

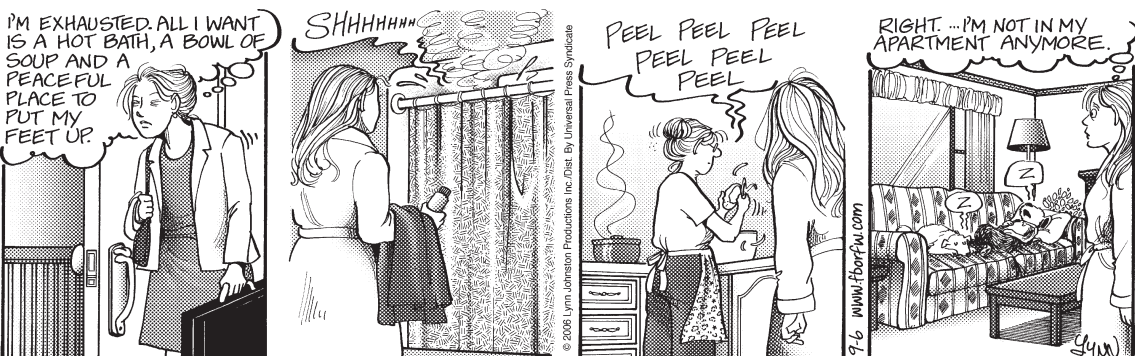
Mother Goose & Grim • Mike Peters (Sample)



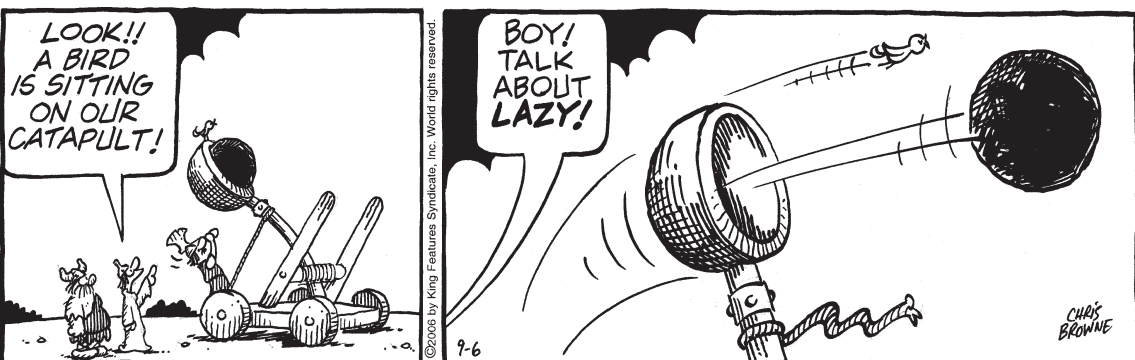
Mutts • Patrick McDonnell



For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston



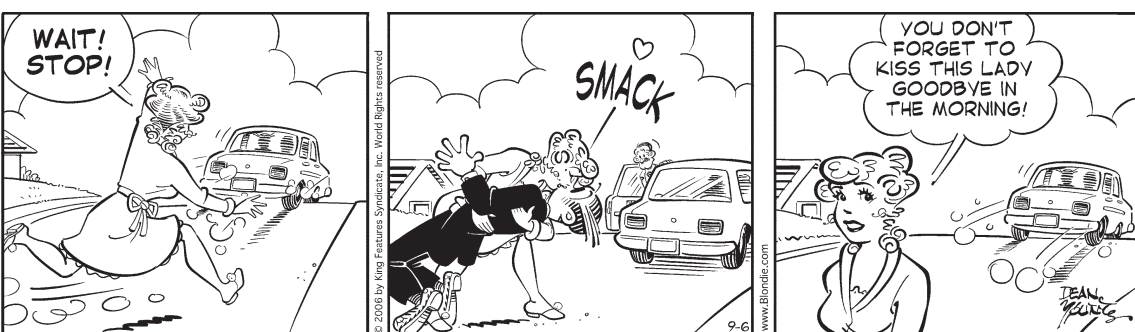
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Garfield • Jim Davis



Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Fiancee ready to break up with soldier

DEAR ABBY: I need your advice on how to break an engagement with my fiance, whose tour of duty in Iraq has been extended four more months. He has been there eight months, and during his absence, I met someone else I would like to start dating.

I didn't want to stress out my fiancé, and I wanted to wait until he returned to talk to him, but now I feel too guilty, so I need to address it soon. Please help me.

— FEELING GUILTY, MEMPHIS, TENN.

DEAR FEELING GUILTY: It's time to grow up and think about someone other than yourself. There is something more important right now than assuaging your guilt. It's making sure that nothing distracts your fiancé from the job he is doing — and will be doing until he is safely back home.

Under no circumstances should you write him a "Dear John" letter or tell him anything that could unnerve or depress him. If you feel guilty now, how do you think you would feel if he was injured or killed after you dumped that kind of news on him? I can't stress strongly enough how important it is that you put his feelings first right now. What you have in mind can wait until his tour of duty is behind him.

DEAR ABBY: I have a friend, "Libby," who has a lot of personal problems. She recently confided that I am the only person who



Abigail Van Buren

Dear Abby

keeps her going day to day. She has attached herself to me because of my "step-on-me" personality, and I have allowed it.

I don't mind her telling me her problems, but she's putting too much pressure on me by making me her crutch. (Without me, she would fall permanently.) Please don't think I am selfish, but I have a lot to deal with personally in my own life.

How can I lessen my load without cracking her fragile personality?

— STRETCHED TO THE LIMIT IN WYOMING

DEAR STRETCHED: Lighten your load by no longer allowing your friend to put off resolving her problems by confiding them in someone who isn't equipped to help her. Libby needs a licensed psychotherapist. If she can't afford one, please tell her (kindly) that help is available on a sliding-fee scale through your county department of mental health services or social services. Take her to her first appointment if necessary, and then start backpedaling from there.

DEAR ABBY: I have been wid-

owed for more than two years, and a nice man has asked me out. We hit it off great, but I have one problem.

A friend of mine dated him years ago, and it didn't work out. She is now happily seeing a man she has been involved with for almost two years. She says you don't date a friend's past date. I think she's being childish.

I believe this man and I will have a good relationship, and I don't want to lose him because of this. She will find out eventually, and I can't decide if I should take the chance of her not knowing for a while and see how it goes. In any case, I may lose her.

Am I wrong? I have been out of the dating loop for 21 years and this is all new to me. I'd appreciate your opinion.

— UNDECIDED IN BROCKTON, MASS.

DEAR UNDECIDED: I see no reason to make any announcements to anyone right now. Keep dating the man and see where it leads.

Because your "friend" has been in a satisfying relationship for nearly two years, she should be happy that you have met someone and "clicked." If she isn't, then she is not your friend, and your question is moot.

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

North dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

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

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

The bidding:
North 1♥ East Pass South 2♣ West Pass
2♦ Pass 2NT Pass
3NT Dble
Opening lead — eight of hearts.

A Tough Defensive Challenge

This deal comes from a par contest many years ago, and features an exceptionally difficult defensive play. It's not surprising that most of the participants holding the East cards missed their cue. East's double was conventional, instructing West not to make his normal lead, but to lead the first suit bid by dummy. And so, West dutifully led a heart.

Declarer played the nine from dummy, recognizing that if East won with the ten and returned a heart, whether high or low, dummy would acquire a second heart stopper.

The defense varied widely at this point. Most Easts shifted to a spade. Declarer won in dummy and led a club, taken by West with the king. A heart was returned, dummy's seven losing to the queen.

Since dummy still had the A-J of hearts, East could not return a heart. He led a spade instead, but that was his last gasp. A club from dummy to East's ace rang down the curtain, and declarer finished with exactly nine tricks.

A handful of Easts found the way to defeat the contract. When dummy played the nine of hearts at trick one, these Easts played the six!

From then on, declarer was fighting a losing battle. South had to attack clubs, and when West won the first club lead with the king, he led a second heart. East, holding K-Q-10-4 over dummy's A-J-7, was now in command of hearts, and declarer had to go down one, losing three hearts and the A-K of clubs.

East's extraordinary play at trick one was very well thought out. He had to assume that West had a club trick as well as another heart to lead, and he backed his convictions accordingly.

Cryptoquip

QHEV WSAMP, SOHDP PH

OV SWWKAVN PH SM HKN

TDQPVN YST, QFHDPVN

"NHM'P YHSP EV HM PFSP!"

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A GUY IS REALLY INTO CATCHING MORAYS AND CONGERS, COULD YOU CALL HIM AN EELING FAN?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals N

Family Circus • Bil Keane



Crossword

ACROSS	39 Toronto team	DOWN	25 "Giddy-ap!" opposite
1 Make like a frog	41 Garage-wall array	1 Injury	26 Slithery
4 "G.W.T.W." spread	43 Cube-maker	2 Hodge-podge	27 Young chaps
8 Music to a comic's ears	44 Sad	3 Trudge	28 Shake-speare or Shelley
12 Every iota	46 Skunk's defense	4 Highest	29 Grooving on
13 Responsibility	50 Ronstadt hit	5 Blackbird	30 Forbidden action
14 "Zounds!"	55 Pirouette pivot	6 Skedad-dle	31 Rain in buckets
15 "Flying Down to —"	56 Uncomplicated	7 Answers, on "Jeopardy!"	32 Fleshly
16 "Dark Side of the Moon" band	57 Miles of movies	8 Assistant	33 Keglers' mecca
18 PC peripheral	58 First lady?	9 Past	40 Make marginalia
20 Try the tea	59 Spud spots	10 Timothy, e.g.	42 Cry
21 Cabin makeup	60 Count counter-part	11 Put 2 and 2 together	45 Bleacher-ites' choreography
24 Banister post	61 Fellow	17 Half a sawbuck	47 Particular
28 Dismissal		19 Wapiti	48 PBS science show
32 Actress Perlman		22 Amorphous mass	49 Acute
33 Lennon's lady		23 Move laterally	50 Spell-down
34 Big bothers			51 Deposit
36 Anti-quated			52 Application
37 Sicilian spouter			53 Verily
			54 Hockey legend Bobby

Solution time: 21 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 9-6

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15				16			17			
18			19			20				
			21		22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30			31		32			
33			34			35		36		
37			38		39		40			
41			42		43					
			44		45		46		47	48
50	51	52			53	54		55		
56					57			58		
59					60			61		