

Ignored when others are there

Dear Annie: I have shared a very close relationship with "Sue" for over 50 years. We worked together as young adults and have remained dear friends throughout the years. We work very closely at our church, as well.

I know I have annoying habits and am thankful for my friends who love me anyway. When it is just the two of us, everything is great with Sue and me. My annoyance with her is that when she is in a conversation with another person (usually casual before or after church) and I approach and wait (or try to) until they are finished, she does not glance at me or acknowledge my presence in any way. I usually just walk away.

When she and I are having a conversation in a similar situation, she'll often stop me when I'm in the middle of saying something so she can speak with every person who passes by. Then I end up walking away because it is so distracting that I honestly can't remember what I

was saying. I recognize this as passive-aggressive behavior, but it puzzles me that she feels the need to control me or shut me down. She is the kindest, most Christian person I know, and

I don't know whether she even realizes what she is doing. I don't know why I am writing, because after all of these years, nothing will change. I can't analyze my impact or my aura or how I affect other people. If I could, perhaps I would know how to avoid being blown off as unimportant or insignificant, which is how these situations make me feel.

Perhaps we are both strong personalities and this is her way of being in control. Do you have a suggestion, other than avoiding conversations when others are present? — Mary

Dear Mary: For all the talk of conversation here, it sounds as if you've yet to tell Sue how you feel. It's time to change that. I really doubt that she's consciously doing this to try to con-

trol you, so give her the benefit of the doubt when raising the topic. Use "I" statements — e.g., "I'm sure you don't mean to do this, but when we're in the middle of talking and you stop to speak with passers-by, I feel ignored" — as opposed to "you" statements, e.g., "You ignore me." True friends appreciate when a friend cares enough to be honest.

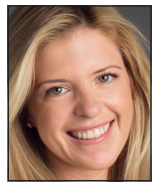
Dear Annie: I want to second what "Nancy" had to say about loud music in businesses, stores and restaurants. It makes visiting with friends, which is usually the whole point of dining out, almost impossible.

I regret to add the following: A lot of today's churches are just as loud. I attend a great, theologically solid church. I accept the contemporary music, but the blast level is pretty hard to take. I have discovered when I've traveled that it is the same across the country. The volume ranges from several notches above necessary to over-the-top painful.

God is not deaf, and I don't want to be. — Dynah

Dear Dynah: Here's hoping a sound tech reads this and dials down the noise.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

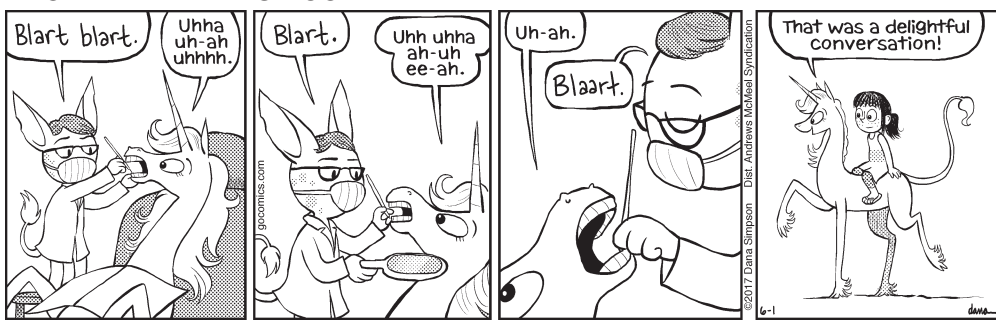
FRANK AND ERNEST



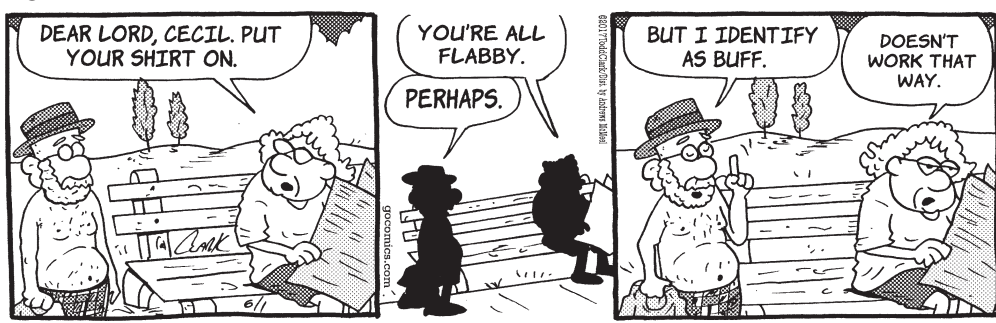
THATABABY



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



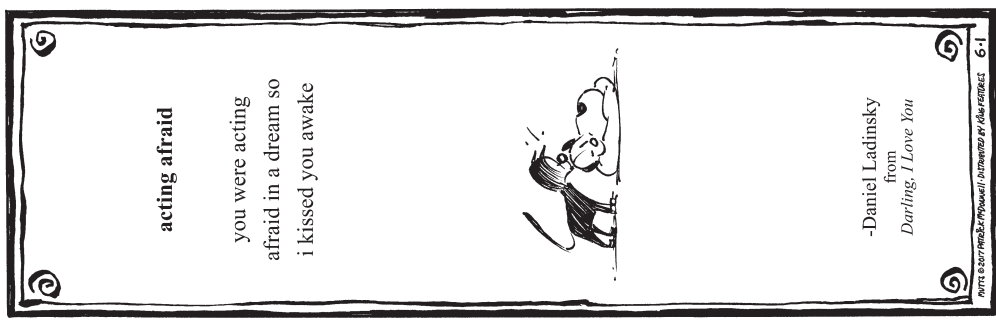
LOLA



SIX CHIX



MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Once the drama stirs up, you're sunk. If you defend yourself too well, you look guilty. If you don't, there will be regrets. The best defense is prevention. Don't let conversations drift into dangerous waters. Stay in control.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your attention is a treasured gift, but your neglect is not a terrible insult. It's just that you can't focus on everyone at once. Be careful not to set up expectations you won't want to or be able to fulfill.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It's a good thing you have quick reflexes, because you'll need them in today's dicey social scenario. You might have to backpedal, pull your proverbial foot out of your mouth, or jump in to save someone from sure embarrassment.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your No. 1-priority task will get done. The rest may not. So put the important stuff first. What's important? It's not a trick question. You know the answer; it's just not the same one that another person wants you to choose.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The work will be much more pleasant when you have the right tools for the job. Do research. Getting this one right before you even start will save you time, money and headaches.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). If you're too strict with yourself, you will surely rebel. Loosen up. Otherwise you may find yourself craving forbidden fruits (maybe ones you didn't even know you liked) in reaction to trying to be too perfect.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The rightness of an action makes you brave. You don't even have to think about it. You dive in and do the necessary thing. The time to be frightened is not before or during; it's after.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Of course no one is really better than another, but our egos have us flexing as though there's something at stake that can be won with an air of superiority. You'll really win by going in the opposite direction.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Patience isn't the most exciting virtue, and there are many who don't see its appeal. However, those who have patience can win the whole game just by avoiding the mistakes that impatient people make.

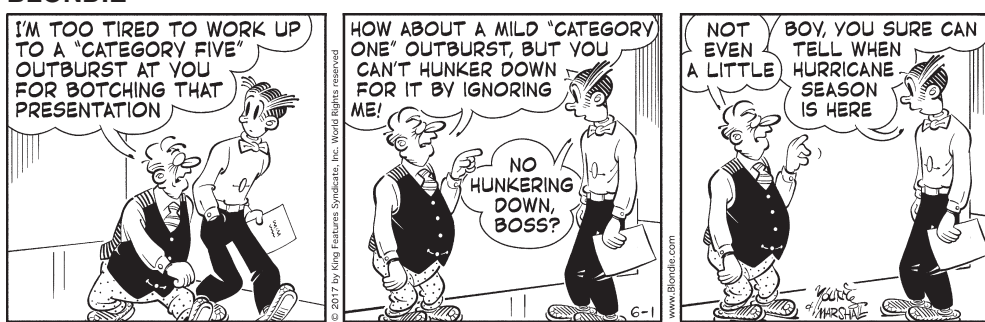
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). To complain is to release some tension and perhaps gain the acknowledgement of a person who agrees. But this comes at a cost. Maybe the tension is a good thing if it forces you to take action instead of complain.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). When a bee becomes incensed, it stings the offender and then shortly after pays a price with his own life. Anger is not usually as costly an emotion for humans, and yet it's still a good idea to de-escalate conflict.

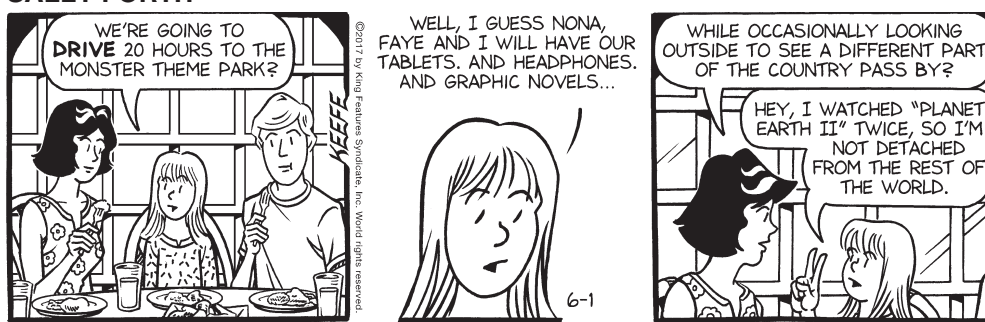
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Just because you're not in step with the others doesn't mean your timing is off. Awareness is key here, because you're really good at adjusting to the pace of others when you want to. The question is, "Do you want to?"

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (June 2). Your work gets simultaneously more challenging and more creative over the next two months, and by the end of August you'll have a prize to show for your dedication. Loved ones will have interesting propositions in September. You won't regret what you do, only what you don't do, so be adventurous in your choices. Libra and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 44, 42, 30 and 15.

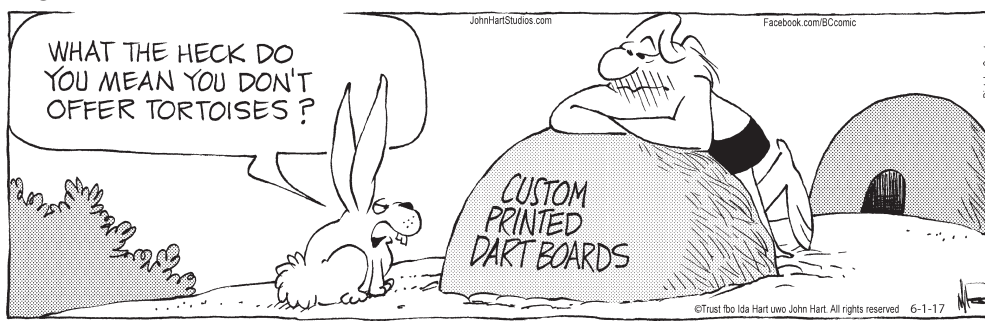
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B.C.



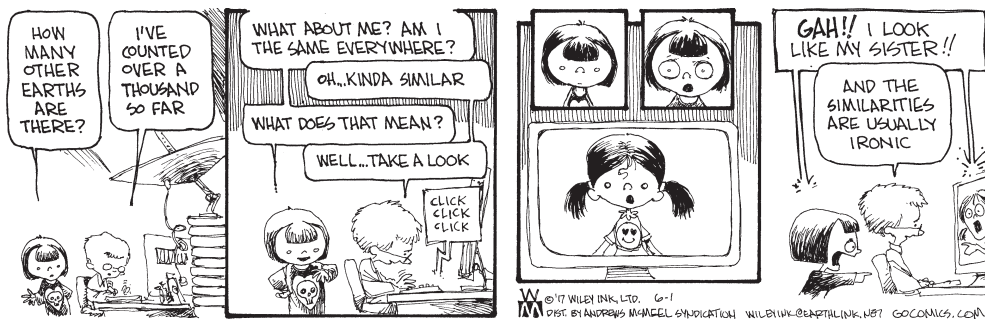
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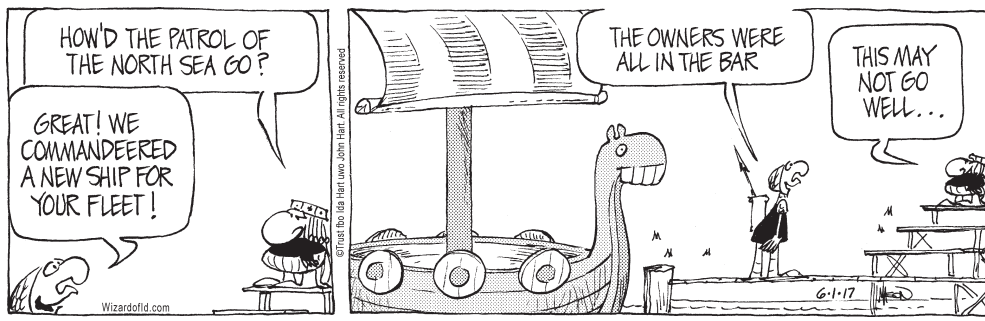
BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

