

Kids have food obsessions

Dear Annie: I am in my mid-60s and retired, as is my husband. We have family scattered around the country and travel quite a bit. It has become quite obvious that our kids' generation is totally consumed with a certain famous coffee brand. I like to refer to it as "Fancypants Coffee." Every morning starts with rushing off to the Fancypants Coffee shop, whether we are visitors or hosts. No more relaxing at home on a Saturday morning with the grandkids playing. It doesn't matter if we purchase this brand of coffee to have at home; that's not good enough. All of my friends are having the same issues with their kids. Food has become another impossibility. If they come to visit, we have to go out and buy different milk, bread, water, salt and so forth. Somehow the notion of eating what is served when one is a guest in someone's home has been completely eliminated. Of course, I am not talking about folks with serious food aller-

gies, but nobody ever died from consuming a different brand of orange juice or bread for three days. If we go out to eat, the poor waiter has to answer all kinds of silly questions about whether the bread is organic or not. Again, nobody ever died from eating nonorganic bread once. Whatever joy there might be in visiting family members or hosting them has been eliminated by this exhausting fussy obsession with "Fancypants Coffee" and strict adherence to certain food beliefs. There are people starving. Be grateful for what you have. I hope you have some clever solution for this problem, and I wonder how many others find this all to be so ridiculous. — *Grandma*

Dear Grandma: Not a clever solution, I'm afraid, just a simple one: You're not obligated to accommodate everyone's dietary preferences. If you don't want to stock your house with all the special

brands of food that your kids want, don't. Let them go out to the store and pick up what they'd like, while you stay home and enjoy watching the grandkids play.

Dear Annie: Your response to "A Fly in the Ointment," regarding her verbally abusive husband, was a good one, but she should be aware that discussing it with a counselor or another third party might not yield results quickly. I went through something similar with my ex-husband. Almost every time I went out with friends or mentioned that I needed to speak to a male friend or colleague, he would say something about my having boyfriends. Seeing a counselor didn't help, because he didn't want to talk about what he felt was a private matter, and he blamed me for his shortcomings. I eventually left him when he began to pile on unfounded accusations and tried to control my actions. — *Been There, Left That*

Dear Been There: I do, too. Thanks so much for writing and sharing your firsthand perspective.

DEAR ANNIE

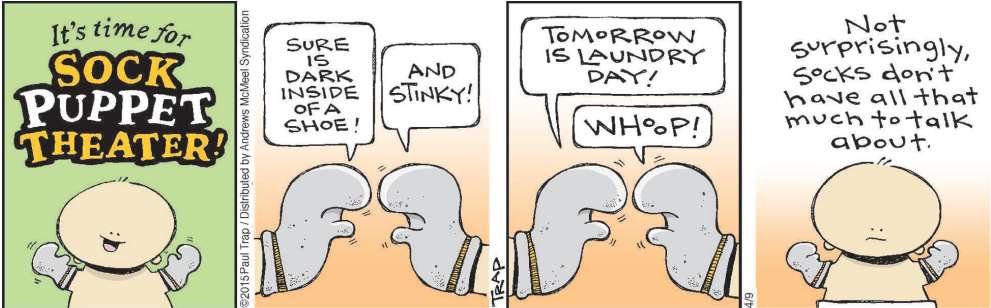


ANNIE LANE
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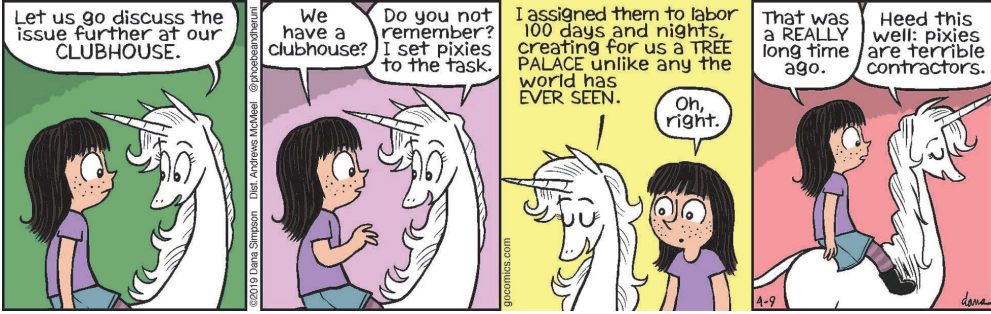
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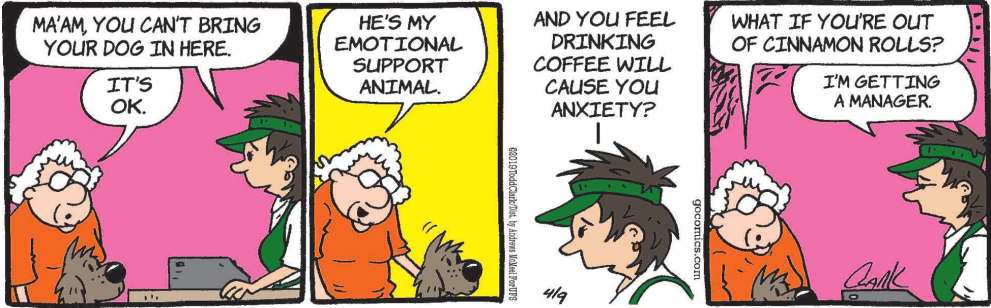
THATABABY



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



LOLA



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BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). A good day, like a good life, must include uncomfortable situations. It's a sign that you're living adventurously and courageously. Each new pickle will teach you a helpful skill.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You'll soon be in a position to state your terms, haggle a price or negotiate a salary. Start thinking about the value you give, what it's worth and what you really want. It's going to take some time to settle on the right amount.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Put your feelers out because your work is too much for one person to handle alone. Find one good person to help you with your project and soon you'll be surrounded by good people, as like attracts like.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Some types of education seem pointlessly inapplicable, but your commitment to learning is anything but. Even if you've consciously forgotten what you learned, it's still in there, and you're building on it every day.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). In the weeks to come you will open your heart to many people, some of them very different from you. The more diverse your group is, the stronger it will be.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Your problems aren't bigger than the problems of others. It just seems like it because everything seems bigger up close. Change the channel. Go somewhere new. Meet more people. Then come back. Perspective restored!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). A wave of ambition will wash over you, thanks to your exposure to a certain inspiring person. What you're starting to dream about for yourself is a lot, but it's possible. You can do this!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Negotiations ensue. You long ago learned that holding out for everything usually precipitates walking away with nothing, which is not always a bad thing. It depends on what's on the table. You're good at this. Trust yourself.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Of course there's no such thing as a perfect relationship, but certainly, there are more and less compatible people. Events today will show you who fits into which category.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Two sorts of people can be hard to tolerate: those very different from you, and those too much like you. Love those who challenge you because it will broaden your capacity to love everyone, including yourself.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). It could very well be that there's an ideal in your head that's blocking the reality in front of your nose. It's one of those days when you have to try a little harder to find something to love.

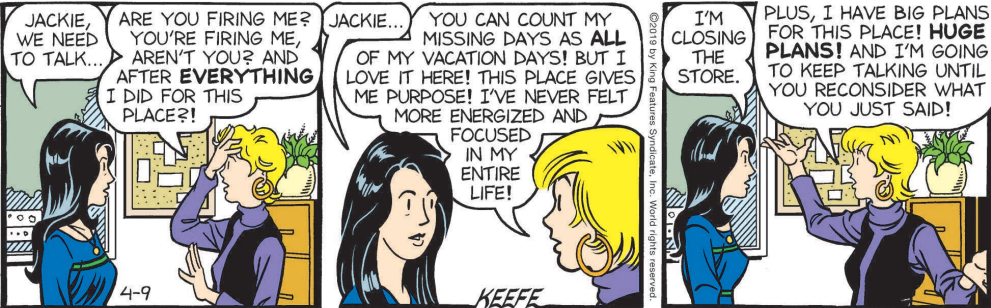
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). At this point, you're not sure if your aim is within the realm of reason. But some things are worth trying to do even if you're pretty sure they're impossible. Some things are worth doing *because* you're pretty sure they're impossible.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (April 10). You'll help someone and get twice helped. You'll love someone and wind up with heaps of the stuff. It's impossible for you to do anything selfless without gaining some kind of enrichment. A tangent will turn into your main gig. There's a move or a big domestic update. For luck, include family in a business venture. Capricorn and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 3, 33, 38 and 17.

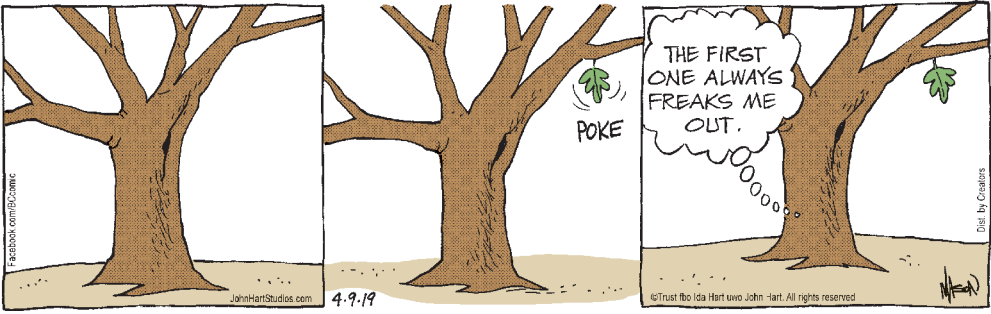
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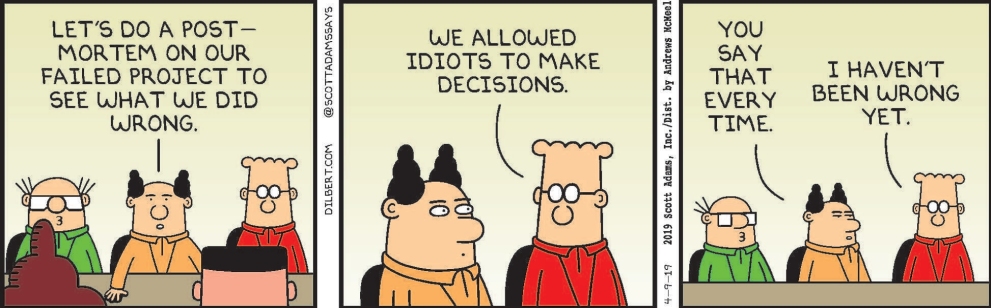
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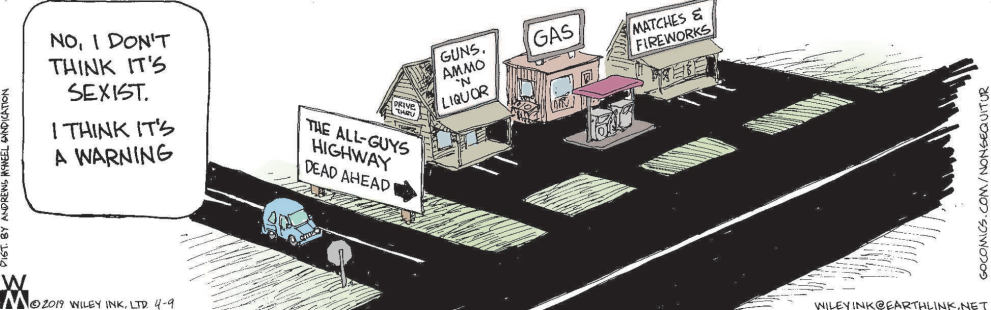
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ROSE IS ROSE

