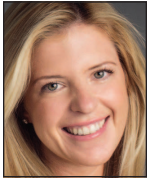


# Traumatic past remains

**Dear Annie:** I want to tell you my story. My father was an alcoholic wife-beater. My crib was in a corner of my parents' bedroom, and I have a vivid memory of him beating her as I stood in my crib crying in terror. He turned to me and warned that if I didn't shut up, I would get some of the same. I sobbed myself to sleep without anyone to comfort or reassure me.

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

Later, when I was a preteen, my mother and elder sister worked, so during the summer, I was left alone at home. I became afraid of being alone at home and confided my fear to my mother, hoping for reassurance. Instead, her misguided attempt to do so was to say, "But who would possibly need you?" That left me feeling worthless and unloved.

To escape, I married too early and unwisely. Predictably, because I was incapable of a good relationship, my husband abandoned me after years of a troubled marriage. And today, my sister — still suffering from sibling rivalry, even though our parents are long gone — is unsympathetic and tells me

to "get over it." I keep to myself and tell no one of my terrible childhood and unhappy life because I don't believe that anyone would understand or sympathize. Because I present a normal face to the world, I'm sure people would be surprised to learn how traumatic my childhood was.

I write this letter in the hope that my sad story will inspire your readers to be kind to everyone they meet in life because an individual's heavy burden, like mine, may not be obvious. A little kindness, a warm gesture or even a smile might go a long way toward making an unhappy person's day. — *My Sad Story*

**Dear Sad Story:** In the words of Joan Didion, "We tell ourselves stories in order to live." Stories help us make sense of a senseless world, of the hurt and heartache that seem to come at random. But sometimes stories can stop us from really living, and in this case, it sounds as though your fixation on the story of your past is keeping you from a brighter future. Witnessing your father abus-

ing your mother when you were just a baby must have been awful, and I don't mean to discount that trauma. If you want to work through that, pick up the phone and make a therapy appointment today. Or try BetterHelp or Talkspace, online therapy tools. Also, rather than assume your sister is speaking out of sibling rivalry when she tells you to "get over it," consider that she may be speaking from love, in her own way. Even if she isn't, you won't be worse off for choosing to assume the best.

Once you embrace the fact that you are the author of your own destiny, you might just surprise yourself with some wonderful plot twists.

**Dear Annie:** Seeing as you have a wide audience, would you please pass this along to the folks who put the recycling number on their packages: Would you please make the numbers big enough to read without having to use a magnifying glass? — *Avid Jacksonville, Fla., Recycler*

**Dear Avid Jacksonville Recycler:** Your best bet in the meantime might be to try to memorize — or keep a list handy of — what types of materials can and can't be recycled.

## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** One thing leads to another. If you want to change the "another" your best bet is to start with the "one thing." And if you don't know the source off the top of your head, this is a fine time to retrace your steps.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Working together with another for a common goal will produce a bond, but it's not as strong as the connection you make when you team up with people who share your values and principles.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Avoid casting a wide net in hopes of dragging back in something or someone that can help you. Be strategic instead. What's your ideal scenario? Work backward from that idea.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** You'll have the courage to speak your mind. That's a non-issue. But is it right to do so? You'll be wondering how far you should go with the truth. If being honest is going to wound someone, is it really necessary?

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Cats will turn anything into a toy: a feather, some fluff, the sock... Play is a mood, and when it hits as strongly as it will today, the whole world becomes a toy store.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** You'll do well to think in terms of relationships instead of transactions. Transactions happen when people carry out their roles. But no one is a role. Everyone is a person, playing a role. Relationships transcend roles.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Not only is it very rare to succeed on the first try but also today it would be unlucky to do so. It's far luckier to make lots of mistakes all along so that you may experience the entire learning curve and

duplicate the success later.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Meaning is subjective. So there's no need to go searching for it, or expect to stumble upon it. It's something that each person must create, determine and assign.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You don't have to ask people what they value, because you can tell by what they talk about and how. Also, there's no reason to try to hide your idiosyncrasies, as they will only help you learn more about people.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** There are two futures, the one you make and the one you don't. Today you'll spend energy on both, combing through to make sure you're ultimately claiming the right one.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** It's not what you say but how you say it that will matter. Choosing the right words does help, and it's much easier to do this when you have the intention of helping the other person.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** How can it be true that happiness is always in the present moment? You'll time travel through your memory and your projections of the future, and there's happiness to be mined in both places.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (April 10).** You'll enjoy a life of moderation for the next six weeks. Then the intensity turns up in one area of your life. You'll specialize your focus and be celebrated (and compensated) for the remarkable skill you hone through the rest of this solar return. Conversation sparks an adventure in August. October brings a commitment. Taurus and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 1, 13, 33, 40 and 18.

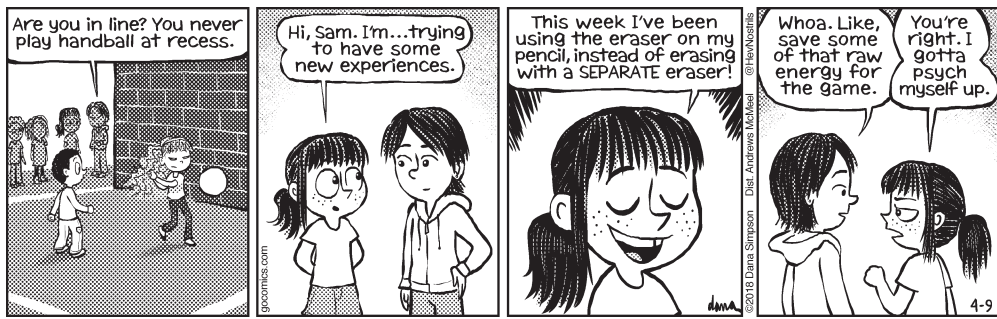
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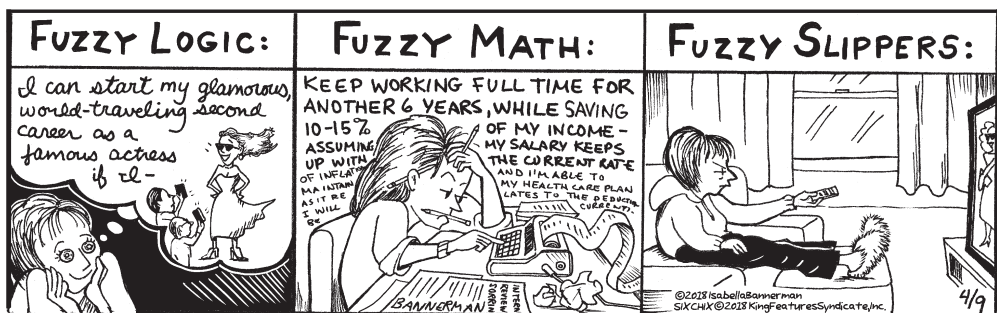
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## LOLA



## SIX CHIX



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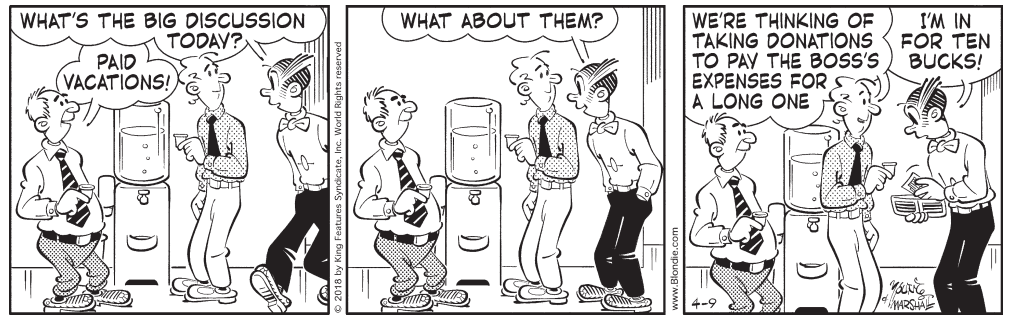
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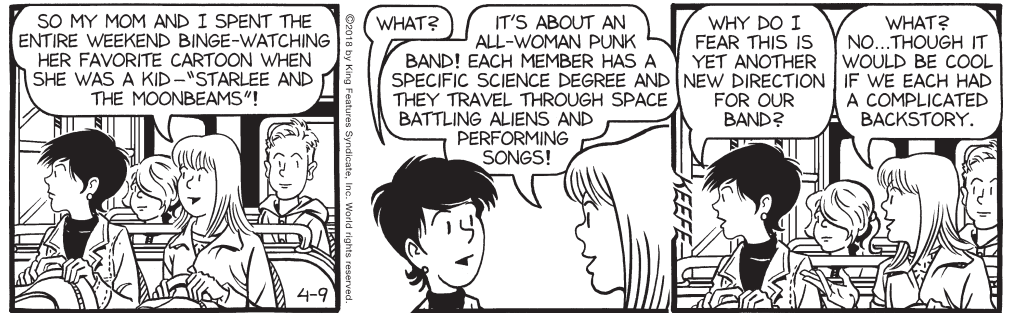
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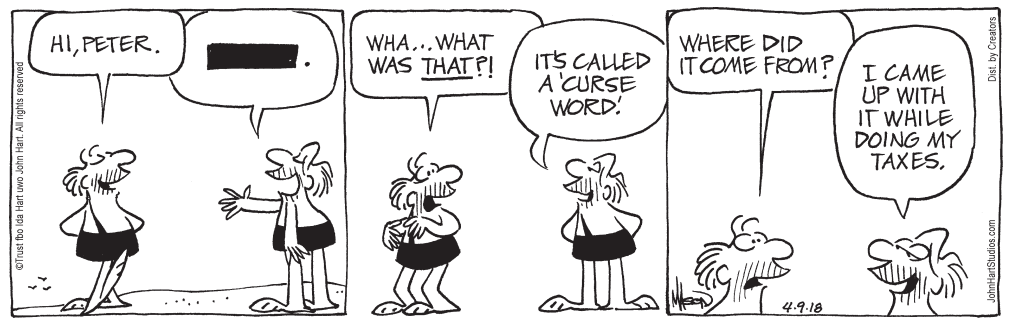
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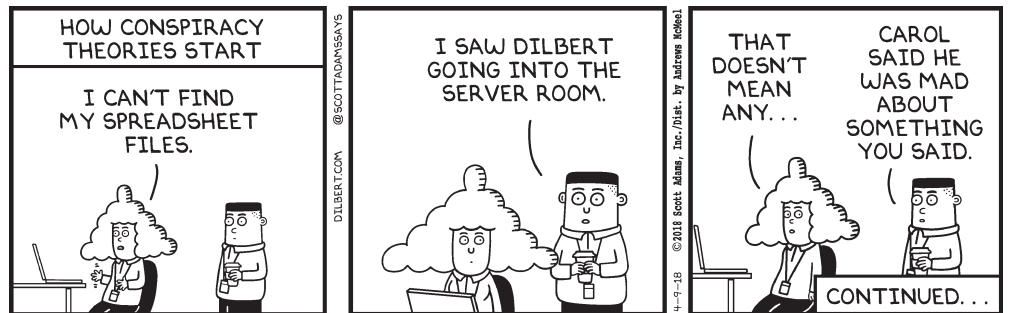
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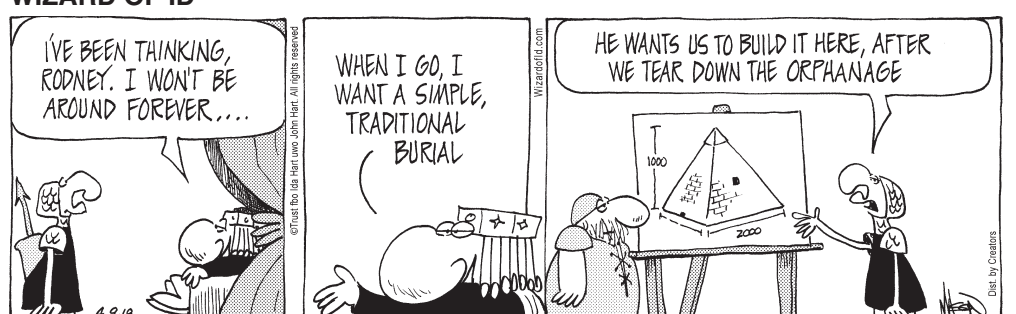
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## ROSE IS ROSE

