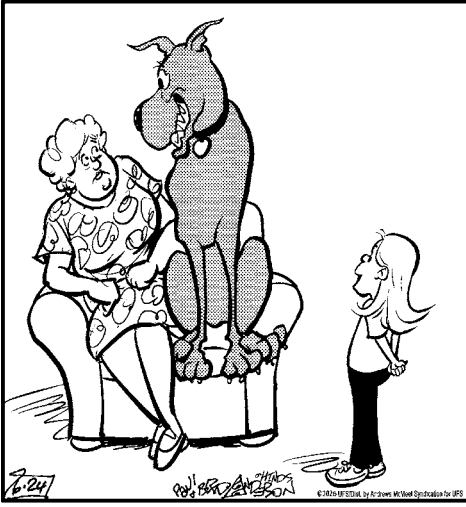


COMICS

MARMADUKE



"Don't worry. Marmaduke doesn't mind sharing a chair."

HERMAN

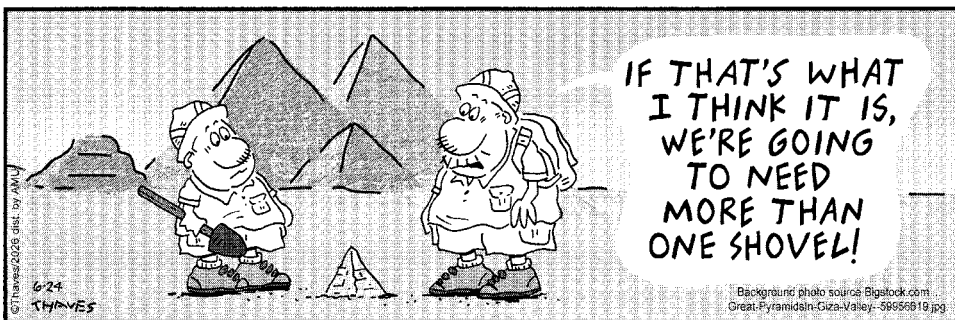


"If you find a pork chop in your soup, it belongs to table nine."

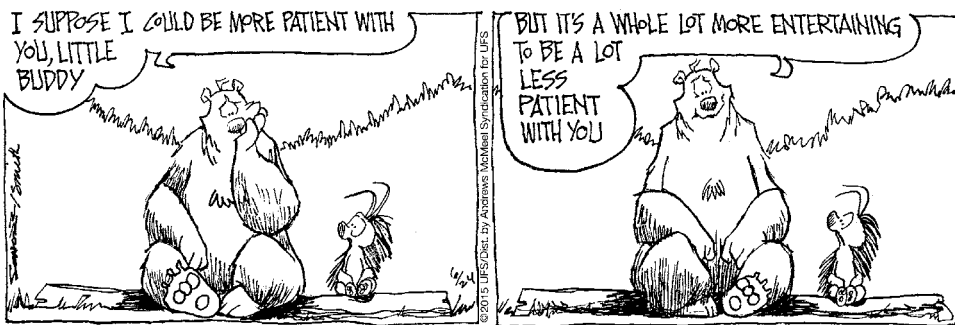
REALITY CHECK



FRANK & ERNEST



THE GRIZZLELLS



PICKLES



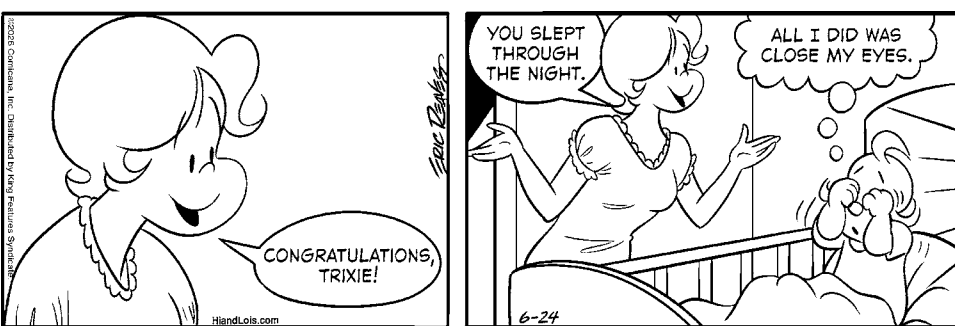
BLONDIE



BORN LOSER



HI AND LOIS



CRABGRASS



Daughter-in-Law Has Distanced Herself After Baby



ANNIE LANE

Dear Annie

Dear Annie: I am heartbroken over my daughter-in-law's sudden and painful change in behavior since the birth of our grandson a year ago.

Before the baby was born, we had a warm relationship. For four years, she was sweet, kind and very much a part of our large extended family. She joined family trips, holidays and even our "happy birthday" text chains. We truly believed she felt invested in us.

Since giving birth, however, she has almost completely cut off communication. She rarely answers texts or phone calls. We have offered to drop off meals, babysit so she can get her hair or nails done, or help in any way we can, and we are lucky to receive a brief "no thank you." She does not acknowledge birthday gifts or gifts for our grandson.

Recently, my husband dropped off a large toy at their home. She did not say hello or even make eye contact. Our son seemed to overcompensate with a big thank-you and a hug, which only made us feel more worried.

My husband and I are devastated. We lie awake at night wondering what happened. Our greatest fear is that she is slowly cutting us off because she plans to leave our son, and that one

very judgmental, and it will not bring her closer. Labels make people feel studied, not loved.

Instead of diagnosing her, try supporting her. Send one warm message: "We love you, we respect your space, and we are here whenever you are ready. No pressure." Then mean it.

Do not make your son choose sides, and do not assume she is planning to leave him. Be steady, kind and patient. Right now, the best way back into her life may be to stop knocking so loudly at the door.

"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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day he may not live with his child.

I have searched online and found terms such as "daughter-in-law syndrome" and "gatekeeper syndrome." I wonder whether this could be related to postpartum issues, breastfeeding for a full year, or trauma from her childhood. I know I may be grasping for explanations, but we feel lost and desperate for guidance.

How do we handle this without making things worse or losing our relationship with our grandson? -- Heartbroken Grandmother

Dear Heartbroken Grandmother: Your hurt is understandable, but tread gently. Your daughter-in-law may be struggling with postpartum depression, anxiety or simply the enormous physical and emotional shift of becoming a mother. A year of nursing, sleep loss and identity change can make even the sweetest person seem distant.

That said, calling her behavior a "syndrome" is

ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

Happy Birthday: Set aside your differences, and consider what matters most. Finding purpose may not solve problems, but it will offer a unique perspective regarding your options. Reaching out to an expert will help you make a clear and honest assessment of the pros and cons in your life. Change takes time, effort and desire to turn any negatives in your life into positives.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- You'll be sensitive to what others say and do. Understanding the motivation will play a role in how situations unfold and help you stretch your mind to accommodate both yourself and those you are dealing with.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Stay on top of your responsibilities. If you fall short, criticism will follow. Work diligently behind the scenes, fine-tuning what you can do and how you can help and make a difference.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Tuck your emotions somewhere safe. Concentrate on putting your energy and intellect into developing an infrastructure that encourages positive change. Use your strengths to make a difference.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Pay attention to money flow. Save for something meaningful. A partnership will play a role in how much you accomplish. Weigh the pros and cons, and maintain equality in all your dealings.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- Put ego aside when dealing with emotional situations, relationships or no-win discussions or situations. Listen, observe and offer solutions that benefit everyone.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Look for additional income. A small home-based

business will lead to learning, experience and prospects you never thought possible. Let your entrepreneurial talents rise and shine.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Mixed emotions can lead to trouble. Take a moment, read the room and take an intellectual approach regarding who you are, what you want and where you feel your time and energy will have the best impact.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- Put your energy into making your space convenient and comfortable. Set the atmosphere to suit your routine and needs to encourage productivity and inner peace.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- Reaching out to people who share your interests will lead to information that can help you expand your circle and your ability to use your skills and creative gifts to ease stress or to bring in extra cash.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Trust issues will surface if someone doesn't honor their promises. Stick close to home, and don't share your feelings impetuously. Consider your options and the individuals you are dealing with.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- Pay attention to your inner voice and to your mental and physical needs. You'll have the discipline to set up and stick to a routine that promises better health and emotional well-being.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- Put your energy into learning, improving your surroundings and taking an energetic approach to manufacturing positive change. Someone you associate with professionally may not share sufficient information.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Business card abbr.
 - 4 Where Havana is
 - 8 Secure
 - 12 "___ was saying ..."
 - 13 Related
 - 14 Walk with heavy steps
 - 15 Take it on the ___
 - 16 Dimple
 - 17 Saturn feature
 - 18 Raised to the third power
 - 20 Narcotic
 - 22 Sea urchin
 - 23 Soon
 - 24 Stinging insects
 - 27 Different
 - 31 Breakfast fare
 - 32 Fall birthstone
 - 34 Exist
 - 35 Charge for service
 - 36 Agents (Hyph.)
 - 37 ___ qua non
 - 38 ___ Haute, Indiana
 - 40 Laughed
 - 42 Coup d'—
 - 44 That fellow's
 - 45 Below accepted standards
 - 48 Available (2 wds.)
 - 51 Margarine
 - 52 Composer — Satie
 - 55 Mine find
 - 56 Humdinger
 - 57 Inlet
 - 58 Nothing
 - 59 Bakery item
 - 60 From the U.S.
 - 61 Stop a fast

DOWN

- 1 Soapstone
- 2 Jacob's elder brother
- 3 Smelly cheese
- 4 Duffer's helper
- 5 Banjo cousin
- 6 Container
- 7 Writer — Chekhov
- 8 Run
- 9 Inter —
- 10 Typeface
- 11 Brink
- 19 River in Austria
- 21 Lake
- 23 Side
- 24 Weight
- 25 Gothic arch
- 26 Male animal
- 28 Falling ball of ice
- 29 Sea eagle
- 30 Woodwind need
- 33 Literary collection
- 36 "I ___ kick out of you"
- 37 Peel
- 39 Bit of news
- 41 Necklace
- 43 Betel palm
- 45 Urban dirt
- 46 Arm bone
- 47 Lager
- 49 Diva's song
- 50 Hit again and again
- 53 ___ -com
- 54 "___ Got a Secret"