

Woman worries her gentle friend may harbor dark side

DEAR ABBY: I'm incredibly fond of my friend "Russell." He is always supportive, considerate and kind to me. However, I know that he is into S&M and this worries me, as I can't reconcile the two different people -- a gentle person with someone wanting to dominate and possibly hurt a woman in bed.

Should I be worried that Russell is hiding a dark side that will eventually come out and ruin our friendship? — **WORRIED FRIEND IN AUSTRALIA**

DEAR WORRIED: You and Russell must be very close friends if he is describing his sexual practices with you. My experts tell me that acting out on aggressive fantasies does not necessarily mean a person IS aggressive.

As long as your relationship remains platonic, what he does in the bedroom shouldn't affect it. But if you're considering taking your friendship with Russell to another level, it's important that you talk further about this. If this isn't something you're interested in exploring -- and it isn't for everyone -- then draw the line or move on.

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 14-year-old girl, and my mother just got home from rehab. I have been living with my grandmother for a year and a half.

I want to tell my mother my feelings, but I don't want to hurt her. I love her, but I'm still not over what she has done. She is barely home. She has meetings, and she likes to stay with



DEAR ABBY

her boyfriend. I think it's too soon. She came home only a week ago. What do I do, Abby? — **CONFUSED TEEN**

DEAR CONFUSED: You have my sympathy. I hope your mother's rehabilitation will be successful. It's good that she is going to meetings, and I agree with you that it's too soon for her to be staying with her boyfriend.

However, she's unlikely to accept hearing it from you or me, which is why you should talk to your grandmother about your feelings. Your mother might accept it if she hears from your grandmother that should there be any "bumps" in her relationship with this man -- and there usually are a few -- that they could jeopardize her sobriety.

DEAR ABBY: I have a 19-month-old son, "Nicky." He stays at my in-laws' house most days while my husband and I work. Lately, I've noticed when I go to pick him up that Grandma and Grandpa like to give him "kiss attacks," where they hold him "hostage" and give him several kisses. Sometimes he lets them,

and it's not a problem. Other times he squirms, whines and tells them no. It's painful to watch, especially when they respond with, "I know you're not going to like this, but I'm going to do it anyway."

I think this is a huge violation of my son's boundaries. It teaches him he should just give in because nobody cares that he's uncomfortable. My husband thinks Nicky is too young to understand, and that it's not going to hurt him to have extra affection.

I'm an affectionate person who likes to hug and kiss my son, too, but if he's not in the mood, I let him be. Who is right? — **LOVING MOMMY IN COLORADO**

DEAR LOVING MOMMY: You are. Affection is something welcome. If you don't want it, it's not affection. The most significant issues in child development have to do with nurturing and building trust. However well meant, holding a child "hostage" is more a display of power than affection.

If your in-laws stopped "attacking," your son would be more likely to seek their affection when he wants it. A better way to demonstrate their love for him would be to do something creative, like draw a picture showing their affection for him.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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5		4	2				6
		3	7			2	
	8					7	4
				9		6	5
			4		6		
3	1			2			
1	3					5	
		2			5	6	
7				8	4		9

Instructions for play: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

That's all there is to it. There's no math involved. The grid has numbers, but nothing has to add up to anything else. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic. It's fun. It's challenging. It's addictive!

Solving time is typically from 10 to 30 minutes, depending on your skill and experience. The solution for today's puzzle will be published in Saturday's paper. Or you can go to www.sudoku.com to find the solution.

7	4	2	9	5	6	8	1	3
6	1	9	8	2	3	7	4	5
3	5	8	1	4	7	9	6	2
5	3	7	4	9	1	2	8	6
2	9	4	5	6	8	3	7	1
1	8	6	3	7	2	5	9	4
4	7	1	2	3	9	6	5	8
9	2	5	6	8	4	1	3	7
8	6	3	7	1	5	4	2	9

Previous Puzzle

HELOISE'S KITCHENEERING BY HELOISE

Bits of Baking Items

Dear Heloise: Every year around the holidays, I bake. I always end up with BITS OF BAKING ITEMS left over that I never use (example: oatmeal, chocolate chips, coconut, graham-cracker crumbs, brown sugar, powdered sugar, etc.). None of it is enough to make anything, and I eventually end up throwing it out. If I make something else, I have to buy more of the same ingredients, and again I am left with bits of this and that. Any ideas on what I can do? — A Reader, via email

One of the easiest ways to use up those bits and pieces is to add them to a packaged cake or cookie mix, or, even better, make "everything" cookie bars! Use your favorite sugar-cookie recipe (or pre-packaged dough) and make a crust in a baking pan. Then spread your leftover toppings, add some melted butter to help bind it together a bit, bake and enjoy! Simple, easy and inexpensive! — Heloise

Send A Great Hint To:

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Keep Off

Dear Heloise: Whenever I make deviled eggs, I insert toothpicks in a few of the outer eggs and one in the center once they are arranged on the serving dish. I am then able to put plastic wrap on top without the egg filling sticking to it.

This also works with a cake, cupcakes or any food item that could potentially stick to the plastic wrap. A few toothpicks are all you need to keep the plastic wrap off the food. — Jenna H. in Ohio

Fresh Coconut

Dear Heloise: Please, please, please tell your readers to remove the fiber husk before placing coconut in the oven! (Heloise here: From a previous column, placing coconut in the oven is a step in getting the meat out). Years ago, newly married, I had a recipe calling for fresh coconut. My mom had always baked coconuts, but somehow I never noticed that she removed the husk.

Do you know how embarrassing it is to explain to the fire department that your coconut is on fire? After quite a bit of laughter, I was told to remove it from the oven using potholders, place it in the sink and run water over it. — Colleen H. in Texas

Oh, Colleen, it's a great story to tell now, but I am sure it was scary! Thank you for the reminder. Readers, remove the husk before placing a coconut in the oven. — Heloise

Sugar Hint

Dear Heloise: Instead of regular, granulated sugar, can I substitute brown sugar in recipes? — Leah M. in Colorado

Yes, you can substitute the equal amount of brown sugar for regular sugar in recipes. All it will do is add a hint of molasses flavoring to your dish. — Heloise

Taco Shell

Dear Heloise: For those who have problems with taco shells breaking, here's what we do in Texas: Fold a soft taco around the crisp one, and not only do you keep your taco intact, but you get a delicious soft taco as well! — Ruth Anne H. in Texas

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

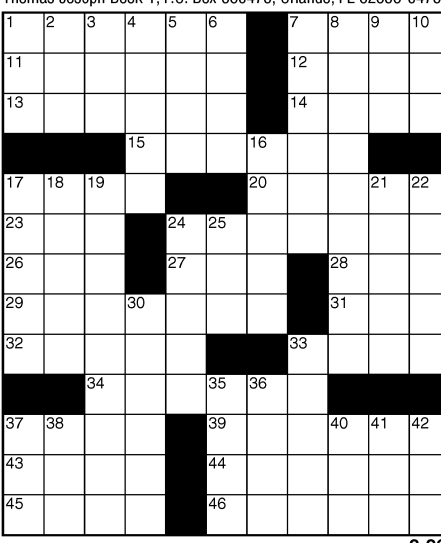
- 1 Zero in films
7 Counterfeit
11 Spanish fleet
12 Guitar bar
13 Corned beef sandwich
14 Director
15 Slot machine feature
17 Eight, in Acapulco
20 Rein for Rover
23 Big snake
24 Glisten
26 Writer Tan
27 Descartes' conclusion
28 Sushi choice
29 Keepsake
31 Workout unit
32 "— of Two Cities"
33 Invites
34 Grovel
37 Ooze
39 Takes advantage
43 Shrek, for one
44 Courier's burden
45 Office leader
46 Like winter weather

DOWN

- 1 Disfigure
2 Vein yield
3 Dallas sch.
4 Forbidden
5 Perfect place
6 Highway division
7 Game official
8 Milliners
9 Fitting
10 Cattle call
16 San Antonio landmark
17 "Dreams From My Father" writer
18 Astronomer's find
19 Powerful punches
21 Streamlined
22 Lends a hand
24 Tendon
25 Contrived
30 Skips a ceremony
33 In the know

- 35 Lights-out tune
36 Egg outline
37 Express despair
38 Sense of self
40 Road hazard
41 Rent out
42 Shrewd

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2-26

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Identical
5 Type a password, perhaps
10 Nurse Barton
12 Conjecture
13 Forum figure
14 Third letter
15 Hydrocarbon suffix
16 Strip of clickable icons
18 Place for mixing at home
20 Had lunch
21 Numerical prefix
23 Went first
24 Curbside call
26 Mysterious loch
28 Signing need
29 Woodland resident
31 Curator's concern
32 Cufflinks' kin
36 Prying tool
39 Imitating
40 West of music
41 Space circle
43 Cake coating
44 Brother's daughter
45 Vegas lights

- 46 Ran, as color

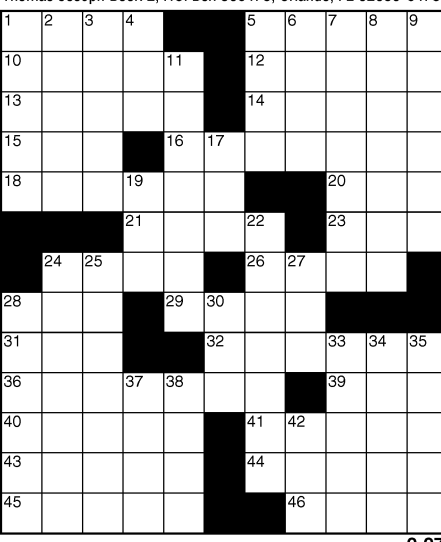
DOWN

- 1 Machine part
2 Without aid
3 "American Buffalo" playwright
4 Important age
5 Company sign
6 Milky stone
7 Gyro-scope rings
8 Pen group
9 Drew close to
11 Tummy relief
17 Table scrap
19 Cereal buy
22 Golfer's cleek
24 Patio's kin
25 Shake-speare's merchant
27 Before, to Byron
28 Cram



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2-27

Daily Cryptoquote – Here's how to work it:

A XYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-26

CRYPTOQUOTE

Z J I S C Z T Q U Z W C N J O Q C Q L
N U E E F Q O K L O T T U K U K C W W L
X J E U N I C K O N C T K S J K U G Q
W O P I C I L . K S J U Q W L J Q K I C Q N J
I J H F O I J E J Q K O T O Q K J I J T K .
— W C X L P O I X D U S Q T U Q

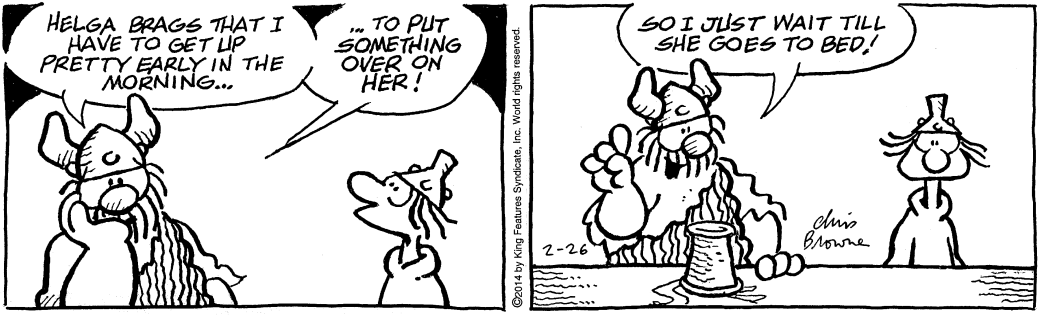
Previous Cryptoquote: A GOOD NOVEL TELLS US THE TRUTH ABOUT ITS HERO; BUT A BAD NOVEL TELLS US THE TRUTH ABOUT ITS AUTHOR. – G.K. Chesterton

COMICS

Tundra



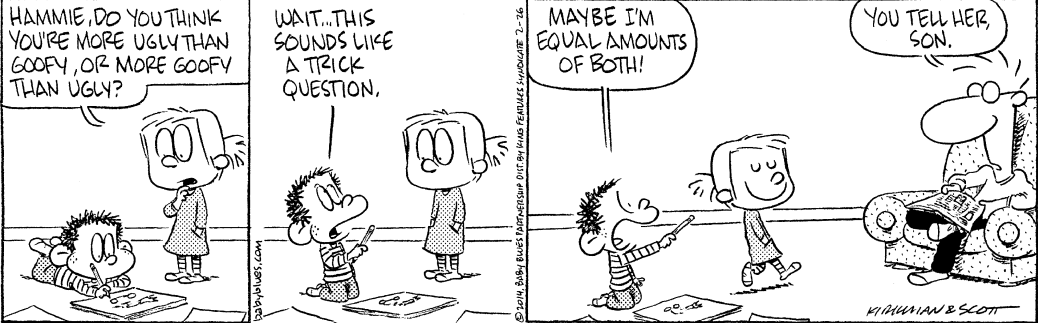
Hagar the Horrible



Peanuts



Baby Blues



Dilbert

