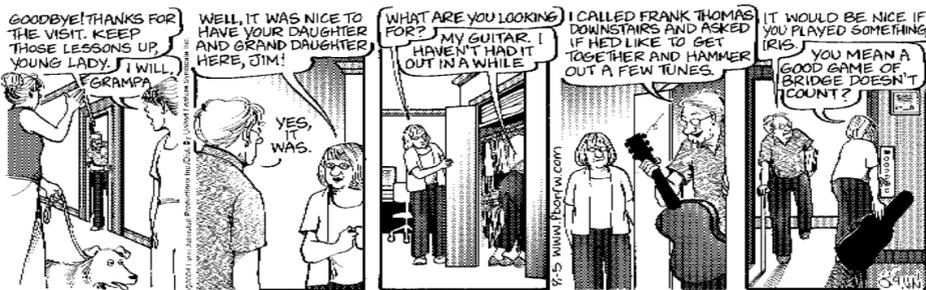
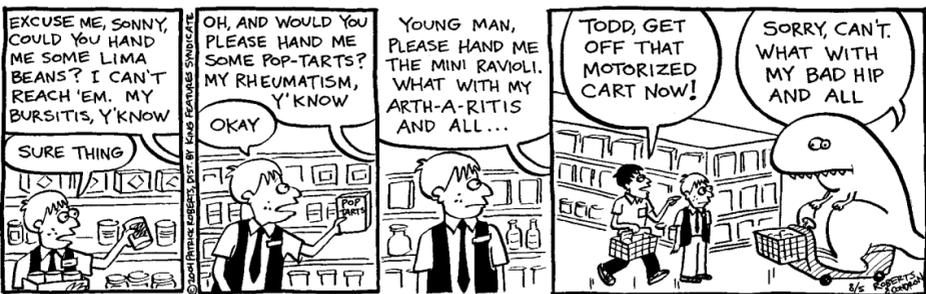


For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



Tod The Dinosaur • PR Condon



Garfield • Jim Davis



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Blondie • Chic Young



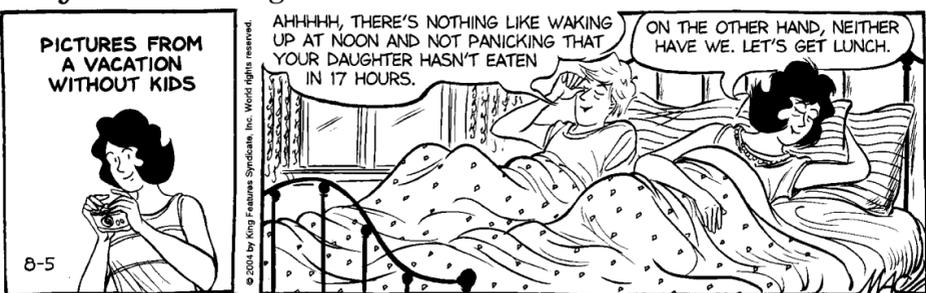
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Silence could be sign of stress

DEARABBY: This is in response to "Lonesome for My Daughter," whose youngest daughter, a married college freshman, has quit communicating with her parents.

I, too, married at 19. My parents didn't approve because they were afraid I'd drop out of school. When we would visit my mother, she'd talk with me and ignore my husband. This made our visits few and far between. Could the mother have done something to alienate the son-in-law?

My marriage has lasted 12 years. However, the times in my life when I quit communicating with family were when I was undergoing severe marital stress and depression, and didn't want to discuss it or pretend all was well when it wasn't. In a more drastic scenario, my niece cut out family visits for years. When we saw her at Christmas, she'd barely speak to family members. She recently divorced, and now we have learned she had been in an abusive marriage.

I do think "Lonesome" and her husband should pay a drop-in visit occasionally. Her instincts may be "heads up" for some reason. Keep the visit brief in case the daughter's college schedule is on overload. That way, they can see, talk to, and hug their daughter and new son-in-law — and while they're at it, scope out the situation. Dropping off food is always a good excuse for a quick visit or, if there's time, invite them out for dinner.

Mom could also send her daughter a phone card to save them money. Mom should be sure no strings are attached, and her daughter and son-in-law know it can be used to call anyone they need to. I also strongly recommend the Internet. Mom and Dad should learn how to do instant messaging: Ask a quick question, want an answer, gotta go. These quick messages let parents know their offspring are alive and well, and allow parents to be involved — at least a little — in their children's



Abigail Van Buren

Dear Abby

everyday lives.

—ALICE IN VINE GROVE
DEAR ALICE: Those are all wonderful suggestions. Many readers wrote to offer input (and insight!) to that mother. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Why don't "Lonesome" and her husband get weekend tickets to a play or sporting event at the college, and go there to have dinner and see a show once a month? That way they'll get quality time with their daughter, and there will be less stress over time management for the couple. After all, she's both a student and a newlywed, and that's a lot to handle.

Also, in my experience, cell phones dramatically increase calls to parents because an hour between classes or waiting for a bus is a convenient time to call Mom or Dad.

—CHRISTINA IN CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
DEAR CHRISTINA: Thank you for lending the younger person's perspective.

DEAR ABBY: I have a heads up for "Lonesome." Newlyweds may not want to come home for the weekend. They're happily enjoying their time together.

Here's how my in-laws handled it 17 years ago: If they hadn't heard from us for a few weeks, they'd call and say, "Is there a day in the next couple of weekends when we can come and take you two out for brunch or dinner? Pick a place you'd enjoy." Or, they'd pick up some food from one of our favorites and we'd have a picnic at our place.

"Lonesome" and her husband should try it. It might be a lot easier for her daughter than a long drive

and an overnight at her parents' home.

—PATRICIA IN LEAWOOD, KAN.

DEAR PATRICIA: I agree. This is a period of adjustment for all concerned. The parents are more in control of their schedule at this point than the daughter and son-in-law may be.

DEAR ABBY: "Denny" and I have been married about a year. Everything was great—we are very much alike. My problem is we both have water jugs that we use for our spare change. I started taking money out of Denny's and spending it. I was planning to replace it as soon as I got a little ahead.

Well, Denny came home one night and counted his savings and saw that I had taken more than \$250 out of his jug. I am paying him back — and he has sort of forgiven me — but every chance he gets, he lashes out. He calls me a thief and curses at me. I know it's a lot of money, but I'm his wife. I want to cry whenever I think about it. Will he ever get over this and let things go back to normal? I'm depressed and angry at myself for what I did.

—THE UNFORGIVEN IN N.H.

DEAR UNFORGIVEN: OK — the honeymoon is over and the illusions are tarnished. What you did was wrong, but so is cursing one's spouse and nursing a grudge. Since you are repaying the money, it's time to ask your husband why he seems unable to forgive.

One of the secrets to a happy marriage is learning to forgive each other. If yours is going to work, the two of you must accept that neither of you is perfect and learn to negotiate beyond your disagreements. Some sessions with the clergyman who married you could be helpful. If that doesn't resolve the conflict, consult a marriage counselor.

Bridge

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ K 9 8 6 3
♥ A 7
♦ A 9 4
♣ 5 4 2

WEST
♠ 2
♥ J 10 9 5 2
♦ J 8 6 5 3
♣ K 7

EAST
♠ 7 4
♥ Q 8 6 3
♦ Q 10 7
♣ J 10 9 8

SOUTH
♠ A Q J 10 5
♥ K 4
♦ K 2
♣ A Q 6 3

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
4 NT Pass 5 ♥ Pass
5 NT Pass 6 ♦ Pass
6 ♣

Opening lead — jack of hearts.

Improving Your Chances

Let's suppose that declarer can make a particular contract only by taking a successful finesse against an opposing king. If nothing in the bidding or play indicates otherwise, he is said to have a 50 percent chance for the contract.

In some cases, however, declarer can find a way to improve on the straightforward 50 percent chance of the finesse succeeding. A means of adding to one's chances is something a careful declarer is always on the lookout for.

Consider this deal where South's slam seems to depend solely on a club finesse. But actually, with correct play it is possible to make the slam not only in the 50 deals out of 100 where East has the king of clubs, but also in another 10 deals or so where West has the singleton or doubleton king.

In order to cater to this additional possibility and thereby raise his chances from 50 to 60 percent, South wins the heart lead with the king, draws trumps, cashes the ace of hearts, ace of clubs and K-A of diamonds, and then ruffs the nine of diamonds.

These preliminaries attended to, South crosses to dummy with a trump, leads a club and plays the queen after East follows low. (South cannot be expected to know that West was dealt the doubleton king.)

West takes the queen with the king but, thanks to South's advance preparation, must return a heart or a diamond.

This permits declarer to discard a club from dummy as he ruffs in his hand, and the slam is home.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Why does Mommy hafta be alone to medicate?"

Crossword

ACROSS
1 Puts together
5 Raring to go
8 Austin Powers' power
12 Passion
13 Pod dweller
14 Acknowledge
15 Jane Austen heroine
16 Sandy's comment
17 Stagger
18 Gilligan's boat
20 Equitable
22 Liberace prop
26 Leader
29 Giants legend
30 Physicist's particle
31 Coal carriers
32 "CSI" evidence
33 Vortex
34 Rage
35 Corral
36 Bewildered

DOWN
1 Throat clearer
2 Ms. Moore
3 Rhett's shocking word
4 Positions
5 Offspring
6 Always, in verse
7 Crisp, lustrous fabric
8 "Sound of Music" role
9 "Price Is Right" errors
10 "Average"
11 Barn dweller
19 Lum-mox
21 Model Carol
23 Reed or Summer
24 Went by camel
25 Novelist
26 Stylish
27 Circle dance
28 Pick out of a lineup
32 Tom Jones song
33 Open-work shelving
35 Part of MPH
36 Football fill
38 Loves not wisely but too well
39 Tabloid tidbit
42 Satan's specialty
43 Trawler gear
44 Genealogy chart
45 Autumn abbr.
46 1960s jacket eponym
48 Census datum

Solution time: 25 mins.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 8-5

THANK YOU FOR READING THE

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Cryptoquip

V T J H N D V D X U D V
X M U O N M F G ' U T E O F O T F T F
U T I M X D F N T I G T E O Q Q T J F G
D U D E T H M E T U O G O T F ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: YOU WOULD IMAGINE THAT THE LUMBERJACKS COULD JOKINGLY BE KNOWN AS TREETOTALERS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals W

