Feels like a housing dictatorship

Dear Annie: I just moved into a new apartment complex and went to my first open board meeting. I am wondering whether I moved into a dictatorship. The board has only two of these meetings per year, and we were told we could speak for only three minutes. One resident asked why the manager hadn't fulfilled his obligation as stated in the guidelines that are given to you when you move in. Immediately, the president got red in the face and said, "We will not hear of any talk like that." Here I thought an open meeting meant you could ask questions, but evidently that's not the case here. I believe my stay will be short-lived. Annie, how would you have handled that situation? — *Bewildered*

DEAR ANNIE

Annie Lane
Creators Syndicate Inc.

Dear Bewildered: Don't start packing just yet. Fortunately, your apartment complex doesn't exist as its own separate state, and the building president doesn't get to impose whatever laws he or she wants. You have rights as a tenant. Housing laws vary by state. The web is a great starting point for finding information and resources. Knowledge is power.

Dear Annie: Recently, you responded to a letter from "Sally," who wrote that her husband, in his mid-80s, has become more controlling about money since their move to a senior residence. Though your advice to have a heart-to-heart with him was good, I would like to suggest an explanation for his behavior: dementia.

I suspected my husband was showing signs of dementia, but I brushed it off. What really showed me that something was amiss was when he started demonstrating paranoia toward our finances and my handling of them. We had always — over 38 years of marriage — blended our money. Suddenly, he was putting his Social Security money into an account in only his name and calling it "his money."

I suggested we both go get tested for dementia. He was in his mid-60s, and I was probably 61 at the time. He thought I was the one with the thinking problem. It turned out he did have dementia, and his could not be cured. But many dementia-like symptoms are actually caused by something that can be cured or fixed (vitamin deficiency, drug side effects, hearing loss, depression, etc.). It is good to get tested often to catch it early so that a temporary dementia can be fixed and a long-term dementia, such as Lewy body dementia or Alzheimer's disease, can be slowed — or at least you can get your affairs in order and turn the finances over to the more capable partner.

If the illness is not caught early, a lot of poor decisions can be made that have lasting effects. Though Sally may just be dealing with a husband adjusting to a new home with higher rent, it would be good, considering their age, for both of them to be tested. Procrastination and denial could have devastating effects on their financial future. — *Speaking From Experience*

Dear Speaking From Experience: You've raised a great point. I've passed your letter along to Sally, and I encourage any readers who are on the fence about getting tested to do so. For more information on getting tested for Alzheimer's and dementia, talk to your doctor or call the Alzheimer's Association's 24/7 Helpline, at 800-272-3900.

TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). People who are afraid to leave their known realm will expend a lot of energy trying to fix things there, while those who are daring enough to journey out will fix everything in one fell swoop by starting new.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You're not looking for what's wrong with the situation; you're just trying to understand what's there and how all the elements work together. Coming at it from this perspective, you'll grow in insight and, ultimately, in power.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Your attention on things will change them — like when you repeat the same word until it loses its meaning, or when you focus on an interest so long that the awesome stuff becomes weird and the weird stuff becomes awesome.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You're structuring the immediate future toward a distant future you can't quite imagine yet. That's all right. You'll be able to see it better as you get closer, which you will by following today's plan.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You'll use your talents for whatever work you do. That said, your skills are also broader than the current work needs. Is there another way to apply yourself beyond what you're paid to do? You'll be happier when better utilized.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Moving forward isn't always about picking the very best solution out there; rather it's about finding something that works and then finding the next thing that works. For today, good timing will be better than good research.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Some will be seduced by the buzzy feeling of superiority, even though the idea that any person is better than another is delusional. Those who can resist the temptations of arrogance will win the day.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). If you live in a way that honors those around you, you'll get pleasure from looking back and reliving the moments — the opposite of regret. Therefore, doing what's right will definitely be worth the inconvenience.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You'll give an awful lot of attention to a version of yourself that doesn't quite exist yet. Well, that's one way to bring that version into being. Act "as if" and soon the "as if" will no longer be an act.

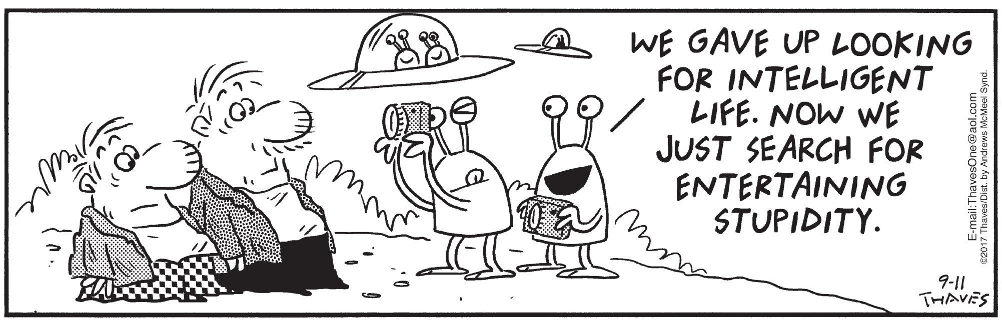
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're not being judged. In fact, the laws of cause and effect are rather straightforward at the moment. You're more likely to be punished by your sins than for them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Many around you are in desperate need of surprise and delight. For this reason you could get a very positive response for saying the opposite of what people expect.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Without question, you're good at what you do. So when this goes long stretches without acknowledgment, stay confident in your ability. Also, there's nothing wrong cueing people, in a lighthearted way, to give you props.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 12). This solar return your friendships will open new fascinations and opportunities. Something you enjoyed a few years back will get a new life in the next three months; the revival will invigorate your work and your personal life, too. A series of uncanny events will lead you to a lucrative arrangement in January. Aries and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 9, 20, 11 and 14.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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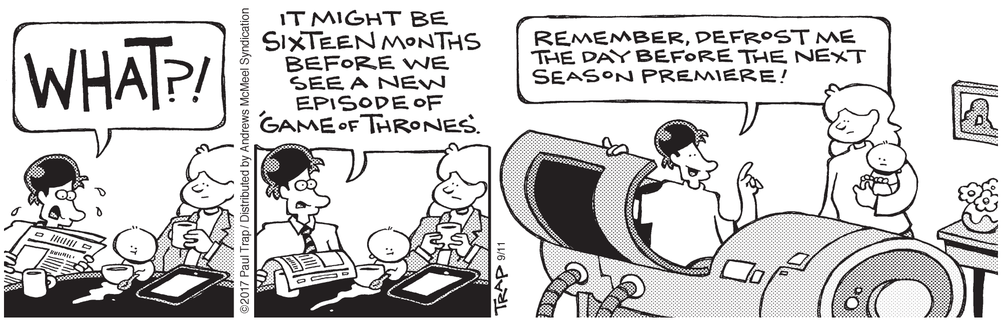
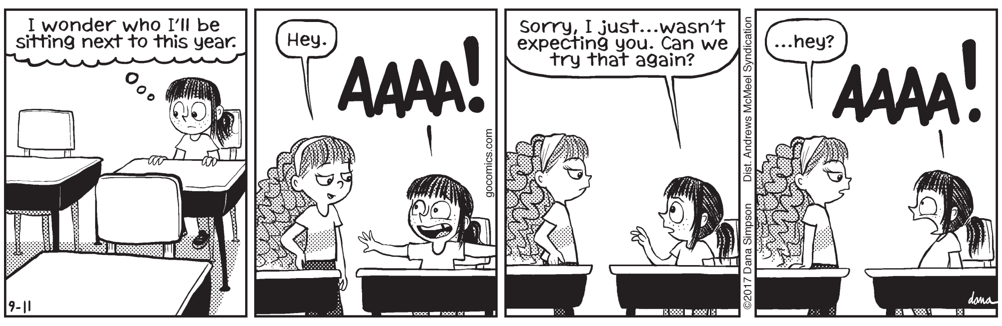


SALLY FORTH

PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



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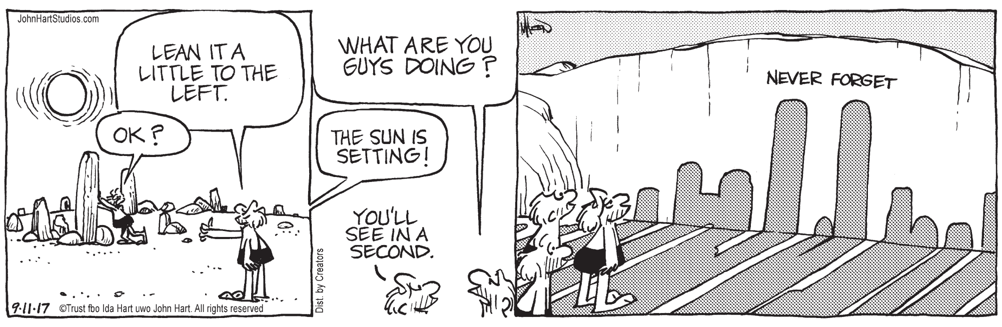

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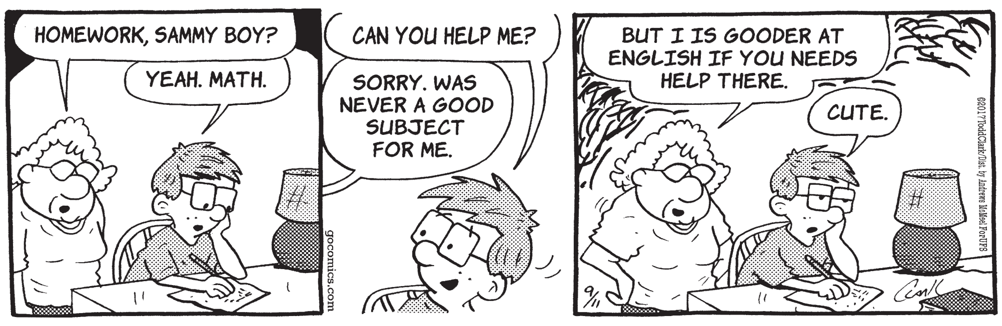

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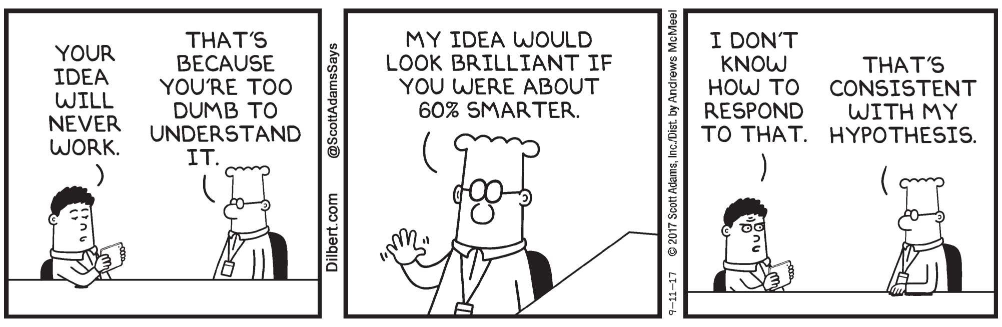

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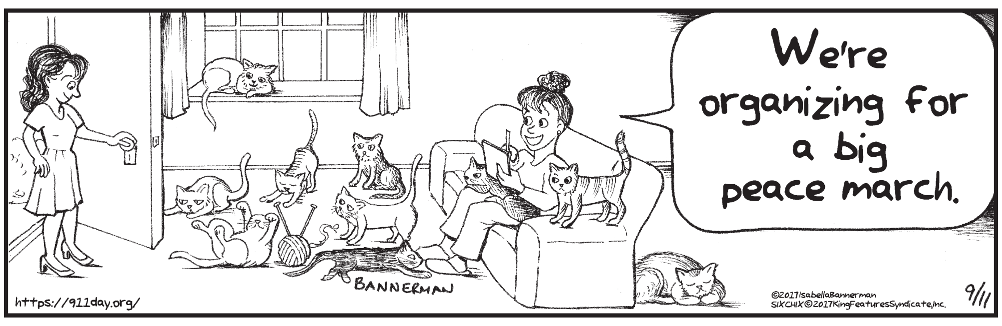

BIZARRO

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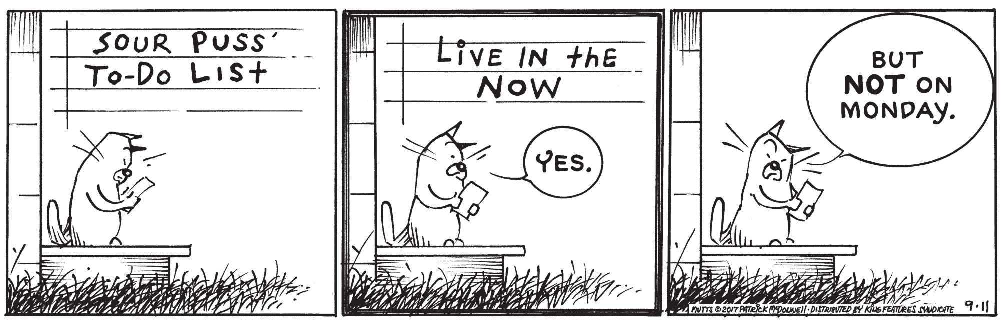

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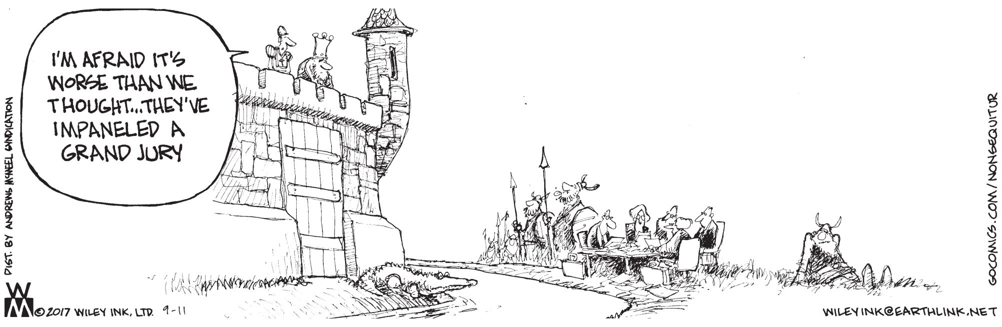
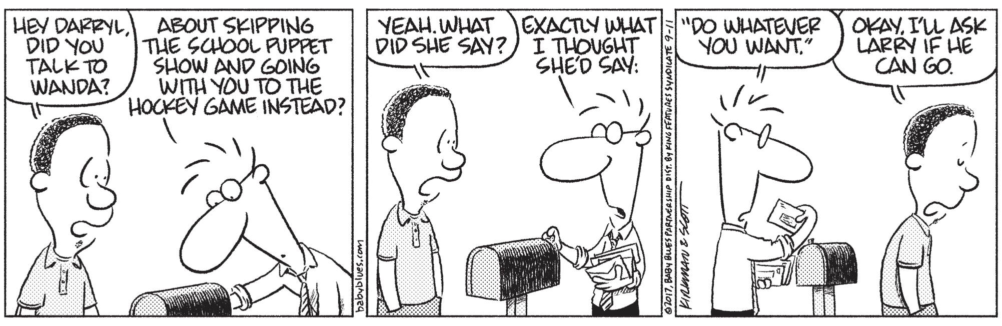


BABY BLUES



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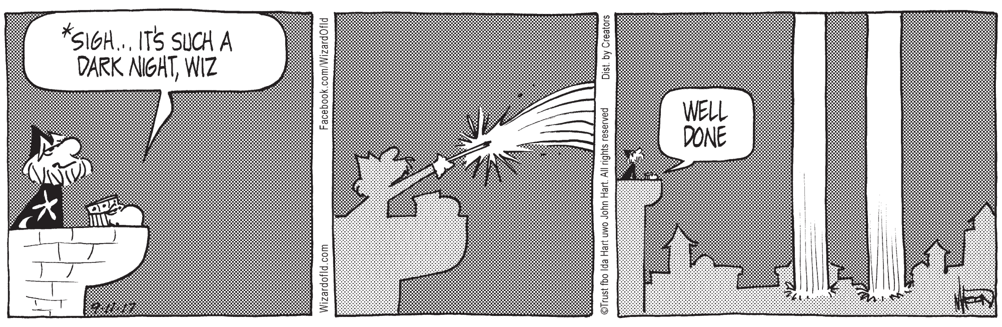

ZITS

ROSE IS ROSE