

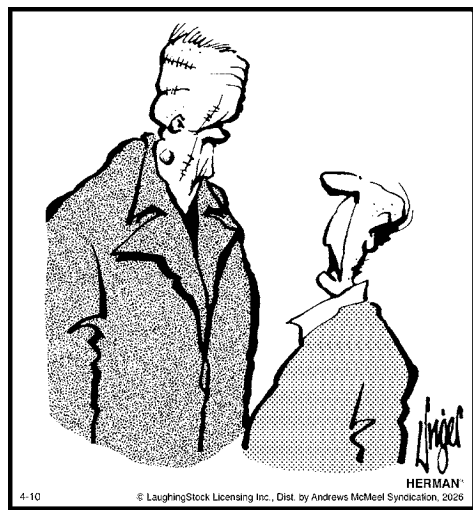
COMICS

MARMADUKE



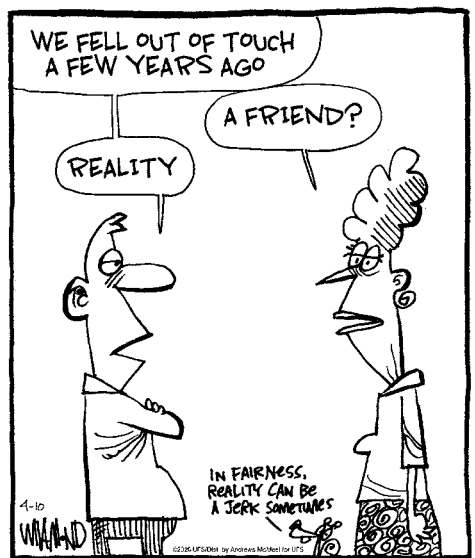
"Okay, Marmaduke. Bark real loud. NOW!"

HERMAN

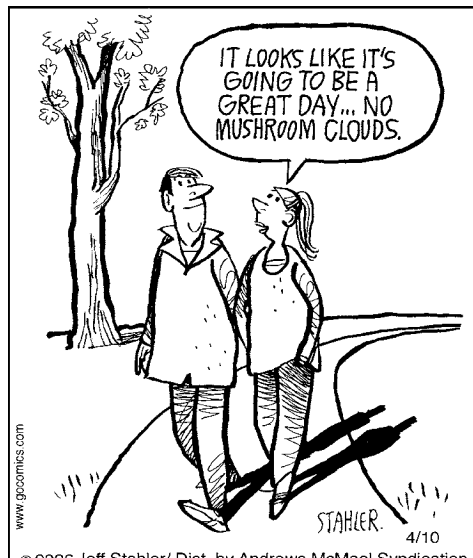


"Say, aren't you Harry Henderson and Pete Watson?"

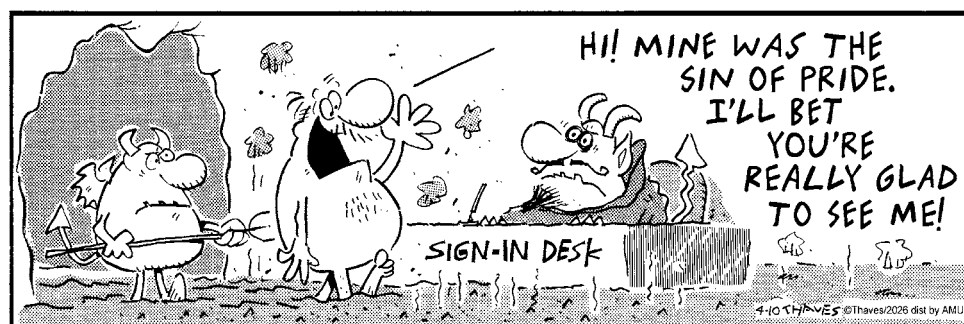
REALITY CHECK



MODERATELY CONFUSED



FRANK & ERNEST



THE GRIZZLELLS



PICKLES



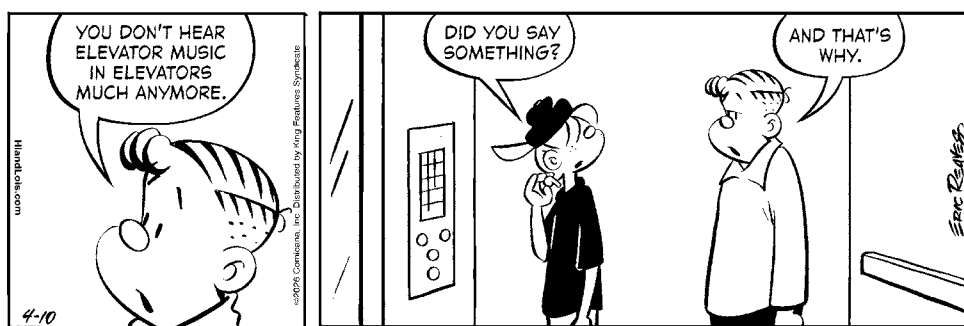
BLONDIE



BORN LOSER



HI AND LOIS



CRABGRASS



Bright Light, Sleepless Nights



ANNIE LANE

Dear Annie

Dear Annie: My neighbor "Rod" installed a motion-activated floodlight that shines directly into our bedroom window every time our dog (or another animal) moves in the yard -- which is often. It goes off all night long.

I mentioned it once, and he said, "It's for security," and suggested we "get better curtains." We already have blackout shades, but the light still leaks in around the edges.

I don't want to start a neighborhood feud, but I also haven't slept properly in weeks.

How do I get him to listen? -- Blinded at Bedtime

Dear Blinded at Bedtime: Ask again and offer a solution: adjusting the angle, lowering the sensitivity or adding a shield. Make it easy for him to say yes.

If he brushes you off again, check your local ordinances on light nuisance, or speak with your homeowners association, if you have one.

You're not starting a feud by asking for reasonable darkness.

Dear Annie: My husband and I are in our late 70s. We have an adult son who uses drugs. He's been kicked out of many halfway houses, spent a month in drug rehab and gone to jail eight times due to possession and DUIs. He lost his car, his driver's license and several low-paying jobs.

He lived with us off and on but caused many problems: dismantling his bedroom, leaving the refrigerator door

open and the stove turned on, leaving messes in the kitchen, staying awake all night and bothering the neighbors. He's been in a psychiatric facility several times but refuses to stay or take any medication for what we believe is a mental illness.

To preserve our safety, we recently told him we love him but he cannot return to live with us. He must find his own way. We know he's now homeless.

Over the past 20 years, we've tried to help him, but in reality, we were enabling him. The angst I feel keeps me from enjoying my life. I have trouble sleeping. My heart stays in my throat, and it feels like a rock is in my stomach. I have trouble choking down food and have lost weight.

I need to figure out how to live my life knowing I cannot help him, but knowing he needs help. I feel certain there are many parents living with this issue. Can you or your readers offer any advice? -- Stressed Mom

Dear Stressed Mom: Few burdens are heavier than loving a child lost to addiction. The ache you

describe -- the sleepless nights, the knot in your stomach -- is heartbreak.

You and your husband made a painful but necessary decision to protect your safety. That isn't abandonment. It's a boundary. Addiction and untreated mental illness are battles your son must choose to face himself.

What you can do now is take care of yourselves. Groups such as Al-Anon or Nar-Anon exist for exactly this reason: to remind parents they're not alone and not to blame. Talking with others who understand can ease some of the isolation and guilt you're feeling.

If your son one day chooses recovery, the door to rebuilding a relationship can open then. Until that time, have grace for yourselves and focus on what is within your control.

"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. COPYRIGHT 2026 CREATORS.COM

ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

Control your emotions, and avoid backlash. If you want to bring about positive change, go through the proper channels and document your every move. You can accomplish plenty if you are specific regarding your intentions and your needs. Compromise is your ticket forward. Don't sit idle when making a move is necessary.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -- Refuse to let anyone talk you into something you don't need. Scams are prevalent, and overpaying for a hyped-up product or inflated quote will set you back.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) -- Take care of unfinished business. An opportunity will surface if you apply for a position or go for an interview. Be sure to ask questions and get what you want in writing.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) -- Be part of the solution, not the problem. Consider the positive changes you can make if you fact-check and research the best way to proceed. Talk is cheap if you don't follow through.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- Take more time to appreciate what is going your way, and spend less time worrying and criticizing what isn't. Attitude is everything when you want to get things done.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) -- Buckle up and get busy. Don't share too much personal information; listen, absorb and determine what and who are in sync with you. Equality is essential.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- Love is on the rise, and healthy discussions that share

expectations will help solidify a meaningful relationship. What you do to encourage, support and help others or a cause will make a difference.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) -- Slow down, and think before you spend. Only offer what's feasible and make promises you can fulfill. Discipline and ingenuity, along with completion, will lead to victory.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) -- Put on your thinking cap, and you'll come up with an idea that will encourage a new adventure. Social events and sensitive topics of conversation will require finesse and delicate monitoring.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) -- Put some time, money and thought into your living arrangements. It's time to upgrade your surroundings to suit your needs. A proper workspace will help you be more productive.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) -- Ease into whatever you want to do, and spare yourself taking on too much or upsetting a situation that is already festering. Don't dig yourself into a hole when it's time to climb out.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) -- Keep a low profile, and you'll accomplish the most. A lifestyle change is on your agenda, and putting the pieces in place will put your mind at rest.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) -- Keep life simple and affordable. Initiate positive change and healthy choices. Someone you encounter will offer insight into how you can use your skills more effectively.

ACROSS

- 1 Cone-bearing tree
- 4 Love god
- 8 Scheme
- 12 Lyric poem
- 13 Hindu goddess
- 14 Hold sway
- 15 Thought logically
- 17 -- vital
- 18 Surrealist Salvador --
- 19 Robert Louis Stevenson's "Island"
- 21 Calendar abbr.
- 23 Perch
- 24 Part
- 28 Saying
- 32 That girl
- 33 Low digit
- 34 Assn.
- 35 Yield from a mine
- 36 "-- you for real?"
- 39 "The Raven" poet
- 40 Strength
- 43 Destructive bug
- 45 -- soda
- 47 Get older
- 48 Large cask
- 52 Concerning (2 wds.)
- 56 Genus of olives
- 57 Rubbed with ceremonial oil
- 59 Make music
- 60 Shock
- 61 "-- how!"
- 62 Cup handles
- 63 Songs that top the charts
- 64 Blvds.

DOWN

- 1 Cross a stream
- 2 Brain wave
- 3 Genuine
- 4 Fuss
- 5 Speak of
- 6 -- and done with
- 7 Goes on
- 8 Very fast, in music
- 9 Humdinger
- 10 Of wings
- 11 Hawaiian goose
- 16 Use a sieve
- 20 Objective
- 22 -- de Janeiro
- 24 Boutique
- 25 Architect -- Saaninen
- 26 Work group
- 27 Tidy
- 29 Pith helmet
- 30 Go at a fast gait
- 31 Gothic arch
- 37 Data display
- 38 Work unit
- 41 Compositions
- 42 Cheer from the sports fans
- 44 Intend
- 46 Means of control
- 48 Desire
- 49 -- podrida
- 50 Equipment
- 51 Opposing one
- 53 Walk of Fame symbol
- 54 Look after
- 55 Concern of bettors
- 58 -- and outs

Answer to this puzzle

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