Contract Bridge

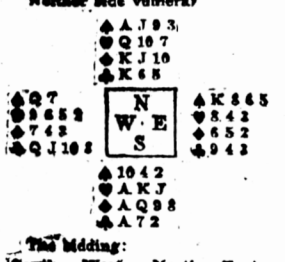
By Josephine Culbertson

CONCERNING SAFETY PLAYS

The term "safety play" is employed rather loosely by bridge experts, sometimes to mean a trie-insuring device; other times to indicate a method which is aimed solely at limiting the loss in a suit.

Take the following undramatic deal, for example. The safety play here is to exploit as fully as possible the spade combination in the North-South hands.

South dealer!
Neither side vulnerable



The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 N T	Pass	6 N T	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opens the queen of clubs, and declarer makes a careful survey. He can count nine sure tricks in hearts, diamonds and clubs, and since there is no possibility of an extra trick in any of these suits, he sees that he must win three spades to make the slam contract.

With anything except a really bad spade break, South should easily be able to collect the necessary three tricks, but he cannot afford to be careless! With the A-J-9-3 in dummy and the ten in his own hand, the average declarer is apt to lead the ten-spot as his first play in the suit. This, however, is a serious mistake if West is alert. West, holding Queen small should certainly cover the ten—and now East has two sure stoppers!

It should be observed that it cannot help declarer to select the ten as his first spade lead, but it can do him very serious harm. Change the East and West spade holdings around as your wish, and it will be found that South's first play in the suit should invariably be a low card. With the distribution it is the opponents are helpless. If West plays low, declarer of course plays the nine or jack from dummy, South again leads a low spade through West. This time the queen is smothered, and South still has the ten for dummy's three-spot.

BURGESS BEDTIME STORIES

By Thornton W. Burgess

YOUNG HOOTY HAS A BAD TIME

For bad mistakes we always pay.
And costly lessons learn that way.
Hooty the Owl.

Now true this is. Young Hooty was just beginning to find this out. Bad mistakes always are paid for, usually by the one who makes them, sometimes, alas, by others. Young Hooty had made a bad mistake. He had allowed curiosity to get him into trouble. He had forgotten a warning that both father and mother had given him, a warning to keep out of sight if possible whenever he heard the voice of Blacky the Crow. He had many times heard Blacky cawing in the distance but Blacky never had been near enough to be seen.

This morning, while mother and father were off hunting, Blacky had come to a tree very near the one in which Young Hooty was sitting close up to the trunk where he wasn't likely to be seen. Blacky began to caw to let his flock know where he was. Perhaps Young Hooty really did forget that warning. Perhaps curiosity was too much for him. Here was a chance to see what noisy fellow looked like. The young Owl poked his head out from among the green branches that had hidden him. He could see, but also he could be seen and was.

He had thought Blacky noisy before, but it was nothing to the noise now heard. "C-a-a-w, c-a-a-w, c-a-a-w!" shrieked Blacky and his harsh voice carried far through the Green Forest. What he really was shrieking in Crow language was, "Owl, Owl! Owl!" He was answered at once by many excited voices. There is nothing Blacky and his flock enjoy more than tormenting an Owl when they think they can safely do so, and Blacky had seen at a glance that this was a young Owl and alone.

Young Hooty backed close to the trunk of the tree where he was somewhat protected by surrounding branches. He was in a tall spruce tree. He was larger than

He was frightened now, very much frightened.

Blacky. He fluffed out all his feathers to make himself look bigger still.

He snapped his bill and he hissed just as he had heard father and mother do when they were angry.

Blacky perched just above him.

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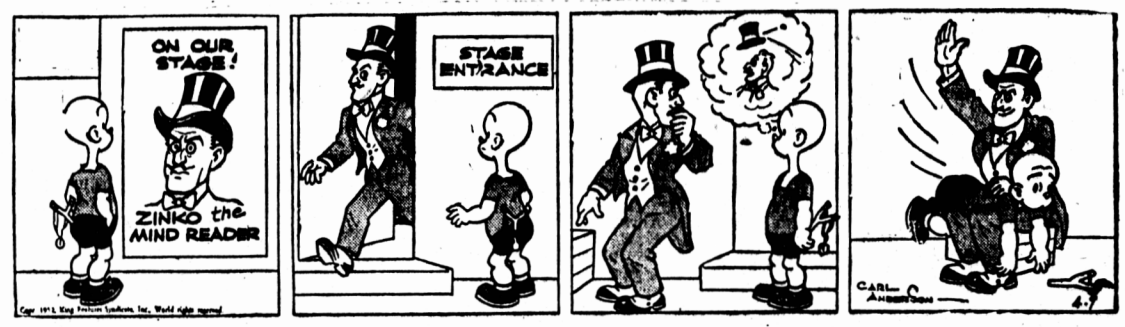

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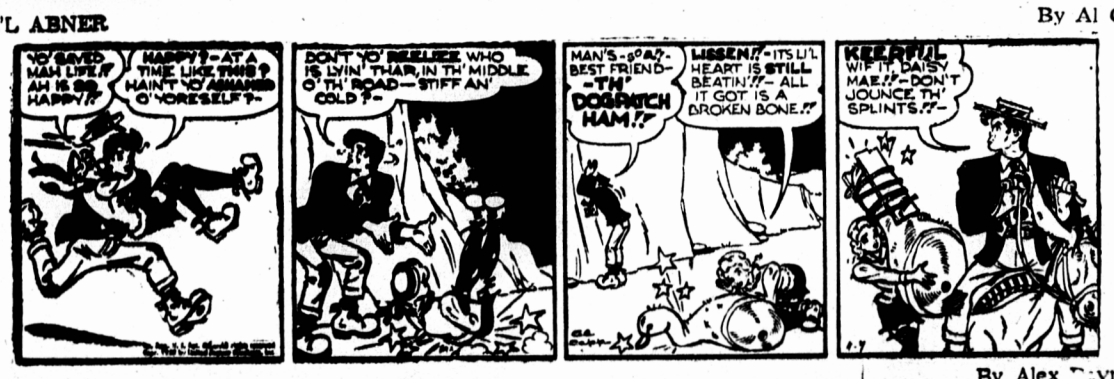

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