

Trouble with mom's behavior

Dear Annie: I am a 13-year-old girl in Montreal. I go to a private high-tech school with nice friends and teachers. I have divorced parents and an elder brother, "Edward."

My mom and I spend quality time together pretty often. We go out and have fun, and she buys me things. The thing is that she does these nice things — such as taking me for ice cream or shopping — and then uses them against me later. She also says I'm rude when I'm just doing my thing. I am sick and tired of having my mom use the fun times and activities we do as leverage to make me feel bad. Why does she do these things? Is it my fault? Is it hers? Should I talk about it again with her?

Also, my mom tells me not to bully Edward, when he lies more than I do and often starts the problems. She doesn't believe me when I tell her the truth, though.

Does she like him more than me? I must admit that I get along better with my father and Edward gets along better with our mother. But Mom always tells me we're equal in her eyes. I don't believe her. Please help me; I have no one

else to turn to. I do believe this could help others with the same problem who are afraid to speak up. — *Lost and Unloved*

Dear Lost and Unloved: Though we do our best as parents, we're not perfect, and sometimes we don't realize the impact of our words. The next time you and Mom are out together, tell her how much you enjoy the quality time. Then explain that you're feeling anxious about doing these outings together because you're afraid she'll bring the memories up in a negative context. Rest assured your mom loves you and your brother equally, my dear. You both will always be No. 1 in her heart, no matter what.

Regarding your issues with your brother, here's the bad news: Elder siblings have been blaming younger siblings for things since the dawn of time. The good news: They eventually grow out of it. In the meantime, when Edward starts to bug you, just ignore him.

Dear Annie: This is in response to "First-Time Heart Patient." I'm not a physician, but I'm a retired open-heart surgery nurse who spe-

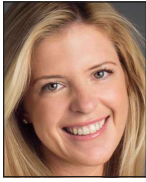
cialized in critical care. I want to assure "First-Time Heart Patient" that it sounds as if he received excellent care. Apparently, the doctors thought his situation was so critical that rather than discharge him from the hospital, they sent him for cardiac intervention as soon as it could be coordinated. This would be considered an urgent heart catheterization and intervention.

Perhaps he was too overwhelmed or too ill at the time to remember the nurses explaining the medication to him, or perhaps the meds had to be given very quickly to prevent further problems. That happens. However, it should all have been in the printed copy of his discharge instructions, which should have been given to him and reviewed with him before he went home.

I understand his anxiety and concern about this life-threatening condition. Mended Hearts is a great support group for heart patients after heart attacks and beyond. He can check with his hospital to see whether this is available in his area. Good luck! — *J.P.*

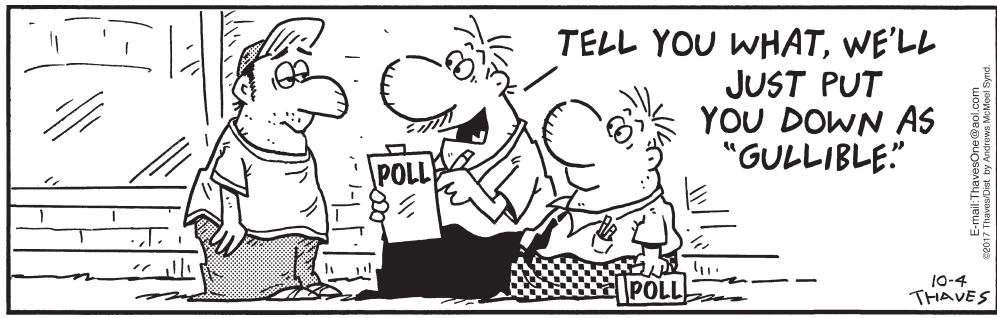
Dear J.P.: I so appreciate your taking the time to write in and share your expertise and experience. Thank you.

DEAR ANNIE

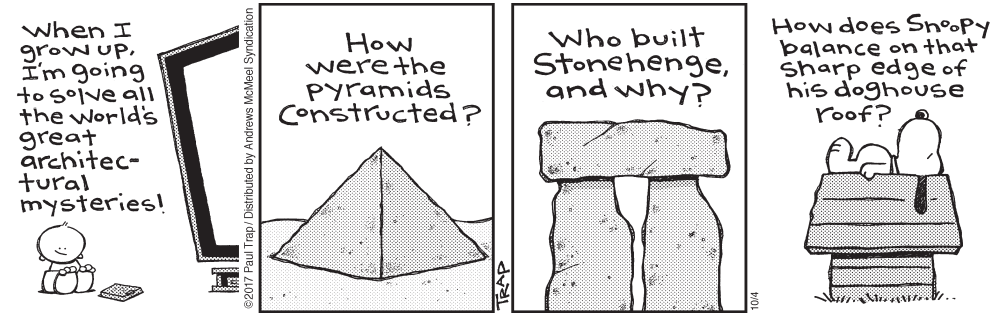


Annie Lane
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FRANK AND ERNEST



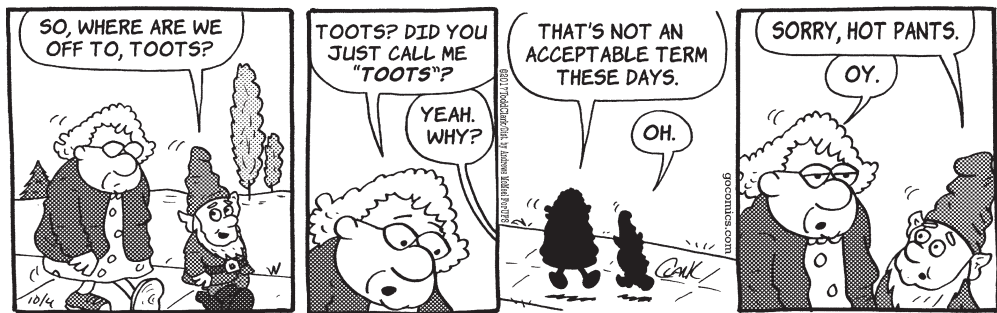
THATABABY



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). Wisdom isn't among the more glamorous traits: Foolishness, shallowness and impulse are far more celebrated. However, you really can't progress without growing wise. Acknowledge the wise part of you and watch it grow.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Many people say "I love you" easily and with no follow-up proof. Love is a verb. You'll enjoy finding ways to help, please, nurture, comfort, understand, support, applaud and celebrate those you love.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Theoretically, you could retreat to the fantasy of your mind for a free getaway. But in actuality, environment matters. It will be much easier to find the new you in a new place.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You've formal training in some areas, and there are plenty of things you taught yourself. Now you'll get the chance to fill in the gaps of your education. There's an exciting opportunity on the other side of this.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your productivity ebbs and flows according to what's going on around you. You'd like to have more control over this, and you can when you take charge of your environment. This is best done by changing it, or leaving it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Someone has asked too much of you. You didn't think the request was too much at the time, and that's why you said yes. Now you see how you mis-spoke. But don't worry, the decision should, can and will be reversed.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are some things you shouldn't be too careful about. As one philosopher suggested, "Of all forms of

caution, caution in love is perhaps the most fatal to true happiness" (Bertrand Russell).

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You don't really see being happy as your duty, but what if it is? What if, on some spiritual level, your unhappiness dims the light of humanity? Act as though this is the case and you'll see some magic today.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If you find yourself avoiding people, this might be a sign that you've some unfinished business or something to reconcile in yourself. Then again, you could be wisely economizing your energy.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). What does "authenticity" really mean? Most assume it has to do with acting on some grand individualistic agenda. Today's authentic living may be best expressed by eating a sandwich or doing what everyone else is doing.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Surrender is the greatest stress reliever. The best part about it is that you can choose which direction to take it. There are so many things to give in to. Ideas for today: Surrender to laughter, touch, dance, love, taste, sleep, etc.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Arguments will be best among friends, preferably bright ones with diverse and even outlandish opinions. You'll hash out topics for the sake of sporting debate and come to a universal truth.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Oct. 5). Heart connections will be made stronger this solar return as you communicate more openly and thoroughly. Your interest in others will carry you into new worlds in 2018. Gemini and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 11, 5, 20, 41 and 16.

BLONDIE



SALLY FORTH

