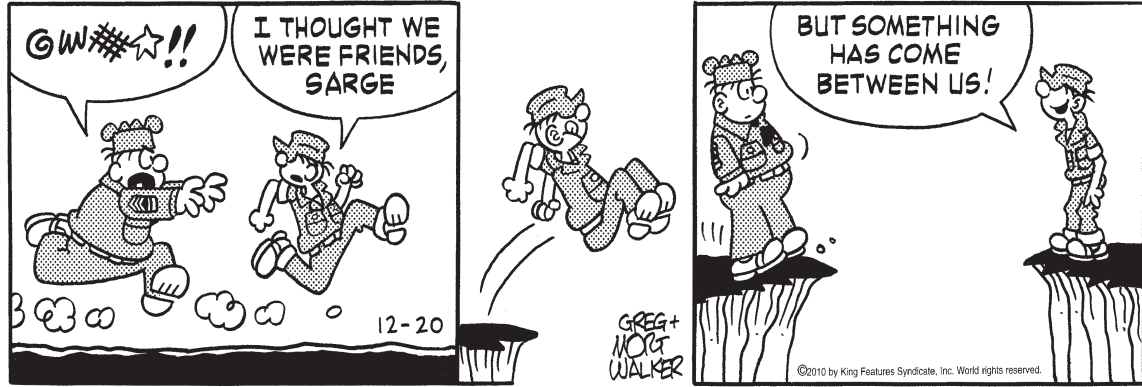


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



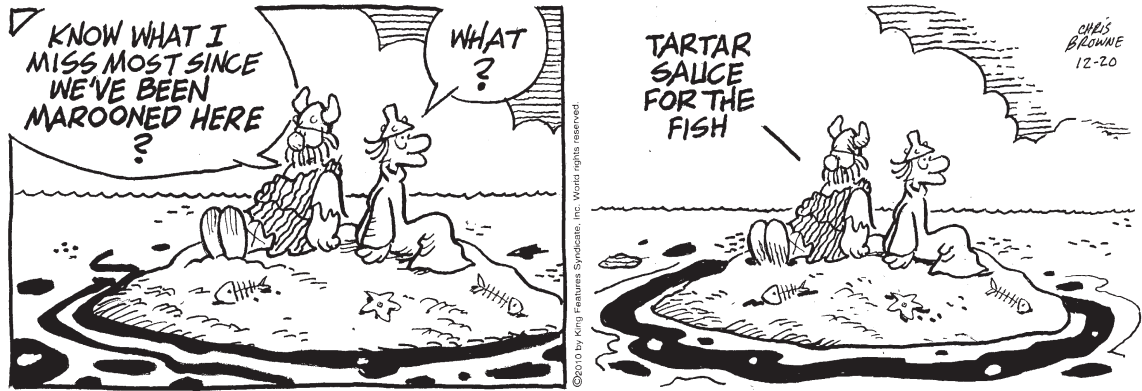
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



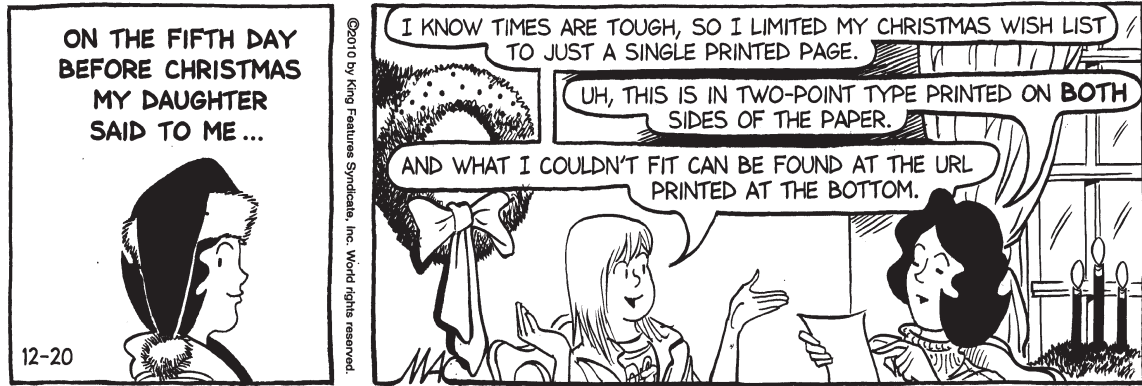
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



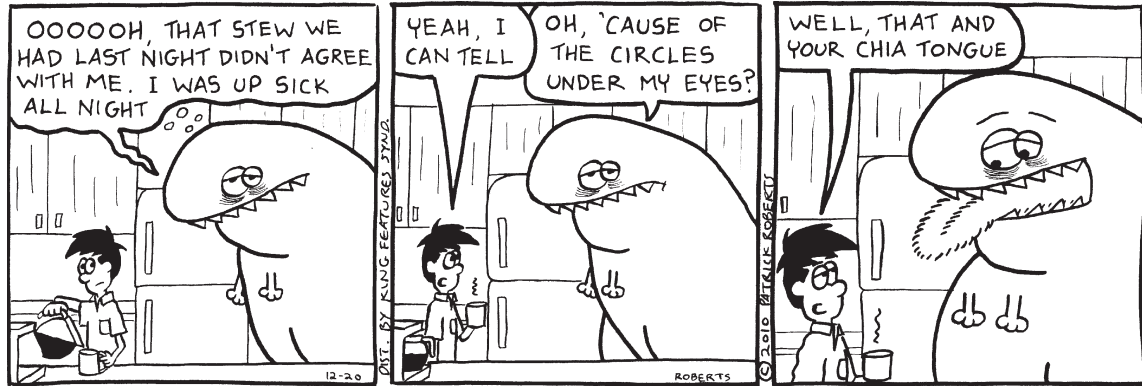
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



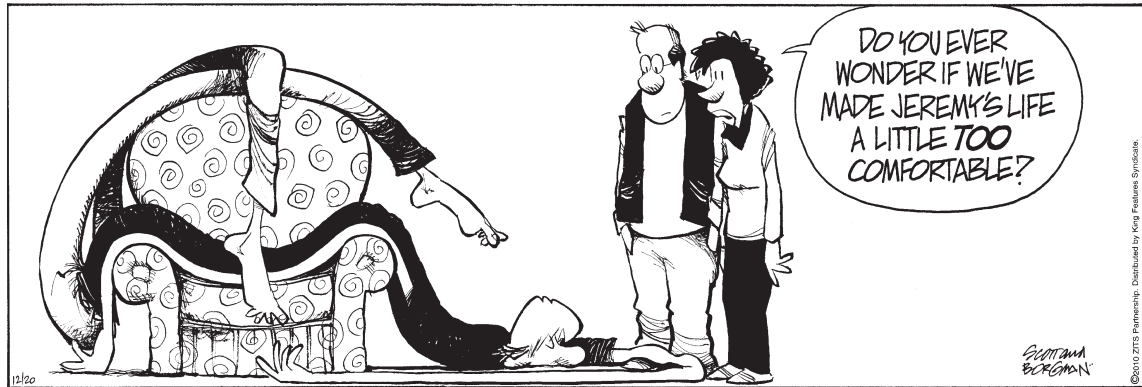
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers
• Ask Dr. Brothers
She can't stand his interruptions

Dear Dr. Brothers: My husband has developed an annoying habit I hope you can help me with. Every time I try to tell him something, he interrupts me. Sometimes, he tries to finish my sentences – which he usually gets wrong; while other times he'll just say "I know, I know." It's so frustrating I think twice before I even talk to him! How can I end this nightmare? – C.H.

Dear C.H.: You have my sympathies, for when communication becomes so overwhelming talking to your spouse is a "nightmare," you've started to feel helpless to change. But there are steps you can take. The first is to ask your husband to discuss this with you. It's possible he doesn't realize he is doing it – are you the only victim? Did he suddenly develop this sentence-finishing skill, or has it been there all along but you didn't mind it as much, or has it gotten worse? It's difficult to change the way people interact, but if you have a clear idea of the problem, things may be easier.

If he doesn't acknowledge the problem, suggest taping a conversation and playing it back. He may feel he can finish your thoughts for you – but point out what you were going to say and how it differs. Show how you don't interrupt him. And let him know you are willing to examine your own communication. (Are you excruciatingly slow articulating your thoughts, or do you ramble before getting to the point?) Sometimes it takes two to make a conversation a nightmare, so make sure you aren't the problem.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My boss was cool in granting me a six-month leave of absence from my job. I know that in this economy, he could have found someone to replace me in a minute, but he was considerate enough to give me time off. But now that I'm where I am – building houses in Africa – I feel like this is what I should be doing. I know it's a major life upheaval, but it feels right to me. How can I explain my feelings to not my boss and my family as well? – T.W.

Dear T.W.: If your boss has a good business head, he not only will have someone else capable of doing your job actually doing your job, but he will have provided for an employee to learn your job backwards and forwards so you can go on to another career without rocking the boat too much. I'm sure that when he granted you leave, he was well aware of the effect it would have on the company and has taken steps to cover the bases in the case you will be handing in your resignation. At the same time, you need to be looking as far into the future as he is, to make sure you are not doing anything you will regret.

Even if it is legally possible to relocate and work in another country, you need to look at the long term. Whether your family is parents or your wife or children, this is a decision that will affect them deeply. Perhaps the skills you are learning there are transferable to home, or the need is also present here. As long as you aren't burning bridges that should be kept going in this economy, it's always worthwhile to explore options and follow your passions. Just do your homework first.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

East dealer. Neither side vulnerable.
NORTH: ♠ J864, ♥ A10, ♦ A J84, ♣ QJ2
WEST: ♠ K9, ♥ 92, ♦ K7, ♣ A1098543
EAST: ♠ 3, ♥ KQJ86543, ♦ 653, ♣ 7
SOUTH: ♠ A Q10752, ♥ 7, ♦ Q1092, ♣ K6
The bidding: East 4♥, South 4♠, West 5♥, North 5♠. Pass, Pass, Dble, Opening lead — nine of hearts.

Famous Hand

China won its first Venice Cup in Sao Paulo in 2009, comfortably defeating an American team in the 96-deal final for the world title. The margin for the Chinese women was 72 IMPs, including a 16-IMP carry-over from their win over the U.S. team in an earlier round-robin match held during the qualifying stage.

The victorious Chinese squad was comprised of Sun Ming, Wang Wenfei, Wang Hongli, Liu Yi Qian, Yan Ru and Dong Yongling. The U.S. runners-up were Lynn Deas, Beth Palmer, Lynn Baker, Karen McCallum, Irina Levitina and Kerri Sanborn.

In the final, the Chinese displayed superior judgment in many key situations. Today's deal, which occurred just past the midway point of the final, produced a big gain for the new world champions.

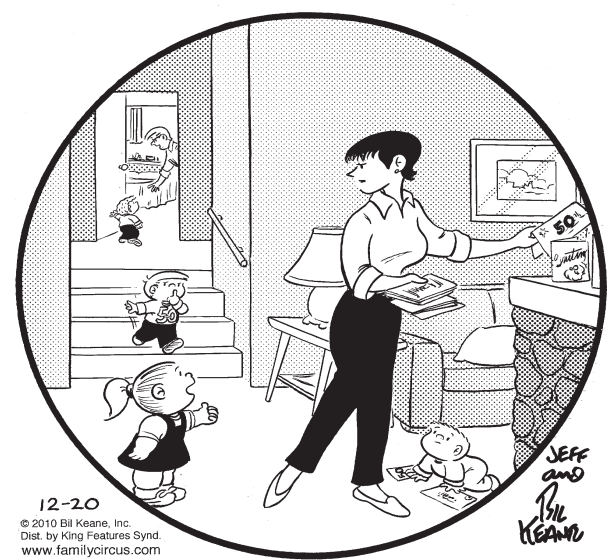
Both Easts opened four hearts, and both Souths ended up in five spades. In the auction shown, Palmer, West for the U.S., doubled and led the nine of hearts. Wang Wenfei won with dummy's ace, led a spade to her ace and conceded a trick to the king. When the diamond finesse succeeded shortly thereafter, declarer had her doubled contract for +650.

At the other table, where Levitina's five-spade contract was not doubled, Wang Hongli elected to lead the ace of clubs. Given that she had seven clubs and her partner had indicated a seven or eight-card suit for her four-heart bid, it was not unreasonable to hope that East had a singleton or void in clubs.

After leading the ace, she continued with a second club, ruffed by East. West still had to score the spade king, so South was down one, giving the Chinese a total pickup of 700 points, or 12 IMPs, on the deal.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Guess what, Mommy? Daddy's in the bedroom copying down your sizes!"

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

	2		1	7	5			
8				5				
			2	6	7		4	
6			7			3	8	5
		1			4			
7	5	3			4			9
2		6	5	7				
			9					1
		4	3		8		2	

Difficulty Level ★ 12/20

This is a logic-based number placement puzzle. The goal is to enter a number, 1-9, in each cell in which each row, column and 3x3 region must contain only one instance of each numeral. The solution to the last Sudoku puzzle is at right.

2	1	8	7	5	9	3	6	4
3	4	5	2	1	6	8	9	7
7	6	9	4	8	3	1	2	5
8	9	2	5	4	1	6	7	3
6	7	4	3	2	8	5	1	9
1	5	3	6	9	7	4	8	2
4	2	1	9	6	5	7	3	8
9	8	7	1	3	4	2	5	6
5	3	6	8	7	2	9	4	1

Cryptoquip

IPRL IREGOPJ TRNTGR AGREL
RDOEOR PNKDRD, H SKRDD
JNK ANKGC DEJ OPRJ'BR
WHLCHLS OPRHB WELNBD.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN I TOLD THE HUBBY TO STOP BEING SO LOUD WHILE SLEEPING, IT REALLY HIT A SNORE SPOT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals Y

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Hula Hoop holders? 5 Drunkard 8 Staff leader? 12 Badge of authority 14 Georgetown athlete 15 Cream-less liquid 16 On the rocks 17 Baby's soft food 18 Card game that also means "swindle" 20 Transit fare, at times 23 Morse symbol 24 State with certainty 25 Ad slogan since 1993 28 Young dog 29 One of the S's in SST

30 — the fields we go" 32 Unmanly man 34 Glenn of the Eagles 35 For fear that 36 Sports venue 37 Canada's capital 40 Literary collection 41 Arm-strong's landing site 42 Dairy employee 47 Therefore 48 Situation with only two options

49 See 9-Down 50 — de Janeiro 51 Say it isn't so

DOWN
1 That guy's 2 Pen filler 3 Omega predecessor 4 Smirk 5 Quick cut 6 Lubricate 7 Heed someone's advice 8 Arty 9 With 49-Across, monster's home? 10 Watchful one 11 Disappear gradually 13 Federal agt. 19 Gomer Pyle's org. 20 Spigot 21 Egg 22 French military headgear 23 — pass Go, ... 25 Cobwebby 26 Traditional tales 27 Acute 29 Twist 31 Flat-piled rug 33 Grassy plains 34 Made to look guilty 36 Egyptian cross 37 Portent 38 Ripped 39 Apparel 40 Singing voice 43 Roman 3 44 Exist 45 Charged bit 46 Thirsty

Solution time: 27 mins.

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

Saturday's answer 12-20

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			
37	38	39					40				
41					42	43			44	45	46
47					48						
49					50				51		