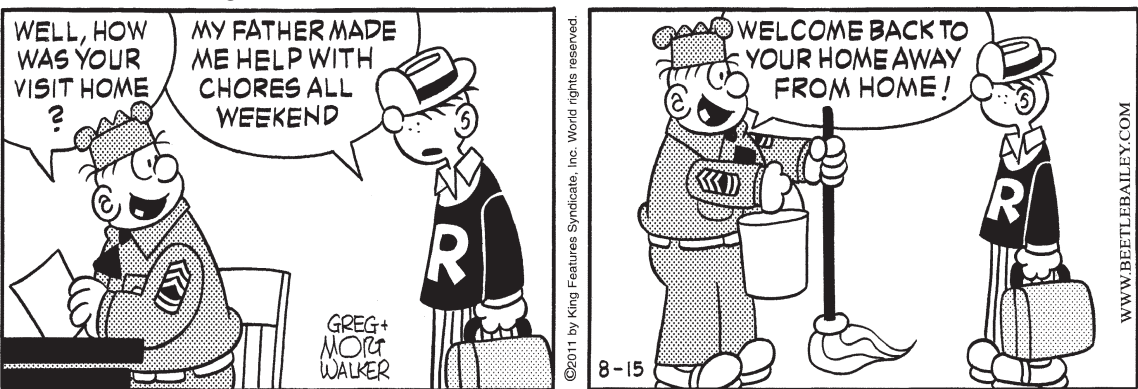


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



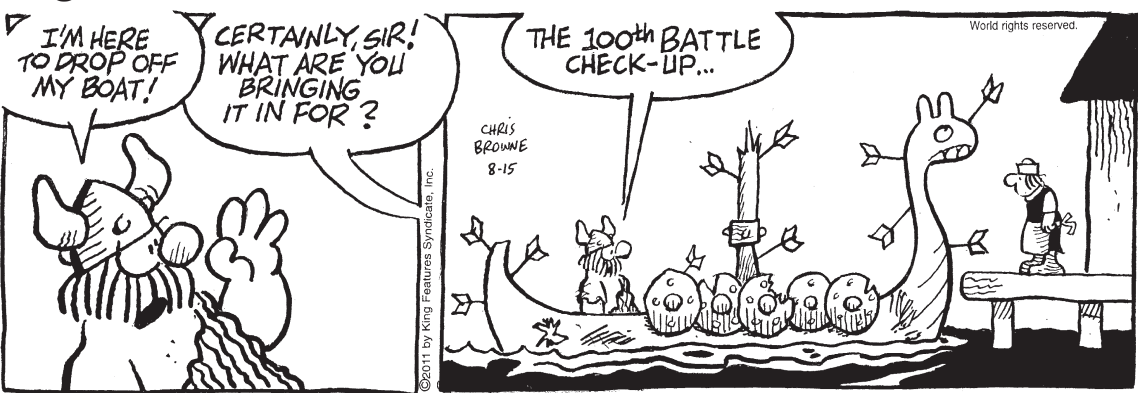
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



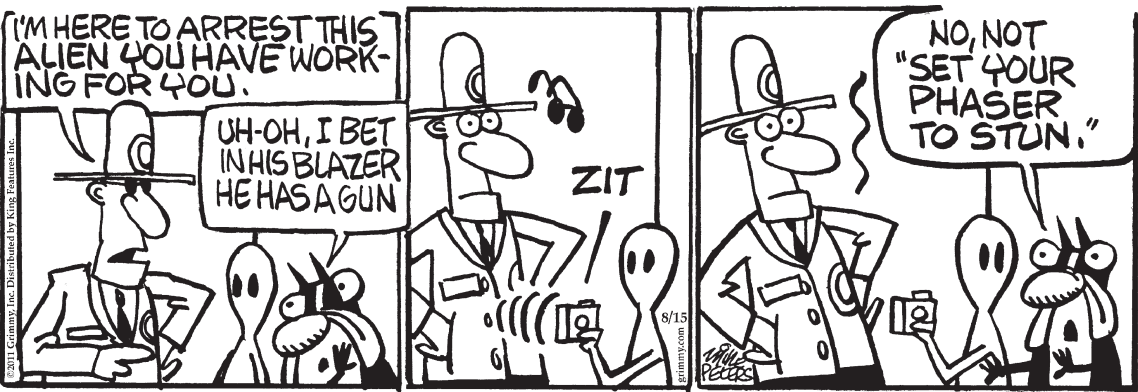
Blondie • Chic Young



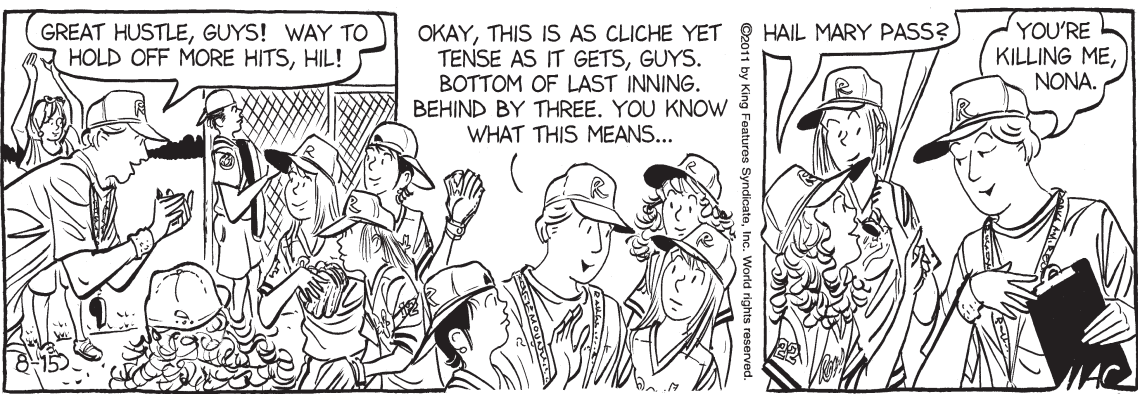
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



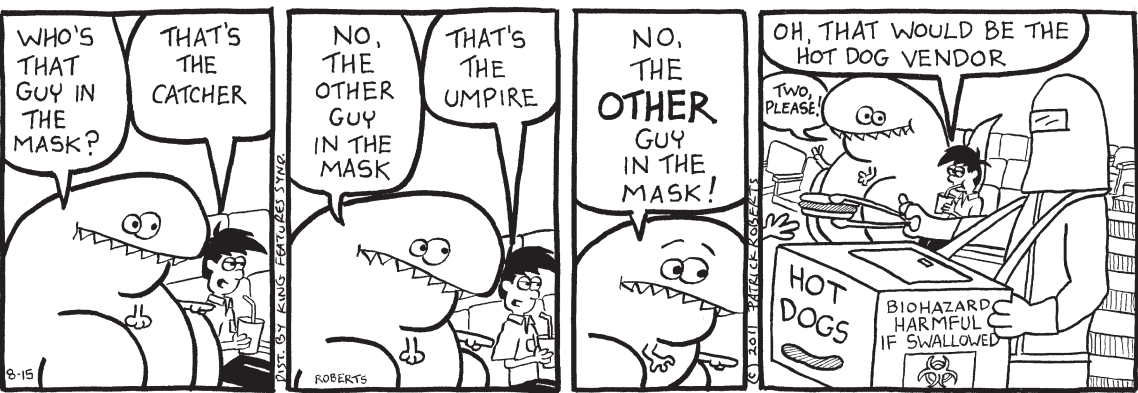
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



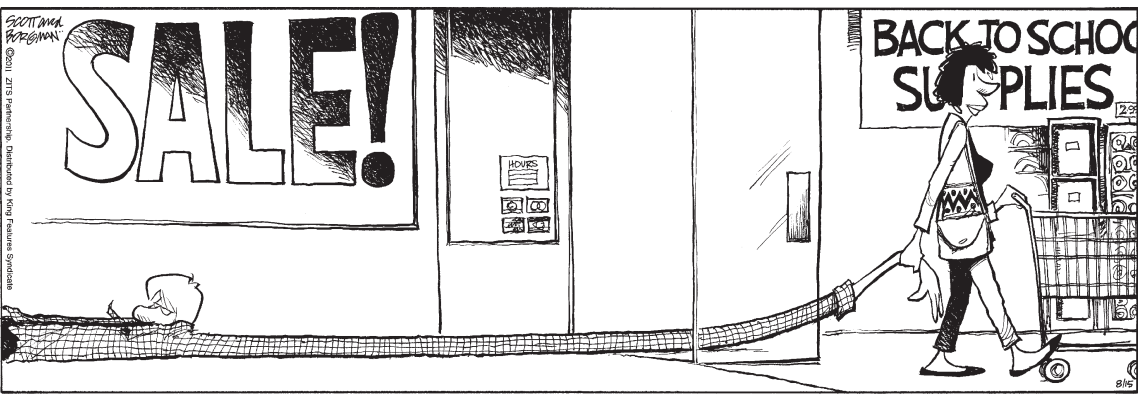
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers

• Ask Dr. Brothers

Self-talk psychs husband's work

Dear Dr. Brothers: My 25-year-old husband has this weird habit that I'm concerned about. Whenever he gets ready for an important business meeting, he starts talking to himself. He tells himself he's "in it to win it" as he straightens his tie in front of the mirror, and mutters how he's going to "bring it" over his morning coffee. I teased him about it, but now I'm getting worried. Is he nuts, or what? — D.J.

Dear D.J.: No, I seriously doubt he has mental-health issues if this is the only behavior you think odd. He is indulging in a bit of harmless "self-talk" to motivate him and get his energy where it needs to be in order to succeed in his meeting. Just think of it as a pep talk delivered out loud to himself, and you've got the picture! Teasing is only going to break his stride, so stifle your urge to stifle him! Self-talk is used mostly by athletes with visualization, another technique that lets the athlete focus on proper moves, breathing, techniques, etc. There is no reason self-talk can't be used in business, so if it helps your husband prepare for an important presentation, you can be tolerant and understanding.

A new look at more than 30 previous studies by a sports psychologist revealed that there was indeed a helpful aspect to self-talk in terms of improved performance. When your husband is psyching himself up for competition, he's helping himself focus and boosting his confidence. If it works for him, I say bravo! Athletes have good results with self-talk because it improves their concentration. Something for everyone!

Dear Dr. Brothers: I've recently reconnected with a high-school friend over the Internet. I forgot this excruciatingly annoying habit she had of always trying to outdo anything you say. If you talk about how much you like your house, she'll go on about how big her house is. If you tell her you're reading this great book, she'll tell you she met the author and has a signed copy. I keep my distance, but am curious: What makes a person a one-upper? — C.W.

Dear C.W.: That's an interesting question. I would have to say the person who is always bragging, putting down your belongings or accomplishments in favor of hers is a woman with some self-esteem issues. Although she seems to be one of the world's most smug and self-satisfied individuals, it is far more likely she has some basic problems relating to people she doesn't have to impress. If there is no way to show she is superior, she is at a loss as to how to relate. So this is a woman who needs ego-boosting to just live normally. Someone like this might be unpleasant if she doesn't get her way — unless she has done a lot of maturing since school days.

How to handle her? You could keep your distance, as you have been. Or you could get together and delve deeply into her life. If this sounds awful, imagine how excited she would be to spin everything her way. There's a small chance you might catch a glimpse of a person who has fears and disappointments. And that might be worth knowing. Once you break through that facade, anything can happen. Good luck.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

South dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.
NORTH
♠ K J 7
♥ 10 9 8 7
♦ K Q 7 5
♣ K Q
WEST
♠ 3 2
♥ A K 2
♦ J 6 4 3
♣ J 9 8 6
EAST
♠ 10 9 6 4
♥ 5
♦ 10 8 2
♣ A 7 5 4 2
SOUTH
♠ A Q 8 5
♥ Q J 6 4 3
♦ A 9
♣ 10 3
The bidding:
South West North East
1♥ Pass 4♣* Pass
* Strong heart raise.
Opening lead — three of spades.

Famous Hand
On some deals, it appears that the contract is sure to fail because of an unlucky lie of the opposing cards. Today's hand, from the 1988 Spingold Teams, certainly seems to be one of this type.

West leads the three of spades, taken by dummy's king. South plays a trump, and West wins and returns his remaining spade. Declarer leads a second trump to West's ace. East signaling with the club seven. West then plays a club to East's ace, and East's spade return is ruffed by West for down one.

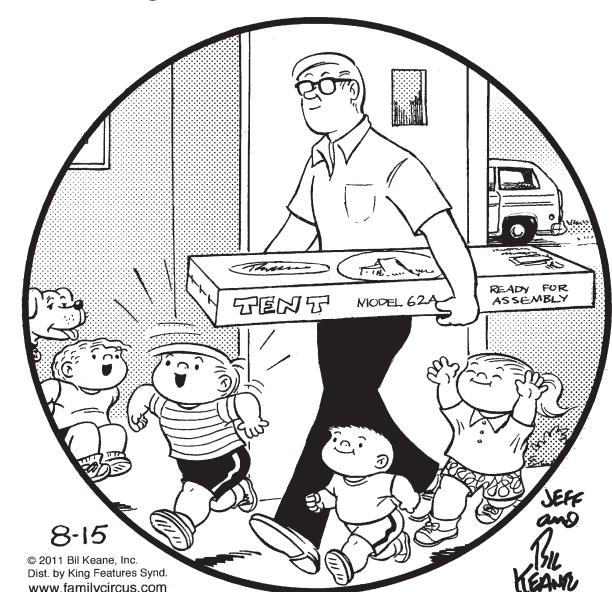
Once West leads a spade initially, it's not easy to see what South can do to prevent this scenario from unfolding. But when all-time great Bill Root was declarer, he managed to get home safely even though the defense functioned perfectly.

The early play went exactly according to form, with Root winning the first spade and leading a trump, and West continuing a spade after taking the heart king. But there the similarity ended.

Unwilling to accept his fate without putting up a fight, Root decided to try to do something to thwart the impending spade ruff. So instead of leading a second trump at trick four, he cashed the A-K-Q of diamonds, discarding a club. He then led dummy's seven of diamonds and, when East showed out, discarded his last club on it!

This presented West with an unexpected diamond trick in exchange for declarer's club loser. But, more importantly, it robbed East of the entry he needed to give West his spade ruff.

Family Circus • Bil Keane



"Daddy bought us a TENT, Mommy Let's sleep outside tonight!"

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★ 8/15

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.

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

Cryptoquip

CGDA QR G MQDDAEMLGX
OGZZACTAE IQGU KLUP GC
GEEGV QR OEQDLCACU KGECLCT
IXGZUZ: UPA UQQU RAEV.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THAT SPELL-CASTING WOMAN IS A CHAMPION CRICKET PLAYER. ONE MIGHT SAY SHE'S A WICKET WITCH.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals F

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
1 Small pellets
4 Cigar residue
7 Soft-drink flavor
11 Secular
13 Sticky stuff
14 Mountain goat
15 Norway's capital
16 Erstwhile acorn
17 Buster Brown's dog
18 Grave robber
20 Red gemstone
22 Pinch
24 Round peg in a square hole
28 3/4 time dances
32 Coast
33 Bakery employee
34 — Mahal
36 Capri is one
37 Cafeteria carriers
- DOWN**
39 Mends old jeans, maybe
41 Old Toyota model
43 Stir-fry pan
44 Cambodia neighbor
46 It makes dough rise
50 God, in Grenoble
53 "CSI" evidence
55 Ancient letter
56 Bedouin
57 Republicans
58 Ollie's pal
59 New York ball club
- 12** Golfers' meccas
19 Taylor or Claiborne
21 Huge party
23 Favorite journal
25 Tuna or carp
26 Not busy
27 Ball holders
28 Skater
29 Land measure
30 Shake-spearean
31 Tree
35 Mandible
38 Vast expanse
40 Plaything
42 Skiers' hotel
45 Winter forecast
47 Car
48 Break suddenly
49 Campsite shelter
50 Beaver's construction
51 Anger
52 Dine on
54 Gorilla

Saturday's answer 8-15

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
28	29	30			31		32		
33				34		35		36	
37				38		39		40	
41				42		43			
			44		45		46		47
50	51	52			53		54		55
56					57			58	
59					60				61