

# Dad's inconsistent visits

**Dear Annie:** My now-ex-husband and I got married and had a baby right after high school. We had a beautiful baby girl, "Sophia." Caring for a newborn while all my friends were going off to college was challenging, but I would not trade the experience for the world. Sophia is my light and love.

The problem is with her father.

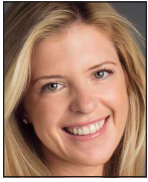
He felt a great deal of resentment at having to care for a baby when he was only 19. He preferred going out with the guys to spending time at home with Sophia and me. The tension and resentment built until one day, he left us, saying it was too much for him. He said he would be going to community college to start over. I was devastated. He didn't want any major responsibilities, so I was awarded sole custody.

Now Sophia is 5 years old. As hard as it is for me, I know that he is her father, so I allow him to see her when he has time. Last week, he picked her up to go to the movies. She came back with stars in her eyes from getting to spend the afternoon with Daddy. The problem is that she wants to see him every

weekend. When I told him this, he said he just doesn't have the time and can't commit to every Saturday or even every other Saturday.

I hate to see her so disappointed each Saturday when I have to tell her that Daddy won't make it today. His inconsistency is breaking her heart. I have allowed him to come and go as he pleases because I don't want her to have zero relationship with her father. Is this type of inconsistency OK for a child, or should I just cut him off entirely?

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

— *Confused Mom*

**Dear Confused:** This man is giving you only crumbs while you and your daughter deserve the whole cake. What he's doing to Sophia — and to you — is terrible and selfish, and no, this kind of inconsistency is not OK for a child.

It's time to sit him down for a long, serious heart-to-heart and lay it all out. Express your concerns about the effect his unpredictability is having on your daughter. Ask him whether he could pledge to see Sophia for one Saturday a month without any ifs, ands or buts. That commitment should be small enough even for his stunted sense

of responsibility, and your daughter would at least have one Saturday a month that she could safely look forward to.

But also let him know upfront that if he were to stand her up even once, that would be it. Sophia's little heart deserves to be treasured, not broken.

**Dear Annie:** I have just read the letter from "Appalled," who is disgusted by men wearing hats while indoors, along with your response. I strongly suggest that you educate yourselves. My husband is a Vietnam veteran, and like many of those who served in Vietnam, he has photophobia (severe light sensitivity), a condition that increases in severity with age. The jury is still out, after decades, as to whether this condition is caused by exposure to Agent Orange; it is most definitely known to be a symptom of traumatic brain injury. He wears a baseball cap indoors at all times; the only other option is to keep his eyes closed. If your reader and you are so disgusted and appalled by his indoor hat, my suggestion is simple: Don't look at him. — *Donna*

**Dear Donna:** You're on the mark. I hadn't considered the medical reasons for why someone might wear a hat indoors.

## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** "Why?" is a question for rookies. You know better. You're a pro. Pros don't ask why; they just go in and fix it. You'll spend most of the day in this mode: Go in. Fix it. Repeat.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** You've danced around it, they have, too, but the bottom line is that you need someone, and this person needs you. Realizing the situation and talking it out will be the best (and bravest) thing you both do.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** Much will center on the idea of time wasting. What's a waste, and what isn't? Your decision about this will shape your days and your character, too.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Some people just like being angry. Too bad for them, though, because your calm communication and diplomacy will allow you to work most problems out before anyone even has a chance to get too frustrated.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** It's said that you shouldn't give a party if you're the most interesting person there. Of course that is totally absurd. You're such an interesting person that, if you followed that rule, you'd never have a party.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Your best intentions, well, that counts for something even when intentions aren't enough to get the outcome you were hoping for. However it works out for you today, it can still lead somewhere good.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** You'll be putting your life to a good soundtrack, and that will make everything about it a little bit better. Choosing the songs that make you happy will be a very specific kind of process.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** You're ready to know more. You'll ask the good questions. "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing; drink deep or taste not the Castalian spring." — Alexander Pope

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** There is no need for friction. The world is big. There will be plenty of room for everyone to do what he or she needs to do. Spread out. Claim an independent space.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** You won't be able to totally please them, so you may as well totally please someone: How about you? It's as fair as anyone else you could choose today. You can always try compromising again tomorrow.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Your instinct will be to entertain. Sometimes it's done by making things up — fanciful stories, exaggerated ideas — but none of that is necessary now. The small plain truth is the most engaging entertainment there is.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Experience has taught you what to do, and you could automatically slip into the next step. Hit the pause. This way will work, but another way will work better. Call on your higher powers of reason.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 20).** Your commitment to a goal will be steadfast, and by March you'll have it in your hot hand. You and a love will be bonded in victory in January. Relationships take a lot more work in February but it's worth the effort. A big sale will happen May. Work takes a new trajectory with training you get over the summer. Aquarius and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 44, 28, 32 and 11.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



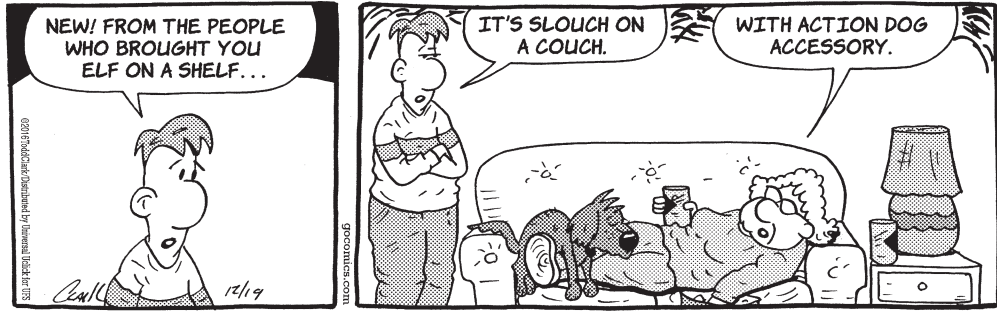
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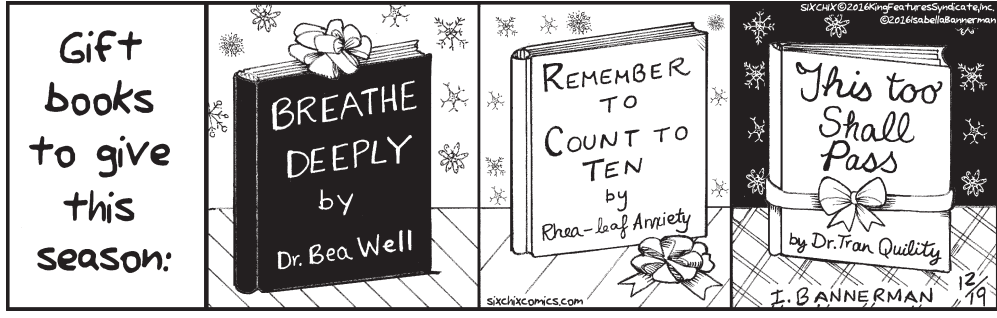
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## LOLA



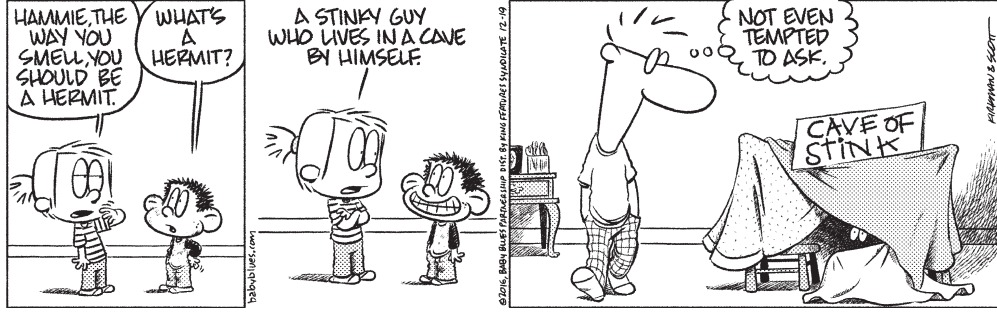
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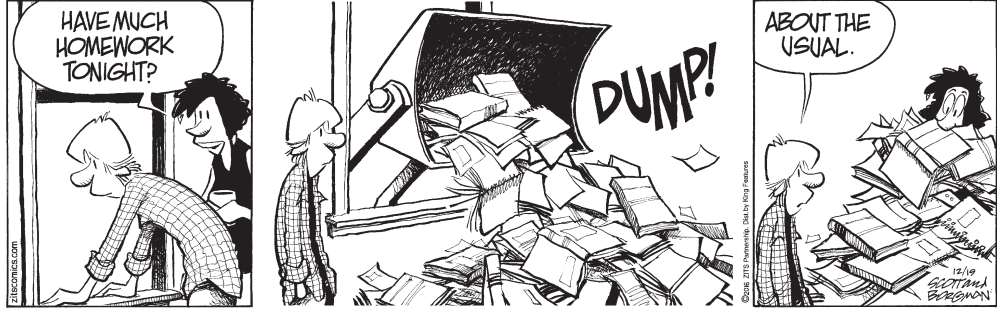
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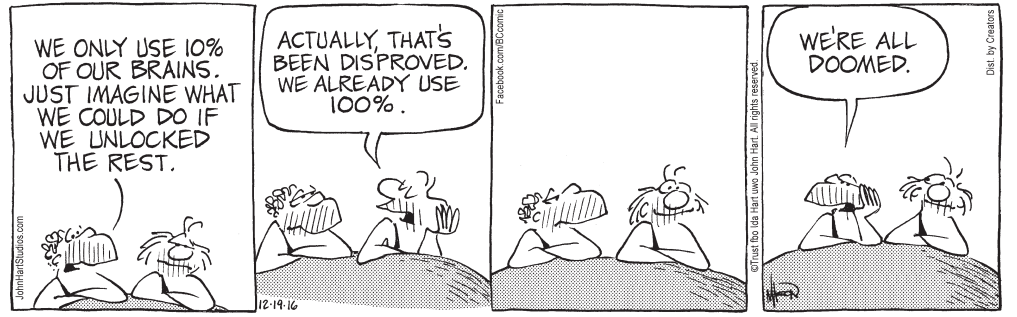
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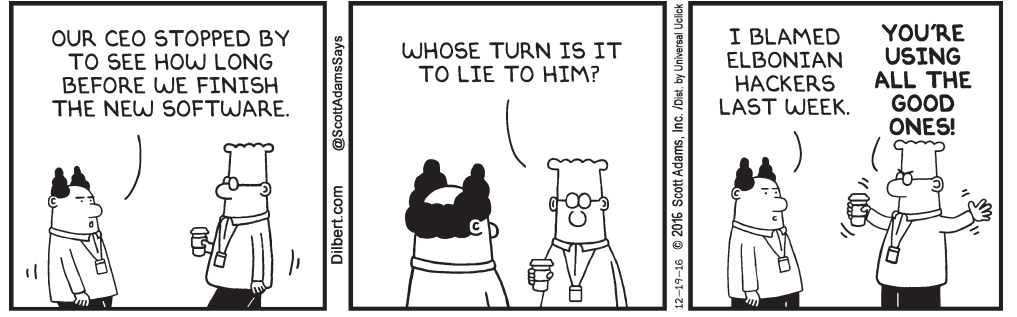
## SALLY FORTH



## B.C.



## DILBERT



## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

