#### For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



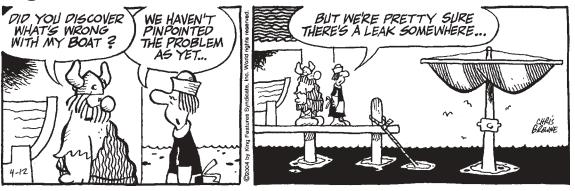
#### For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



#### Garfield • Jim Davis



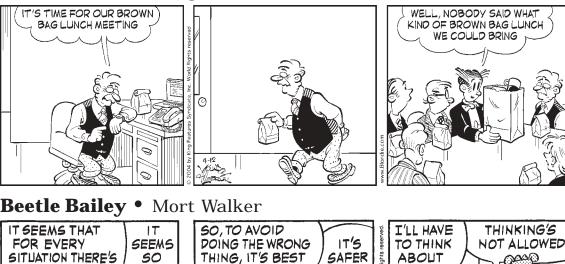
#### Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



#### Blondie • Chic Young

SITUATION THERE'S

A MILITARY



THING, IT'S BEST

TO DO NOTHING

# Father-in-law stifles young couple

DEAR ABBY: I am 24 years old and have been married for seven years. We have one child.

My father-in-law has lived with us for the past three years. I am tired of this situation. I cannot have anyone over later than 10 p.m. or he goes crazy. Lights and TV have to be off by then, too. He lies on the couch all day. He doesn't clean up after himself. On top of that, he walks into our bedroom without knocking, so you can imagine what our sex life is like.

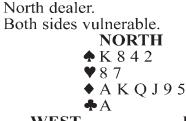
He is not over the hill or ailing. He is 57, and his only health problem is diabetes. We can't go anywhere without him; he even tags along with us when we visit his ex and her husband.

How do I tell him that we need time to ourselves without hurting his feelings?

- HAD IT IN TEXAS DEAR HAD IT: You should be nominated for sainthood for tolerating the situation this long. Stop worrying about his feelings; he is certainly not worrying about yours. Set new house rules. Kindly but firmly take care of your own needs and don't apologize for it. Install a lock on your bedroom door. You and your husband are entitled to your privacy and your own life. If he doesn't like it, give him a deadline to be out, and then enforce it.

DEAR ABBY: I applaud "Sad and Disgusted in Virginia" for being proactive about protecting children from verbal and physical abuse. I was slapped often by my mother in grocery stores and parking lots. Plenty of people witnessed her tirades; no one would intervene. What they couldn't see was what went on at home behind closed doors. She hit me with her high-heeled shoes, pots and pans, even a violin, which shattered when it struck my head. No one ever questioned me about my bruises. I was too weak, scared and

## Bridge



WEST EAST **♦** J 10 9 7 3 ♥ A K 4 ♥ 10 9 6 3 2 ♦ 7 6 3 ♦ 8 4 **•**O 6 ♣J 10 8 4 3 2 SOUTH

A Q 6 5 ♥QJ5 ♦ 10 2 **♣**K 9 7 5

The bidding:

Abigail Van Buren Dear Abby

under my abuser's control to do any-27-year age gap. thing about my situation.

I endured her beatings until I was 21. They stopped only because I moved to another state to attend graduate school.

with my mother. I have often blamed myself for not speaking up about my own abuse. I remember hoping that someone like "Sad and Disgusted" would simply ask, "Are you OK?" That small act might have given me the courage I couldn't muster on my

own. - FREE AT LAST, CHICAGO **DEAR FREE:** I am pleased you finally escaped your abuser. I hope you no longer blame yourself for not telling anyone what was going on. The reason many vic- in the movies, it can happen in real tims do not speak up about their life, right? mistreatment is they have been brainwashed into believing they somehow brought it on themselves. One phrase that echoes repeatedly in the mail I get from victims of abuse is, "He/she said I MADE him/her slap me, hit me, choke me, etc." Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Adults are responsible for their own behavior. We have free gartner, Harrison Ford is dating will. What we do or refrain from Calista Flockhart. And the redoing is our personal choice.

DEAR ABBY: "Grossed Out in Florida" asked where older men "get the idea" they can date much younger women. For the answer to known as Jeanne Phillips, and was that question one need only look at the nearest movie theater marquee:

Harrison Ford (61) with Michelle (43) or Anne Heche (34) — a 16- to Angeles, Calif. 90069.

Michael Douglas (59) with Famke Janssen (38), Frances McDor-

mand (46) or Gwyneth Paltrow (31) - a 13- to 28-year age gap.

Steve Martin (58) with Bonnie I no longer have a relationship Hunt (39), Jean Smart (44) or Helena Bonham Carter (37) — a 14- to 21-year age gap.

All of these relationships are presented as perfectly normal. Also, consider the fuss that was made about Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton in "Something's Gotta Give." How NICE it was to see contemporaries as a love interest! In reality. Diane is nine years younger than Jack. It's no wonder these men think that young girls will be interested because, hey, if it can happen

- REALITY CHECKER, GURNEE, ILL.

**DEAR REALITY CHECKER:** Not only can it happen in real life -it has: Humphrey Bogart married Lauren Bacall, Michael Douglas married Catherine Zeta-Jones, Warren Beatty married Annette Bening, Kevin Costner iust married Christine Baumverse can be true: Let's not forget Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher!

Editor's note: Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips.

Write Dear Abby at www.Dear-Pfeiffer (45), Kristin Scott Thomas Abby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los

## **Family Circus** • Bil Keane





Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott

50



## Sally Forth • Greg Howard



YOU CAN'T SPEND EVERY DAY AVOIDING EYE CONTACT, TALKING THROUGH THIRD PARTIES, AND CHANGING DIRECTION IN THE HALLWAY.



ABOUT

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Opening lead — king of hearts.

## **Famous Hand**

A hand once played by Italian star Pietro Forquet illustrates the theme that in bridge you never give up.

He reached four spades as shown (playing the highly artificial Blue Team Club System), and West led the K-A and another heart.

Forquet won with the queen and, expecting no trouble whatsoever, cashed the ace of trumps.

When West showed out, the entire picture changed.

What had seemed like an easy contract a moment before now appeared impossible to make.

But Forquet thought the matter over and concluded he could still make four spades if West had three diamonds in addition to the five spades and three hearts he had already shown up with.

Accordingly, Forquet led a club to the ace and continued with the A-K-Q of diamonds, ruffing the queen after East showed out.

He then cashed the king of clubs, producing this position:

North [S] K84 [D] J West [S] J1097 East Immaterial South

[S] Q6

[C] 97

Forquet led a club, and West, who seemed to have two sure trump tricks, suddenly found he had only one.

West could not afford to ruff with the seven, which declarer would overruff with the eight, so he ruffed with the nine.

Forquet found the correct counter to this when he discarded the jack of diamonds from dummy. It now did not matter whether West returned the jack, ten or seven — whichever card West chose, Forquet had the rest of the tricks.

purple jelly beans."

## Crossword

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