

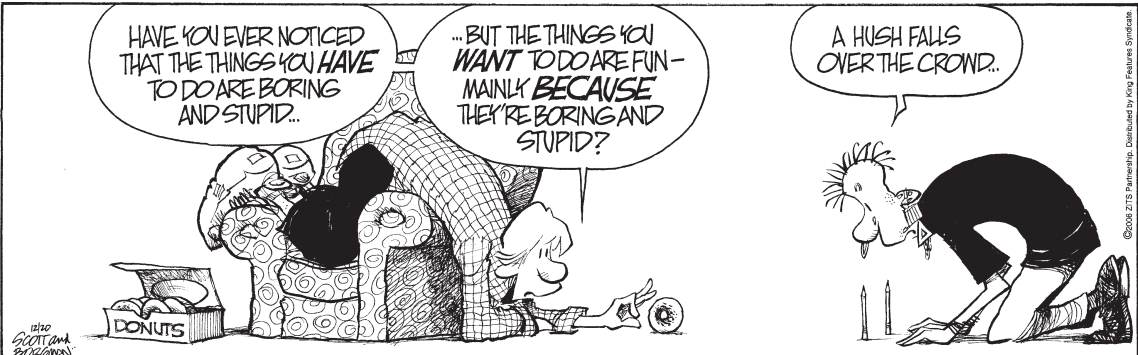
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



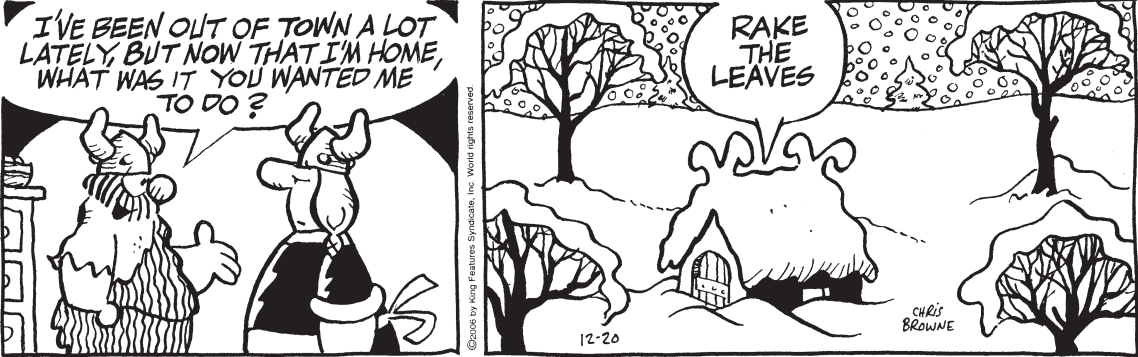
Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



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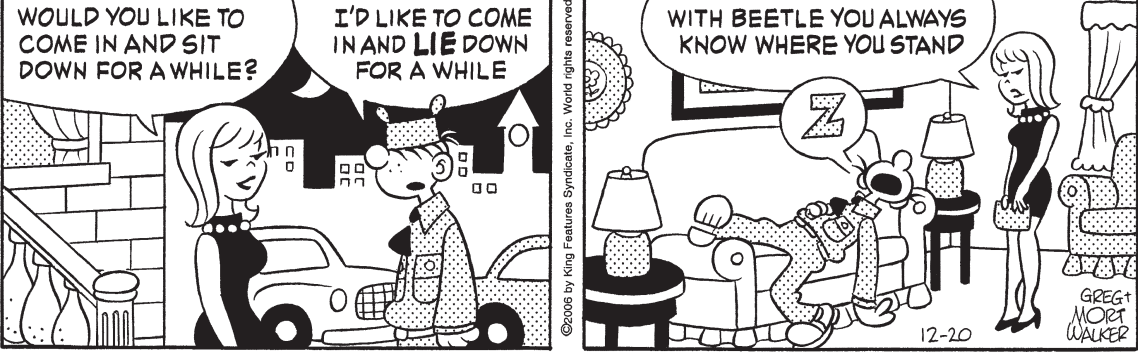
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Cryptoquip

XE EYM CZMQX, BC EYM YE PNF'MS VMWBYQV W
WKIFMQW CZE EC FQMME ISMBWYQ AYQL NE IJSSCS,
CIM XICEYMQ UKEY "YCU BJWB HYVJB Hwas PNF
XQKX BCKIF ECIKFYE?" W IJSL LWM CJMSLLSM.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN ACTOR Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AT THE OPERA, DO
CHANEY IS TRIMMING HIS GRASS, DO YOU THE SINGERS OPT TO GREET ONE ANOTHER
SUPPOSE HE SHOULD USE A LON MOWER? WITH "HOW ARIA DOING TONIGHT?"
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: E equals T Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals R

Crossword

ACROSS

1 School subject
5 PC alter-native
8 Gentle soul
12 Lotion additive
13 Response (Abbr.)
14 Chills and fever
15 Taj Mahal city
16 Con
18 This may have seven letters
20 Sty comments
21 Ander-son's "High —"
22 Support system?
23 Buck-wheat porridge
26 Dud
30 Squid squirt
31 Cartesian conclusion
32 Tier
33 Sewers, maybe
36 Larynx output
38 Sort

DOWN

1 Sir's counter-part
2 Plankton compo-nent
3 Actress
4 Wellness
5 Army rank
6 Have — to grind
7 William Peter-sen's series
8 Pertain-ing to the lips
9 Not "fer"
10 Gloom
11 Hotel furniture
12 Actress Loughlin
13 Feathery acces-sory
14 Emeril's interjec-tion
15 DIY buy
16 Literary collection

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 12-19

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12				13			14				
15				16			17				
18				19			20				
			21			22					
23	24	25			26			27	28	29	
30				31				32			
33			34	35			36	37			
			38				39				
40	41	42				43			44	45	46
47						48			49		
50						51			52		
53						54			55		

Bridge

South dealer.
Neither side vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ Q 4
♥ A Q 6
♦ K J 10 8
♣ 9 7 4 2

WEST

♠ A 5
♥ 8 4 2
♦ 7 6 3
♣ A K Q 10 6

EAST

♠ J 10 2
♥ 10 9 7 5 3
♦ 9 4 2
♣ 8 3

SOUTH

♠ K 9 8 7 6 3
♥ K J
♦ A Q 5
♣ J 5

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	2 ♣	2 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
4 ♣			

Opening lead — king of clubs.

The Obligatory Finesse

The obligatory finesse is a play used by declarer to win a trick that he would otherwise surely lose. Because the play is not a favorite to succeed, it is used by declarer more out of desperation than by choice.

As an example, examine the North-South spade holding in this hand. The normal way for declarer to start playing this combination is to lead a low spade toward the queen in dummy. If the queen holds the trick (marking West with the ace), declarer next returns a spade from dummy and plays low after East produces the ten or jack, hoping West started with the doubleton ace.

Observe that it would be wrong for South to cover the jack or ten with the king because the king would lose to the ace and South would later have to lose another spade trick. This maneuver is the obligatory finesse, and when the cards are favorably placed for declarer, it gains him a trick.

Occasionally, the defense can invoke a countermeasure to the obligatory finesse, as in the present deal. South is declarer at four spades, and West cashes the K-A of clubs, then continues with the queen.

If South is allowed to go about his business unimpeded, he will, as we have seen, lose only one trump trick and so make the contract.

But if the defense functions perfectly, South can be defeated. When West leads the queen of clubs, East ruffs with the ten, even though it appears routine to discard on his partner's high club.

South is helpless against this defense. He is forced to overruff with the king — otherwise, he is down immediately — and lead a trump toward the queen.

This does him no good because West rises with the ace and returns the ten of clubs. Dummy has to follow suit, whereupon East once again trumps his partner's high club — this time with the jack — to secure a one-trick set.

East dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ 6 3
♥ 10 7 2
♦ A J 7 4 3
♣ A Q 7

WEST

♠ A 10 8 7 4
♥ Q 6 3
♦ 10
♣ 9 8 6 3

EAST

♠ J 9 2
♥ K 9 8 5 4
♦ Q 8 2
♣ 10 5

SOUTH

♠ K Q 5
♥ A J
♦ K 9 6 5
♣ K J 4 2

The bidding:

East	South	West	North
Pass	1 NT	Pass	3 NT

Opening lead — seven of spades.

Better Safe Than Sorry

There are times when the normal way for declarer to play a suit should be altered in order to increase the chances of making the contract. South neglected to do that in today's deal, and it cost him a vulnerable game.

He won East's jack of spades with the king at trick one and could count eight certain winners — four clubs, a heart, two diamonds and the spade trick already taken. The diamond suit clearly offered the best chance for a ninth trick, so declarer cashed the king of diamonds at trick two and continued with a low diamond at trick three.

When West showed out, South played the ace and then conceded a trick to East's queen. Declarer was hoping the defenders could collect only three spade tricks at this juncture, but after East returned a spade, West cashed four spades to set the contract.

South's failure to make three notrump was directly attributable to the way he handled the diamonds. Considering the threat posed by the spades, he should have played the diamond suit so as to minimize the possibility of East gaining the lead at any point.

With that goal in mind, declarer should start by leading a low diamond to dummy's ace. In the actual deal, after West produces the ten, the contract becomes an absolute certainty. A low diamond is next led to the nine. If the nine wins, as it does in the actual case, declarer scores 11 tricks; if the nine loses to the queen, at least 10 tricks are assured.

This careful approach to the play guarantees the contract whenever the diamonds are divided 2-2, as well as when they are 3-1 and East does not have both the queen and ten. If East does turn up with the Q-10-x, then, and only then, will declarer have to resort to conceding a diamond to him in the hope that the missing spades are evenly divided.

Family Circus • Bill Keane

