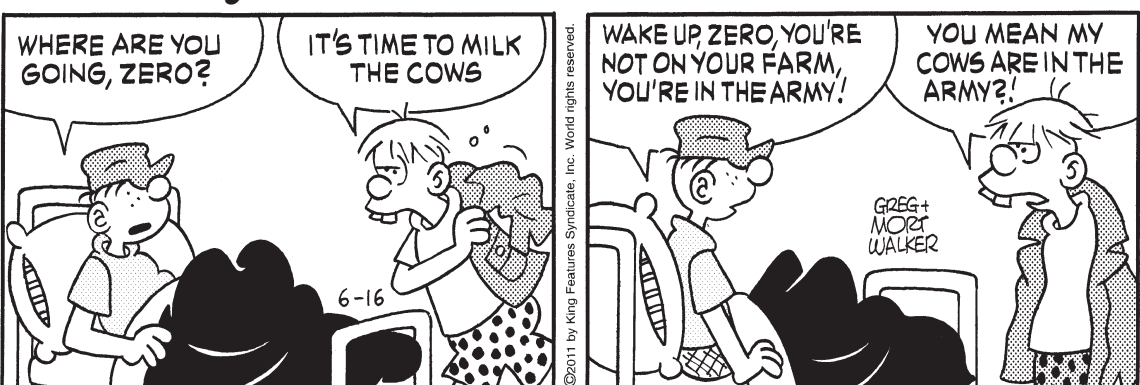


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



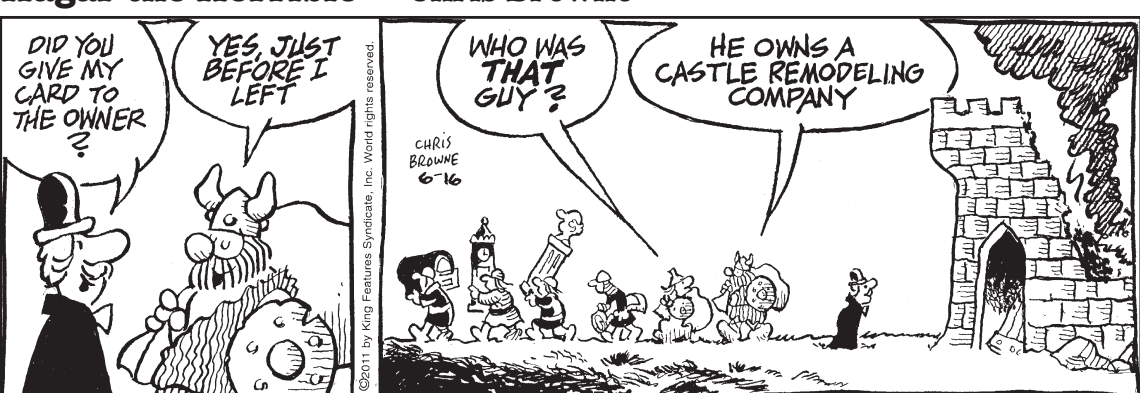
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



Blondie • Chic Young



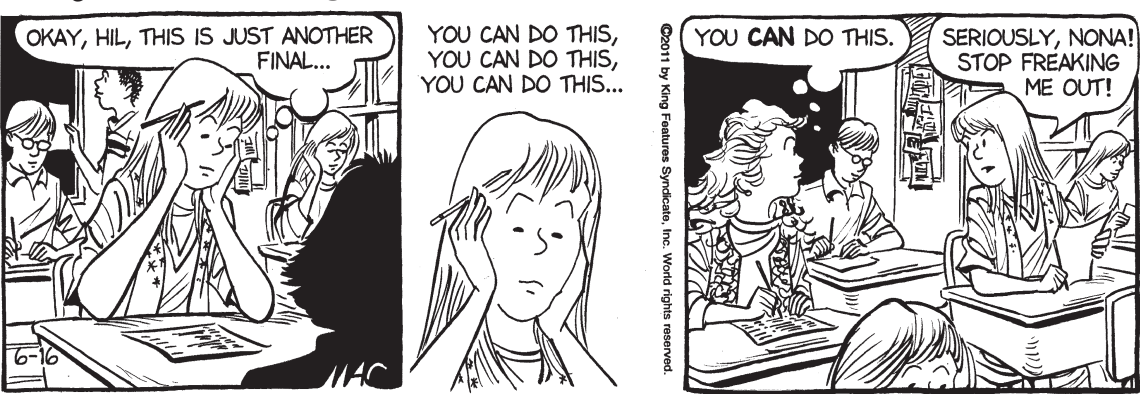
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



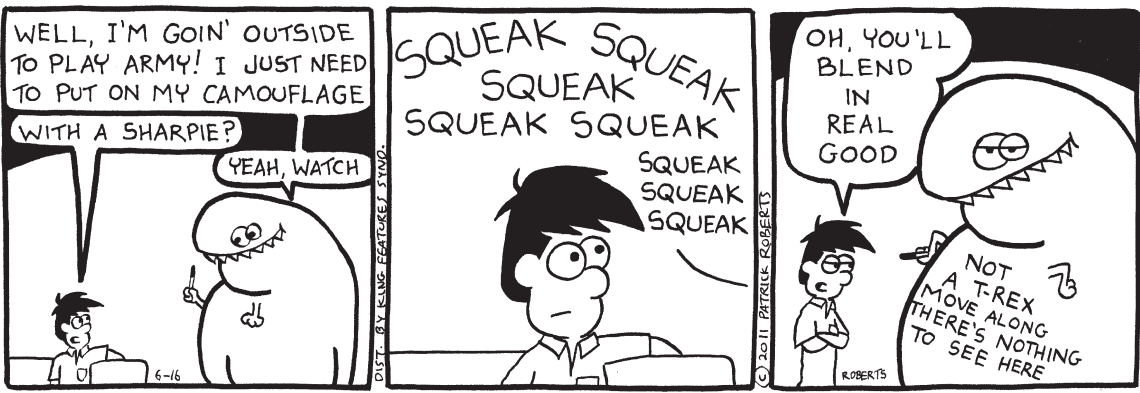
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Friend sabotages her constantly

Dear Dr. Brothers: I don't know what is wrong, but my friend is trying to sabotage me in our baby group. Maybe I should call her a "frenemy" instead of a "friend." She is always making comparisons between her baby and mine. Her baby can say 36 words, and mine is still stuck on "Mama." She even mocks my choice of diapers. How do I get her to stop being mean? She never did this before we had kids. - G.D.

Dear G.D.: There is something about having babies and joining baby groups that invites competition. Especially if you both are first-time mothers, there is a constant search for benchmarks, validation and anything that makes you feel more secure. Also, it's never too early to start competing for coveted spots in the leading preschool. See what I mean? It's a jungle out there.

Your friend/frenemy may be feeling the pressure keenly. In fact, it is likely she is jealous of you now you have something she doesn't - a kid she secretly feels is cuter than hers, or more coordinated, or more attached to Mommy. It could be almost anything. The fact is you will run into people like this as long as you have a child in groups with other kids. If you care about the friendship, try to have a couple of "girls' days out" so that you can rekindle the feelings that brought you together before there were babies. You sound like a good person - so you may have to take the lead in not taking offense when the cattiness starts.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I am not a kid - I'm in my mid-30s. I've been dating a guy for six months, and just found out I am pregnant. The thought of having a baby is exciting - I know I could manage because I have a supportive family and a good job - but I am not keen on having this guy in my life. I could break up with him and he would never know he was the father. Do you think this would be a fair solution? - M.A.

Dear M.A.: I am reluctant to call this deception "fair." You don't have any idea what the reaction to your news might be, and while it is possible the man would marry you, it seems unlikely, given your feelings. If you are having a casual relationship, he still might want to be a father. That would mean he's going to be in your life even if he doesn't have a romantic relationship with you. Another possibility is he might wish to support the child financially but in no other way. None of these can be acted out if you hide the truth.

There's little chance you could keep this secret from your child for long, once she or he is an adult. So if you have decided to have and keep the child - two big things to think about - your ability to be fair will increase if you emphasize being truthful. You will have more cooperation if things are out in the open. You can sit down with the father-to-be and come to a meeting of the minds about the baby. This way, you will have a better idea what the real facts are about your future.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

East dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 6 4
♥ 10 9 5
♦ Q J 10 8 5
♣ K 8 4

WEST
♠ A 10 8 5 3
♥ Q 7 2
♦ 7 4
♣ 7 3 2

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

SOUTH
♠ K Q 7
♥ A K 6
♦ A K 3
♣ Q 10 9 6

The bidding:
East South West North
Pass 2 NT Pass 3 NT
Opening lead - five of spades.

A Good Rule of Thumb

There are many means by which the defenders can avoid having to guess in what might appear to be a guessing situation. Here is a case of this type.

South was in three notrump, and West led a spade to East's jack and declarer's king. At this point, South had only eight sure tricks and needed a ninth. His primary concern was that if he next led a low club to the king and East won with the ace, a spade return might sink the contract.

So, being a highly resourceful player, he first cashed the A-K of diamonds and then led the queen of clubs, trying to create the impression that he had started with only two diamonds and was trying to develop an entry to dummy to cash the Q-J-10.

This ingenious maneuver would no doubt have succeeded against many Easts, who might have refused to take the queen of clubs with the ace. That would have been fatal to the defense in the actual deal.

But East and West were both first-rate defenders and had no trouble seeing through South's scheme. East took the queen with the ace and returned a spade, and declarer finished down one.

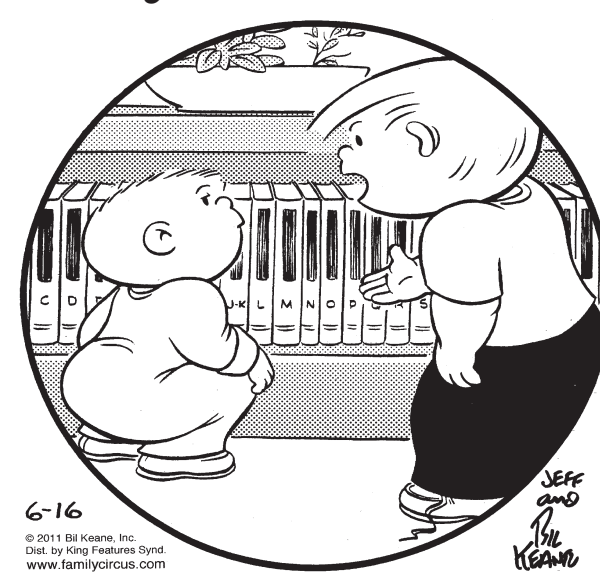
How was East able to diagnose what declarer was doing? In truth, he had no problem at all. As happens so often when good defenders help each other whenever possible, East knew that declarer had the missing three of diamonds!

How did he know this? Because when the A-K of diamonds were cashed, West had followed first with the seven and then with the four, indicating - in accordance with standard practice - that he had a doubleton diamond. Had West held the 7-4-3 instead, he would have played the three first and the four next.

Some players might think that this is cutting too fine a line in bridge, but it is surely better to play the game precisely than to have to resort to guesswork.

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"They're encyclopedias. When Daddy was a kid he used them to find out stuff."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★★

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

DNWP EZ ND PBMI WNGCPH
AHMWM DNI XYE NIXNKG
GPPWPO CE SP NZZIMACPO
SK BMHQGGP: ZIQ WNDAYQ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A CERTAIN CODE INVENTOR FELT VERY GUILTY OVER SOMETHING, I WOULD SAY HE WAS RE-MORSE-FUL.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals B

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 38 Snakes | DOWN | 19 Mr. Pacino |
| 1 Con game | 39 Storm center | 1 Messy guy | 21 "Ulalume" writer |
| 5 Not-so-tall tale | 40 Keyboard abbr. | 2 Mafia bigwig | 24 Speedometer stat |
| 8 Front projection | 42 Take out of context? | 3 Master-Card alternative | 25 "Caught ya!" |
| 12 Needing a cane | 45 Small yellow fruit | 4 Gathering places | 26 Brit's radio |
| 13 Earlier than | 49 Vicinity | 5 Intrepid | 28 Ball-bearing gizmo |
| 14 Hold sway | 50 "Hail!" cartel | 6 Mr. Robbins | 29 Negligent |
| 15 Intl. actress | 52 Loosen Gardner | 7 Optimistic member | 30 Knock partnered with Burt |
| 17 Elevator name | 53 Particular | 8 Suitor | 31 Billboards assent |
| 18 Railyard sight | 56 Being, to | 9 Toaster's word | 36 Sailor's collection |
| 20 Result | 57 "Of course" | 10 Medley | 37 Find not guilty |
| 22 Every last bit | 58 "Piggies" | 11 Into the sunset | 41 Therefore challenge |
| 23 15-Across' product | | | 42 Love deity |
| 24 Gullets | | | 43 Uncomplicated |
| 27 And so on | | | 46 "Do — others ..." |
| 32 — Beta Kappa | | | 47 "Zip — Doo-Dah" |
| 33 Vast expanse | | | 48 — River, NJ |
| 34 Blue | | | 51 Struggle (for) |
| 35 Unrelenting pest | | | |

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

Yesterday's answer 6-16

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
56					57					58