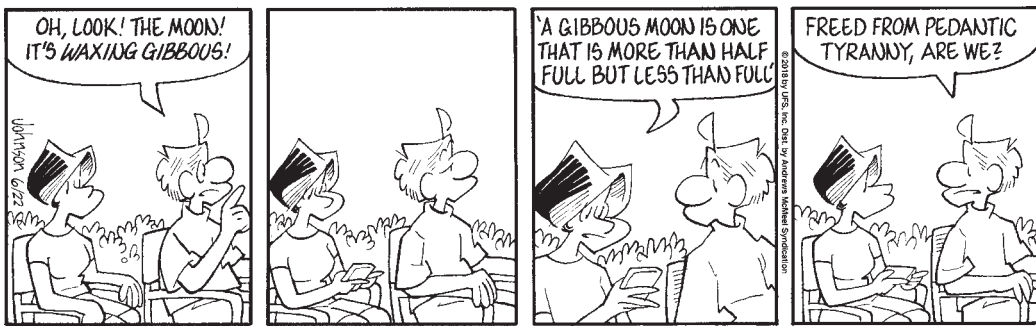


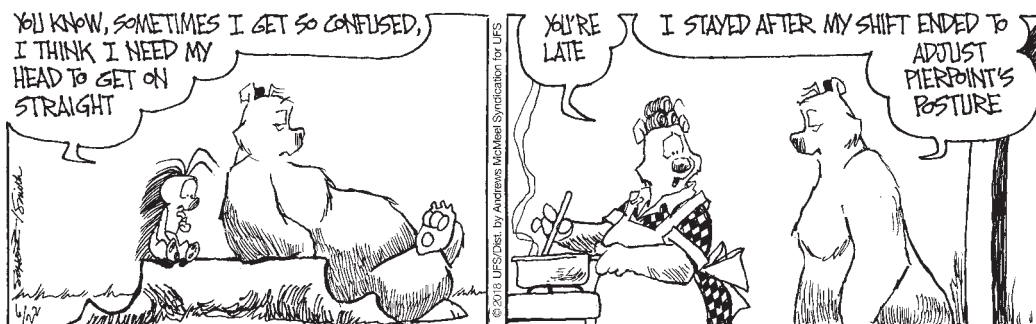
**ARLO AND JANIS®** by Jimmy Johnson



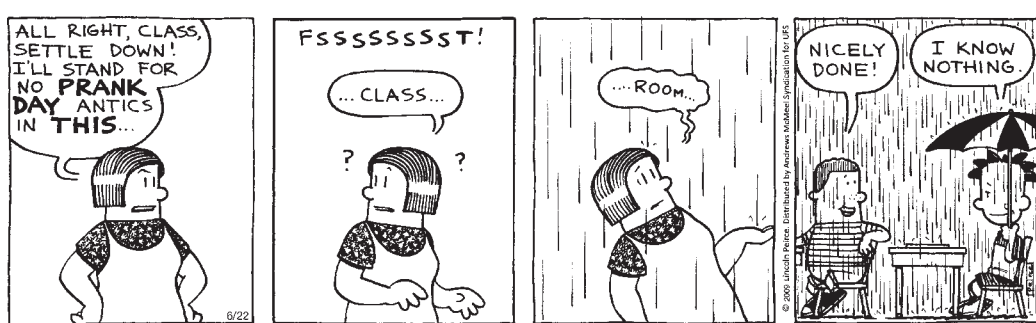
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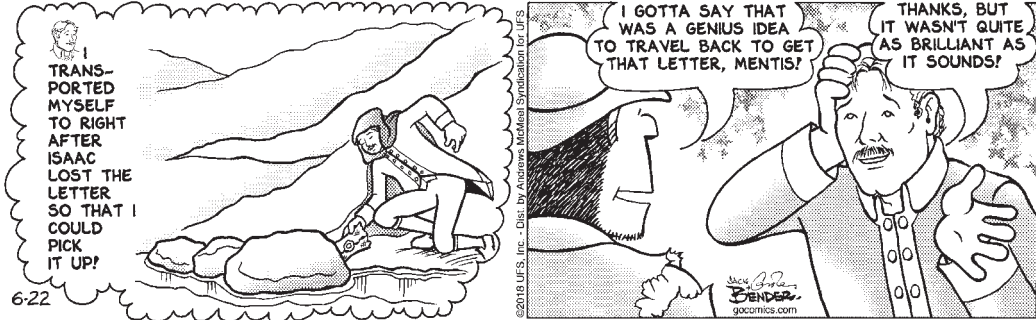
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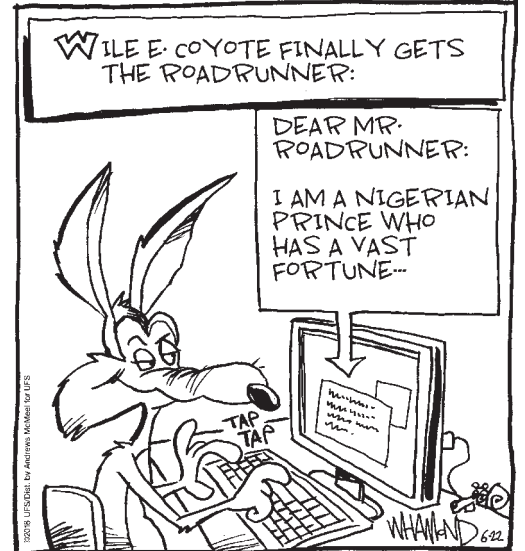
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**AT THE MOVIES**

## 'Jurassic World 2' leans on nostalgia

(AP) — Here's the good news: "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" is more fun than "Jurassic World." It's not exactly a high bar, but still a welcome surprise. In the hands of a new director, J.A. Bayona, with Chris Pratt's high-wattage charisma on full blast and a fair amount of self-aware humor intact, there are certainly worse ways to spend a couple hours in the air-conditioned multiplex this summer.

Mind you, this movie is pretty ridiculous and the script (from Colin Trevorrow and Derek Connolly) is not very clever — I found myself rolling my eyes almost as frequently as I found myself smiling with genuine delight. "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" will not stand up to rigorous scrutiny, and yet, it's kind of an enjoyable, preposterous and thrilling ride that ticks through nostalgia beats like a shopping list.

It's a little sad how in this era of industrial franchise filmmaking a three year gap between films actually feels like quite a bit of time — or maybe it's just a testament to how grueling the past few years have been — but, hey, it did at least seem like the right time to check in with those dinosaurs again, although I worry that our emotional investment in Owen's connection with a velociraptor has been vastly overestimated.

After a very solid, and scary, beginning, with pouring rain and genuine suspense as some scientists venture back into the defunct Jurassic World to retrieve a dinosaur bone, a helpful newscaster orients the audience with a whole lot of exposition: It's been three years since Jurassic World closed; \$800 million in damages have been paid out; and, most importantly, a dormant volcano has come back to life on the island and is about to cause an "extinction level event" that will wipe out all the remaining dinosaurs.

The question of whether or not to let the dinos go extinct again has become a national debate and Bryce Dallas Howard's Claire is leading the charge to try to save the animals. As a not-so-subtle nod to that other national debate about Claire's choice of footwear in "Jurassic World," our first shot of her is her feet in sky high heels (the hiking boots she wears later for all

the action get their own loving close-up too).

Essentially, and this is where the contrivances start, a wealthy, dying man, Benjamin Lockwood (James Cromwell), who is somehow connected to John Hammond, and his associate Eli Mills (Rafe Spall) pitch Claire on an expedition to stage their own Noah's Ark with the dinos and transport as many species as possible to a sanctuary island. They need her to tap into the park's security system, and also to convince Owen (Pratt) to come along and get close to the raptor Blue, his old pal who has become so anthropomorphized it's actually surprising she doesn't just start talking.

There are some more new characters added too: A skittish computer guy, Franklin (Justice Smith), and a doctor

Zia (Daniella Pineda), who come along on the journey for some comedic relief; a mercenary military guy (Ted Levine); and a cute dino-obsessed girl, Masie Lockwood (Isabella Sermon).

Perhaps the most unexpected thing about "Fallen Kingdom" is that the "escape from the volcano" plot is just the first set-piece. It's all a precursor to the dinos coming to the mainland.

If you're thinking, "I've seen this movie before," just wait, it get so much more derivative than you would ever imagine possible. Bayona, who also directed "The Impossible" and "A Monster Calls," is good enough to pull it off. It's the main reason why "Fallen Kingdom" is entertaining despite itself, but it is a shameless strategy that can only work so many times. Also, can we retire the "objects in the mirror are closer than they appear" joke at this point?

Life finds a way, and so do franchises that make ungodly amounts of money. "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" gets away with its unoriginality for the most part, but this franchise's desperation is starting to show. It's time to evolve or go extinct.

"Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom," a Universal Pictures release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for "for intense sequences of science-fiction violence and peril." Running time: 128 minutes.



## CROSSWORDS

ACROSS

- None the —
- Outmoded
- Macho
- Ongoing drama
- Laws
- Slangy foot
- Artist's plaster
- Untold centuries
- Verne skipper
- Blondie's shrieks
- Give — — break
- BMW rival
- Shelter
- Attic window
- Expert
- Wed in haste
- Broken finger support
- Dog-scolding word
- Ocean predator
- Double curve
- Leaf source
- "Only Time" singer
- Comic-book heroes (hyph.)
- Barbarians
- Suffused
- Begin to droop
- Not in a whisper
- UFO crew
- Assuaged
- Oui and si

DOWN

- Broad
- Spring bloom
- Urges on Fido
- Singer — John
- Home tel.
- Lowly laborer
- Popped up
- Plop down
- Stockholm carrier
- Famed cathedral town

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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