

# Boy tired of being a mistake

Dear Annie: I am a 12-year-old boy, and I hate my life. I am the youngest of five, but there is a huge age difference. My siblings are aged 29 to 35. My parents are in their mid-50s.

My parents didn't plan me and I'm tired of being constantly told that I am the family "mistake." It's like a big joke to them. People always think I am my parent's grandson. My mom seems happy to tell them, "No, he's our son and obviously he was a mistake." It makes me feel small and embarrassed.

I think I'm a good kid. I get straight A's and I always help around the house. I have told my parents that it hurts my feelings, but they laugh it off and say it's just an expression and I am too sensitive. Most of my siblings are worse. They like to bully and make fun of me. My oldest sister blames me whenever Mom or Dad have a health issue, saying it's hard on them to deal with a young child at their age.

The only sibling I have who likes me is my single 29-year-old brother. He always defends me and likes spending time with me. I have this fantasy that he will adopt me and let me move in with him, but I

## Annie's Mailbox

Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



know that's unrealistic.

How I can get my family to stop being so mean to me? They don't seem to hear anything I say. — *The Family Mistake*

**Dear Family:** No one likes to be constantly teased. But your parents were undoubtedly teased about the age gap of their children, and they responded by turning it into a joke. You believe it reflects poorly on you, when it's really about them. Surely your parents know that lots of people in their 50s have kids your age and they do just fine.

Your parents and siblings have fallen into a pattern of treating you poorly. If your brother cannot get your parents to rethink their behavior, please talk to your school counselor, favorite teacher or coach, your grandparents, aunts, uncles or a sympathetic family friend. You need an adult to advocate for you

and talk to your parents on your behalf.

**Dear Annie:** I read the letter from "Stymied Husband" who wants to go for counseling with his wife in order to regain intimacy. She thinks it means he wants a divorce.

Counselors have gotten a bad rap. As with any professional, you should interview them and get references. It saddens me that society has made counseling a shameful thing, when really, it is just there to help you. To what degree depends on your willingness to accept your responsibility and do your part. My husband and I have been married 30 years and have been to counseling off and on for 25 of them. We consider it a tuneup.

Hopefully "Stymied" can get his wife to see a counselor as a "life coach" rather than a "divorce coach." — *Thankful for Our Life Coach*

**Dear Thankful:** You are absolutely right. Readers often take us to task for recommending counseling, believing that we should be able to give a line or two of pithy advice to solve all problems. That may work for which way to hang the toilet paper, but it doesn't work for complicated issues involving intimacy and trust.

# Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** When it comes to following your heart's desire, there's no such thing as being too old to start or too young to start. It's the happiness of your heart that counts, not the age of it.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** It's not a day for putting up with your own trepidation. The minute you feel yourself hesitate, push yourself to dive into the thing that gives you pause. Face the fears now while they are still small.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** The candy colors of this environment were exciting to you at one time, but you've matured. Now you want to interact in a place with more to offer. You're looking for variety and depth. You'll find it, too.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Fast fixes, succinct answers and brief interactions rule the early day, because you've something juicy to get to — something you'd like to savor in slow motion.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** A lot could happen; a lot might happen. Playing the odds is smart today, and the odds are against those "coulds" and "mights." Focusing on what (SET ITAL) is (END ITAL) happening will be lucrative and satisfying.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Overcoming the fear of rejection is a simple process. All you have to do is get rejected a few times so you no longer fear it. The timing couldn't be more perfect, as the stars favor personal risk.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** You don't always get the laughs you're going for, which is why you so appreciate how you're able to deliver levity now. You are far more entertaining than you might suspect! Your stories help others develop a better sense of humor.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Your success is closely linked to confidence. Maybe you can't entirely fake being sure of yourself, but the fact that you try is enough. Believing in your ideas will be half the battle. Convincing the others will be the other half.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You have the attitude of a hard worker, and so you'll be able to handle whatever job comes up. Whether or not it's within your jurisdiction or expertise is beside the point really.

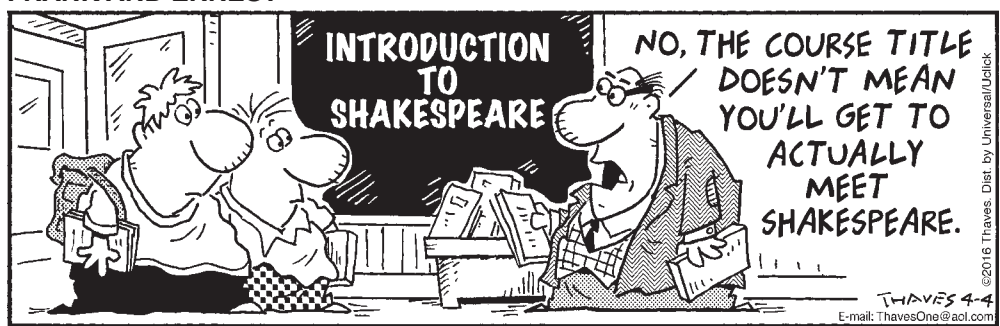
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Children (and those who behave as such) respect you greatly, and yet something stubborn and innate will have a few of them pushing the boundaries anyway. Keep cool and enforce your position as you said you would.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** You would prefer to travel comfortably, first-class if possible; who wouldn't? And yet, that comfort comes with such a high cost today (spiritually and financially) that it will be worthwhile to take the "coach" alternative.

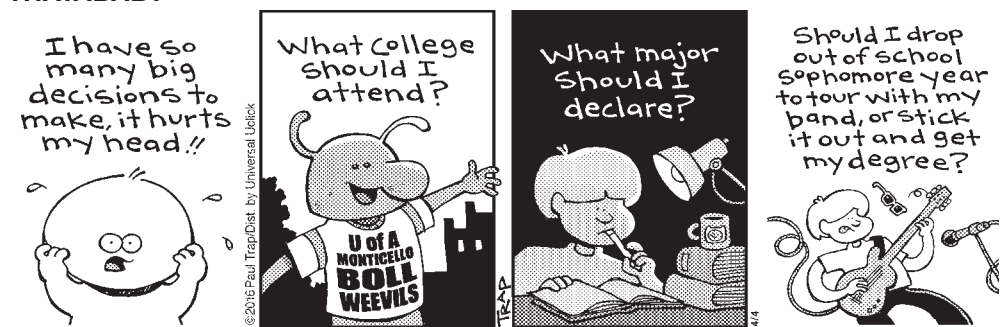
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** You feel as though you are standing on the precipice of something grand, overwhelming and dangerous. You're above this, but you're not the master of it. Do not let it mesmerize you away from your firm footing.

**TUESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 5).** Your solar return will give you the courage to let go of what's holding you back. If you still don't realize what exactly that is, you'll learn in the next three weeks. You'll gain access to an exclusive world in May. June brings a new way of running your daily life. An audacious long-term goal will be realized in August. Aquarius and Taurus adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 20, 44, 47, 3 and 17.

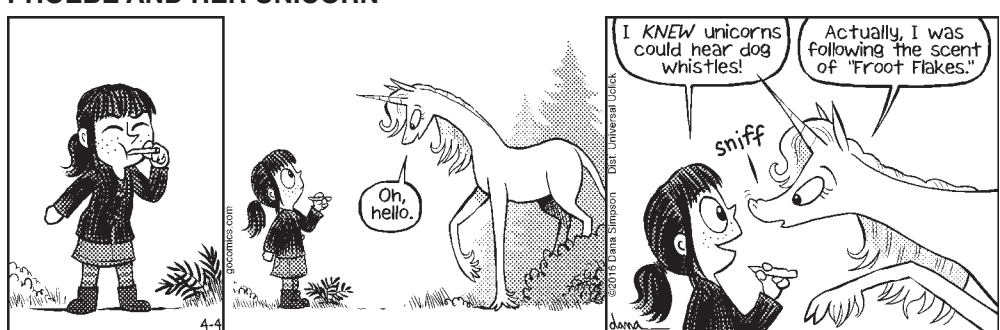
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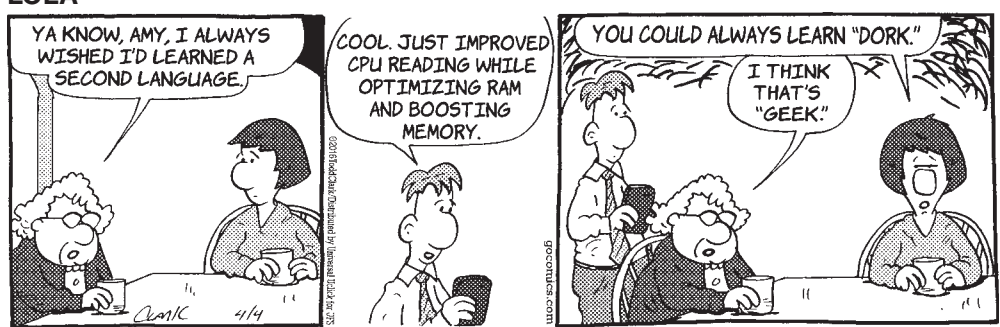
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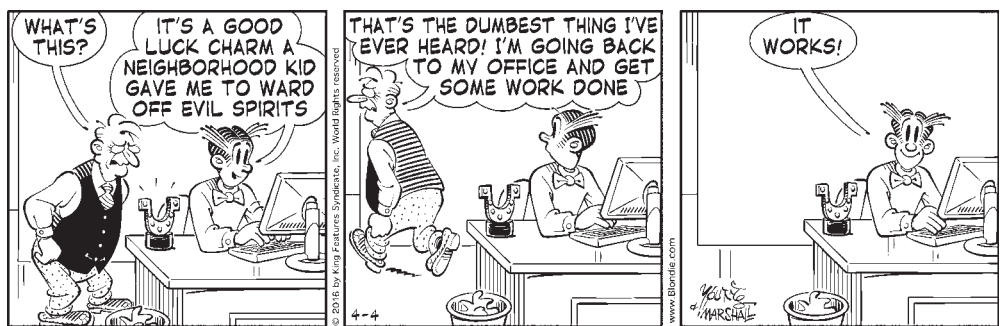
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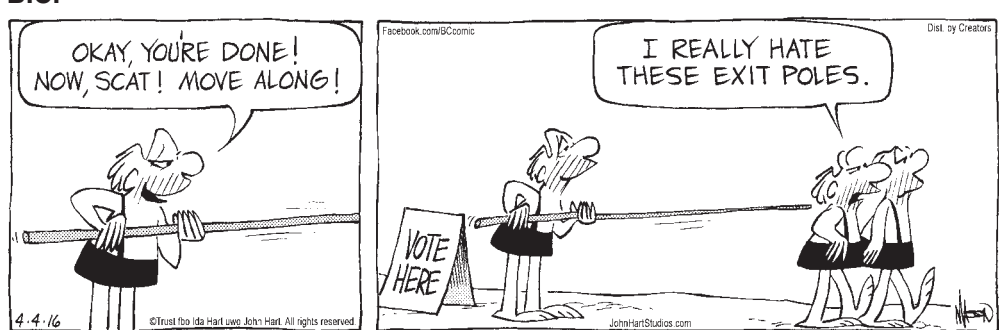
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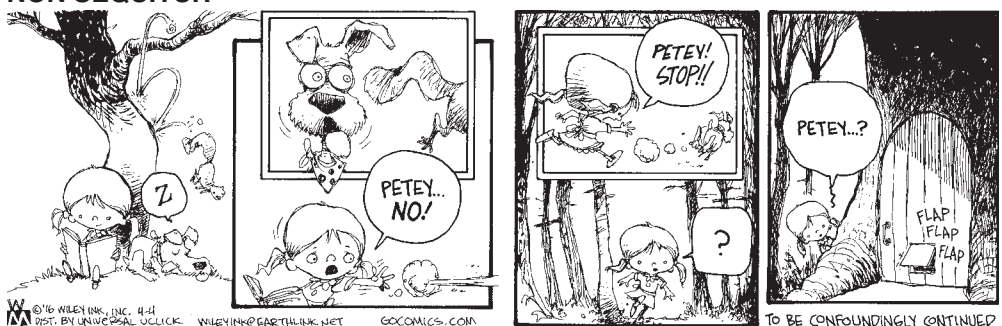
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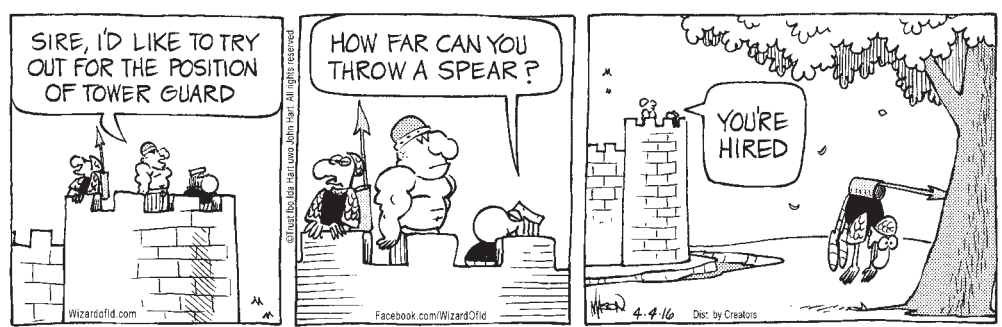
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