

Daddy's 'little girl' problem

Dear Annie: I am absolutely at my wits' end and seriously thinking of divorcing my husband.

My husband and I have been married for 11 years. My stepdaughter is 26. She married three years ago after living with her boyfriend for a year. The problem is that she still places her dad over her husband. Her poor husband takes it because he is very meek and does whatever she wants. She definitely wears the pants in the family. She wants to be married, but she still wants to be Daddy's little girl. It goes beyond that. She still has him so high on a pedestal that it is ridiculous for a supposedly grown woman.

She is driving a definite wedge between us, and it is serious. They live about two hours away. She and her husband both have jobs. Yet she calls and cries tears that she misses her dad. They still have date nights; he has offered to go places with her if she does not want to go alone. If she calls and has a problem or something that needs to be fixed, he drops

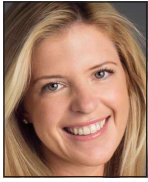
everything and runs to her. In my opinion, she chose to get married and have a husband. She needs to rely on him for things and cut the apron strings with Daddy some and be an adult. I am not begrudging visits; in fact, I encourage them. But I refuse to change our plans simply because she decides, spur of the moment, to make an appearance. He always takes her side that we should let her come and change our plans. This makes me the monster if I dare say no. I think plans should be made accordingly. We should all four do things together. We could do a dinner out, a day out, etc. My pleas fall on deaf ears.

How do you deal with a 26-year-old who thinks the world revolves around her? I don't see where she and her husband make any attempt to create their own friendships and have their own life. These are supposed to be the happy years when we can go out and do as we please, but it is far from that. I am about to give up and start taking vacations by myself. — *Desperate in Montana*

Dear Desperate: You can take a vacation, but these problems will be waiting for you when you get back. So before you get out the suitcase, try getting in your husband's head. He seems to have a guilt complex that makes him feel the need to bend over backward to make his daughter happy. His fuzzy-headedness on the subject means that you end up having to be the voice of reason — a voice unwelcome to his daughter and therefore unwelcome to him. (He has the overwhelming need to keep her happy, remember.) If you keep fighting the battle this way, you're destined to lose.

Instead, you need to get him on your side of the issue, whether by going to therapy together or just by putting on your own therapist cap and talking it out. Why does he feel compelled to help his daughter all the time? How does he think this will impact her and her marriage in the long run? With some clarity, he should see that this codependent behavior is unhealthy and does his daughter a disservice. She needs to learn how to rely not on her dad or even on her husband but on herself.

DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It is common among the superstitious to, when on a lucky streak, disallow any change of behavior. And even if you're not superstitious, it's logical to take this approach: Whatever worked, keeping working it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Don't plan the minutiae; plan the broad strokes so you're free to improvise between the lines. This will keep you from boxing yourself into a future that is smaller than it could have been — or, worse, overly influenced by others.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Love isn't always magical and exciting. Furthermore, a partner doesn't have to be perfect to be perfect for you. You'll gladly trade the lightning bolts and fireworks for mutual support that you can trust for the long haul.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). People acting out of a sense of duty do not expect to be appreciated as you appreciate them, but this will be a nice perk to their jobs and one of the many ways you make the world better by just being you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). This day is for practicing and getting good at your craft. It starts with you, alone in a room, repeating the motions, honing your skill. Then you get to summon your courage and test what you know by sharing it more widely.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll set out with the best of intentions and very little control over environmental factors and other circumstances. There will be something awesome about absolutely any place you wind up.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Just because you think it, hear it, see it or feel it doesn't make it true. Use doubt as an instrument to question your own thoughts, and you will save yourself

from the inconvenience and drama that comes from making incorrect assumptions.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll have more confidence going into an endeavor if you allow for every possible outcome in your mind, including dismal failure or wild success. Deem it all acceptable and, suddenly, you're fearless.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Before the high-pressure situation of the day (and there will be one), go be alone; breathe; get centered; calm your mind to as close to nothingness as you can get.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Get the tedious stuff over and done as soon as possible. The work may stay at a fun level of zero, but the freedom you'll feel when it's complete is the first ingredient for the level-10 fun that follows.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Even when you're not trying to reach out and connect with people, you accidentally start up excellent relationships. It's a function of your curious mind and unassuming charm.

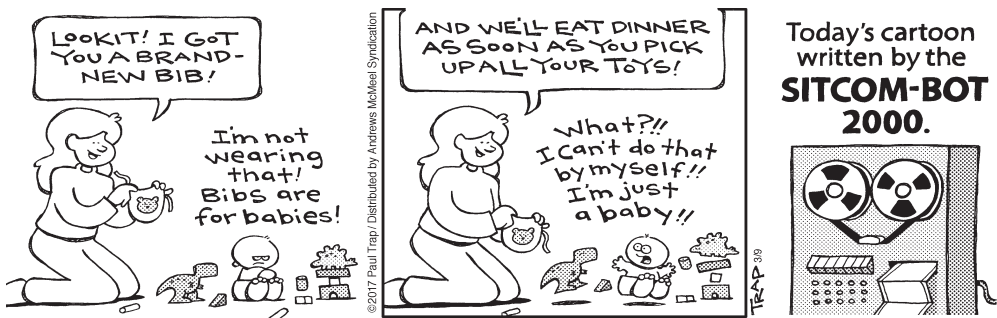
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Should you invest your attention and money in tiny details (like you want to)? There's no reason not to yield to the temptation. Your belief that the beauty of life is in little things mirrors the beliefs of many artists before you.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (March 10). To sum it up in three words: You got this. When you think you don't, it's like looking for glasses that are on your head. Stop; adjust; see. Follow through with the ideas you have in April: There is a destiny to be released inside one. The people you meet in June will enhance existing relationships. Get training in October. Leo and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 10, 44, 11 and 36.

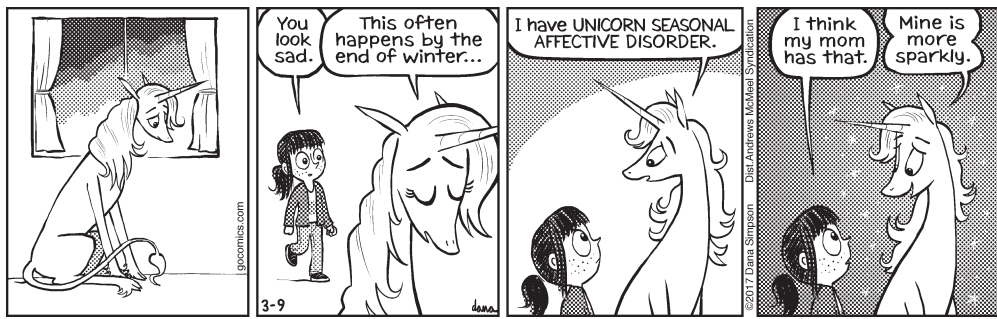
FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



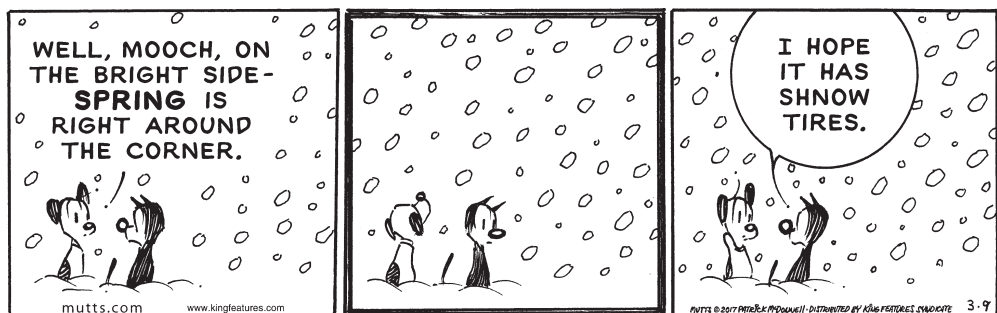
LOLA



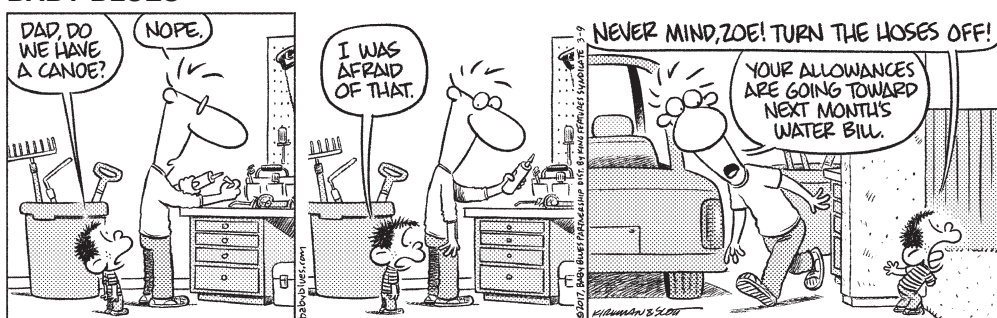
SIX CHIX



MUTTS



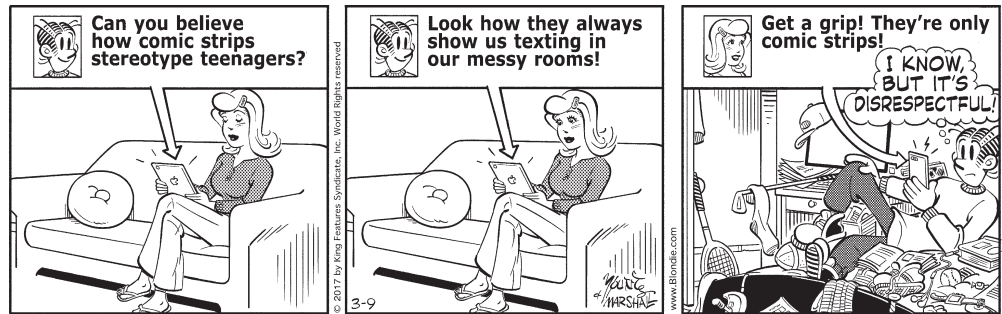
BABY BLUES



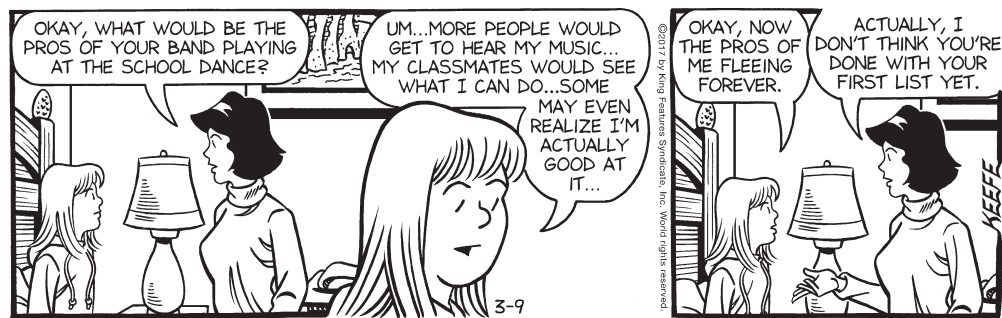
ZITS



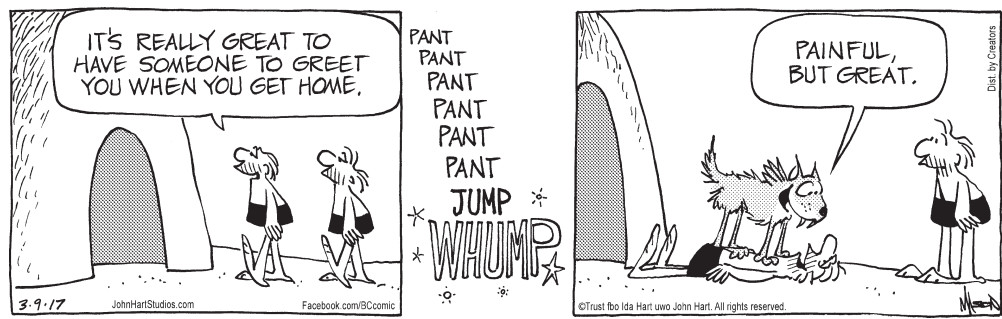
BLONDIE



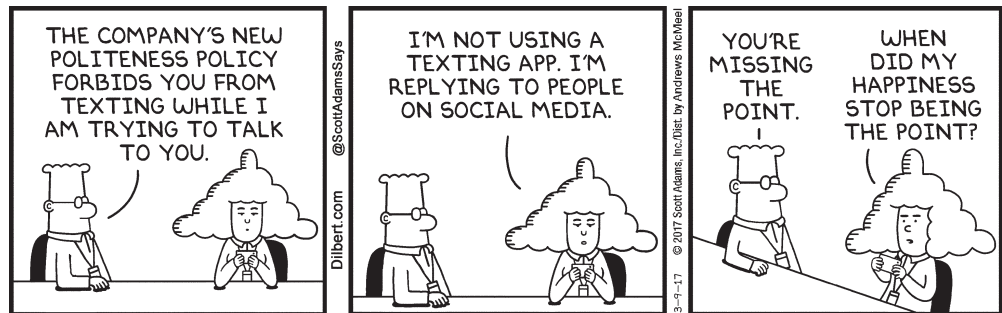
SALLY FORTH



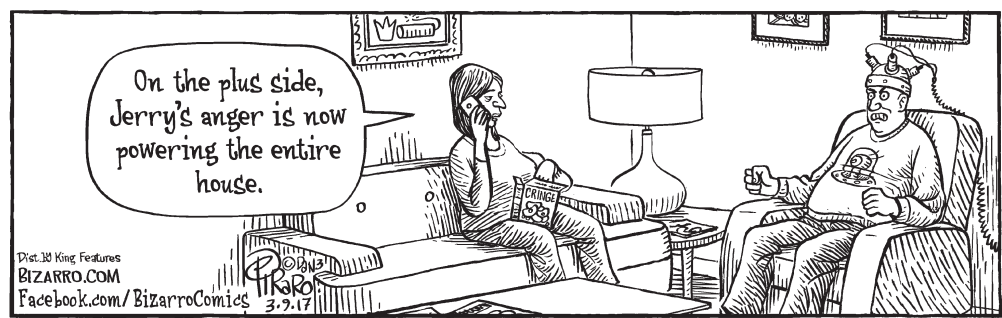
B.C.



DILBERT



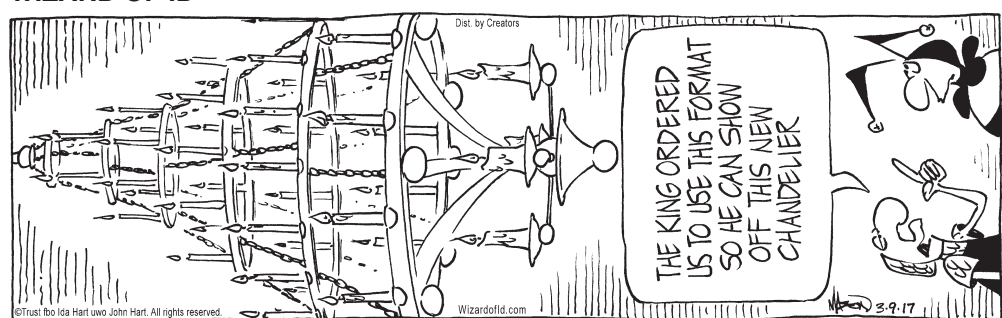
BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

