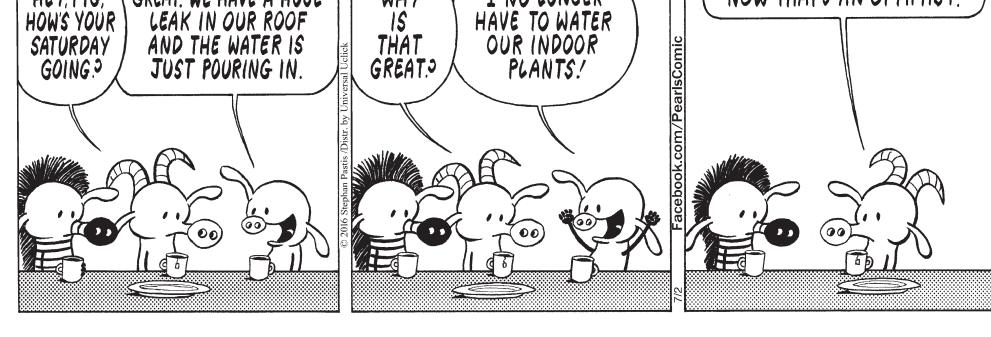
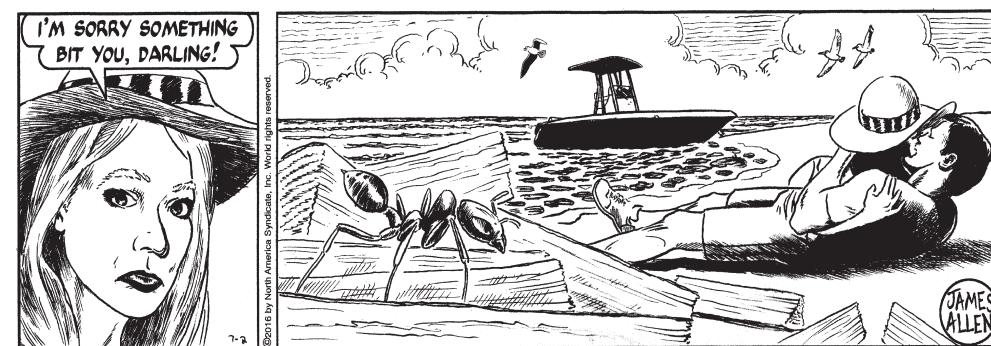


CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson

Knowing that Marge didn't like kissing a guy with a beard, Rich wisely wore his new synthetic "make-out lips."

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

Teen under stress keeps mouthing off

Dear Abby: I'm 15. My problem is I often mouth off and insult people.

When I'm asked to explain why I said what I did, I answer with, "I don't know" or a shrug.

It's the truth. It upsets me that I act this way, and I have lost friends because of it.

My parents think counseling and therapy are a coward's way out, and I don't want to go to my school counselors because they'll tell my parents or the state.

Is it a blatant choice not to care, something subconscious or a possible disorder? I'm under a lot of stress.

I know stressors can cause people to act this way, but I have a feeling it's not caused by stress.

What should I do? — *Nervous and Afraid*

Dear Nervous and Afraid: Everyone snaps sometimes, but because it has ruined relationships, do talk to a school counselor or other

adult you trust about what's happening.

Your behavior may just be part of being a teenager, but if the stressors in your life might also be a factor, it's important you understand what triggers your behavior so you can modify it.

Dear Abby: I'm a 14-year-old girl and I have an identical twin. The problem is, she always gets all the attention, especially from boys.

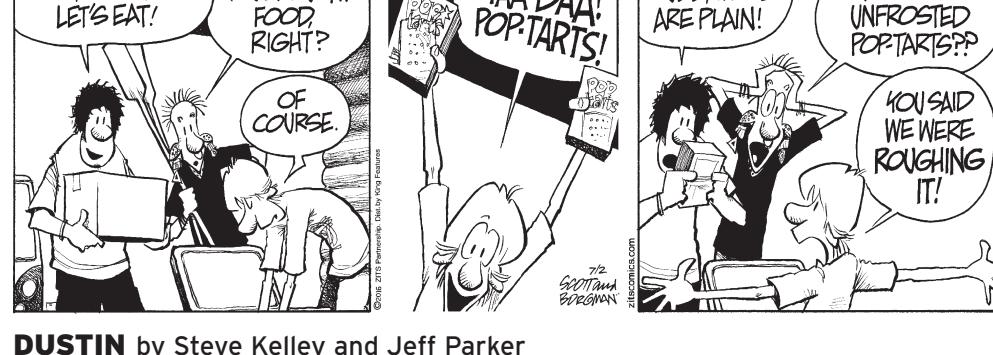
I don't understand why because we look exactly alike, and in my opinion, I have the better personality.

When I'm around her, which is practically all the time, I feel invisible — as if people only see HER.

How do I get people to stop noticing my sister and get them to see that I deserve some attention? — *Here, Too, in California*

Dear Here, Too: You say you and your twin are together practically all the time. THAT may be the problem.

If you want to be noticed, start joining activities on your own. That way, you will

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). Though you don't like to dwell on upsetting experiences of the past, you can now see them as though you were a casual observer; not the one at the center of the scene. Doing so will help you work out today's dilemma.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You've discharged quite a lot of emotional energy as of late, and now there's a hum of mental calm to accompany your every move. It's a good soundtrack.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

Speaking in abstract principles won't help what's going on for you personally. Ground your conversation and anecdotes in the facts and happenings of your life.

CANCER (June 22-July 22).

You're tough and so you have to do the tough work. After you clear up this bit of gnarly (or perhaps just inordinately tedious) business, you'll be back to your charismatic, hilarious, sparkly self.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

You sometimes wonder if the person you're being in a relationship is intrinsic to who you are or only showing up because of the circumstances present in that particular dynamic. Take yourself out of it and see.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

It's an ideal day to assess your current status in concrete measures.

Whether it's counting your blessings, children,

money or body stats, size up the facts and find out exactly where you're at.

develop separate interests and, along with them, separate friendships.

Although you and your twin are identical, you do not have to be joined at the hip. Remember that.

Dear Abby: I'm 27 and my grandparents have played very important roles in my life. I know they won't be here forever, and I cry myself to sleep thinking about this.

Besides spending more time with them, what else do you suggest I do to prepare myself for their passing? — *Loving Granddaughter*

Dear Loving Granddaughter: Accept that death is a part of life and make sure that yours is a full and happy one. And make an effort to stay in the moment.

The more time you spend obsessing about what will eventually happen, the less you will have to enjoy the blessings you have today.

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

HOLIDAY MATHIS

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You may be surprised by a sudden awareness of a responsibility you didn't know you had. Probably, it's something you've already been taking care of, though now, instead of acting automatically, you see the choice in this.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Was it something bad that happened or was it a wisdom-building experience? Well, if you never thought of it that way before, you'll run with the idea today and apply that wisdom all over the place.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The computing power that's woven into almost everything you do will have a definite effect on a main relationship today. It could, if used well, bring you much closer to your love. If used badly, it could cause a wedge.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You want to excel, but when you do, there is a set of feelings on the other side of it that catches you off guard. Remember how it was last time. You're going to succeed again, so it's important that you prepare yourself for it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The pertinent question is whether your current sense of what you're capable of is actually balanced or it's a distortion you've created based on the expectations and needs of those around you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). On your way to the next evolution, the one in which you gain what you've been wanting, something gets lost. It's most commonly something you weren't using and don't need anyway, but grieving may be called for.