

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"Knock it off, you guys! That's Uncle Hobart you're tossing around!"

Reader irked by man's lack of interest

Dear Abby: When I was 19 and played bass in a rock band, I fell in love with a guy I'll call "Brian." He was three years older and also a musician. We had the best times together — we were young and wild without a care in the world. But the years rolled on and we got older. After six years together, I got pregnant. I thought Brian would be thrilled, but he wasn't. It changed how I felt about him. I was heartbroken and lost respect for him.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

I grew up fast, and put our son, "Ricky," first. Brian, on the other hand, has refused to give up his rock 'n' roll lifestyle. He shows up to see Ricky two or three times a month, but doesn't even look at him. I can't stand the way he ignores our son. Brian says I can't alter who and how he is. I say, if he mattered to him, he would change on his own. This leads to arguments.

Which is worse — having my son grow up with an absent father who's not "present" even when he's here? Or Ricky seeing us fight

all the time, but leaving the option for Brian to be a part of his life?

Or should I get my ex out of our lives for good, and risk resentment from Ricky because I moved on with our lives? — *Fully Formed Adult in L.A.*

were a good student. Why aren't you on the honor roll?" "Do you keep your room clean?" "Would you change for our daughter?"

Todd is a good kid and a good student (A's and B's mostly). He has strong morals, lots of friends and is a typical teen. He isn't asking for that girl's hand in marriage! It's their first "boyfriend/girlfriend" relationship. They just like each other.

Is the mom out of line, or am I being too sensitive? — *Dumbfounded Dad in Illinois*

Dear Fully Formed: If Brian didn't care about Ricky, he wouldn't show up two or three times a month. What strikes me as sad, however, is that he apparently doesn't know how to relate to his son.

Rather than exclude him entirely, stop the arguing and suggest that he and Ricky would both get more out of the visitations if he enrolled in a parenting class for fathers. Tell him that for the sake of Ricky's emotional well-being, you would be glad to help facilitate it any way you can, including helping him to research some of them online.

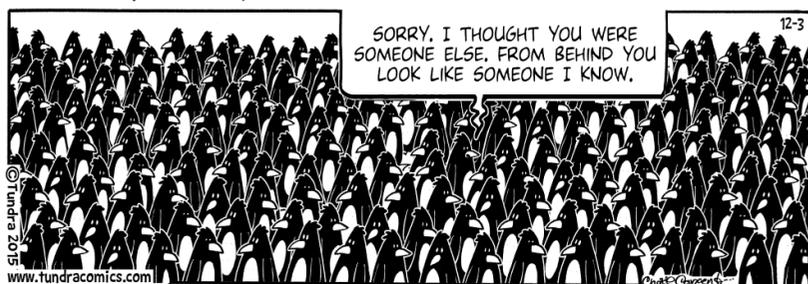
Dear Abby: My 15-year-old son, "Todd," has started seeing a girl he goes to school with. "Winona" seems to be a nice girl from a good family. However, my son confided that her parents (mostly the mom) have started asking him all sorts of questions like, "I thought you

Dear Dad: Because this is her daughter's first boyfriend, the mother may ask these questions because she's protective, and it's her way of trying to get to know your son better.

Please try not to take what's happening so seriously, because she'd probably ask the same questions if Prince Harry were seeing her precious daughter. That's how some mothers are — until enough boys become so uncomfortable that they disappear and the daughter finds it so embarrassing she puts a stop to it.

Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



www.tundracomics.com

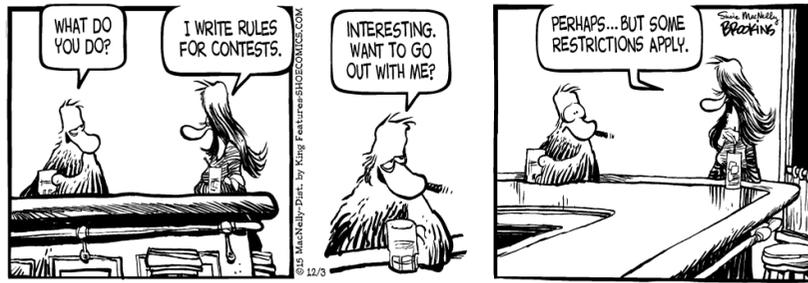
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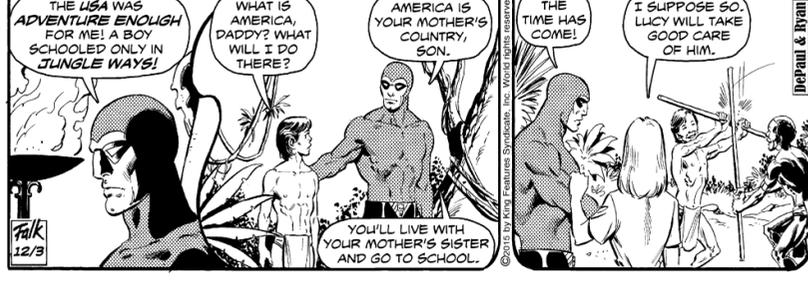
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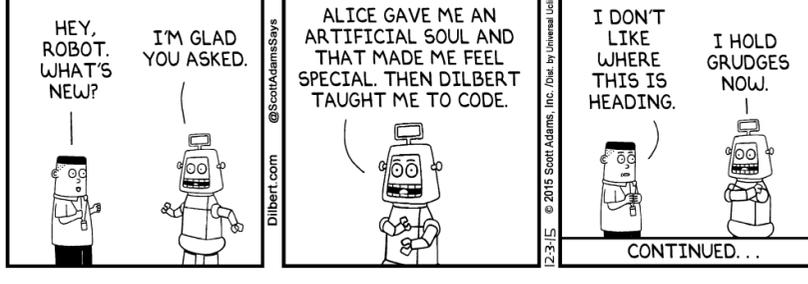
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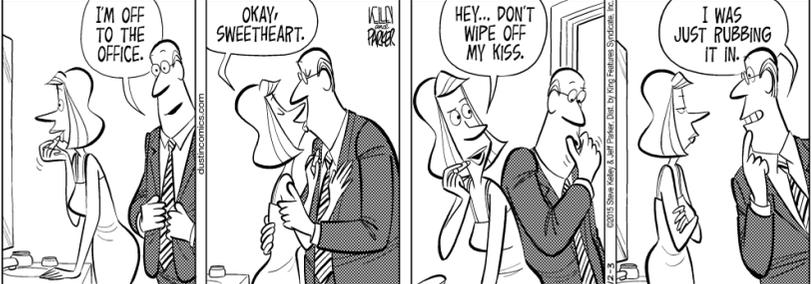
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Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You used to listen to your adviser and act on all you learned. This same person will come to you for advice. Try not to act so surprised. Good teachers are students. Good students are teachers.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Though you're adept at sensing the needs and feelings of others, somehow it's difficult for you to connect with your own and requirements, let alone get them met. Pisces can help.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Don't miss the magic that's happening now by focusing too far into the future. Of course every day is unique and special in its own way, but today features one of the more memorable moments you've had in a while.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There are distances between even the closest of friends that will never be bridged, but you still keep trying because you never know when you'll be able to close another gap.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Pets have much to teach their owners about patience, loyalty and playfulness. Whether or not you have pets, you'll be inspired by the animal kingdom — and you'll feel in better touch with your inner animal as well.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Your cosmic gift of the day is enhanced powers of visualization. See

yourself completing the tasks you know will contribute to your success. While you're at it, you may as well see yourself having an easy time of it!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your soul lights up when exposed to beauty. Art, nature, the best of humanity — if it resonates with the stuff of life, you feel more alive just observing it. If you can actively participate in it, all the better!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Everyone fits in somewhere. You suspect it's harder for you now because of your uncommon talents and unusual interests — you might be right. Luckily you have the Internet to help you look for your tribe.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). As long as you don't allow yourself to be distracted by people who are typically negatively focused, you'll naturally gravitate to fine roads and fair weather.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There's an art to understanding and sensing the right quantity for things. You possess keen judgment and will know how much to use and when to stop. This will help in everything from cooking to work to love.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). In every endeavor there is a point of diminishing returns. You may have already passed it but you keep going. Either you enjoy the process too much to stop, or you're still not convinced the yield has been tapped.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It will be easier than you think to tame the chaos. There are but one or two elements that are out of balance and once you eliminate or offset them the rest will be cake.



HOLIDAY MATHIS