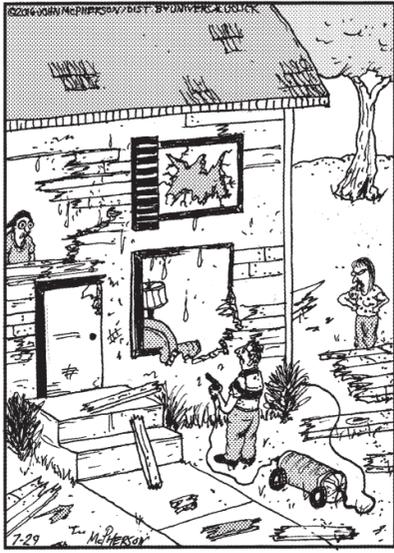


**CLOSE TO HOME** by John McPherson



"Yes, siree! It sure is great that you saved us \$80 by power-washing the house yourself instead of hiring some pros!"

# Mom feels guilty for failing only child

**Dear Abby:** I am the mother of a 13-year-old son, my only child. For the past 10 years I have been living with mounting guilt over the fact that he doesn't have a sibling. Fertility issues took us down an empty road, and adoption discussions were just that — discussions.



**JEANNE PHILLIPS**  
DEAR ABBY

I can't tell you how many times our son has said he wishes he had a sibling. Every time, it's like a knife in my heart. I think about how he will have no brother or sister to share life with or lean on when something happens to my husband or me. Although I have always felt blessed to have him, I can't escape these feelings. Sometimes I feel like I have failed him horribly.

It's worth noting that my son is a happy, well-adjusted child. He has good peer relationships in school, is close to me and my husband and has hobbies and friends. My love for him is endless, and I pray that he will forgive me someday for not being able to give him what he has so deserved. — *Sad Mom in Ohio*

**Dear Sad Mom:** Take a step back, stop self-flagellating and ask yourself how many times your son may have also asked for a puppy. You say you have raised a happy, well-adjusted son. That's an accomplishment that should fill you with pride.

Not being able to give birth to another child is not something you should feel guilty about or need forgiveness for, and neither is refraining from adopting "so your son would have a sibling." Not all siblings have the kind of relationship you fantasize about. While some do, many do not.

Please consider carefully what I have said and search your heart. And if you still think you are guilty of any sin of omission, discuss it with a licensed psychotherapist.

**Dear Abby:** Last year I found out my husband borrowed \$3,500 from our savings account and gave it to a female co-worker. When I asked where the money had gone, he lied to me.

It has been more than a year and the co-worker hasn't repaid the money. She comes up with cockamamie excuses, but has plenty of money to buy gifts for her grandkids and

new clothes for herself. When I contacted her about it, she called human resources on my husband! He said no one at work likes her and she has a lot of personal problems.

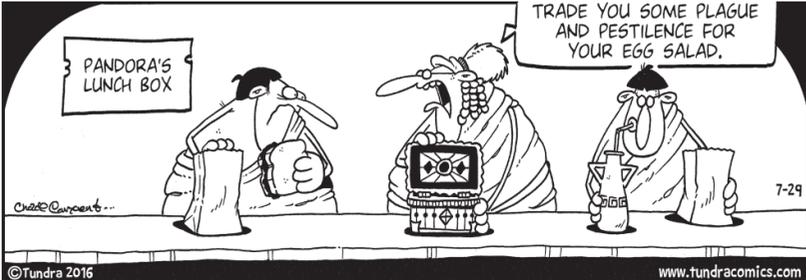
Our marriage has been rocky, and we need this money back. What's really going on here? How do I get her to start paying back the money? I have reached the end of my rope and my husband is no help whatsoever. He gets mad whenever I ask about the money. Some advice, please? — *Needs the Money*

**Dear Needs the Money:** Stop asking your husband about the money. It should be clear by now that the woman he gave it to has no intention of repaying it. As to her not being liked at the office, HE must have liked her or he wouldn't have forked over all that dough.

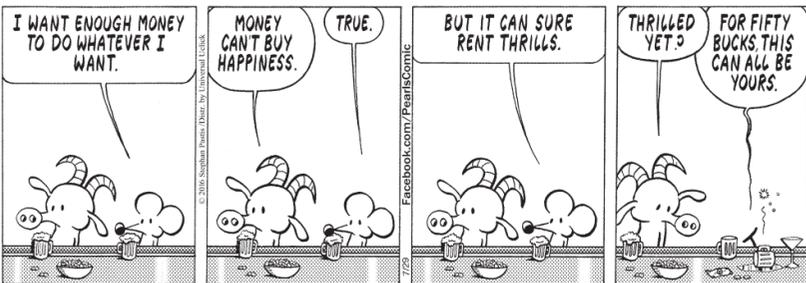
Because your marriage is "rocky," I'm recommending that you seek couples counseling. Perhaps with the help of a mediator your husband will be able to be completely truthful with you. That's essential because good marriages are based on trust.

**Write Dear Abby** at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

**TUNDRA** by Chad Carpenter



**PEARLS BEFORE SWINE** by Stephan Pastis



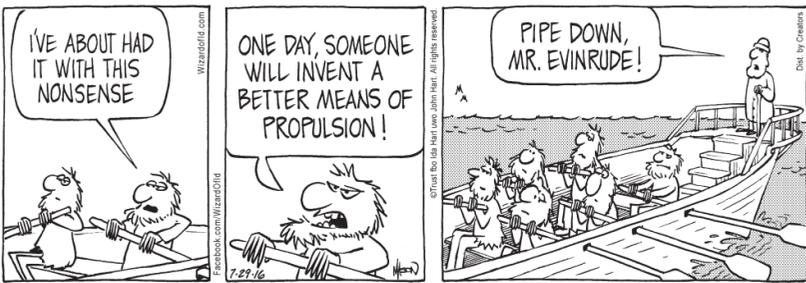
**GARFIELD** by Jim Davis



**JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE** by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



**WIZARD OF ID** by Brant Parker



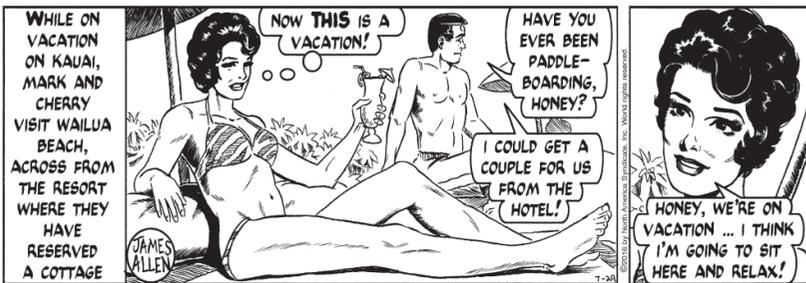
**THE PHANTOM** by Lee Falk



**DILBERT** by Scott Adams



**MARK TRAIL** by James Allen



**PEANUTS** by Charles Schulz



**PICKLES** by Brian Crane



**FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE** by Lynn Johnston



**BABY BLUES** by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



**ZITS** by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



**DUSTIN** by Steve Kelley and Jeff Parker



## Daily Horoscope

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** More than one high-priority concern will demand your attention, and you can get to each one before the day is over. Make a list and persist until all items are checked off. It's important.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Wanting the same thing as your equally matched opposition? This can't end well, even if you win. Like two atoms seek to occupy the same space, the result is cataclysmic. Do consider wanting something else.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Backing out may not seem like the heroic thing to do, but if it's the thing that will make your life better, smoother and more peaceful, do it. Remove yourself from the situation; seek sanctuary.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** It may seem, from your current vantage, that any place is better than the one in which you stand. It's not true, but you should move anyway, if only to get into a new position.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** There's no chance of the day getting boring. Part of the fun will include snappy banter with an attractive someone. By the way, if you keep this up you could accidentally make someone fall in love with you.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** From time to time, even the most exciting people get bored of their own stories and skins. Being around the people who love you dearly will help you see

yourself with the adoring eyes that they see you through.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** The dangers of being overwhelmed are just as real as they are unnecessary. You can and will handle everything you need to. Start easy and make a list of the harder things. You'll deal with those when you're in a stronger position.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Owing too much makes you feel disorganized. You can upgrade by downsizing. Tonight, if you're in the mood to experience the mysteriously exciting side of love, it will be there for you.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Sometimes life happens to you, but mostly it happens from you. Even though you're not always in charge, it's empowering to see your life as a series of choices.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Turn off your self-censorship for a few hours while you brainstorm about how to improve your personal life. During this time, there are no wrong answers or threatening ideas. Ideas won't hurt you.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Morale is higher when everyone on the team feels at least somewhat powerful. If it seems someone has too much control while others have none, there will be problems. Seek balance.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Your thoughtfulness, combined with your generous spirit and refusal to deal in pettiness, inspires love to flow through your life in a big way. Someone is getting used to this and will soon be spoiled if you keep it up.



**HOLIDAY MATHS**