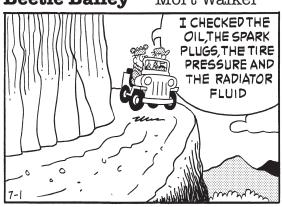
Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker

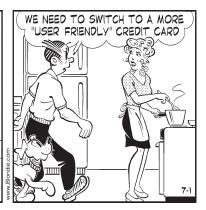




Blondie • Chic Young







Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



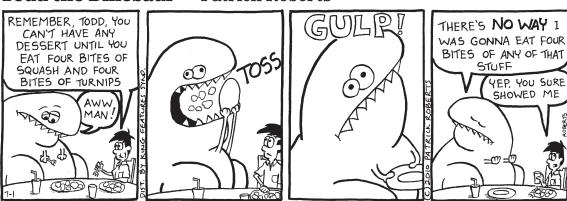
Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott







Dr. Joyce **Brothers**

Ask Dr. Brothers

Guilt given along with gift

Dear Dr. Brothers: My wife always seems to get me the right birthday gifts. But this time, I don't know what happened. Though we've been married 17 years and she's never seen me wear anything light-colored, she bought a yellow shirt. I told her my feelings about it, but now she is guilting me into wearing it. Can I wear what I choose and yet not hurt her feelings? – J.T.

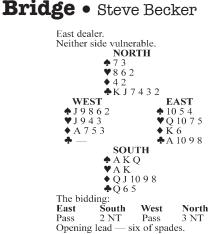
Dear J.T.: It seems odd you have to walk on eggshells after 17 years of marriage, but I applaud your intentions to avoid hurting her feelings. That shows you are caring, but perhaps you could work toward more intimacy. You should be able to let her know there are some things you won't do or wear, for whatever reasons. See if you can name colors she doesn't like to wear, or things she won't eat, etc. Make it into a game if you must – at the finish, you can be sure she will know not to buy you a light-colored shirt again!

On the other hand, you could wear the shirt and see how you feel. Chances are, you will get compliments from people who are tired of seeing you in dark colors. This might make you change your mind about what you wear, and please your wife too. It would be interesting to know if she bought the shirt because she didn't realize you don't wear light colors, or because she likes yellow, or because it seemed so "you." In any case, try not to give up on trying new things. There are a lot of options to keep life interesting for those who are flexible. And be careful not to seem unreasonable - next year, you may just get a gift card.

Dear Dr. Brothers: My father ordered an expensive watch online, and two were shipped by mistake. Since his credit card hasn't been charged twice, he said he's keeping it! He's always raised me to do the right thing, but seems to be getting angrier as he grows older. My son asked me if what his grandfather did was wrong, and I don't know what to say. What do I do? - M.P.

Dear M.P.: This is a difficult moral dilemma, especially because a life lesson for your impressionable son hangs in the balance. You love your father and have concerns about his emotional health as he ages, and yet have the moral compass to tell you what he is doing is wrong. Confronting [] him could make your relationship uncomfortable even if he and sends back the second watch. And your son is watching to see how he should behave when someone makes a mistake in his favor. So it's a delicate path you must walk.

But this may be an opportunity to help your father with issues that are making him angry and wanting to get even with somebody - even though the watch company is innocent! Why don't you talk about how he feels? Are there physical complaints making it difficult for him to be happy? Is he lonely, feeling useless or missing work? Sometimes clearing the air can take away some of the free-floating anger. Just knowing you and your son care may help as well. Then you can gently suggest you are worried about the example it sets for his grandson if he were to keep the watch and see if he deals with it on his own.



Painting Yourself Into a Corner

There are many simple-looking hands where it is very easy for declarer to go astray. Such hands appear with no advance notice at all, and the first thing declarer knows, he finds he has painted himself into a corner.

For example, consider this seemingly innocent deal where West leads a spade against three notrump. Let's say South wins with the queen and plays a low club to the jack, West showing out. East takes the jack with the ace and returns a spade. Eventually, South goes down one, losing two spades, two diamonds and a club – even though he shifts his attack to diamonds at trick

Declarer also goes down if he leads a diamond 34 s at trick two, assuming best defense by East-West. In that case, South loses two hearts, two diamonds and a club.

The winning line of play - guaranteed to succeed regardless of how the missing cards are divided – is to lead the queen of clubs, not the five, at trick two! In the actual case, if East takes the ace, declarer wins any return and allows East to win the next round of clubs with the eight. This assures scoring four club tricks, three spades and

If East ducks the queen of clubs at trick two, South is still on solid ground. He simply turns his attention to diamonds, forcing out the A-K, and scores nine tricks consisting of three spades, two hearts, three diamonds and a club. Choosing whether to lead the queen or five of

clubs at trick two may seem unimportant, but the fact is that playing the queen guarantees the contract, while playing the five does not. When one play is sure to win and cannot lose, and another play is likely to win but may lose, there can be no question as to which is the better play.

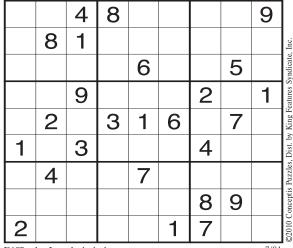
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Family Circus • Bil Keane



"I hope my dream tonight doesn't turn out to be a rerun."

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★

This is a logic-based num- 5 1 3 4 6 8 9 7 2 ber 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.

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Cryptoquip

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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals O

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(c) 2010 by King Features Syndicate **Crossword** • Eugene Sheffer

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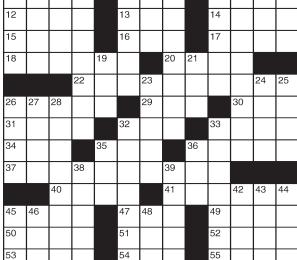
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