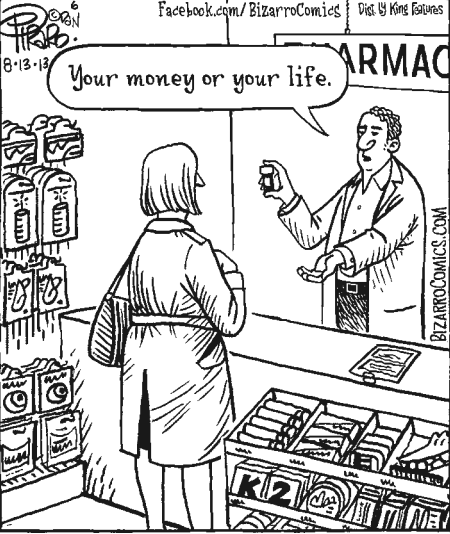


FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



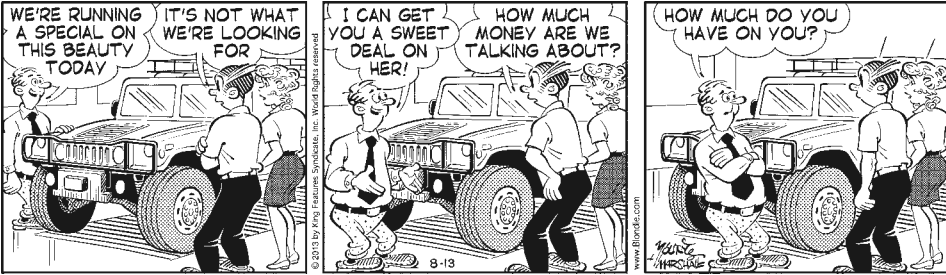
PEANUTS | CHARLES M. SCHULZ



DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



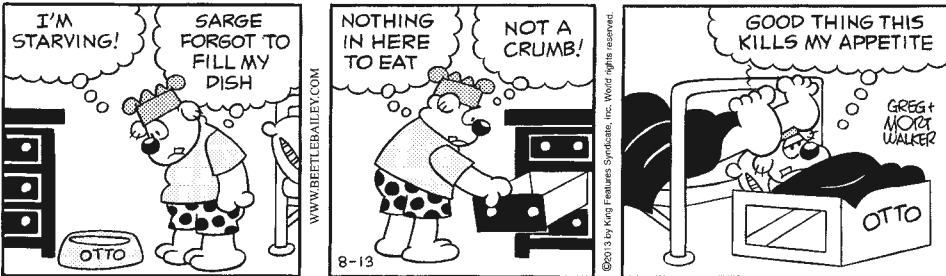
BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



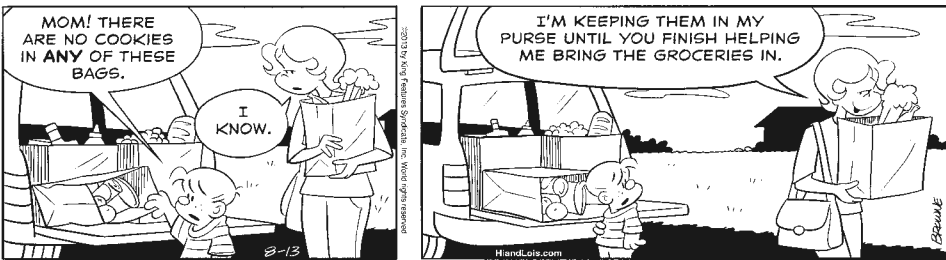
GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



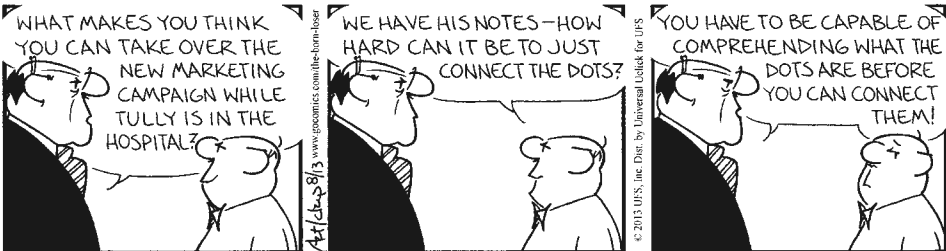
BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



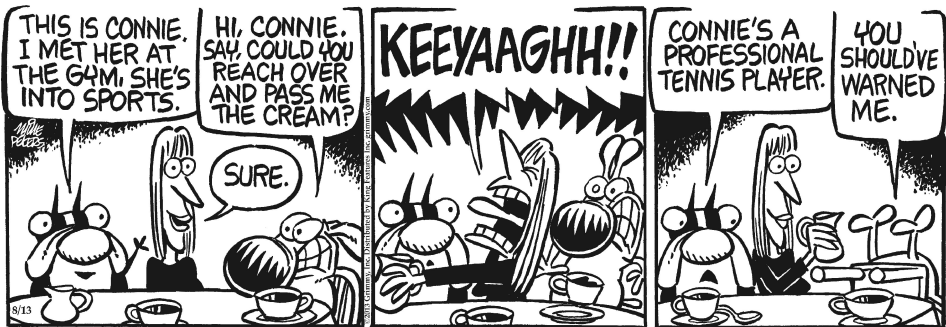
HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSOM



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



Questions About Sons' Adoption Deserve Answers

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have two wonderful sons who joined our family through adoption. While we don't broadcast that they are adopted, it sometimes comes up in conversation. When it does, people inevitably ask, "What happened to their 'real' parents?" or, "Why were they given up?"

I know folks are curious, but these comments are hurtful. The details of my sons' lives are private, to be shared as they grow in age-appropriate ways. They know they are adopted, but are too young to know the details surrounding their lives prior to joining our family. I do not want to have an in-depth conversation with every person who asks a nosy question. These questions always seem to come up when the kids are around and I feel unprepared to answer them.

Do you have any suggestions for a witty and confident response that can shut down these questions? I don't want my boys to be ashamed that they were adopted, but I also don't want the details out there for public consumption. — ADOPTED MOM IN INDY

DEAR ADOPTED MOM: That someone would be so insensitive as to pose those questions in front of the children is disconcerting. While I can't think of a "witty" response that would deter the questioner, I can think of one that would be effective. Look the person in the eye, smile and say, "Oh, that's a long story, but look at what beautiful sons I have. I feel truly blessed."

DEAR ABBY: My parents died when I was a teenager. In the years since I have noticed strange things. While I don't find pennies, I do often see streetlights turn off right before I drive under them. I drive a lot at night and in the early morning because I work graveyard shifts, and it seems to happen almost every day when I go to work or come home.

I guess it could be coincidental. But a friend suggested years ago that it's my parents letting me know they're watching over

me. I want to believe, yet I feel skeptical at the same time. Have you ever heard of anything like it? — LIGHTS OUT IN FEDERAL WAY, WASH.

DEAR LIGHTS OUT: The only time I have heard of anything like what you're experiencing has been when I happened to change channels and come upon a television show about the paranormal. More important than what I believe is what you choose to believe. If the reassurance that your parents are watching over you brings you comfort, then I am all for it.

DEAR ABBY: This idea may appeal to the parents of young children: Celebrate "half-birthdays." (The concept is derived from the "Half-Birthday Song" in "Alice in Wonderland.")

A year to a young child is a long time. In addition to recognizing the joy that he/she was born, it's a start to learning the structure of our calendar. It doesn't have to involve a big party or gifts, just a special activity day with a parent. Our family has observed half-birthdays for 45 years and have found it to be a worthwhile tradition. — FUN MOM

DEAR FUN MOM: The title of the song you mentioned is actually "The UNbirthday Song," but I'm in favor of anything that will bring parents and children closer. If the household is headed by a single working parent, then I'll bet a grandparent would be delighted for the chance to celebrate that special occasion.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable — and most frequently requested — poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Keepers 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 the Sun in Leo and the Moon in Scorpio.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR TUESDAY, AUG. 13, 2013:

This year you have many demands domestically. How you handle them will impact other areas of your life. A move, a change in the family, a new addition are only some of the possibilities of what might occur. If you are single, someone you become romantically involved with might become a live-in quickly. Be aware that this person might not move out as quickly if you want him or her to. If you are attached, look within if you're not feeling content. Responsibilities could be weighing on you so much so that you are losing your sense of spontaneity and fun. Schedule some much-needed private time with your sweetie. Both of you will gain from these periods together. SCORPIO can weigh you down mentally and emotionally. 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)

★★★★ Your intensity cannot be hidden. Even if another party has a one- or two-sentence conversation with you, your fervency and passion come through. Confusion might arise easily. The more you try to clarify, the more chaos seems to arise. Tonight: Togetherness works.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ You have a subtle yet strong manner that marks your conversations and actions. Others know when you are serious. Confusion marks a money matter. Tonight: Defer to another person's suggestion.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★ You know the toll of pushing others too hard, and once more you see the impact of this behavior. A close associate gives you the cold shoulder. Push comes to shove when you deal with another person whom you care about. This person has an attitude that demands calls, gifts and other tokens of affection too often. Tonight: Know when to quit working.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★★ You are the poster child for transparency. You cannot help but show your feelings. Caring seems to flow. A friend or associate will bend more than usual, but this might not always be the case. Have an important discussion. Tonight: Paint the town red.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★ You could be taken aback by another person's suggestion. In a sense you might find this person a bit intrusive, probably because his or her

perception hits close to home. A partner doesn't know how to respond to your upset and thoughts. Tonight: Order in.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Conversations are lively, even if they are somewhat stilted. You might not know what to say. A neighbor or a close relative gets an attitude at one of the worst moments possible. Invite others to join you for a fun happening, maybe this Friday. Tonight: Hang out with a friend.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★ You cannot have a say in every matter, though you might like to. You see a series of events as a continuum. With this perspective, you might not pay attention to some important details, which could be critical. Pressure builds, as a boss or a parent wants your attention. Tonight: Leave the day behind and join a friend for a drink and munchies.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★★ You seem to be very centered and know which way to go. Others will follow your lead and indirectly give you support. Stop and take time to see the big picture before making a decision. Tonight: Whatever knocks your socks off.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★ Take your time thinking about an impending change. You see a potential issue involving funds. You tend to be less positive than a partner, yet you have more insight into the negatives. For this reason, you are generally more prepared. Confusion surrounds a conversation. Tonight: Let go of concerns for an evening.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ Aim for exactly what you want. Listen to news and consider how you want to use the information. You demonstrate the ability to integrate different elements into a successful, winning proposition. Others respond positively to your direction. Tonight: Find your friends.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

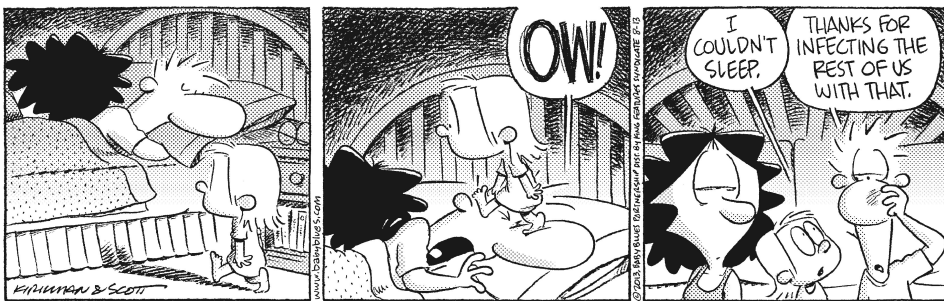
★★★ Be aware of your limitations with a friend or loved one. Listen to news more openly, and make decisions accordingly. Honor a change that seems necessary. Trust in your resilience to get around a difficulty. You are on top of your game, even if you feel a little insecure. Tonight: Others follow your lead.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★★ Listen to news with a grain of salt. You are hearing information that until now has not been shared. Your ingenuity takes this information and funnels it appropriately to create a winning situation. Trust in your ability to grasp deeper concepts. Tonight: Let your mind wander, and follow its lead (within reason!).

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

