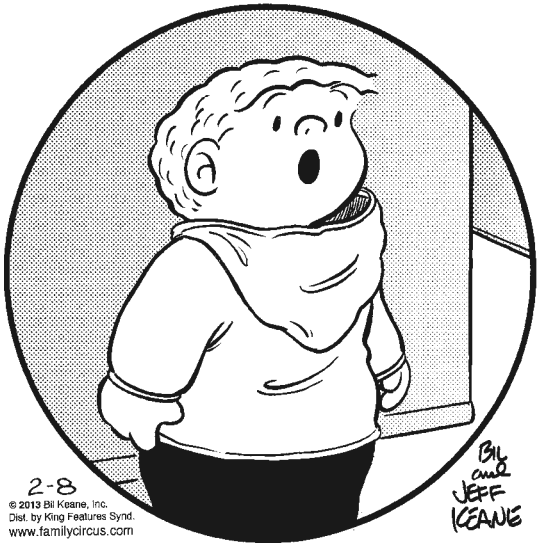
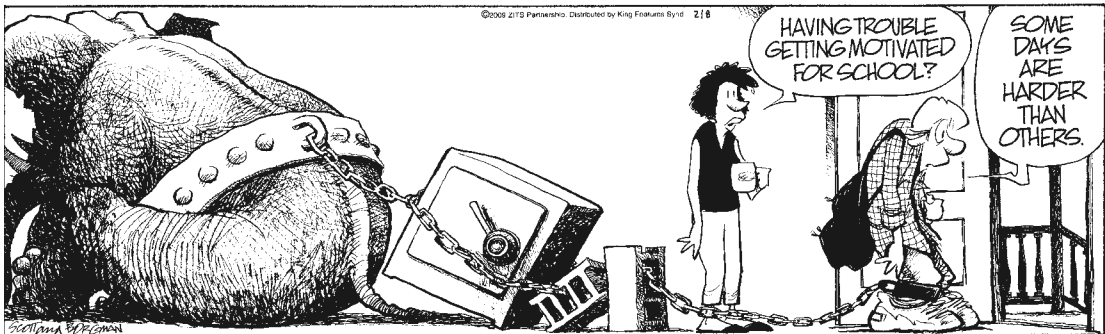


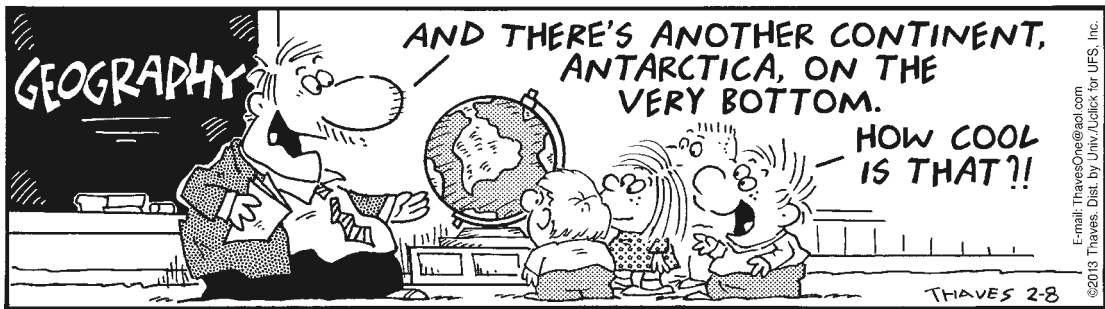
FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



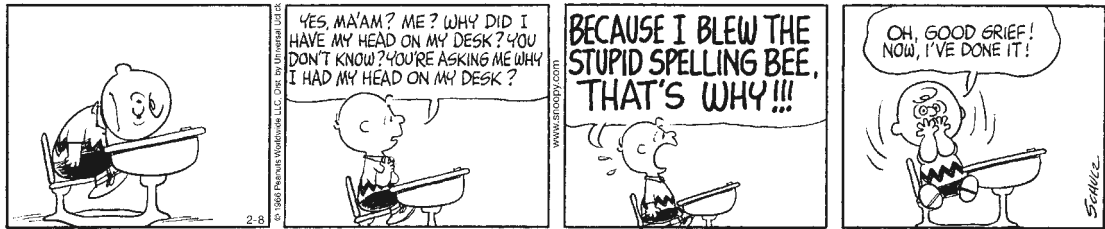
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FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



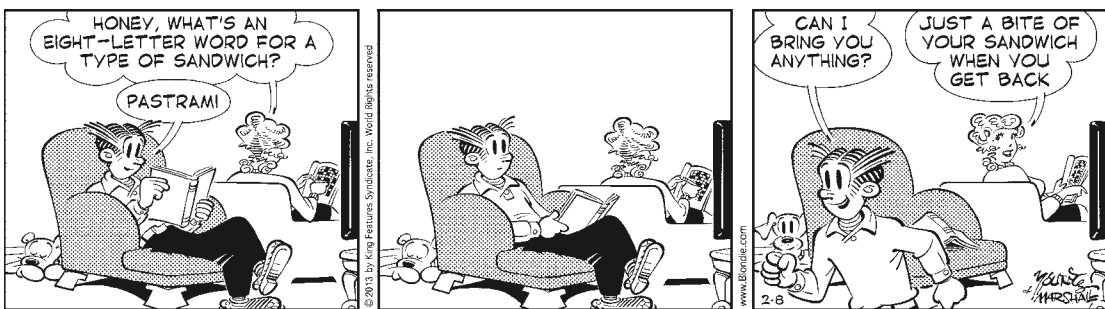
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DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



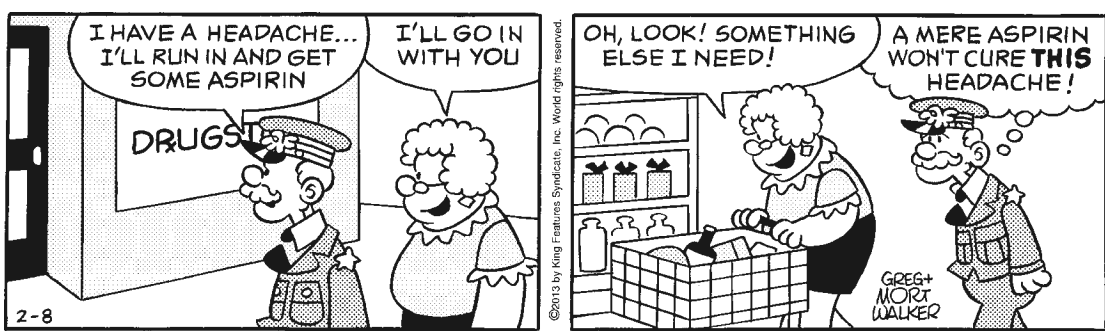
BLONDIE | YOUNG & DRAKE



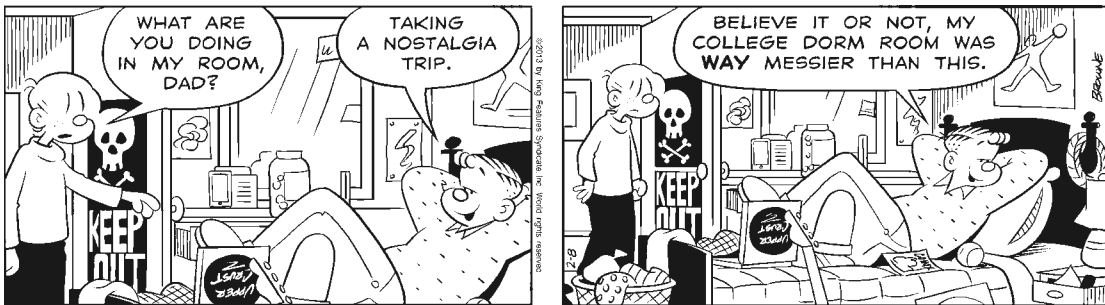
GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSON



Grandfather Wants To Free Boy From Parents' Protective Bubble

DEAR ABBY: When my 9-month-old grandson, "Eli," comes to visit, I become frustrated to the point of leaving the room, if not my house. Not only must we put away things he shouldn't get into, we must tape shut every drawer and cabinet, block access behind couches and chairs to keep Eli from electrical cords, then constantly be on guard for the "unexpected."

Eli is never restricted in any way, and would never be confined to an "inhumane" playpen for even a few minutes. At the slightest whimper, he is picked up. He's walked to sleep (or taken on car rides to "soothe" him), and his parents literally run to him whenever he awakens.

I'm reluctant to criticize because I know they'll be offended, but I'm aching to suggest they teach the child about limits and restrictions and correct him when he misbehaves. Let him experience being in his playpen or even allow him to whine a little before jumping at his every whim. We're not allowed to say "no-no" — the preferred response being to distract Eli and let him go about doing as he pleases. By the way, both parents are professional psycho-babble people.

Am I unreasonable to think my grandson is capable of learning limits with a simple "no-no" and, perhaps, a little smack on his hand? Or should I keep my mouth shut? — WELL-MEANING GRANDPA

DEAR GRANDPA: Well-meaning as you are, I doubt that you will be able to convince two "professional psycho-babble people" that by not giving their little one limits, they're creating a monster. Rather than allow his visits to upset you, I suggest you visit this family in their OWN home.

DEAR ABBY: I am shocked at the rude treatment I see many older mothers receive from their children. I spend considerable time at various doctor appoint-

ments. Fortunately, I can drive myself, but many senior women must depend on their caregivers — often their daughters — who treat them badly. I can't help but wonder how they treat their mothers in private since they are so insensitive in public.

I'm grateful to have a daughter who puts up with my occasional crankiness and complaints. She loves me unconditionally and takes wonderful care of me when needed.

I'd like to ask sons and daughters to be kinder and more patient with their elderly moms. They won't be around forever. — GRATEFUL MOM IN PHOENIX

DEAR GRATEFUL: I wish you had described more clearly the interactions you observed. What you saw may not have been a lack of devotion to their mothers, but signs of caregiver stress or burnout.

Daughters (and sons) caught in the sandwich generation — earning a living and caring for their children as well as their aged parents — are not always at their best. However, you are correct. These frail, elderly parents need compassion and patience because they won't be around forever.

DEAR ABBY: A question was recently raised at a family gathering. If the patriarch of a family is deceased and a man wants to marry his daughter, should he ask permission from her mother? — CURIOUS IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR CURIOUS: It would be a lovely, respectful gesture if he did. But first he should be 100 percent certain that the daughter would like to marry him.

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 Aquarius and a Moon in Capricorn if born before 11:17 a.m. (PST). Afterward, the Moon will be in Aquarius.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR FRIDAY, FEB. 8, 2013:

This year you will alternate between being reclusive and being open and friendly with others. During the times you spend alone, you will center yourself and become more grounded. When you finally emerge, you will be a force to be dealt with. Your personality and charisma also will come out. If you are single, you could change that status quo, if you so choose. Use care as you get to know someone new. This person might not be everything that he or she appears to be. If you are attached, your sweetie finds you to be unusually magnetic and caring this year. At times, you will have a tendency to be me-oriented. Remember, a partnership consists of two people. AQUARIUS is unique in his or her own way.

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)

Handle all professional matters, or any matters having to do with the public. By afternoon, you'll want to schedule meetings and intense discussions. You will see a totally different attitude come forward. Could this be a Friday mood? Tonight: Out with friends.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

Do a little more research and/or have a chat with someone you respect in the morning. Take the lead in the afternoon, and set the standard for what's expected on an important project. Others naturally will follow your example. Tonight: A force to be dealt with.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

A negotiation with a key partner could take you until midday to finalize. Even if you haven't come to a decision or a point of action, start returning calls. Seek feedback from trusted sources should you find a situation to be problematic. Tonight: Listen to some great music.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

Continue to defer to others. The responses you get could floor you. Note that you are gaining some interesting insights from others, and you might want to write them down. A discussion on a one-on-one level is inevitable. Tonight: How about dinner for two?

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

Revisit a project that is completed. You might

opt to revise the message from this work or redo it in a meaningful way. Discuss this change with colleagues or those you consider to be in the know. Tonight: Try to clump all of your invitations together, if possible.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

You have no doubt in your mind that you are more than ready for the next few days. You even might decide to make some plans in the morning. By midafternoon, last-minute problems could arise. Stay focused. Tonight: Out with your colleagues and friends.

LIBRA (SEPT 23-OCT. 22)

You might be unsure about which way to go with a personal matter. Your ingenuity will kick in during the evening, and it will provide an answer regarding what path to take. Tonight: You know how to wow others.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

Communicate any reticence you have over a personal matter early on. Feel your way through this situation. Someone might surprise you with an invitation. Your initial reaction is probably the right one. Return calls later in the day. Tonight: Home is where the fun is.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 21-DEC. 21)

You could be overzealous in the morning. Once more, you might take a hard look at your budget and see how much you can push it. You know there are limits to everything. Others come forward late in the day. You'll feel more at ease with them. Tonight: Can anyone hold you back?

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

Use the morning to the max for any crucial ventures. Your finances, your budget and how much you are willing to spend could become hot issues in the evening. Know what works, and do not hesitate to ask for more of what you want. Tonight: Treat a friend to munchies.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

Listen to news carefully. It might not be as difficult as you believe it is. Give yourself a little time to rethink all the information. You'll laugh at your initial reaction once you turn the corner on this matter. Honor your feelings. Tonight: Speak your mind, and use your charisma.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

Your high energy attracts many people. You have pushed so hard that you might want to rethink your schedule. Don't put off an important matter that has been on the back burner any longer. If you can chill in the afternoon, by all means, do. Tonight: Something just for you.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

