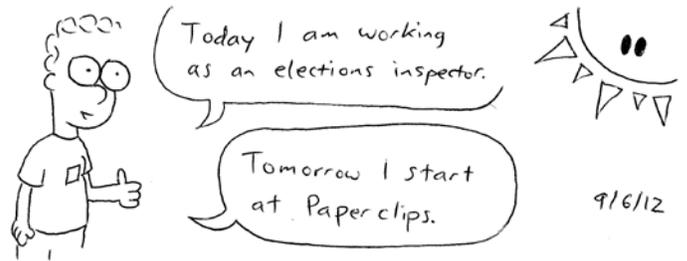


# ETOOTONIN'

2013.04.14

Roll With It

XIV / 124



Yesterday I demoed a kitchen with Mario...

9/15/12



Wow. So much has happened since last Etoonin'! First of all, I worked several days for a friend's moving company. I tended to work just one day per week. My friend was very appreciative. He paid above market rates for my labor. He is the most Charismatic and Holy Spirit led Christian friend I am aware of. He is modest and quiet spoken, but does all he can to bless others through his moving business. He hires only people who really need money, and he rotates through them so they all get money. Then he works his hardest for any and all customers, no matter how nice or nasty. He works very hard. I once saw him hoist a box spring up to a third floor porch by a piece of rope lent to him by a neighbor because there was no other way to get the box spring up the stairs. He is totally dedicated to the customer, blesses his employees, and prays all the time during his moves. He is very well attuned to the Holy Spirit and watches what God does. Anyway, he was my 32nd and best employer I've had. May 3rd, 2012 was our first move together. We worked and prayed together. He prayed in tongues many times during moves. He bought me lunch and dinner too. So blessed.

I got a part-time job at a company I will call "Paperclips". This is my 33rd job. I started Sept. 7th, 2012. It was a rough start as I continued to feel extreme isolation after 8 months with nothing much to do. I was so afraid of getting fired and for the first two months I was so stiff. Now I have passed the probationary period and have made it. I try to relax a bit more. I still have rough days, but I am working on it: trying to trust the Lord and believe that He is with me and I need not worry or fear. Sometimes I cry before work or during lunch breaks. I don't know why. I think I have addicted myself to sadness when I should feel confidence and joy. The Lord Jesus gave His life for me so I can live an abundant life free from worry or fear. I am going to work hard at giving up my addiction to sadness. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit filled life and I intend to live that way. Nobody else can detect how I feel inside, so I need not discuss it with outsiders. I will no longer mention that I have bipolar to employers. When I don't feel well I will just say "I am sick". I work hard and everybody takes a day off here or there. But I find it best to get to work no matter how I feel. It brings financial peace.

	Amount \$	2012 %	2011 %	2012 vs 2011 %
<b>Savings, Initial</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>3.76</b>	
<b>Expenses, Total</b>	<b>31,836.67</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>89.60</b>
Giving	3,482.27	10.94	11.91	
Saving	2,366.50	7.43	0.00	
Education	40.00	0.13	1.64	
Debt	1,226.40	3.85	2.03	
Housing	4,749.41	14.92	26.26	
Insurance	2,864.74	9.00	3.52	
Legal	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Automobile	1,594.99	5.01	4.10	
Medical Expenses	2,509.84	7.88	5.71	
Gas	3,531.10	11.09	10.77	
Cash	110.00	0.35	1.57	
Groceries	2,616.99	8.22	7.05	
Jim Bures.com	551.23	1.73	4.89	
Etoonin' Inc.	1.05	0.00	0.19	
Priscilla the Cat	1,051.01	3.30	0.94	
Entertainment	3,772.23	11.85	11.32	
Other	1,368.91	4.30	8.09	
<b>Income, Total</b>	<b>31,835.67</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>93.10</b>
Jim Bures.com	1,197.05	3.76	6.29	
Jobs	4,753.34	14.93	4.24	
SSDI	23,662.80	74.33	62.89	
Etoonin' donations	125.00	0.39	8.31	
Church	517.00	1.62	5.26	
Family	1,250.46	3.93	2.15	
Girlfriends	0.00	0.00	0.23	
Other	330.02	1.04	10.31	
<b>Balance, Final</b>	<b>0.00</b>			
<b>Savings, Total</b>	<b>2,332.72</b>			
Emergency Fund	1,005.08			
Replacement	210.23			
New Car	400.38			
Travel	0.03			
Security Deposit	717.00			
3-6 Months	0.00			
Retirement	0.00			
College	0.00			
<b>Debt, Total</b>	<b>12,789.70</b>			

Summary:

In 2012, Expenses went down roughly 10%. Income went down roughly 7%. Etoonin' donations, Church and Other income all went down significantly, representing less dependence on charity. Family contributions went up slightly. Job income went up by 10% as I worked more. SSDI went up proportionally as overall income decreased.

In 2012, I paid off all personal debt to family and friends and stopped borrowing money. In November 2012 I began paying down Educational debt. I remain committed to living debt free. If I can't afford it, I don't buy it. This has been painful as I've had to forgo an iPhone indefinitely, and suspend all travel plans, with the exception of a very important trip to Denver to witness a friend's wedding. I paid for the plane ticket and expenses completely with money I earned additional to meeting my monthly spending plans. A very good friend and two sessions of Dave Ramsey FPU classes helped me to do this.

Now for some more cartoons. In a way, I kind of do not like drawing cartoons because they often revolve around how depressed I feel or bipolar disorder in some way. But I think it good to include them, as they often help other people.

Do I really believe  
and trust that  
God is directing  
my every path and  
Keeping me completely  
safe?



I don't know.  
I don't think so.



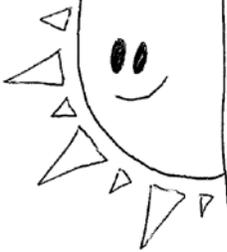
For why else  
would I feel  
such a pain  
in my heart: a  
pain I can not  
explain.



A pain that  
makes me dread  
getting up and  
going to work  
tomorrow.



It's the same  
old story just  
told through  
a new cartoon.



I am with  
you, surely,  
even until  
the end of the age.



2013.01.20.01

A. Barnes

Yesterday I met  
for coffee with  
a guy from Church.



I was worried  
but then had  
the time of my  
life. I felt so  
encouraged  
leaving him.



Then I went to  
work...



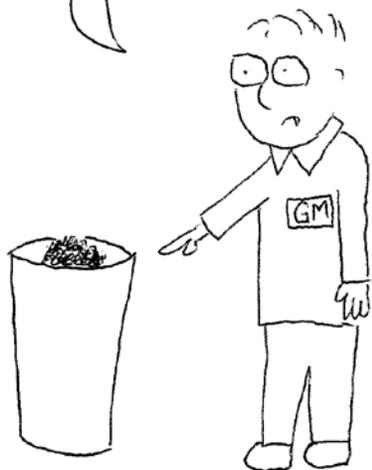
Jim Bures  
report to the  
tech bench.



Yes?



See this?  
This is how you  
empty the  
vacuum cleaner.



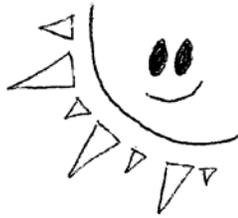
Now don't use  
the employee  
recognition web  
site to communicate  
about matters like this.



2013. 01. 20. 02

J. Bures

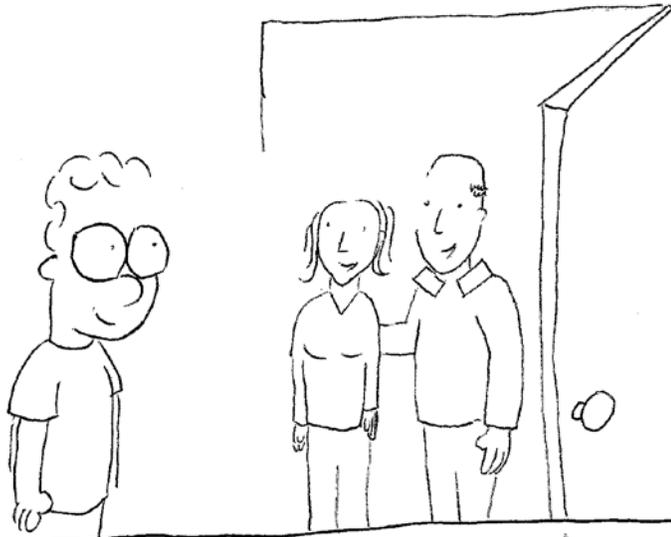
Today I had Tom and his wife over for dinner...



This is my new place...



Hi Jim!



Here's a gift for your cat.



Here's chicken parmesan for dinner...



So how's your job?

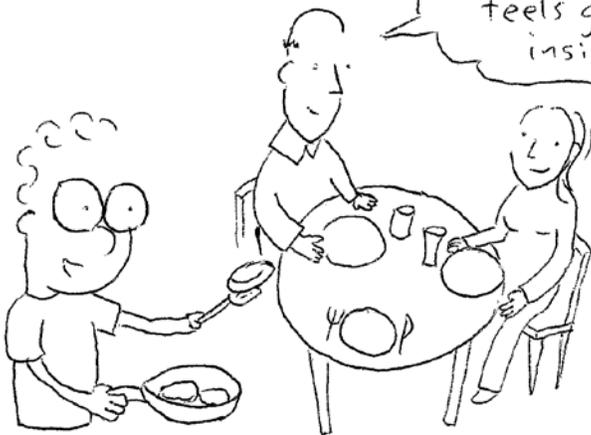
Good.



I can really see you stepping into a career here.

It seems like it will be the start of something big. I like watching it from the ground level.

Mmm... feels good inside.



2013.01.20.03 A Bue

Lord, this life is hard for me. I covet what others have. I find I am so far behind in my financial life. It feels like I will never catch up.



And I don't want to go to work: a constant struggle in my life.

I am afraid.

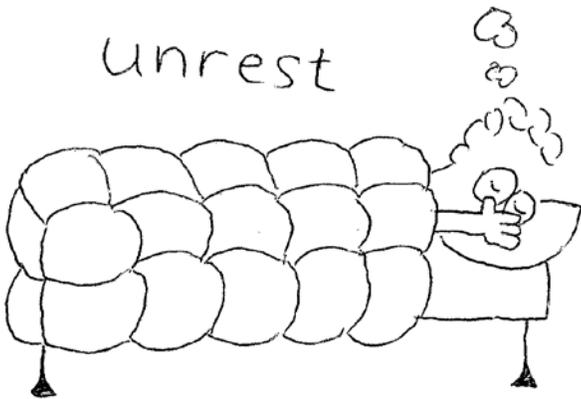


This is me lying in bed...

They always get to go on vacation.

They have saved enough for a good retirement.

unrest



I just want to cry all day long...



2013.01.22.01

A.A. Bines

What is the  
Solution, Lord?

How do I get over  
this sadness and into a  
place of peace?



Oh Lord, like the  
Psalmist, David, I  
know every moment  
of my life is in Your  
hands.

I don't have  
to be anything  
apart from  
you.



Oh but Lord, how  
I want to be  
loved. I hate  
feeling alone even  
while drawing.



But Joe Lib told  
me to never give  
up seeking You as  
respite from my  
problems.

Sounds like  
another day  
at the office,  
Jim



2013.01.22.02

A. B. Jones

Here I am at  
Paperclips: sad &  
longing to avoid  
work.



Lord, I don't know  
what to do.



People tell me not to  
commit suicide and  
I don't want to.



Nothing brings  
me joy any  
more.



But I don't  
want to work  
yet life is so  
empty without  
work too.

I am so worn  
out, Lord.



I can't believe  
there is any purpose  
in this.

I just want to cry,  
but my feeling is  
that crying at  
work won't benefit me.



2013.01.28.01

A Buns

I could brag about what I have done, but I feel like Boasting is excluded.



What is the Solution, Lord?



When do I get to feel Your presence?

It doesn't make me feel any better anyway.



Is Joy really a choice I must make? It feels so hard.



I just keep hoping I find You. You seem to want to be loved for being You, but how can I love You that way if I don't know You?



It just hurts so much inside, Jesus.



The self service computer just shut down.

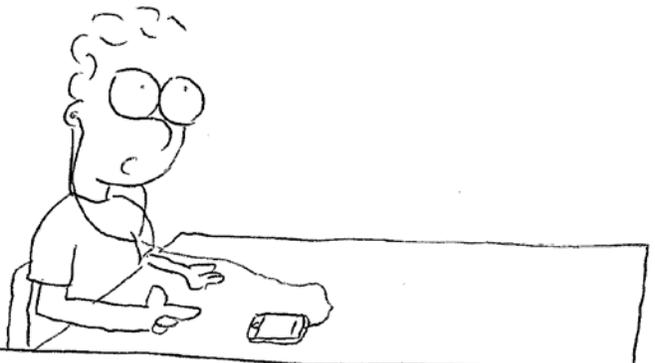
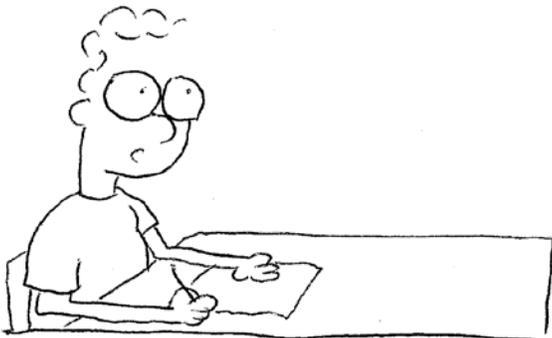


2013.01.28.02 A.Dines

I confess to You,  
Lord, that I have  
made my life into  
one of sadness.



Even now as I  
listen to Jason Gray  
I want to cry like  
usual.



I believe what  
Kevin said: You  
are perfect. You  
do not need to  
change. We need  
to change. I believe  
that.

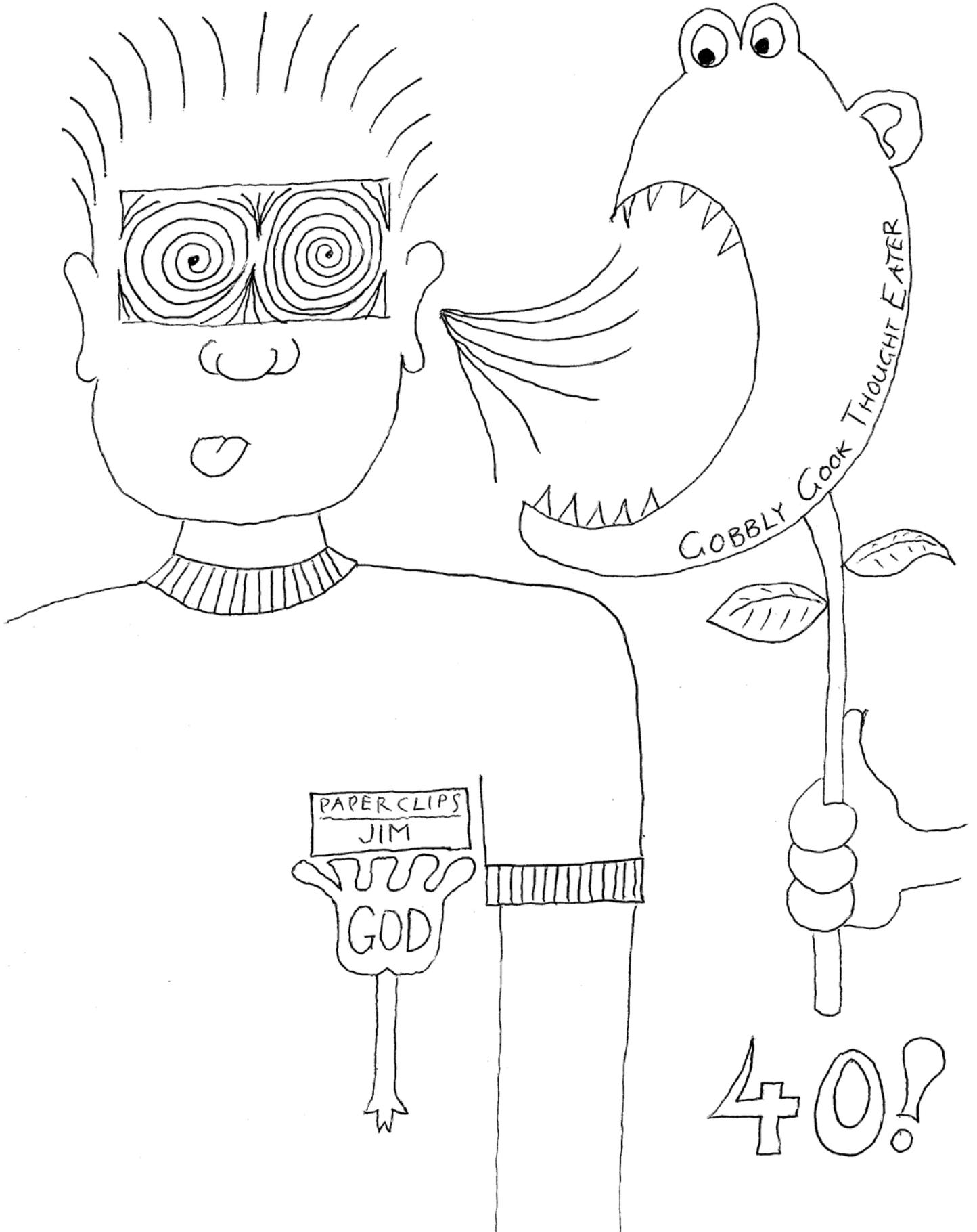


Please help me  
to change.



It is really  
scary.

2013. 01. 30. 01 *A. B. B.*



Monday @ Work...

Jim Bures to the office.

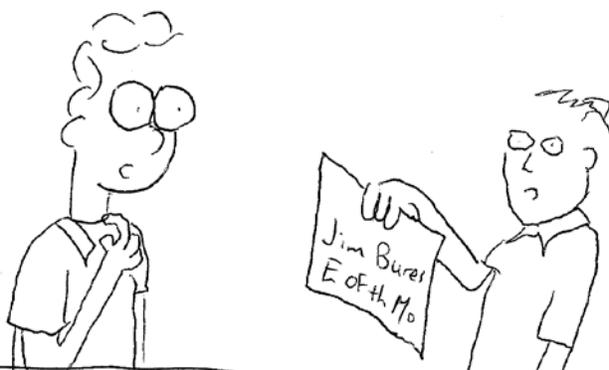
uh-oh.



What did I do wrong?

Yes?

Jim, congratulations. You won Employee of the month.



Wow! Thanks!

In addition, here is a \$20 dollar gift card to Paperclips...

And I have another gift for you...

What's that?



high five



A new vacuum cleaner.

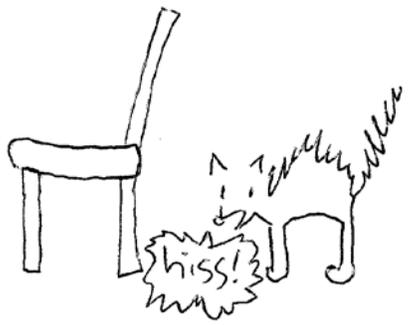
I am so happy  
right now,  
Lord! I  
must admit:  
I called in sick for  
the first day in 3  
months. I was feeling  
really woozy  
from the new  
meds...



However, I did  
so many things  
with my day  
off...



Vacuumed...



Finances...  
Weight Watchers...  
Doctor's appoint-  
ments scheduled...



And! I did my  
taxes, as a  
bonus add-on.



2013.04.05.01 AABues

I am just so thrilled to have such a beautiful apartment as my own!



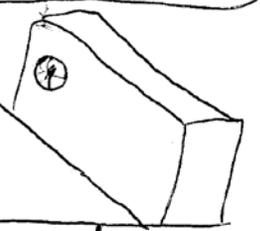
I enjoyed a Meteor Dollar's Decaf Iced Café Mocha at the end of it all...



And I am paying down my student loan debt now!



Paid for by Wild Bill's Bday gift card!



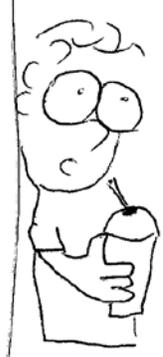
I am so glad the depression is gone...



I hope I can be like Job and praise You during the good times as well as the bad.



I didn't realize how much that hampered my thoughts.



Sure is easier when the times are good.

2013.04.05.02 *ABW*

Good times,  
Bad times,  
You know I've  
had them all...



Lord, when  
I get to  
thinking too  
much...

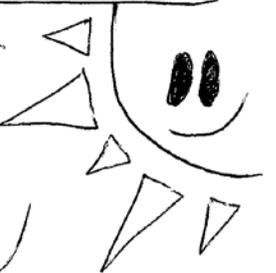


Please remind  
me that I  
really just  
want to be  
a musician.

Not the  
President or  
a rich person  
or famous...



Oh the dreams  
I have  
dreamed...



And not for  
You necessarily  
but for me to  
express my  
heart,  
like BT.



2013.04.05.03 ~~ABus~~

Lord, I am a little bit nervous...

I am not sure if Paper clips is going to keep me.



Two days ago I cried for two hours while at work.

One of the managers helped me and said, "We're going to get through this together."



It was very embarrassing.

Anyway, now I haven't heard from them if they are going to keep me.



Seven months... a new record for me in work life longevity. Haven't worked that long since 2006 at my second to last Engineering job.



2013.04.11.01

AA Bues

Any who...  
at least I love  
myself more  
now.



By the way,  
I am too lazy  
to draw proper  
4 panel cartoons...



I don't  
think I will  
go through  
such an  
explosion  
like 2.12.2012



... that just  
takes so  
much time.

I kinda want  
something to  
happen, but I  
don't know what.



I am still  
living within  
my means  
whether employed  
or not...



What do  
I long for  
right now,  
Lord?



2013.04.11.02 A.Bene

So I successfully defended myself from an insurance surcharge...

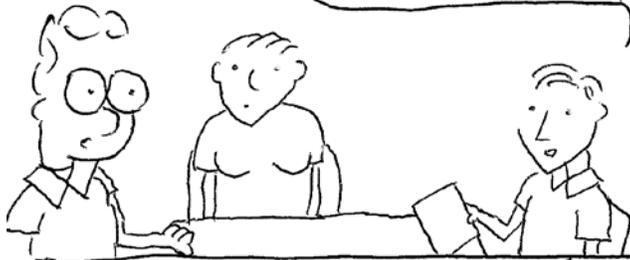


This after I successfully defended myself against a parking ticket...

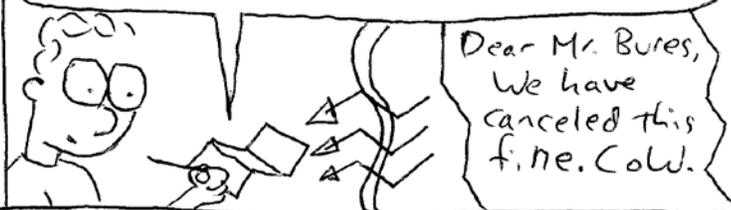


I'm not more than 50% at fault due to the snow

This will be removed from your record.



I contend that I am not guilty of blocking yard waste cleanup because no signs were posted.



Dear Mr. Bures, We have canceled this fine. Colw.

And best of all, my job at Paperclips is safe, though I took 3 days off following the crying in cedent!



Whesw!

Miss you buddy...

Miss you too.



Hello, Nick? What hours am I scheduled next week?

M, T, F, Sat  
3PM - 9:30PM



Man, Nick didn't even mention the crying or 3 days off: Just gave my schedule!

2013.04.13.01 Jim Bures

Blisters 4 Sisters  
fundraising dinner

Man, I don't know  
any one here...

... I am more shy  
than I used  
to be...

Welcome!



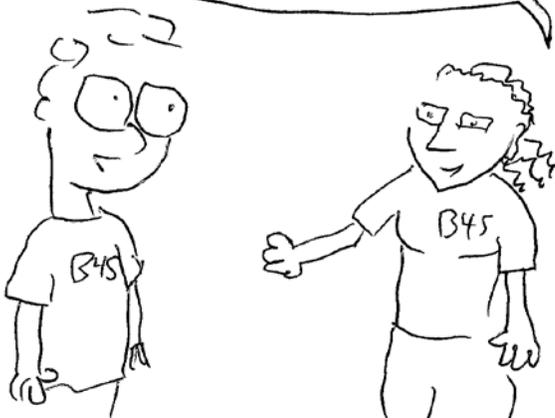
Wow, Lori, you  
have a lot of  
friends!

And now  
I have one more!

Come help me  
with the raffle!

And the winning ticket  
is... (Jim, pick a  
ticket)...

I'm so  
glad you  
joined our  
team!

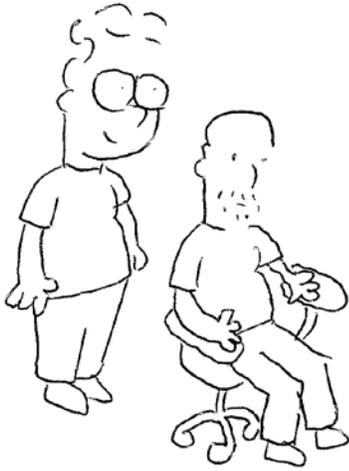


2013.04.13.02

Jim Brown

8:00 AM

Paperclips Mandatory Meeting...



10:40 AM Church



1:30 40's CLUB

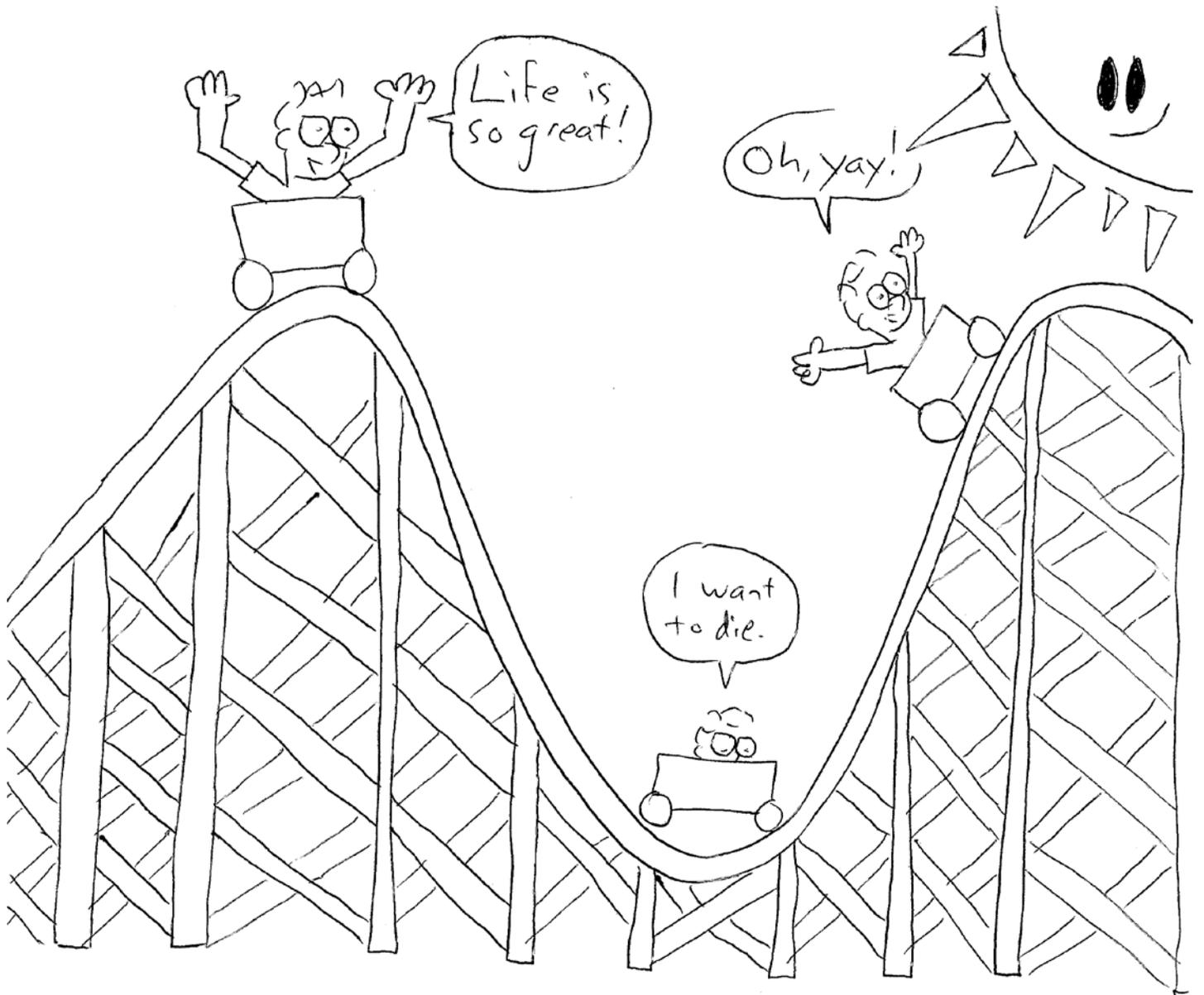


3:00 PM Hike



7:00 PM Dinner w/ Peter B.





The Roller Coaster Life  
of Bipolar Disorder...

Thanks God for friends!  
Enjoying the ride, *Amber*

So a lotta those cartoons were written when I felt down. But I have had some major progress since drawing them. At the encouragement of a friend, I gave medicine another chance. My Christian psychiatrist recommended a new mood stabilizer for me called "Trileptal". I had given up on trying medicine because nothing worked. Even Lithium did not help me, the most famed of the mood stabilizers.

Anyway, so the Trileptal helped so well I experienced hypomania, which I haven't felt in a while. It feels really good. The doctor prescribed some non-habit forming sleep medication to replace the Klonopin. The new sleep aide, Thorazine, seems to work with just one 300 mg pill.

I just want to state clearly that when I talk about hating work, I am really talking about hating work WHILE depressed. Or anxious. Or suicidal. It makes everything seem hard. Work itself I don't really hate, but I hate having to work when I feel so listless and depressed.

I have been working at my present employer for 7 months, which is the longest I've held a job since my last engineering job in 2007. It is quite amazing. I have learned the hard way that it is better to go to work while feeling depressed than to be completely unemployed and so tremendously anxious all the time, feeling like there is no place for me in the world.

Since I last wrote, I have also moved into a 1 BR apartment in Worcester. It is awesome! They completely redid it for me. Fresh paint, new carpets, very clean. There are picture windows in both my bedroom and my living room. I live on the sixth floor, which I have in common with my brother.



My apartment is luxurious at only \$717/mo. It is so big; It is very similar to my Boxborough condo. The rent covers heat, hot water and electricity. There is a dishwasher and a disposal. My cat loves having more space to roam around. My Brother, Sister and Mother gave me enough furniture to fill my living room all at once! Previously all my possessions fit into one bedroom. My favorite part is the stucco ceilings.

I finally feel comfortable at work. People have accepted me, even with the "Jesus is Lord" stickers on my car. One lower level manager told me about how a woman came in and gave an employee a "Jesus hug". So he came to me, because he knows I am religious, and asked what it was. I didn't know. But I learned. So if you ever want a Jesus hug, just let me know. This colleague has bipolar also. He hides it very well, but he is open about talking about it, like I used to be. I didn't tell anyone at work that I had it this time around. It is cool, because this person knows how to live with it better than I do. Usually it is me helping other people with it.

Anyway, so I turned 40. I was treated to a fantastic birthday party hosted at my place by a good friend, Don. He planned it last minute and yet still 12 people came! I just love the look of joy on his face as I blew out the candles.



The look of joy on Don's face while he watches me blow out the candles reminds me of the lyrics to this Jason Gray song, "Hold on, if the life that we've been given is made beautiful in the living and the joy that we get brings joy to the heart of the Giver." I just see such joy in Don's face as he gives me such a wonderful birthday party. I was able to say what was on my mind in front of everybody, even though I was sad. My step-brother and his wife came to my party and I partly addressed them as I talked about how God had improved my family life. It is good to be alive with friends like Don. He has taught me that God is my Partner. Co-heirs with Christ.

# NEW CAR: FROM BUICK TO COROLLA

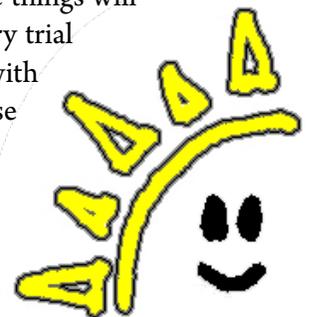


So I bought a new car. My '94 Buick, Edgar, has served me well for almost three years. Edgar, named after a Great-Uncle, was a gift to me from my Dad and Granny in 2010. But Edgar had a radiator leak, oil leaks, and the transmission was starting to slip. So I bought a '95 Toyota Corolla instead of pouring \$2000 into a new transmission. The Toyota suffers from rust underneath, but the mechanic who inspected it said it is good mechanically. He told me it was a money pit, and he might be right, but I took a gamble because I think the car will last 1 year. I took it to this trusted mechanic and he said it would not pass inspection with some problems that would cost \$300 to fix. The woman I bought it from was very nice, and dropped the price from \$1500 to \$1200. It probably didn't hurt that I waved \$100 bills in front of her when buying the car. The most amazing part of this sale is that I paid for the car with savings, instead of credit. I sold my Buick to the junkyard for \$300. I had just enough money to pay for the car. Dave Ramsey taught me that poor people look to see if they can afford the payments, but that rich people look to see if they can afford the whole thing. He also said that rich people drive used cars because buying new is a rip off. Your car goes down 1/2 its value when you drive it off the lot. I am very proud to have done such a thing: buy what I can afford and saved for. I am also thankful for my financial adviser who guided me through the purchase.

Oh, I don't know if you picked up in the cartoons, but the GM was very reluctant to get a new vacuum cleaner, though the old one didn't suck. I complained, but got the impression I should back off. However, the GM, out of nowhere, bought a new vacuum! And I won Employee of the month too. It was really special to have my work recognized. I applied to corporate jobs at my company, with the GM's approval. But I must work 12 months before I'm eligible. They called me 3 hours after applying, which indicates they like me.

So now we come to the grand finale of this Etoonin'. Happy Easter everyone! Hope God blesses you with a good time among friends and family. Easter represents the victory Jesus has over death and how He shares that victory with us through His death on the cross to atone for our sins. I did not really like last year and it is so easy to focus on the negative, but Jesus is positive. It is not easy picking up your cross and following Him, but where else can we go? Jesus has the words of eternal life. That is what Easter is all about: celebrating Jesus for His accomplishments for us. There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. It was hard living in poverty and I am certain that worse things will come my way, but every trial brings in closer unity with God and even those around us. Love, Jim.

**bt zédèk**



With my God I can scale a wall. When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies live at peace with him.