

# He refuses to pay car damage

**Dear Annie:** I am finding myself in a predicament. Currently, my sister-in-law baby-sits my 3- and 5-year-old children two days a week while I am at work. Last week, when I went to pick them up, I parked behind her fiancé's truck. Her fiancé, "Brad," was getting ready to leave at the same time I was. Instead of waiting for me to move from behind his vehicle, he squeezed around my car between other vehicles in the driveway. When I got home, I noticed that his tire had rubbed against my car and put several scratches in the paint.

**DEAR ANNIE**



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

Well, I called my sister-in-law, as I don't know Brad very well, and explained to her what had happened. I said I think Brad needs to pay for damages. She said she doesn't want to be in the middle of things and would give him my number.

Several days went by, and I didn't hear from Brad. In the meantime, I got an estimate for repairs. I talked to my sister-in-law again, and she said she would have Brad call me. Well, he finally did that evening, and he gave me about a dozen different scenarios of how he thinks

the situation might have happened, but he said that there is no way he did it and that he isn't paying for it. I am sure he hit my car, and I told him that. He told me he had gone to my workplace to look at my vehicle and gone to the body shop and asked to see pictures of the damage. I thought that was disturbing. The conversation ended with him swearing at me and hanging up. The next day, Brad called my husband to also tell him he isn't paying and offered no apologies for his behavior toward me.

The problem I now have is how to handle the baby-sitting situation. Brad lives at my sister-in-law's home, and I really don't want to have any more confrontations with him. My sister-in-law loves my children and would be heartbroken if I got a different sitter. But I really don't think I am comfortable taking them to her house with Brad around. Should I follow my gut feeling and stop taking them there and further divide my family's relationship? Or should I try to get past the vehicle damage? I am also worried about how any possible repercussions against me by Brad would affect my children.

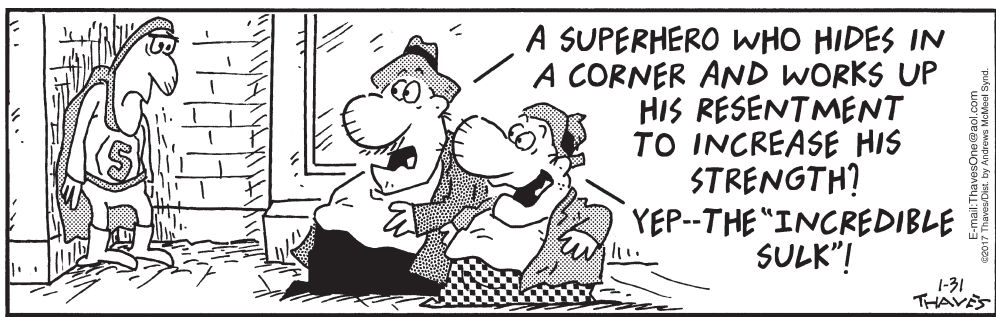
How do you think I should proceed from here? — *Scuffed*

**Dear Scuffed:** The answer to the question "Should I follow my gut?" is always yes. And if you're a mom, the answer is yes with three exclamation points. A mother's intuition is a tool more reliable and precious than any piece of technology. So if you feel uncomfortable leaving your children around this man, then don't. Invite your sister-in-law over for coffee so she can still visit with the kids. Given Brad's lousy attitude, I have a feeling she'll be looking for excuses to get out of the house as often as possible anyway.

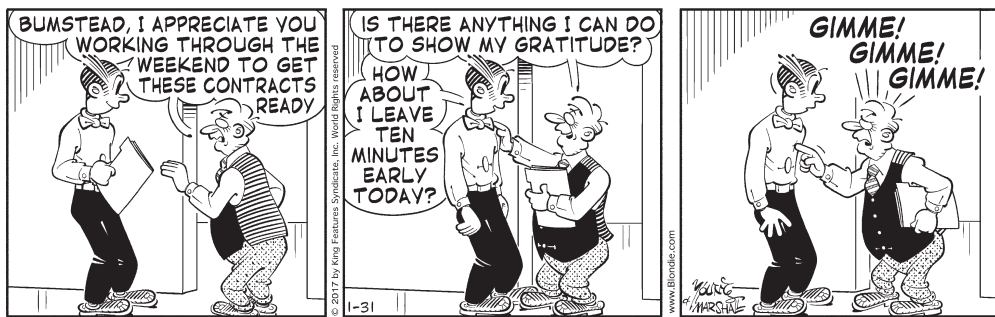
**Dear Annie:** I know that people often write to you about how hurt they are when they don't receive a thank-you note. On the next gift-giving occasion, I know what I'll be giving those who don't understand the importance of acknowledging gifts and showing appreciation: a very nice set of thank-you notes and a book of "forever" stamps. Anyone who doesn't write me a note after that will be off my gift list! — *C.J.*

**Dear C.J.:** Now there's a creative solution for a tired old problem. I give you my stamp of approval.

**FRANK AND ERNEST**



**BLONDIE**



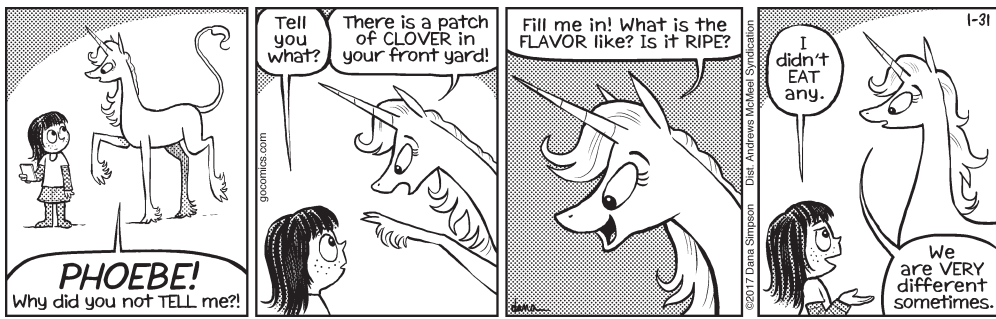
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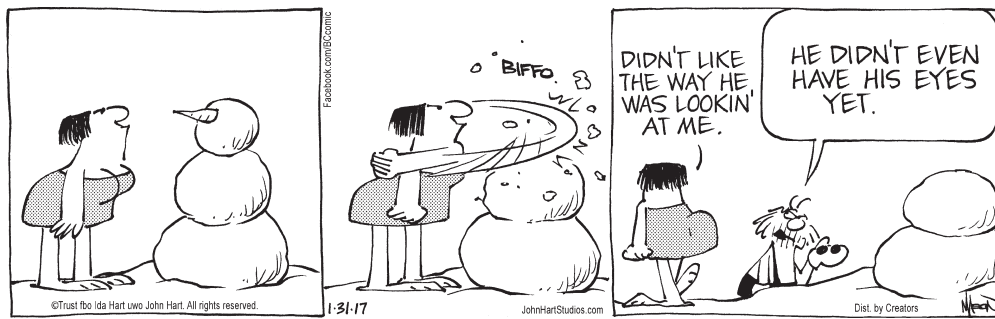
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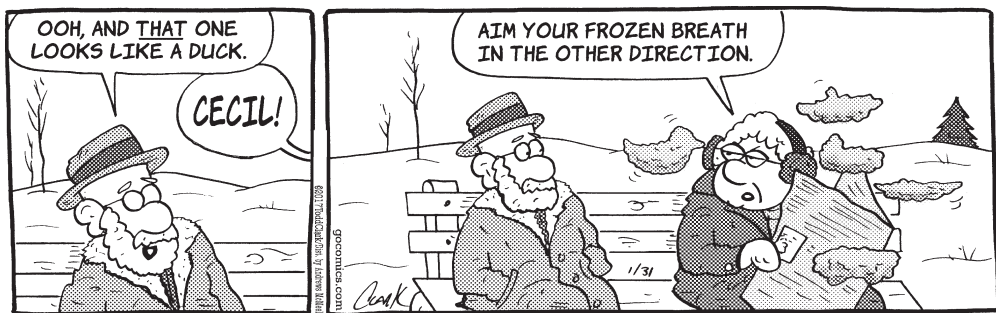
**PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN**



**B.C.**



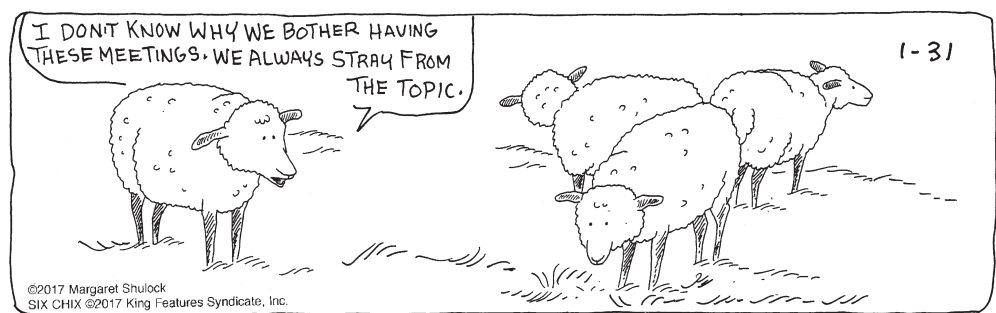
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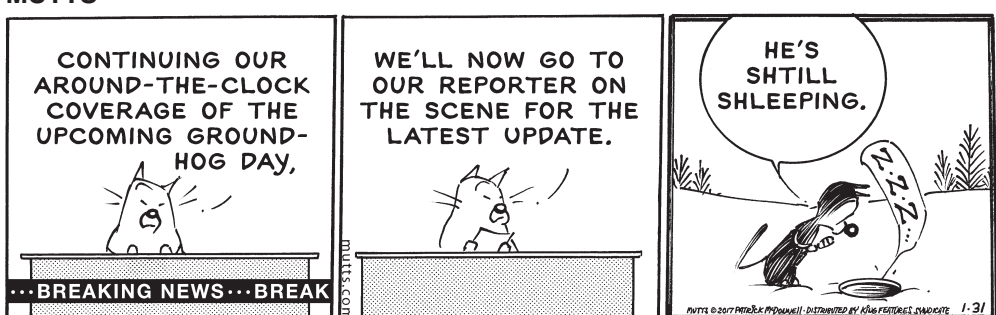
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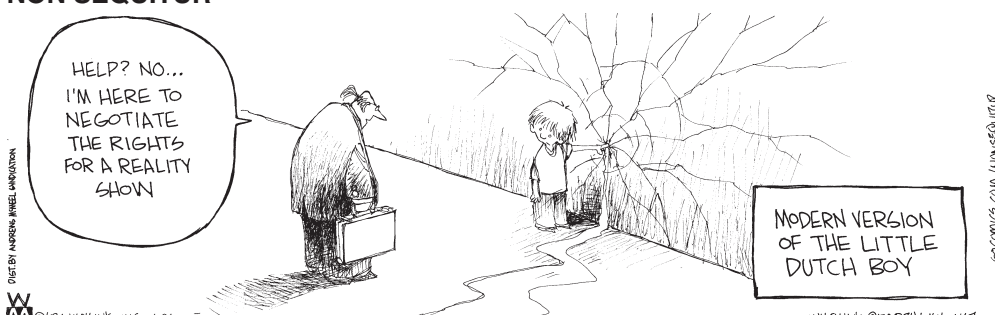
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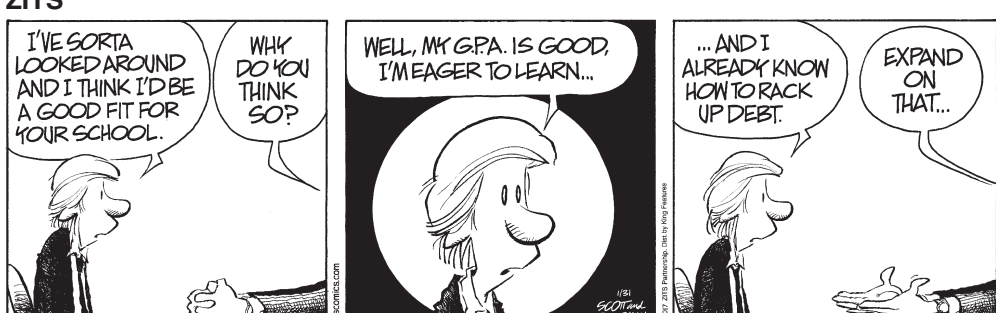
**BABY BLUES**



**WIZARD OF ID**



**ZITS**



**ROSE IS ROSE**

