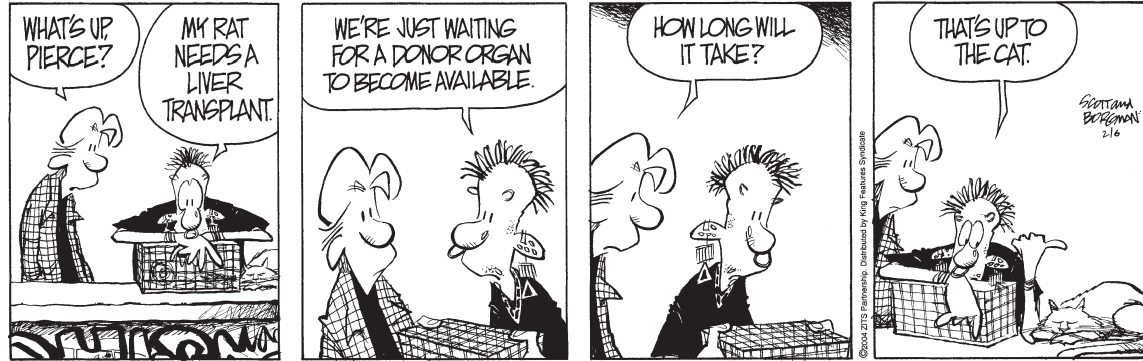


Sally Forth • Greg Howard



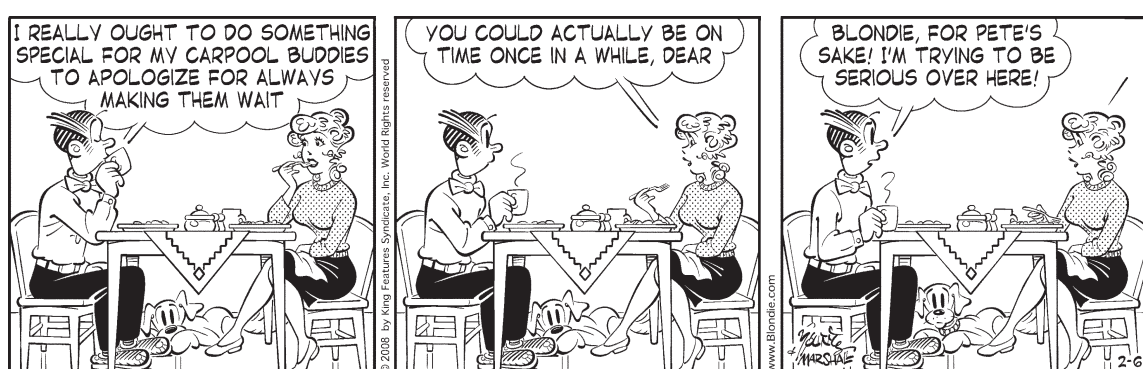
Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



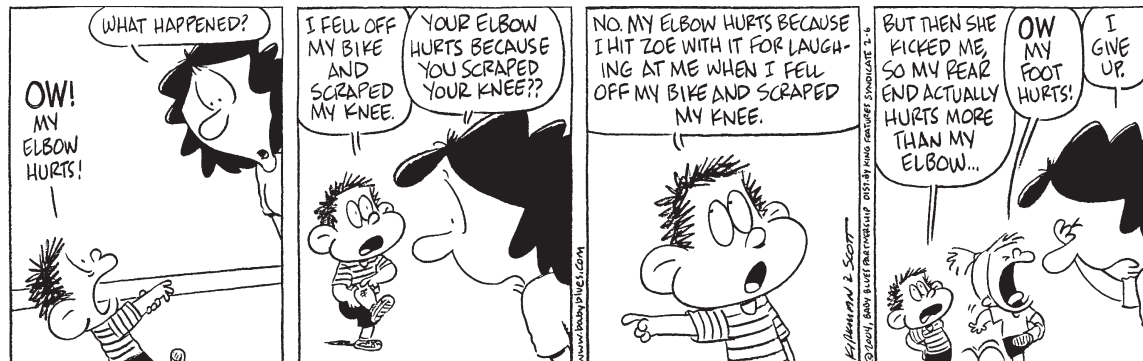
Blondie • Chic Young



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Tod the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Cryptoquip

HJ L UDMRSHBI QLBZJLURZXTX T JCHPDI, JCFQP N

ATUMQTK L UXHQHBLD, KOCIWKS NKWDI JZC SNQK KCED

H'P KLF ST'K PLQLIHBI MTB BNED MD SCHKTPDIDP

RST JLAXHU MJ KMUHTRF. WZD SCFIW IDOCIWDI?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SUPERMAN MANAGED TO FREE HIMSELF FROM HIS OUTER GARMENT. HE CALLED IT "THE S-CAPE ESCAPE."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: K equals S

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A CLOTHING MANUFACTURER BECOMES A CRIMINAL, I'D SAY HE'S DAMAGING THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals W

Crossword

ACROSS

1 Uppity sort

5 Actor McBride

8 "Gosh darn!"

12 Emanation

13 Shack

14 Wan

15 Dressy garb

17 Newman or McCartney

18 The whole enchilada

19 Inseparable

20 Frothy matter

21 Make marginalia

22 Susan of "L.A. Law"

23 Station

26 Please

30 Ellipse

31 Comic Leno

32 Screenwriter James

33 Corridor

35 Turns the soil

36 Sweet potato

37 Tibetan beast

38 Covers in smoky powder

41 Mai (cocktail)

42 Carte lead-in

45 Cab

46 Robin Hood's posse

48 Throat clearer

49 Cushion

50 Fail to include

51 Mysterious character

52 120 min. = 2 —

53 1-Across' protrusion?

DOWN

1 Long story

2 — and void

3 Exam format

4 Malicious

5 Intone

6 Ginormous

7 —

8 "South Pacific" song

9 Birthright

10 Crony

11 "South Park" kid

16 Cheer

20 Vast expanse

21 Popcorn brand

22 Desiccate

23 Homer's "Phoey!"

24 Longoria or Mendes

25 Crony

26 Festive

27 "But — on forever": Tennyson

28 A small number

29 "Of course"

31 Predicament

34 Existed

35 Twosome

37 Football measures

38 Luminary

39 Diamond Head site

40 The yoke's on them

41 Rend

42 Bullets

43 Garlands from

39-Down

44 Initial stake

46 Speedometer stat

47 Thither

Solution time: 21 mins.



Yesterday's answer 2-5

Bridge

South dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ Q 8 7 2
♥ K J 9 3
♦ 10 7
♣ Q 8 5

WEST

♠ J 9 3
♥ A 8 6
♦ A J 6 3
♣ 9 6 2

EAST

♠ 10 5 4
♥ 10 7 5 2
♦ K 8 5 4
♣ 10 3

SOUTH

♠ A K 6
♥ Q 4
♦ Q 9 2
♣ A K J 7 4

The bidding:
South 1 ♣
West Pass
North 1 ♥
East Pass

3 NT
Opening lead — three of diamonds.

You Have to Pay Close Attention

One of the worst sins a defender can commit is to trap his partner into making a mistake. Defense is difficult enough as it is, and giving partner a chance to go wrong when there is an easy way to prevent it is the bridge equivalent of a capital offense. For example, consider how West victimized his partner in today's deal. East won the opening diamond lead with the king and returned the four, his original fourth-best diamond, South producing the nine and West the jack. West then cashed the ace of diamonds and led a fourth diamond to East's eight, declarer discarding two low clubs from dummy and a heart from his hand. The defense having collected the first four tricks, East now had to decide what to lead next. Since a heart return into dummy's strong heart holding looked extremely unappealing, he shifted to a spade. Declarer happily won with the ace and cashed five clubs and three more spades to make the contract. Of course, had East returned a heart instead of a spade, South would have gone down one. The question, therefore, is who was primarily responsible for the faulty defense? In assessing the blame, it is clear that West was the culprit. He had learned from the play to the first three diamond tricks that East -- not the declarer -- had the missing eight of diamonds. He could deduce this not so much from South's producing the Q-9-2 of diamonds -- declarer might have been concealing the eight -- but from East's play of the king followed by the four and then the five. Had East started with only the K-5-4, he would have returned the five at trick two and played the four on the next round. West should therefore have cashed the ace of hearts at trick four before leading his last diamond, relieving East of the burden of having to guess what to do next.

South dealer.
East-West vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ 9 7 4 2
♥ A 5
♦ 6
♣ K J 10 8 5 2

WEST

♠ 5
♥ K J 7 4 3
♦ K 9 3 2
♣ 9 7 4

EAST

♠ K Q 6
♥ 10 9 6
♦ A Q J 10 8 5
♣ 3

SOUTH

♠ A J 10 8 3
♥ Q 8 2
♦ 7 4
♣ A Q 6

The bidding:
South 1 ♣
West 3 ♦
North 2 ♣
East 2 ♦
Pass

Opening lead — two of diamonds.

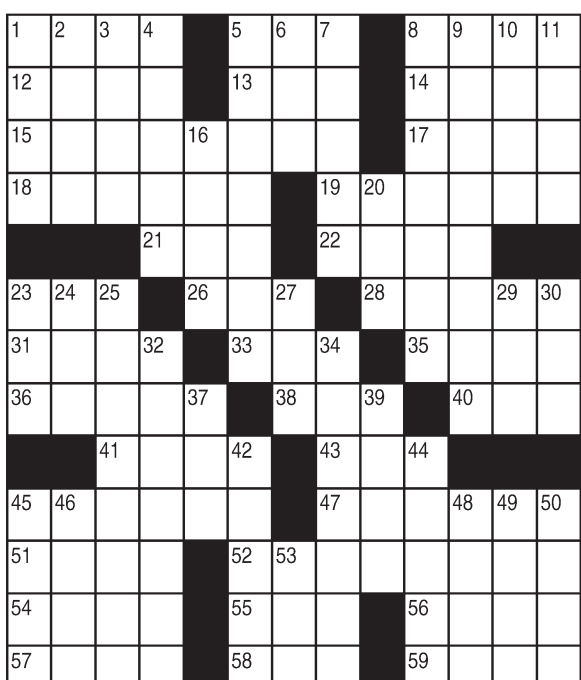
to Fear But Fear Itself

There are times when declarer, because of the imminent danger of a ruff in a side suit, decides against taking a normal trump finesse and instead tries to draw the outstanding trumps as quickly as possible. Whether this decision is correct naturally depends on the surrounding circumstances. Consider this case where East won the diamond lead with the ace and returned his singleton club. South was well-aware that the normal percentage play with his combined trump holding was to try two finesses, but he was afraid that if he won the club in dummy and led a spade to the jack, West might win and give East a club ruff. So South instead took the club in his hand and played the ace and another spade. East won with the queen and shifted to a heart, covered by the queen, king and ace. Declarer now had to go down one, losing two trump tricks, a diamond and a heart. South's method of play would have succeeded if the trumps had divided 2-2, or if an honor had fallen from either opponent's hand on the ace. The question, therefore, is whether in the given situation he should have preferred that approach to taking a first-round finesse, which would have made the contract. The answer is that declarer should have opted for the trump finesse at trick three, since his fears were utterly groundless.

To confirm this, let's assume that what South was afraid of actually occurs. He finesses in spades, West wins, and a club return is ruffed by East. This gives the defenders their third trick, but that is the end of the line. Declarer wins any return, draws the lone missing trump and scores the rest of the tricks, discarding his heart losers on dummy's clubs.

South's fear was an illusion, and it should not have panicked him into rejecting the normal percentage play.

Family Circus • Bill Keane



Yesterday's answer 2-6