

Be your daughter's confidante

Dear Annie: My 35-year-old daughter can't seem to meet a decent man to have a relationship with. She has never married but has had several long-term relationships. The men were very charming in the beginning but turned out to be physically and emotionally abusive.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

It's hard for me to wrap my mind around why she stays in these relationships so long and why she puts up with the abuse. She wasn't abused and didn't see anyone being abused while she was growing up. She was loved and supported in everything she pursued.

She recently started a new relationship, and though I don't know whether this person is abusive, I do see that the relationship is starting out with her making all the concessions and changing her life to meet his needs. This is very much a pattern for her. She goes out of her way to help and do things for them and gets very little in return.

What can I do to help her see what she is doing? I just can't stand to see her go down the same road over and over. I don't think she has ever had a man who went

out of his way to do anything for her. I realize she must have some sort of low self-esteem to get into these one-sided relationships. She's beautiful and smart, with a college degree and a great job. I want her to realize her worth and quit settling. — *Frustrated Mom*

Dear Mom: As difficult as it is to see your daughter going down the same road over and over, she has to be the one to take an exit. You can empower her to make that decision by building up her self-esteem and acting as a friend and confidante. Knowing that she has a loving refuge in friends and family will make the prospect of leaving an abuser less daunting — but only slightly, and it's still not going to be easy. If she's expressed to you that she wants help, you might encourage her to go to a counselor. But if she's in denial, any help you try to give her will have the opposite effect.

I truly hope her current relationship doesn't become abusive. If it does, I encourage you to call The National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233.

Dear Annie: To "Blah Birthday," the young newlywed who complained that her husband took her on her birthday to something he liked instead of her favorite: Get over it.

My husband has been dead for five years. We usually spent my birthdays at home together. I loved it! He was a romantic, and we spent time cuddling, maybe watching a movie on television, and it was beautiful because I was with the man I loved.

Did it occur to "Blah Birthday" to be grateful that her husband remembered her birthday? Did it occur to her that her husband did something he truly thought would be special? No, it only occurred to her to be a whining, selfish woman.

I would give anything to have my wonderful guy back.

Please get over your selfish self and thank the man who bothered to remember you at all on your birthday. One day, you just might wish you had. — *Loved My Guy*

Dear Loved My Guy: I should certainly hope that a husband remembers his wife's birthday. However, I think most of us could use a reminder to be grateful, so I'm printing your letter. I'm sorry for your loss.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). At some point the barriers you erect to protect yourself become energy inefficient. They cost too much emotionally. They become exhausting to maintain. You'll drop the defense. Maybe you didn't need it in the first place.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You'll create something today, and rather mindlessly at that. It's a gift to be able to float above your thoughts. Perhaps that's the best, purest way. There will be nothing to interfere with your process.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Once you become concerned with the result, your energy changes. If you're in a professional setting, the difference will be better. If you're in a social setting, the difference will be worse.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There are those who like to dance and will do it no matter who is watching. You've been that person before, and you will be again. You're edging toward it, drawn to the music.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). It's not necessary to achieve anything beyond what you already have. Being alive is the gift. The rest is icing for the ego. Whatever you do to enjoy being alive today is good.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You don't need to go anywhere for the beauty. The beauty is in how you see it. The truth you seek is the same. You'll find the truth and you'll find it right where you are.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). If you give your mind the chance, it will make things much more serious than they need to be. Employ your body. There's a wisdom there that will take over the situation once you get moving.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). If you want to know how a thing is, you have to forget about how you think it is. While you're at it, lose your ideas about how you want it to be. Look at a thing as though you were not the one looking.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It takes no special level of devotion or goodness for the river to obey the natural laws affecting the earth. Without the least bit of effort, it flows home to the sea.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You've followed many lines of reason, none of them pointing to the answer you want. Perhaps what's needed is an unreasonable approach. Switch off your head and let your inner knowing have a go at this.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Walk beside the one who knows the path and you, too, will know the path. Don't expect yourself to pick up the route in a day, though. Repetition will be key.

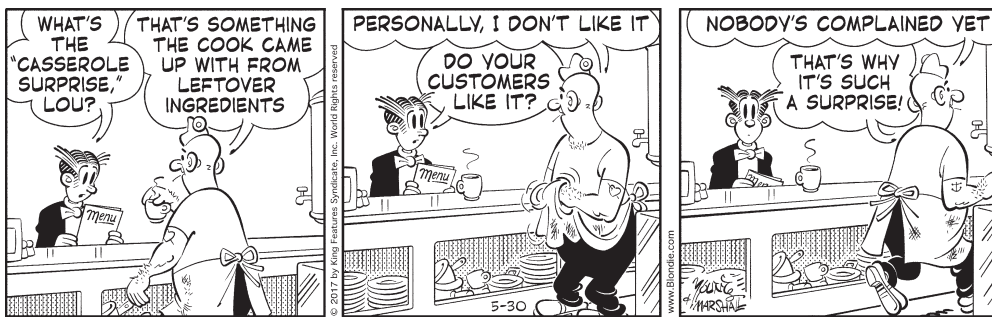
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Today's doubts will have a real limiting effect on what happens tomorrow. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, if the doubts are founded. But hope will leave you more options. So make sure you're not being overly pessimistic.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (May 31). This year you'll cultivate the fine art of laughing in the face of trouble. Your courage will inspire others, and that's part of why you're so brave. You have to be! You know you're an example to someone. Exciting times in June will be followed by relaxing ones in July. A big bonus happens in September and again in February. Leo and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 40, 3, 33 and 28.

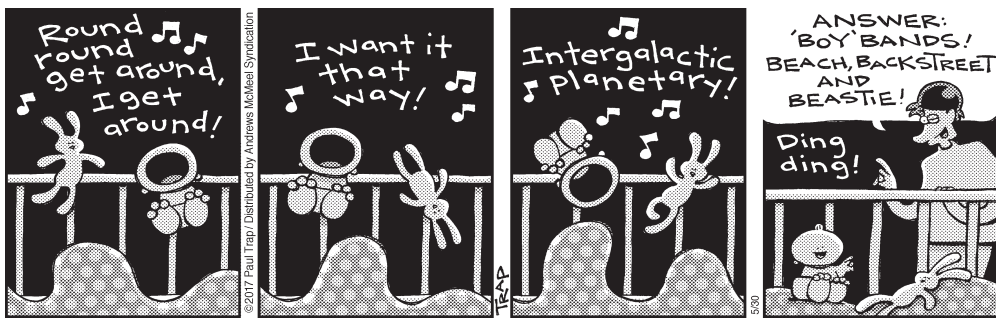
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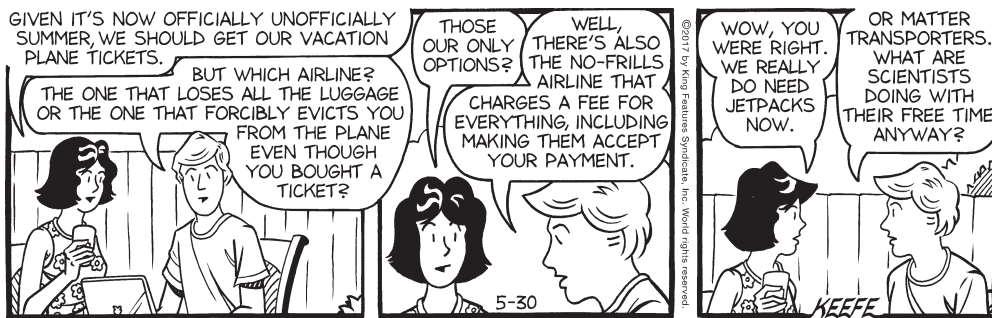
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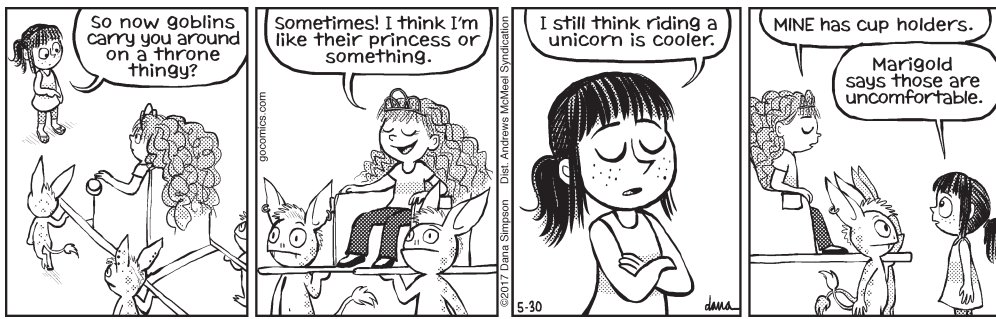
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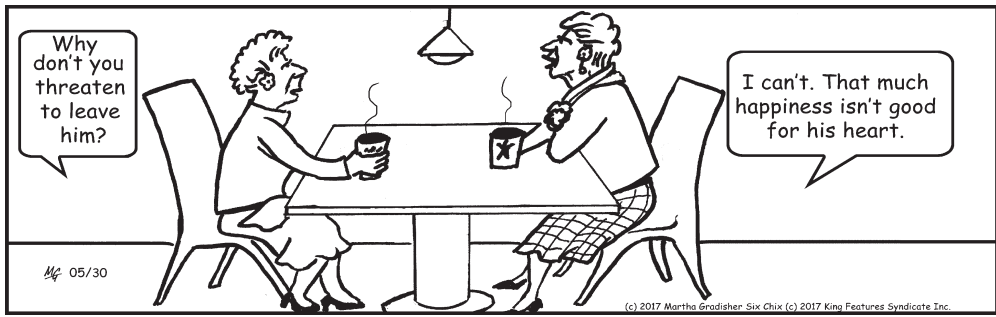
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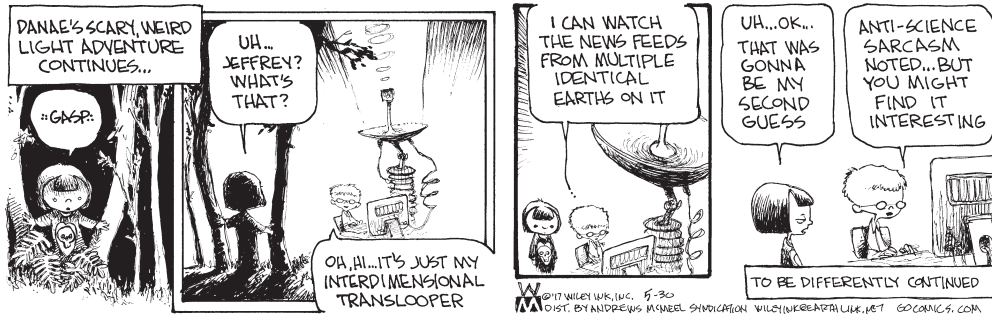
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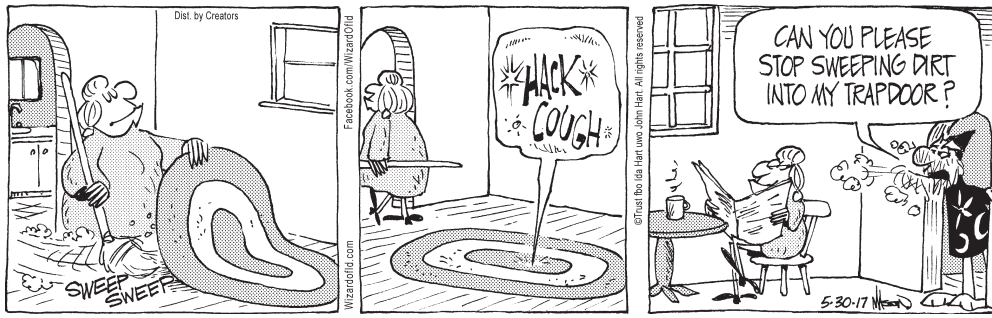
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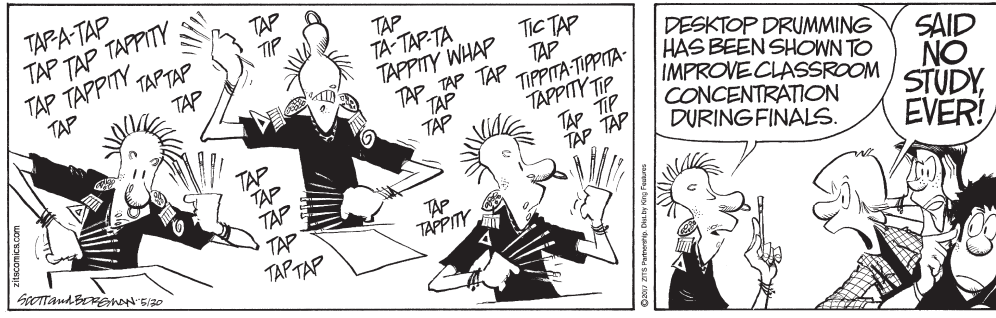
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