

Son's choice nags parents

Dear Annie: My 25-year-old son, "Andy," has been dating "Cassie" for a year and a half. Andy is the kind of guy whom everybody loves, from 2-year-olds to 100-year-olds. Cassie only has a couple of friends and has a terrible reputation. Nobody has anything nice to say about her.

For the first six months, he hid their relationship from us. When I found out, I was devastated. He told me he liked her so much and wanted to marry her, but first he wanted to get to know her better and make sure she would be worth breaking his mother's heart for.

He wanted me to get to know her, so I agreed to go out with her, and we spoke for several hours. I still believed she was not the right person for Andy. I did not invite her over to the house for a few months, even though she wanted to come over. Eventually, I

saw she wasn't going anywhere, so I sucked up my pride and included her.

Cassie is very stubborn. She and Andy set a wedding date without involving us. When I told her the date would be inconvenient for us, she said that she was sorry but that it was the date they wanted. When I protested, she threatened that I would never see the future grandchildren. She ended up breaking things off with Andy over the fight. He begged for her forgiveness, and they were back on again. I was skeptical but swallowed my pride and even bought her a diamond bracelet.

Then Andy dropped out of the program that Cassie really wanted him to be in, and she broke up with him again. He begged for her to give him another chance, and eventually she did, but in the meantime she wrote a nasty letter to my sister,

tearing Andy's character apart. Cassie tried calling me several times to apologize, but I do not want to hear it. That letter was so abusive; I cannot forgive her.

I told Andy that he can always come to us should he need anything but that I will not go to the wedding. I can't walk him down the aisle to an abuser. I know you'll say I'd regret not going, but I don't think I would, because how can I support my son's marrying somebody who abuses him emotionally?

By the way, his friends have even told him that she's not the right one for him, so it's not just us as parents. But he just won't listen. — *To Go or Not to Go*

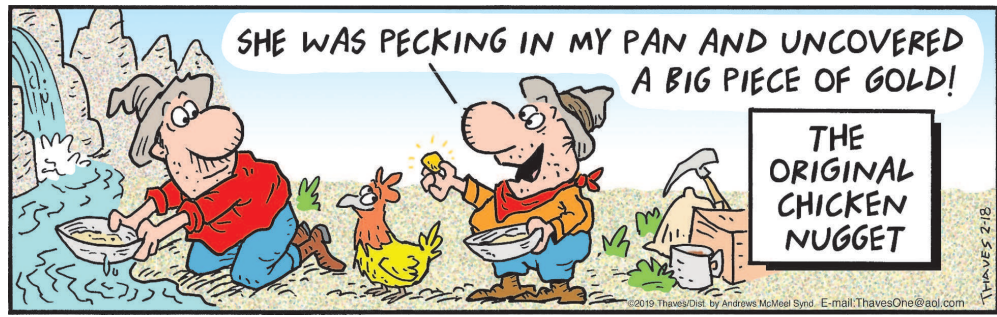
Dear TGONTG: I'll get to Cassie's behavior in a minute, but first I have to keep you honest. You were never going to like this woman, no matter what, even if she turned out to be a saint. You prejudged her and made sweeping generalizations about her.

DEAR ANNIE

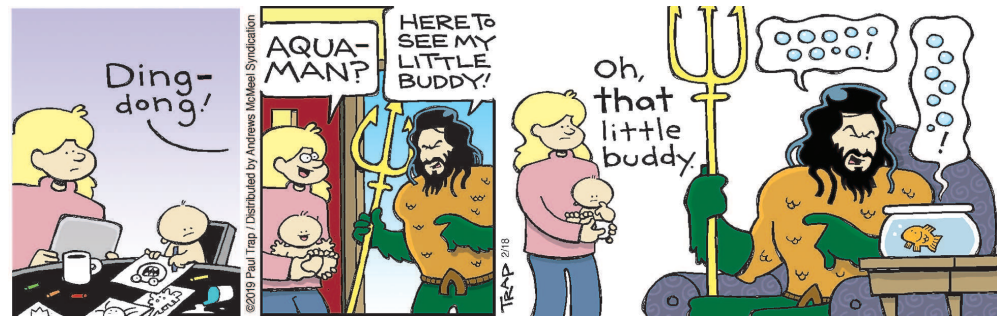


ANNIE LANE
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

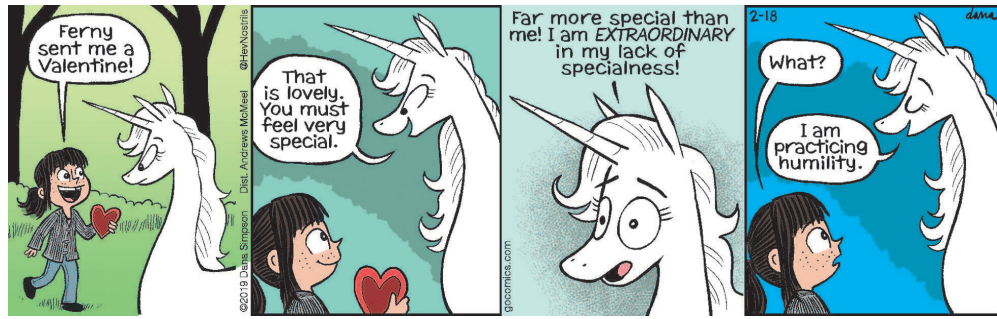
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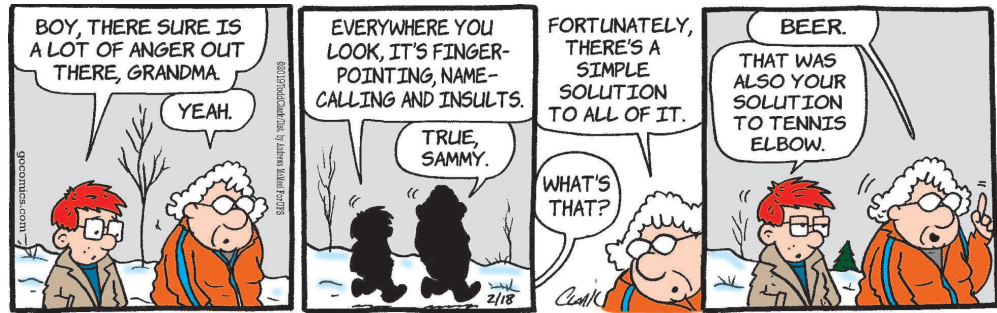
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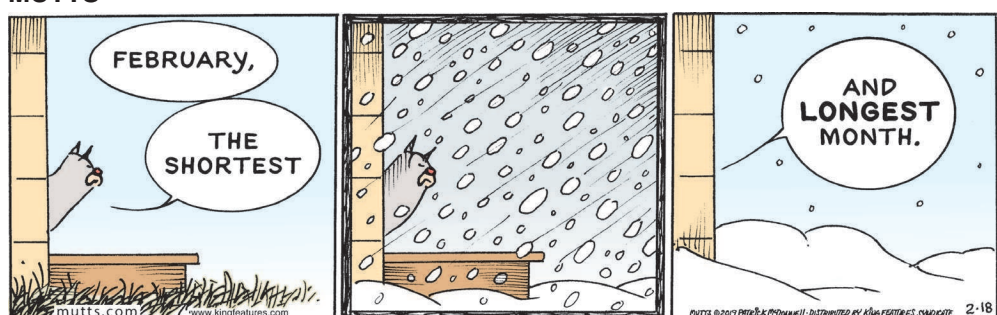
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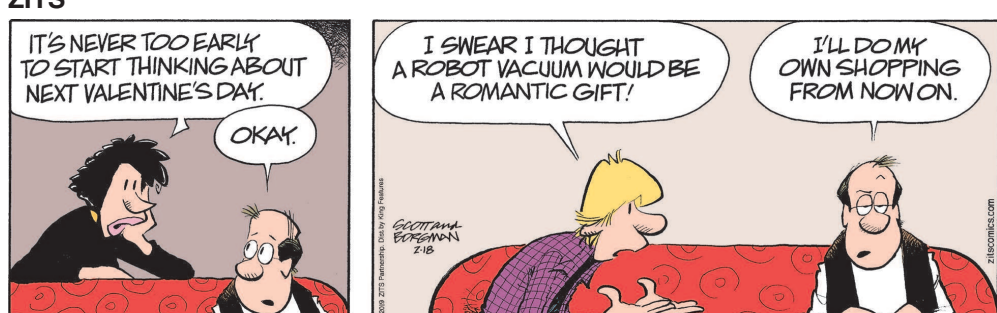
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TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It's a planning day. As there's not a week that goes by without a surprise challenge, you'd be wise to work that into the plan. Also, leave room for error and/or irresistible delight.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You won't be able to weed out the problems and keep what's good, because what's good is the problems. The end product will be magnificent not in spite of but because of the challenging way you had to go about getting it.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Every cycle has a winter — a period where the environment drives the being further inside to do the work that must be done in order to grow after the thaw. This work often looks a lot like sleeping.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). What's unseen will be more critical to the action than the action itself. The invisible things don't care whether or not anyone believes in, or trusts, the power of invisible things. Their cycle is the same either way.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). If nothing is inherently good or bad, then how effective could it possibly be to think in these terms? Of course, it's second nature. But if you can question that nature even slightly, new answers and easier ways of managing will arise.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). What if you knew that your mentors considered you, in some ways, to be their teacher? Well, it's true. So you don't have to feel less than or indebted just because you ask for help. It goes both ways.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Are they picking up what you're throwing down? The number of people tracking with you at this point may be small, but it will grow. Don't change the message; just share it with

more people.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). What does an evolved spiritual outlook have to do with phone usage? Technology isn't inherently evil or in conflict with spiritual principles, as long as you're the master of your digital usage and not a slave to it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You appreciate confident people all the while realizing that a social persona may be but the tip of the iceberg of personality. Your respect and social savvy will earn you a friend.

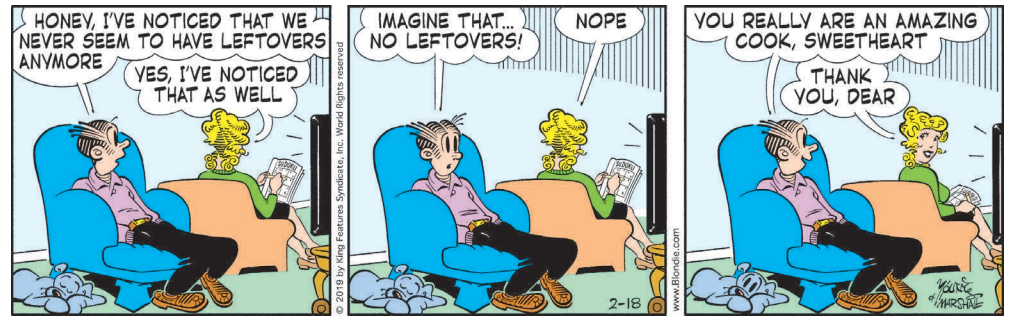
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your response will be requested or something like it, maybe your presence, opinion, vote or support. Anyway, part of you is what they'll ask for, and your job is to give the right amount.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Much will be solved by recognizing the difference between gratification and contentment, and by playing the long game. Instead of going for a quick lift, work to bring up your overall level of vitality.

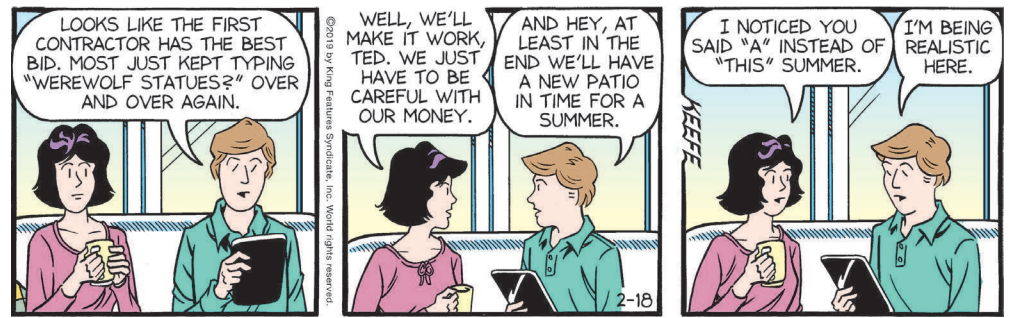
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You put people first, before the agenda, before the results are counted, definitely before the money is divided up. Because of your "people first" approach, you'll take a little longer to get things done, and you'll enjoy it more, too.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 19). Because you're able to pay closer attention, noticing and feeling more, you'll be astoundingly creative this year. You may be put on a pedestal for this quality, though the accolades are not the point. Your heart is full when you create, and the love that spills over into your life and world makes it all a little better. Sagittarius and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 20, 18, 24 and 19.

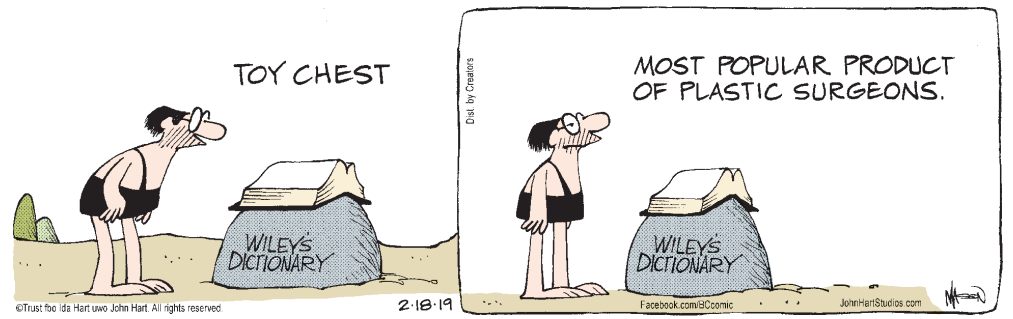
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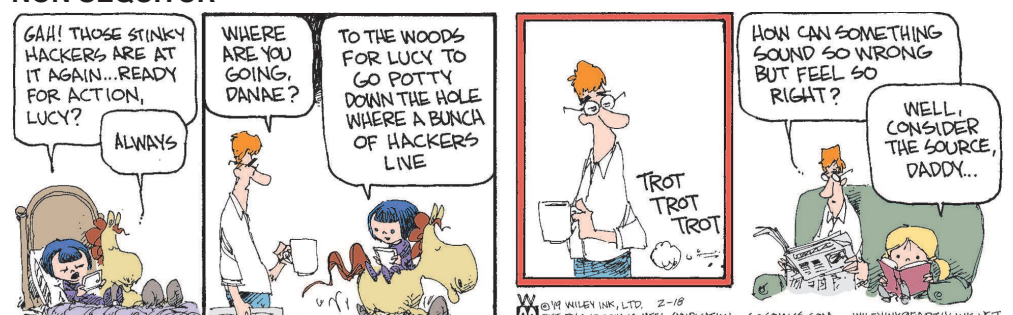
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