

# Mom exhibits gross habits

**Dear Annie:** My mother is 82 years old. I love her greatly and know I'm lucky to still have her in my life. All my siblings live out of state, so my husband and I have Mom to our house for dinner and games once a week, which we all enjoy. There's an issue, however, with which I need your help.

**DEAR ANNIE**



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

Mom seems to have lost her sense of appropriate grooming habits in front of others. For one, she picks at scabs all the time, although I've gently — and then more assertively — asked her not to. Every time I see her doing this, I ask her to wash her hands with soap, but she dismisses my requests.

Another issue is that she doesn't like denture adhesives, so she usually uses her finger to wipe out food that gets trapped in the gaps. Sometimes she'll use a fork to try to scrape things out, which is not much better. I've asked her to go to the bathroom (only 10 feet away), where she could remove her dentures and rinse them thoroughly, but she refuses.

I love her so dearly, and yes, I know she may have a compulsion, but I'm to the point where I don't think I can invite her for dinner anymore. She goes to the senior center for lunches during the week but doesn't cook, and we like to make sure she gets healthful food over the weekend. (We send leftovers home with her.)

These years together in the latter part of her life should be treasured, but I'm being robbed of them, and I feel both angry and guilty for not being able to tolerate her behavior.

She reads your column. Maybe you can get through to her and others about the inappropriateness of these things. Please remind us all of proper grooming habits for public and private places. — *Wish She'd Stop*

**Dear Wish She'd Stop:** As your mom ages, she may find it more challenging to complete simple tasks such as showering and brushing her teeth and hair. Very often, people in their 80s tire more easily or get cold

or hot sooner than the rest of us. If they have dementia, a multi-step task can feel overwhelming. What you are describing seems less like personal daily hygiene and more like completely inappropriate behavior that must be addressed. I'd suggest that you have her assessed for dementia. If this is new behavior, then it is pretty clear that she has some form of mental deterioration that is causing her to act so inappropriately at the dinner table.

**Dear Annie:** I am very disappointed with your advice to avoid doing business with friends. I am a real estate agent; would you advise me to never make any friends at all so that I am free to do business with anyone? How ridiculous of you to make such a statement. Half of my business has been with my friends over 15 years.

— *Disappointed*  
**Dear Disappointed:** You're right. Though I think it's an area into which people should proceed with caution, it's possible and sometimes very positive to do business with friends. That statement was a bit rash and over-generalizing. I'm printing your letter to correct the record.

## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** You'll say the words, take the actions, make the commitments that fix things, knowing full well that you could just as easily, with other words, actions and promises, blow them apart.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Methods for improvement come and go. So do styles of dress, food, entertainment ... Some of yesterday's "normal" now seems barbaric. With an eye to the future, something about your current life needs immediate change.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** You become part of whatever you're experiencing, and it becomes a part of you. It's a truth you'll feel today, and it just might change your mind and involvement with certain environments.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** It's good to be a little careful about what you say and how you present yourself, but if you're too careful it's uncomfortable for all. Trust that you're acceptable. Accept yourself and they will, too.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** The world is shifting before your eyes today. Someone you admire is a big part of this. You like how this person sees the world, and it changes your view, which changes what you choose to look at.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** You're charged with the responsibility of creating yourself, your happiness, the meaning you derive from life. It's a privilege, a pleasure and a lot. You're not always up for it. Rest will refresh you.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** You're attractive whether or not you want to be or try to be. This makes your life slightly complex. You'll be in a position to step lightly, dodge trouble and move quickly to avoid getting derailed from your goal.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Relationships

are always a risk. The risk is not that they will be bad; the risk is that they will be good. To leave a bad relationship is a rather obvious choice. A good relationship often brings both reward and limitation.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You feel like you know what you want, but don't be surprised if you get it and find out that it wasn't a good fit. Humans are notoriously bad at knowing what will make them happy. Continue the experiment, and have fun with it.

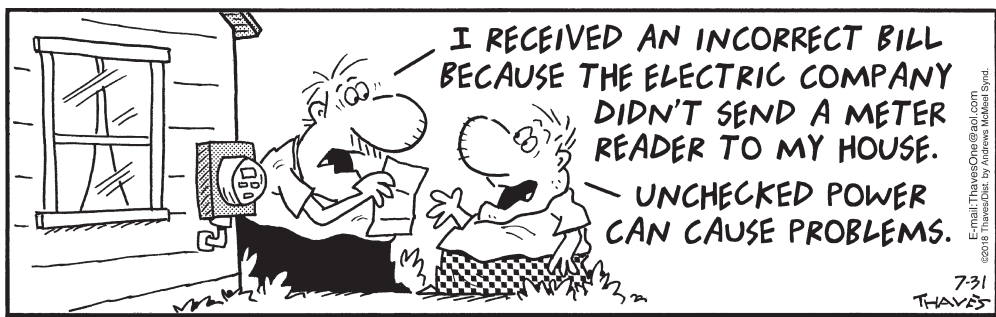
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** You make the plan and your crew will follow it. You'll get both credit and blame, and both are good. You make life interesting and memorable for those around you.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Your personal experience with a full range of human error coupled with the disappointment it has caused you will make it all the more difficult for you to believe the best in others, and yet you will. You are to be commended.

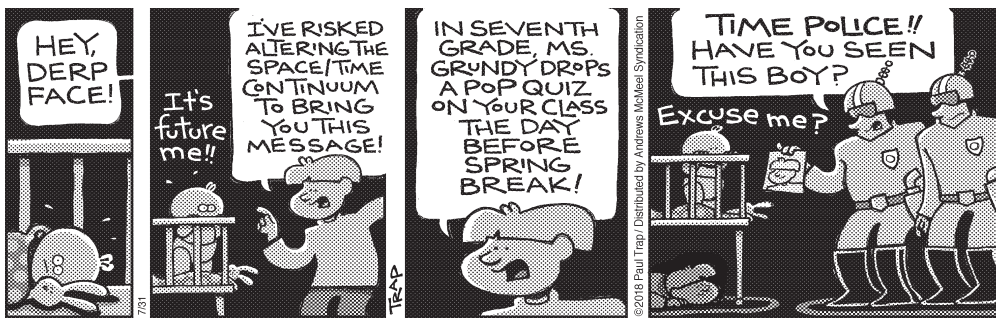
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** It has never been hard for you to understand that people in the general public matter. You may never see them again, and yet each is an important individual whom you pride yourself in treating with the utmost respect.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 1).** There's quite a history back there, and you'll put it to good use. You don't have to look backward to do this. Trust that you've already learned from it and you now have everything you need to build toward the idea you've created about what you're supposed to be and do next. Go make your vision real. You've got this. Libra and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 42, 10, 13 and 8.

### FRANK AND ERNEST



### THATABABY



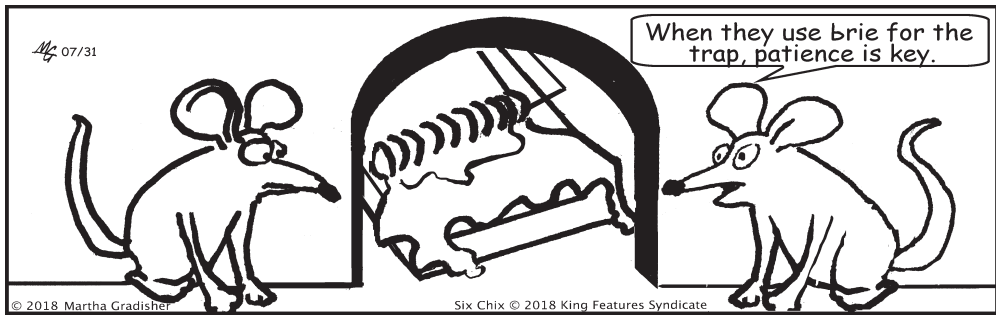
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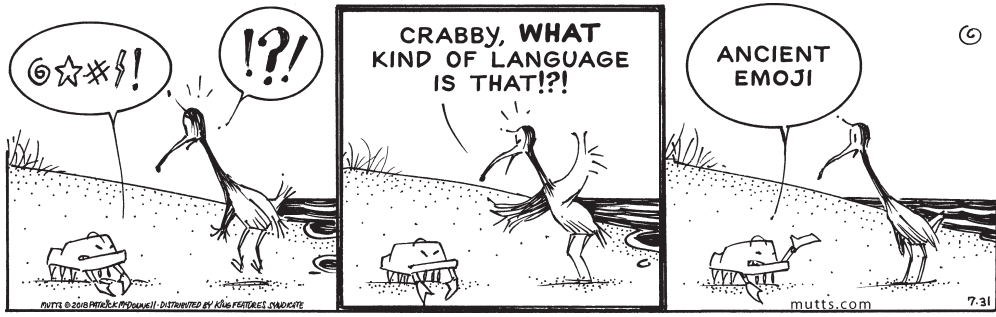
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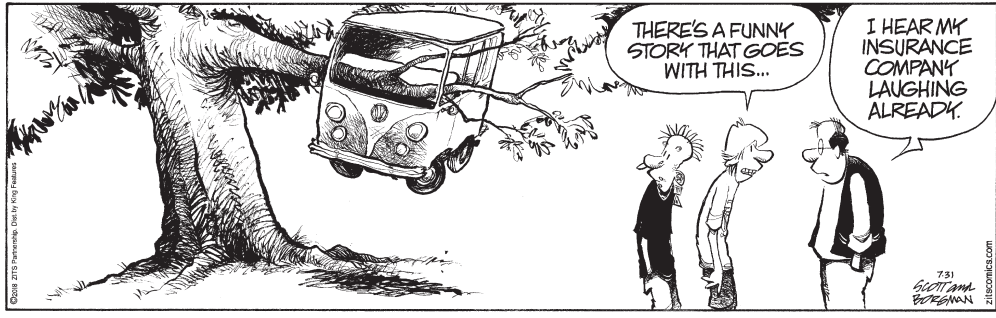
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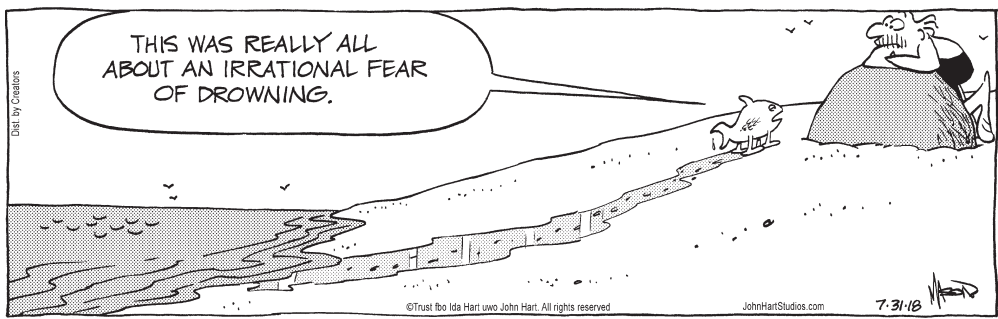
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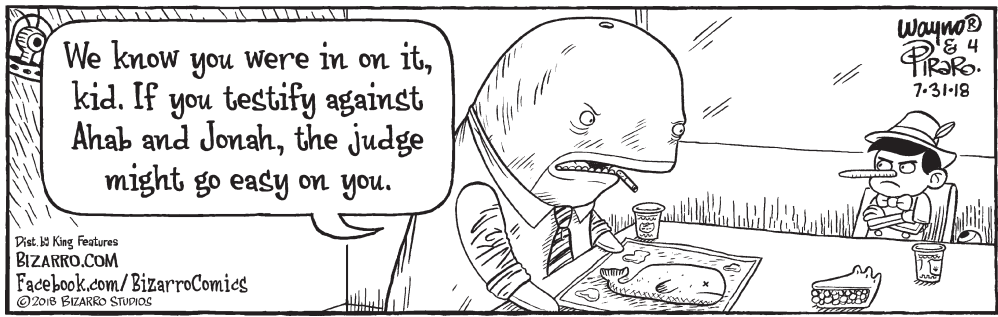
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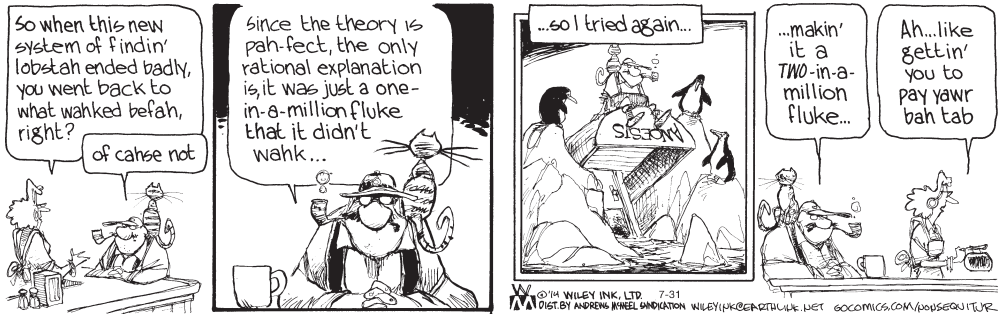
### DILBERT



### BIZARRO



### NON SEQUITUR



### WIZARD OF ID

