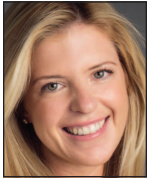


Does mother know best?

Dear Annie: A few months ago, my mom came to visit from out of state. We've always had a strained relationship and never seen eye to eye. While she was here, she made a big deal about the fact that I wash my dishes with bristled brushes and not dishcloths. I explained that dishcloths harbor bacteria and that bristled brushes are more environmentally friendly than cloths and sponges (in my own opinion). She offered to go to the store to buy me some dishcloths. I explained that my limited supply was because of my personal wishes and not monetary reasons and that I would not use them if she bought them. So she didn't.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Fast-forward five months and my Christmas present in the mail includes dishcloths. I am very annoyed, as I feel she couldn't care less about my feelings and thinks she is right no matter what. It also feels like a jab. Should I let her know my feelings on the subject or let it slide? — *Mother Doesn't Always Know Best*

Dear MDAKB: Bristled brushes are the most hygienic

choice. They dry quickly and are easy to clean. So you're right. But that's beside the point.

Your mother will always think she knows best. I could tell you to talk to her and explain why the gesture seemed patronizing and hurt your feelings, but realistically, she's probably going to keep "sending you dishcloths" in one form or another for the rest of her life. All you can change is how you receive them. Rather than wring every passive-aggressive meaning from the gift, accept it at face value and say thank you.

Dear Annie: I'm writing about a situation in the medical field. It's about the long hours expected of nurses.

It's a fact that when a nursing replacement doesn't report to work, the person who has just worked an eight-hour shift is required to stay. Additionally, a nurse must request a vacation well in advance, and even though it is supposedly guaranteed, the vacation can be canceled at the last minute. There is no concern that the employee must cancel reser-

vations, cancel flights and lose deposit money.

I am concerned for the well-being of dedicated nurses and for the future of nursing. Who would want to work where these conditions seem to be the norm? I'm concerned for patients. Nurses who would normally be friendly, compassionate and caring can become tired and grouchy. Everyone needs some down time, especially people who work at such an important job. — *Worried in Wisconsin*

Dear Worried: I agree. Nurses work hard, long hours, in a role that is physically and emotionally draining. Countless studies have shown the adverse effects that fatigue has on nurses' health and job performance. In pursuit of better hours and conditions, many nurses have chosen to unionize. Though this might not be for everyone, it's worth considering. A Nurse.org article titled "Should I Join A Nurses Union? Pros And Cons" is a good primer, though I encourage everyone to do independent research.

Additionally, the American Nurses Association (<http://nursingworld.org>) offers fact sheets about staying healthy as a nurse.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your social life is a series of concentric circles. The rules are different depending on which strata you're dealing in. To act intimately with the outer ring or respectfully distant with the inner ring is a breach of unspoken contract.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You like people, but you don't cling. You're confident that you can find kinship with any number of people in the world. You'll wait for a love that's intriguing. For you, curiosity is a key component in attraction.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're a naturally hospitable person, so you can't fully enjoy yourself unless you know that everyone is having a good time. Your generosity in this regard won't drain you; instead it will actually renew your energy.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Account for what is going right for you: So much is that this will be a very long list. Your focus on the positive will reduce your worries. Your lighter, more joyful heart will attract the same.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Two people make the same mistake. One agonizes over it for ages; the other ponders what happened just long enough to decide what the takeaway is then moves on to new mistakes. Be like the second person.

VRIGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You have the chance to work behind the scenes. Is that really where you can do the most good? What if you put yourself front and center instead? You're in fine form and have something unique to contribute.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's inside you now — that impish urge to upset the applecart. You know better, and you won't make

a move, but everyone will find the daring gleam in your eye very intriguing.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You don't preserve your self-esteem by doing things perfectly. Self-esteem is built through realizing that even when you make mistakes you're still awesome and worthy of your own love and the love of others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Everyone needs help from time to time, but even if you don't really need it, you should ask for it anyway. Because people need to give you help. And the help they give makes them like and understand you better.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). How much do you want to accomplish? With little on your plate, you'll work slowly, take detours and just barely meet your deadline. With lots on your plate you'll work quickly, take shortcuts and just barely meet your deadline.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). What stops people from having fun together is an entire story in their heads about how it should go — a story based on their assumptions about each other and not based on getting to know who is really there.

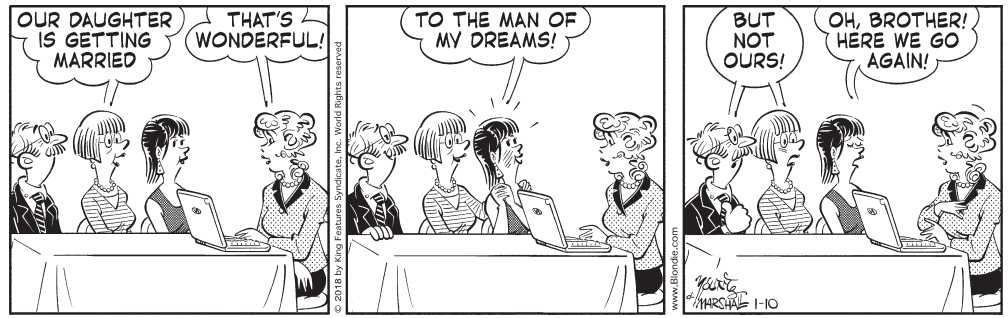
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There's an art to making mistakes well. The weak way is to pass the blame. The strong way is to think in terms of cause and effect instead and then just figure out how to fix things.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 11). You've much to share and the right people to share it with, too. But you have to vet them to make sure. People should prove themselves over time before you let them get close to you. Libra and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 40, 22, 12 and 36.

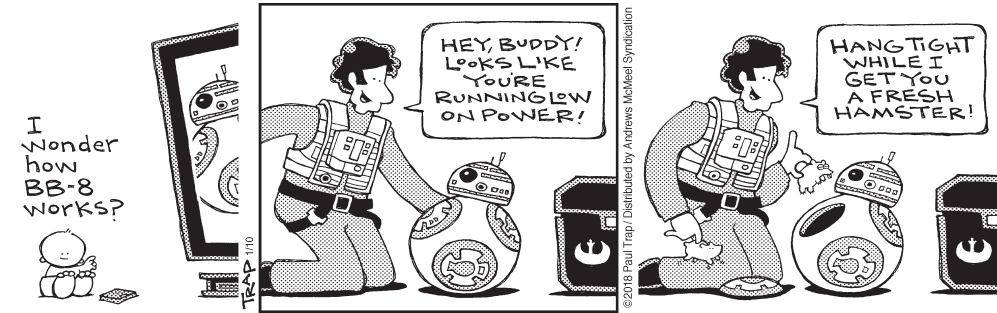
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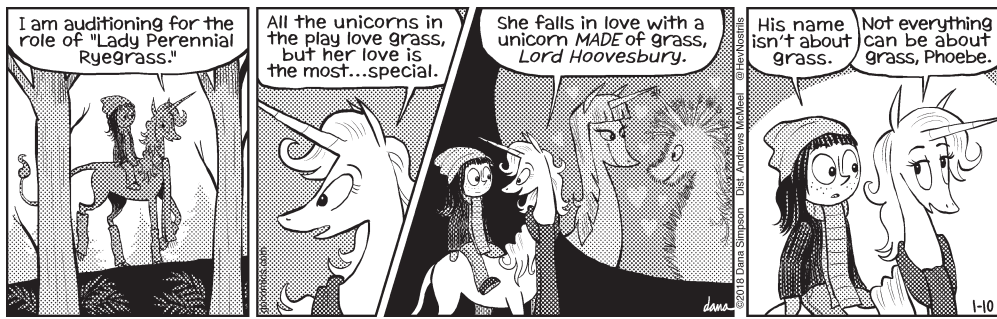
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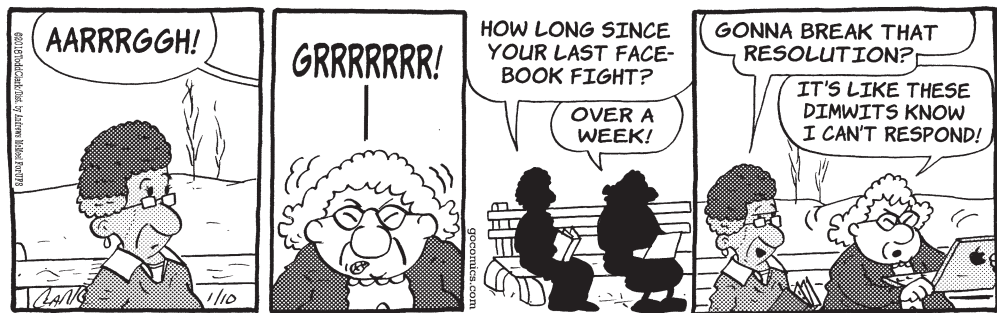
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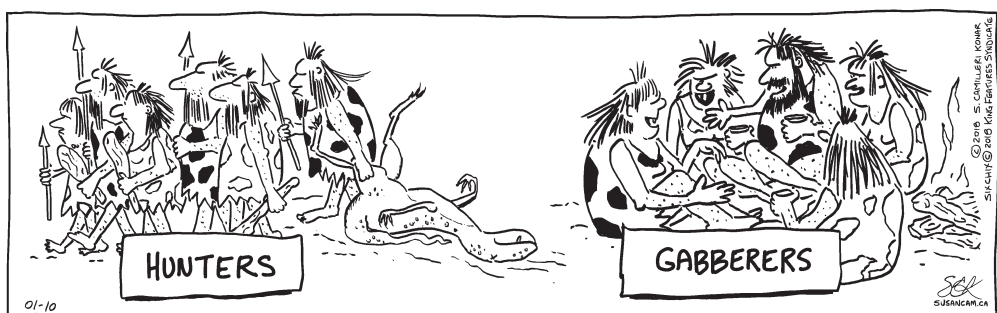
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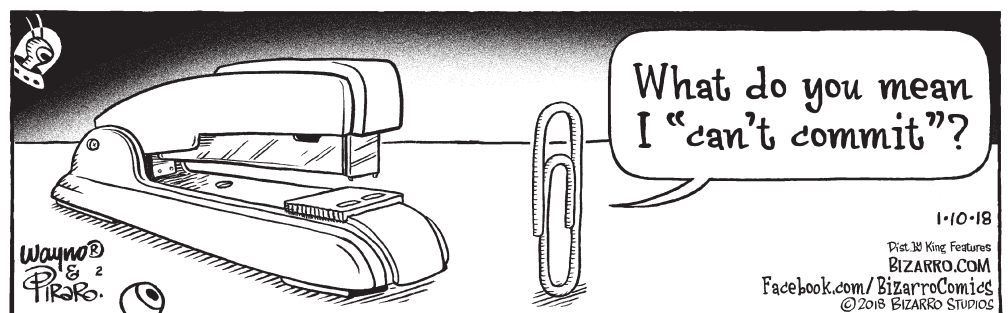
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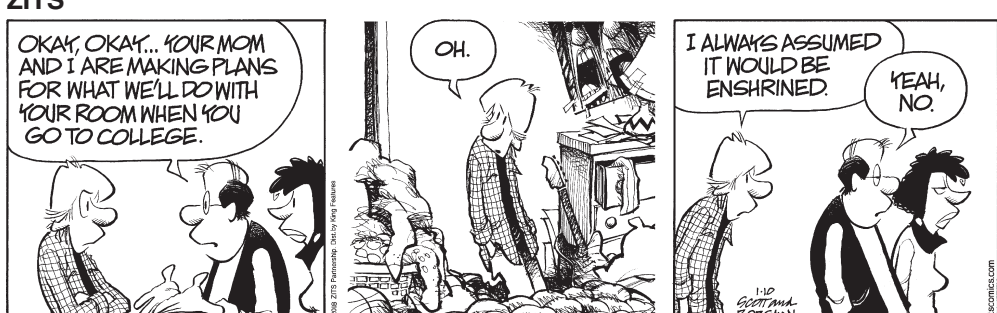
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