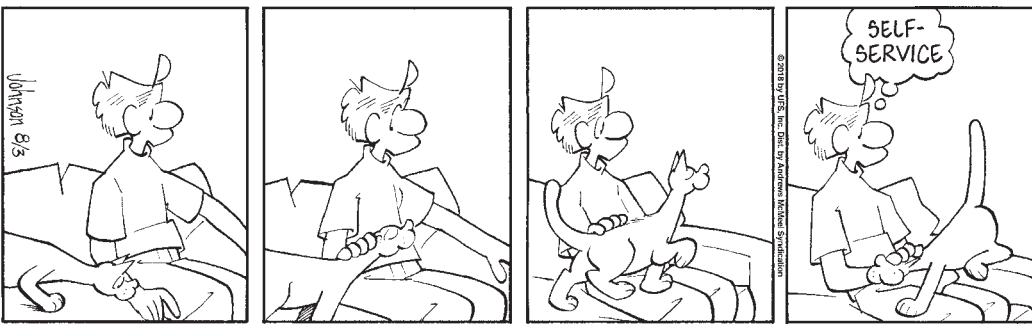


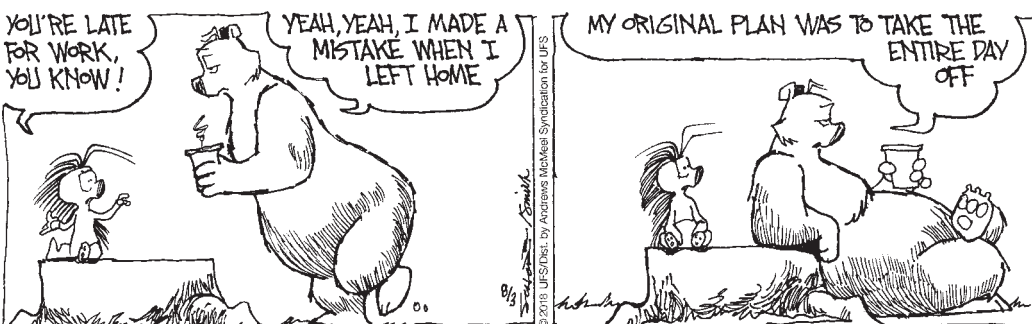
ARLO AND JANIS® by Jimmy Johnson



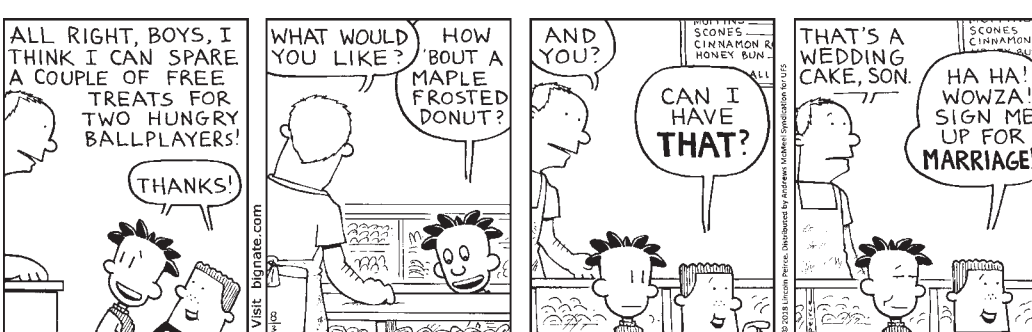
FRANK & ERNEST® by Bob Thaves



THE GRIZZWELLS® by Bill Schorr



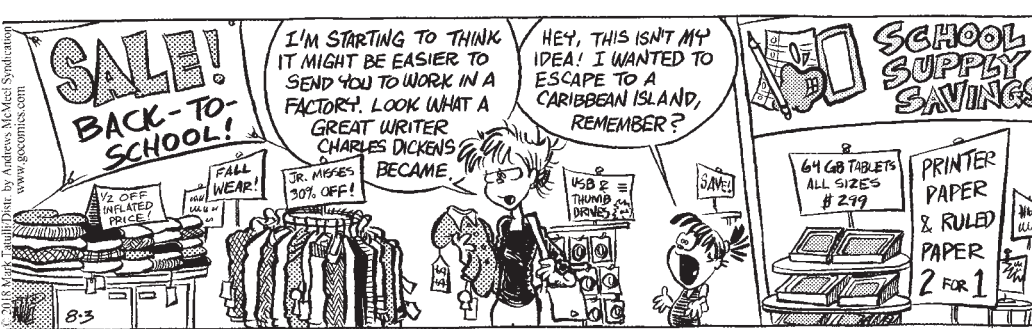
BIG NATE® by Lincoln Peirce



ALLEY OOP by Jack and Carole Bender



HEART OF THE CITY by Mark Tatulli



THE BORN LOSER™ by Art & Chip Sansom



HERMAN® by Jim Unger



"It says here a laboratory rat got himself a lawyer and is suing the government for \$10 million."

REALITY CHECK® by Dave Whamond



AT THE MOVIES

Buddy spy comedy mixes laughs, stunning violence

(AP) — From the get-go, "The Spy Who Dumped Me," a Kate McKinnon-Mila Kunis buddy spy comedy, has two things going for it.

First, female spies are clearly in vogue — or if you prefer your spies to be fictional, may we recommend Keri Russell's recently departed Elizabeth Jennings on "The Americans"?

More importantly, the film has McKinnon, whose comedic brilliance on "Saturday Night Live" has yet to find the perfect big-screen vehicle. It will, one day, but this movie isn't it. Still, her presence gives the film — an often entertaining but chaotically uneven experience — its energy and spark.

The main problem with "The Spy Who Dumped Me" is its strange dis-

sonance of tone. There's nothing wrong with trying to be a hard-knuckle action film and a goofy comedy all at once. But here, that effort results in moments of occasionally stunning violence that simply don't mesh with the light-hearted vibe the filmmakers seek elsewhere.

Talented director Susanna Fogel clearly feels that a female action comedy doesn't need to be short on the action, and that's totally true. But gender issues aside, there's action and there's serious violence. When an appealingly kooky character gets shot in the head during a hilarious car chase, it suddenly doesn't feel so hilarious. Likewise when someone drowns in a pot of fondue, or gets impaled on a blade.

We begin with Justin Theroux as Drew, the spy in the title, tangling with a bunch of bad guys in Lithuania, racing around on a motorcycle, leaping out of a building, that sort of thing. Who's he fighting? Not clear. Cut back to the USA, where Audrey, a sweet, self-effacing store clerk, is celebrating her 30th birthday and trying to forget that jerky Drew dumped her via text message. Her BFF Morgan, who is NOT self-effacing, convinces her to burn the stuff he left at her house.

That threat gets Drew's attention: He shows up, looking for the stuff, and soon is apparently shot dead in front of Audrey. She's just conveniently learned he's CIA — Audrey thought he worked at NPR, which is funny

because he really doesn't have that sensitive NPR vibe. Anyway, Audrey learns this news from a pair of agents who abduct her, briefly. One of them, Duffer, is an insufferable Harvard alum who's incapable of uttering a sentence without the word "Harvard" in it. The other, Sebastian, is a hunky but soulful Brit whose allegiance is murky, but might as well be wearing a T-shirt saying "Love Interest."

So, how do Audrey and Morgan become a dynamic duo of globe-trotting, butt-kicking spies? Well, turns out everyone's after a cheap fantasy football trophy, inside of which is a very, very important USB drive. Audrey's task is to bring this drive to Vienna, now that Drew's indisposed, and into the right hands.

The adventure — often bloody, sometimes fondue-soaked — takes Audrey and Morgan to a series of scenic European capitals. The funniest scenes, not surprisingly, have nothing to do with complex stunts or violence, but simple laughs, as when the two women hijack a car from an elderly couple, but realize it's a stick shift and slowly inch it down the street before just handing it back.

Also funny: when Morgan, during a high-speed car chase, suggests to Audrey that it's self-defeating to use the turn signal.

Here's what's not so funny: when the women have to hide a USB drive, they hide it — well, you know where. Middle-school level anatomy jokes ensue. Yawn!

It all comes down to an action-packed showdown at a black-tie gala in Berlin, where McKinnon gets to indulge her inner trapeze artist. She makes the most of it, but even better are totally silly moments like when she poses as an airport chauffeur in Berlin and decides to sport an English Cockney accent.

Speaking of Morgan, one of the film's less believable moments is when we learn she was deeply insulted when Drew called her "a little much."

"The Spy Who Dumped Me," a Lionsgate release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America "for violence, language throughout, some crude sexual material and graphic nudity." Running time: 116 minutes.



CROSSWORDS

ACROSS

- Aught
- or naught
- Tennis
- great Steffi
- Tater
- Snake River loc.
- Gael republic
- Merchandise
- Get going
- Diminishes
- Arm joints
- Ms. Reese
- Mets' former ballpark
- Harrow rival
- Cholla and nopal
- Had been
- Between pi and sigma
- Nonrust coating
- Wander
- Big mouths
- Androcles' pal
- Chomped
- Potter's need
- Phoenician port
- Mournful wail
- Forward or reverse
- "Nutcracker" costumes
- Handles dough
- Sea eagle
- Stocky
- Bald-faced
- Berlin single
- New Zealand parrot
- Fourth planet
- Cribbage markers
- Mole, maybe

DOWN

- Agreeable
- Elvis, to some
- Gentle person
- "Holy cow!" (2 wds.)
- Washer cycle
- Circle portion
- Cow chow
- Feel the heat
- Picasso's name
- Not rural
- Plaines
- Majority
- Always, to Byron
- Cafe feature, maybe
- Utter loudly
- I knew it!
- Police officer
- Kind of system
- Sick
- Sapporo sash
- "Old" London theatre
- Plato's H
- Hockey team
- Subtle differences
- Ames inst.
- Safari, e.g.
- Open-air lobbies
- Of the moon
- Scraping by
- Ladder type
- Queries
- Profound
- Shade
- Shade tree
- Hurry

Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	L	O	T	T	L	C	I	N	K	S	
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A	L	O	E	O	D	E	S	N	O	B	

Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com

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