

Who should bring the cake?

Dear Annie: I'm planning my birthday party. I'm renting out a room in a beautiful bar/event space downtown. I've got about 15 friends coming. Recently, in passing, I mentioned to one of my friends that I'd ordered a cake from a bakery for the occasion. She said, "You're getting your own cake? You shouldn't do that! That's sad!" I told her I was happy to do it. And no, I don't think she said that because she was planning on making me a cake. I think she was just appalled by the idea of someone's providing her own birthday cake.

To me, it just makes sense. I know I like having cake with friends on my birthday, and when I know I'd really like something, I like to take care of it myself. I can't expect anyone else to read my mind and do something for me. And I would never ask a friend to make me a cake, because that just seems deranged. Plus, I don't want to put any-

one through the trouble. I am a big girl and can make my own cake. But does bringing cake to my own birthday party make me a control freak? — *Happy to Share*

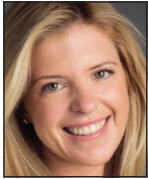
Dear Happy to Share: It's wonderful that you're so self-sufficient, but sometimes it's about allowing our loved ones to do things for us. I wouldn't be so sure that your friend wasn't planning on bringing you a cake. That may be exactly why she reacted with such dismay. Still, that's no reason to cancel your order at the bakery. If no one springs a sweet surprise on you, you'll be glad you took care of that. And if someone does, well, no party ever suffered from too much cake.

Dear Annie: I'd like to add to your response to "Realist, Not Pessimist," who's despairing about the state of the world, because I have made the same cynical mistake of believing there is no hope for mankind. I recently discovered that this idea is entirely wrong. Though

we still face huge challenges, humankind has made incredible progress, including having longer life spans, more education and fewer wars globally than at any other time in history. "Realist, Not Pessimist" should check out <https://our-world-in-data.org> and <https://humanprogress.org>, which track the many ways life, on average, has improved. Recent books such as "Enlightenment Now," "Factfulness" and "It's Better Than It Looks" detail this progress and lift the spirits of everyone who reads them. Search for human progress and you can find hundreds of articles explaining problems we've solved and improvements we've made. There's no need to give in to cynicism when a little knowledge can cure that pessimism and inspire all of us to do what we can to contribute toward humanity's growth. — *Former Pessimist, Now Fact-Based Optimist*

Dear Former Pessimist: Thank you for sharing further proof that "realism" and "optimism" aren't antonyms. Your change of attitude is inspiring.

DEAR ANNIE

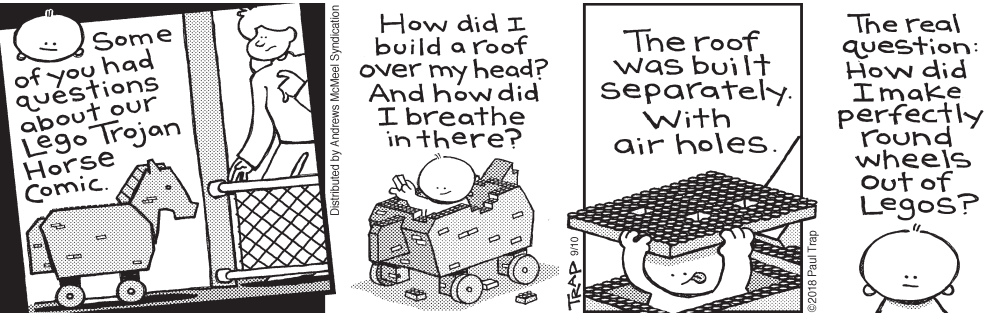


Annie Lane
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

FRANK AND ERNEST



THATABABY



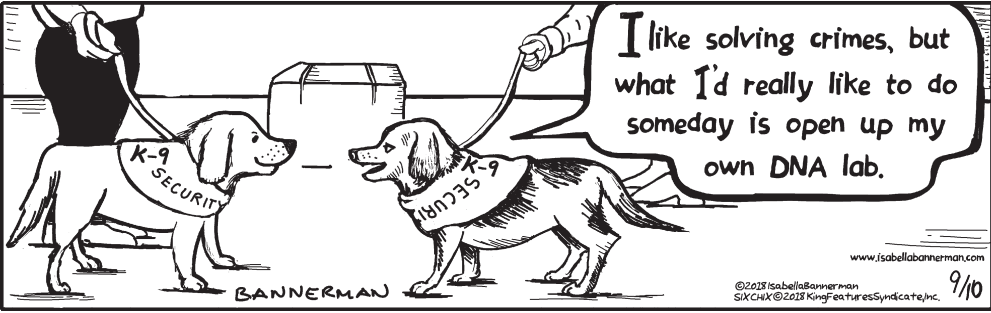
PHOEBE AND HER UNICORN



LOLA



SIX CHIX



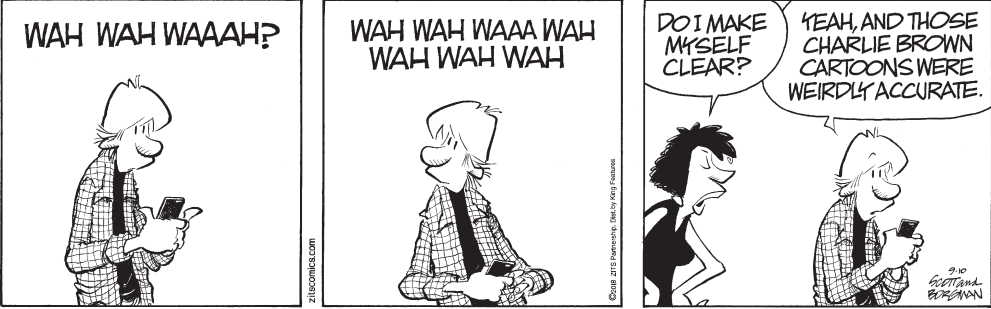
MUTTS



BABY BLUES



ZITS



TOMORROW'S HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When loved ones struggle to find the right way to tell their story, your talent kicks in. You can help because you see things in people that they do not see themselves.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your eyes not only complete the smile, they can smile all their own if necessary. Your eyes may reveal a little more than you intend, if only because there's so much for your mind to keep track of today.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If your goal happens to be a very popular one, then it's a perfect day to assess whether it's what you really want. Very possibly, it's in the ballpark, but give it more thought to get clear about what would be good to accomplish and why.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Maybe what's on offer isn't exactly what you deserve, but forget about that for now. What you need to determine is which available choice is most likely to lead to greater happiness in the future.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). From the Latin word "disciplina," which means "teaching," we get the word "discipline." True discipline, the deep and lasting kind, will be born from education, not punishment.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Play when you get the chance, make the joke, try the weird experiment, approach the stranger with a smile and an outstretched hand. These things require confidence and a good mood. You'll have both.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You'll soon be hashing out the details of a deal. If you do your homework, you'll be impressively articulate and persuasive. Take the time to get clear

in your own mind about what you want and what you're willing to trade for it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It will be important to meet your own expectations. Where you set them, therefore, is key. You want them high enough to help yourself grow, and low enough to let yourself win and stay encouraged.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The ripples that open outward may be gentle yet they affect the distant shore. The same will be true of words. Seemingly inconsequential comments will linger in memory, and ultimately be acted upon.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You'll be wondering why you agreed to take on a certain responsibility. What it involves is far more than you expected. But what it gives also will be far more.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're looking and feeling somehow more alive. Opportunities will be plentiful, but of course you can't say yes to everything. Focus this surplus of energy.

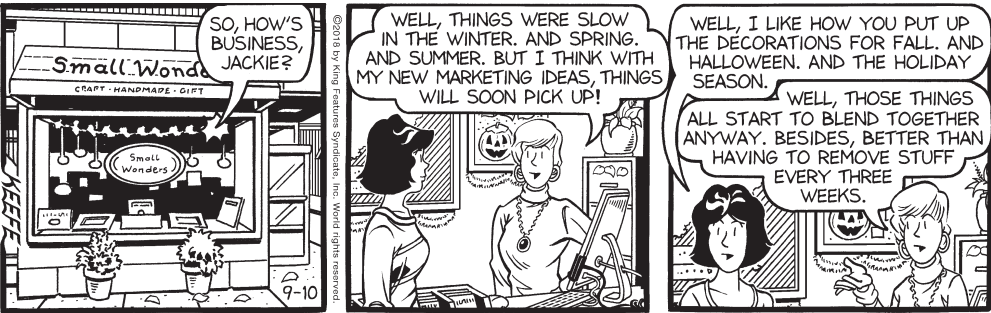
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Someone close (possibly a Capricorn) wants you to do things differently. You will respect their need to offer an opinion whilst respecting your own need to make choices independently.

TOMORROW'S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 11). Gifts and favors fill the next 10 weeks. You'll be the resident bon vivant through the holiday season, with everyone deferring to your taste and asking you for tips about where to go, what to do, etc. After working very hard in early 2019, you'll hit a rather effortless run of good luck. June brings a promotion. Taurus and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 39, 2, 11 and 33.

BLONDIE



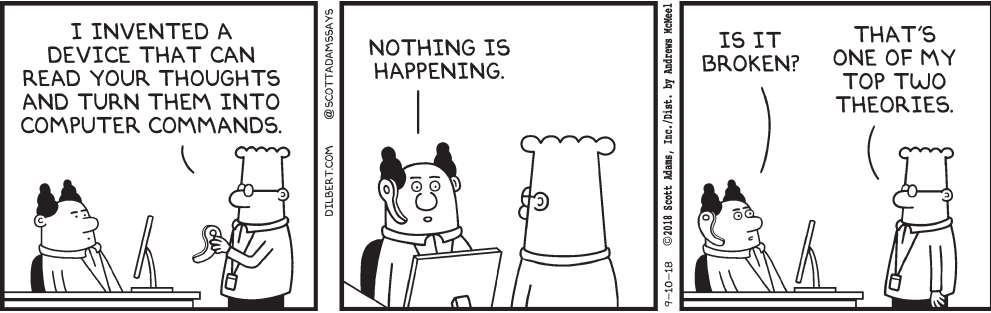
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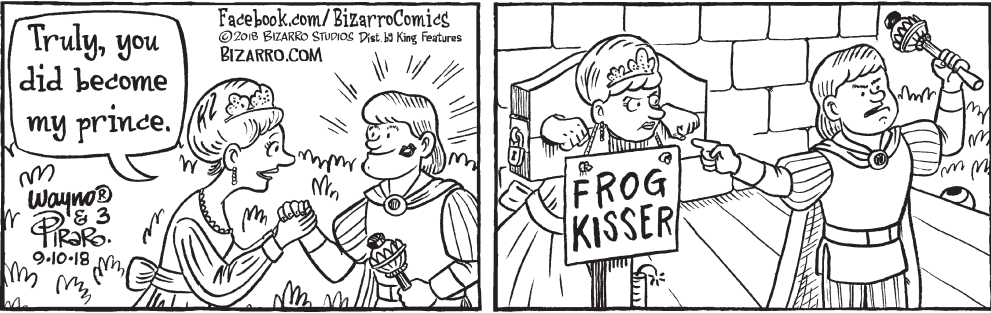
B.C.



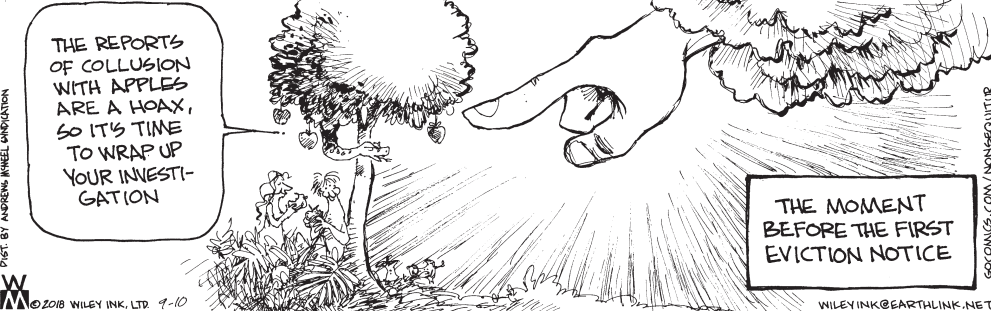
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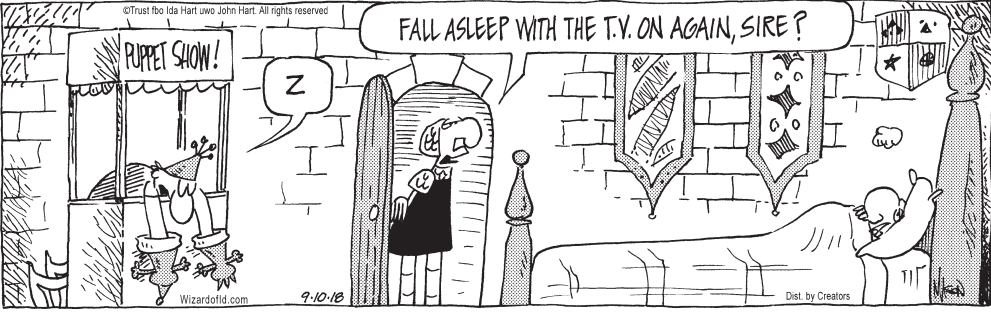
BIZARRO



NON SEQUITUR



WIZARD OF ID



ROSE IS ROSE

