

# Should I stay with deceiver?

Dear Annie: I'm torn and hoping an objective voice will help me reach a decision.

I recently found out that my girlfriend of three years has been seeing another guy behind my back for the past couple of months. I had been growing suspicious for some time; she has been distant and has not been physical at all lately. Then the other day, when she was in the shower, I snooped through her cell-phone. I found that she'd been texting with some guy the night before about meeting up at a bar. She had told me she was going out for a girls night.

I immediately confronted her. At first, she was furious with me for going through her phone, but she finally broke down and admitted that she'd been hanging out with this guy from work. She says it wasn't anything physical, although he's been flirtatious with her. She begged me to forgive her for keeping a secret from me, and she promises never to do so again. I don't know whether to believe the part about them not being physical, but I do believe she really regrets the relationship. She says she wants

to work things out between us. I love her a lot, and I am really torn up. I don't feel ready to end things. Would I be nuts to stay with her? — *Aching in My Chest*

**Dear Aching:** I'll answer your question with another question: Why do you want to stay? If you really see a future with this woman, then OK, give her another shot. You'd both have to work together to build a strong foundation of honesty and trust. You'd need to stop snooping on her; she'd need to stop giving you reasons to feel as if you have to snoop. (And if she were to break your trust again, that would be it. I'm a big believer in second chances, but not so much in third chances.)

But I've a feeling that the real reason you're avoiding a breakup is you're afraid to let go. If that's the case, it's time to end things so you can start the process of beginning again. You cannot simply wish that pain in your chest away.

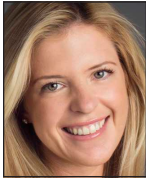
**Dear Annie:** We have actually found comfort in reading the letters from grandparents and others who have shared their dismay in never receiving thank-you notes.

I tried talking to the kids and the parents, to no avail. The parents even tried to "explain" that their kids were too busy with activities. I was appalled. So I went to plan B. During one visit, when everyone was at one dining room table, I passed out thank-you cards to all the grandkids. The envelopes were pre-addressed to my husband and me and stamped. I also gave them an additional box of thank-you notes to be used for other gift givers. I shared the importance of sending thank-you notes whenever they receive a gift. I then advised that they were all on permanent probation. No "thank you" means no future gifts — end of story. I give them five days after receipt of a gift to send a note. This has worked.

Of course, their mother thinks I am a nag and old-fashioned. I think I'm teaching my grandkids an important life lesson, and shame on their parents for not doing the same. But now I enjoy notes from my grandkids, and some of them are even being more thoughtful and giving in other ways. — *C.A. in Sarasota, Fla.*

**Dear C.A.:** You are indeed teaching them an important life lesson, one they'll thank you for when they're older.

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

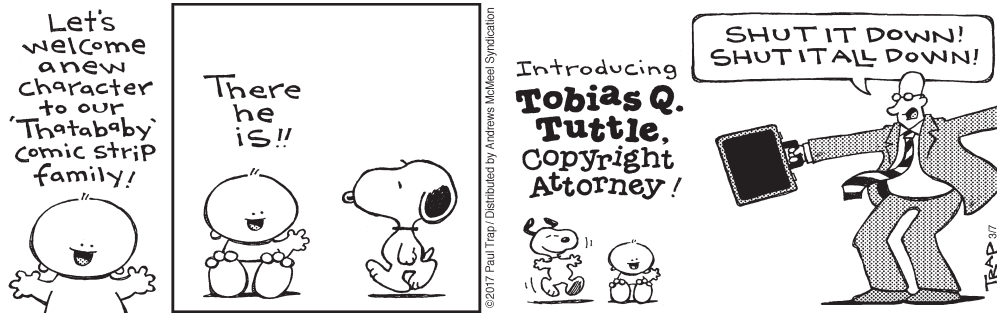
## FRANK AND ERNEST



## BLONDIE



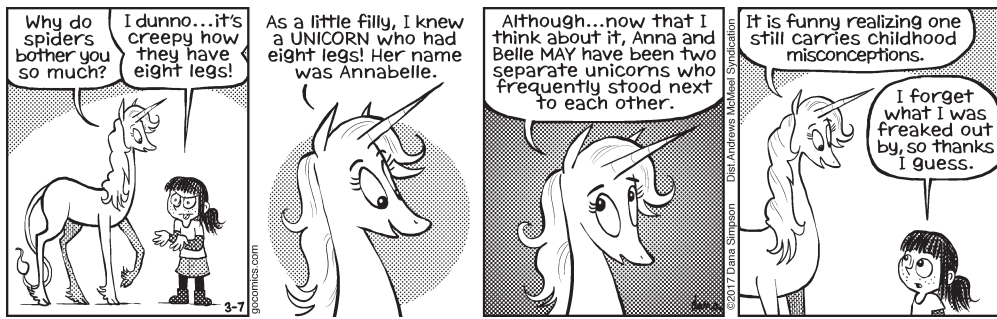
## THATABABY



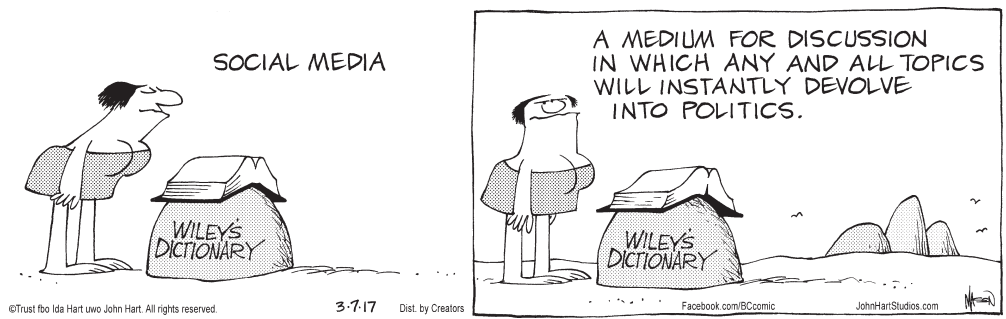
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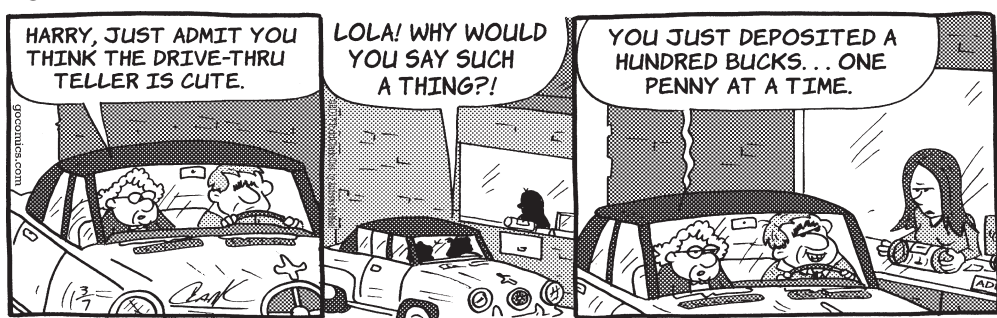
## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



## B.C.



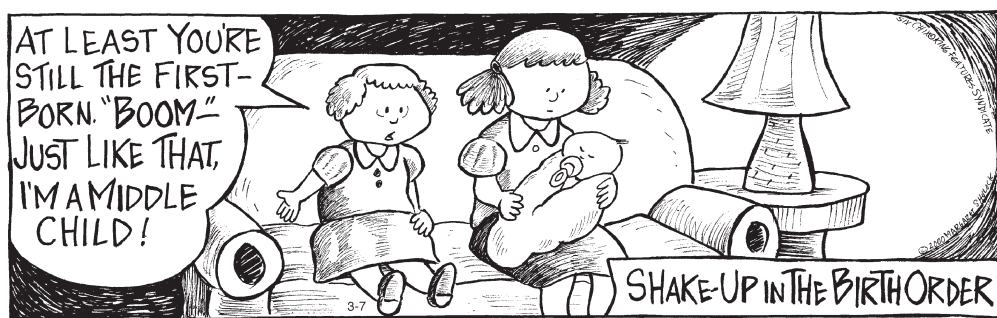
## LOLA



## DILBERT



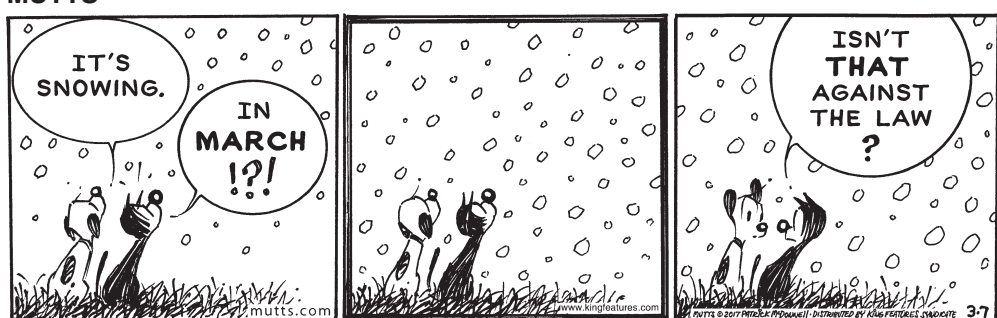
## SIX CHIX



## BIZARRO



## MUTTS



## NON SEQUITUR



## BABY BLUES



## WIZARD OF ID



## ZITS



## ROSE IS ROSE

