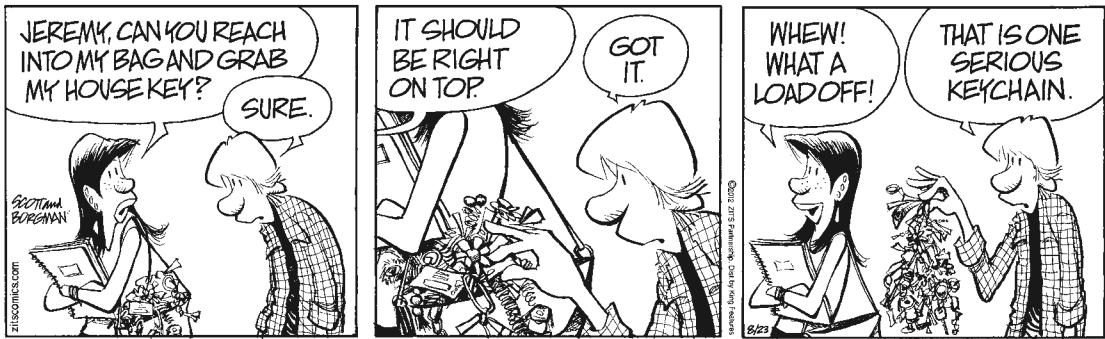


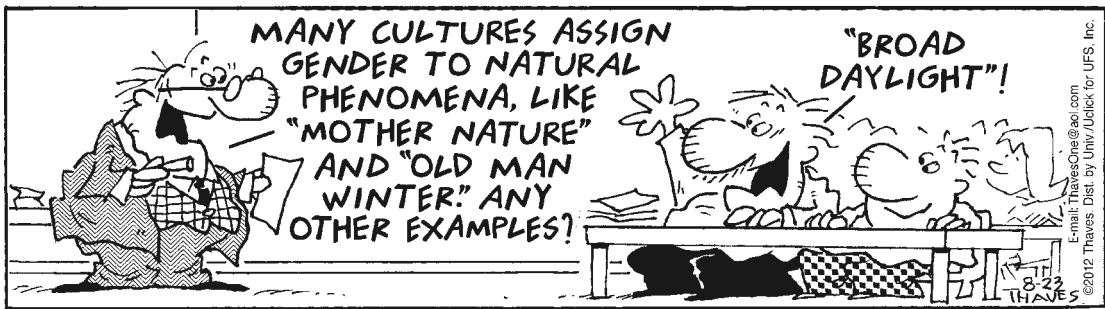
FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



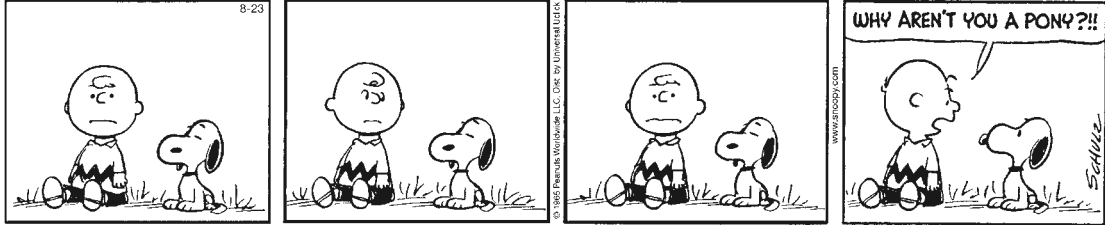
ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



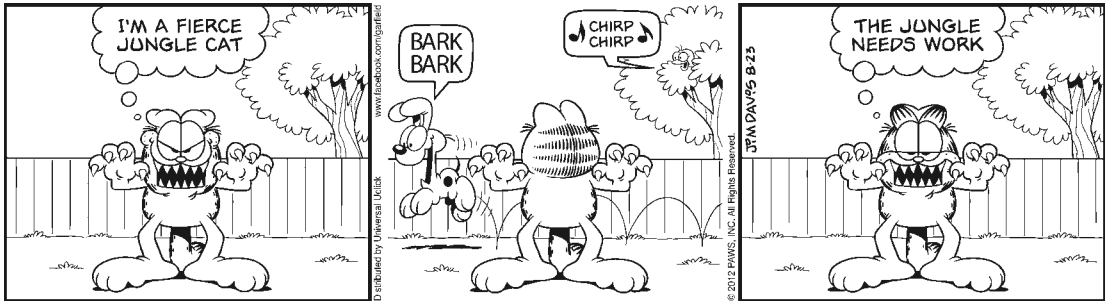
DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



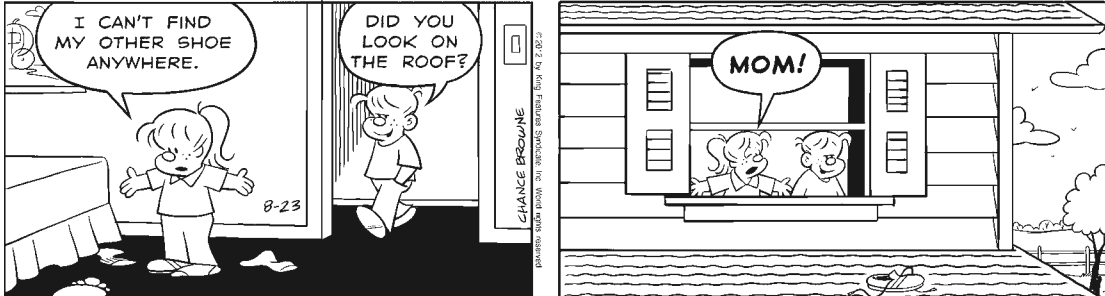
GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



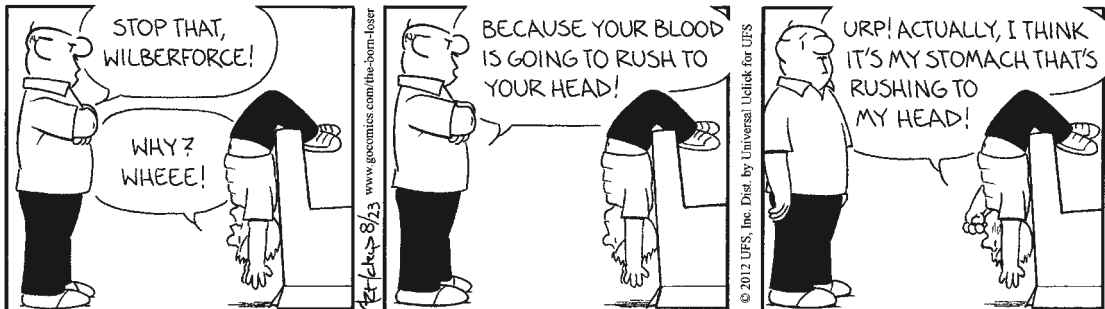
BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSON



New Boyfriend's Old Life Is Still Uncomfortably Close

DEAR ABBY: I started dating my boyfriend a month ago. On our third date he informed me that he was previously married. It lasted two years and he has been divorced for almost a year. It didn't bother me, so I let it go.

He introduced me to his two roommates — one of them is female. After spending a day with them, I noticed he had an odd relationship with her. When I asked him about it later, he said she's his ex-wife. They live together and share basically everything, including groceries and a laptop. He can't seem to understand why I'm disturbed by this.

He says the decision to divorce was mutual and that they have both been seeing other people for a while. I adore him and hate to end a fantastic relationship because I'm jealous. I have no life experience to prepare me to handle this sort of situation, so I don't know what to do. Help! — TAKEN ABACK IN PITTSBURGH

DEAR TAKEN ABACK: Sometimes when a person doesn't know what to do, the best thing to do is — nothing. Your relationship is very new. Stay calm and see how it develops. If you both decide to take it to the next level, the living arrangements may change to something you're more comfortable with.

DEAR ABBY: My 70-something-year-old mother is being remarried soon. I'm happy she has found love again after my father's passing. Several of her friends are throwing her a lingerie shower to celebrate. Abby, I am uncomfortable attending this party.

I asked that she exclude me from the list, but yesterday I received an invitation. Hooray! She has a new life which involves new love. I just don't want to think of my mother in that role. Am I wrong to

not want to attend? — THEY GROW UP SO FAST

DEAR T.G.U.S.F.: You're not wrong. While most of us are aware that we did not arrive via immaculate conception, few of us want to dwell on the reality of our parents as sexual beings. Because you have already told your mother how you feel, simply respond to the invitation by saying you are unable to attend.

DEAR ABBY: I often read letters in your column you refer to as "Pennies From Heaven." I have something I'd like to share with you.

I believe that I have received such gifts from my older brother, Shane, who passed away as an infant. I found one the other day that can't be explained away as anything but a penny from heaven.

As I was about to leave for my morning commute to work, I went out to the garage where I keep my bike, helmet and biking gloves. As I pulled my glove on, I found — you guessed it! — a penny was lodged in the little finger. I never keep money where these gloves are, so I can only guess that Shane put it there for me. — LOVED LITTLE SISTER IN INDIANA

DEAR LOVED LITTLE SISTER: The penny may indeed have been a token of your angel brother's affection. Keep it for luck while you're on the road, and pedal on with confidence knowing you're being lovingly watched over from above.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

© 2012, Universal Press Syndicate

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 Virgo and a Moon in Scorpio all day.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR THURSDAY, AUG. 23, 2012:

This year you will become far more assertive than in years past. Often, a misunderstanding develops out of nowhere, or people distance themselves. Others simply might be responding to your attitude. Accept responsibility for this, and others might change their perception of you. If you are single, you will want to meet a like-minded person. This possibility becomes more of a reality in spring 2013. If you are attached, the two of you seem to have a natural pace. You understand each other well. Dote on this person. SCORPIO can hold you back.

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)

★★★★ How you focus your energy will change substantially. You suddenly will concentrate on joint financial matters and agreements. You might find that a partner can be very difficult. The good news is that this, too, will pass. The bad news is that you will have to put up with it in the meantime. Tonight: A discussion does not need to turn into a fight.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ Your popularity seems to soar. Do not question the moment; simply enjoy it. You also discover that someone is on your case, whether you feel this is fair or not. Remember, there always are alternatives. You will be able to move a difficult situation in the right direction. Tonight: Who, where and what?

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ Your ability to do research and find answers emerges, perhaps by necessity. Confusion seems to surround a key question. You might very well decide to find your own solutions. Others who know your abilities will be more relaxed, too. Tonight: Take a walk by water, or choose some other stressbuster.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ You have a big imagination. Often, that can be a positive thing, and other times this gift can be a double-edged sword. Use your ingenuity to figure out how to handle a financial matter. Make sure you are not walking through quicksand before you act. Tonight: Let the fun begin.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★ Stress has a way of building if you are not careful, especially if there is a misunderstanding between you and someone else. Stay centered by paying attention to your general feelings toward that person. If you can, avoid letting a difficult situation become even more difficult. Tonight: Express your fieriness.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ You might be more out of sorts than you realize. Could you be misinterpreting others' words? Don't read too much into what is being said. Remain caring, and initiate a conversation to clear out a problem later today. Tonight: Talks over dinner.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ Keep expressing your feelings, but do not be surprised if you get an odd reaction midway. Be generous when dealing with this person. Your compassion will come back tenfold. Schedule time to do some shopping ASAP. Tonight: Buy that special item.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ You are in your element. You could be confused by a boss or older friend. This person not only is confusing you, but also him- or herself, the more he or she talks. Be diplomatic. Tonight: Whatever you do, choose a physical activity. You need to let off steam.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ Know when to pull back. You might feel as if you must do something, but in reality you do not know what that is. You will figure it out if you can stay centered. A caring gesture toward a loved one at a distance draws an exciting response. Tonight: Take some much-needed time.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ You know what you want, and you know that you have no interest in stopping. You will be more centered than you have been in a while. A meeting proves to be most instrumental in helping you focus on a long-term goal. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

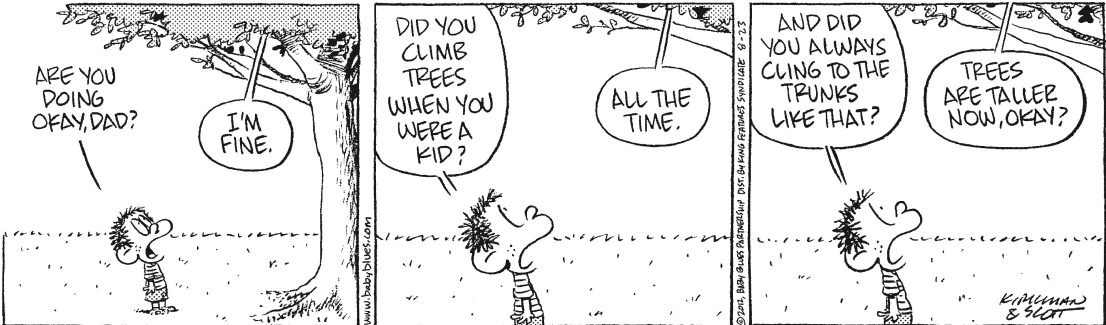
★★★ Note how much pressure builds to get you to do certain things in a particular way. Explain why you do what you do. The more you are pushed, the more you push back. That trait cannot help you in the long run. Tonight: Try to be more reasonable.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ You want more information, and you are determined to get it. An initial attempt at being direct might not work, and actually could backfire. Detach from the immediate problem; the answers will appear. Tonight: Let your mind wander to good music.

© 2012, King Feature Syndicate

BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

