

# Guilt arises over ignoring family Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**Dear Annie:** My father died a year ago. Since then, I have ignored my extended family, but I'm close to my children and grandchildren. Christmas passed and I never phoned my sick mother, even though I live 15 minutes away. I want to make it right, but can't just waltz into their lives and say, "Here I am."

My younger sister has been taking care of Mom without a break. I can't stand to be around my older sister, who handles Mom's finances. She is hateful and judgmental, and frankly, she scares me. And then there's my mother. We have a strained relationship. When I was a little girl, my parents would argue and she'd tell my father to leave and take me with him. Only me. My mom always treats my siblings and their children with kid gloves, but my sweet, intelligent kids she treats like lepers.

I want my family to be together like we used to be. If you could print this, maybe my mother and sisters would see it and know that I beg their forgiveness. — *Lost in Louisville, Ky.*

**Dear Louisville:** Here's what we see: You resent your mother for the favorable treatment she has always shown your siblings and their children. You dislike your older sister for her overbearing attitude. You feel guilty about your younger sister, who took on the burden of caring for Mom. And you miss Dad, who was the buffer.

## Annie's Mailbox

Creators Syndicate Inc.  
Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar



Start with your younger sister. Tell her you went into a tailspin when Dad died and you deeply regret abandoning her. Ask what you can do now. Then go see your mother. Phone or email your older sister. You will have to put up with their anger and disappointment, but that will be temporary while you work on forgiveness. You might also consider counseling to work through some of your family issues.

**Dear Annie:** My husband and I have been married more than 30 years, and every year he buys me gifts that don't require much thought. He gets lovely things for our daughter, son-in-law and even co-workers, and I know he puts a lot of time into the selection. But the gifts he gives me always make me want to cry. Last Christmas, I got a bug suction machine. The year before, it was an organizer for my spice cabinet. In all fairness, he also gives me a generous gift card to one of my favorite stores, but he knows

that I don't get there often and the cards sit in my drawer for months. Plus, it's not really special to get a gift card from my husband, but I am grateful nonetheless.

I dread opening gifts, and my feelings are hurt no matter how much I tell myself it doesn't matter. To me, it's not the size of the gifts; it's whether he was truly thinking of me. So how can I tell him nicely that he'd be doing me a favor by not getting me any more gifts? — *Midwest*

**Dear Midwest:** Be sure that's what you want, because if you tell him not to buy you anything, he will stop completely. And has it occurred to you that perhaps his assistant buys the other gifts, but considers yours too personal and leaves it for Mr. Clueless? Talk to your husband about this. Teach him how to be more thoughtful. Explain what you mean. Give him concrete suggestions. But that bug suction machine made our day.

**Dear Annie:** "Gotta Dance" says his mom doesn't support his desire to tap dance. She needs to recognize the benefits.

My 13-year-old son has taken dance lessons (tap, hip-hop and musical theater) since kindergarten. It keeps his core muscles in shape when he's not playing football and helps him gain confidence around girls, since he is the only boy in the class. I don't expect it to be his profession, but I hope he continues for as long as he wants. — *Proud in Omaha*

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Your past will inform your future, if you care to look at it very carefully. This day is a fast rush, so that kind of review may seem impossible, but knowing you, you'll find the time for a moment of reflection.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** The more you give the more you want to give; it feels so good. Your generosity will make a difference for those who need it, and it will make an impression on those who could stand to give more.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** You'll meet someone who knows about the subject you are extremely interested in of late. If your questions are met with resistance, assure your subject that your interest is impersonal.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Do you dare head out on a quest? The distances you travel may not be physical miles, but you will arrive at a new place anyhow. You will be a friend to many fellow travelers, though some relationships will emerge as special.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Honor tradition. The simple act of sitting down to a meal with loved ones will be grounding. The regular things about life get you grounded for what promises to be an action-packed weekend.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Your nearest will appreciate what you do, because they see how much effort it takes, though they don't understand the intricacy of it. Next in line are those with similar skills. They really get it. Keep them close now.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** You'll compare yourself, to the extent that it helps you maintain a competitive edge. Also, you'll be funny when it counts, and that's part of

your appeal to your many followers.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** You have so much work to do and no clue how you're going to accomplish it all. Other people — that's the answer. And when you're giving instructions, you'll be simultaneously assertive and laid-back. Amazing!

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** They like the results, yet they still may have a criticism. That is unacceptable. Let your people know that they can't have the effort without the person who is doing the work. Don't let them disrespect you.

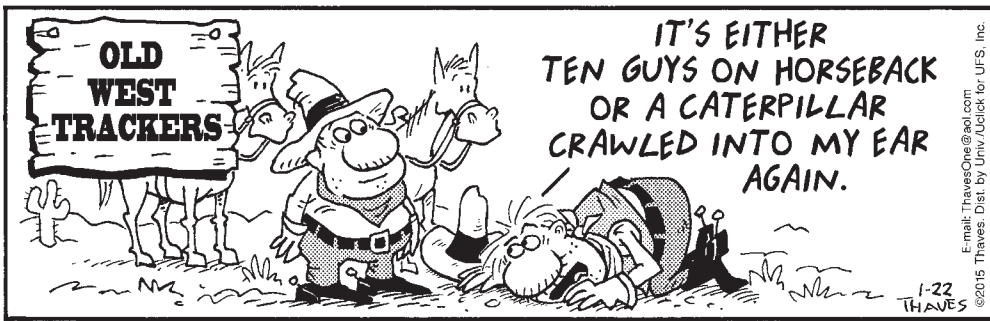
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** There's a physical chasm to be crossed with human ability. Take the chance. The more difficult the risk the more winning power you'll put into the leap.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Segal's law suggests that a man with one watch knows what time it is and that a man with two watches is never sure. This is a time to limit your knowledge sources.

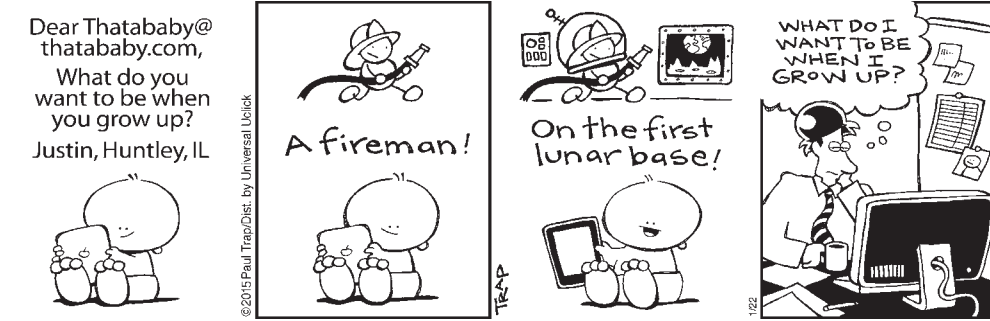
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** People will say the wrong thing from time to time. Be patient with someone who is socially awkward. And if that someone happens to be you, then afford yourself a measure of grace.

**FRIDAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 23).** You love your work and look forward to the interactions of each relationship. This makes for a motivated, happy, optimal state of being. There's a financial bonus in February. March comes with travel opportunities. May brings a switch of the career direction, and you'll be ready for it. Give your heart in July. Aries and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 15, 6, 33, 41 and 28.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



## THATABABY



## STONE SOUP



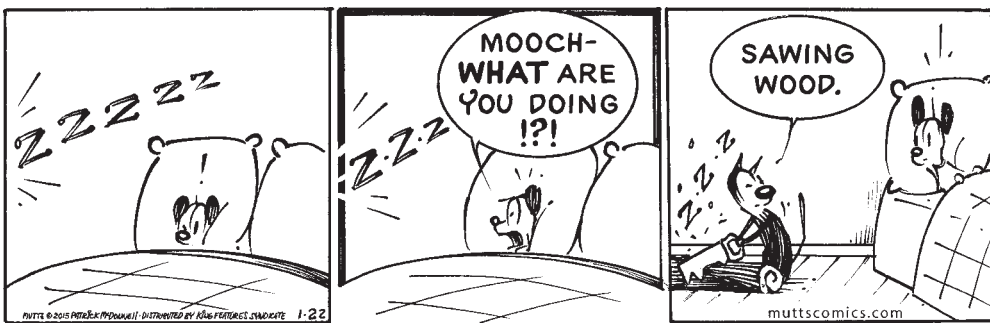
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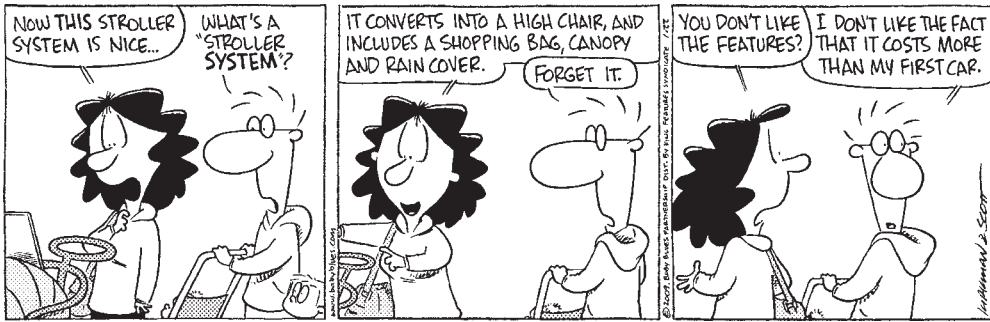
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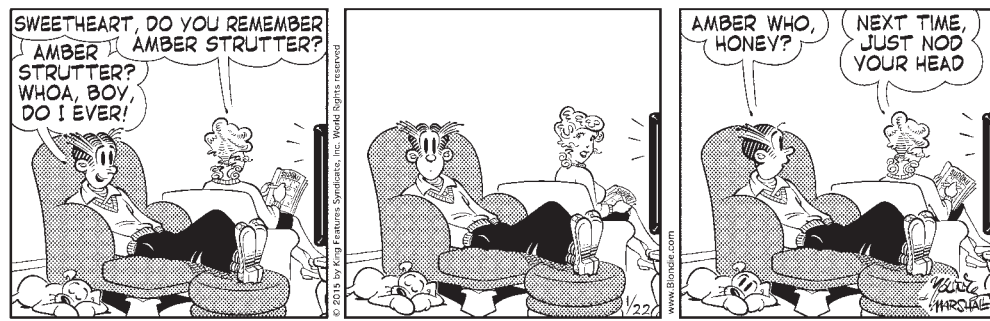
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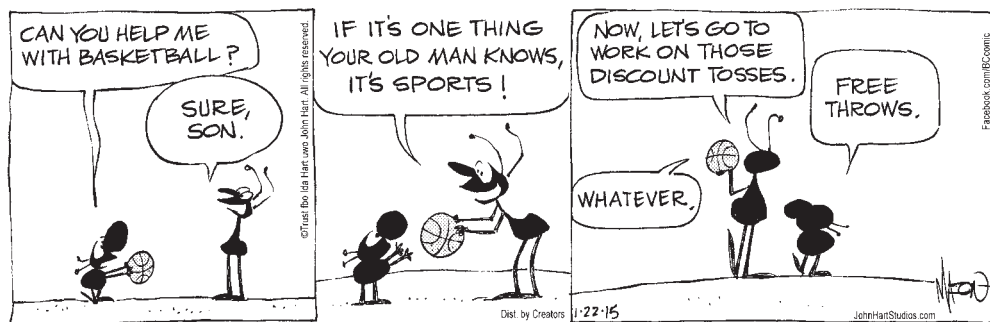
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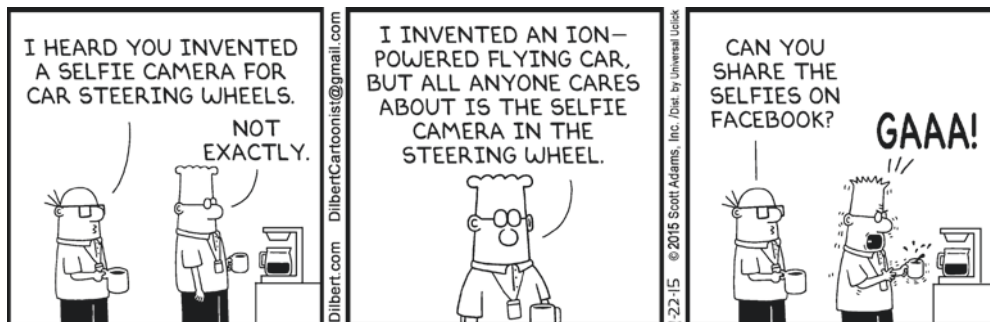
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## B.C.



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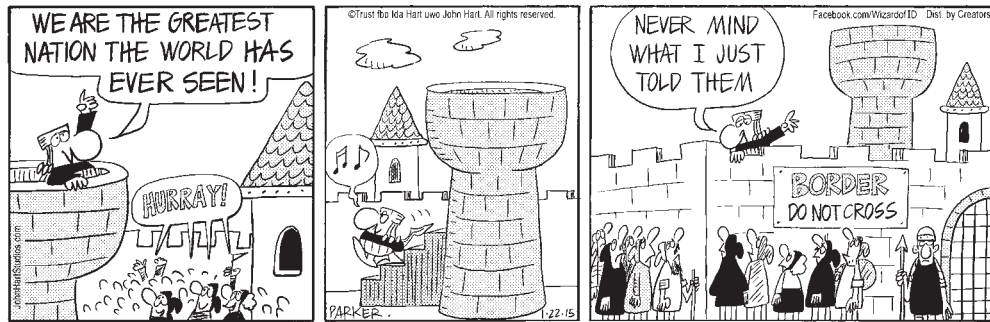
## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

