

# Dessert isn't the problem

**Dear Annie:** My husband and I have both been married before, and our children are from our first marriages. My husband's daughter lives close by, and she brings her kids to our home often, which we all enjoy. The problem is that every time they show up — even when they know we are preparing a meal for them, even prior to big holiday meals — they get out of their car with empty bags and partially consumed beverages from a popular fast-food chain.

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

This drives me insane! My husband just shrugs and says that there's a reason they are all overweight and that nothing we say or do will change their behavior. When his daughter asked me not to always make a dessert to accompany our otherwise healthful meals because she was worried about "how big the kids are getting," I had a heart-to-heart with her about how awful the fast food is for the kids. Her reply was that she just can't say "no" to her kids and is just too tired to cook. I told her that is why we are trying to help by making meals for

them. No change. What now? — *Fed Up in Florida*

**Dear Fed Up:** It's considerate of you to cook healthful meals for your family, and it was thoughtful of you to have a heart-to-heart with your daughter-in-law about this sensitive issue. Your husband might consider periodically encouraging her to stay strong in teaching her children better eating habits, reminding her that she's the boss — and that her children in fact need her to be the boss.

But in the end, there's nothing you can do to force her to stop buying fast food. The only person you can control is yourself. The sooner you accept this the sooner you'll be able to relax and enjoy the time with your family.

**Dear Annie:** I must disagree with your assessment that "no problem" means the same thing as "you're welcome." The phrase "no problem" carries with it the implication that if the task had created a "problem" for the server (or whoever uttered it), perhaps she might not have carried it out so nicely — or at all.

"You're welcome," on the other hand, has a much more gracious implication: that the person would have done this task for you no matter the cost to herself.

Words matter, and there is no use pretending that they don't carry a lot of freight. Better to use them thoughtfully. — *English Major*

**Dear English Major:** I see no evidence that "no problem" carries that implication, but I love a good linguistic debate, so I'm printing your letter — followed by a different viewpoint.

**Dear Annie:** "Out of Touch" was annoyed that a popular response to "thank you" is "no problem." My husband and I were annoyed by that also, until I realized that the traditional replies in French are "jet'en prie," which is somewhat equivalent to "don't worry about it," and "de rien," "of nothing." In Spanish, "de nada" also means "it was nothing." So maybe it's not a millennial thing. Maybe it's cultural, global stuff and millennials are really sophisticated! OK, I went too far with that. — *Ann-Marie*

**Dear Ann-Marie:** *Merci beaucoup* for the language lesson.

## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** You'll learn by listening, and it will be pleasurable learning indeed! You'll especially like hearing the stories of those much older or much younger than you.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** In the interest of living fully, you'll risk going too far. And why not? You've already experienced what it's like not to go far enough, which is to say it bears little to nothing in the way of results.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** These gifts you were given will go to excellent use, and it will thrill you to share them. The best part of the day will be spent adapting things to fit what's needed. Your contribution will be essential to the success of the day.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** It's not fun to go without when those around you have plenty. And yet, you're better for having done this in your lifetime. You trust your instincts, and your character is strong.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Take the day beat by beat, the way you sing a song. You can't sing the next part of the song while you're singing the part of the song you're on. Approach the day like this: Your whole self only doing the part you're on.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Making other people happy makes you happy. And then when they're not, you're not. And though you really can't control how other people feel, something about the equation will really work for you today.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** To be soft and easy is the goal. Even the toughest person will benefit from letting go of some rigidity now. Warmth, peace, togetherness — these are the qualities that will rule the day.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** There will be a lot of moving parts. The thing about keeping it simple — well, that bus left weeks ago. It's all good, though. Your able mind will lead in the complication and details.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Being too careful causes stumbles worse than being reckless, so go a little mad with it today. You can handle the squirrely parts. You're brilliant at that, really!

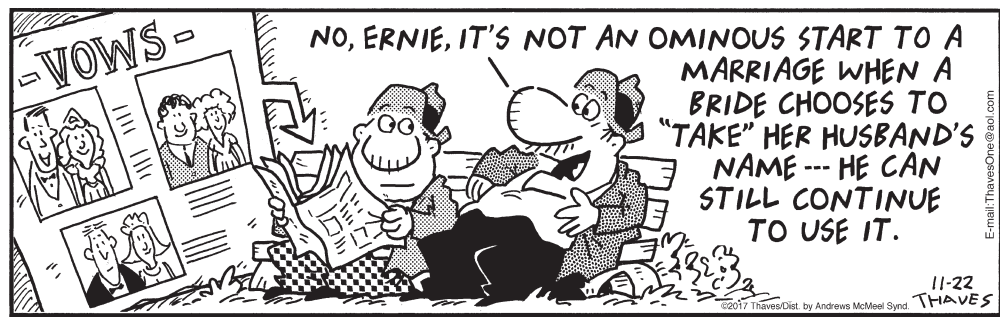
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** If you could download your body of knowledge into the mind of a loved one and still retain it — if that would help matters — you'd do it in a heartbeat. But all you can do is piece it out, little by little. It will be gratefully received.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Knowing what people are doing and being able to predict their next moves will be key to figuring out how to turn the day's events in your favor. And they should go in your favor. It will be better for all if they do.

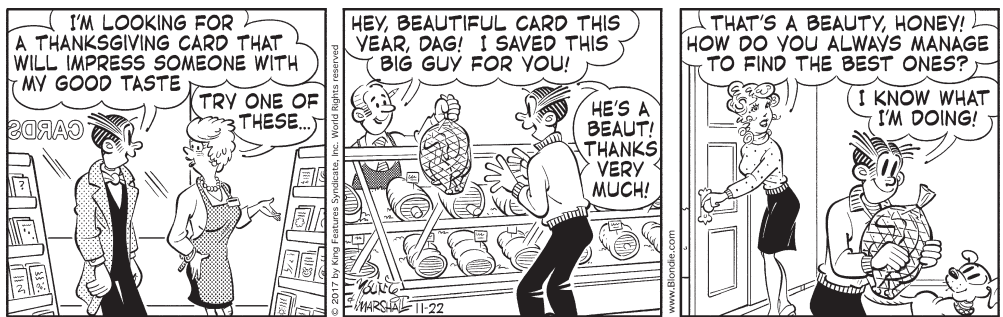
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** The events of the day will really capture your imagination and time-released inspiration. You'll especially love finding out how other people do things different from your way.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 23).** More than any other factor, pacing will determine your success this year. Take things at the speed you can best control, and seek people who are moving similarly on this highway of life. You've outstanding good fortune in business at the start of 2018. Midyear will bring the lifestyle enhancements you crave. Cancer and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 28, 47, 20, 33 and 10.

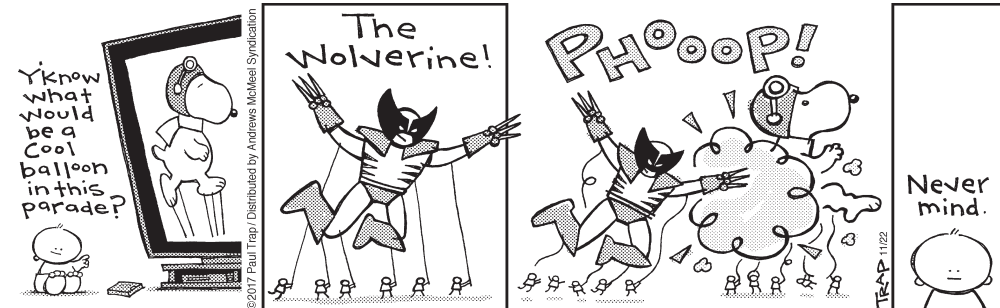
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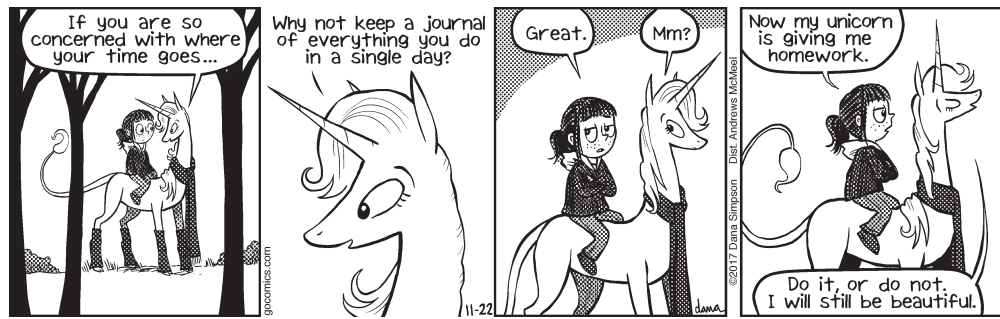
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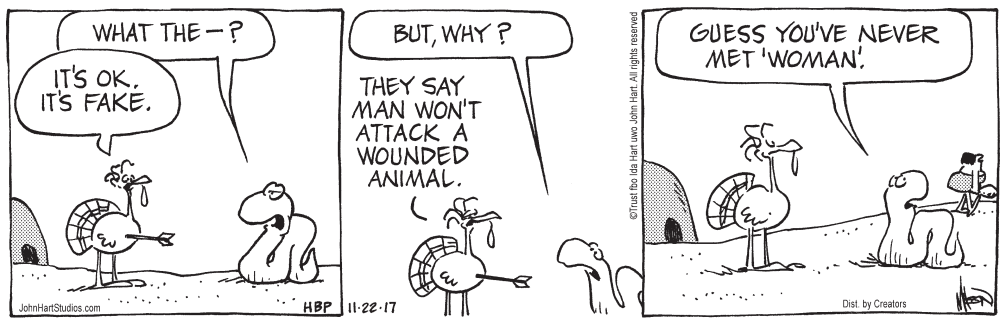
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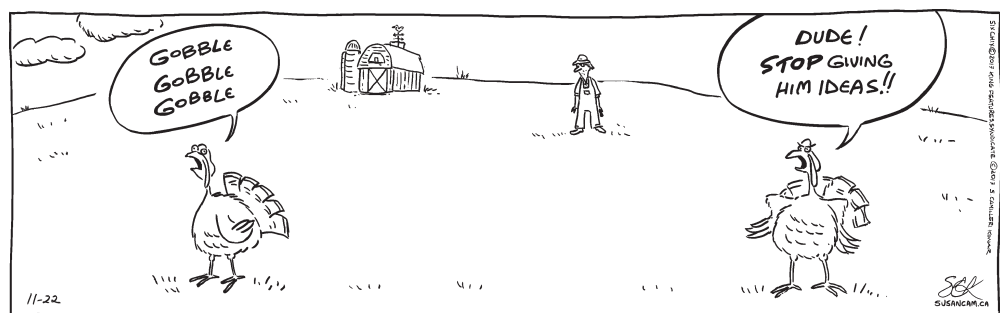
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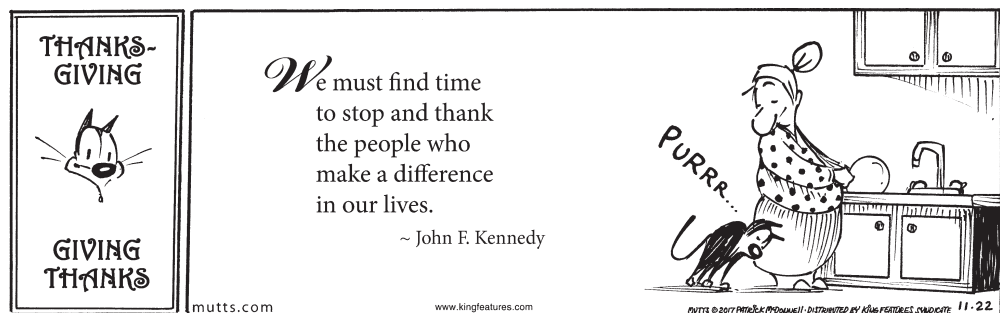
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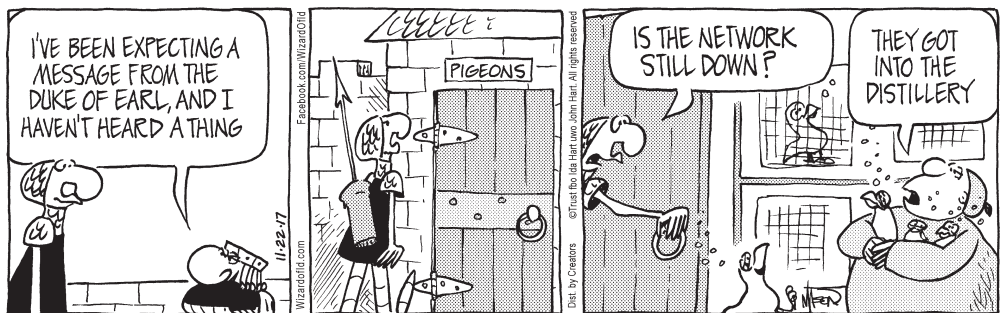
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## ROSE IS ROSE

