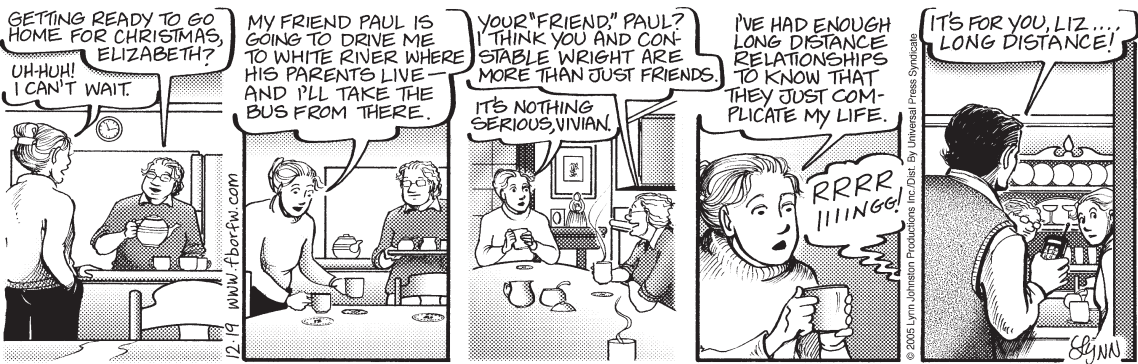


For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



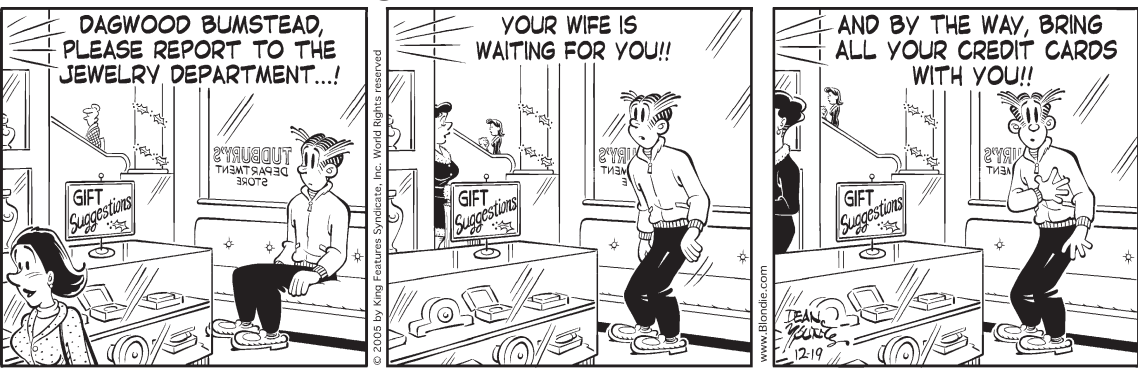
Garfield • Jim Davis



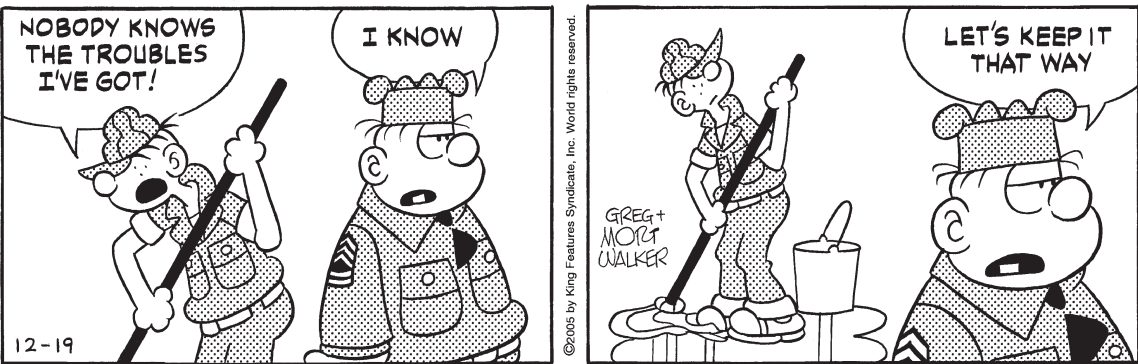
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



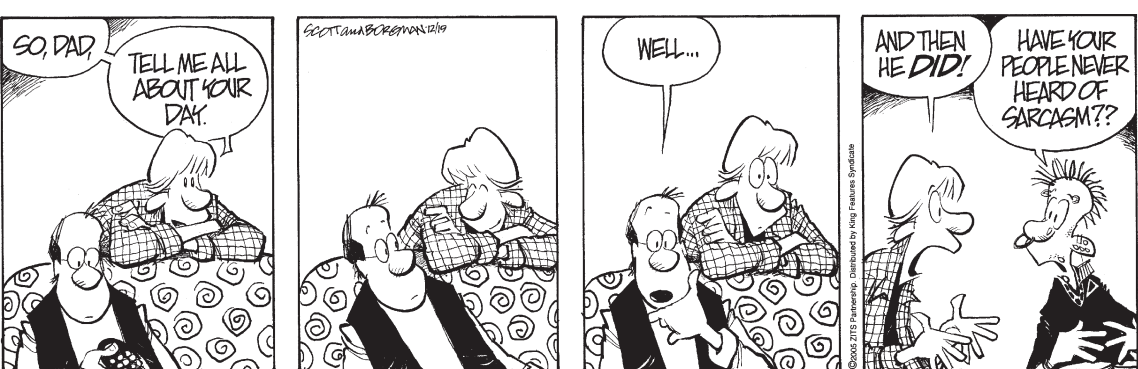
Blondie • Chic Young



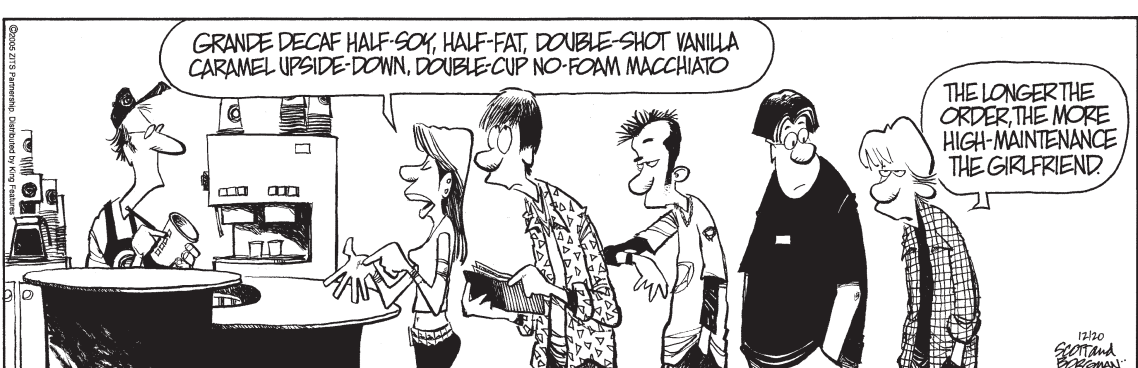
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



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Cryptoquip

Y E R M J H Z R Y V O J V Z R K

G H W O X M Z A J H J A R B

X V O J H G H Y M J O , Y Z A W X K O

G H W S R S K B S J R E K W T T K J R O J H .

Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF TWO OCEAN-FLOOR SCUBA DIVERS WERE MARRIED, I SUPPOSE THEY MUST BE DEEPLY IN LOVE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: E equals F

Pastor's wife reopens old wound

DEAR ABBY: I recently retired and moved to a small town in Washington, where I began attending the local church. Last Sunday, a new assistant pastor was introduced along with his wife, "Millie." Abby, Millie is the woman who broke up my marriage 10 years ago! It was so painful and ugly that I have never remarried.

Millie, on the other hand, appears to have "erased" from her biography two previous marriages, countless affairs (my husband was one), and a short stint in prison for drugs. She is now — and this is what irks me — teaching marriage classes. She does not recognize me. The last 10 years have been hard on me. I put on weight and stopped coloring my hair, among other things.

If Millie was just a member of the congregation, I could forgive her past sins. But Millie is lying to everyone — maybe even her clueless husband. Should I stay quiet and watch this farce, inform the senior pastor, or drive 30 minutes to attend another church? (And yes, I'm sure it's her. There's no doubt about it.)

— HATES HYPOCRITES IN WASHINGTON

DEAR HATES HYPOCRITES: Have you considered that Millie may have realized the error of her ways and found God in prison? It is also possible that her husband is aware of her past. As to her fitness to teach marriage classes — one thing is certain, she knows firsthand where the pitfalls are.

Rather than seeking revenge, it would be better for your own soul if you change churches. But before you go, walk up to Millie and introduce yourself. I'll bet she'll be surprised to see how the past has come full circle. Then go on and start living your life fully again, and that includes getting professional counseling so you



Abigail Van Buren

Dear Abby

can heal and learn to trust again, and enjoy your life to the maximum that it's possible.

DEAR ABBY: I am a 32-year-old woman who has recently enlisted in the Navy Reserves and would like to go into full-time Navy. The problem is I'm still living with my mother. Mom is "difficult." She refuses to take care of herself and have yearly physicals, exercise, eat right, etc. She doesn't want to go out anywhere, socialize or do much beyond watch television. She was diagnosed with breast cancer a while back, but she has had treatment and is doing fine now.

I don't want to feel guilty that I'm not taking care of my mother because she refuses to do things for herself and take care of her basic needs, when in reality she can. I want to have a life without having to worry about her all the time. I am taking the Navy one day at a time to make sure that going full-time is what I want. Any suggestions?

— MY MOTHER'S KEEPER IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR MOTHER'S KEEPER: You didn't mention whether your mother has always been this way or if she became this way after her cancer diagnosis, but her extreme dependency and passivity could be a sign of depression. (They could also be a technique that has always worked for her in manipulating people.) Your mother may need counseling, medication or both. And you need to live your own life. One way to ensure that would be to join the Navy. If you

don't cut the umbilical cord now, you may never be able to.

DEAR ABBY: Don't most of us enjoy stories from our parents' and grandparents' past? During the last few years of my mother's life, she was confined to her home and then to a nursing home.

I urged her to write her memories of childhood in a lined notebook that I provided. On one hand, those stories needed to be preserved for my children, and on the other, it gave my mother a project to work on and keep her mind active. She enjoyed it and filled about 20 pages. She described her childhood days, then continued through courtship, marriage, my birth, struggles through the Great Depression, and the building of a new home. It gave us a clear view of times gone by — a family treasure in her handwriting.

My reason for writing this is to remind your readers to ask those old-timers to write their memories before those treasured stories pass into oblivion.

— ROBERT H. BADIN, N.C.

DEAR ROBERT: Thank you for the reminder. And readers, maybe you should jot down your own memories yourselves. On another note, every year I hear from older people on fixed incomes who are worried because they don't have enough money to buy gifts for their families. Something like this would make a priceless gift.

P.S. It could even be video- or audio-taped if a friend or family member has the equipment.

Editor's note: 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, Calif. 90069.

Bridge

South dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH			
♠	A Q 10 8 6 4	♥	9 6
♦	A 8 7	♣	10 8
WEST		EAST	
♠	9 7 5	♠	K
♥	10 7 4 3	♥	J 8 2
♦	J 9 3	♦	K 10 5 2
♣	Q 7 2	♣	J 9 6 4 3
SOUTH			
♠	J 3 2	♥	A K Q 5
♦	Q 6 4	♣	A K 5

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
2 NT	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
6 ♠			

Opening lead — two of clubs.

Famous Hand

This deal occurred in an early-round match between Denmark and the United States at the 1993 World Team Championship.

When Ron Rubin and Mike Becker of the U.S. held the North-South hands, the bidding went as shown. Becker-Rubin were using a complicated relay system, and the first seven bids were all artificial. By the time Rubin bid four spades, Becker had learned that his partner held either two aces and a queen, or an ace and two kings, as well as a long spade suit.

Six spades was a reasonable contract needing only the king of spades onside. Failing that, there was a potential squeeze in the red suits.

Becker won the opening club lead with the ace and tried the spade finesse, losing to the singleton king. Declarer won the club return with the king and began to run his spades.

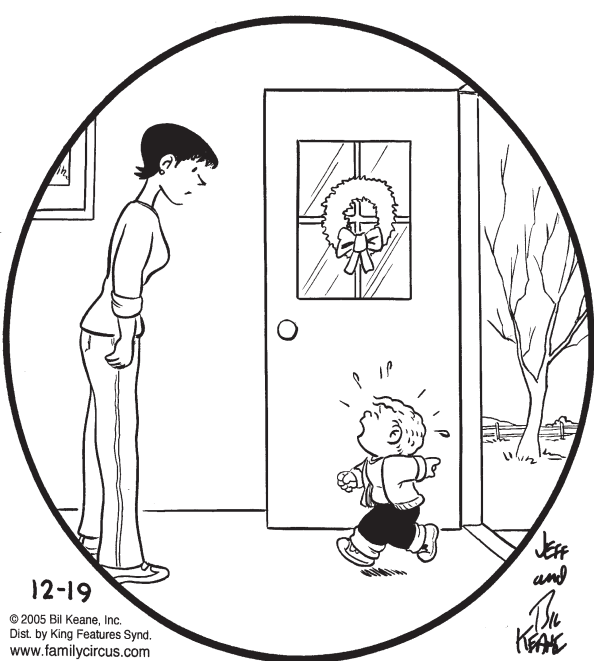
If East had held the king of diamonds and four hearts, he would eventually be forced to unguard one of those suits, giving declarer his 12th trick. As the cards lay, however, the squeeze attempt was going to fail.

But Becker had another thing going for him — namely that, thanks to the nature of the relay system, the defenders had no idea what the South hand looked like. Consequently, when the fourth spade was played — on which declarer discarded a diamond — West had a real headache trying to find a safe discard.

After nearly five minutes of thought, West elected to discard a heart from the 10-7-4-3, and Becker suddenly had four heart tricks — and his slam. At the other table, the Danish North-South stopped in four spades, giving the U.S. a 13-IMP pickup on the deal.

Tomorrow: It's all very logical.
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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Billy won't let me join in any reindeer games."

Crossword

ACROSS	37 Trash receptacle	56 Altitudes (Abbr.)	11 Swiss city
1 Verve	5 Undergo recession	57 Existence (Lat.)	17 High, arcing toss
8 Amor-phous sci-fi beast	39 Inseparable		19 Rope-making fiber
12 Diner's card	41 Skewer		22 Link
13 Noon, on a sundial	42 Put in a box		24 Pop
14 Green land	45 Be that as it may		25 Carnival center
15 Damon or Dillon	49 Truck driver		26 Supporter
16 Gallup employee	51 One of the Three Bears		27 Protective barriers
18 With hands on hips	52 Peace-keeping org.		29 Witness
20 Sun-screen, e.g.	53 Garfield or Heathcliff		30 That lady of a "Fortune" action
21 Deserve	54 "American —"		33 "Wheel of Fortune" game
23 Cranberry territory	55 Mimic		36 Inflammation
24 Auto racer of a sort			38 Stand in the way of
28 Cleanse			40 Curvy character
31 Succor			42 Sicilian spouter
32 Largest of the 48			43 Tide type
34 Born			44 Leave a lasting impression
35 Peace symbol			46 Bankrolls

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
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Saturday's answer 12-19