Problematic grown sons

DEAR ANNIE

Annie Lane
Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Annie: As I understood it, your primary job as a spouse is to respect, protect and support your spouse in all things, to always be truthful and never ask the other to do anything that you yourself would not do. However, all of the aforementioned becomes moot, it seems, when it comes to getting married later in life to a spouse with grown children.

Before we married, we decided my wife's domicile would be where we would live. I've been here as her husband since December 2004. I feel as though within these walls, we're equal (even if she does have a larger income), and I think I do my best to be my best, most of the time. I do, however, resent the fact that her sons are able to do as they wish without regard for us.

Recently, without any recourse, her eldest son began to yell at me. He told me to shut up and not even look at him. I somehow ended up being the one at fault. I feel as though he should have been shown the sidewalk.

On another occasion, I "forgot my place" and told another of my wife's sons how rude I thought it was for him to blow his nose (rather loudly, I might add) in the same room as his mother while she was on the phone with a client.

His response? "That was where the tissues were."

This same son, a self-proclaimed mama's boy, has recently decided to call me expletives and tell me I'm worthless.

Because I now refuse to be at "her home" during any family gatherings, it's assumed that I hate her children, when in fact I just don't like being disrespected any more than anyone else does. I find myself angry with my wife for not standing with me on the right side. At this point, I don't want to spend holidays in a compromising situation, even though that would mean not spending them with her. — *Married My Wife, Not Their Mother and Them*

Dear Married: Actually, you did marry them, too, in a way. When committing to a life with someone who has children from a previous marriage, you have to embrace the family as your own.

That said, I agree with you that your stepsons have said and done reprehensible things. Your wife shouldn't have allowed them to speak to you that way. She needs to step up and mediate.

You have to do your part, too. Set aside your pride and let go of past resentments. If you want a happy marriage, you have no choice but to reconcile with them. No matter how foul their mouths, they will always be your wife's baby boys. She will never choose you over them — and it wouldn't be fair to ask her to.

Dear Annie: This is in response to "Disappointed Dude," who didn't like his dates "snooping."

Reading his email? Not OK. But Googling him and his friends? Absolutely! That's fair game.

I'm a retired child protective social worker, and I would encourage all the girls I worked with to do this. It's a safety issue.

Not everyone is who he says he is. Too many girls and women are not cautious enough about whom they are dating. They could end up used, abused and even worse.

Maybe "Dude" could consider discussing this issue with the woman he is seeing. Together, they could look up his online profile, and she could learn about friends and relatives from his past. If he had a daughter, I bet he would look up every man she dated! — *Seen More Than I Want*

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You are entitled to project your own sense of order on this beautiful chaos. Why accept other views as the way it's supposed to be done? That's their way, and this is yours.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Do you believe in psychic gunk? Because sometimes when you go out in the world, you actually feel like there's a film of bad energy getting transferred to you. Look for tools to help you brush off the accumulated residue of karma.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). To be thoughtful and kind is the most important goal. This one goal, in the front of your mind, will organize the rest of your thoughts. It will make the complications align into simple problems to be systematically solved.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). When you're in your fan mode, you are dazzled by what's popular, selling and being supported and acclaimed. When you're in competition mode, you know that these things only signal: "It's on!"

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Are you feeling what's outside you or what's inside you? This can be confusing for one as empathetic as you are, and that goes double when there are people close to you feeling intense emotions.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've come to consider synchronicity as more than something that happens to you on a regular basis; it's an aspect of who you are. You'll experience a most favorable coincidence today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Figure out what you need, and ask for it. Don't wait on this one. You may find yourself lacking certain resources and this, if left unchecked, will take a physical and emotional toll. Get what you need.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). People will gather in tight circles to gab about what's wrong. Seldom do they assemble in such a way to express what's wonderful. Be the one to bring people together to celebrate all that's going right.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Cook food. Walk the earth. Put your hands in dirt. Get grounded. Otherwise, this sense of lightness you're experiencing can cause you to float up emotionally and disconnect from people who need your attention.

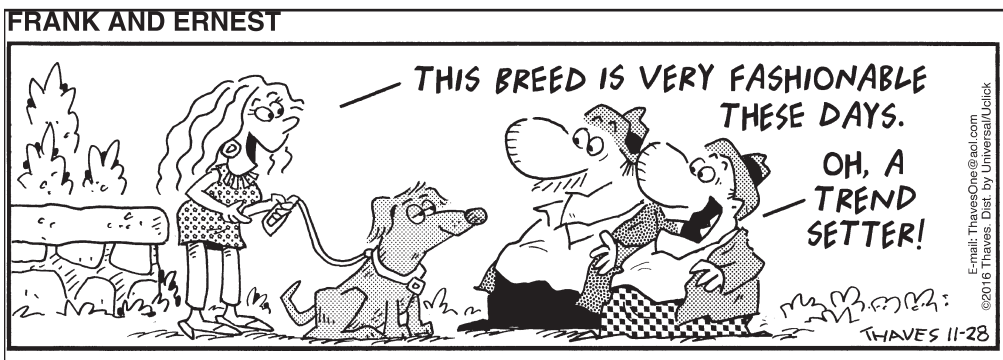
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The focus will go to a relationship in its early stages. Whether the relationship is oriented toward business or pleasure, the heart connection is what will matter. It needs to feel right — forget what it looks like on paper.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Character development often happens through hardship, though it's harder to be strong in good times. You'll manage such a remarkable feat of grace.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You connect to others, raising their spirits and your own in the process. If it's all you accomplish today, count yourself among the most accomplished people there are.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 29). Your self-assurance is your ticket to a fun ride before the year is up. The bonds of love will be strengthened in 2017 through many enjoyable times with those who share your humor and taste. Your family will have new reason to celebrate, and you'll be proud of the developments in your family tree. Pisces and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 4, 39, 22 and 15.

FRANK AND ERNEST



BLONDIE

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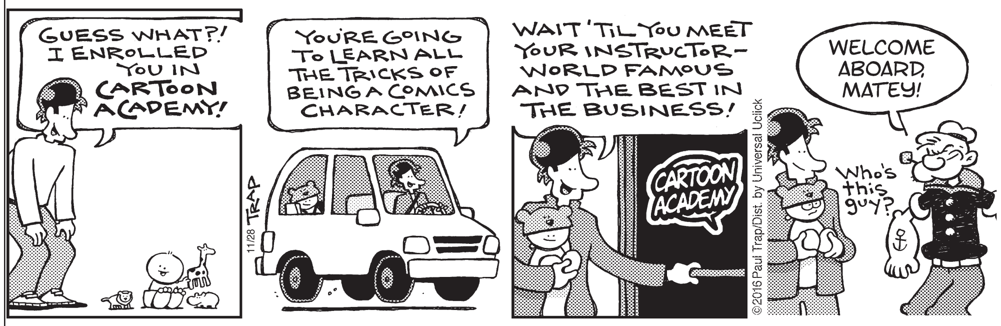
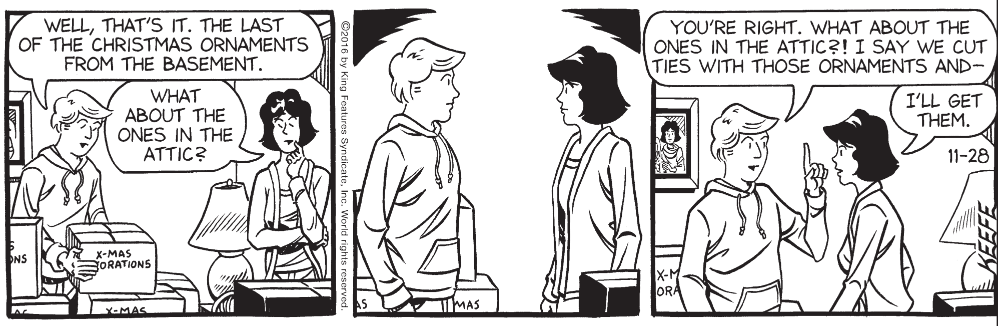
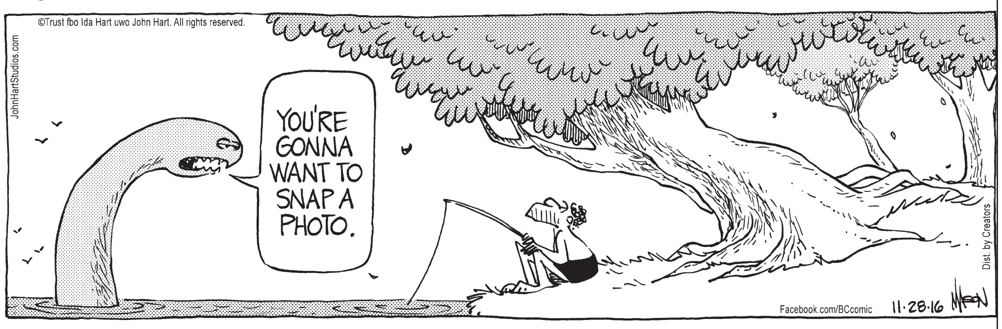


SALLY FORTH



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN

B.C.



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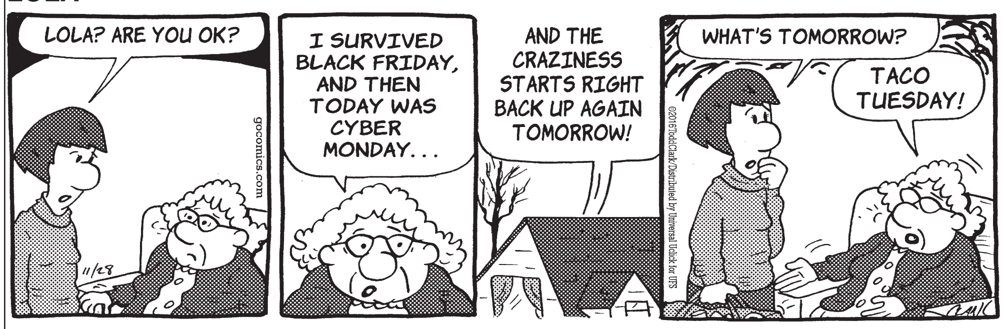
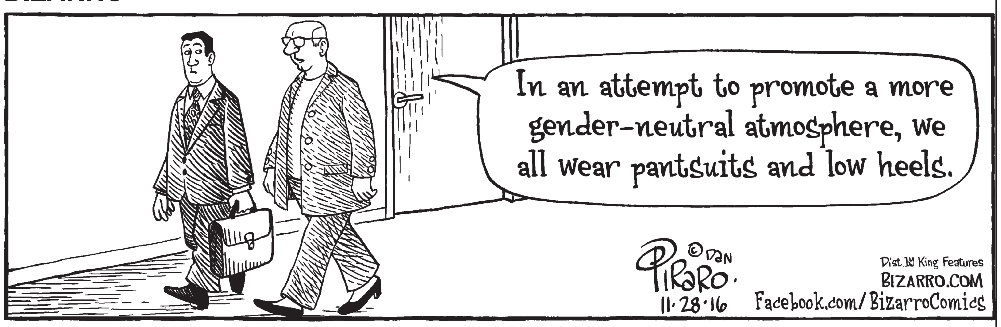


DILBERT

SIX CHIX

BIZARRO



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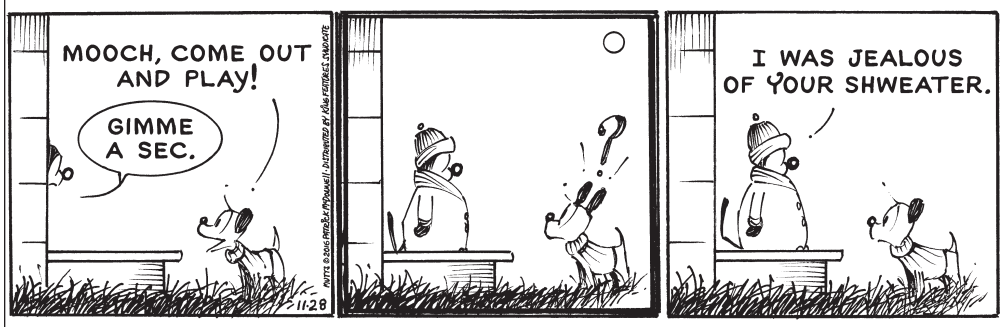

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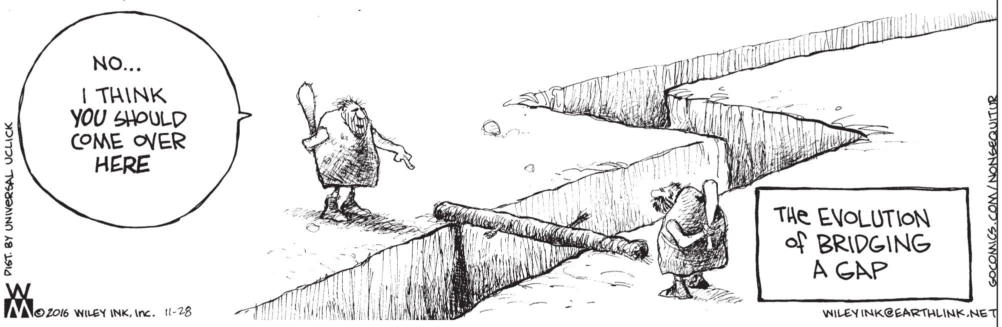
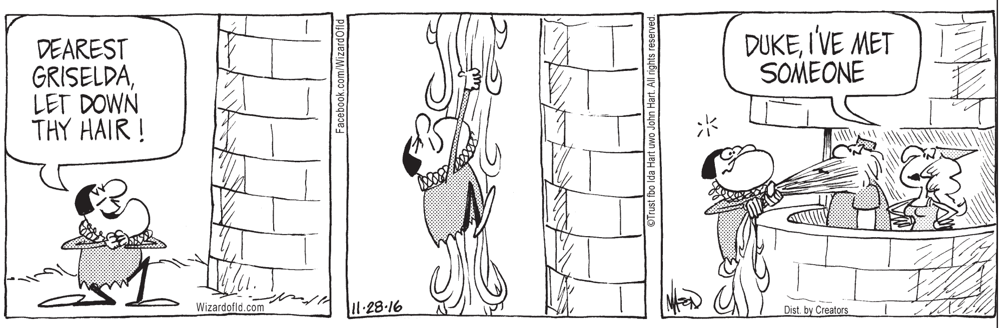


BABY BLUES

WIZARD OF ID



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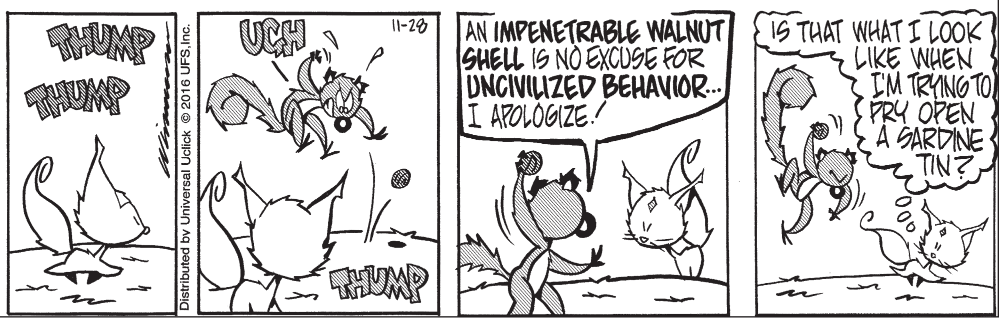
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