

# Daughter is now abuser

**Dear Annie:** My ex-husband was emotionally, verbally and physically abusive, and he was a womanizer from the very beginning. So I divorced him in the 1980s; I then kept custody of our daughter.

All was good between my daughter and me for 10 years — before my ex managed to work his way back into my life with his usual charm. I really thought he had changed. What's that old saying about a leopard?

I have to confess that we both drank a lot. But I seemed to be the only one at fault for everything. His abuse got worse and worse over the years. He did and said anything to destroy my self-esteem and credibility with my friends and even my co-workers. He managed to destroy my relationship with my daughter, too. They started to hang out in the bars together, and she started to treat me just as he did. They planned for weeks to throw me out when I temporarily lost my job, and they tried to hurt me in other ways. They would huddle in corners of bars together, kissing as

if they were lovers, watching my reactions to their behavior. I had people ask me whether they were actually sleeping together, and to be honest, I wasn't really sure.

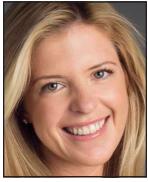
It came to a head one night when she was getting ready to go out with her dad again while I was sleeping. She was going to leave her 18-month-old son with me without even letting me know I was baby-sitting. I woke up before she left and was very angry when I figured it out. I woke the child up and told him Mommy was going bye-bye and asked whether he wanted to go with her. At this point, she hit me and knocked me down. Before I could get up, she hit me again. Then she called her dad, and he told me to get out, which I did. I went back to work shortly after this, thank goodness, but they left me with nothing. I had to start all over again.

To this day, my daughter has never apologized for any of her behavior or actions. Trust me; having your child treat you like a piece of garbage isn't something that's easy to get over. She has also

tried to turn everyone she knows against me ever since then, even my current husband. She is doing exactly the same things her father did. I no longer drink at all, for the record. I don't know where to go from here. She says she has tried to have a relationship with me, but I just don't see it happening, not with the hatefulness still coming at me. Should I try to repair the damage that has been done, or should I just walk completely away? If this is her way of showing love, I don't think I want her love anymore. — *Wits' End*

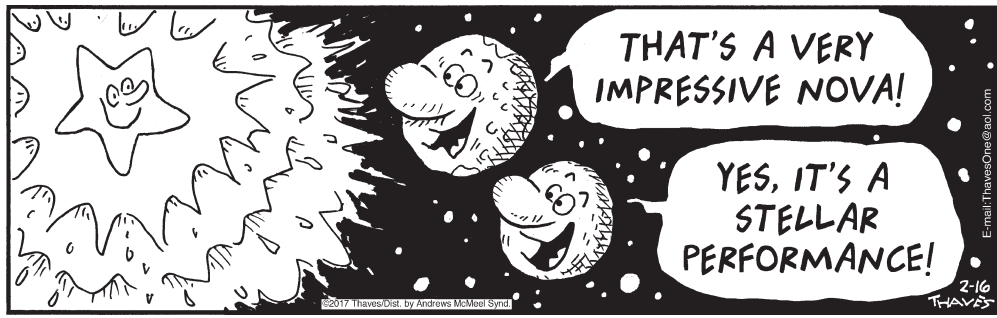
**Dear Wits':** There is, unfortunately, much more to hash out here than the space of this column allows. But it sounds as if the years of abuse from your ex-husband saddled you with a lot of emotional baggage that you're still carrying today, and I strongly recommend seeing a therapist. If you're unable to see one in person, consider using BetterHelp or Talkspace. These websites connect patients with health care professionals via video chats, text messages and phone calls. I hope you and your daughter can build a healthy relationship together over time.

## DEAR ANNIE

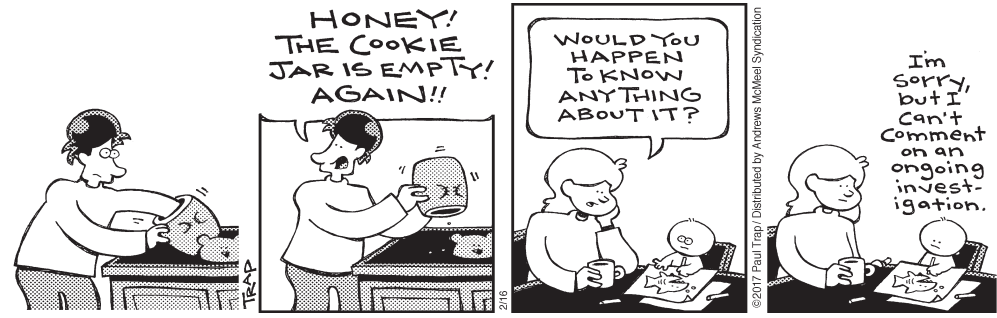


Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



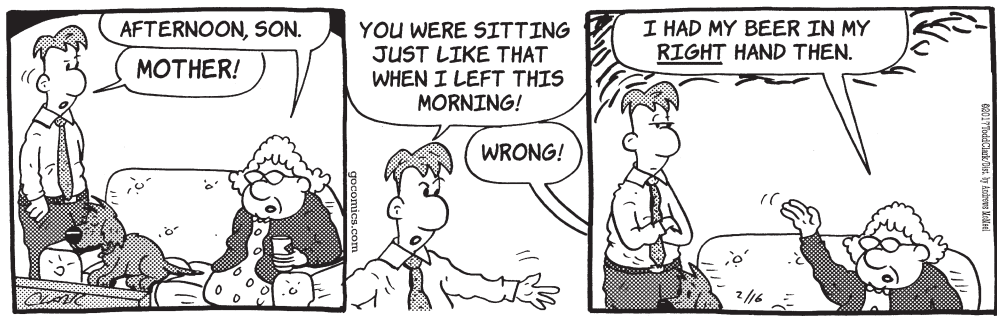
## THATABABY



## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



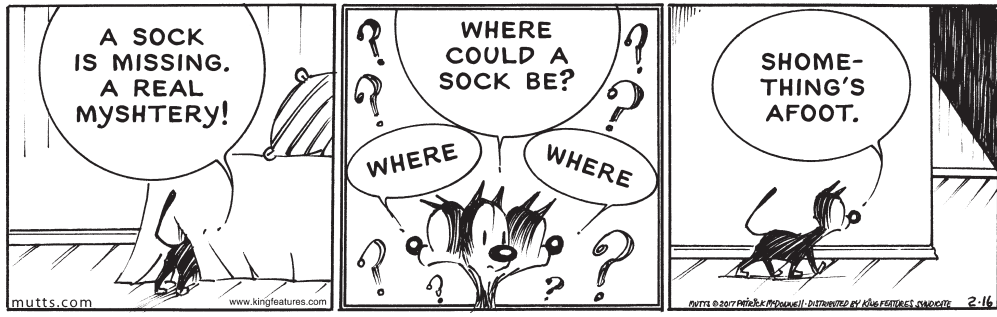
## LOLA



## SIX CHIX



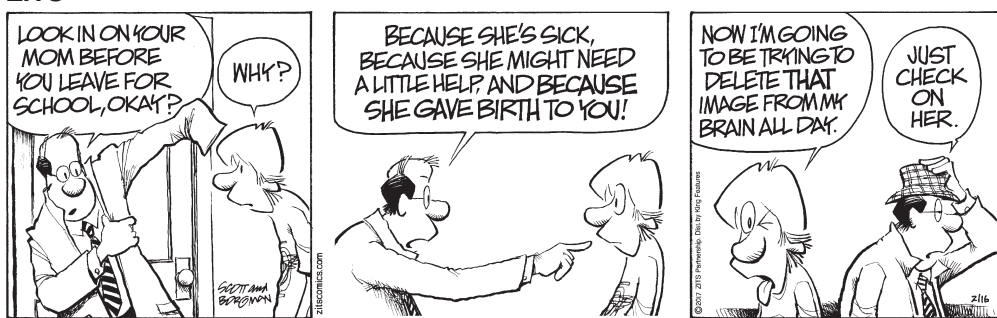
## MUTTS



## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Good relationships are the most important thing to you, though lately it doesn't feel like your life is structured in support of that end. What needs to change? Puzzle it out.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Combine a little faith with your solid work ethic to launch a project off the ground. Eliminating the conflicts and distractions will be the hardest part.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** You know what you want. So why is it sometimes so difficult to make the choice, in the moment, that will lead you to it? Perhaps you're still not absolutely sure. Get clear and discipline will be easier.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Emotions expressed will dissipate, while emotions unexpressed will concentrate. The sweet ones become hard as old brown sugar. The bitter ones become toxic. Don't let it happen. Speak up.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** There was a time in human evolution when survival depended on conformity. To live in solitude was to perish outside of the protection of the group. You may have to remind your primal sense that this is no longer the case.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Try not to worry so much about being who you need to be to make other people feel comfortable. You're good at that and yes, it will work. But at what cost? You're "people" too. Make yourself comfortable for a change.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** The way to productivity is in not doing anything that isn't in line with the production you hope to achieve. It sounds hardcore, and it is. It all boils down to priorities. You'll give a good think to

you're today.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Separate the decisions you make that may affect a relationship from the relationship itself. You can feel great affection for a person and still deny that person's request. Denying a request is not the same as denying a person.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You have a low tolerance for boredom, and this will work in your favor today as you stick with the people and projects that juice your energy and spark your intellect.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** You want to do a great job for the people you serve, and it's why you can't serve very many people right now. It's better to be really effective with one person than to give weakly to many.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** You're not being cynical by noticing that everyone is selling something. Maybe it's not a product. Maybe it's just an idea about who they are. There is still the posturing of an exchange. Are you buying?

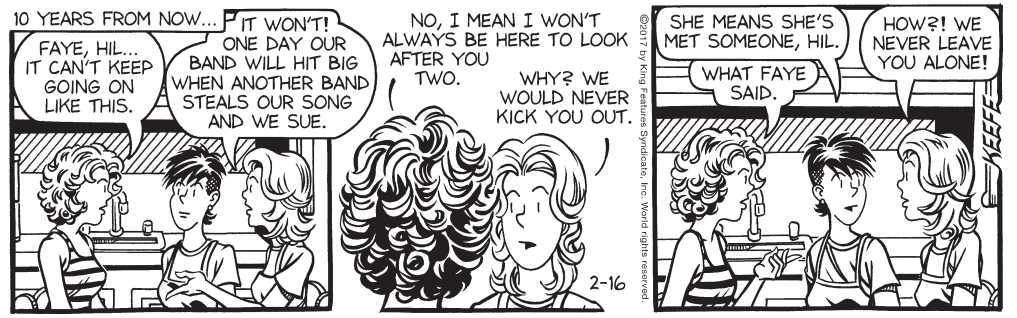
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** While you'd love to help along the work of other people, there's something brewing in your own kitchen that simply won't come together unless you tend to it now and tend to it well.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Feb. 17).** You'll add more and more loving people to your circle. Even though you're very secure and content without certain trappings, when they come your way over the next two months, accept graciously. There will be many helped by what you are able to give in May. You will work brilliantly in a team of two in June. Taurus and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 12, 3, 39 and 14.

## BLONDIE



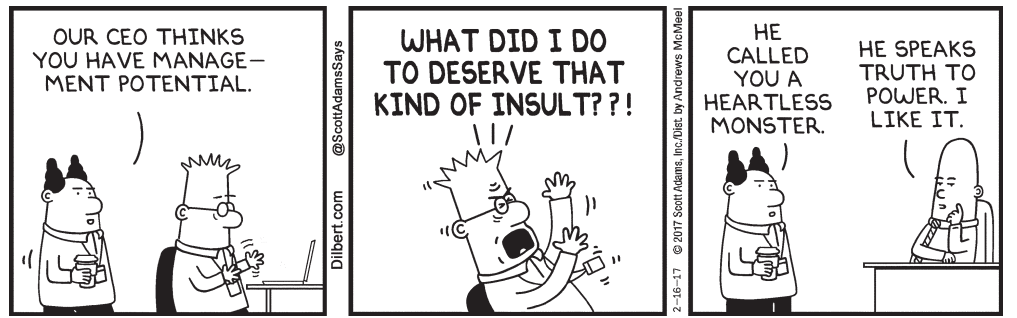
## SALLY FORTH



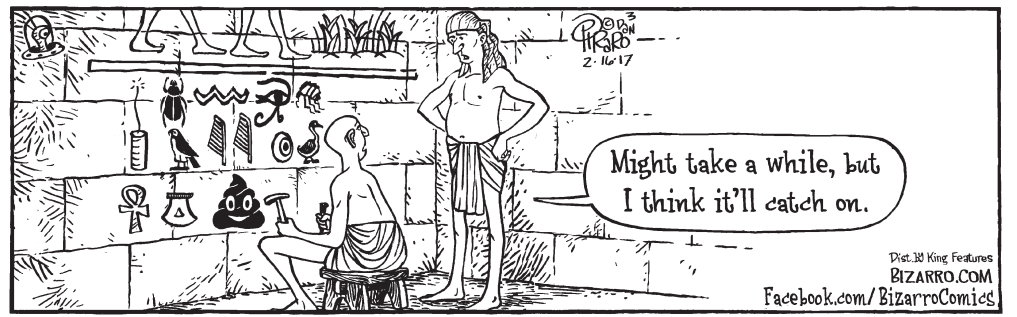
## B.C.



## DILBERT



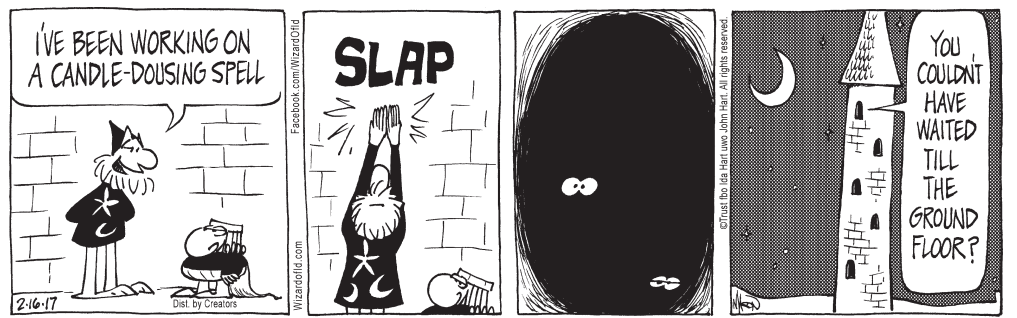
## BIZARRO



## NON SEQUITUR



## WIZARD OF ID



## ROSE IS ROSE

