

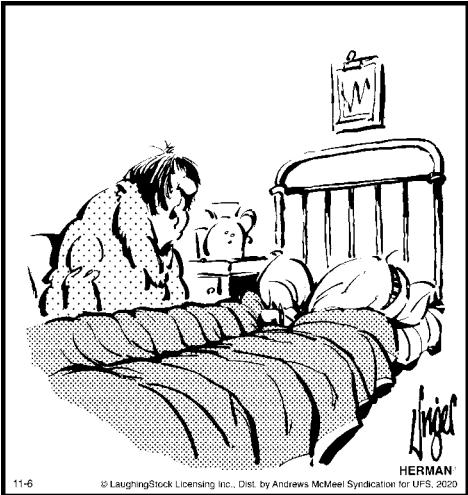
COMICS

MARMADUKE



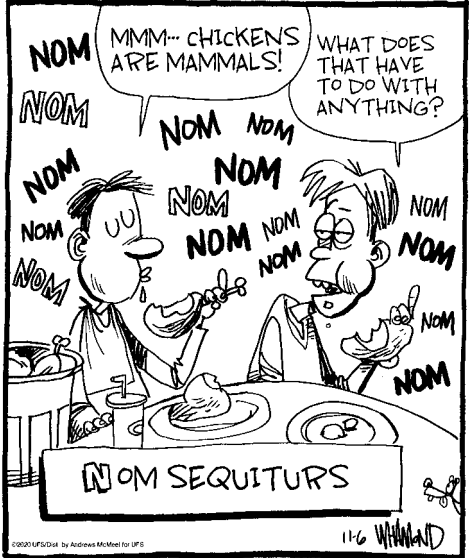
“Are you sure that’s your piggy bank?”

HERMAN

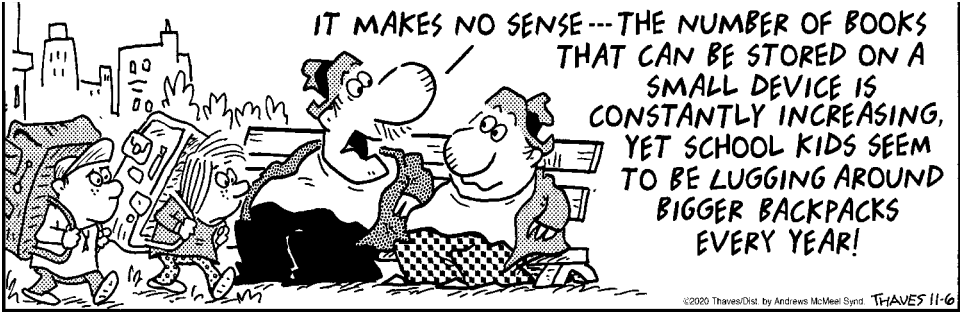


“I spoke to the doctor. He said you’re taking too much iron.”

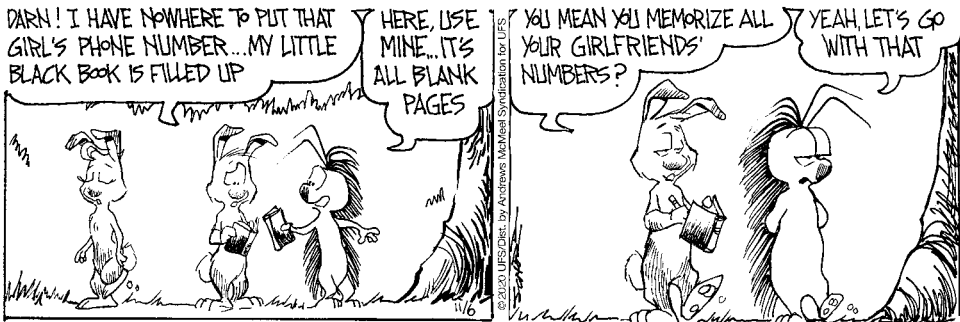
REALITY CHECK



FRANK & ERNEST



THE GRIZZLELLS



PICKLES



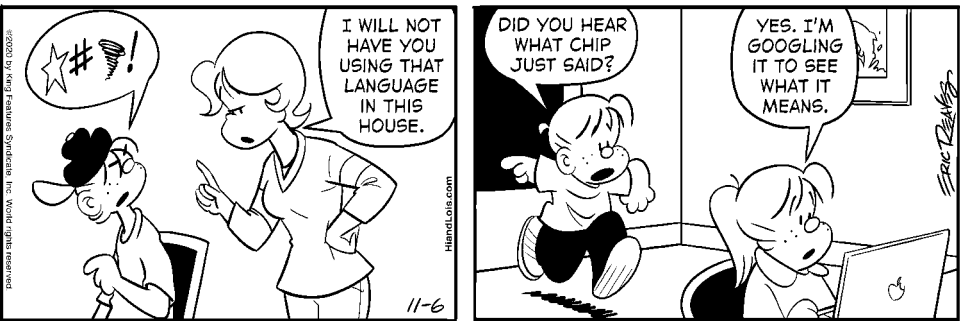
BLONDIE



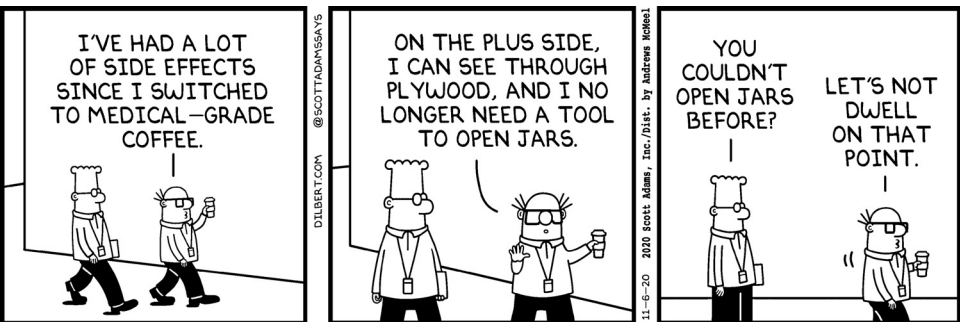
BORN LOSER



HI AND LOIS



DILBERT



Marriage Is More Than Being There

Dear Annie: I have been married to a caring, sweet, very cool woman for the last 13 years. We have four children. Like all marriages, we’ve had our ups and downs, but I thought we were solid.

A few months ago, she started spending time with an old friend, “Jimmy,” who is a shady guy. One night after spending time with Jimmy, she came home, sat beside me on the couch, and calmly told me that she wanted to separate and that she had already set her Facebook status to single. She claimed that I was manipulating her. While I’ve seen how manipulative her family can be, I’ve never been manipulative toward her, at least not intentionally. I’ve always supported her emotionally, and I’ve never withheld money or anything like that.

But when I told her that I didn’t think I was being manipulative, she said she really had just fallen out of love. She talked about how I wasn’t affectionate with her; I didn’t hold her hand. Well, I have been sleeping on the couch a lot of nights the last few years, only due to my not wanting to roll on our 3-year-old, who slept in our bed almost every night.

We have not been intimate the last few years except when she was tipsy and wanted to. I was not into it but went along with it. But if it was more affection and handholding that she’d wanted, I wish she had just told me. I guess I overlooked the little things.

I think about our four children



ANNIE LANE  
DEAR ANNIE

and what our splitting up would mean for them. I worry about my wife’s stability and, consequently, our youngest daughter’s safety. I refuse to initiate the divorce on my end because we took a vow. Or should I just give up? Do you think I could find someone who would like me for me and accept the kids? I am probably one of the easiest people to get along with, and I always try to do the right thing. — Heavyhearted Husband

Dear Heavyhearted: I commend you for taking your wedding vows to heart. But being a good partner isn’t just about staying in it; it’s about staying present for it. Of course, your intimacy has suffered when you’ve been spending nearly every night on the couch. But if this is really the first time that your wife is raising any of these issues with you, then you both owe it to your marriage to try to work through them. Ask her to attend couples counseling with you. And if she insists on divorce, don’t rush into your next relationship. Work on developing your self-esteem and communication skills first, so you’ll be bringing your best,

healthiest self to the table.

Dear Annie: You recommend Al-Anon a lot in your column. It’s a good idea in theory, but in the small town where I live, when you walk into those meetings, you walk into a cohesive, preexisting group whose members just sit and talk to each other. I wish it would be better managed so that we could all benefit. — D.K.

Dear D.K.: From what I know of Al-Anon, your experience is the exception, not the rule. I encourage you to give it another try. Al-Anon suggests trying six different meetings before deciding that the program isn’t for you. If there aren’t six meetings near you, you can find telephone meetings on their website ([al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/telephone-meetings](http://al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/telephone-meetings)).

Another support group for families and friends of alcoholics is SMART Recovery ([smartrecovery.org](http://smartrecovery.org)). I hope you find the help that you’re looking for.

“Ask Me Anything: A Year of Advice From Dear Annie” is out now! Annie Lane’s debut book — featuring favorite columns on love, friendship, family and etiquette — is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit <http://www.creatorspublishing.com> for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to [dearannie@creators.com](mailto:dearannie@creators.com).

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ASTROGRAPH BY EUGENIA LAST

You’ll pick up information readily. Expanding your knowledge and experience is encouraged. Check out online courses, be resourceful and strive to map out a path that stimulates your curiosity. Don’t limit what you can do. You’ll find the success you desire.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — Create an environment that is conducive to achieving your goals. Choosing a unique lifestyle will lead to personal growth, confidence and success. Follow the path that makes you feel alive.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — Home improvements look promising. Do as much of the work yourself as possible to avoid unnecessary costs. Verify information before you make a decision or hire someone you shouldn’t. Romance will brighten your day.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Easy does it; don’t feel that you must jump through hoops to appease someone. Concentrate on your objective, not on what others do or say. You’ll gain the most if you implement the changes that suit your needs.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — Take care of documents before they expire. Look for alternative ways to budget for something you need or for changes you want to make. Romance and partnerships look inviting.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — Focus on creativity and innovative ideas. A chance to make extra cash is within reach. Team up with someone who shares your beliefs and has something to offer.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — Look for

opportunities, send out your resume and market your skills. Actions will speak louder than words. Physical activities will alleviate anxiety.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Thwart outside interference before it has a chance to manifest. Take control and bring about the changes that you want to see happen.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — Think more about what you want and what you can do. Distance yourself from people and practices that have let you down and focus on what’s possible.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) — Be reasonable, stay focused and control your emotions. If you get into a battle over something you cannot change, you’ll waste valuable time. Concentrate on what you can accomplish.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — Spend time on self-improvement, learning new skills and updating your image. Stop worrying so much about what others think, and put your energy into reaching your goals.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Embrace change, set up new goals and gather information to help you on your way. Don’t give in to someone putting unreasonable demands on you. Make your plans your first priority.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Don’t get angry; get moving. Assess situations carefully. Arguing will be a waste of time. Progress will come from taking hold of a situation and dealing with matters constructively.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

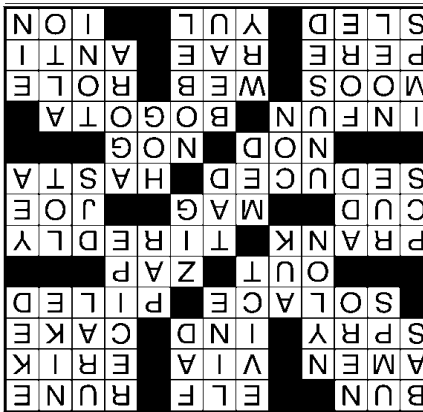
ACROSS

- 1 Coffee-break treat
- 4 Diminutive being in folklore
- 7 Viking letter
- 11 Grace ender
- 13 Travel word
- 14 Norwegian name
- 15 Agile
- 16 Swing voter (abbr.)
- 17 Bar of soap
- 18 Comfort
- 20 Heaped
- 21 Big League event
- 22 Microwave
- 23 Escapade
- 26 In a weary manner
- 30 Heifer’s mouthful
- 31 Newsstand buy
- 32 Frazier of boxing
- 33 Swept away
- 36 “— la vista, baby!”
- 38 Give silent assent
- 39 Eggy drink
- 40 As a joke (2 wds.)
- 43 Colombian city
- 46 Cattle calls
- 47 Fly catcher
- 48 Function
- 50 Explorer Marquette’s title
- 51 — Dawn Chong
- 52 Not pro
- 53 Winter runner
- 54 Mongkut portrayer
- 55 Na+ or Cl-

DOWN

- 1 College degrees
- 2 Safe callers
- 3 Rome’s fiddler
- 4 Dispossess
- 5 Row
- 6 Brief craze
- 7 Cookbook page
- 8 Eurasian range
- 9 Reebok competitor
- 10 Was very thrifty
- 12 Parachute material
- 19 Puffin’s kin
- 20 Standard
- 22 Sharp turn
- 23 Desktops
- 24 Paris street
- 25 Put 2 and 2 together
- 26 Just a little
- 27 LP spinners
- 28 MGM workplace
- 29 Stadium cheer
- 31 Shirt sz.
- 34 Left over
- 35 Debate side
- 36 Farm animal
- 37 Old Greek public square
- 39 Peace prize
- 40 Bratty kids
- 41 Carol
- 42 Fairway shout
- 43 Boyfriend
- 44 R&B’s — Braxton
- 45 Singing voice
- 47 Dryly humorous
- 49 Un, in Berlin

Answer to this puzzle



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