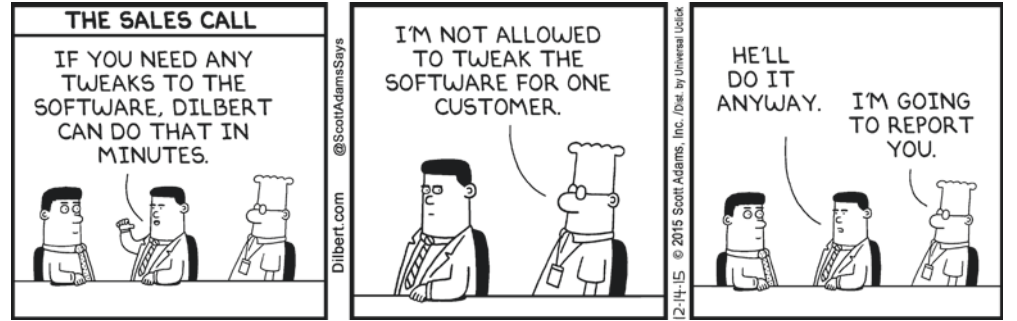
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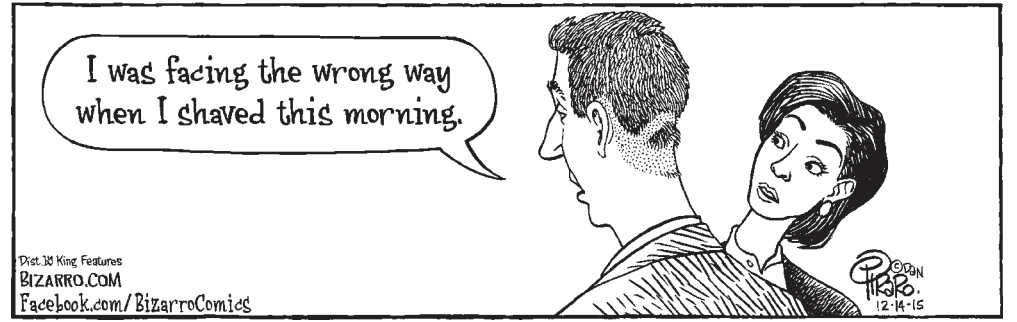
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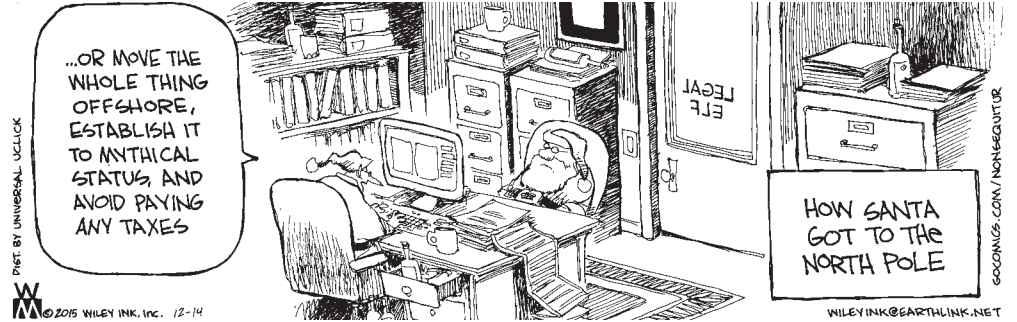
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## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

