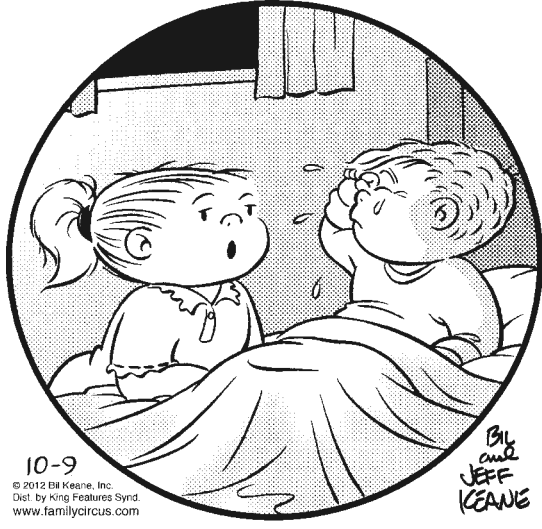


FAMILY CIRCUS | BIL KEANE



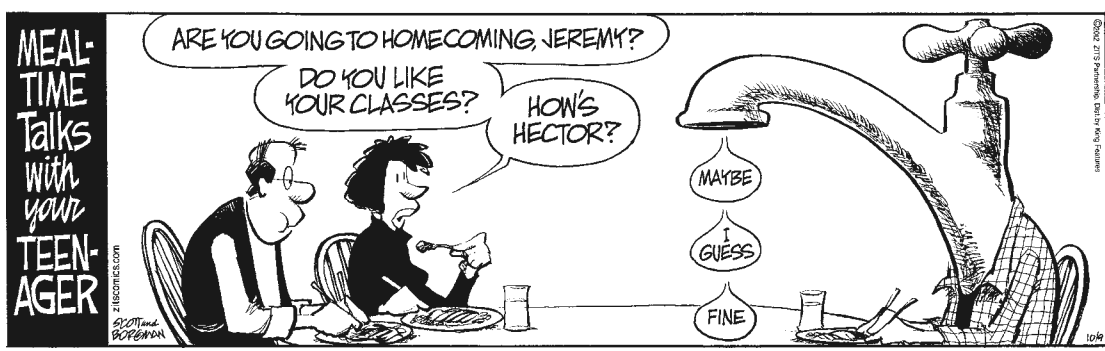
10-9
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"Don't worry, Jeffy. You were just dreaming. If the monsters were real, Sam and Barfy would've barked."

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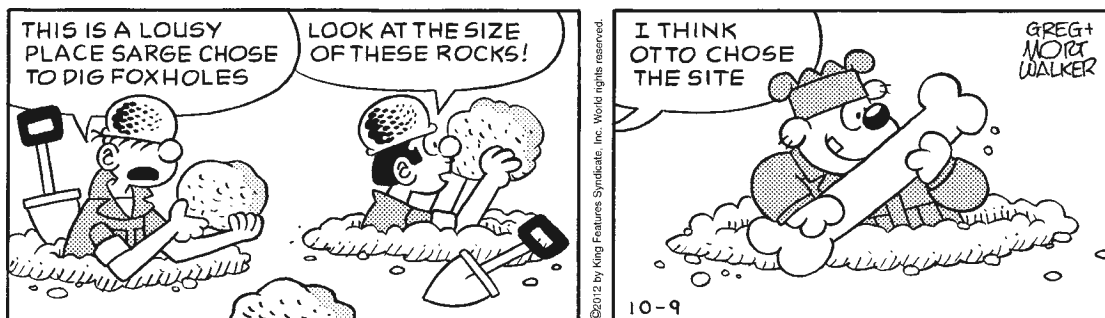
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Wife's Surprise Travel Plans Throw Husband For A Loop

DEAR ABBY: Many women like surprises. Most men don't. My wife can't understand that. She recently "surprised" me by informing me she had made non-refundable arrangements for us to visit a foreign country. She said I had once mentioned that I'd like to see it. I have no recollection of saying so, but I suppose it's possible.

Abby, I am physically barely able to endure such travel. My balance is bad and walking is extremely painful for my legs and hips. I wish she would have discussed her plan with me in advance. It's possible she wanted very much to go and suspected I'd tell her it would be unwise for me to do it.

Now that we're locked in, I'll go. But if it becomes too arduous, I'll tell her that we're going to have to leave the group and return home immediately. Perhaps that would help her understand that she should talk to me about a plan that includes me before implementing it. Abby, can you comment? — GOT AN UNWELCOME SURPRISE

DEAR SURPRISE: What your wife did was wrong; she's well aware of your physical limitations. Foreign travel isn't cheap. Before laying out sizable chunks of money, most couples discuss the expense. I think your method of handling the situation is a good one, particularly if no accommodations can be made for your disability by the company arranging the trip.

P.S. I'm advising you to get travel insurance well in advance.

DEAR ABBY: I'm in love with a beautiful woman. She's divorced with two kids, 15 and 17. I believe the 15-year-old boy is feeling threatened by my presence. He has become very "clingy" to his mother and tries to get between us.

I love both of her kids and treat them like my own. I know it's a delicate situation and I want to do

the right thing. The disrespect he shows me is becoming an issue, and I know his mother won't do anything about it. I have mentioned it a few times and nothing has changed.

I know she would be crushed if I ended this relationship, because recently she asked me to move in by Christmas. Marriage has been discussed prior to or shortly thereafter. Please help. — DISRESPECTED IN OHIO

DEAR DISRESPECTED: Do not move in with this woman unless she first agrees to premarital counseling with you to ensure that you're both on the same page regarding parenting, and then family counseling with her children. As much as you care about them, you are not their parent. Because your ladyfriend appears to ignore problems when they arise, without counseling nothing will change. Be warned.

DEAR ABBY: Our son and daughter-in-law have invited us for Thanksgiving in another state. We'll fly there with my husband's mother.

Recently my daughter-in-law mentioned that we may all (11 of us) be going to some sort of buffet instead of making the dinner at their home. We would also end up paying for the meal.

I would much rather cook for them than eat and pay for a Thanksgiving meal at a buffet or restaurant. How can we get this across to our son and daughter-in-law without hurting their feelings? — NO BUFFET FOR US IN LEAVENWORTH, KAN.

DEAR NO BUFFET: How about saying it in plain English? Tell them you would be glad to prepare the dinner, and if your daughter-in-law would help you, the task wouldn't be onerous for either of you.

P.S. Unless the men are "all thumbs" in the kitchen, they could pitch in, too. Multigenerational rituals are the glue that keep a family together.

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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 Libra and a Moon in Cancer if born before 4:55 a.m. (PDT). Afterward, the Moon will be in Leo.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR TUESDAY, OCT. 9, 2012:

This year opportunities come out of left field. Matters involving someone at a distance, travel or education appear to be very fortunate. You might want to schedule a trip or two this year. If you are single, you could meet someone very intense who draws you in. The compulsive quality of this relationship might scare many an easygoing Libra, yet most of you will explore the possibilities. If you are attached, you will experience a lot of positive moments despite the fact that your relationship has weathered some hard times in the past. You are like two magnets when you're together. Stay open with each other, and you will stay out of trouble! LEO makes a great friend.

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 fiery ways might ignite others into action if you are not careful. You also could provoke a great deal of brainstorming and unexpected ideas. Follow through on your chosen path, and remember that you are the director. Straighten out a misunderstanding before it becomes a problem. Tonight: A little fun never hurts.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ Your sense of humor allows others to relax around you. As people start to open up, you'll gain helpful insights. Avoid a misunderstanding by clarifying facts and information. Being generous is a wonderful characteristic, and it will emerge today — just honor your budget. Tonight: Hang in there.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★ Initiate a conversation by helping the other party feel more comfortable. You might regret some of your prior judgments. Don't live in the past; instead, update your thoughts for the present. A friend surprises you, and you will respond instinctively. Remain direct with a family member or loved one. Tonight: Chat away.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★ Sometimes you might overwhelm people with everything that you do and seem capable of handling. Give someone the space to grow, as he or she needs to deal with a personal issue. Do some price comparison for the right Halloween costume or decoration. Tonight: Head home, but buy a little something for a friend on the way.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★ Get past a bad mood. A child or a lively conversa-

tion will help you to do just that. The unexpected has become routine, and yet somehow it still manages to surprise you. Look at today's events, for example. Verify that you are on the same page as others. Tonight: Zero in on what you want.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★ Defer to a more upbeat person. You might feel sluggish when dealing with an issue that you want to keep hush-hush. You could become irritated as well. Someone could act in a surprising way, just to get your attention. A friendship helps clear the air. Tonight: Take some private time.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

HHHH Listen to news carefully. You can be quite intellectual and detached at times. When you get into this mode, you tend to gather a lot of information and discuss your feelings more easily. You'll finally see how a misunderstanding occurred. Clear up your side of the issue ASAP. Tonight: Where the crowds are.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★ You don't mind being complimented and admired, but the other side of the coin is that you must perform at 110 percent on a regular basis. Pull yourself out of a semi-laxed state, and choose to be present. You could be surprised by what you hear. Be kind to a friend, even if doing so messes you up. Tonight: Burn the candle at both ends.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ What you come up with in your mind could be the best-case scenario. Distance yourself and see if the potential exists to have this idea happen. If so, take the necessary steps. An intervention could occur through an unexpected twist. Others might become confused as a result. Clarify what is happening. Tonight: Help your mind relax.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★★ The unexpected occurs, and you could act on your frustration. Perhaps you feel as if there is no other way. Convinced that you have the answer, you might decide to take action. Unfortunately, many people will be confused. You'll have to reverse a misunderstanding quickly. Tonight: A cozy dinner and a chat.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ You feel a strong sense of dedication to your friends, and they to you. Your ability to identify with others falls short with one person. Your words could have an unexpected effect. Try restating your idea in a simpler, less complicated manner. Tonight: Sort through invitations.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

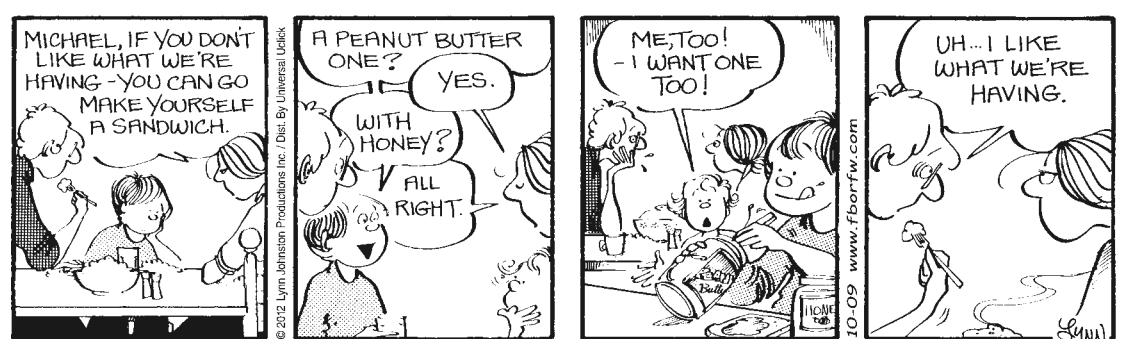
★★★ Maintain a steady pace. News could be slow to arrive, if it comes at all. If you need some information, seek it out. Do not stand on ceremony. Your instincts will kick in; learn to follow them. Remain open, rather than allow someone to wonder what you're thinking. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS

