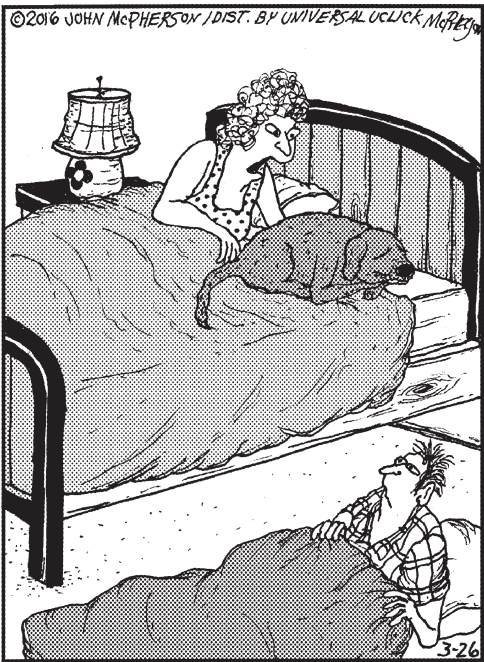


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"For heaven's sake! A grown man jealous of a dog! Just roll over and get some sleep, you whiner!"

Vacation plans make reader feel uneasy

Dear Abby: I have been dating my boyfriend for two years. He is applying to graduate school, while I am applying to medical school. He's wonderful and we talk often about marriage and our future. Both of us have student loan debt, which we are aggressively working to pay down, pulling long hours at work.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

My problem is, he thinks nothing of planning weeks-long, extravagant vacations for us. I make twice what he does, but I prefer saving for the obvious debt in my future and taking shorter, less-expensive vacations. He relies on his "strategic financial planning" to compensate for his "I want it all, and I want it now" personality.

When I express my hesitancy to go on these long trips based on my personal finances, he offers to pay for everything, which makes me feel like a cheapskate, since I could technically pay for us both easily. Am I unreasonable in saying I'm uncomfortable with either of us

spending thousands of dollars that would be better spent setting up our future together?
— Vacation Scrooge

Dear Scrooge: Oh, how I wish you had revealed more information about your boyfriend's "strategic financial planning" because I'm sure many people would be very interested. However, if he's investing in the stock market, he should know that it's like an elevator — investments not only can go up, but they also can come down, and there are no guarantees regarding investment results.

Before this relationship goes further, I URGE you and your boyfriend to seek not only couples counseling but also financial counseling. Few things are more destructive to a marriage than money woes, and you both need someone to explain exactly what the philosophy of "I want it all, and I want it now" will mean for your future.

Dear Abby: I'm having a problem with my boyfriend's friend "Chuck." Chuck constantly does things like open a door on me (which has left bruises), run into me "by accident" (which caused me to trip) or "accidentally" push me

into the water. My boyfriend already knows I have strong reservations about his friend's character, and it upsets him because Chuck is a childhood friend.

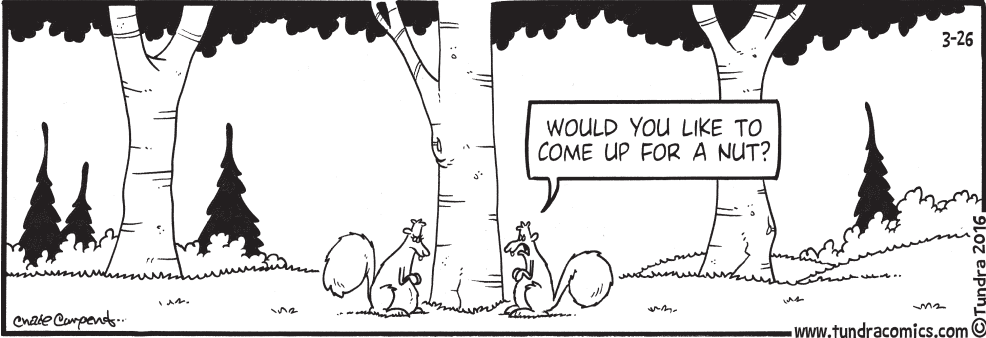
I don't like to bring it up as often as these incidents occur, but I'm worried that one day I'll finally lose my temper and be accused of making a big deal out of nothing when it's obviously something. How can I make Chuck stop before something happens?
— Uncomfortable in California

Dear Uncomfortable: Has it occurred to you that Chuck may be jealous of the time you and his friend spend together, and may be punishing you because he feels you have taken his friend away from him?

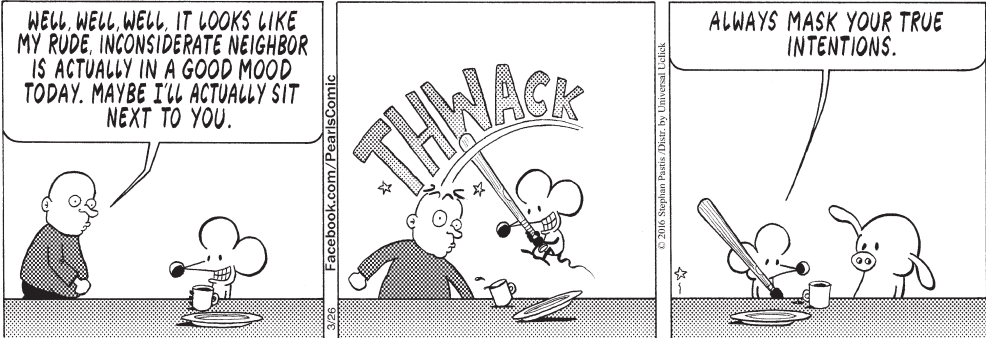
I suggest this because that's the way he has been acting — literally trying to "push" you out of the picture. I see nothing wrong with telling your boyfriend about EVERYthing Chuck has "accidentally" done to you, and then letting him deal with his friend's insecurities.

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

TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE by Stephan Pastis



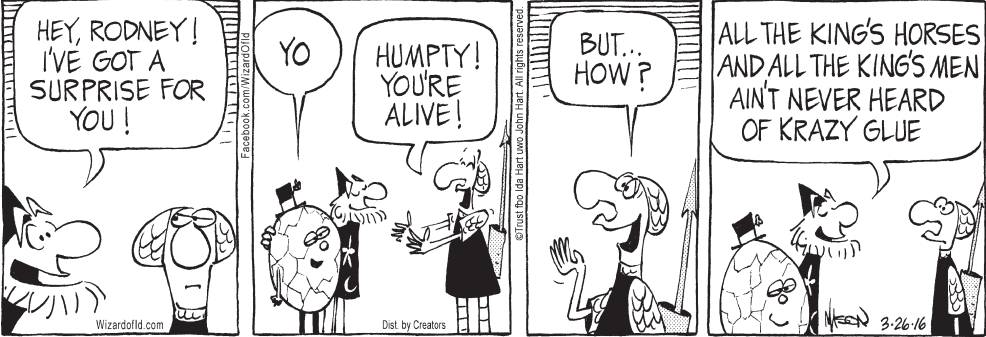
GARFIELD by Jim Davis



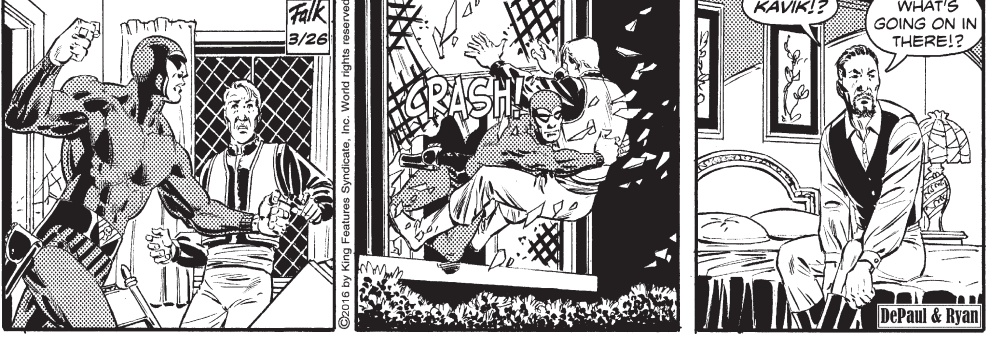
JEFF MACNELLY'S SHOE by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins



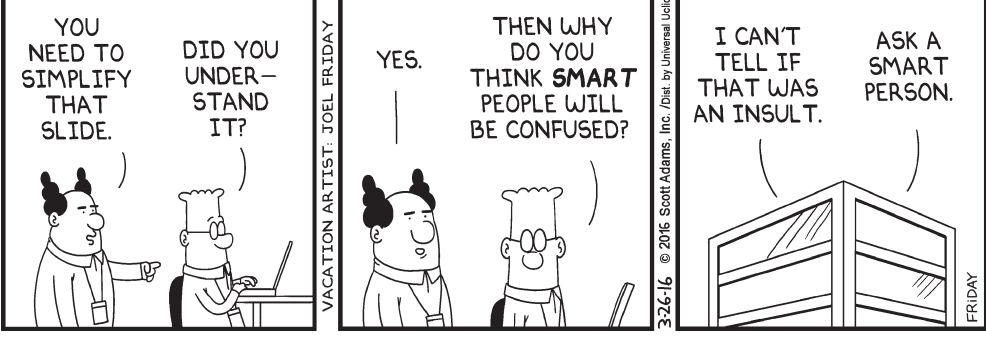
WIZARD OF ID by Brant Parker



THE PHANTOM by Lee Falk



DILBERT by Scott Adams



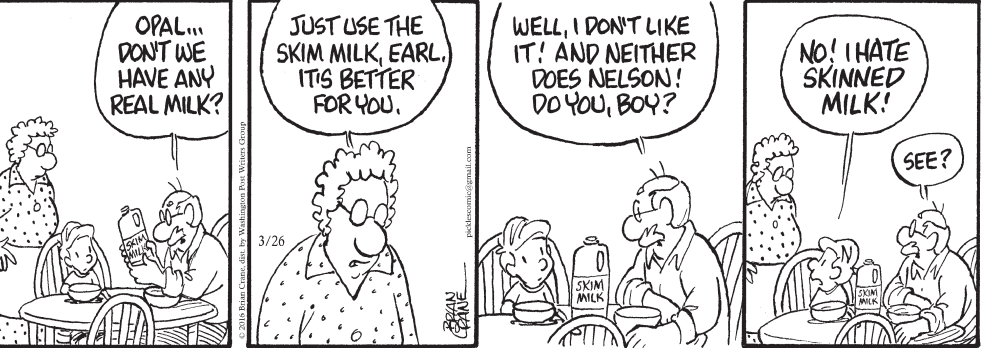
MARK TRAIL by James Allen



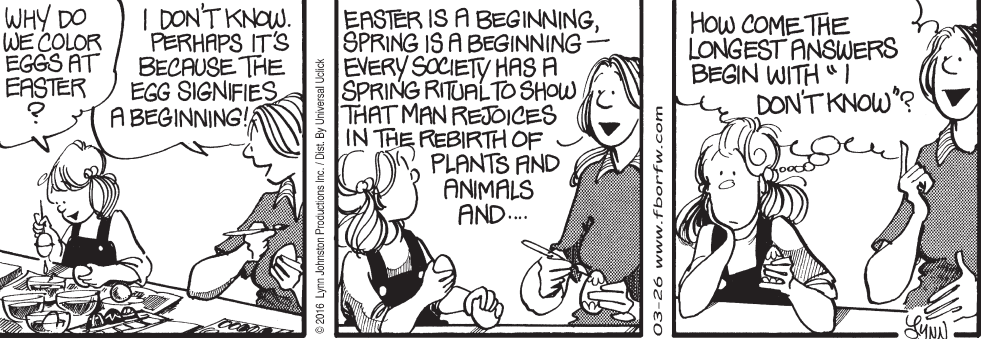
PEANUTS by Charles Schulz



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). You seek the guidance of someone strong and objective. You may even prefer the impersonal directive of a book or self-guided program. Your desire to learn will be answered in the eventual acquisition of serious skills.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Discard your conventional notions of what it means to dance and a wondrous ballet will unfold before your eyes. This ballet will be performed by people, objects and ideas alike.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Some may mistakenly think you are indecisive. It's just that they don't currently understand your information-gathering process. You like to know the full range of options before you make up your mind.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It's not always the case, and yet you have been before — and will be again — the essential crux of the action around you. For now, enjoy your position slightly out of frame.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your idea of playtime is different now from what it was when you were a child, but it's no less crucial to your development as a person. In playful acts you will discover yourself and grow.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You do have support, though it might not be as specific or as plentiful as it could be. How much better would you feel with even more people around you who

were supportive of you living the life you want to live?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There's a point in which you can actually hurt a relationship by operating too generously inside of it. So why not cash in on that stack of karma chips that has been steadily growing over the last few weeks?

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Hope is a hard thing to hold in your hand sometimes, but you can totally wrap your head around a realistic paper plan. So write it all down. This is how you'll push through to the next stage.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It's been suggested that a fallen halo becomes a collar just waiting for someone to snap on a leash. You're better off avoiding the angel stereotype altogether by reminding someone now that you're not perfect.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You would love to experience more grace in your life. You embody grace in more ways than you think, and yet you need someone to reflect this back to you to see it clearly.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You can appreciate that people love you the way you are, and maybe you even feel some pressure to stay that way. But quite simply, there's something in you that doesn't want to. You'll spread your wings tonight.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Your hospitality is so attractive, which could be humorous to you, because it does feel at times that the responsibility has been thrust upon you. This is only because you're so good at it!



HOLIDAY MATHIS