

I am not a particularly insightful person, and I have no pretensions of any ability to come up with those “eureka” moments. It has happened to me just one time, and I thought about it recently for the first time in years. This is an absolutely true story.

It came to mind again a few days ago when I heard that Bob Newhart had died. Back when television comedies were actually rather funny, I liked the Bob Newhart shows—both of them. The first one, for those who are old enough to remember, featured the comedian as a rather tightly controlled psychologist. Suzanne Pleshette was his wife. The comedy was low key and very relatable to Newhart’s reputation as the “button-down” comedian.

Some years later—I don’t remember how long it was after the end of this series that Newhart had a second comedy. I don’t even remember its official name, but it was another Bob Newhart Show. I am not even sure how many television seasons it was on the air. In this sitcom Newhart played a rather hapless and often beset innkeeper in a small town in Vermont—a character that was far removed from his role as a psychologist in Chicago, but which featured the same Newhart personality.

When we heard that the series would end, there was speculation about how they would finalize the story of the innkeeper and his travails in Vermont. As our family began watching the show, I told them that I had no idea how they would end it, but I knew exactly how they *should* tell the final story. Nobody believed that I could possibly be correct, but it happened exactly as I had envisioned. In the final scene of the last show, Bob Newhart wakes up—in Chicago with Suzanne Pleshette—and says something like “Honey, you wouldn’t believe the dream I just had.”

I haven’t seen a television show in years, but I have no reason to believe that I would ever again make any kind of prediction regarding its final program.