

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Reader seeks cure for her fear of dying

Dear Abby: I'm a hypochondriac. I am currently waiting on the biopsy results for a mole I had removed. Right now I'm worried and miserable. I feel guilty for what I'm putting my husband through. I want to get therapy, but doing that feels like admitting I'm too weak to handle my problems myself. My husband thinks he's a bad husband because he can't help me.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

This isn't the first time I have worked myself up over a medical condition I may or may not have, and it won't be the last. How can I deal with my fear of dying from something horrible without damaging my relationship with my husband?
— *Hypochondriac in The South*

Dear Hypochondriac: It's a wise person who seeks help for a problem that's ruining the quality of his or her life. You should definitely discuss your fear of dying with a licensed mental health professional. To do that isn't "weak" — it's the opposite.

Dear Abby: My son is getting married in the fall and we're all looking forward to the celebration. There's just one problem. My daughter will be in the wedding and the bridesmaids' dresses are strapless. She will look beautiful in the dress, but she adopted a "hippy lifestyle" a year ago and stopped shaving her armpits.

The bride-to-be asked me how to approach her to request that she remove her armpit hair on the day of the wedding. Is there a tactful way to approach this? — *Unsure in New Jersey*

Dear Unsure: I would discourage you from doing that. Although every bride wants her wedding to be "perfect," there's a point at which she must realize there are some things she can't control. An example of where that boundary should be drawn would be at her bridesmaids' armpits. During a formal wedding ceremony, bridesmaids usually keep their arms down, so unless your daughter's "pit hair" is so long she can braid it, it should not distract attention from the bride.

P.S. If hairy armpits in the pictures concern her, they can be Photoshopped off.

Dear Abby: My parents built a two-bedroom apartment onto their house for my brother and his wife when they were struggling financially. They decided to move out of state, so my single sister is now in the apartment.

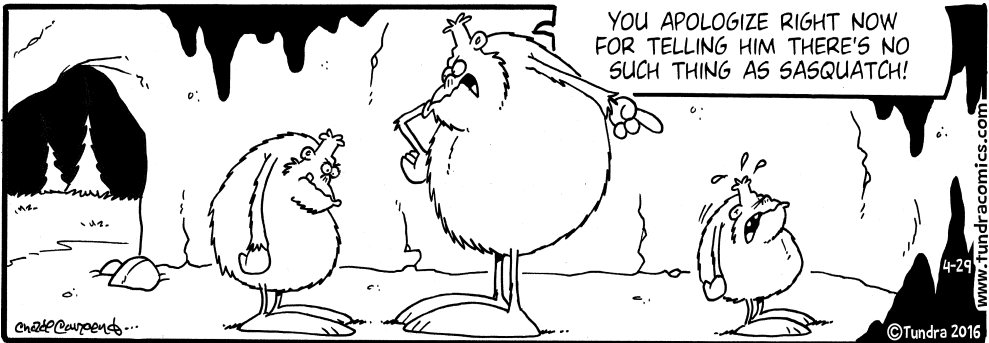
It has been a year, and my brother and his wife are now expecting. They have moved back to the area because they want to raise the baby near family, and want the apartment back. Of course, my sister doesn't want to give it back. I feel she shouldn't have to.

I agree with my sister that my brother gave it up. But my brother feels my single sister doesn't need a two-bedroom apartment. My husband, my parents and I are in the middle. What do you think? — *Squabbling Siblings*

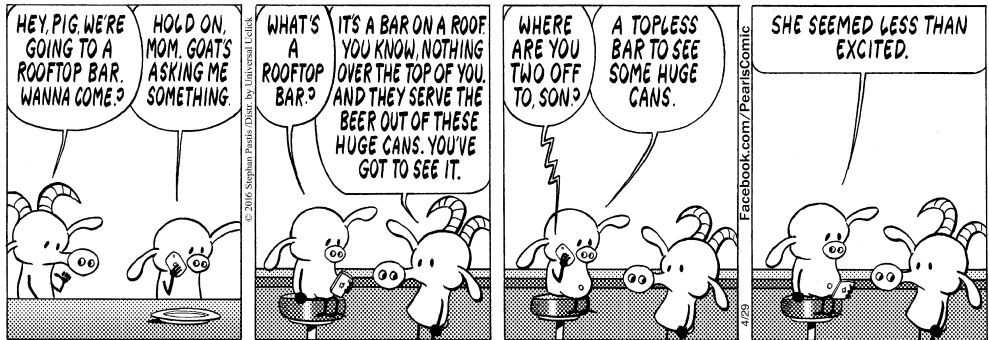
Dear "Squab": Get out of the middle by stepping away. The apartment belongs to your parents, and it is up to them to decide who gets to use it. The rule of etiquette in a situation like this is: Mouth shut! (The more you involve yourself, the more one of your siblings is sure to resent you.)

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

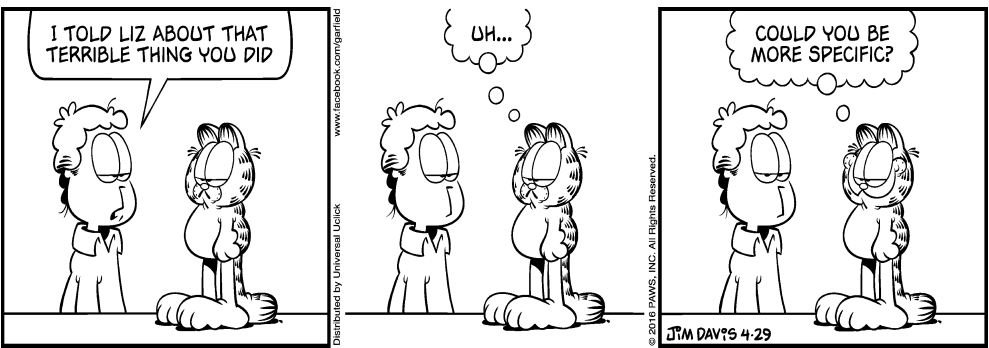
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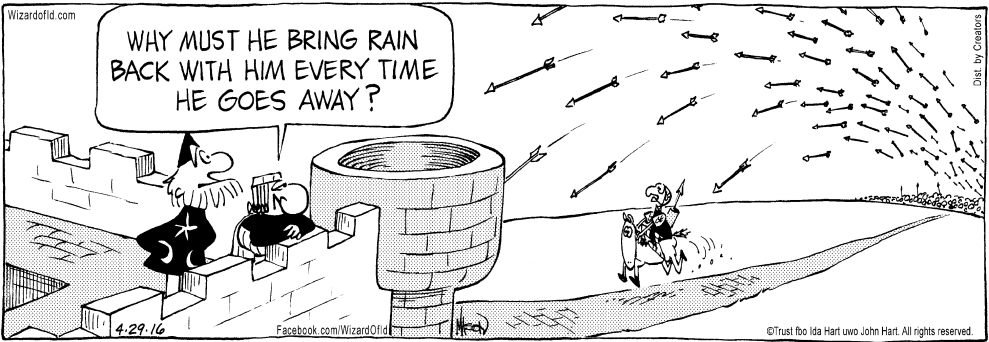
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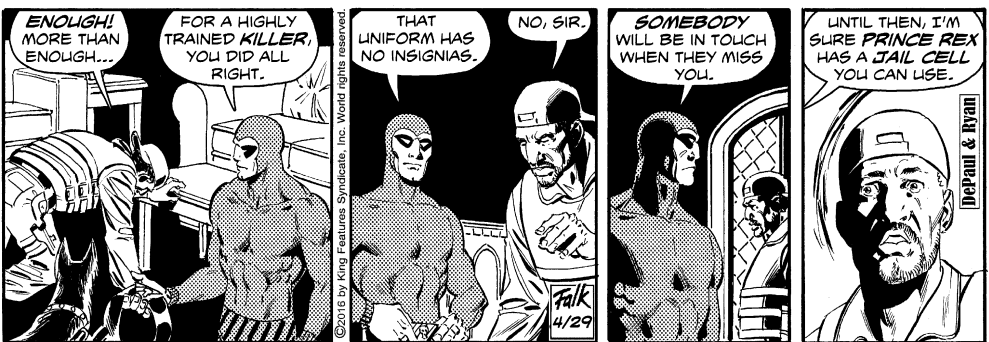
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



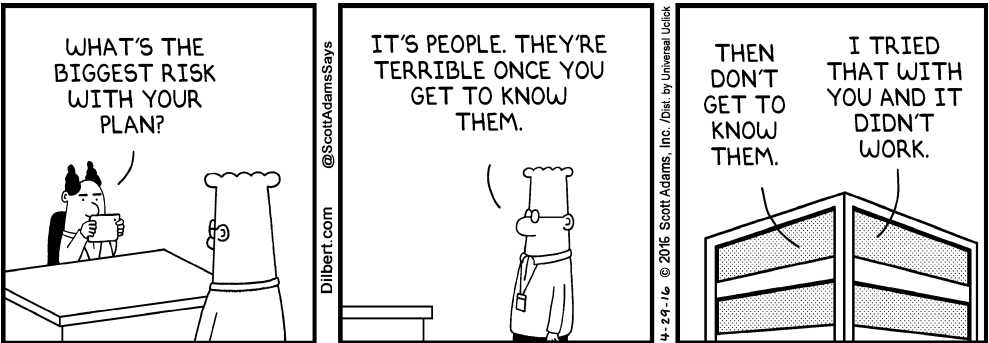
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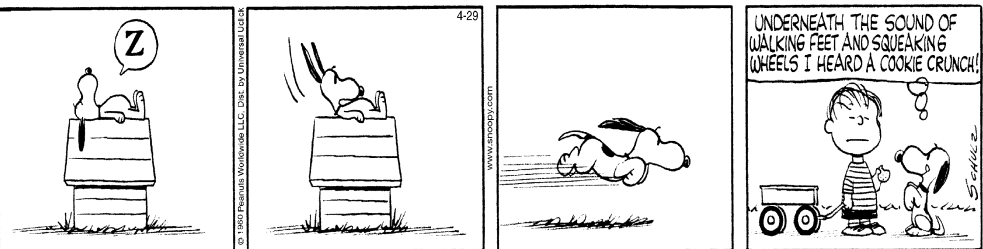
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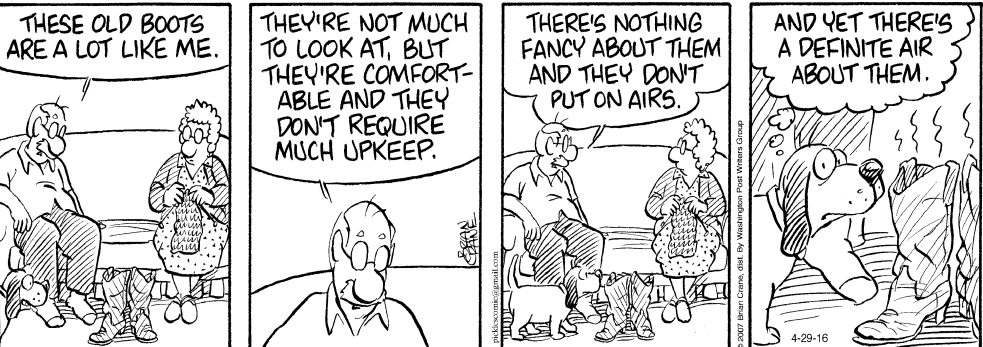
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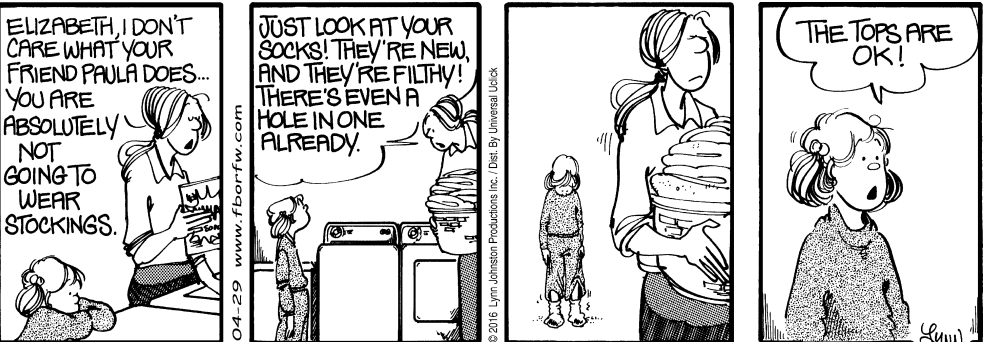
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



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Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). A loved one has proved to be dependable. It's healthy to trust! On the other hand, much depends on the extent to which you're taking things. It's also very important to have a full and balanced life outside of a key relationship.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Victory! Success! Profit! These will be yours soon enough. First, you'll spend many hours in service, contribution and humility. In retrospect, that first part of your day will be the most memorable and awesome.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). There's little to be gained from arguing. It won't sway the ones who believe differently, so you can save your breath and conserve your energy. You'll influence best through attraction, not argument.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Without you, an upcoming event has real "snoresville" potential. Are you willing to step in to give it your signature sizzle? They need you!

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Success favors you. Maybe it's the way you flirt with it all the time, chumming up, batting your lashes, sharing secrets. Success finds your fun, lighthearted energy totally irresistible.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Keep your eyes open and your hands free so you can snap up the juicy opportunities du jour. Today will feature an invitation, the chance to make a new connection and a hot tip worth moving on immediately.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are quite a few logistics to work out, and people won't be communicating very well on the matter. You'll have to be the responsible, thorough one. In the name of clarity, ask more questions than you normally would.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). If you wanted to, you would find it dreadfully easy to shake and rattle a person's confidence. Realizing the fragility of the human condition, you willfully go the opposite direction, searching for ways to build up those around you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Love has been compared to a battlefield, a paradise and a head cold — all apt descriptions, depending on the day and the love in question. You'll have your own unique comparison for love by the day's end.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You've subscribed to the adage before, but the problem with the "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" approach is that winning takes a mindset that would rather go down in flames than "join 'em."

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Often the changes that seem magical and miraculous are merely a matter of consistent, daily effort made over a long period of time. The tricky part is setting up a lifestyle that reminds you to keep up the effort.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Some of the things you've been saying to yourself are less than supportive, but you can and should make it up to yourself now. Get positive about yourself, and give yourself tangible proof of your loyalty.