

Boss bikes over the line

Dear Annie: My pay isn't great, but it's better than minimum wage. I get no benefits, and my boss refuses to train me for anything more skilled than what I'm doing now, because he needs me for the lowest position. I ride a bike to work, and he often has me work at multiple locations in the area, sending me to pick up supplies.

Recently, he wanted to borrow my bike to get to an appointment and didn't want to pay for a cab. I said, "Nobody rides my bike but me." He was very insistent, but I still said no. If he damaged it and refused to pay, what would I do?

Anyway, he said, "I'm going to remember this the next time you need a favor." I wasn't aware that I had ever asked him for a favor. When I questioned him, he rattled off the time I left early to see the doctor because of a job-related injury, and the time he gave me the day off because I was sick, and I had to agree to come in the morning anyway. I wasn't paid for the sick day, either. I once asked to attend a safety seminar, but he wouldn't allow it. I told him those "favors" don't count, but he was still angry.

Was I selfish not to let this guy use my bike? He makes more than three times what I make, and I do

Annie's Mailbox

Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell
and
Marcy Sugar



my job diligently and honestly. — *Feeling Used*

Dear Feeling: You were not wrong. Your boss was out of line to demand that you loan him your bike and then vaguely threaten you when you refused. Sometimes the best approach in these circumstances is to express your deep regret that you are unable to accommodate him ("I'm SO sorry that I can't loan you my bike"), adding how awkward it would be if he accidentally damaged it. He might still have given you a hard time, but repeating a very polite refusal would likely have limited the threatening attitude. Nonetheless, your boss sounds like a difficult person who is now out to punish you. We'd suggest seeing what other jobs are out there.

Dear Annie: Your suggestions to "Noreen in Nebraska" about

checking the photos and flowery phrases of online suitors were excellent. I have some other hints to spot someone too good to be true:

They are overeager. They jump to respond to your profile within hours of your first posting it, and respond to any communication within minutes.

They claim to live in your town or nearby, but are "working overseas for several months or years."

Their spelling and grammar are incorrect for someone who claims to be native-born, and/or their communication doesn't make a lot of sense. It usually means they are cutting and pasting phrases from other sources.

They provide a phone number, but they won't call you first. Always verify the location of the area code before calling.

Most telling: They will never directly answer any personal questions. If you ask about their favorite local restaurant, they'll hedge.

I'm the voice of experience. I did meet my significant other on a dating site, but I had to sift through a lot of garbage first. — *Learned My Lesson*

Dear Learned: Thanks for the added tips. We hope our readers are cautious.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your style will set you apart, even though you are probably so immersed in it that you don't even realize what "your style" is. Relax and know you're effective without trying.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You'll get your "aha!" moment, but not today. Keep doing what you're doing. This is about the grunt work that, unfortunately, must be handled before the glorious ideas can drop in.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). There's quite a lot of information and misinformation zinging around today and, because of this, you're better not to weigh in with too heavy an opinion. Listen and accept what you hear — no judging.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You feel like reeling it back some. You're not being shy, just more in control and in touch with your inner nature. The natural outcropping of that is that you will consume and express less.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). From time to time we all slip back into the mentality of a three-year-old fighting over a toy. These primal instincts are legitimate. Feel the childish feelings, and then invite your inner adult to keep the behavior in check.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The time to change the topic is when everyone in the circle who wants to speak on it has had a turn. Your mindfulness of this basic common courtesy will bring you stellar luck.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're pretty good at finding the value in another person but sometimes you keep it to yourself. Today, they need to hear your discovery echoed back and maybe even broadcast-

ed to a wider circle.
SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The one who touches your heart may be unaware of your feelings, but those quiet and constant actions you take will eventually become something that can't be overlooked.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If you know what to expect at every step of the way, you're no longer on a ride: You're in a rut. Get out of that line and go walk around the park to choose a new adventure.

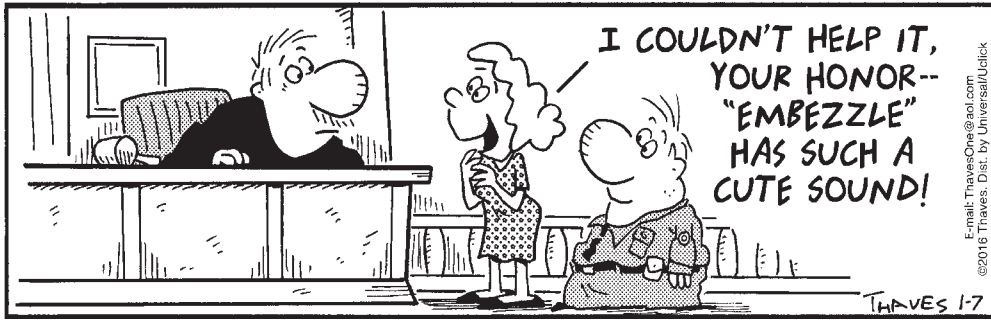
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're the king of cool. Your creed: Once you lose your temper, you've lost, period. However, sometimes losing is just in the cards, so don't be too hard on yourself when the heat rises.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). An introverted group won't give you immediate feedback, but if you give them time and ask directly for a response, you'll get a good one. Stick with the expressive types; they'll provide fast help.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). When you can't think of the answer, that's ok. Thinking isn't always going to come first. Put your feelers into the ether. Reach for something else and your mind will softly follow.

FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 8). The spiritual growth spurt starts now. Maybe it won't be so comfortable, but you'll love the transformation. At work you'll sharpen your skills and start to think bigger. You may change your answer to some moral, ethical and social questions based on the new experiences and influences of the year. Sagittarius and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 26, 15, 20, 38 and 41.

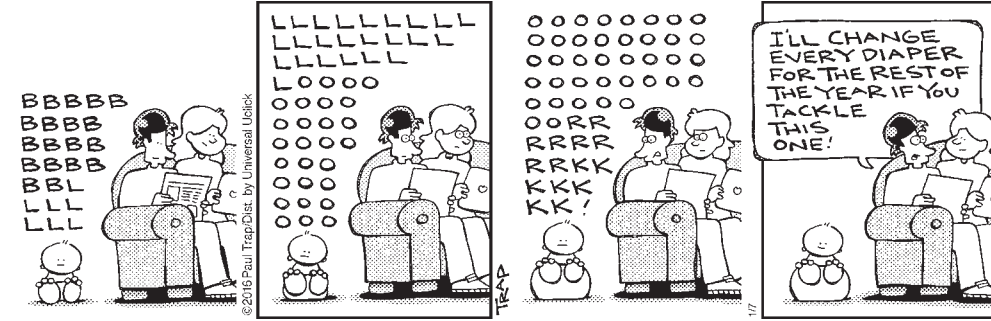
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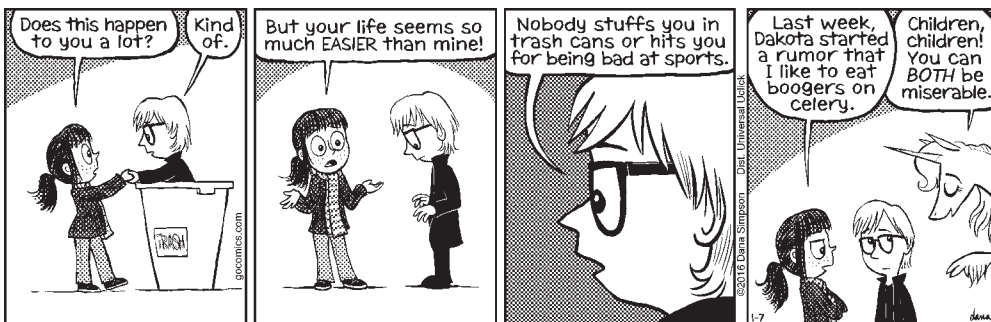
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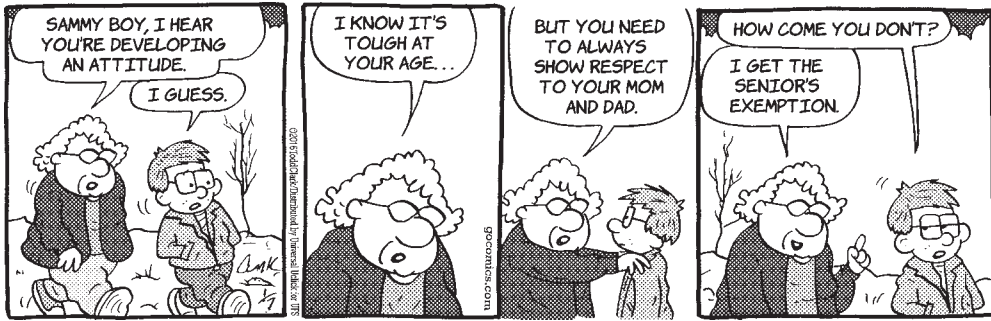
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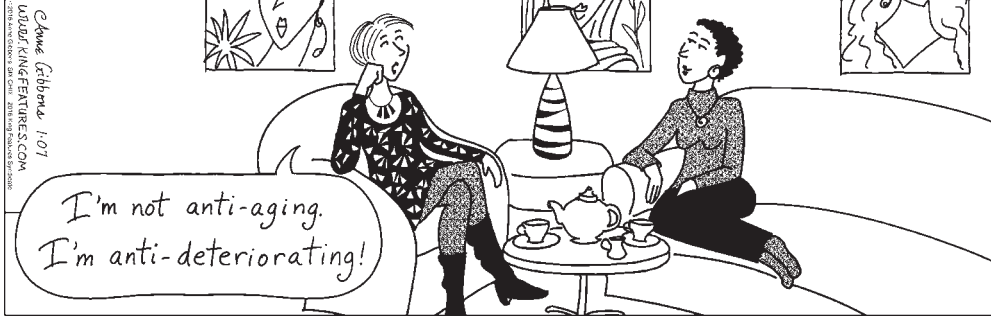
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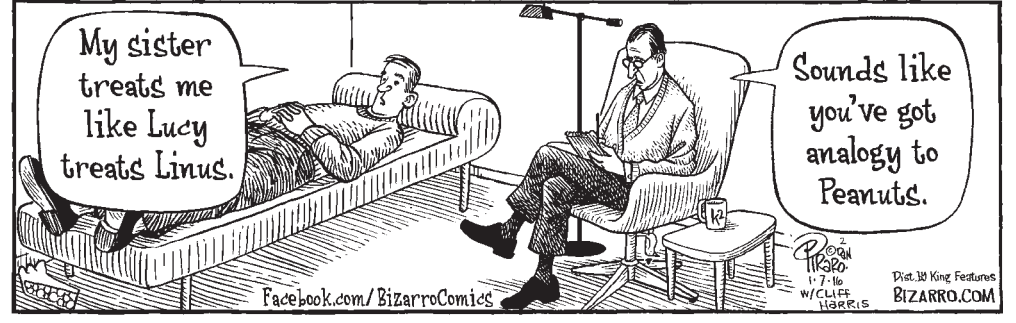
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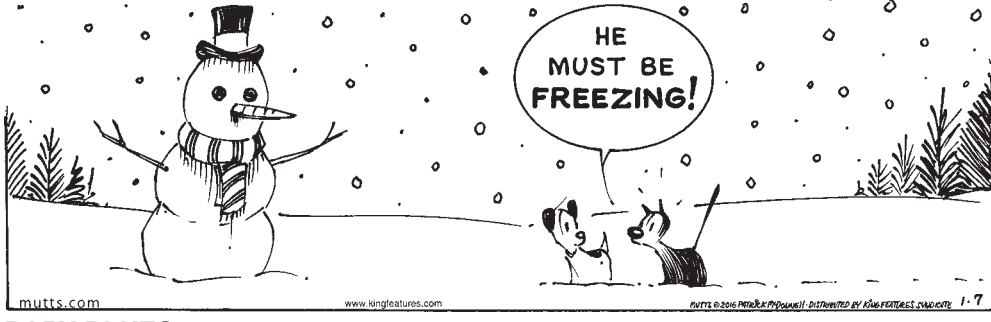
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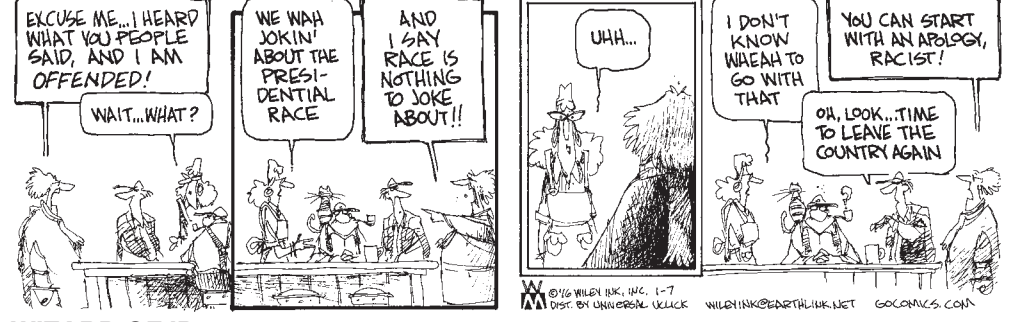
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