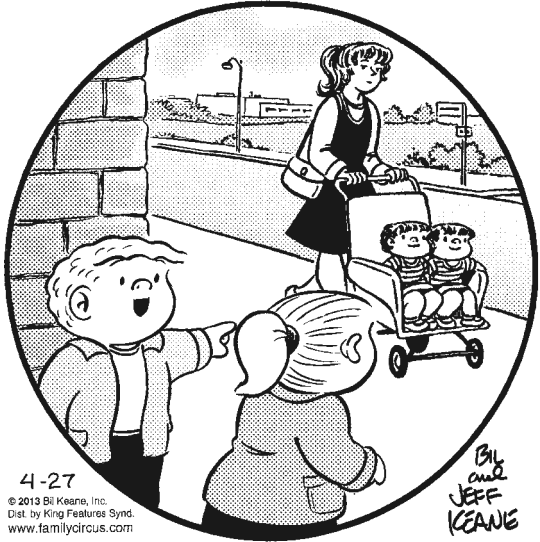


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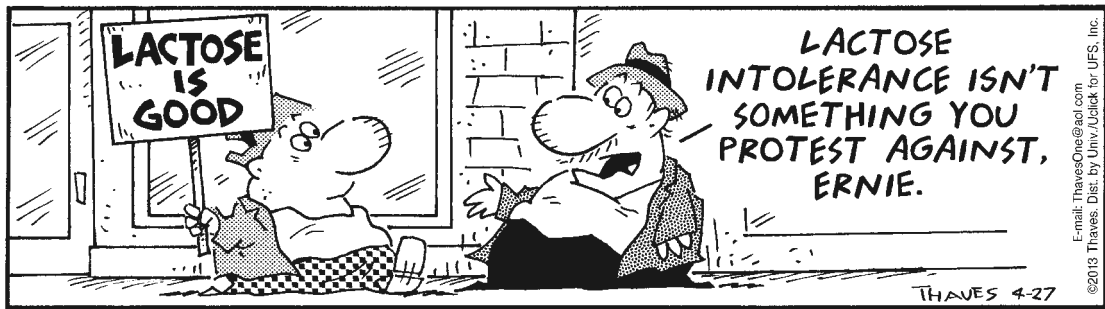


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Teenager's Dating Game Begins With Proving Her Maturity

DEAR ABBY: I am a 13-year-old girl and my parents won't let me date. I believe I am mature for my age and won't do anything foolish. I don't know why my parents are being like this. Please give me some advice on how to persuade them. — RE-ALLY READY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEAR REALLY READY: Although you think you are ready to start dating, your parents will have to make the ultimate decision on when you enter the "dating game." Their decision will most likely be based on whether you have demonstrated the beginnings of emotional maturity.

Here's how: You need to have proven to them you can handle responsibility, carry out school assignments and chores, be honest with them and keep your word. It will also depend upon whether they know the boy in question, and whether HE is responsible enough to be trusted with their most precious possession, which is you.

DEAR ABBY: I have been married for 27 years to a man who is a church pastor. We have had to move every six to eight years, partly because he was repeatedly unfaithful. We have gone through his alcoholism, gambling and womanizing, and my two suicide attempts. We have been trying to work things out, but I suspect that he's back to his old ways.

I work part-time, but haven't been able to find a full-time job after our most recent move, so I am financially dependent on him. I have two adult children who don't live near me. Most of the people I know are through the church, and they are all great supporters of my husband.

I feel trapped, and I don't know how to fix my life at this point. Have you any suggestions? — TRAPPED ON THE EAST COAST

DEAR TRAPPED: You will have to do it in stages.

The first should be to talk with a licensed therapist who is not associated with the church. It will help you to clarify your thinking and become more emotionally stabilized.

Next, continue looking for full-time employment. If necessary, start by volunteering. It will help to widen your circle of acquaintances and perhaps lead to a job.

Then, once you are feeling better about yourself, you will be better able to decide what to do about your unhappy marriage.

DEAR ABBY: After being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis last year, I moved 900 miles from home. Shortly after the move, my dog had to be put to sleep. Because of all the stress, my M.S. flared up and I was admitted to the hospital.

After my third day there I was lonely, so I went to the gift shop (the Pink Smock) and bought myself some pretty flowers and knick-knacks as a pick-me-up. While I was paying for them, the ladies behind the counter asked me if I needed a card for the flowers. I explained I was buying them for myself because I was alone.

After I returned to my room, about an hour later more flowers arrived. I thought my mom had sent them to me from afar. The card read: "Feel Better Soon! From the Ladies at the Pink Smock."

Abby, that has to be the most thoughtful thing a stranger has ever done for me, and I wanted to share it. I am so touched! — RACHEL IN SANFORD, N.C.

DEAR RACHEL: Your letter is an example of what strong medicine an act of kindness can be. I don't know which hospital the Pink Smock is in, but whoever runs it should know what an asset those caring women in the gift shop are. Kudos to them, and I hope you are doing much better now.

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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bigar's Stars is based on the degree of your sun at birth. The sign name is simply a label astrologers put on a set of degrees for convenience. For best results, readers should refer to the dates following each sign.

A baby born today has a Sun in Taurus and a Moon in Scorpio if born before 8:13 p.m. (PDT). Afterward, the Moon will be in Sagittarius.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2013:

This year you swing from one pole to the other. You'll open up to new ideas, but only after initially being uncompromising. Many people will be surprised at your rigidity, as you have been known to flex more in the past. Fear of the unknown could be a factor. If you are single, someone who enters your life is very serious, yet desirable. Ask yourself if you can live with this type of person. If you are attached, your sweetie often makes great suggestions that are well thought out. GO with the flow. SAGITTARIUS jumps in with ease! The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19)

★★★★ A partner loves the extra attention, and he or she gives back accordingly. One-on-one exchanges are powerful right now. If you are single and you're interested in someone, make an advance. You will know what to say and do. Tonight: Try a change in routine.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ Forget the thought that you'll have a quiet day where you can do what you want. If you are invited to go on a day drive or an excursion of some sort, accept. A change of scenery invigorates your energy and makes you more open to socializing. Tonight: The party goes on.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★ Complete projects rather than initiate them today. You could want to get some extra work done or finish some spring cleaning. Don't start any effort that could go past late afternoon, as that is when many options will open up to you. Make sure that you are free. Tonight: Not alone.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ You have an unusually flirtatious attitude that others pick up on. You also have a way of handling a difficult loved one. This person listens to you, and he or she will shape up quickly. A long-distance call invigorates your imagination. Tonight: Paint the town any color you want.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★ Deal with family and a domestic matter. You could have difficulty getting around a problem that in-

volves finances and your sweetie. Give some thought to approaching your budget differently. Get together with friends. Tonight: Ease the tension between you and your sweetie.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★ Return emails and make several calls that you have been putting off. Be more open to the different possibilities that head your way. Understand that you might not be able to relax as you would like, because you have so much to do. Tonight: Entertain at your place.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★ You have a tendency to go overboard. Make more of an effort to use some self-discipline. Listen to your inner voice more often, as it attempts to guide you. You could be particularly vulnerable with spending right now. Keep the tags and receipts! Tonight: Dinner out.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★ You can say that you need to work or be left alone, but your magnetism won't allow this to happen. You might want to adjust your schedule accordingly. You have a lot of energy, and you probably can do it all. Remember, others are not always so available. Tonight: Your treat.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ Take today just for you. Run certain personal errands; perhaps even consider scheduling a massage or taking a trip to the salon. Others might choose to snooze or read. You'll enjoy the remainder of the weekend. Tonight: Someone shares his or her delight in visiting with you.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ Use the daylight hours to the max. Many people are thrilled to have you around. Whether you're off at a ballgame or at some other happening, being surrounded by your friends makes you smile. You could want to go on and on. Tonight: Make it an early night.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ You might need to check in on an older relative. As you see a situation change, you might want to direct its outcome. Let those involved make their own choices. Being responsible is different from pushing your will on others. Tonight: Hook up with a friend or two.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

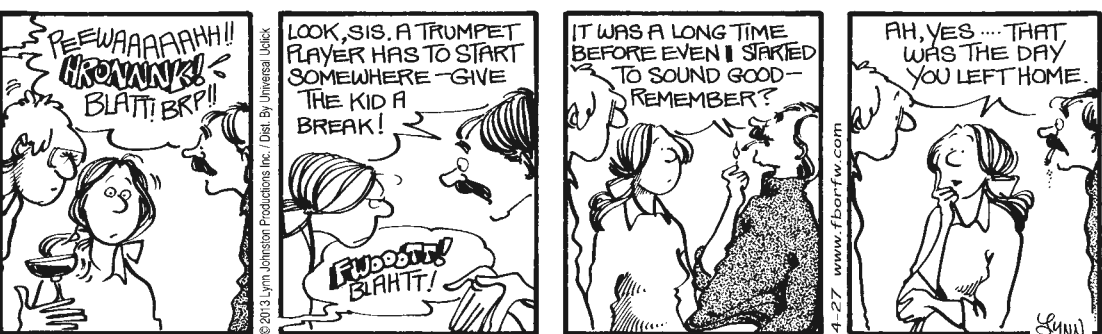
★★★★ Schedule a vacation, or at least pick up a pamphlet or two. Discuss your dream trip with others. Make a phone call to someone at a distance who might want to be involved in this adventure. Tonight: Wherever you are, know that others are following your lead.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

