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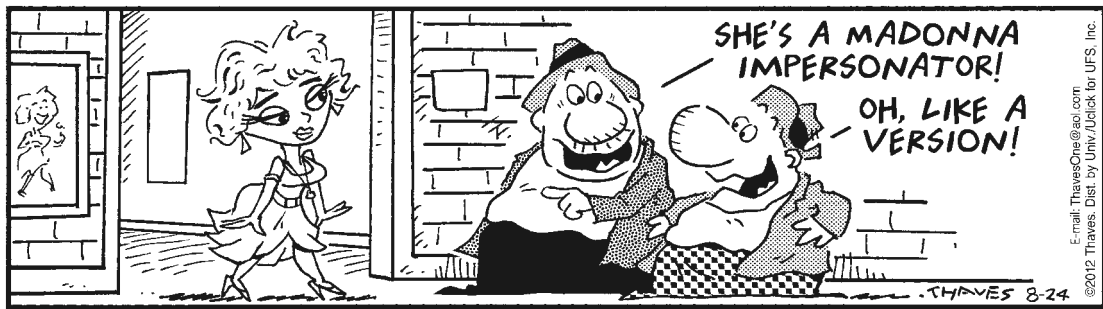


8-24
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FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



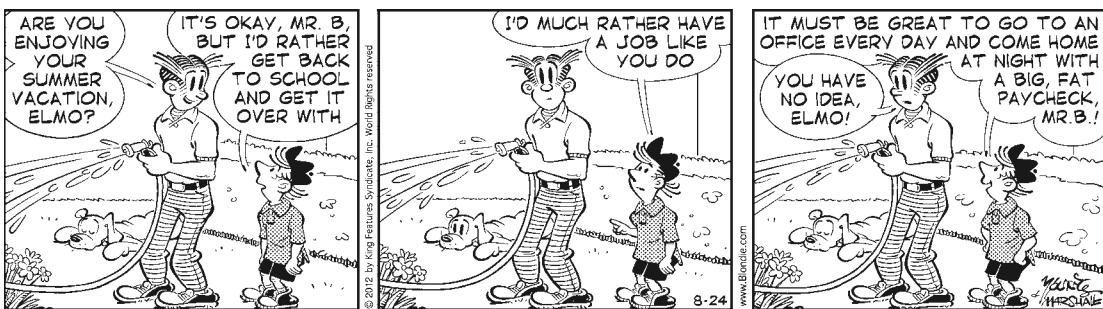
PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



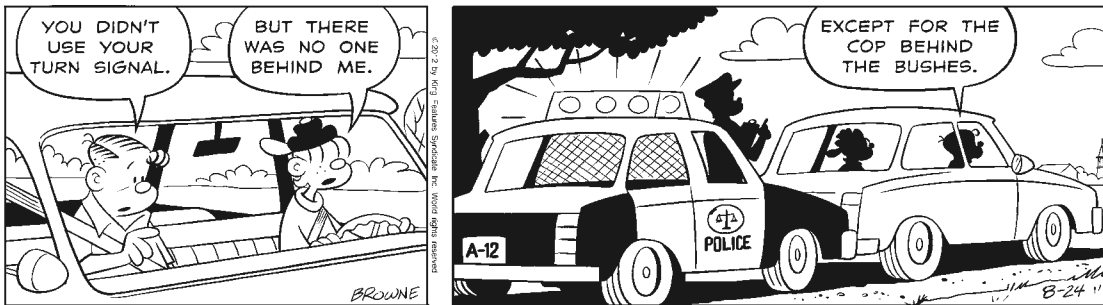
GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



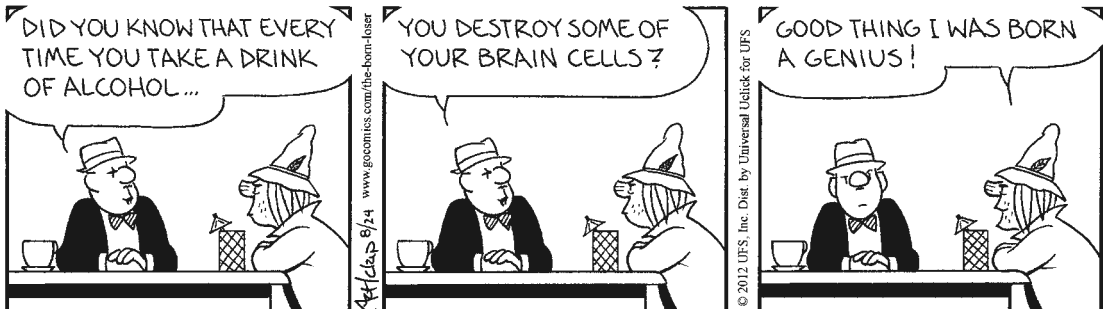
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Woman's Daily Phone Calls Are Suffocating To Friendship

DEAR ABBY: I'm writing for advice on friendship. There is a person who insists we are "best friends." She calls every day to gossip and get into people's business, including mine. We are grown women and I find this childish.

I am a loner. I don't like too many people in my space, but I don't want to hurt her feelings. I just want her to get a life. I'm married; she's single. We have nothing in common, in my opinion, and she tries to keep up with my every move. If I don't answer her phone at home, she calls me at work.

Help me tell this person, without being hurtful and rude, that I like her but I want to have a normal adult relationship with her. I have other close friends, but I don't have to call or talk to them every day to maintain our friendship. — INFRINGED UPON IN MISSISSIPPI

DEAR INFRINGED UPON: The woman may be trying to live vicariously through you, which is why she's calling daily and pumping you for information. Tell her that phone calls at work are distracting, so please don't call you there.

She should also be told that while you like her, the closeness she craves has become claustrophobic and is making you uncomfortable, so to please limit her calls to one or two a week. If you do not set boundaries, you can't expect her to observe them.

DEAR ABBY: I know a fairly well-to-do couple who, after living together for a while, have decided to get married. I went to their online wedding registry to select something for them and was stunned to see that several of the items they had on there were pricey items for their CATS. Is this the status quo these days, or is it just plain bad taste?

I chose to put money toward another item, but now I'm wondering if it will go where it was directed — and not to the cats. It was also suggested that I provide an email address so that an e-card of thanks might be sent.

Abby, you keep telling your readers that times have changed. I reluctantly guess we need to resign ourselves to the emails, but what is your take on the gift suggestions? — OFFENDED WEDDING GUEST IN NEW YORK

DEAR OFFENDED: The couple you mentioned may have most (or all) of the household items they need. While the request for something for their pets instead of themselves is somewhat unusual, no rule of etiquette forbids it. The object is to give something they can use, and I'm having trouble understanding why you find their request offensive.

I do, however, take exception to the idea of a generic, mass mailing being used to acknowledge wedding gifts rather than an INDIVIDUAL thank you. If that's what they're planning, it seems more of an impersonal "shrug" than an actual expression of gratitude.

DEAR ABBY: A woman at work wears flip-flops every day. The sound of her walking is extremely annoying, to the point where I get a headache every day. The boss says her footwear is fine. Any advice? Thanks. — FOOTSTEPS IN OHIO

DEAR FOOTSTEPS: If the boss says her footwear is fine, then you're out of luck. Wear earplugs, use aspirin as directed and pray for an early winter.

DEAR ABBY: Is it wrong to answer a question with a question? — CURIOUS IN K.C.

DEAR CURIOUS: Why do you ask?

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

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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 Virgo and a Moon in Scorpio if born before 3:50 a.m. (PDT). Afterward, the Moon will be in Sagittarius.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR FRIDAY, AUG. 24, 2012:

This year you often will feel tense, as you have so much on your plate. You will demand a lot from yourself and want to deliver just that. Your family and home life evolve in importance. You might want to become more of a cynic in order to see people as they really are, rather than how you think they are. If you are single, you will increase the chances of forming a viable relationship by being more grounded. People will reveal their true essence if you stay alert. If you are attached, listen to what your partner says his or her intentions are, rather than just going off of your ideas of what they are. SAGITTARIUS is too strong of a personality for you.

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)

★★★ You might be somewhat bothered by a dream or premonition you have this morning. Though you typically are cynical of intuition, especially your own, you might try honoring it today. News or an invitation could be instrumental to a new start. Why not go for it? Tonight: Wherever there is music.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ Work with a partner or loved one directly. You are far more powerful as a team than you are separately. You might want to resolve some confusion surrounding mixed messages. Move forward with a strong sense of direction. Tonight: Find a favorite person.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ Someone does not hesitate to question your decisions, and others simply seem challenging. Tension builds as a result. A discussion with a respected authority figure centers you. You might want to find out how this person would handle certain situations. Tonight: Enjoy all the new faces around you.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★ Focus on what you need to do get done; avoid getting sidetracked by others. You can kick back when you finish. A late lunch could become an early dinner. Don't worry — just enjoy it. Reach out for someone at a distance. Is it time for a mini-trip? Tonight: Join friends and/or associates.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ Your imagination adds to the fever and enthusiasm surrounding a project, a special friend or an activity with a child. Where others trip up with confusion and miss an opportunity, you will not. In fact, you'll create an exciting adventure out of a boring happening. Tonight: Let the fun begin.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Stay close to what is familiar to you, as right now there could be a sense of confusion. You might want to rethink your communication style. Confirm appointments. Do not get upset about a partner's or dear friend's vagueness. Tonight: Home is where the heart is.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ You might need to repeat yourself in several different ways to make your point or even just to be heard. You could be frustrated by someone's ambiguity. Any attempts at communication could be difficult later today. Return calls and schedule meetings. Tonight: Go to a favorite spot.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ Be aware of what someone has to offer. You have the same versatility, but a different set of skills. Together, you make quite a team. A loved one or child needs extra attention. Detach, and look at the whole picture. Tonight: Be careful with your finances.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ Your actions make all the difference in a domestic matter that goes from confusing and disappointing to very pleasing. Zero in on a long-term goal if you really want it to happen. You might be surprised at the results of one day. Tonight: Whatever knocks your socks off!

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★ Take your time discerning what is happening around you. Slow down and clarify facts — doing so might be more important than you realize. Ask questions to verify what you think. Tonight: Not to be found.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ A meeting could go longer than you intended. You might want to postpone it until the end of the day. Your finances could seem strange at first, whether it is because of an offer or difficulty realizing a momentary goal. Don't worry; you will be able to clarify the situation. Tonight: Favorite spot, favorite people.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

HHH Tension builds surrounding a superior or a community and/or business situation. Your intentions might be well-meaning, but others do not receive your ideas clearly until you reiterate your reasoning several times. Tonight: A force to be dealt with.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

