

Daughter is draining mom dry

Dear Annie: I'm a 69-year-old retired widow living on a fixed income. I'm paying monthly on a loan to get some repairs done to my home. My problem is my daughter and son-in-law. They both have health problems, my daughter especially. He gets Social Security disability and Medicare. My daughter has applied for Social Security disability and has been turned down. She has no health insurance at all. They are in deep financial debt. They live off his Social Security check, which isn't much. He does pay the mortgage on their home and a few other important bills, but he is a hoarder and buys things he doesn't need.

When they come to visit me, they just have enough money to get them up here and spend some while they are here. When they get ready to leave, they always ask me for money to get them home. I keep telling them that when they come up here, they need to have enough money for all expenses till they

get back home. I've also sent money to my daughter several times so she can get her prescriptions filled if she is sick. I've told her it should not be my responsibility to do that. But if I don't, she can't get the much-needed meds.

How do I tell them — and really get it through to them — that they need to take responsibility for having enough money without hurting my daughter's feelings and without causing my son-in-law to lose his temper? I'm being taken advantage of, and I'm tired of it. — *Wrung Dry*

Dear Wrung Dry: There comes a time in your life when you have to stop crossing oceans for people who won't jump puddles for you. Sit down and have a frank conversation with your daughter and son-in-law. Let them know you can no longer give them money but you can give them advice. Perhaps encourage your daughter to file an appeal to have her application accepted for Social Security disability benefits, and

implore your son-in-law to seek help for his compulsive hoarding. Whatever they decide to do, it's not your burden to bear.

Dear Annie: I liked your response to "Snubbed in the South," who was disappointed her boyfriend didn't get her a gift. This year, I was saddened to hear from a few of my female friends that their husbands failed to get them Christmas gifts. I have been married for 38 years now. My husband likes to show he loves me by doing things for me — but birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas are special times.

Early on in our marriage, I told him that when it came to Christmas, what I needed was something sparkly, something that smelled good and something soft. After that talk, he had a clear sense of how to please me, and he felt happier, too. — *Sunny in Sarasota*

Dear Sunny: Some people are resistant to the idea of plainly telling a partner their needs — but after hearing stories such as yours, you have to wonder why. Congratulations on 38 years of happy, communicative marriage.

DEAR ANNIE

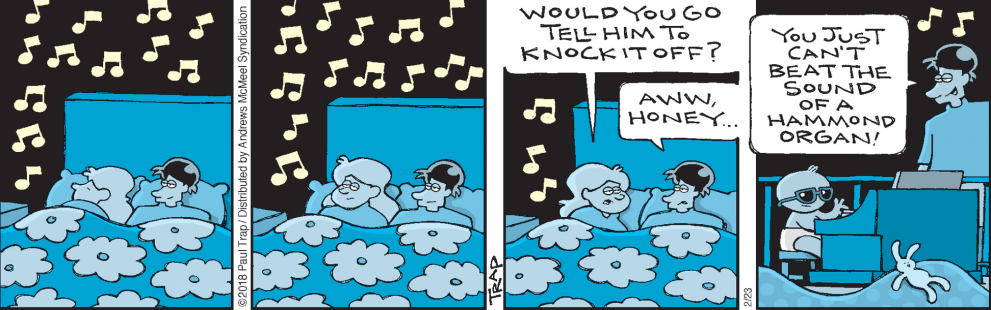


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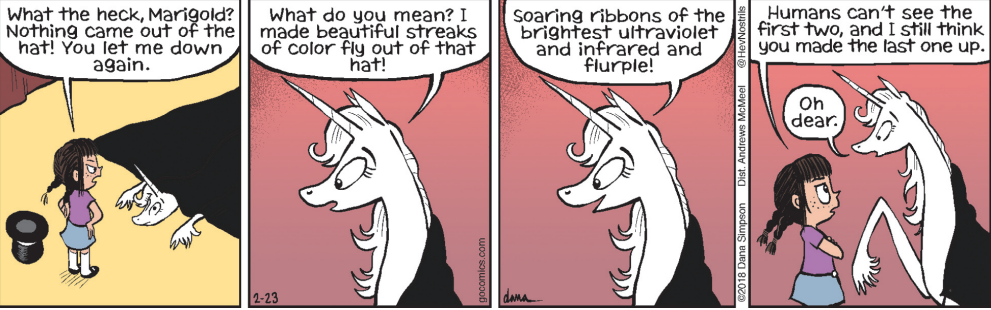
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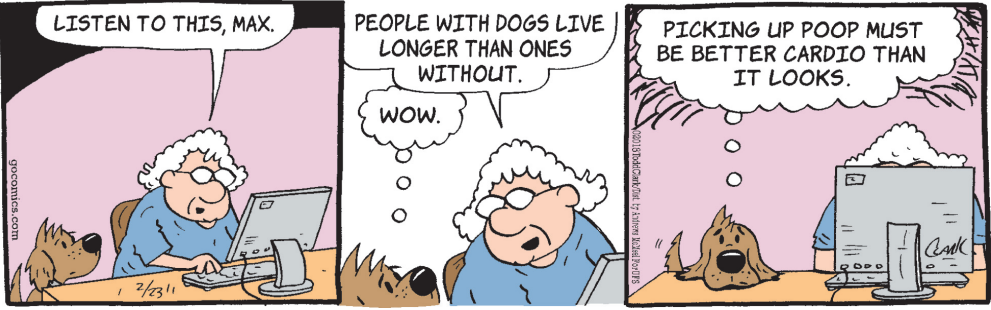
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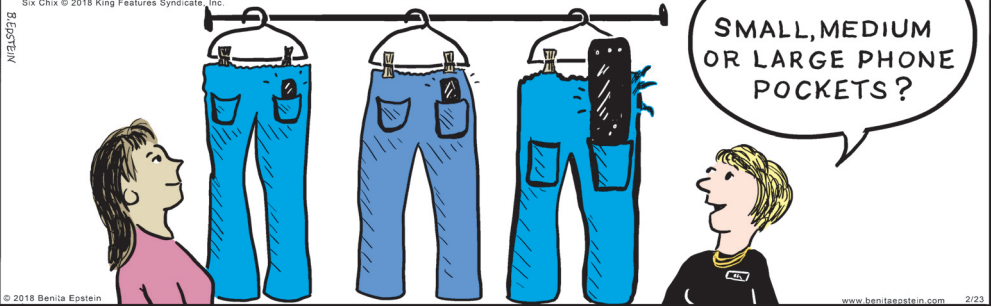
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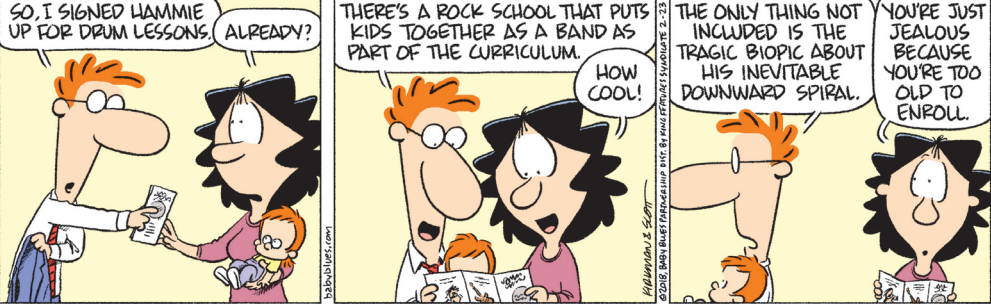
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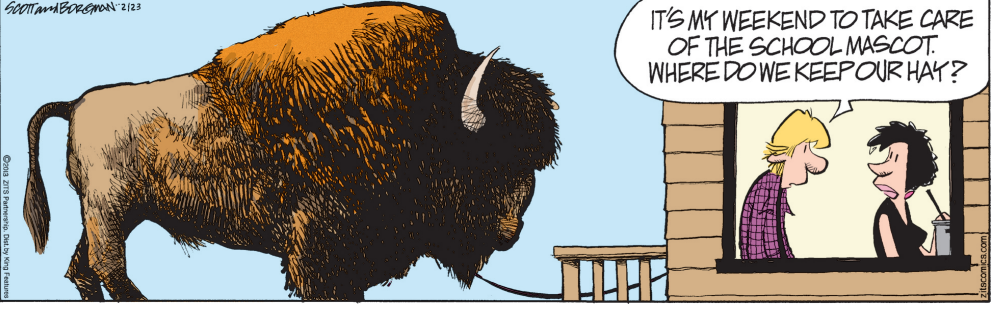
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BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). People do not stay interested in the same thing forever. Interests change on scale with personal growth. When your interests change rapidly, it's not that you're flaky — you're just growing quickly into someone new.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). While it's possible to love someone with whom you have little in common, that love will have a limited means of expression compared with the many ways love is expressed between people with more common ground.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). A secret talent is like an illicit love affair, occupying a dream space outside of place and time, not fitting into normal life. But sooner or later, the passion must integrate into daily living or it will fade away completely.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). People are not standards. They are not behaviors. They are flexible beings who can show up in many different ways. Much will depend on what you expect of them.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You were not adequately supported or tended to. So you worked harder, developed yourself further ... and came to a realization. They are never coming around. It's not you; it's them. You can live with it or seek different elsewhere.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Faces diverted into glowing screens — a very uncharismatic look. Unnecessary phone usage is such a turnoff to you that a person's screen addiction could be relationship deal breaker.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). An informational tidbit has the potential to set you spinning down a winding road for hours. Try to stick to your original intent. Tonight, your connection with a water sign (Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces) will refresh your soul.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll jump into a project in the manner of the Looney Tunes cartoon character Tasmanian Devil. In your tornado whirl, obstacles will be uprooted, and they never even saw you coming.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). With so many distractions of late, taking back the control of your time will feel terrific. Though you feel there's not a moment to waste on the mundane, some of it is more crucial to the big picture than it would seem.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). If you don't make your work important, they won't either. It's about time to up the ante. This could mean asking for more attention, responsibility or money. It could mean claiming a higher rank or a better role.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). It's not fair that you were born with so much social intelligence at your disposal you don't even see it as being a talent. It is. And people need your help. All you have to do is show up — suddenly, it's a whole lot better.

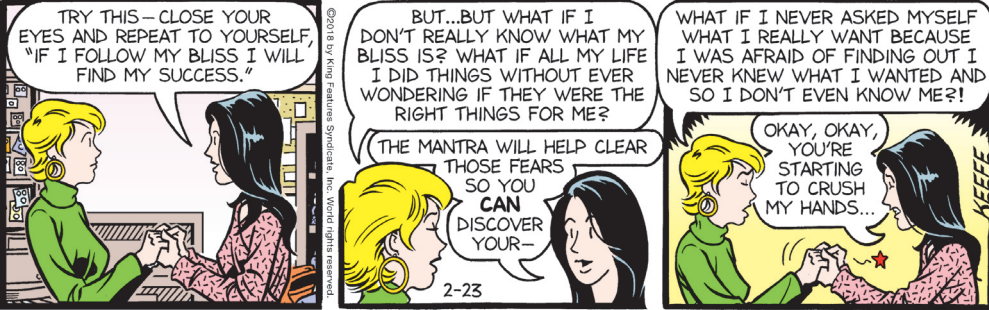
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There are benefits to low self-esteem and benefits to high self-esteem. The most advantageous belief to hold about yourself is a flexible one that allows you to settle into the role and attitude that best serves all.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (FEB. 24). The year brings a quickening — you feel somehow more alive. The next three months bring ideas to invigorate your body and animate your life. There's a turn of power at work. The start of summer presents a choice that will affect domestic life. There's no wrong way, but life will be very different with each option. Aries and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 7, 44, 29 and 15.

BLONDIE



SALLY FORTH



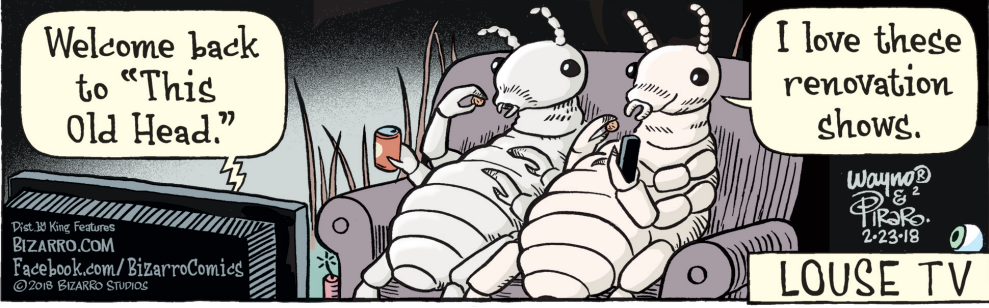
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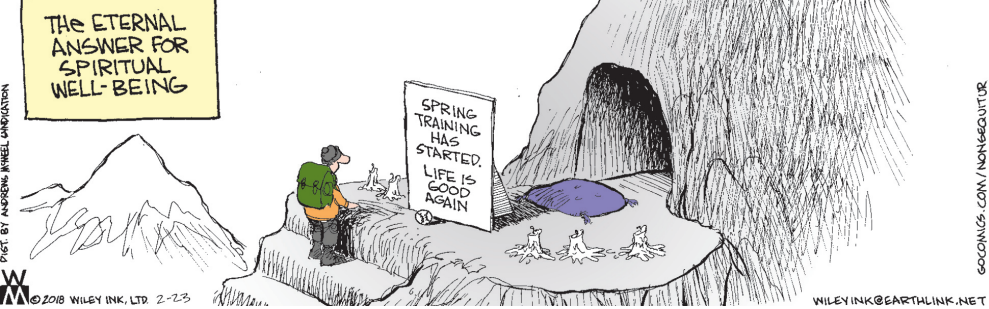
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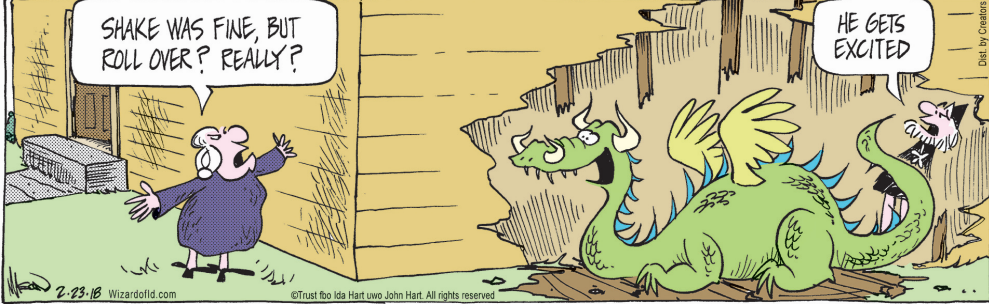
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NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

