

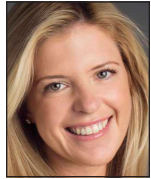
Time with grandchildren

Dear Annie: My three children are all grown and married and are in their early to mid-30s. They have three children among them, ages 14 years, 10 years and 1 month.

When I first got married, many years ago, my parents hounded me constantly about when I was going to make them grandparents. Sadly, after I had my three children, they were "too busy" for my children, just as they had been "too busy" for my siblings and me. My mother was notorious for making "dates" with my kids that she didn't keep. Later, my parents did do a lot with my youngest child, but not with the other two, who were teenagers by then. This caused a lot of hurt feelings.

Now that I am a grandmother, anytime we have holiday and birthday gatherings (which are the only times we all get together), I feel as if my mother takes over my children and grandchildren — as if she were their mother and grandmother. She even calls herself "Grandma-Grandma"! She acts as if I am not even there.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

When she's talking to my daughters and I try to join in the conversation, I am ignored, even though I'm careful not to interrupt. This happens every time.

At my child's birthday party this week, I had to wait my turn to hold my 1-month-old granddaughter. My mother brought her to me telling me that I shouldn't walk while holding her. Then she stood over me the entire three minutes I got to hold her. I told my daughter that I wanted a picture of me holding the baby, as I hadn't gotten one yet. So one of my kids took one, and yes, my mother even stood right over me with her face over my shoulder when the photo was taken, and then she promptly took my granddaughter back from me.

It's impossible to say anything to my mother because she has an unreasonable temper. But this is my grandchild! My mom is very close to my youngest child and my brother's youngest child and has spent a great deal of time with them their entire lives, so it's not that she hasn't gotten to be a grandmother.

I'm not sure you can help me, but could you at least tell me that she is overstepping her boundaries and I have a right to feel hurt? — *Just Wanting to Be Grandma*

Dear Just: Of course you have a right to feel hurt. But simply sitting with those hurt feelings does nothing for you or your relationship with your family. If talking to your mother about how you feel isn't a realistic option because she has a volatile temper, then talk to your children. They can help include you in conversations, ensure you have enough time holding the grandchildren and serve as moderators.

Even if your mother is on your last nerve, it's rare and wonderful that four generations get to spend time together.

Dear Annie: In response to "Crybaby," who is embarrassed by how easily she cries, I always keep a pack of gum nearby. Even a little piece of gum helps me stay calm in emotional situations. Just use half a stick, and don't chomp on it. That way, you don't look unprofessional. I have shared this tip many times with women when they have to talk to their bosses, and it has helped them. — *Under Control*

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You keep stepping forward, sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, but ever forward. As long as you don't stop, you'll eventually get there. Persistence will win out.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If home is where the heart is, yours isn't so much an actual place these days. Rather, it's a circle of people you give your love to. Your affection is abundant, your efforts selfless, your attention addictive.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). What you need to learn now can't be studied; it must be observed. As you watch those who have the quality you want to attain (quietly, without judgment) you'll pick it up, as if by osmosis.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You've loved and lost, but worse than that, you've loved and not had that love returned. These are the rites of passage that all great lovers experience. Be proud of the scars on your heart. They've made you extraordinary.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). When a baby cries in public, any mother within earshot is activated to care and act. This is how a soul's cry is to you, except the soul's cry can't be heard with your ears. You hear it with your heart, and your heart reaches to respond.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Success is pretty simple. Not easy, but simple. Essentially, break the big goals down to small chunks and get to work. Also, a mentor will significantly help your chances.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're a true friend and a stellar partner, which you'll prove in today's interactions. If you feel pressured to prove this too often, consider that the relationship may be unbalanced, and think about how you might restore equipoise.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your charms are working today, perhaps even better than the other kinds of intelligence you were born with. If you're not giving the perfectly correct answers, you're giving entertaining ones.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). With creativity you will solve the problems that can't be solved with money or might. The trick to getting into a creative mindset is in freeing your mind from the perception of boundaries.

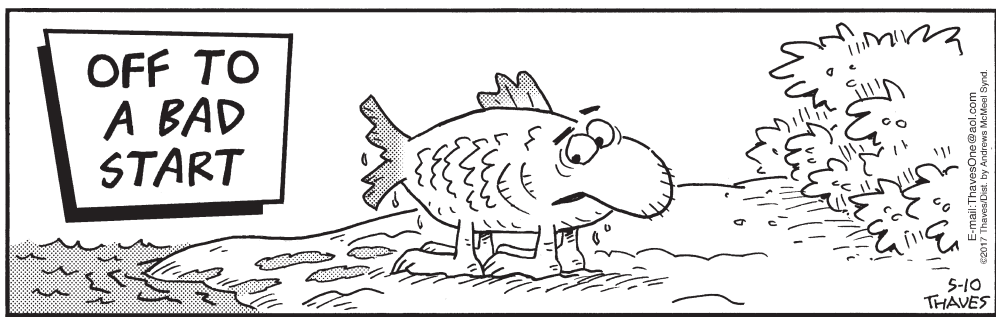
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The outcome you desire will be achieved through persuasion — but if your subject feels manipulated, the effect will be lost. Effective persuasion hinges on attraction, which you should build first and foremost.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll plan your day well, although it may seem that there's a distraction monkey on your shoulder ready to bail on any task that doesn't promise instant gratification. If you're to achieve your goal, he must be ignored.

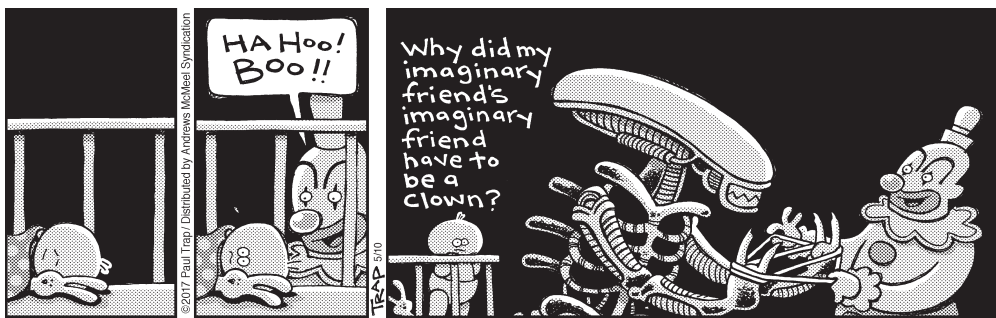
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). One small gesture will be the start of something consequential. The initiation move will have the kind of domino effect that people make videos about, the collapsing pieces spiraling in an intricate design.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (May 11). This year is marked by a sense of stability. In relationships and in your projects, stability is the guiding tenet. Turmoil gets settled; injustice is made right. July through September represents a thriving time for your family. August is for adventuring. Be a little selfish, because your happiness will benefit all. The Gemini and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 13, 19, 1, 44 and 11.

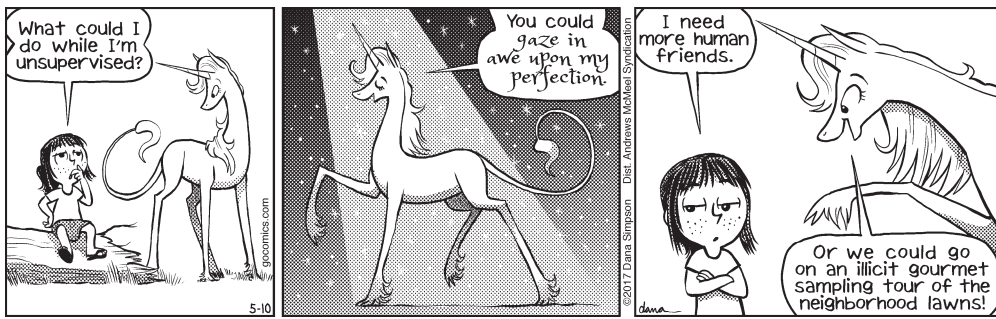
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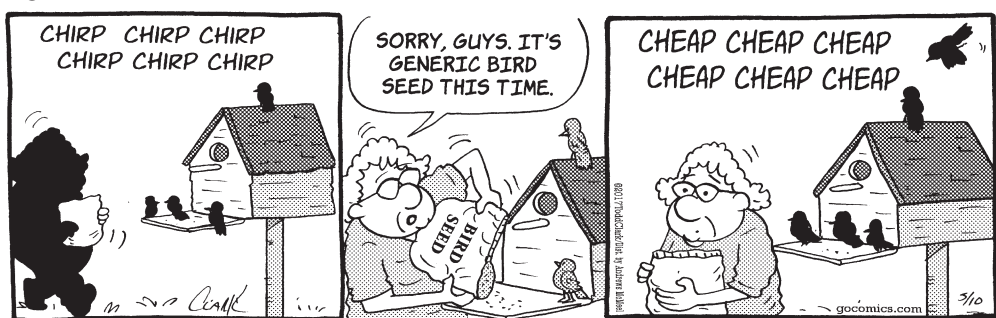
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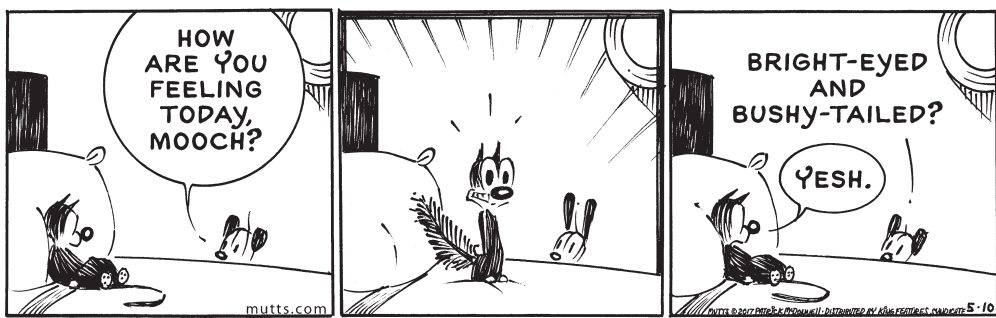
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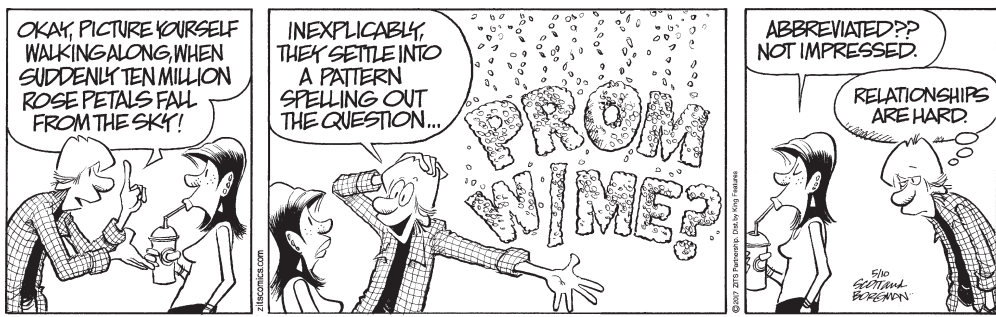
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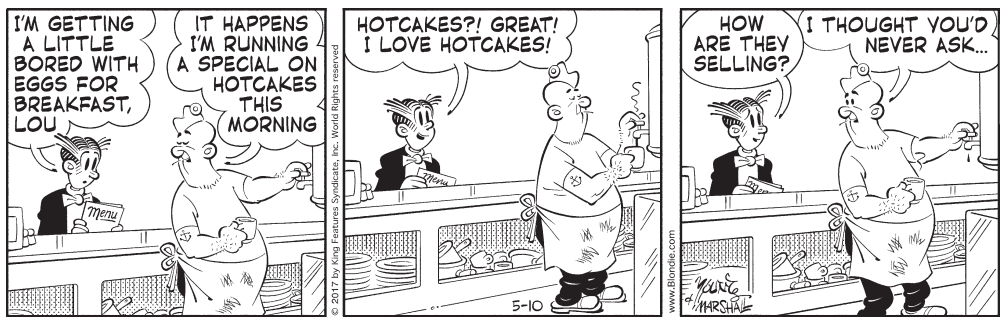
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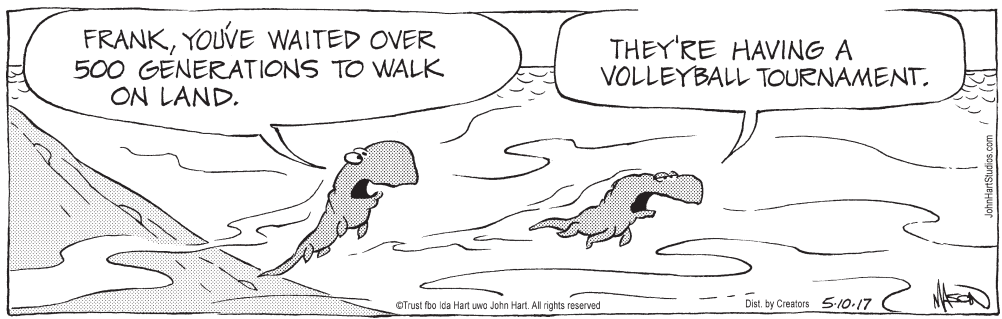
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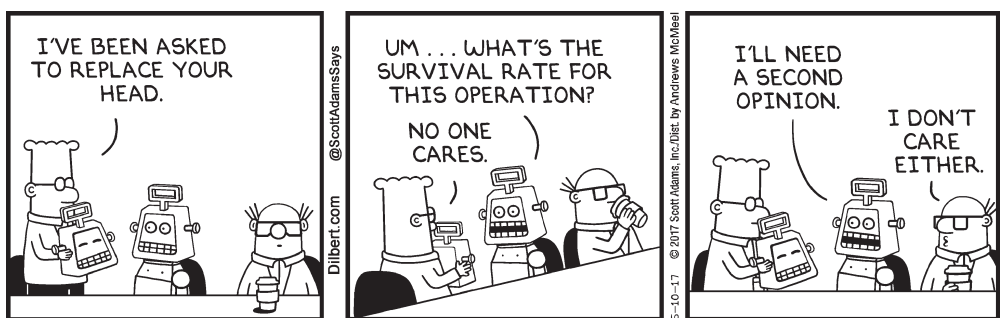
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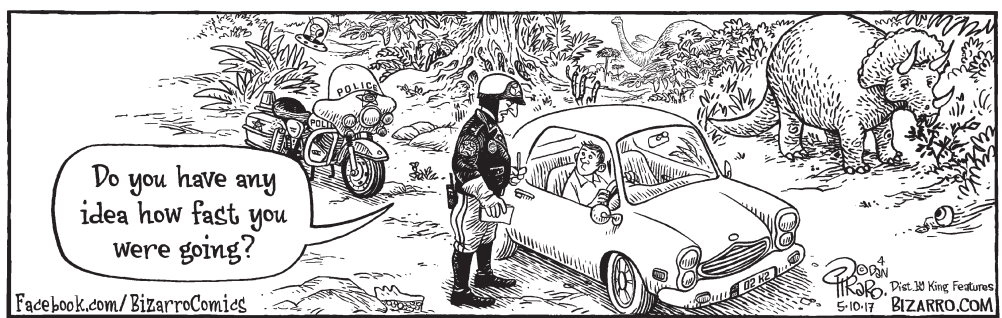
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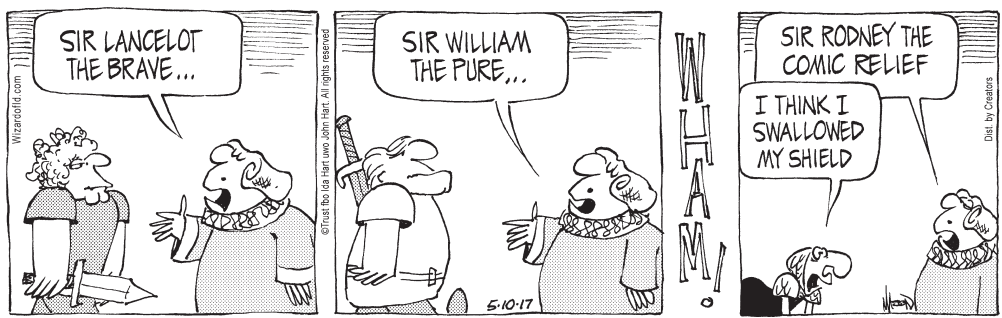
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