

COMICS

MARMADUKE



“Marmaduke comes in every day to give everyone a ‘like.’”

HERMAN



“They warned us in hairdressing college this day would come.”

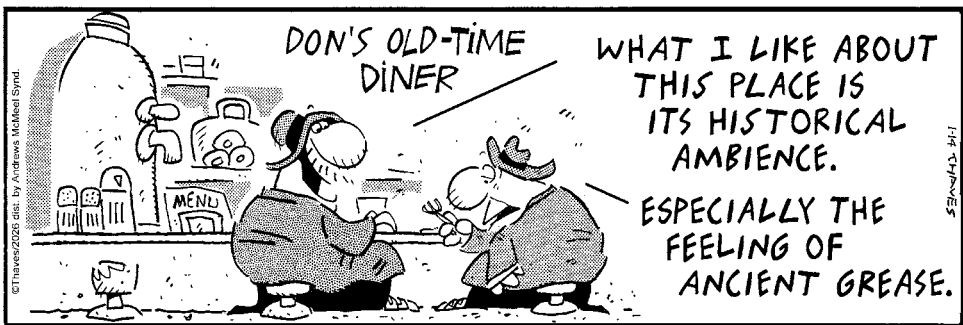
REALITY CHECK



MODERATELY CONFUSED



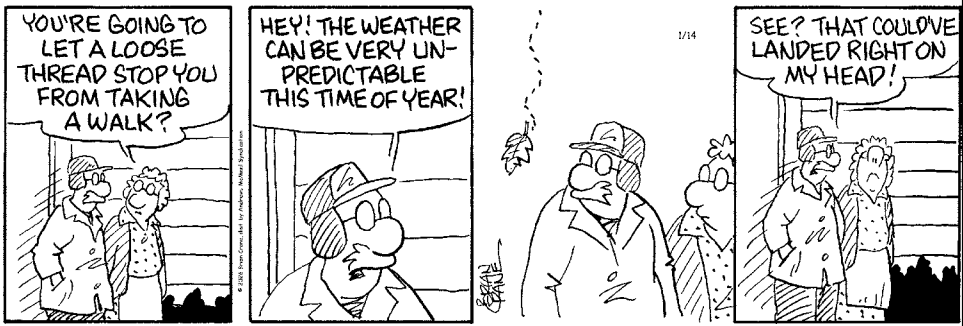
FRANK & ERNEST



THE GRIZZWELLS



PICKLES



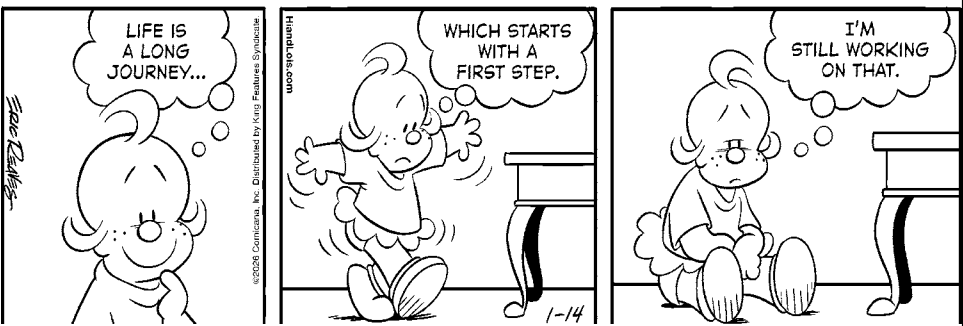
BLONDIE



BORN LOSER



HI AND LOIS



CRABGRASS



All's Fair in Love and Sports?



ANNIE LANE

Dear Annie

Dear Annie: One of my good female friends graduated from a rival college of mine. We love talking smack about who has a better football team. When her school loses games, I gloat. One time this year, I said her school had zero chance of winning against my school. I did this level of trash-talking for two months, practically daily.

She said that if I was so confident, then I should put it on the line. I told her to name the stakes. She said if my school lost one game in particular, starting Jan. 1, I would have to post a new picture of myself on social media in a thong every day for a year, holding a sign saying, “My school sucks.” Well, my school lost, and it was never close.

She texted me during the game talking smack. I said the bet was just a joke. She said it was not and that she could show our friends our text receipts. I’m worried what people will say if I start posting the kind of content we discussed. My friends from high school and college plus my coworkers would see it. Is there any way I can get out of this? -- Unfriendly Bet

Dear Unfriendly Bet: You and your friend can joke all you want about college sports, but long gone are the dorm days. You’re both adults with myriad responsibilities and obligations; posting the kind of pictures you described could lead to serious fallout at work and in your relationships, not to mention chip away at your dignity.

Give your friend a call and draw your line in the sand. Assure her that if the game had

gone in your favor, there’s no way you would actually expect her to post these photos online, either. Perhaps a happy medium would be repping her team’s spirit wear instead of your alma mater’s in a single defeat post. Only do what you feel comfortable with. If you find the situation can’t be sorted civilly, call it quits on all future bet-making with this friend -- and maybe give some thought to whether or not she should be on your friend roster at all.

Dear Annie: I’m 54, and my boyfriend is 57. We’re in a long-distance relationship, 1,700 miles apart. It’s been going on for almost two years now. I’ve flown to see him three times, and he wants to plan another visit for May. At that point, it will have been almost seven months since our last visit.

He’s never flown to my state to visit me. I live on the East Coast, and he lives on the West Coast. His adult children live about eight hours from me. He’s planning a visit with them in February, but I’m not included in those plans. His mother lives with him on the West Coast, so when I visit him, we don’t get private time at his house because she’s there. I rarely call

him because it seems like when I do, he has to take other calls, so I wait for him to call me. When I experiment with a new recipe and share it with him, I’m told how well his daughter cooks or how he or his mother would do it. I don’t feel like a priority in his life and like I’ll always be last in line to his two daughters and his mother. Am I overthinking or overanalyzing things? -- Long-Distance Lovers

Dear Long-Distance: If anything, I’d say you’re finally confronting reality. The truth of the matter is you’re playing second fiddle in this man’s life while you’ve made him the first chair in yours. After two years of dating, he’s not visited your home, integrated you into his close relationships or simply kept up regular, consistent communication. If a breakthrough hasn’t happened yet, I doubt it ever will. There are far better options out there for you than this fella -- and I’d reckon a lot closer to home.

“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.

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ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

Embrace change. Start the ball rolling. Stop waiting for someone else to show you the way. It’s up to you to figure out what makes you happy and to pursue things that get you moving and help you make an impression. Idle time is the enemy this year, and regardless of your stage in life, it’s still up to you to head in a direction that motivates you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Put yourself out there and make your voice heard. Everything comes at a price, and it’s up to you to decide what you are willing to sacrifice to follow your heart.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- Stick to your plan regardless of what others do. Work to stay in sync with what’s current and marketable. Let your uniqueness lead the way and your discipline help you cross the finish line.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- Participate in events that matter to you, and you’ll gain insight into how you can make a difference while connecting with like-minded people. A change of habits will lead to progress. Romance is favored.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Invest in something that matters, and you can make a difference. Use your imagination, and offer your skills, time and experience to bring about change.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- Keep your expenses under control. Don’t pay for someone else’s mistakes or poor judgment. Focus on getting ahead and staying up to date with technology and what’s happening in your community.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- If you want something, find a way to make it happen. Your opportunities will come through communication and recognizing when to make your next move.

Go where the action is. Travel and partnerships are favored.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Mixing business with pleasure will backfire if you haven’t thought matters through. Use your intelligence, protect your reputation and focus on unique ideas, a disciplined attitude and positive change.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Do something you enjoy with someone you love. Personal improvements will boost your confidence and encourage you to do things you enjoy. Express your feelings and find out where you stand with someone you want to spend more time with.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Be careful how you divvy things up. Partnerships will suffer if you let someone get away with something that irks you. Speak up rather than allowing your emotions to swell out of proportion. Romance is favored.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Fast talk and action will be necessary. Too much of anything will weigh you down. Problems at home or work will escalate quickly if you aren’t prepared to make a move. Address financial constraints before it’s too late.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- Emotions will trigger uncertainty and change. Think on your feet and be ready to make a move. You have more opportunities than you realize. Romance is favored.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Stop doubting yourself. Build equity and look for ways to use your skills and money to get ahead. Invest in your ability to be competitive and be ready to parlay your skills into something you want to pursue.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Small dog
 - 4 Donkey’s cry
 - 8 Mass of floating ice
 - 12 Org. for lawyers
 - 13 Marathon
 - 14 Dalai —
 - 15 Costa del —
 - 16 Currier’s partner
 - 17 In its present condition (2 wds.)
 - 18 Thin
 - 20 Montana city
 - 21 “— You Need Is Love”
 - 22 Play on words
 - 23 Avoid
 - 26 Horse opera
 - 30 Stage of life
 - 31 Charge
 - 32 Twosome
 - 33 Author — Levin
 - 34 Writing fluid
 - 35 Sloe — fizz
 - 36 Reptile
 - 39 Peace goddess
 - 41 Youngster
 - 42 In favor of
 - 43 Brilliance
 - 46 Impresario
 - 50 Pottery material
 - 51 Sept
 - 52 “— Got a Secret”
 - 53 Mist
 - 54 Sit for a painter
 - 55 The present
 - 56 Had a debt
 - 57 Struck with solemn fear
 - 58 Dynamite letters
- DOWN**
- 1 Elapse
 - 2 Old coin of Greece
 - 3 Masculine

Answer to this puzzle

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| T | N | I | | D | E | M | A | | D | E | M | O |
| M | O | N | | E | S | O | P | | E | Z | V | H |
| E | A | I | | N | A | T | C | | A | T | A | C |
| N | V | M | | M | O | H | S | | A | T | C | E |
| | | | | O | R | | | | D | A | T | |
| E | N | E | | R | I | | | | T | N | E | P |
| N | I | G | | | | | K | | N | I | | V |
| O | U | D | | | | | E | | F | E | | A |
| N | R | E | | T | S | E | M | | E | G | D | O |
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| E | T | T | | B | | | R | | E | D | N | E |
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| L | A | M | | A | | | V | | A | C | E | |
| E | F | L | | O | | | A | | B | R | A | |

- 4 Headgear for a horse
- 5 “Bolero” composer
- 6 Maple genus
- 7 “Certainly!”
- 8 Show off
- 9 Endure
- 10 Leave unmentioned
- 11 Relaxation
- 19 Complain persistently
- 20 Coach
- 22 Furtive look
- 23 Raised platform
- 24 Beast
- 25 Costly
- 26 Traveled
- 27 Outer boundary
- 28 Destroy completely
- 29 Second to —
- 31 Discover
- 37 Made music
- 38 Dine
- 39 Removed wrinkles from
- 40 Argument
- 42 Stage
- 43 Repeat
- 44 Hammer part
- 45 Lie around doing nothing
- 46 Sluggish
- 47 Gum flavor
- 48 The Bard’s river
- 49 Amphibian
- 51 Tax pro