

# Are we betraying stepdaughter?

**Dear Annie:** I am a widowed stepmother of a man and a woman. My husband and I had a cordial relationship with their mother. I grew to love her, and I think she liked me.

My stepdaughter, "Renee," has been divorced for 2½ years. She and her ex, "Matt," share custody of their three children. Matt sought the divorce, and Renee has never gotten over it. She takes no responsibility; it is all Matt's fault.

Matt has been in our lives for 20-plus years, and we have all always adored him. Renee feels that because my stepson, his wife and I are friendly with Matt (go to his house to watch football games, like his new wife and her children, attend parties where they are, etc.), we are "siding" with him.

Today Renee advised us that because we still like Matt and went to his house last weekend, she is disowning all of us because we have chosen him over her. Then she blocked us on Facebook.

We feel that if we are nice to Matt and his new family, we are avoiding further conflict/discom-

fort/resentment/friction with the three children. The children like their new stepsiblings and stepmother. Because of the children, Renee and Matt will be stuck with each other for the rest of their lives. Why not try to make the best of an unfortunate situation? Isn't it better to maintain friendliness?

Are we betraying Renee by being nice to Matt? — *Baffled Stepmother*

**Dear Baffled Stepmother:** You are not betraying your stepdaughter by continuing to be friendly with her ex-husband, who was your son-in-law for many years. That said, try empathizing with her. You did not state the circumstances of the divorce, but if Matt left Renee to be with his new wife, her sourness is understandable, even if it's not constructive. In any case, if you show her that she's loved, too, by spending more time with her, she may worry less about the time you're spending with Matt. There's also a chance she will stay angry no matter what. In that event, recognize that her emotions are valid,

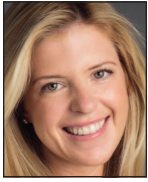
and encourage her to seek counseling to work through and past the hurt.

**Dear Annie:** My husband's son came to live with us when he started high school. His mother lived in another state, so when she came to visit him, she stayed with us. I had friends who thought I was crazy to "allow" the "ex" to stay with us. I really liked my stepson's mother. She was a funny, caring woman who brought a lot of joy to our family gatherings. I did not break up their marriage, and I really loved the way that the two could co-parent their son and include me in the mix. We attended her wedding when she remarried. We were Facebook friends. When the grandchildren came along, we shared many holidays and birthday celebrations together. Sadly, she passed away earlier this year. We all miss her so much. Please suggest to "Ex-Wife Issues" that she may be missing an opportunity for a great friendship that she could treasure for years to come.

— *Missing My Friend*

**Dear Missing My Friend:** Your letter touched my heart. What a beautiful message. Thank you for sharing it with the world.

## DEAR ANNIE



Annie Lane  
Creators  
Syndicate Inc.

## TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** You're not sure why you feel the way you do, but you can be sure that there's a good reason. There's a gift in these feelings that will be presented as you heed them or explore them.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** You're brilliantly intuitive, but smart to keep it to yourself today. While your best guess might be correct, it won't be a good idea to share the speculation, certainly not publicly, and especially not in writing.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** The giving you do will be better when there's no price tag involved. Here's the best gift: Tell someone the story of where your love started and how it grows. There's no story sweeter.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Ask for it in writing. Start a paper trail. Take a picture. You trust people, but everyone behaves better when the systems of accountabilities are obviously in place. Records matter.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** The expected norms and safely appropriate behaviors aren't usually high on your list of fun things to adhere to, but today they'll give you a thrill anyway. You'll approach them as an artist and a diplomat to excellent effect.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Close your eyes and imagine the best version of you. This is who you really are. Now find the scissors (they are in the drawer behind your mind's eye) and cut ties with any part of you that opposes the vision.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** The actions you take every day are adding up and you'll soon open your bloom to the sun, experiencing life in the way you feel you were meant to. It takes time though. Keep working and be patient.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Your life is an expression of your soul. When you align with that idea, making a good impression seems a little beside the point, though it might happen anyway, quite by accident.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** You understand your role better than ever. Because you know what it feels like to get to the place where a sense of appreciation, excitement and pride kick in, you'll find it impossible to stop before you get there.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** The sunrise is a spectacle extraordinaire that most people miss on the daily. While we need the sun very much, our lives orbit around other things. Something magical will happen when you put a higher priority on beauty.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Once you figure out that the remote control you hold doesn't go to the device you're pointing it at, you set it down and go looking for the right controller. Letting go doesn't take courage; it takes intelligence.

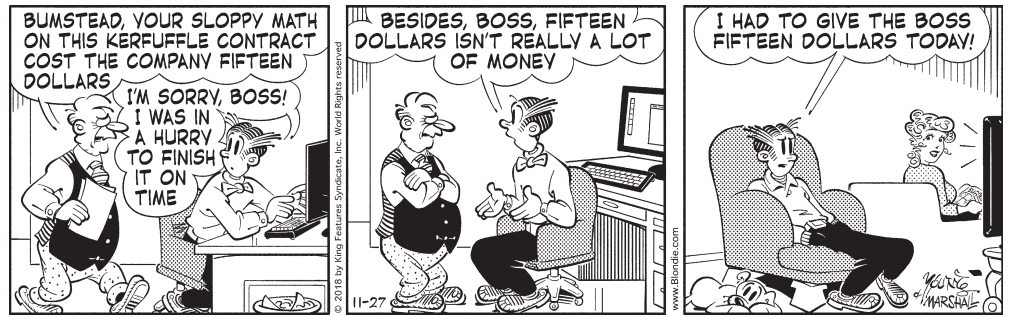
**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** It is possible for a person to change your energy just by existing in the vicinity. It's why spiritual protection is just as important for you as a jacket or umbrella when it's cold out.

**TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Nov. 28).** This year features stellar alliances. The obstacle preventing the strongest flow of love and success into your life will be crushed by the foot traffic of fellow soldiers of spirit, marching toward a common goal. You'll apply talents differently in 2019. Necessity might be your best inspiration, but won't be your only teacher. Pisces and Aries adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 16, 3, 33 and 48.

## FRANK AND ERNEST



## BLONDIE



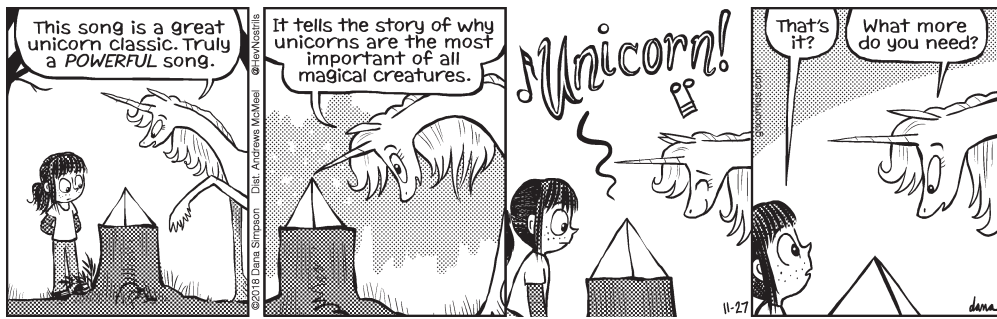
## THATABABY



## SALLY FORTH



## PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



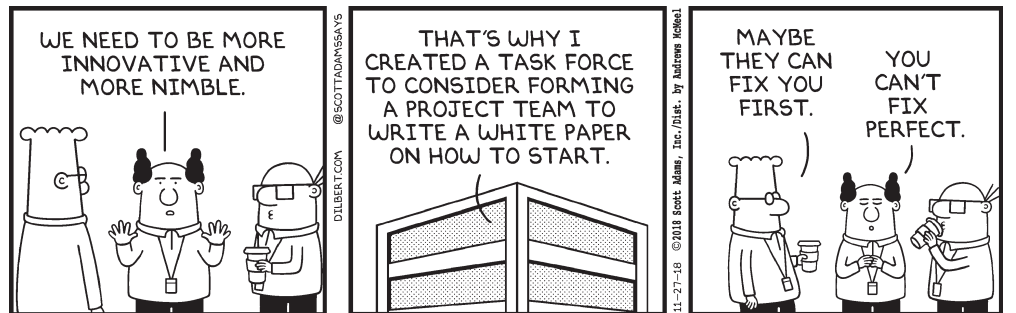
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## LOLA



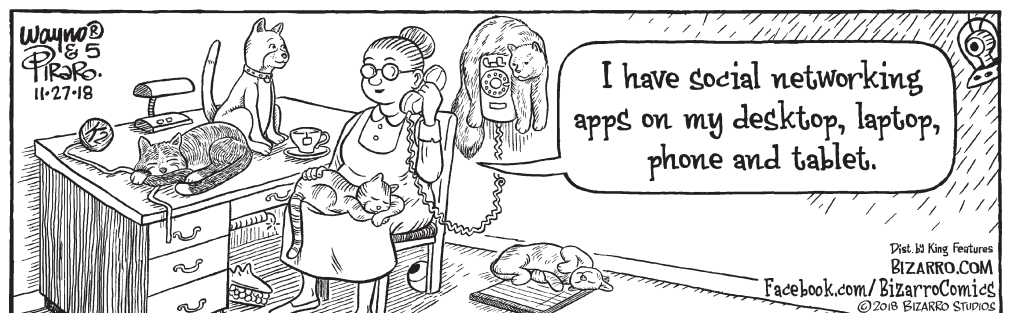
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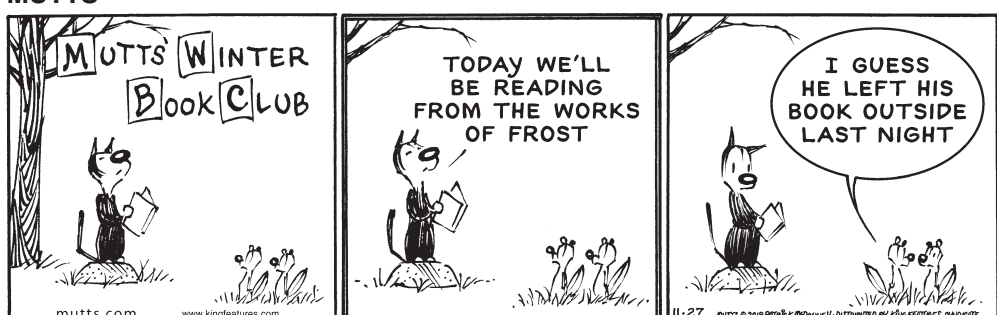
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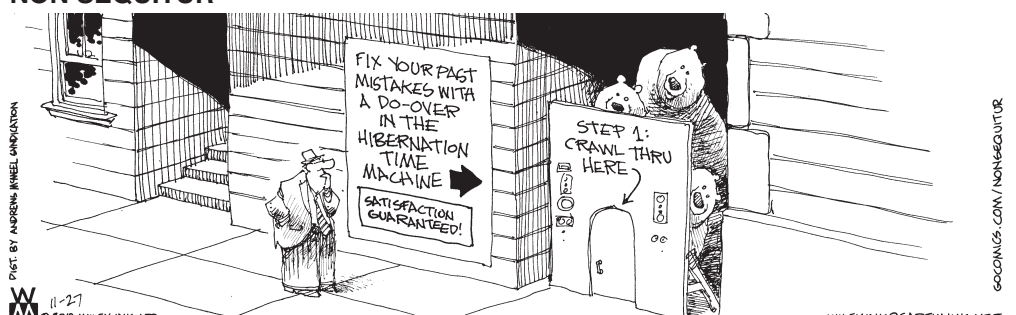
## BIZARRO



## MUTTS



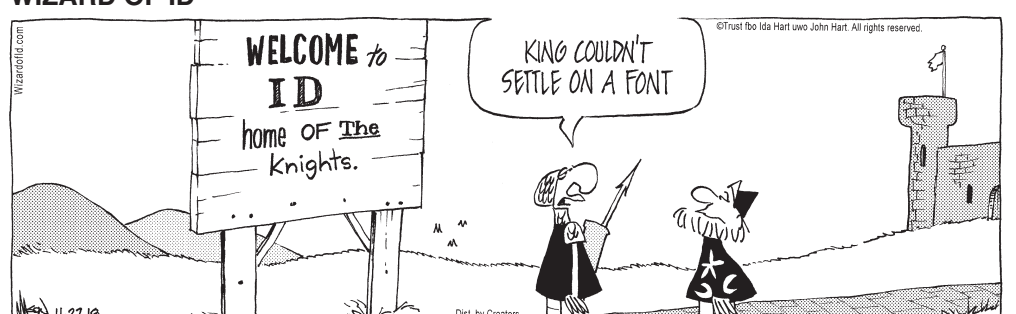
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## BABY BLUES



## WIZARD OF ID



## ZITS



## ROSE IS ROSE

