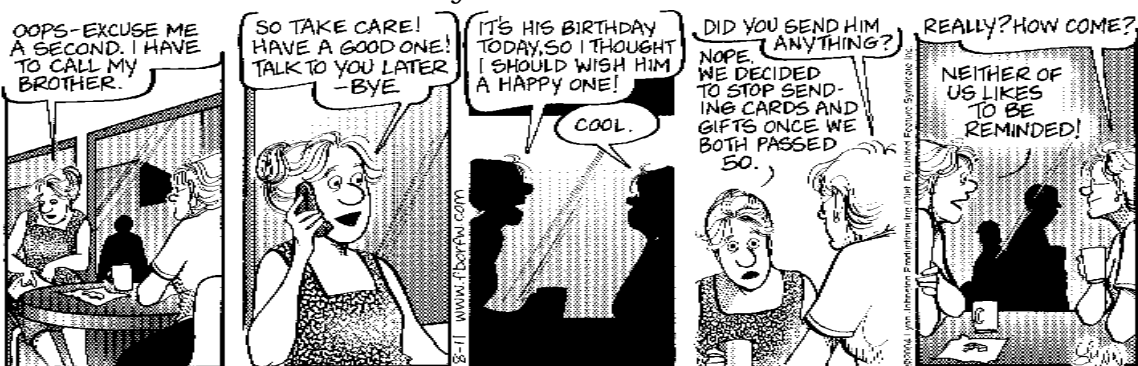
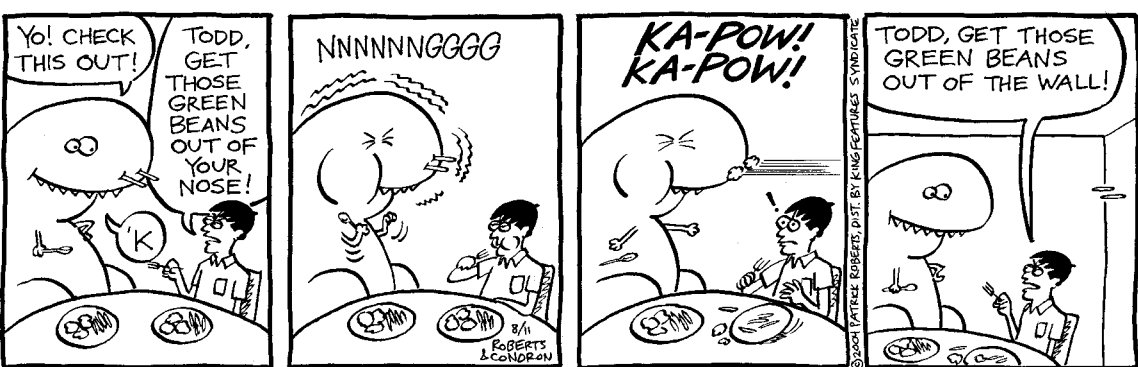


**For Better or Worse • Lynn Johnston**



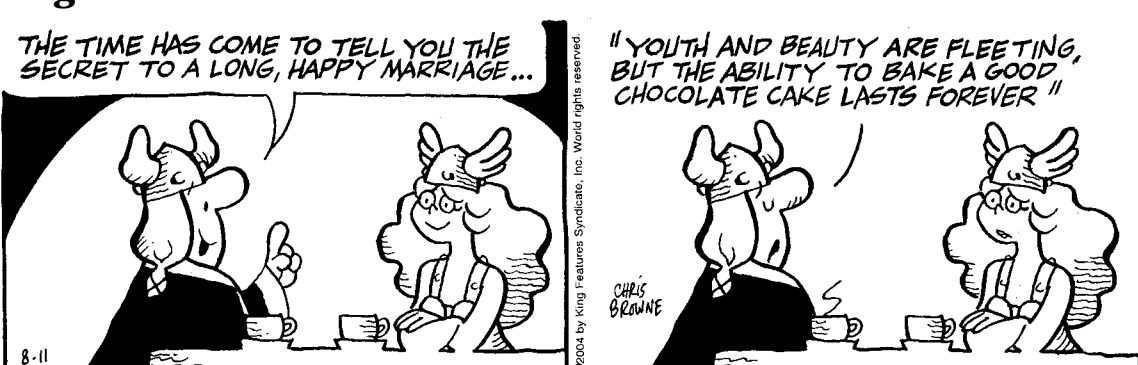
**Tod The Dinosaur • PR Condron**



**Garfield • Jim Davis**



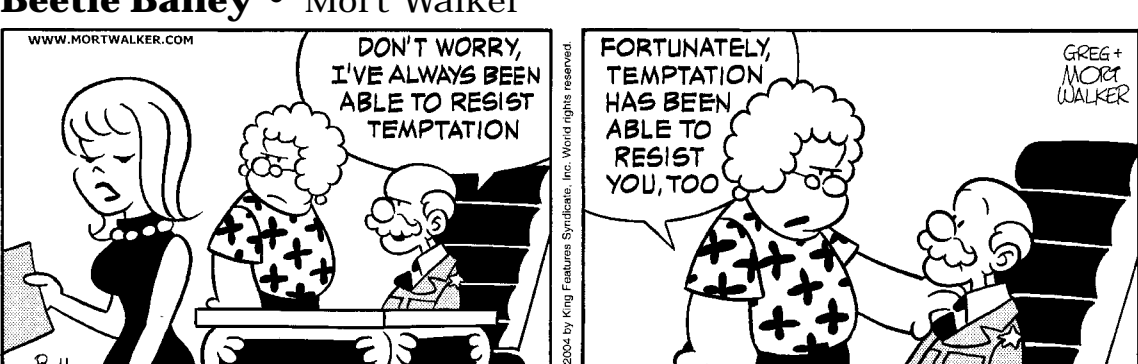
**Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne**



**Blondie • Chic Young**



**Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker**



**Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott**



**Sally Forth • Greg Howard**



**Cryptoquip**

PV IDJ WPWO'E AODY EFU PLMI Z CZBBSZTM  
 SDTCEPDO DV C GFDRRUX, NMBMCKIH AMNCKMR  
 TDJSW IDJ CGA "ZJIUX BMZQQH GJQQ, S TJMRR  
 ZU YFUXU?"  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TO GET AMPLE NUTRITION, I'D SAY A TYPICAL GHOST MUST EAT THREE SCARE MEALS A DAY.  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals D

FLZF'R Z PMGGSIT AQZIG.  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW THE LOCATION OF A SHOPPER, COULD YOU ASK "BUYER BE WHERE?"  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals L

**Crossword**

**ACROSS**  
 1 Frizzy coiffure  
 5 Rope fiber  
 9 With it  
 12 Gator's cousin  
 13 State with authority  
 14 Praiseful piece  
 15 Base-runner's goal  
 17 Mal de —  
 18 Exemplar of craziness  
 19 Night vision?  
 21 Rodeo rider's interjection  
 24 Official decree  
 25 "— Rhythm"  
 26 Ghostly  
 30 Muppet eagle  
 31 Damp  
 32 "Born in the —"  
 33 Gets set  
 35 Goblet part  
 36 Lee or Wayne

**DOWN**  
 1 Interlaken interjection  
 20 Scoundrel  
 21 Stream of smoke  
 22 Culture medium  
 23 Omelet side dish  
 24 Boone portrayed Parker  
 26 Ilk  
 27 Sales pitch?  
 28 On the briny  
 29 Easter entree  
 31 Sheriff  
 34 Legume holder  
 35 Soap opera, e.g.  
 37 Gun the engine  
 38 Test the waters  
 39 Unsigned, in "Bartlett's"  
 40 Eye irritant  
 41 Congers  
 44 Buy now, pay later  
 45 Soon to arrive  
 46 Historic period  
 47 Erstwhile acorn

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

EYRE	FAR	BEAM
ROADSIDE	AXLE	
GUYWIRES	LION	
ICE	EDITED	
SPUNK	PLAN	
EARS	FALLGUY	
END	ALLEY	RUN
GUYNOIR	UGLY	
A	GUN	KNEES
LICHEN	AIR	
OLEO	CABLEGUY	
TYRO	EMULSIVE	
SATS	SIT	TEAS

Yesterday's answer 8-10

**Bridge**

West dealer.  
 Neither side vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
 ♠ 8 6 4  
 ♥ K 5 4  
 ♦ K 9 3  
 ♣ J 4 3 2

**WEST**  
 ♠ K 7 2  
 ♥ Q 7  
 ♦ 8 6 5 2  
 ♣ Q 10 8 6

**EAST**  
 ♠ A Q 10 9 5  
 ♥ 10 9 3  
 ♦ 7 4  
 ♣ A 9 7

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ J 3  
 ♥ A J 8 6 2  
 ♦ A Q J 10  
 ♣ K 5

The bidding:  
 West Pass North Pass East Pass South 1♥  
 Pass 2♥ 2♠ 4♥  
 Opening lead — two of spades.

**A Necessary Assumption**

To be a successful declarer, one must make assumptions during the play. Often these assumptions are based more on hope than expectancy, since there is not much point in playing a hand on the basis that the cards are so divided that you cannot make the contract.

Here is an example of this principle at work. Let's say you're in four hearts and West leads a spade. East wins with the ace and returns the nine, your jack losing to the king. Back comes a spade, which you ruff, and the question is how to play the hand.

Ordinarily, you would lead a heart to the king and finesse the jack on the way back, but this would be the wrong play to make here. It is right to lead a heart to the king, but it is wrong to finesse the jack. Instead, you should go up with the ace.

As the cards lie, this anti-percentage play succeeds beautifully when the ace catches the queen and East later shows up with the ace of clubs. But how, you might well ask, can you possibly be expected to know that playing for the queen to drop is better than taking the finesse?

The answer is that you have no chance for the contract unless East has the ace of clubs, and, once you make this assumption, you cannot also play East for the queen of hearts.

It is conceivable that East would have passed in third seat holding five spades headed by the A-Q and the ace of clubs, but it is inconceivable that East would have passed had he also held the queen of hearts. You therefore have no choice but to assume that West has the queen, and on that basis to deliberately reject the finesse.

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**Crossword**

**ACROSS**  
 1 Sailor  
 4 Tallow source  
 8 Hamlet  
 12 Inseparable  
 13 Desire  
 14 Hydroxal rival  
 15 Packed away  
 16 Show-stopper, maybe  
 18 Actress Jennifer  
 20 Resort  
 21 Harry's first lady  
 24 Flight component  
 28 Auditor's dream  
 32 Sgt. Snorkel's dog  
 33 — Khan  
 34 Sequence  
 36 Antique  
 37 Characterization  
 39 Bloomberg's bailiwick  
 41 "Queer Eye" network

**DOWN**  
 1 Objective  
 2 Informed of  
 3 Gridlock noise  
 4 Like some refrigerators  
 5 Swiss canton  
 6 Early bird?  
 7 Nadia's scores  
 8 Love apple  
 9 Sphere  
 10 Teensy  
 11 Neither mate  
 17 Delivery co.  
 19 "Cabaret" lyricist  
 22 Belgrade native  
 23 Thompson or Hawkins  
 25 On "— have to do"  
 27 Took the A train  
 28 Pointed remark  
 29 Lab assistant?  
 30 Festive  
 31 Bar stack  
 35 Yellow-stone employees  
 38 Votes off the island  
 40 Shell-game need  
 42 Reaction to fireworks  
 45 Fit snugly inside  
 47 Heart-strings sound  
 48 One of HOMES  
 49 Arrears  
 50 Support system?  
 51 Sundial number  
 52 Pantheon member  
 53 SFO info  
 54 Potential syrup

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

A	F	R	O	H	E	M	P	H	I	D
C	R	O	C	A	V	E	R	O	D	E
H	O	M	E	P	L	A	T	E	M	E
L	O	N	D	R	E	A	M			
W	A	H	O		F	I	A	T		
T	I	G	O	T	S	P	E	C	T	R
S	A	M	M	O	I	S	T	U	S	A
P	R	E	P	A	R	E	S	S	T	E
F	O	R	T	R	E	H	A	B		
W	A	R	D	S	S	E	E	R		
A	N	T	H	O	M	E	V	I	D	E
D	O	E	A	W	O	L	A	U	R	A
E	N	S	L	E	G	S	L	E	A	K

Yesterday's answer 8-11

**Bridge**

West dealer.  
 Both sides vulnerable.

**NORTH**  
 ♠ 7 3  
 ♥ K 6 5  
 ♦ A K 9 7 3  
 ♣ A J 8

**WEST**  
 ♠ A K Q 5 4  
 ♥ 10 9 8  
 ♦ J 10 8 5 2  
 ♣ —

**EAST**  
 ♠ J 10 9 8 6  
 ♥ 4 3 2  
 ♦ 4  
 ♣ 10 5 4 3

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ 2  
 ♥ A Q J 7  
 ♦ Q 6  
 ♣ K Q 9 7 6 2

The bidding:  
 West 1♠ North Dble East 2♠ South 3♠  
 Pass 4♦ Pass 6♣  
 Opening lead — king of spades.

**Imaginative Defense**

This hand occurred in a multiple team-of-four match. At most tables, West opened with a spade despite holding only 10 high-card points. Most of the North players doubled one spade rather than overcalling with two diamonds, and the bidding then took off in different directions at the various tables.

In one case, the auction went as shown, South taking a blind stab at six clubs, which proved to be laydown. At other tables the contract was four or six hearts, or five or six clubs, and in each case — except one — declarer made the obvious 12 tricks.

Our story concerns itself with what happened at this one table, where South became declarer at six hearts rather than six clubs. West was a highly imaginative player who decided that, on the bidding, the chances of stopping the slam with normal defenses were virtually non-existent. And so, instead of leading the king of spades, he led the four!

No truer arrow was ever shot! Declarer followed low from dummy, on which East played the six, and West died a thousand deaths before South produced the deuce.

It did not take long for East to figure out why West had underled the A-K-Q of spades. He dutifully returned a club, and West's ruff sank the slam.

Had West made the more normal lead of a high spade, South would have made the slam easily. But with West's imagination working overtime, South had to pay off to a sensational, but well-reasoned, opening lead.

Tomorrow: The better way.  
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**Family Circus • Bill Keane**

