

A visit from old St. Nick

Dear Readers: To all of the children out there and all of the children young at heart, I wish you all a very merry Christmas.

“A Visit From St. Nicholas”

’Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,

In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,

While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;



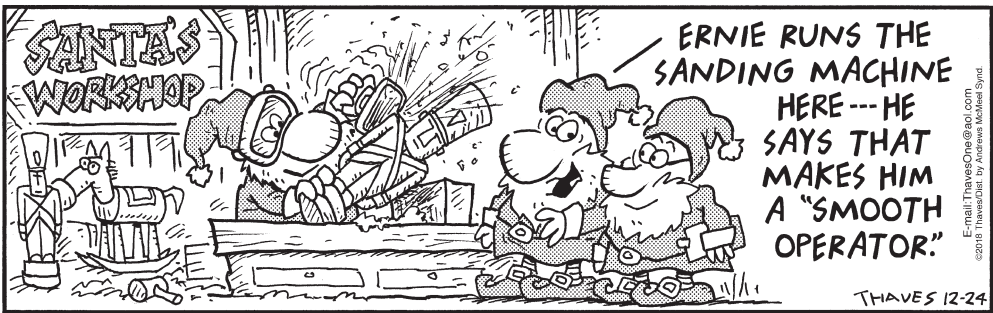
ANNIE LANE
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

And mamma in her ’kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter’s nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the luster of mid-day to objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,

I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his courses they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;
“Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!”
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;
So up to the house-top the courses they flew,
With the sleigh full of Toys, and St. Nicholas too.
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedlar just

opening his pack.
His eyes — how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night.”

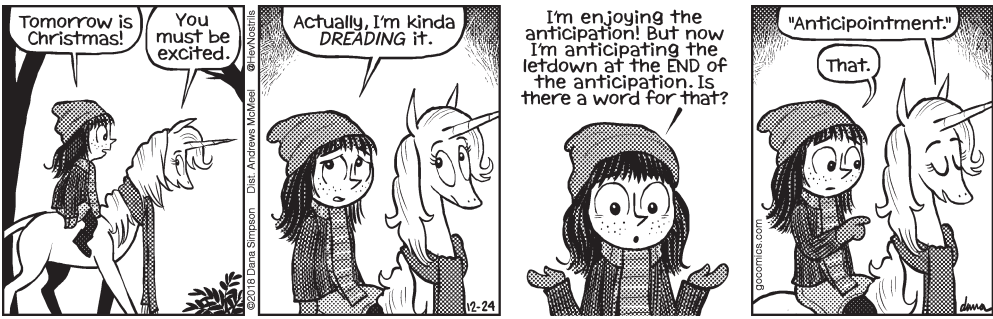
FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



LOLA



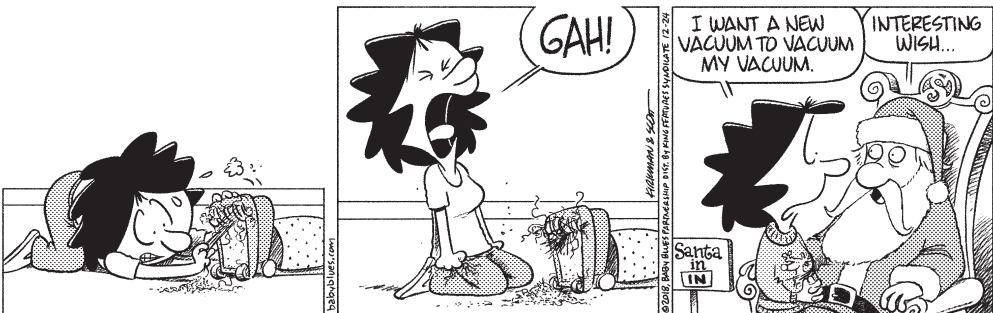
SIX CHIX



MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). There's fun in the role shift that happens today. It's like you suddenly got a permission slip to behave in a way you've always wanted to but never thought you could.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). It will be energizing to go shoulder to shoulder with loved ones, even if the task at hand technically qualifies as work. Touch is the highest form of communication. Also, when in doubt, go in for the hug.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The cosmic gift won't come wrapped. You've an extra special sense for knowing the right thing to say and when to say it. You'll help many with this talent, and more folks will come to you for wisdom in the days that follow.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The opportunity to connect fully, with all of your senses, to what's going on around you today will be ever-present, as though all you have to do is plug in, and outlets are everywhere.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). We are all more impressive than we think, with personalities that can change with the company we keep. This is much to your advantage today as the cheer keeps ramping up and your heart keeps following it to new heights.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). As it turns out, you're a supernatural being. There's more to you than your past, your present or your future. The day's events will strike a chord in you and you'll feel the truth of your everlasting soul.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). The complexities of the personalities around you will emerge like holly berries, red and dangerous, to be enjoyed and admired at a distance. If they are dangled before you, don't bite!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The attention you get will be your favorite kind — specific to you, an acknowledgment of what you've worked very hard to achieve, well-deserved and the right portion size, too.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Because you don't miss a beat when it comes to hooking into laughter, beauty and music, it will be easy to get completely engaged in the action. Life seems to be happening through you, not to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Words can't really adequately describe the big feelings, but try anyway. It means so much when you do, and you're certainly better at this than anyone around today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Because you're one of two people who want the same thing — to get from point A to point B as smoothly and safely as possible — there'll be comfort and companionship in today's unfolding.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're upbeat and full of energy, making things happen and resonating a cheerful tone while positive influences are all around you. It's about as smooth a day as you've had in months.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 25). You'll gain skill, grow in confidence and enhance your health and vitality. You'll even become a snappier dresser. None of these things contributes more to your life than a single quality you already possess. That quality is warmth. Warmth starts relationships and adventures. Warmth draws loved ones back to you. Libra and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 40, 1, 22 and 48.

BLONDIE



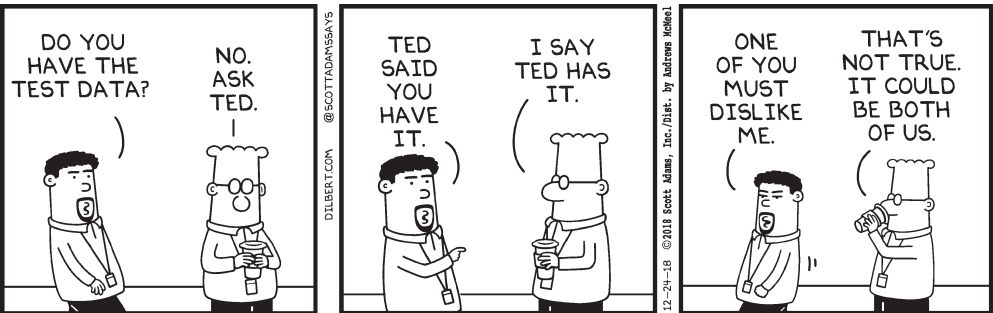
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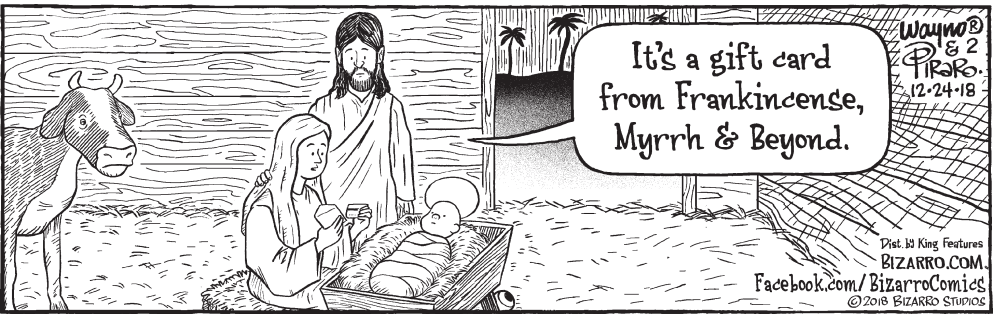
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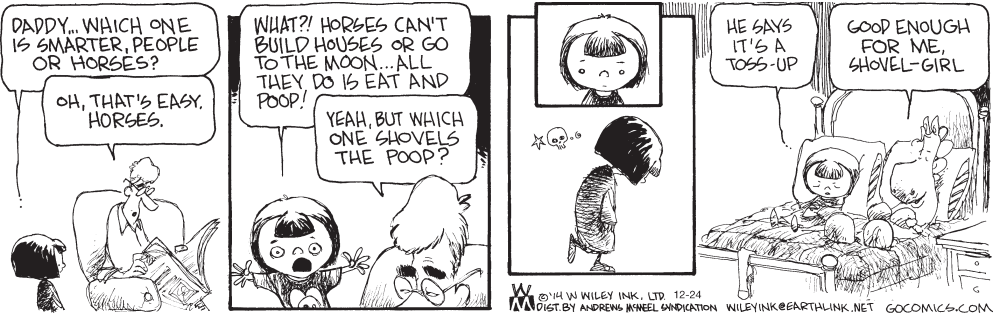
DILBERT



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NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

