

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



With the plane's restrooms out of order, sales rep Dick Pope saw his chance to make a killing off his samples.

Beau asks reader to rescind proposal

Dear Abby: My boyfriend, “Jimmy,” and I have been together for two years. After about four months, out of necessity we moved in together and it was great.

Not long afterward I got a job two hours away. Since I moved, we get to see each other only every two or three weeks.

The separation has been tough, but when we're together, everything is perfect and all is right with the world. I feel we were fated to be together.

Before the move, Jimmy and I often talked about marriage, and although I am not crazy about it, I knew it meant a lot to him, so I proposed (ring and all).

He initially said yes, then sort of asked me to take back my proposal. Since then, he has been avoiding all discussions about our future, and I don't know what to do.

I'm willing to quit my job and go back to be with him, but I'm scared he's going to get cold feet.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

Obviously, I'm hopelessly in love with him, but now I'm feeling lost and confused. — *Hours Apart in The South*

Dear Hours Apart: Please allow me to offer some clarity. Do not quit your job because if you do, you may find yourself not only without a job but also without a place to stay.

When someone (man or woman) asks that a proposal be rescinded, it usually means the person feels he or she may have jumped the gun by saying yes. Jimmy is avoiding all discussion about your future because he doesn't want one, and he's afraid to say it directly because he knows it will hurt your feelings.

For your own sake, have an honest conversation with him about this. It may be painful, but it will be better than living in limbo the way you are. As the saying goes, “When a door closes, another one opens.”

Dear Abby: Last Friday was Grandparents' Day at my kids' preschool. My parents attended and were well-behaved for the most part, but then my mother made a faux pas. She asked one of the directors when her baby was due. Well, Abby, the woman isn't pregnant.

When I picked up my kids, I had no idea what had happened. The director was having a conversation with one of the teachers when I walked in, so as usual I smiled and waved as I walked by.

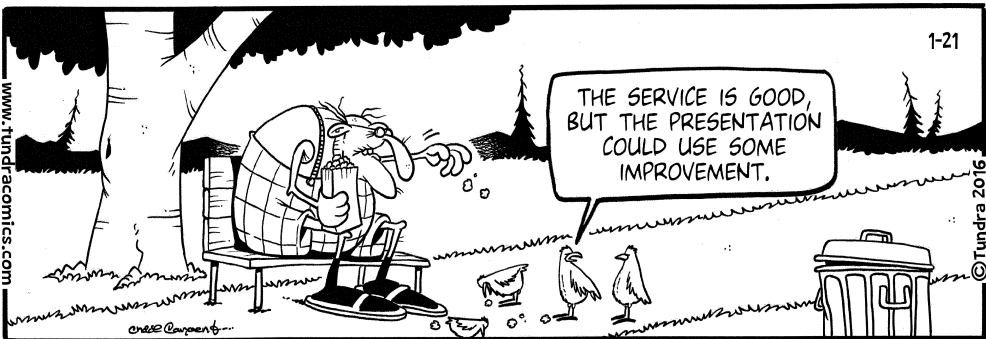
I did sense something was off when she didn't respond, but I figured she was preoccupied. When we met my parents for dinner, my mother told me what happened.

I am mortified. I managed to make it out of the preschool this morning without crossing paths with the director, but I'll be seeing this woman for the next couple of years. What, if anything, do I say to her? — *Horried in Michigan*

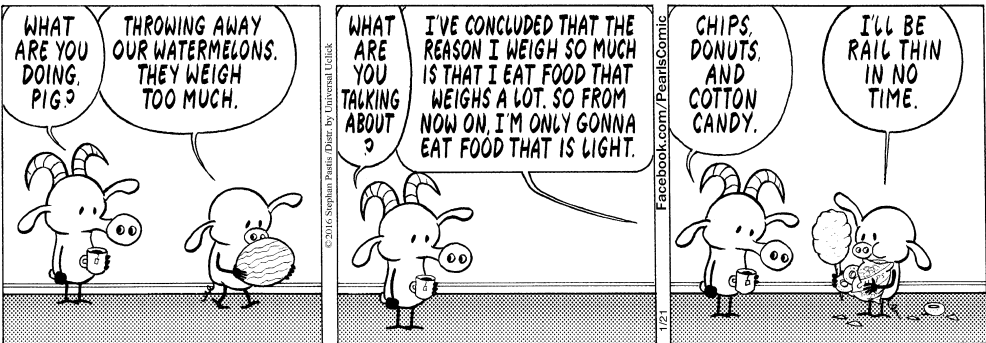
Dear Horrified: You did nothing wrong, so stop avoiding the woman and behave as you usually do. If you notice that she treats you differently, all you should say is: “I heard what happened with my mother, and I'd like to apologize for her behavior. As you can see, she sometimes puts her foot in her mouth, but we love her anyway.”

Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



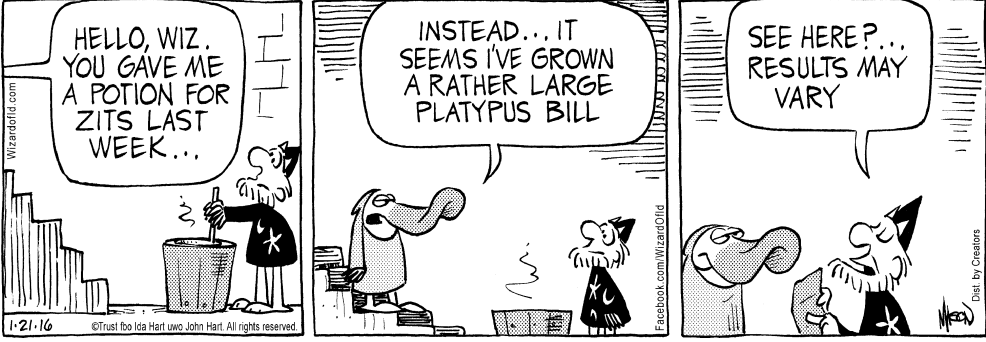
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



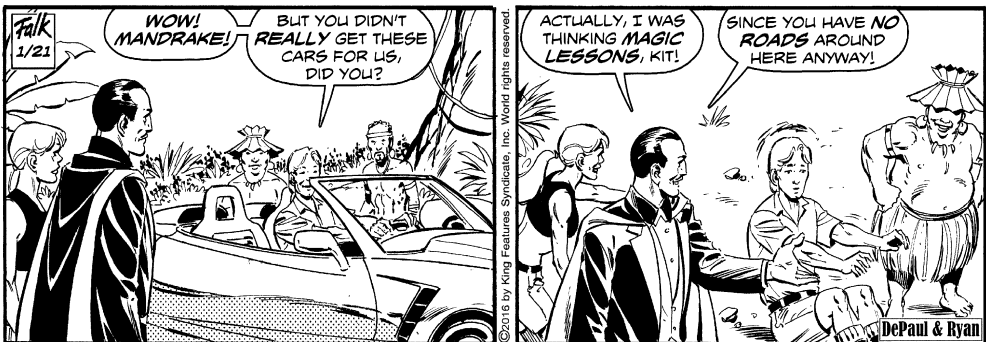
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



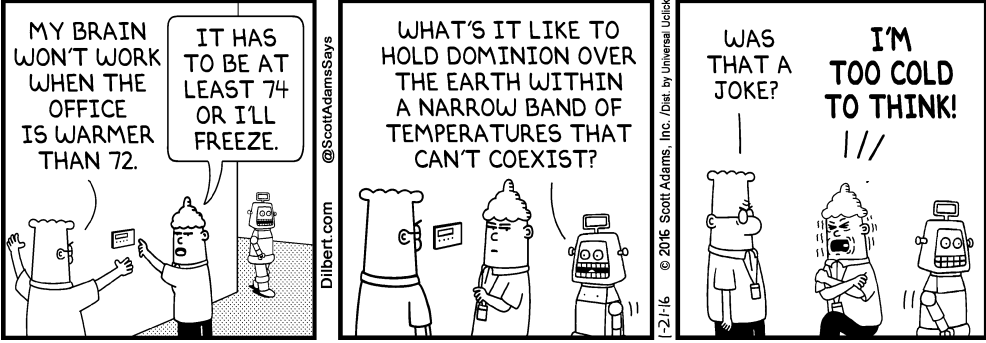
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



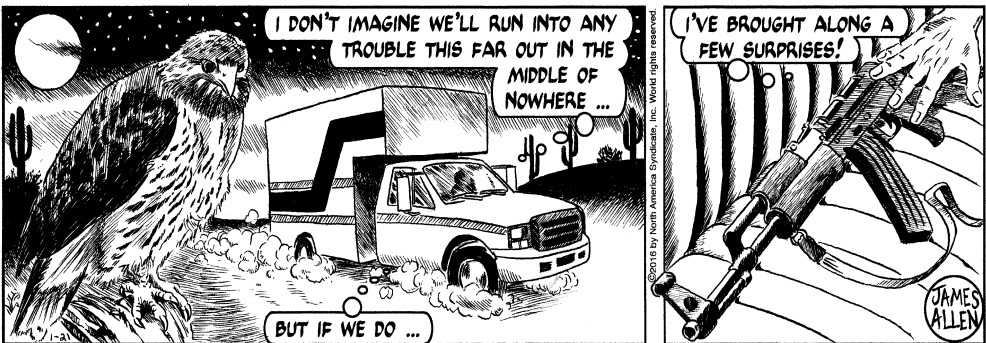
THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



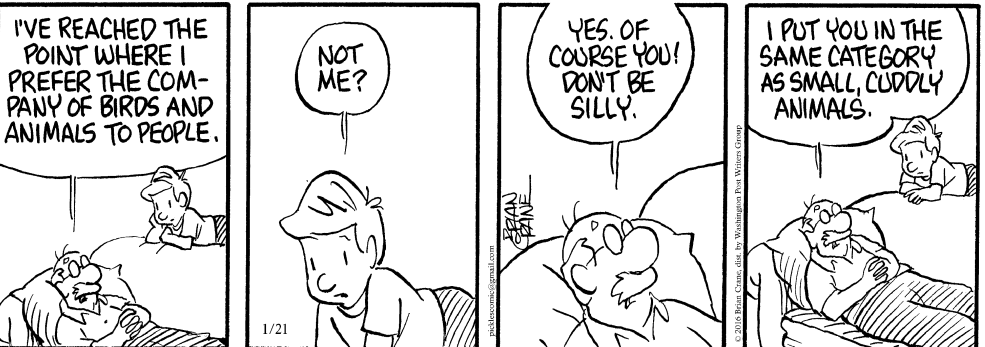
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



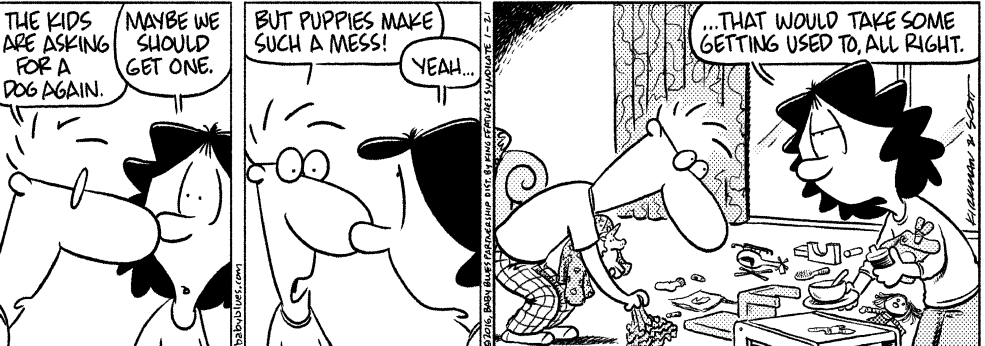
PICKLES by Brian Crane



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



BABY BLUES by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



ZITS by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



DUSTIN by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Andy Warhol discovered new ways to use silk-screening. Duchamp discovered the high art in found objects. You'll hit on your own amazingly specific discovery today to put a finer point on your “voice” in the world.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). The fastest way to gain the approval of others is not to need it or care about it in the least. An organic process will take you there. It starts with being a little more selfish. Are you up to it?

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It's flattering when someone is so impressed with you that he or she wants to show you off. Don't let all that parading around take the life out of your smile.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You won't have to get too creative to do your work in the best way possible. The normal methods will do. Efficiency will count for more than anything, and keep you within the budget, too.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Once you tell someone where you are going, there will be no turning back. Go on and mention what you plan to do along the way and with whom you will be sharing this adventure, and you're as good as launched.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Life has brought you to many a crossroads, but this time is different. It appears to be more of a dead end. You'll

have to cut through on foot for a while to get to the next obvious path.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Sometimes when you endeavor to re-cut it, re-shape it and keep whittling away at it until it's right, it becomes too small to be workable. Don't be afraid to start over.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Play around with formats that are entirely new. You may just find that you're able to put your entire self into it and create something that is perfectly “your thing.”

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). As long as you don't let it stop you, frustration is actually a very useful emotion. It's better than self-delusion — that's for sure. Frustration has a simple message: What you're doing isn't working. Now go find what will.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Things are getting better, and part of the reason is you, so go ahead and take the credit. Do it quickly and you'll be relatively inconspicuous enough so as not to inspire jealousy.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The new project is packed with potential. It's safe, appropriate, necessary even to apply your fervor. A touch of madness will take this from “exciting” to “brilliant.”

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If you take up too much room with your kindness and efforts to make the other person happy, there will no space left for reciprocation. Back off and let the other person come forward with a bigger effort.



HOLIDAY MATHIS