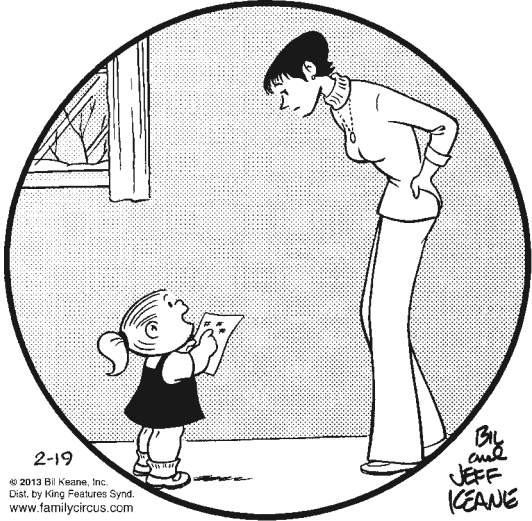


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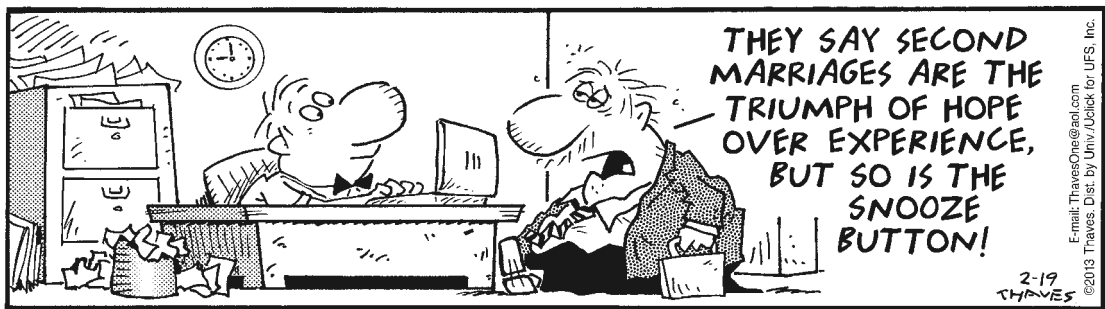


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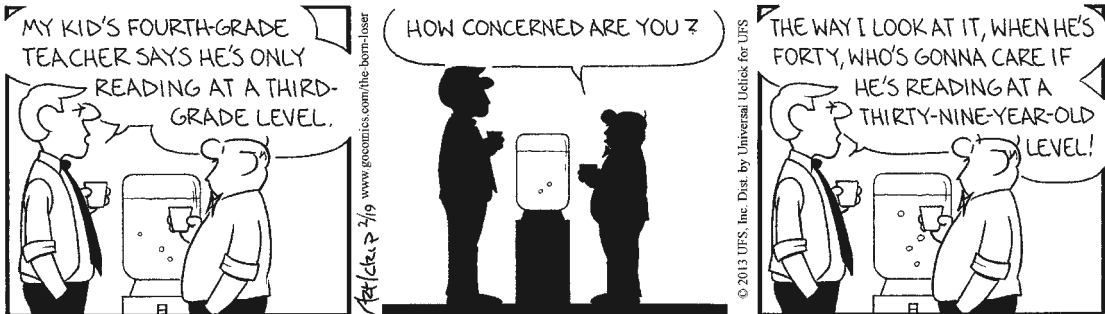
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Son No Longer Living At Home Should Move His Stuff Or Pay

DEAR ABBY: While I always enjoy your column, I thought your advice to "Wants My Space" (Dec. 14), whose son "Dustin" moved away five years ago and expects her to keep his room as he left it, was off the mark. I would have told Dustin what I have told both of my daughters several times: It is not "your" room; I merely let you use it.

Not only is "Wants" not obligated to use her home as a storage facility, she's doing her son a disservice by doing it under these circumstances. At 24, he needs to learn that if he wants a service, it's his obligation to procure it. There are plenty of businesses that can fulfill his needs at a reasonable price. — MATT IN PROVIDENCE FORGE, VA.

DEAR MATT: For the most part, readers agreed with you, and they offered their own "take" on how to accomplish the removal of the young man's belongings:

DEAR ABBY: An acquaintance of mine had a similar problem with his son. The son expected his dad to provide storage space at no charge for an indefinite length of time. My friend told his son: "No way! You get it out of here within six months, or I'll sell it and keep the money for storage fees."

He didn't think his father would actually do it. Well, he was wrong. And now the younger siblings don't even think of leaving any of their stuff at the father's house. — SHIRLEY IN CHULA VISTA, CALIF.

DEAR ABBY: My parents, while not upset with still having their four adult children's belongings in their home, solved their dilemma in a unique way. One Christmas we all gathered at their house and were delighted to find heaps of presents under the tree. Concerned that our folks had way overspent, imagine our surprise when we unwrapped the packages and found all of our own belongings! It was an inventive and effective way to clear out the attic and basement. We still talk about it to this day — a warm Christmas

memory. — KATIE IN NEWARK, DEL.

DEAR ABBY: "Wants" is blessed that Dustin voiced his desire for his mom to keep his stuff. My mother continued asking me if I wanted my stuff for years. I said no, until one day, yes, I did. My parents are no longer alive, and I treasure the little stuffed dog that was my very first Christmas present.

I'd advise "Wants" to return some of the items to her son from time to time in the form of gifts. To him, they are treasures, and they can be returned in a way that won't make him feel betrayed. — IRENE IN OWOSSO, MICH.

DEAR ABBY: Dustin should either pay rent to his mother or move his stuff out. If he doesn't, he has abandoned it and she can dispose of it as she sees fit, since it's her house to do with as she pleases. In all fairness, a deadline is reasonable, but it's been five YEARS — why give him six more months? Enough mollycoddling. — ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

DEAR ABBY: Dustin may be lucky his mom wants his stuff out. My mom insisted on keeping my room exactly as I had left it as a shrine. I was glad not to have to move all my coin, toy and stamp collections and the other things from my first 18 years.

However, subsequently Mom allowed a young male relative to use my room, and he lost, stole or destroyed all of my memories. I was and am still sad, but I never told my mom 'cause "that's life." — CHARLIE IN FLORIDA

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby Cookbooklet Set, 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 Pisces and a Moon in Gemini.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR TUESDAY, FEB. 19, 2013:

This year you experience some tension regarding what you want to do and the way in which you go about executing those goals. Others might feel as if you are sending them mixed signals. You can go from being deeply emotional to highly intellectual within a few minutes. Confusion surrounds your communication. If you are single, you could have a few start-ups to relationships with different people. Potential partners might be confused by your varying needs, but the right person won't be. If you are attached, the two of you need to work on your communication. Many events happen quickly around you. GEMINI can't understand your feelings, yet he or she loves your ideas.

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 have a way with words that is clear and concise. Right now, whether confusion lies on your side or someone else's, do your best to clear it up. Not pointing fingers leads to good will and continued ease when relating on a one-on-one level. Tonight: Be clear and direct.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★ You might have made an error financially — or maybe someone else has, yet you're the one who has to deal with it. Don't turn down someone's offer to help. Once your finances are back in order, you can make that purchase you've been eyeing. Tonight: Treat yourself on the way home.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ Go full speed ahead. Don't worry about the outcome of a situation. Rethink a personal matter involving a child or a new friend. Clearly there is a lot of caring between the two of you. If a misunderstanding occurs, don't take it personally. Tonight: All smiles.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ You are able to make a difference, and you will do your best to make someone feel more comfortable. Don't worry so much about the long-term implications of a situation, as it might not be the best time to clear the air. Tonight: Get a little extra R and R.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ Listen to news with a touch of cynicism. You might sense that someone has distorted the story or left out an important fact. Show interest and ask questions. Others appreciate your attention. A meeting takes a positive turn, which leads to success. Tonight: Find your friends.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★ Others will look to you to take the lead, so do so. You might be confused by recent events. Ask questions and trust your judgment. Your friends and loved ones will demonstrate their caring because of your kind personality. Tonight: Burn the midnight oil.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★ Take an overview. You know what you did wrong, but you also might be curious about others' reactions. Explore this further by asking questions. Your creativity and gentleness might seem like a ploy to some, but that is who you really are. Tonight: Watch someone open up.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ Work with individuals rather than groups, and you will be happier with the results. You might need to sort out some recent confusion. How you feel about someone could change once you put a misunderstanding to bed. Tonight: Opt for togetherness.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 21-DEC. 21)

★★★★ You always have strong opinions. Allow others to make the first move and express their ideas and feelings. Everyone, including you, gets to see the end results of his or her actions. On some level, this experience could be important. Tonight: Defer, defer, defer.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★ Focus on each task on your to-do list, and work toward meeting your goals. Your ability to move through a problem marks your interactions. Others trust you to get the job done. Understand what your expectations are from a certain situation. Tonight: Lighten up and relax.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ The unexpected occurs, and you might profit from the outcome of handling it the way you want. Others might take a little while to regroup. If you are wondering what's going on, try to walk in their shoes. You are in the mood to overindulge. Tonight: Ever playful.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★★ Stay close to home. You might want to reconsider an investment involving real estate or your domestic life. Investigate and discuss different courses of action with a family member or roommate. You will come to a mutually acceptable idea as a result. Tonight: Order in.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

