

Just let me pay you back

Dear Annie: We know an elderly couple who are on a very low income, and we have helped them a lot. Not long ago, their car needed to be fixed, and my husband paid the garage and gave the mechanic a tip. We did this not expecting repayment. Well, the woman has gotten angry at us for not letting her repay us, which she cannot afford to do. It honestly wasn't that much. No amount of polite refusal helps. Now she pretty much doesn't talk to us. Were we wrong? — *Able to Be Generous Paying It Forward*

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

Dear Able to Be Generous: For some people, pride is more important than money. You should allow this lion and lioness to repay you and not try to push your own wishes onto them. It was very kind of you to pay for their car; now be kind to them and respect their wishes. Just tell her that you really value her friendship.

There are many charities that help hundreds of thou-

sands of people. Maybe you could volunteer your resources to one that you care about.

Dear Readers: I received a lot of mail in response to "Over It," who was tired of his girlfriend's brother tagging along. Here are a few letters that stuck out.

Dear Annie: People with Asperger's syndrome often have difficulty with social cues and social interactions. I know because my 23-year-old son has Asperger's. He is currently in graduate school and is doing well, but he

has great difficulty in social situations. He does not know how to initiate conversations, especially with strangers. He cannot read body language and has difficulty recognizing humor. These are just a few aspects of the manifestation of this disorder in him. Others have different symptoms, which vary in degree. The point is, given an Asperger's diagnosis, the brother may not recognize that he is a third wheel and may not have the

tools in his toolbox to understand when "Over It" would prefer to be without his company. Learning more about the disorder and its manifestations could help "Over It" gain compassion and understanding for this man, who could someday be a brother-in-law. — *Proud Mom*

Dear Proud Mom: I definitely agree that the onus is on "Over It" to become more informed and more tolerant. Here's a letter from another woman who has a son with Asperger's.

Dear Annie: After reading the letter from "Over It," I just had to express my anger at his referring to his girlfriend's brother as a "moron." Shame on him! Asperger's is a learning disability. You were correct in telling this man to move on so this woman can find someone who has a bigger heart and is accepting of people who are different. — *Mom of a Loving Son With Asperger's*

Dear Mom of a Loving Son With Asperger's: Thanks for writing. You're right. "Over It" needs to get over his prejudices.

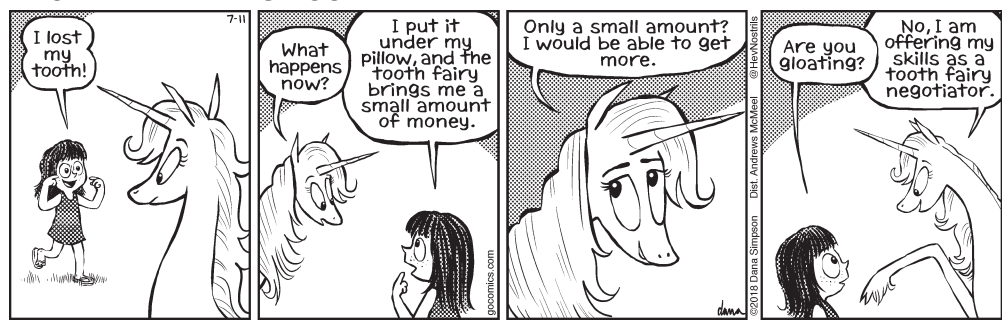
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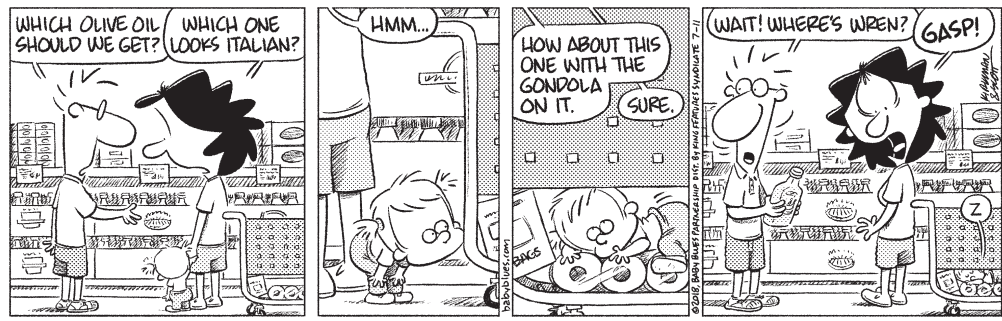
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TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your love is a rare and beautiful gift best invested where it can be appreciated. If you're not getting feedback that you're appreciated, then you're probably not. You deserve better! Go find it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If you got into love a little deeper than was good for you, you have it in you to save your own heart like a hero. Of course, it's a lot easier just to choose the right people upfront — people who can love you back and just as hard.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). People on the offense will make moves to defend themselves, and this creates conflict. So if you want to avoid conflict, refrain from threatening people's beliefs, possessions or position.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). In order for something to make you happy, you must really feel as though you've earned it. When you're putting in the quality attention and work, even the tiniest things can bring you a great sense of accomplishment and elation.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You love your friends and family, but the most satisfying relationships featured today will be with mere acquaintance. When people barely known to you do kind things, it restores your trust in the good of humanity.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). A deeper look into your possessions will reveal what you have, what you thought you'd lost and what you'd totally forgotten about. It will also help you avoid making unnecessary purchases in the future.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). "Taking stock" is a term used by merchants accounting for their wares to track what's available, what's been sold, ordered, broken or stolen. Take stock of current resources, material and immaterial;

you'll soon reopen "shop."

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). For whatever reason, others seem fine with all that's going on. But everyone is different. Suddenly you'll feel creative. This is a response to discomfort — your way of trying to cope or adapt to conditions that don't naturally suit you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Do people really belong to each other? It depends on whom you ask. This will be the question at the heart of the action: To what extent do and/or should you allow yourself to be controlled by others?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You'll combat difficult people with tolerance, acceptance and love. You'll win with this approach, not a trophy or a monetary award but something more valuable: peace and self-respect.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You like people, but you also thrive on solitude. Lately, you haven't had enough tranquility to do the deep thinking that connects you with the most intelligent and creative parts of yourself. Arrange for it!

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Follow instructions and you'll be a hit with the boss. Whether the "boss" in this instance is a friend, a partner or your actual boss, deference to authority is a skill that will serve the whole team well today.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (July 12). The Chinese word "guanxi" describes a network of trusting relationships essential to conducting business. This year, such a network will bring happiness and prosperity to you. You'll develop a system of measuring goodwill. Those who learn your ways and earn your trust will get your business, your love or both. Sagittarius and Aquarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 20, 4, 16 and 23.

BLONDIE



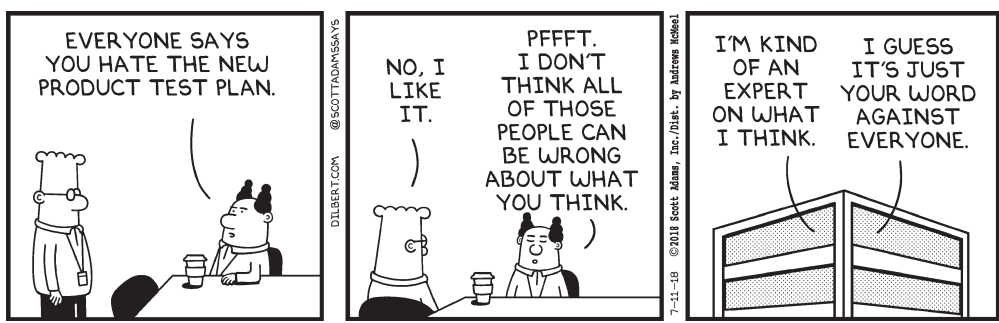
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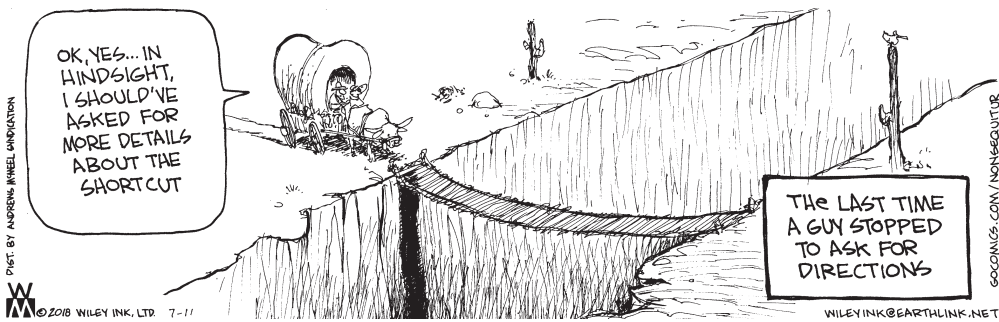
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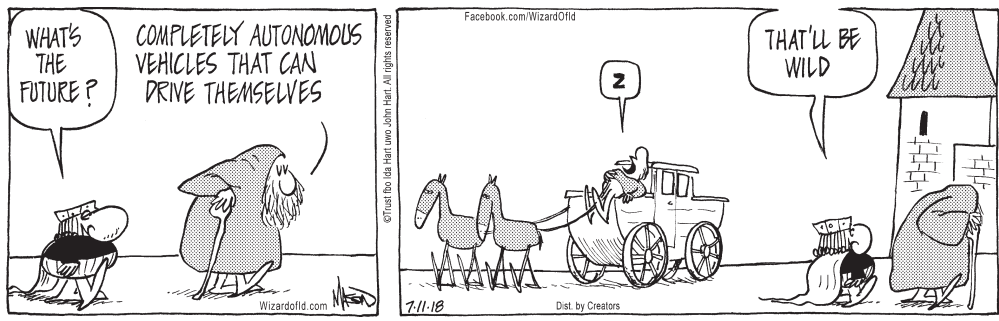
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ROSE IS ROSE

