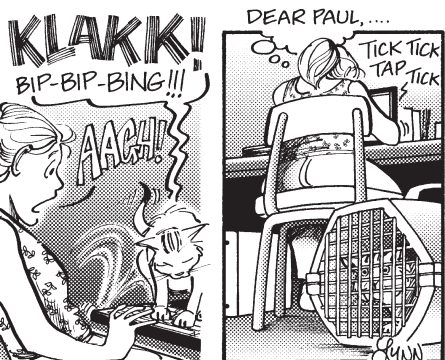
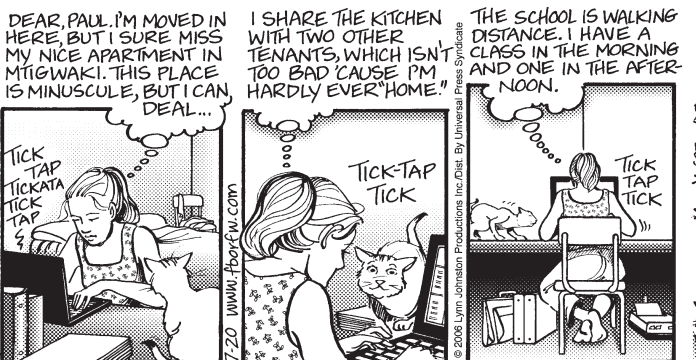
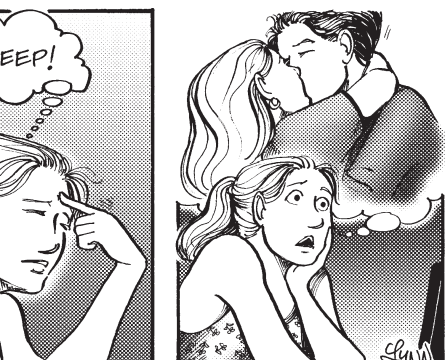
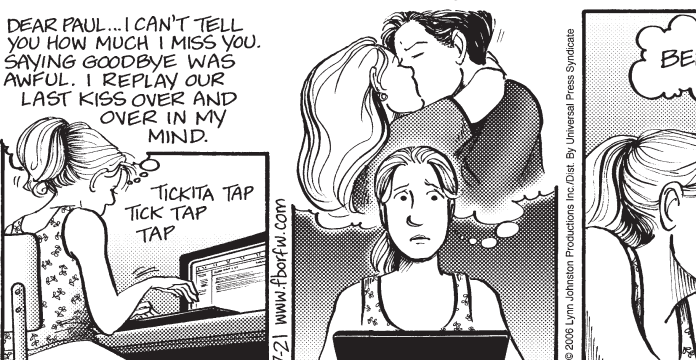


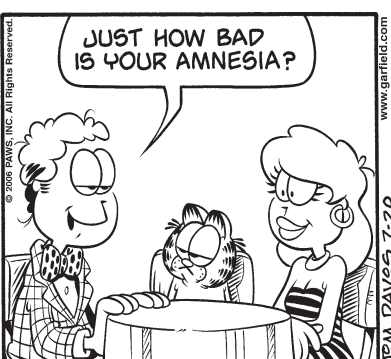
For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



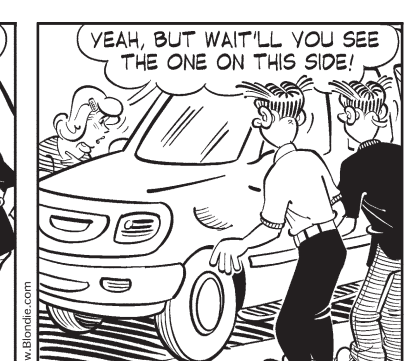
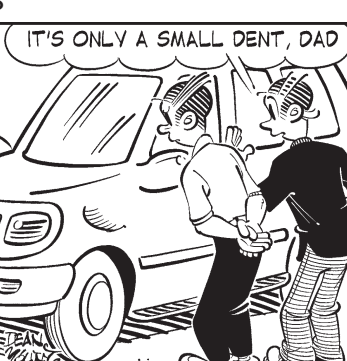
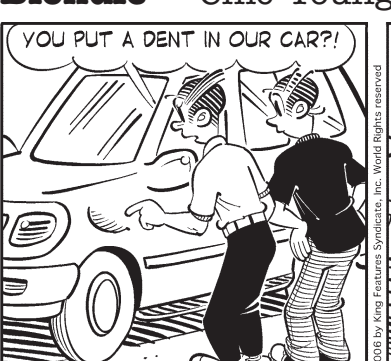
Garfield • Jim Davis



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



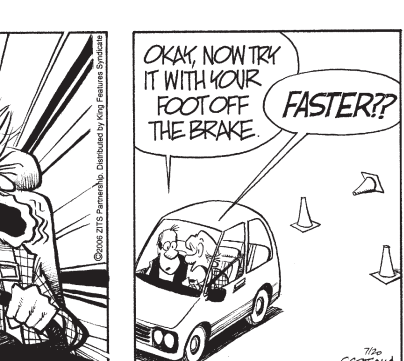
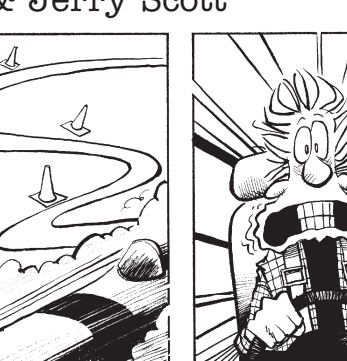
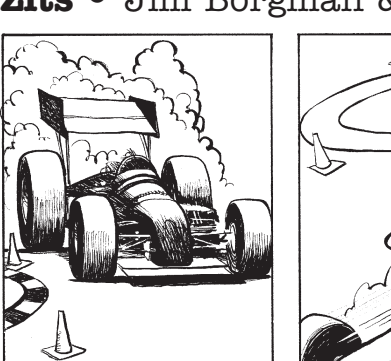
Blondie • Chic Young



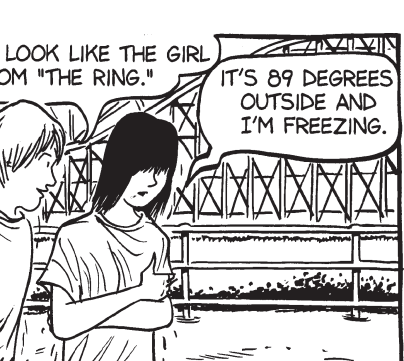
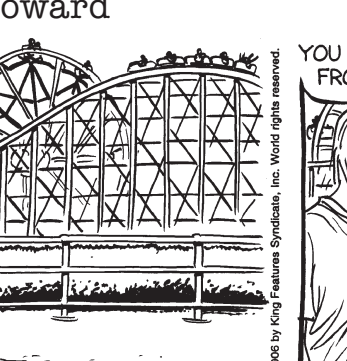
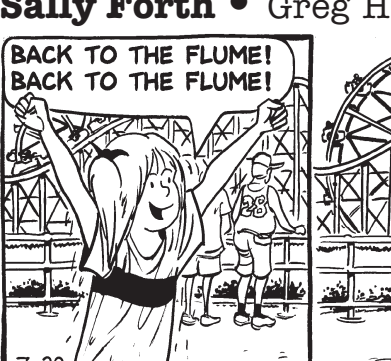
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Couple unhappy with gag gifts

DEAR ABBY: A few weeks ago, my partner and I received an invitation to a friend's 50th birthday party. The invitation stated, "No gag gifts."



Abigail Van Buren

Dear Abby

A few hours before the party, my partner came home with a bag full of gag gifts, including Preparation H, Depends, etc. That's when the argument started. I told him I would not go to the party if he brought those gifts. I feel they are insulting, and those kinds of gifts are not funny anymore — especially when the invitation specifies no gag gifts. I have seen those kinds of gifts a hundred times. As a result, we did not attend the party. How do you feel about gag gifts? Who's right and who's wrong?

— **TOO SENSITIVE IN RENO**
DEAR TOO SENSITIVE: While I do not condone mentioning gifts — gag gifts or otherwise — on an invitation, the host, and presumably the honoree, had made their wishes known. You are not "too sensitive"; you were socially appropriate. For your partner to have ignored the invitation would have been rude and insensitive.

I have nothing against gag gifts if they are original, funny and tasteful. Frankly, I think in this case, by not attending, you spared yourself embarrassment and did the honoree a favor.

DEAR ABBY: My grandmother is 88 and in good health. She has lived with my dad's sister ("Aunt Joy") and her family since Grandpa died nine years ago.

Grandma doesn't have a mother-in-law suite or anything like that — just her own bedroom and bath — but she pays them between \$600 and \$700 in rent every month.

Furthermore, Aunt Joy charges Grandma a percentage of everything they do to improve the house. Aunt Joy had granite countertops

put in; Grandma paid \$1,200 for the use of them. They also had a fence installed and charged Grandma 25 percent of the cost.

I think my aunt is very materialistic. She uses Grandma and her money to get what she wants. Grandma isn't rich, but she has enough to live on her own if she wanted to.

It's also interesting that their daughter, who is 27, lives with them and pays no rent at all. Why should my grandma have to pay so much and my cousin nothing?

My parents would love for Grandma to come and live here in our guestroom for free, but we live 1,200 miles away. Dad doesn't want to create a rift in the family, but shouldn't he draw the line somewhere?

My aunt and uncle call themselves Christians, but taking advantage of an elderly woman doesn't seem very Christian to me. How should something like this be dealt with? How should Dad handle it?

— **PERTURBED IN NORTH CAROLINA**

DEAR PERTURBED: I don't know what kind of conversations are going on in your house about Grandma, but they are not something you should be involved with. If your father feels his mother is being taken advantage of, he should talk to her about it and tell her — if he hasn't already — that he and your mother would love to have her live with you rent-free. After that, the decision about where she wants to live and how she wants to conduct her life should be up to her.

As it stands, Grandma seems to have chosen to live with her daughter and agreed to the terms. Some mothers feel closer to their daughters than to their sons. It's a girl thing.

DEAR ABBY: Until recently, I lived happily in my apartment complex. All that changed when some neighbors moved in. "Greg" and his girlfriend, "Suzy," smoke what I believe is marijuana. I let the landlord know, and she had a talk with them. Of course they denied everything and swore that they do not smoke anything in their room. The landlord then spoke to me and said there is not much he can do about the problem.

Abby, the smell is terrible. My closet abuts the area in which they smoke, and my clothing is permeated. People have asked me if I smoke dope. I tell them I don't, and leave it at that.

My concern is that I will be working for a school district soon and I'm afraid my colleagues may think the same thing, and it will put me in a bad light with the school administration. My neighbors smoke 24/7, and I don't know what other options I have. My landlord says they have to be caught in the act. Have you any advice? Please keep this strictly anonymous because I'm afraid of retribution.

— **SMOKED OUT IN TEXAS**
DEAR SMOKED OUT: Your landlord copped out. Because your neighbors are smoking "24/7," they could be using something stronger than marijuana. Pick up the phone and notify the police about your problem. Because the stench has traveled through the walls (or vents), it's time the matter was properly investigated and a stop is put to it.

Editor's note: Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069.

Bridge

South dealer.
 North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
 ♠ A K 3
 ♥ 9 4 2
 ♦ K Q 8 7
 ♣ A K J

WEST
 ♠ 9 6
 ♥ 8 7 5 3
 ♦ 6 4 2
 ♣ 6 5 3 2

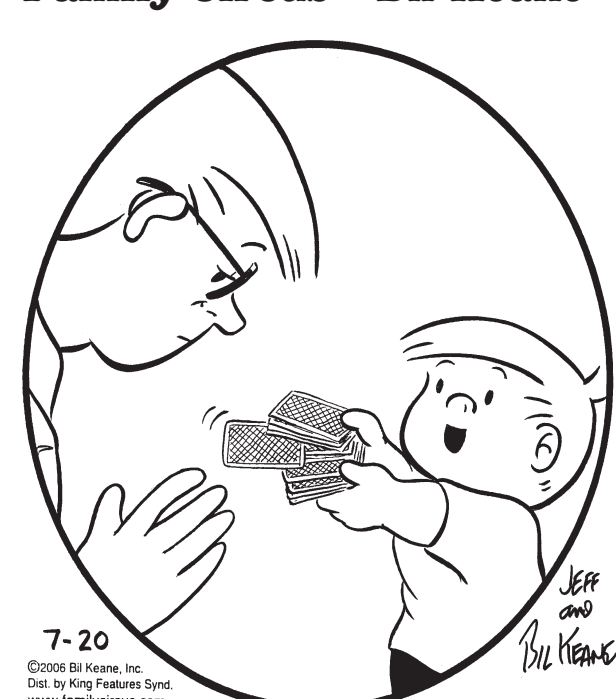
EAST
 ♠ Q J 10 8 7 5
 ♥ K Q J 6
 ♦ —
 ♣ 8 7 4

SOUTH
 ♠ 4 2
 ♥ A 10
 ♦ A J 10 9 5 3
 ♣ Q 10 9

The bidding:
 South West North East
 1 ♦ Pass 3 ♦ 3 ♠
 Pass Pass 4 NT Pass
 5 ♥ Pass 7 ♦

Opening lead — nine of spades.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



From the Mailbox

Dear Mr. Becker: I been reading your column lately, and I figure you play pretty good. I wanted to ask your opinion about a hand we played at the club yesterday.

The way I look at it, my partner shouldn't have bid seven.

This don't make no sense to me because here we got a 700-point rubber stashed away and 750 for a small slam, and he takes a shot at losing the whole bundle to try and make a big slam. This don't seem like a good percentage bet to me.

But there I am, and I gotta do the best I can. I look the dummy over and I see I have to lose a heart because I can't eat it, unless maybe I can con these guys out of it.

The fellow sitting East, his name is Charlie Four Cents, can't beat his way out of a paper bag. If I can give him the business, I got a chance, because he really don't know from nothing.

So I win the spade lead and start pulling trumps, and I keep on playing them till I don't have any more left, hoping Charlie will get mixed up.

Next I play the A-K-Q of clubs, and when I cash the queen, Four Cents starts to look worried. You see, dummy by this time has the K-3 of spades and nine of hearts, and I have the four of spades and the A-10 of hearts. Charlie don't know what to throw, because he's got the Q-J of spades and K-Q of hearts.

Would you believe it, Mr. Becker, he threw the queen of hearts and made my A-10 good, and we wrapped up the grand slam? I tell you this fellow Charlie don't know what time of day it is.

Should my partner have bid seven? Yours truly, Butch O'Doul.

Dear Butch: I don't think so, but I wouldn't squawk if I were you. Just keep playing your cards the way you played them here, and Four Cents will have no cents in no time. SB.

Tomorrow: Bidding quiz.
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Cryptoquip

CV FG MVVCXOY'R
 JCDCPFYQ WGCVMYJ AFR
 AMYG CG EFU PFRPO, AMWDU
 PZFP EO F PFXSQ SZFSC?
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN YOU'RE REALLY GUNG-HO TO SEE ACTOR DAMON OR DILLON, I'D SAY THEY'RE WELCOME MATTS.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: V equals F

Crossword

ACROSS

1 By way of, short
 5 Third degree?
 8 Sleeping
 12 Jalopy
 13 Costello or Ferrigno
 14 "J'accuse" writer
 15 Coffee-shop array
 16 \$ dispenser
 17 With skill
 18 Reminiscent of Poe
 20 Beats
 22 Washington's bill
 23 Witness
 24 Obligation to pay
 27 "Full House" cast member
 32 Past
 33 Scull need
 34 Earlier than
 35 "Cabaret" director

DOWN

2 Medal earner
 3 Carry on
 4 Result
 5 Phony pills
 6 Very stylish
 7 Jettison
 8 Rhododendron's kin
 9 "Night Moves" singer
 10 Model
 11 Soap title start
 19 Chic
 21 Constitution abbr.
 24 Apply lightly
 25 Id counterpart
 26 "Like a Rolling Stone" man
 28 W.
 Hemispheric grp.
 29 Col-leagues, perhaps
 30 Detergent brand
 31 Whodunit writer
 Josephine
 36 Cat
 37 Barn dweller
 38 Sense of taste
 41 Lindbergh book
 42 Enjoy the hammock
 43 Antelope's playmate
 44 Parlor piece
 46 Actress
 Sorvino
 47 Tend texts
 48 Catches a base runner
 51 Director
 Howard

Solution time: 25 mins.

L	A	S	F	O	R	T	W	O	S
A	U	T	O	E	R	A	U	R	G
W	R	E	C	K	E	R	S	T	E
S	A	T	I	E	P	A	T	T	E
A	N	E	W	M	I	C			
Y	A	W	L	A	R	C	H	O	E
E	R	R	W	R	E	A	K	E	L
N	E	E	A	N	N	S	A	D	D
N	A	G	S	K	I	P			
D	E	C	R	E	E	N	A	A	C
A	C	H	E	W	R	E	S	T	L
R	H	E	A	E	A	R	H	O	L
N	O	D	S	S	H	E	Y	E	L

Yesterday's answer 7-20

THANK YOU FOR READING THE

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