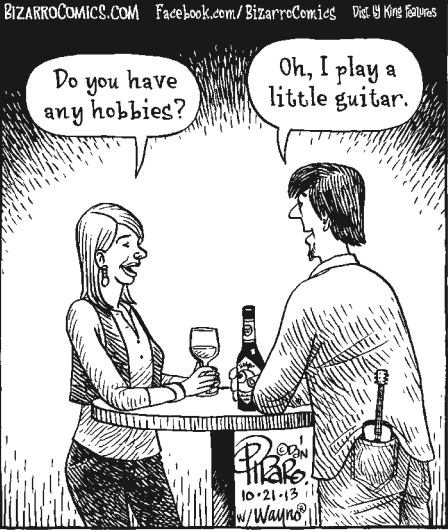


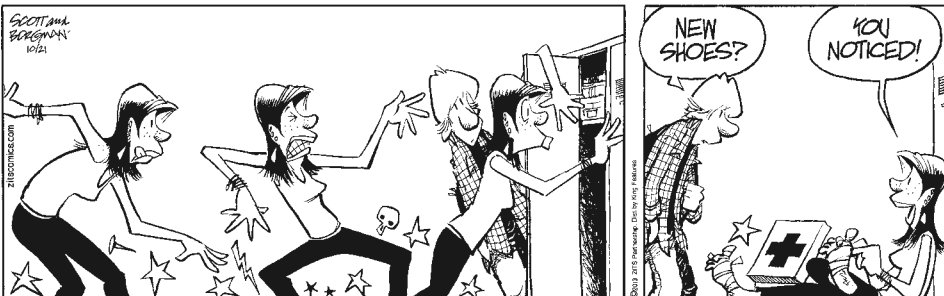
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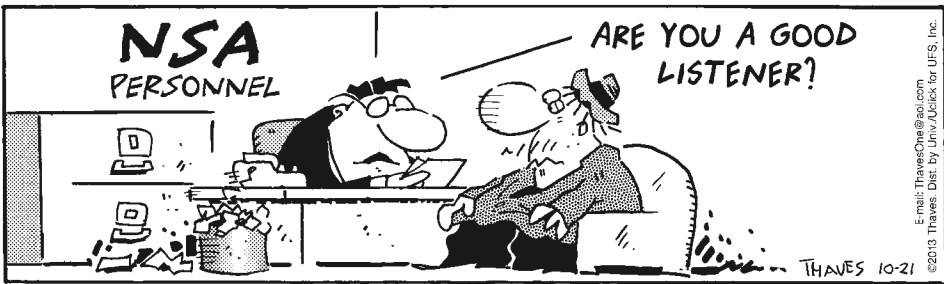
BIZARRO | DAN PIRARO



ZITS | JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



FRANK AND ERNEST | BOB THAVES



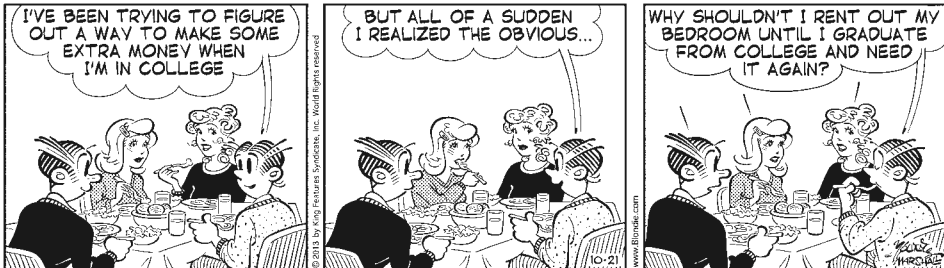
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DICK TRACY | JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS



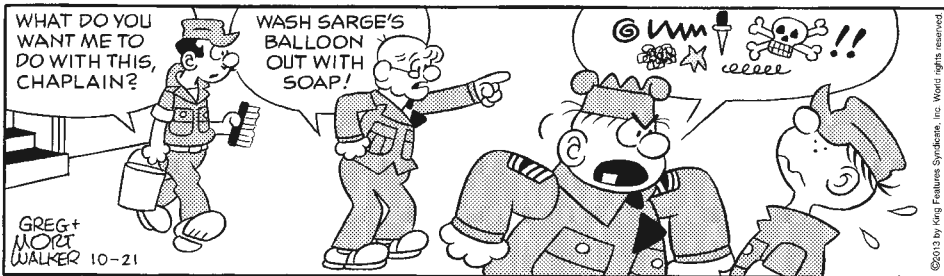
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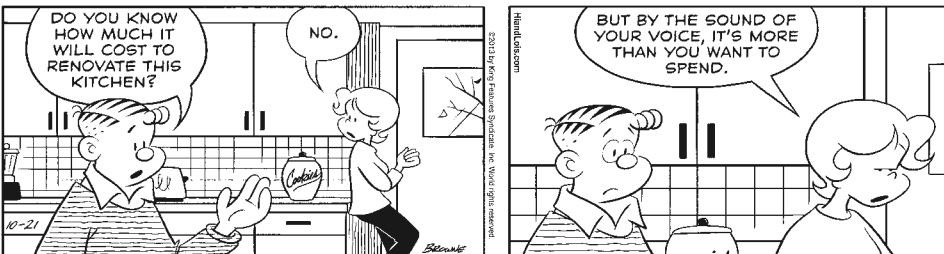
GARFIELD | JIM DAVIS



BEETLE BAILEY | MORT WALKER



HI AND LOIS | BRIAN AND GREG WALKER



THE BORN LOSER | ART SANSOM



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM | MIKE PETERS



Woman Who Left Bad Marriage Hesitates To Take Next Step

DEAR ABBY: Last summer, after 24 years of marriage, I finally summoned the nerve to take my teenage daughter and leave my emotionally abusive husband. We are both thriving now.

I have been in therapy, lost almost 45 pounds and have rediscovered my self-confidence all over again. A friend I have known for more than 10 years has expressed interest in dating me. I like him very much, but I'm not sure if it would be appropriate to date yet. What do you think? — TENTATIVE IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR TENTATIVE: Tempting as this is, proceed with caution. When a person has been emotionally starved for a long time, then begins to feel attractive, accepted and validated again, the result can be euphoria — a powerful "high." Right now you need to be rational. What I think about your dating this man is less important than what your therapist thinks right now. Please make this question a priority during your next sessions because the insight you'll gain into yourself will help you not only in a relationship with this man — if you decide to have one — but in future ones as well.

DEAR ABBY: My 86-year-old dad buys all his food from the mark-down "quick sale" tables, then lets it sit in the fridge for weeks or even months before he eats it. He insists the mold is penicillin and good for you. He eats moldy cheese, bread, fruit and meat I wouldn't feed to my dogs. He has a turkey in the freezer that expired in 2008, and he can't understand why I won't cook it for my pets.

Dad reads your column every day, so please give me some input. By the way, he isn't poor and can afford good, fresh food. — PERPLEXED DAUGHTER IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

DEAR PERPLEXED DAUGHTER: Your father is a product of his upbringing during the Great Depression, a time when many people were starving. The habits people form when they are young can be hard to shake.

One reason that perishable products have a "sell by" date is that the food begins to lose its nutritional value. As to your father's excuse

that he's ingesting "penicillin" when he eats moldy fruits, vegetables, baked goods and dairy products — I'm sure his doctor would prefer he get it by prescription only.

Spoiled food can cause serious illness, which is why the U.S. government publishes pamphlets on the important topic of food safety. Visit www.foodsafety.gov and print out some of the "Food Safety at a Glance" charts for him. If he refuses to take your advice and mine, perhaps he'll be more receptive to what Uncle Sam has to say.

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend of two years, "Jesse," has suddenly changed. He's pushing me away. We are both 17 and have a 9-month-old baby.

Jesse spent the first six months of our son's life in state custody. Since he has been back, he has been really distant. He ignores me and isn't affectionate anymore. When I get upset about it, he denies it and says I have no reason to be upset.

I'm scared our relationship isn't as strong as I thought. My son deserves a family, but it's falling apart. What should I do? — TROUBLED IN TENNESSEE

DEAR TROUBLED: You have no idea what might have happened to Jesse after he was sent away, so give him some space, but let him know that if he wants to talk about it, you are willing to listen and be supportive. Don't push and don't be clingy. You may have to be strong for all three of you. Complete your education, take parenting classes, and encourage Jesse to do it, too. Do this and your son WILL have a family, whether or not it's the one you thought you'd have with Jesse.

Good advice for everyone — teens to seniors — is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger 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 Libra and a Moon in Taurus if born before 9:14 a.m. (PDT). Afterward, the Moon will be in Gemini.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR MONDAY, OCT. 21, 2013:

This year you often find yourself in no-win situations. Misunderstandings surround you. Work on your clarity, and be conscious of meetings and times. Remain authentic, and you will feel better. If you are single, you might experience some difficulty transforming a dating situation into a more intimate relationship. Do not get frustrated. Time will prove what is valid. If you are attached, communication between you and your sweetie might not be as in sync as it previously has been. You learned to listen to each other once, and you can do it again. GEMINI helps you see the big picture.

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 could be as clear as a bell, but you still will witness a lot of confusion. Your intuition will counter what you are hearing. You might become irritated and angry as a result of this misunderstanding. Know that everyone is human. Tonight: Choose a stressbuster.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20)

★★★★ Be aware of the cost of not being as thorough as you could be in a certain area of your life. You might feel as if a risk is worth taking. Make sure you look at the worst-case scenario before you commit. You'll be less likely to make a mistake. Tonight: Run errands on the way home.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20)

★★★★★ You'll be ready to proceed full throttle, but you could get tripped up by a misunderstanding. You are slightly accident-prone, and you might not be ready to take off on a physical jaunt. Relax, and choose to do only what feels right. Tonight: As you like it.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22)

★★★★ You might think one way, but within hours, you could reverse your direction. The elements of indecision and confusion easily could mark your day, if not the next few weeks. Try to give yourself some space to figure out what you want. Tonight: Start thinking about Halloween.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22)

★★★★ Confusion starts right now, whether it is around you or within you. Be as succinct as possible. Your diligence will keep you out of trouble.

Use caution and good sense before spending money or committing to any investments. Tonight: See through the obvious.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

★★★★★ Your anger flares easily. The issue is how you handle it. Somehow you could be involved with a misunderstanding today or in the near future. No one likes being misrepresented. A partner or associate will seem vested in not getting it. Tonight: Claim your power.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

★★★★★ You are all smiles, no matter which way you look at a personal matter. At this moment, you will want to detach to gain a new perspective. Don't let this attitude undermine being supportive. Confirm meetings and times. Tonight: Release any tension through exercise.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

★★★★ Deal with a partner directly. Even if some tension ensues, know that you have done better than anyone else could. Your imagination might conjure up a lot of reasons for the problem that might not be grounded. Let them go. Tonight: Even if it is Monday, go let off some steam.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

★★★★ Defer to others, as your perspective might not be heard at the present time. A boss or someone you look up to could be cantankerous and touchy. Meanwhile, you could be thinking in other terms and not connecting. Tonight: Go along with someone's suggestion.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

★★★ Stay focused on what you are doing. Confirm all plans. Misunderstandings easily can happen. Understand your limits. Let your creativity emerge in a discussion. Know that your message might not be digested and understood by everyone. Tonight: Be diplomatic.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

★★★★ While others are in the midst of confusion, you seem to carry on with the playfulness of the weekend. Your easygoing attitude might help you, but it could aggravate someone close. Be as clear as you can be about plans. Others will be touchy. Tonight: Deal with someone's ire.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20)

★★★ Defer to others as much as you want. Confusion surrounds a partner's feelings. This person might not be as clear as he or she should be, and you might not be able to read between the lines. In fact, you most likely are seeing only what you want to see. Tonight: Stay close to home.

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BABY BLUES | RICK KIRKMAN AND JERRY SCOTT



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE | LYNN JOHNSTON

