

# COMICS

## MARMADUKE



"Thanks to you-know-who, that's the last time the office will have a bring-your-dog-to-work day."

## HERMAN



"One cola, no ice."

## REALITY CHECK



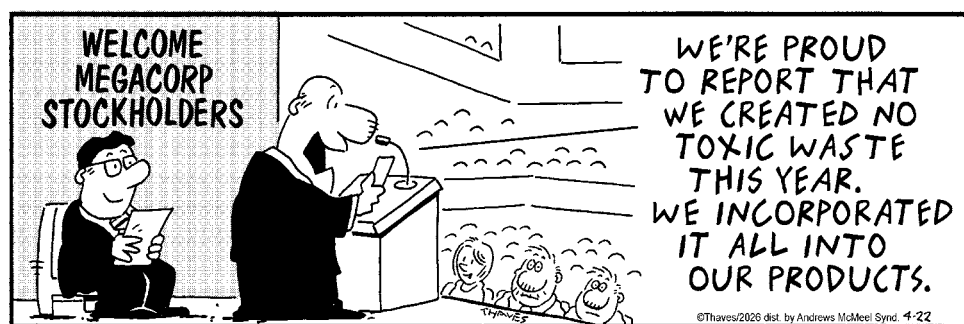
"SOB: IT DOESN'T EVEN LOOK LIKE LARRY ANYMORE!"

## MODERATELY CONFUSED



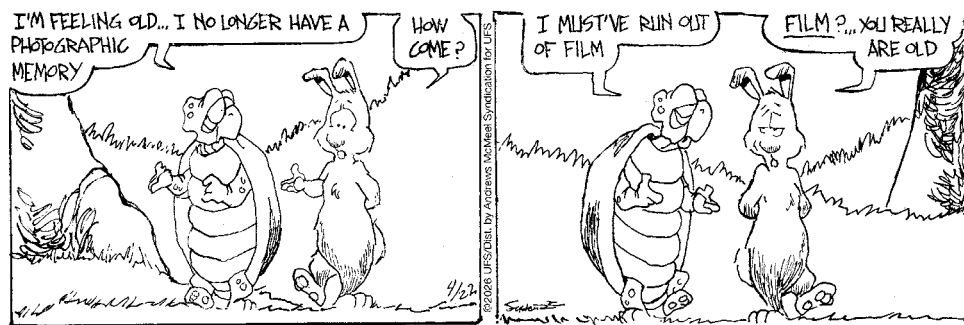
"I DRESS FOR THE WEATHER I WANT."

## FRANK & ERNEST



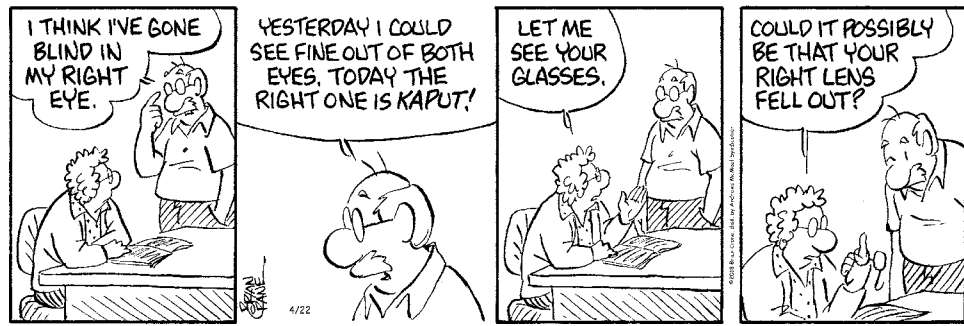
"WELCOME MEGACORP STOCKHOLDERS... WE'RE PROUD TO REPORT THAT WE CREATED NO TOXIC WASTE THIS YEAR. WE INCORPORATED IT ALL INTO OUR PRODUCTS."

## THE GRIZZLETS



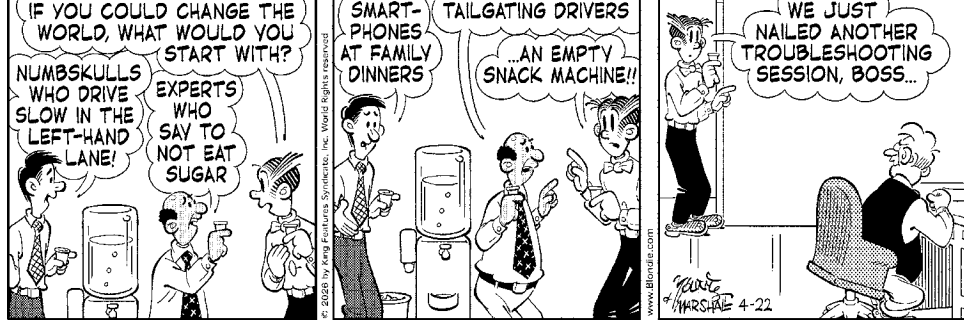
"I'M FEELING OLD... I NO LONGER HAVE A PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY... I MUST'VE RUN OUT OF FILM... FILM?... YOU REALLY ARE OLD"

## PICKLES



"I THINK I'VE GONE BLIND IN MY RIGHT EYE... YESTERDAY I COULD SEE FINE OUT OF BOTH EYES. TODAY THE RIGHT ONE IS KAPUT!... LET ME SEE YOUR GLASSES... COULD IT POSSIBLY BE THAT YOUR RIGHT LENS FELL OUT?"

## BLONDIE



"IF YOU COULD CHANGE THE WORLD, WHAT WOULD YOU START WITH?... NUMBSKULLS WHO DRIVE SLOW IN THE LEFT-HAND LANE!... EXPERTS WHO SAY TO NOT EAT SUGAR... SMART-PHONES AT FAMILY DINNERS... TAILGATING DRIVERS... AN EMPTY SNACK MACHINE!!... WE JUST NAILED ANOTHER TROUBLESHOOTING SESSION, BOSS..."

## BORN LOSER



"WHAT? SALAD FOR DINNER, INSTEAD OF STEAK?... IT'S ALL WE CAN AFFORD THESE DAYS... I GUESS YOU COULD SAY WE ARE ON A LOW-SALARY DIET!"

## HI AND LOIS



"MOM TOLD ME TO BE QUIET WHILE SHE TALKS ON THE PHONE... THAT'S A BIG ASK... BUT I'M WARMING UP TO IT."

## CRABGRASS



"MS. BEECHAM, THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL YOU... YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?... NO, SHE DOESN'T! EVERYTHING WENT PERFECTLY TONIGHT. NOTHING AT ALL TO REPORT HERE!... ISN'T THAT RIGHT, SHELL?... KEVIN, I'M NOT JUST GOING TO LIE TO YOUR MOTHER... OH, SWEET-HEART... I AM VERY TIRED RIGHT NOW, MAYBE JUST TRUST KEVIN'S INSTINCTS ON THIS ONE."

# Trapped in a Cycle of Comfort and Guilt



ANNIE LANE

Dear Annie

Dear Annie: From the outside, my life looks steady and full. I have a thoughtful husband, grown children who stay in close touch, dear friends and work that gives my days purpose. I know I am fortunate, which only makes it harder to admit how much I am struggling in private.

For years, I have carried pain from things that happened to me when I was young. I have done counseling and truly tried to make peace with the past. In many ways, I have built a happy life. But when stress creeps in, or I feel lonely, disappointed or overwhelmed, something in me still reaches for food as comfort.

It is never really about hunger. It is about quieting the noise in my head for a little while. I eat in secret, promise myself it is the last time, then wake up the next day filled with guilt and disgust. I have gained so much weight that getting dressed for dinner with friends can bring me to tears. More than once, I have canceled plans because nothing fit and I could not bear the thought of being seen.

The people who love me tell me to be kinder to myself, but they do not understand how relentless

that inner voice can be. I am so tired of feeling ashamed in a life that should feel joyful. How do I break a cycle that seems to begin in my mind long before it ever reaches the kitchen? -- Ashamed and Exhausted

Dear Ashamed and Exhausted: This is not a character flaw, and it is not just about food. It sounds like old pain is still asking to be cared for, even after all these years. That does not mean you have failed. It means you are still healing. And healing, especially the kind rooted in long-held hurt, rarely follows a straight or tidy path.

Please stop measuring this by willpower alone. A therapist who understands trauma and disordered eating, along with a doctor, could help you far more than self-criticism ever will. Shame is a terrible diet plan. It may feel like it's motivating you in the moment, but it ultimately keeps you stuck in the very

cycle you are trying to escape.

You already have something precious: people who love you. Let them support the real you, not the one pretending she is fine. Healing may not start in the kitchen. It may start with compassion. And the more gently you treat yourself, the more room you create for lasting change.

"Out of Bounds: Estrangement, Boundaries and the Search for Forgiveness" is out now! Annie Lane's third anthology is for anyone who has lived with anger, estrangement or the deep ache of being wronged -- because forgiveness isn't for them. It's for you. Visit <http://www.creatorspublishing.com> for more information. Follow Annie Lane on Instagram at @dearannieofficial. Send your questions for Annie Lane to [dearannie@creators.com](mailto:dearannie@creators.com).

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## ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

Change what's necessary. Learn to work with what you have, and recognize how good your life currently is. Let go of excessive behavior, and live within your means. Your joy will come from gratitude and using what you have to your advantage. Interesting choices and opportunities are heading your way.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- Keep tabs on how you look, feel and present yourself to the world. Running a tight ship will go part and parcel with the outcome you achieve. Stick to basics, and choose your allies with care.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- Do what you can to help those who need it. Share your expertise and your wisdom. A kind word will do wonders for others and make you feel good.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Keep your life simple, your plans doable and your eye on the ball. Too much of anything will lead to regret. Say no to temptation or anyone trying to outmaneuver you using emotional manipulation.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Situations will get out of control if you overreact. Indulgent behavior on your part or that of someone close to you will result in emotional distance. Choose love over discord.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Live and learn. Review the past and let it go. Your present and future require your attention to excel. A social encounter will lead to friendship or romance.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- You'll be pulled in different directions. Ask a question, but don't

overreact or offer too much insight into your intentions. Physical activities will help alleviate stress.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- Don't worry about things you have no control over. Nourish your relationships, keep lines of communication open and do your best to meet your personal and professional demands.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Pay attention to your surroundings and what you can do to bring down your cost of living. Choose wisdom over exaggeration or excessive behavior. Work for peace instead of instigating chaos.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Look inward, and consider what you can do to enhance your life, looks and home to suit your needs. Efficiency is the goal, so start streamlining.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- You'll be torn between your responsibilities and what you want to do. Clear your head, look at your schedule and do whatever it takes to ensure you meet your demands.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- You can't connect with people if you don't participate. Stop procrastinating and start turning your desires into a reality. Love, personal growth and gains are on the rise.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Lie low, assess situations and calculate what's necessary to get to where you want to go. Timing is everything, and sticking to a schedule will be crucial in reaching your objective.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Vegas airport code
- 4 Bivouac
- 8 Pub pints
- 12 Toner
- 13 Iridescent gem
- 14 — the roost
- 15 Cuckoo
- 16 Shredded
- 17 Toward shelter
- 18 The — the merrier
- 20 Ten-spot
- 22 Holler
- 24 Recite
- 25 Cunning
- 26 Calendar abbr.
- 27 Short time in a pool
- 30 Guid — quo
- 32 Pitcher
- 34 Badly
- 35 Paving material
- 36 Breezed through
- 38 Firmament
- 39 Sales rep
- 40 Gallery contents
- 41 Final (Abbr.)
- 43 Unmatched
- 44 Crude fellow
- 46 Ironworks
- 50 Snatch
- 52 Is in possession of
- 53 Greek peak
- 56 Stalemate
- 57 Solar plexus
- 58 Outdo
- 59 Med. specialty
- 60 Tie a certain way
- 61 Writer — Bombeck
- 62 Henna, e.g.

- Answer to this puzzle
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Y | D | V | M | R | E | T | O | N | K |
| T | N | E | T | A | B | E | T | E | R |
| E | I | T | A | S | O | S | N | W | O |
| B | V | G |   | Y | R | N | O | U | F |
| R | O | B |   | D | D | O |   |   |   |
| T | L | U |   | R | V | T | G | V | A |
| Y | K | S | D | E | C | A | V | R | T |
| T | P | I |   | S | U | W | E | P | R |
| D | I | P |   | N | S |   | L | T | S |
| K | C | B | W | A | S |   | L | L | E |
| E | E | U | V | A | R | E |   | I | N |
| E | L | E |   | P | A | L |   | O | I |
| S | A | L | P | C | A | S |   | L | V |
- 3 Aspen, for one (2 wds.)
  - 4 Simple bed
  - 5 Mil. address
  - 6 War god
  - 7 Enjoyment
  - 8 "The Sheik of —"
  - 9 Humdinger
  - 10 Energy type (Abbr.)
  - 11 Look for
  - 19 Annex
  - 21 Lacking color
  - 23 Caustic solution
  - 26 Denomination
  - 27 Misshapen
  - 28 Kind
  - 29 Work at
  - 30 School org.
  - 31 Tattered cloth
  - 33 Cabinet for clothing
  - 37 Call
  - 40 Say further
  - 42 Fireplace fodder
  - 43 Start
  - 45 Wet
  - 46 Dinner table item
  - 47 Actor — Wilson
  - 48 "Do — others ..."
  - 49 River in France
  - 51 — noire
  - 54 Actor — Neill
  - 55 One — time

