

Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



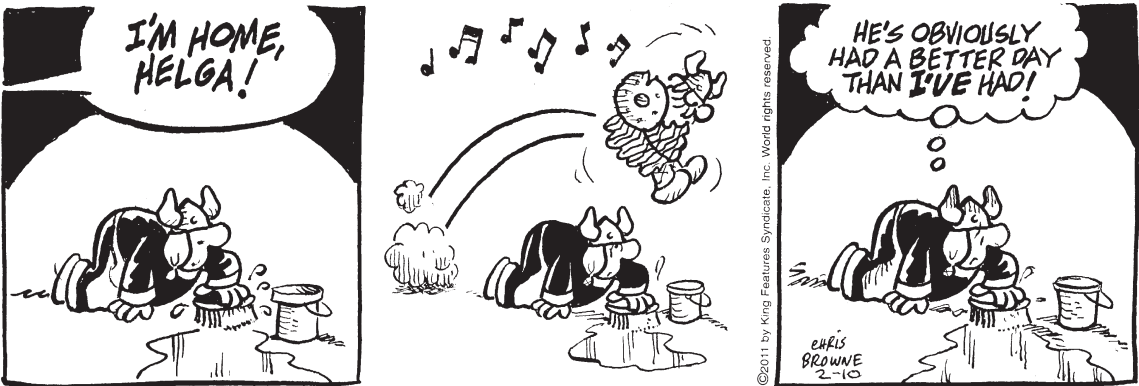
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



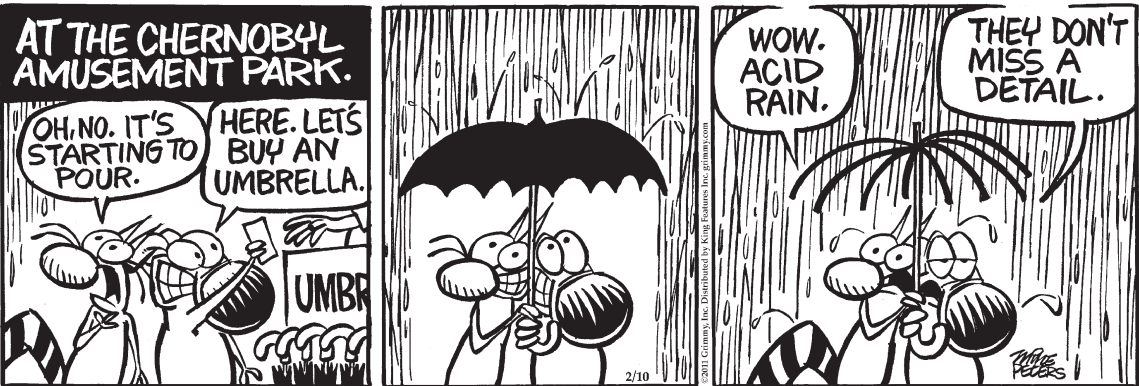
Blondie • Chic Young



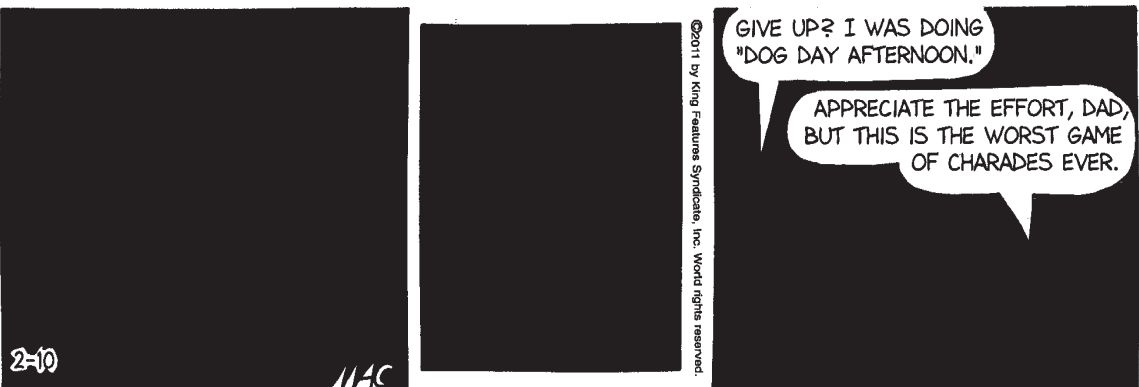
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



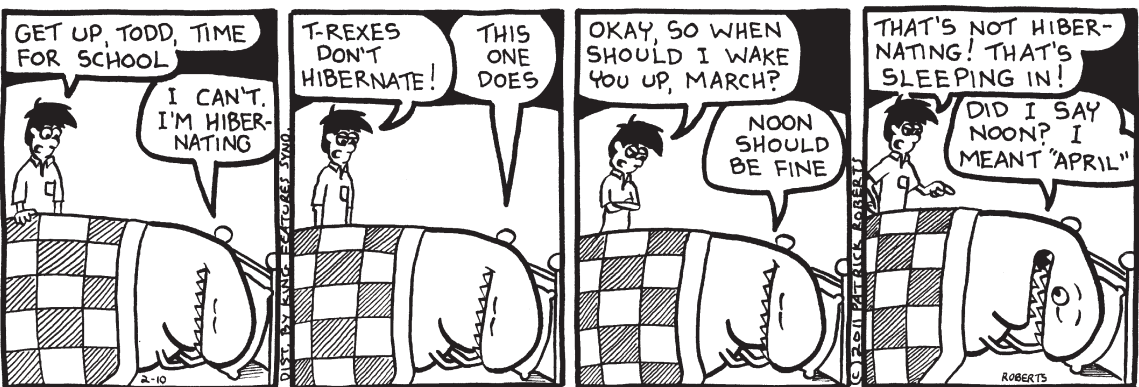
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



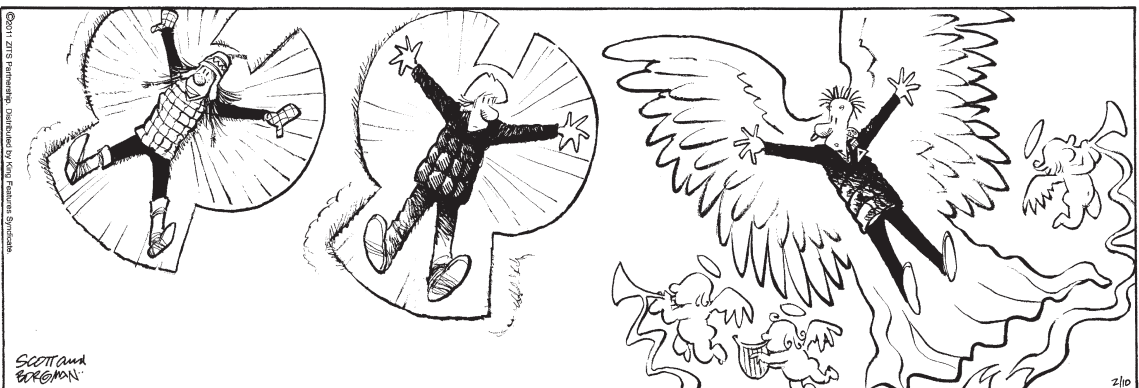
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers • Ask Dr. Brothers

Can shyness be overcome?

Dear Dr. Brothers: I was concerned when my neighbor asked me if anything was wrong with my 7-year-old daughter. Our children go to the same school, and her son was telling her how my daughter acts in class. According to him, she never says anything and turns red when the teacher calls on her. I understand, because it's how I was when I was younger. I don't want her to suffer the debilitating shyness I did; what can I do? – L.D.

Dear L.D.: You must know by now that your daughter is shy, but having a firsthand report of how she behaves in class seems to have made the issue more real to you. Even though it was long ago, you probably still remember the stress it caused you to be called on in class and can empathize with your daughter because you know what she is going through. The fact that her friend has talked about it to his mother means others must notice, too – and I'm sure you are aware of bullying in schools today. You don't want your daughter's behavior to lead to anything unpleasant. There also is a chance it can affect her grades as well as social development, and cause her self-esteem to plummet. There is nothing wrong with being shy, but it can't hurt to talk to her teachers.

Your daughter probably learned some of her shyness from you – although you don't want her to suffer as you did, you also are reluctant to push her to be outgoing, because you may remember how counterproductive that was in your own childhood. There are few things more terrifying to a shy kid than having a parent try to make him or her speak up and be outgoing. You may not have outgrown your shyness and may be modeling the behavior for your child. Talking about it and telling her you understand should help.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My 10-year-old son has to undergo inpatient surgery next month. Thank God it's nothing too serious and will only require one overnight stay at the hospital. We've arranged for me to stay with him, but he's getting anxious. He's Internet-savvy enough to look up this procedure, along with graphic images of the surgery. As the date gets closer, the more freaked out he gets. How can I help him? – S.H.

Dear S.H.: It is wonderful you will be in the room with your son after his surgery. That will be comforting to him, although he may be groggy or sleep through most of your time together. Even so, the presence of a parent will make all the difference. Of course he is getting nervous, and you can explain that the waiting before an event like this often is the worst part – it's when our fears seem to get the best of us. If he is going to be in a children's wing or medical center, there may be a hospital-sponsored program for kids who are to undergo operations. If not, surely you can find some appropriate books at the library on the topic that has him up at night freaking out.

Knowing others have gone through the same ordeal should help him a lot. Something else you might play up is the bragging rights he'll have with his friends afterward. This is the kind of adventure that seems exciting and brave in retrospect – and you can remind him how his friends will want to hear how awesome it was. He might even keep a journal or have you take photos. There will not be a cast to autograph, but he can make sure his friends are impressed with his bravery under the knife. Check with the medical staff for their experience and suggestions, too.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

West dealer. North-South vulnerable.

NORTH

♦ Q 7
♥ J
♠ K J 9 4
♣ A K Q 8 5 2

WEST

♦ K 2
♥ A 9 7 2
♠ 10 8 5
♣ 10 6 4 3

EAST

♦ A J 10 9 8 4 3
♥ 4
♠ 6 3 2
♣ 9 7

SOUTH

♦ 6 5
♥ K Q 10 8 6 5 3
♠ A Q 7
♣ J

The bidding:
West Pass 1
North 1
East 3
South 4
Opening lead — king of spades.

The Right Play at the Right Time

Assume you're West defending against four hearts following the auction shown. You lead the king of spades, which holds as East plays the jack, and the question is what you should do next. Remember, all you see is your own hand and the dummy.

There is a real danger that you might relax at this point and mechanically lead another spade. If you followed this impulse, though, it would cost you dearly.

East would win the second spade with the ace, but no return by him could then defeat the contract. His best play would be a third round of spades, but declarer would ruff low in his hand, and, whatever you did on this trick, your only other winner would be the ace of trumps.

The proper play at trick two is to cash the ace of hearts before leading a spade. When East takes his ace and continues with a third spade, South cannot prevent your nine of trumps from becoming the setting trick, regardless of whether he ruffs high or low.

The recommended play is certain to beat the contract unless East started with eight spades rather than seven. This remote possibility should be ruled out by you, if only because the contract cannot be stopped in that case.

Upon reflection, the ace-of-trumps play at trick two stands out a mile, but it is admittedly not an easy play to see unless you are totally focused at the critical moment.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/10

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.

Cryptoquip

AKOSGMK CFK LZEDZUQ

MKMMZJU ZM ZUOEGXZUQ

DSUH OKEKAIZCZKM, Z'X MSH

ZC'M S MFJJC LJI CFK MCSIM.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: NAME OF AN OLD, FAMOUS FEMALE RODENT OF CARTOONS THAT'S MUCH SMALLER THAN NORMAL: MINI MOUSE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals I

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 Part songs	DOWN	21 Feline
1 Blunder	37 Consider	1 Festive	23 — tenens
5 Weep loudly	40 Albacore	2 Stench	(temporary office-holder)
8 Window ledge	41 Speak unclearly	3 Kiln	
12 Hebrew month	45 Popular house-plant	4 Comp	
13 Playwright	47 Upper surface	5 Prophet-ess	24 Pennsylvania port
Levin	49 Bedouin	6 Raw rock	25 Longings
14 Small combo	50 Ireland	7 "South Pacific" song	26 Organization
15 Come in	51 Have a bug	8 Milk-maid's perch	27 Traditional tales
second	52 Poetic foot	9 Raymond Burr role	28 Amelia Earhart, e.g.
16 — canto	53 Like candles or crayons	10 Claiborne of fashion	32 Some Beethoven works
17 Seeping	54 Crafty	11 Actress Myrna	33 Kids' card game
18 Blood channel	55 Society new-comers	19 Pirates' quaff	35 Yang counter-part
20 Object of worship			36 Wilde-beest
22 Admiral William of WWII			38 Soft and liquid
26 Assertion			39 Suggest
29 Feedbag morsel			42 Highland hillside
30 Rage			43 Mary's follower
31 Amour			44 Recedes
32 Phys. or biol.			45 Not many
33 Valhalla VIP			46 Historic time
34 Mentalist Geller			48 Lubricate
35 Thee			

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			