

Teen's birthday party at the mall

Dear Annie: My 13-year-old daughter has been invited to her closest friend's birthday party. The mom of the birthday girl plans to drop off the six girls at the mall for four hours, during which they'll wander around with money, cellphones, credit cards and a plan to get food at some point.

I am not comfortable with this. I called the mom and asked why she isn't going with them. Her daughter doesn't want her there. I suggested the two of us go with the girls and perhaps even let them go off on their own for short periods and meet up with them a few times. But no. She wants her daughter to feel "independent" and to give her her "space."

Besides the safety issue, I don't like the idea of just going to the mall to hang out. Not much good comes from that. My daughter always comes home wanting a bunch of stuff she doesn't need. When she buys clothes or junk impulsively, it always ends up in the trash or on the charity pile a few months later. We're on a tight budget, and this is not in it. I don't mind getting her friend a birthday gift, but that's different.

If it were anyone else, we'd just skip it. But this is her closest friend, so it would be devastating for both of them if she didn't go. But I really don't want her to go under these cir-

Dear Annie



By Annie Lane

Creators Syndicate Inc.

cumstances. — *Between a Rock and a Hard Place in Ohio*

Dear Between: Personally, I think your suggestion to the mom was a bright idea. That being said, it's her daughter's birthday, and they can do what they want. Likewise, you can make choices about what's right for your own family. If this mall idea is absolutely unacceptable to you, you are entitled to put your foot down and explain that different families have different rules.

But if you'd like to make an exception and let your daughter attend, lay down some ground rules to help her be safe and responsible. 1) She can only spend her own money — and not too much of it. Set a limit you feel is fair, such as \$30-50. 2) Cash only. No credit cards. 3) Have her call to check in with you halfway through the night.

There will come a time when she's always out shopping without Mom, so this maybe the perfect opportunity to get her practicing good habits.

Dear Annie: I read your column about the bride who invited a co-worker to her wedding who asked whether she could bring her boyfriend. No wedding gift was received, and the bride asked what to do.

I invited a co-worker to my wedding, too, along with her husband. We received gifts and cards from everyone but her. I always say that a card is more than enough and was saddened by this lack of etiquette.

So I asked a friend of mine whether he could mention it to her. She had left the company, and I had no contact with her. I didn't want to exclude her when I was sending my thank-you notes. I thought that perhaps she had given us a card and we'd misplaced it. Her answer was that she had found the gift under her car seat and would mail it to me. I never received the gift or a card.

I realized that some people are just inconsiderate. We had a wonderful wedding, and I refused to let anyone ruin even a minute of it. I realized that she was not really a friend at all, and her total lack of etiquette was how I choose to view her. — *Disappointed Bride in California*

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When you hear the other person call, but you don't feel any urgency to answer it — that's a sign you want to look into a little further. You'll find that your reasons are valid.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Leave the past behind. That was the old you. Ahead is the new you. There are people who don't even know you, and this is the person they'll think is the only you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Building needs stability. Whether it's a relationship, a business or an actual building, stability is among the first tenants of the build. A person who is in turmoil is not a person you can build with.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You've wide-open eyes today, and what you see is that there are many hard things in life. Good news: They don't all come at once. This is a huge benefit! The pacing of things is definitely on your side.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Everything is impossible until it's done, and soon after it's de rigueur. That thing you want to do — well, you need to put a little more mind and elbow into it, that's all. Soon it's as good as done.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Your way is right. Your heart is true. Your vision is the best for all involved. Now, the thing is, without getting the others on board, none of that will matter. Go and be charming!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The unexpected thing. This is how it happens. You don't mind it when it's happening to you, but when the unexpected thing happens to another, you might find that hard to watch.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your temper is like the black box of an airplane. It's locked away with a log of everything that happened before. If all goes well, it will never be significant. And usually all goes well.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If you should give your heart to someone and that person, it turns out, takes the responsibility very seriously, this is among the best things in life to be cherished, and cherish it you will.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). What in the world would you do without XYZ? The answer is, truly, you'd go on. But XYZ makes it all so much better. And this is as good a time as any to celebrate XYZ. Do it!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Love needs a gesture. It needs a signal. It's a feeling that doesn't mean much without its expression. Don't feel love; do love. Love needs to be done today.

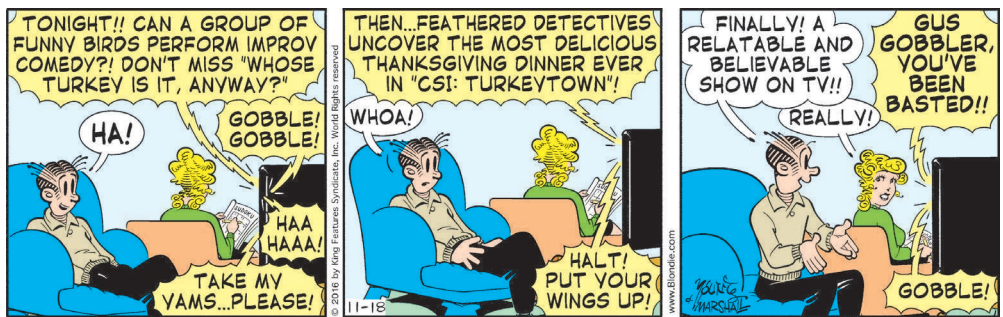
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). The casual answer does not always convey the casual feeling. Look past it; hear through it. Use the intuition that is your cosmic gift. That might be unfair, as you're always using it — but are you always trusting it?

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 19). Your birthday boon is the answer to a question that's been plaguing you. Maybe this comes in the form of a person you lost track of or a dream you let go of. Well, it's all coming back now. In the year 2017 you'll dance your way into someone's heart, and you'll find that someone has taken residence in yours, too. Cancer and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 20, 1, 11, 24 and 3.

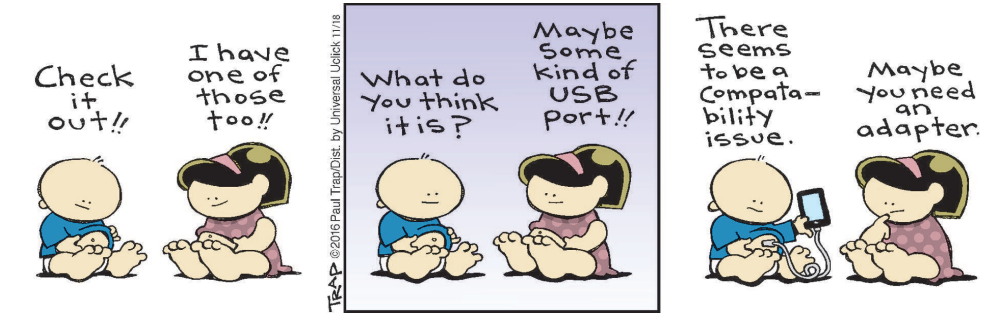
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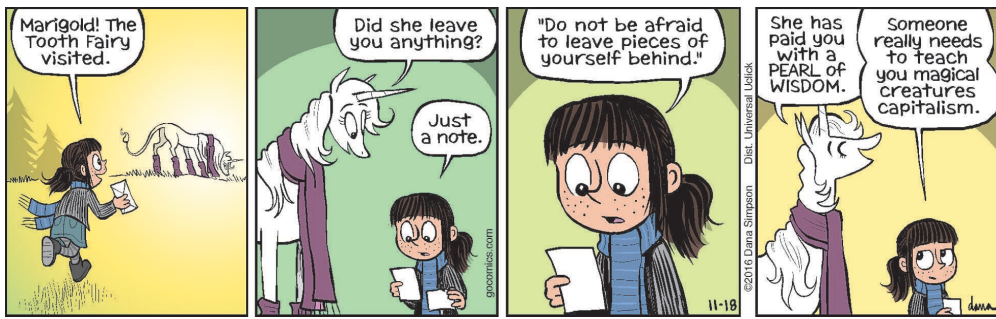
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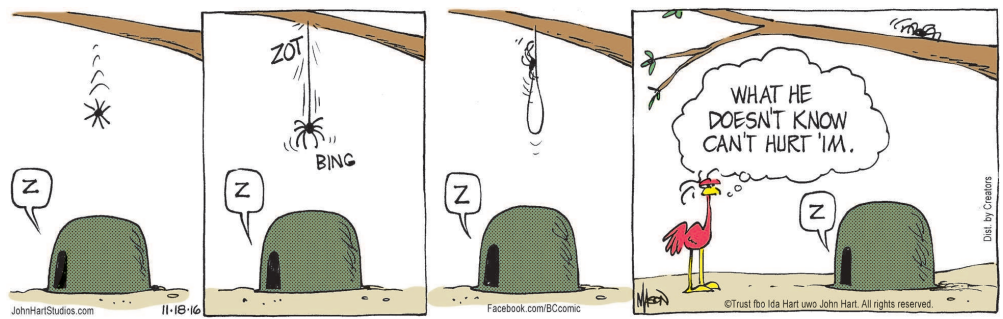
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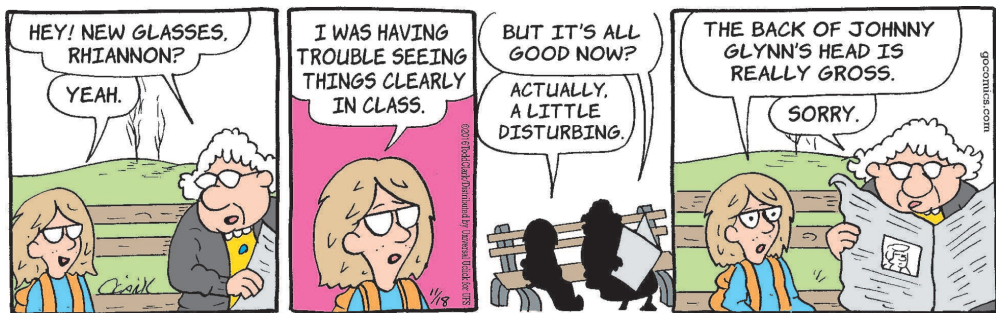
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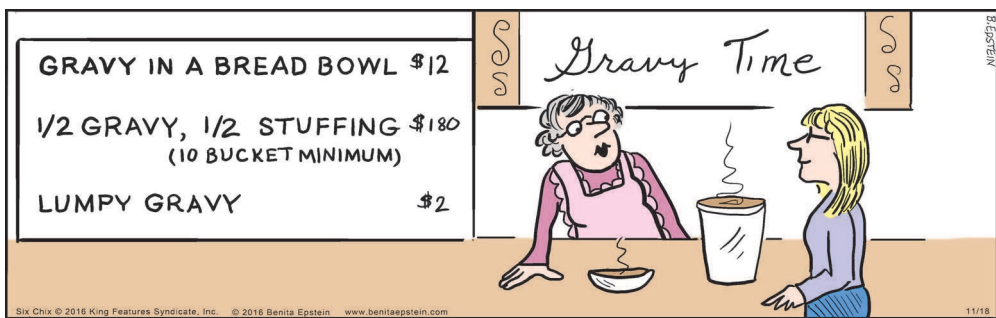
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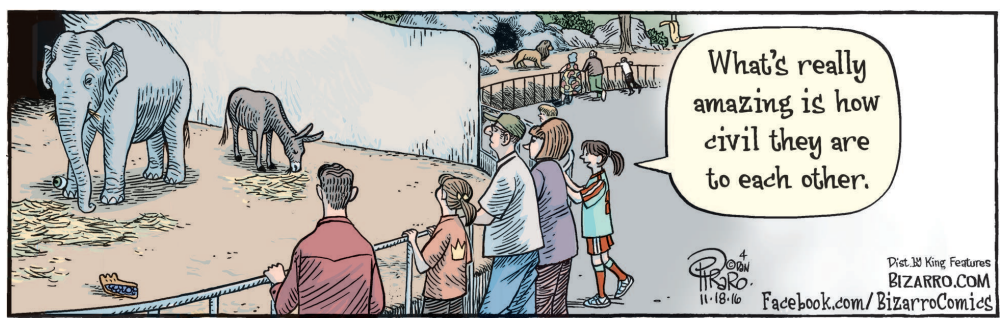
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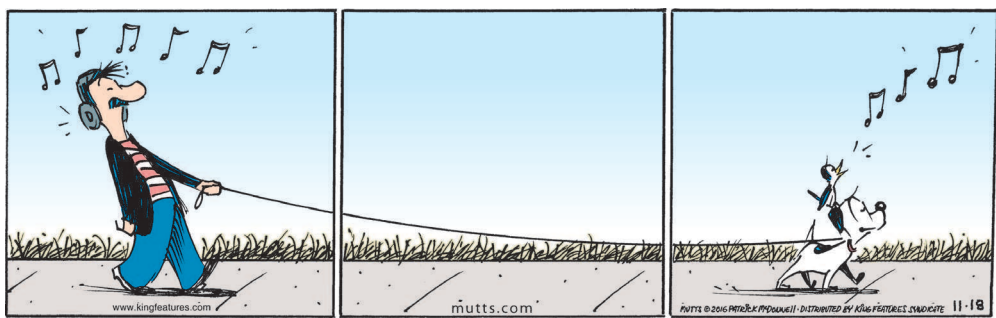
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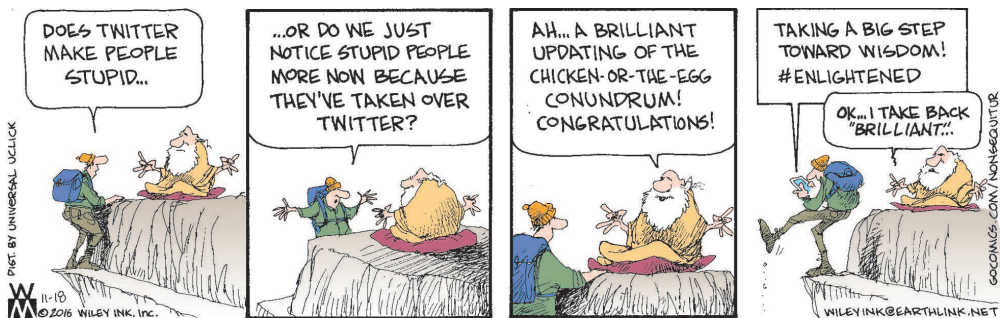
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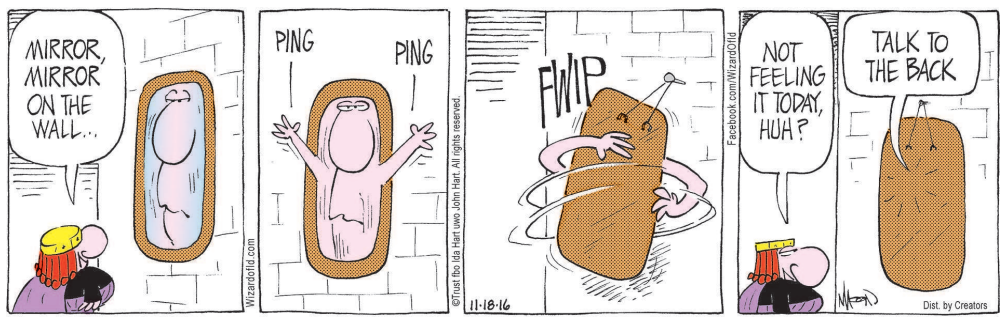
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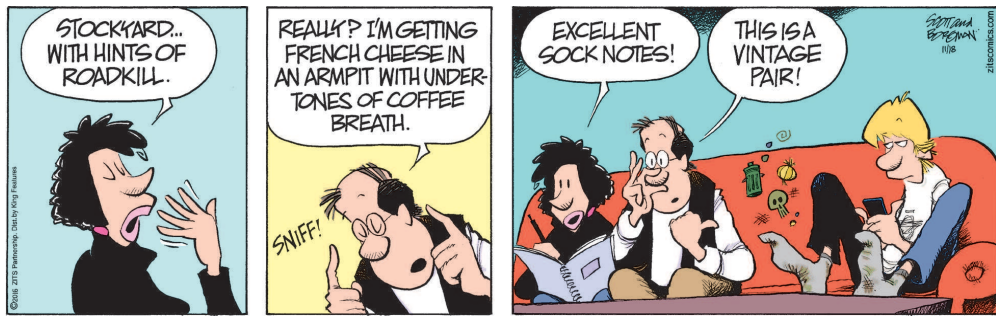
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