

Daughter turns ‘natural’

Dear Annie: My adult daughter recently visited from out of state, and she has developed some odd and off-putting habits. I really don't mean to judge her, but I'd also like to help her. At the same time, if I said anything, she might run a hundred miles in the opposite direction.

She has stopped showering every day. I'm not sure whether it's a "save the water" thing or what, but frankly, she smells like the zoo. No deodorant, either. Her clothes are dirty, as well. She has also dropped table manners. She frequently eats with her hands — says it's what they do in other countries. Her open mouth chews away as she talks, with bits of food spraying all over. She burps freely, and it's not a health/indigestion issue. Her body language says "relax," no matter what position she's in — slumped at the table, reclined on the couch, etc. I think she's trying to be as earthy as possible. Her husband is very similar, so at least they're not offending each other. — *Judgmental-ish Mom*

Dear Judgmental-ish Mom: It sounds as if your flower child

has taken on a whole new look and smell, and she wants you and everyone around her to notice it.

It is lovely that she has found a more relaxed state of living, but not at the expense of her own hygiene. The dirty clothing and lack of bathing will eventually catch up with her — perhaps in the form of a rash or sickness, and that would take away from her and her husband's "relaxed" state. Have an honest and open conversation with her. When you sit down to talk, try not to be critical of every little change she has made. Focus more on the behaviors that could affect her health and others around her.

A sudden lack of hygiene could be a sign of depression. Water your flower child with understanding and compassion and the conversation will go a lot better than it would if you put her down.

Dear Annie: I can't stop thinking about "Over This," who wrote about the alcoholic behavior in her family and its destructive effects. In addition to all the excellent resources you listed, please let her know that once she gets

the immediate issues resolved, establishes some degree of independence (which could help her mother in the long run) and joins a support group, she will need to seek out competent counseling to understand that she should not feel guilty for putting her well-being first.

Obviously, I speak from experience, although nothing like that of "Over This." My mother was a saint and protected and provided for us. I'm 69 now, and without counseling off and on throughout the years, my life might have been very different. But having it earlier would have been so much better. The most important point I want to convey is that "Over This" should learn there is nothing she can do to stop her mother's behavior except to not enable it — and I hope she gets counseling in whatever form she is comfortable with. I'll be thinking of her and her family. — *Glad She Wrote to You*

Dear Glad She Wrote: And I'm glad you wrote to me. Thank you for sharing your experience and testifying to the power of counseling. I'm so glad that you found the support you needed, and I hope "Over This" does, too.

DEAR ANNIE

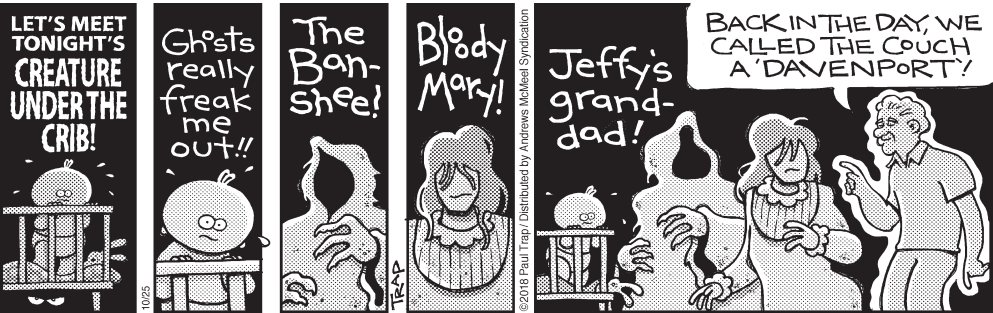


Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

FRANK AND ERNEST



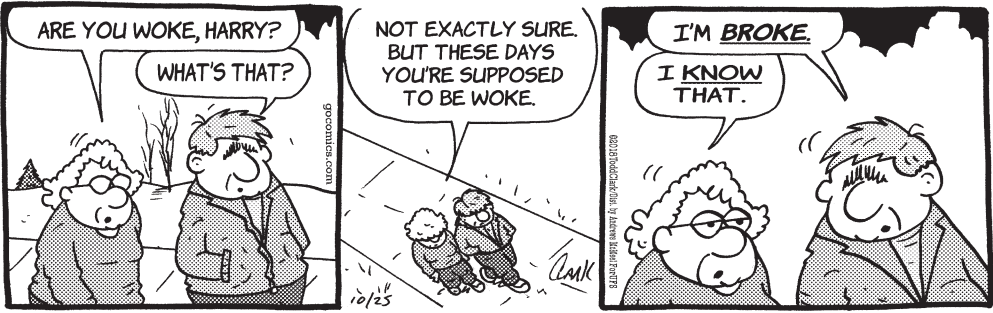
THATABABY



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



LOLA



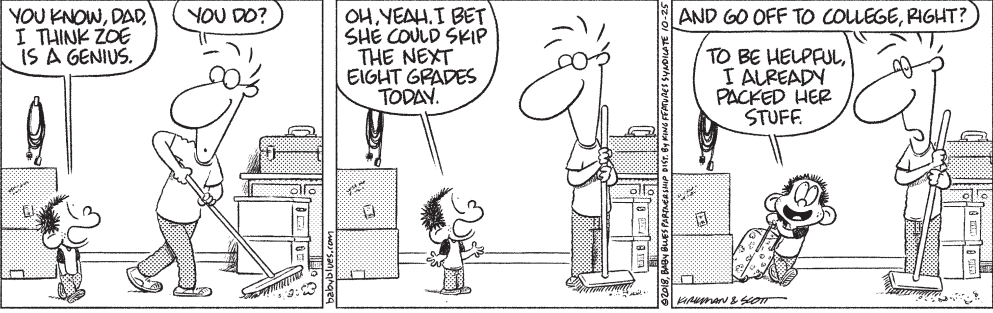
SIX CHIX



MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



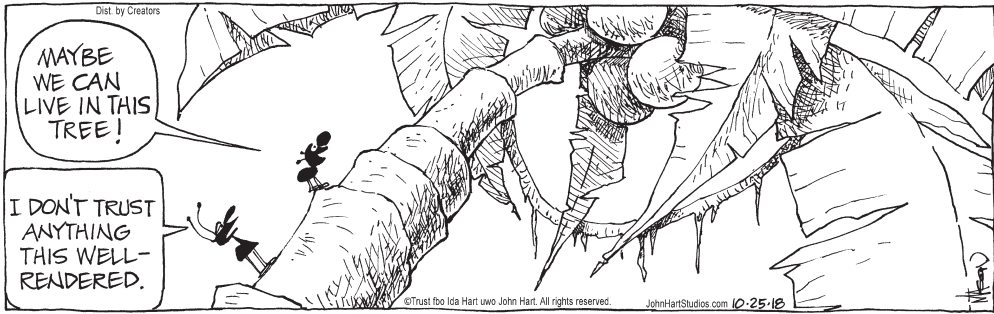
BLONDIE



SALLY FORTH



B.C.



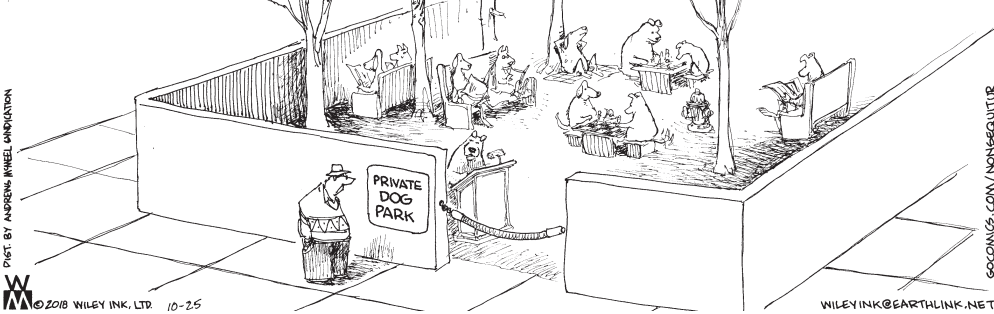
DILBERT



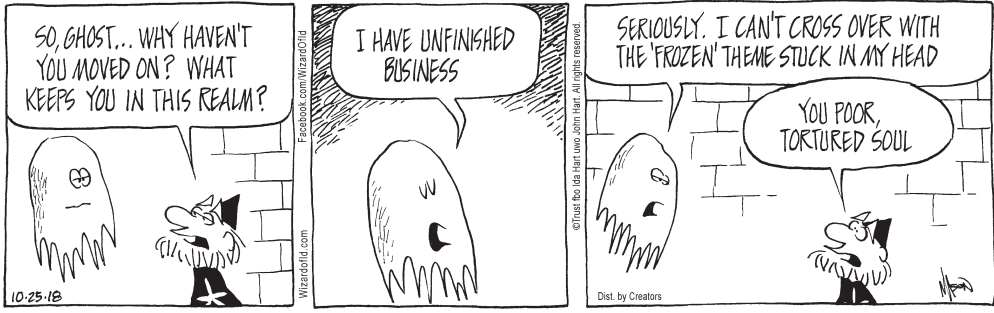
BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

