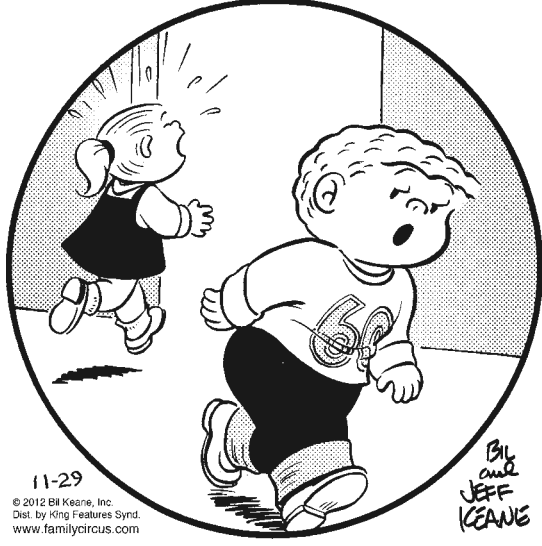


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Boyfriend Can't Fill Father's Shoes For 9-Year-Old Daughter

DEAR ABBY: My husband committed suicide 2 1/2 years ago. We had been married for 13 years and had two daughters who are now 15 and 9. The 15-year-old seems to be doing fine. The 9-year-old is not.

But my biggest problem is my live-in boyfriend, "Tim." While I love him and mostly enjoy his company, he appears to dislike my 9-year-old. She needs male attention because her dad was an attentive, wonderful father. I have discussed this with Tim. His response is he has a hard time doing it because she is "totally out of control and crazy."

Abby, she is none of that. She is a child with a lot of energy. I don't know what to do. I know it isn't fair to my daughter, but I'm lonely and miss Tim when he's not there. I'd appreciate any advice you can give me. — TRYING TO MOVE ON IN OHIO

DEAR TRYING: I am so sorry for your loss. However, parents get only one chance at parenting, which is why it's so important to do it right the first time. What is happening in your household is unfair to your daughter. She should not be forced to live with a man who doesn't like her and can't give her positive reinforcement. That's why, for her sake, it would be better for you and Tim to live apart. If you choose him over your daughter, you will later regret it and could cause her serious emotional problems for decades.

DEAR ABBY: The holidays are right around the corner, and my husband and I have had a difficult couple of years financially. I'm a full-time student; he is the only one bringing in an income while we raise two young boys.

I love the holidays — except for shopping for others. I hate spending money I don't have looking

for that perfect gift for everyone on my list. More often than not, the gift ends up being re-gifted or in the summer garage sale. For the past two years I have asked that if people want to give gifts, to please give them to the kids and leave us adults out of it. My requests have been ignored.

I know for a fact that my extended family is as strapped for cash as I am, but they charge on credit cards. Should I refuse a gift I can't reciprocate or thank them and try not to feel guilty? The name exchange option didn't work. I feel there should be more to the holidays than going into debt for gifts. — MA HUMBBUG IN OREGON

DEAR MA HUMBBUG: I agree with you, and so would credit counselors coast to coast. Thank your relatives for their gifts. Reiterate that money is tight, so you will be giving gifts to the youngest family members only. If you feel you must reciprocate in some way, whip up a batch of holiday cookies or fudge brownies, wrap them with a colorful ribbon and make that your holiday gift.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married for six years. Before I met him, I was with a woman. I don't want my husband to find out about it because I'm afraid it will turn him on and he'll want to have threesomes. (He enjoys looking at lesbian porn.) Should I tell him about it? — WANTS MY PAST IN THE PAST

DEAR WANTS YOUR PAST IN THE PAST: If you think there is a chance that your husband will find out, then the person he should hear it from is you. And if he suggests having a threesome, tell him that you are happy as things are and you prefer to remain monogamous.



DEAR ABBY

Jeanne Phillips

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



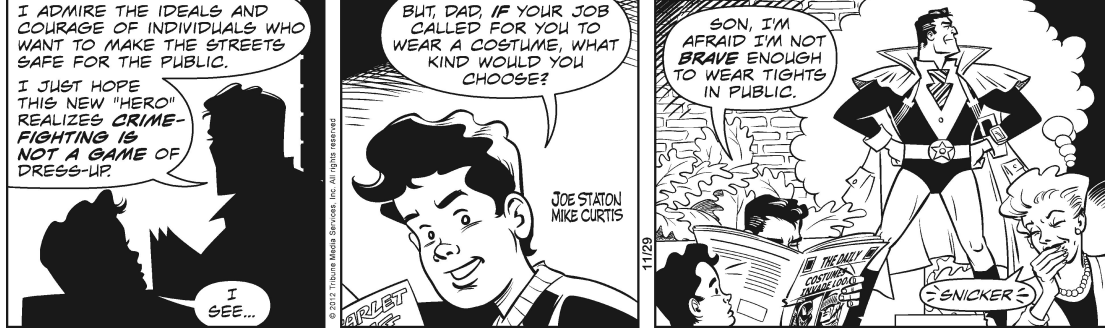
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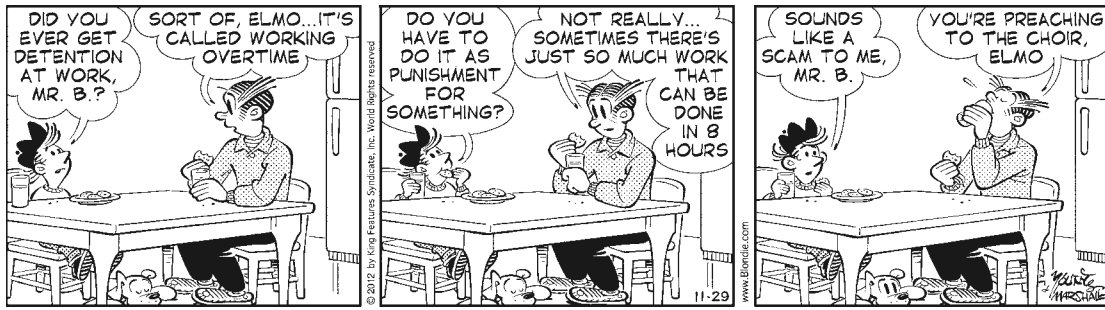
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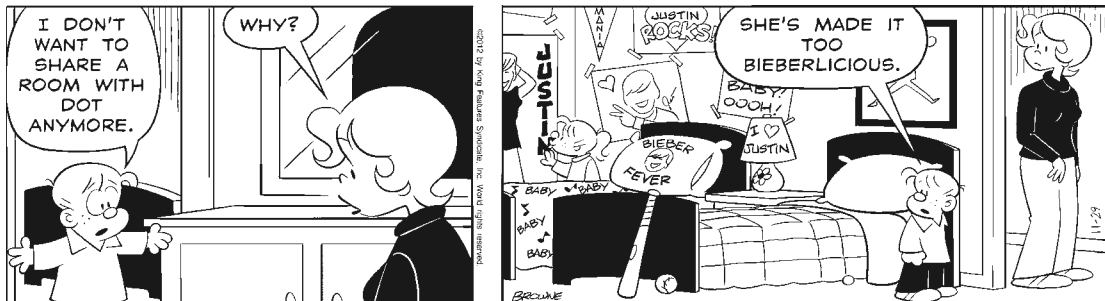
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BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSONO



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 Sagittarius and a Moon in Gemini.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR THURSDAY, NOV. 29, 2012:

This year you often feel challenged by others. As a result, you are unusually verbal and frequently get into heated discussions. Use any criticism you receive to strengthen your ideas. If you are single, you could meet your next sweetie, so be sure to check out people with care. Make plenty of time for social activities as well. If you are attached, the two of you will experience an easier year than in the recent past. GEMINI is even more verbal than you are!

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 know exactly how to get someone's attention, and you put your energy where it counts. You could be surprised at how a little provocation goes a long way with a higher-up. Be sure to use diplomacy. Tonight: How about dinner for two?

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

You might be quite tied to a situation that could involve some travel. Whether the person who attracts your interest is a loved one, a friend or a professional associate, it makes no difference. You will put forth your best efforts when dealing with him or her. Tonight: Time for treats.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

Listen to the drumbeats. You need to be more responsive to someone who could be a bit touchy at times. If you have a problem doing this, you might want to consider changing the nature of the relationship. Clear out your to-do list quickly. Tonight: Visit with some friends.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

Make an effort to contact someone who is alone often. This person appreciates your compassion more than you realize. Listen to what he or she has to share. Your creativity is stimulated by interacting with others. Tonight: Vanish while you can.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

Throw yourself 100 percent into whatever you need to do. Your energy is high, and your mind is keen.

With this combination, you can accomplish nearly anything. Know that a loved one is coming from a caring position in a discussion, even if you do not like what you hear. Tonight: Join your friends.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

Choose your words carefully when dealing with a child or a loved one. No matter what age you are, you will want to relate to the opposite sex on a friendly basis. Be aware that someone is observing you. Take care of your responsibilities. Tonight: A must appearance.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

Keep reaching out for more information. You tend to see much more than others because you are detached and can weigh the pros and cons. Read between the lines with a loved one who might be putting him- or herself at a distance. Tonight: Act out a daydream.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

Relate on a one-on-one level with others, and you could be amazed by what occurs. People will open up more, and you'll be able to resolve problems far more quickly. If you are attached, you might want to make a caring gesture toward your significant other. Tonight: Keep it light.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Others come forward and express a need to share more. Use care if their ideas involve you spending a lot of money. It could be far more costly than what is being presented. Someone you meet today could be problematic in some way. Tonight: Get errands out of the way.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

You get a lot done quickly. A friendship comes through in a meeting. You always knew that this person supported your ideas, and now you are aware that there is more than just friendship between you. Approach this situation with care. Tonight: Play it relaxed.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

Your mischievous side emerges, perhaps because you sense some fun on the horizon. Your creativity opens up a situation with a boss or an older friend. Relax. Worry less about time management and getting everything done. Tonight: You cannot help but be naughty!

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

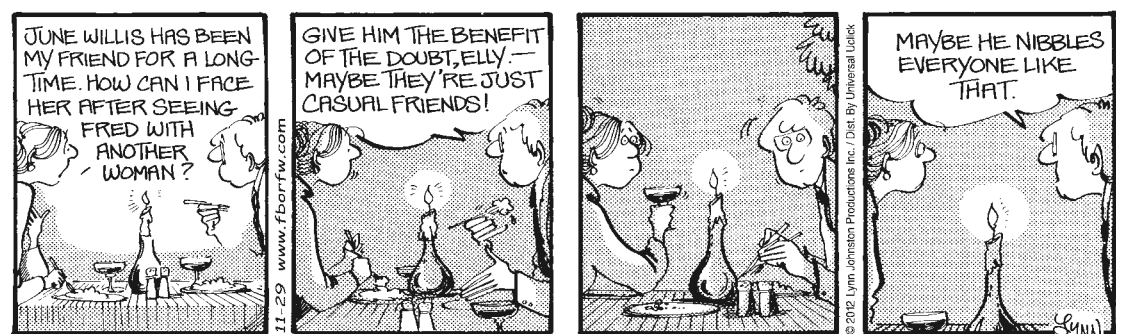
Focus on a matter involving real estate and your long-term goals. For some of you, this might involve a domestic situation; for others, a professional issue. Express only the goals that are relative to the present situation. Others will support them. Tonight: Head home first.

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FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

