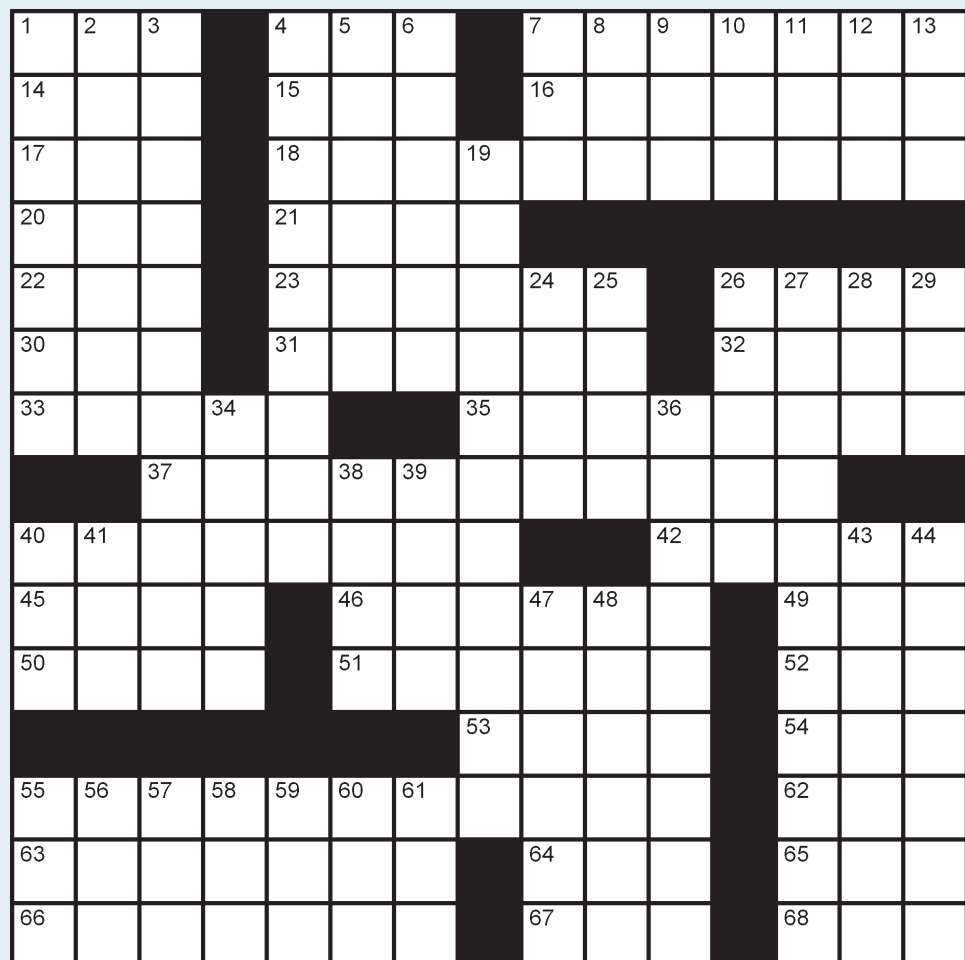


In the Black by Jordan Hildebrandt

Universal Crossword edited by David Steinberg



- ACROSS 1 *Wee fly (Hint: Imagine a letter to the right of each single-starred clue's answer. These letters spell something thematic.) 4 Wee bit 7 Disney movie with a genie 14 *A8 automaker 15 Grocery chain 16 Tart drink 17 *Superfan 18 What cards are in after being shuffled 20 *Short-term worker 21 Italian volcano 22 *Penne-vodka link 23 Many pop songs use the same four 26 Deflation sound 30 *Strategize 31 Something to sneeze at? 32 Name hidden in "believer" 33 Brazilian dance 35 Ball pit, e.g. 37 Roads to nowhere, and a hint to this puzzle's four thematic elements 40 Where to bring a dirty suit 42 Full 45 Broadcasts 46 Sushi condiment 49 **Jump from a board (... a letter to the left of each double-starred clue's answer ...) 50 Gentle shot in golf 51 New York island 52 **Part of, as a scheme 53 Incite 54 *** fair in love ... 55 Budding horticulturist's field 62 **Be generous 63 Trunk marker 64 Iowa college 65 **Smallest bills 66 Some detect motion 67 Terminate 68 **Sparrow's structure DOWN 1 Certain fuel valves 2 Chocolate spread 3 "Whataya Want From Me" singer 4 Winter wheel wrap 5 Novelist Christie 6 Oikos yogurt maker 7 ***Often (... a letter below each triple-starred clue's answer ...) 8 **Prom wheels 9 ***Latin for "love" 10 ***Laura in "Jurassic Park" 11 ***Duchamp's art movement 12 ***Carded 13 ***Infamous emperor 19 1947 Bacall/Bogart film noir 24 Pickling herb 25 Blubbery mammal 26 Beach, in Bolivia 27 Up next 28 "Convenience" charge 29 FDR power project 34 Great time 36 "Absolutely!" 38 What you read while doomscrolling 39 Mild expletive 40 Trade partner? 41 Lucy of "Charlie's Angels" 43 Adapts 44 Most thick 47 Pronto 48 Guiding light 55 ****Mammals in caves (... a letter above each quadruple-starred clue's answer ...) 56 ****Relative of a troll 57 ****Tiny songbird 58 ****Is dishonest 59 ***, in an analogy 60 ****The Tar Heel State: Abbr. 61 ****Bands' jobs

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 29, 2021 Earth Sign Grand Trine



The moon, Pluto and Mercury align most auspiciously in practical earth signs, echoing the sun's practical agenda in Virgo. We are willing to get down to work, and much can be accomplished in a very short period of time. It is therefore of utmost importance that we focus on the right things: endeavors that will have a healthy ripple effect.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The intelligence you use to read the room is a communication beyond language. You tune into primal factors and understand how to best manage the social network before you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You don't expect to be paid for any and every exertion of effort. Though an endeavor should ideally be its own reward, which is a kind of payment built into the action.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You have a talent for creating easy fun. People enjoy your challenges, and they will play the games you lay out and sign up for whatever daring excitement you propose.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Improvements cannot be made in theory; they must happen in practice. You can learn why and how something works, but that's not enough to make it work for you. Experience is the best teacher.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You are a master of silent communication. It comes with flexibility of focus. You can zoom out or in as needed to get in sync with your target. With the right kind of concentration, you establish mental connection.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). An enthralling project makes you forget your worries and concerns. And when reality sets back in, you'll have a fresh take on it. What was once important will seem petty or vice versa.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Relentless excitement can be emotionally taxing. You'll take a break from drama as you gravitate to kind people with something interesting -- but not too interesting -- to talk about.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The role of creativity is thought by some to be secondary to the main action -- a garnish on the plate of life. But if you go into this day leading with your creativity, remarkable improvements will blossom.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Many things you once wanted are no longer important to you. Either you got them already, or the want weakened until it disappeared. But there are still wants that remain unsatisfied. You'll revive an effort to make it happen.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You sense what people need and want. You have a better grasp of the big picture than many can see. With empathy, you open communication. You're perfect for a diplomatic mission.

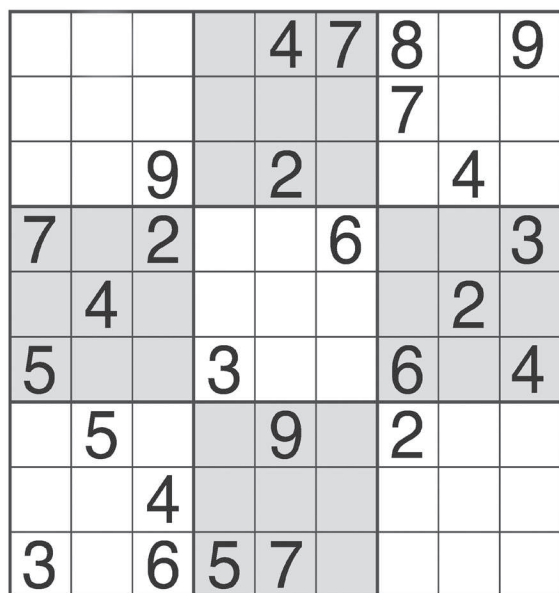
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Tenacity brings success as long as you're tenacious about something that is good for everyone. When the aim is selfish, persistence may still win out, but it's a hollow victory.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It would be cool if loved ones could intuit your desire and fulfill it without you having to articulate a thing. This will not be the case, though. The best way to get what you want is simple: Ask for it!

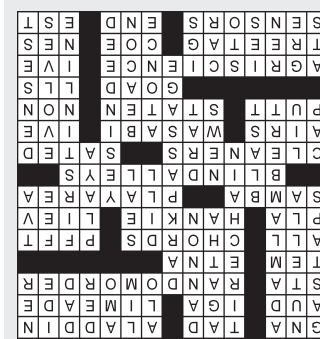
TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 29). You're knowledgeable, but not too proud to utter the magic words "I don't know" so the world unfolds its grandeur at your feet. As you lead with curiosity, you'll keep everyone on their toes, increase communication and cooperation, and be instrumental in smooth operations. You'll be celebrated and paid well! Gemini and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 30, 29, 17 and 5.

Universal SUDOKU

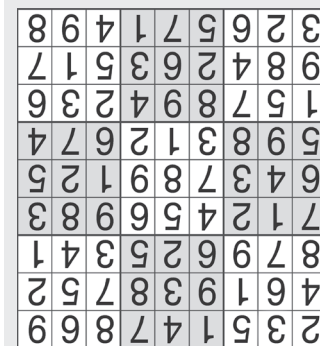
Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆☆

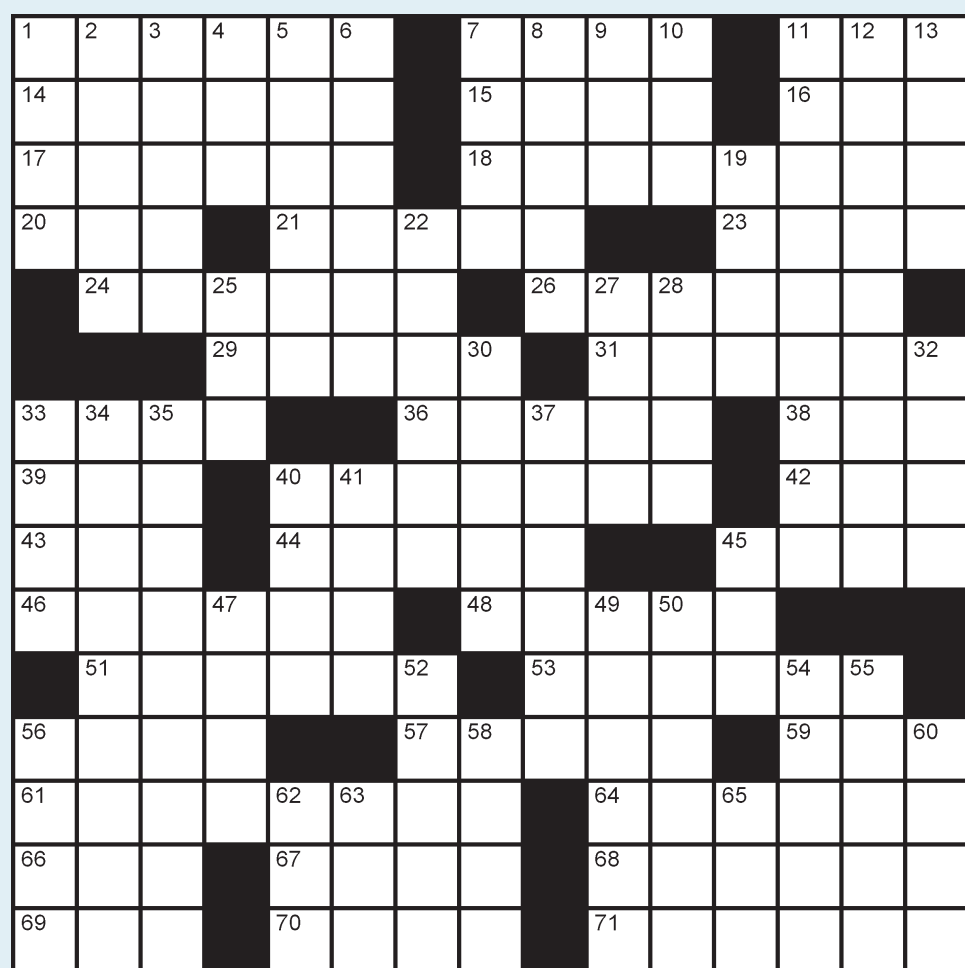


SOLUTIONS



Letter Openers by Gary Larson

Universal Crossword edited by David Steinberg



- ACROSS 1 Grocery in a Spanish-speaking neighborhood 7 Online conversation 11 Nickname hidden in "avid reader" 14 Where to find Eugene 15 Puncture opening 16 Relieve (of) 17 Benefit of a college degree? 18 Noon? 20 Heavyweight boxing great 21 "Calvin and Hobbes" girl 23 Nothing ___ (no more) 24 Watch online 26 Wine and dine 29 Wing it on stage 31 Hollywood makeover, say? 33 Karate blow 36 City northeast of Abu Dhabi 38 Pentagon org. 39 Alley-___ 40 Endowment for a retired soldier? 42 Birth control option: Abbr. 43 Number that looks like an l 44 Ward off 45 Sugar bowl marchers 46 Sneaky plan for skipping gym class? 48 Yemeni's neighbor 51 Philosopher Jean-Paul 53 Living spaces 56 Unaccompanied at prom 57 Big name in chocolates 59 Wireless standard letters 61 Loudspeaker system that's leased out? 64 Promotion for a diplomacy group? 66 Kimono sash 67 Has a bite 68 Sounding like lovebirds 69 It may be iced 70 Professor's specialty 71 Turns on the dance floor DOWN 1 Taiwanese beverage 2 Spoken exams 3 Minus entry in a ledger 4 Sense of self 5 Spurred 6 Like a yearbook 7 Indian beverage 8 Really big hit? 9 Pub pick 10 Number you just read 11 Taught through repetition 12 Quickly cleaned, as a bowl 13 Easy part of a jigsaw, often 19 Sweetie 22 Wee bit 25 Take the ___ (accept blame) 27 Zippy quality 28 Way of walking 30 Southwestern pack animal 32 Chances 33 Where a hen lives 34 Lincoln nickname 35 Solo for Jessye Norman or Paul Robeson 37 The Joker's archenemy 40 Seemingly boundless 41 Assert 45 Word after "Live" or "sleep" 47 Implore 49 Take away in a spaceship 50 "Maybe later" 52 Tickle pink 54 New York Harbor's ___ Island 55 Action movie feat 56 Glasses annoyance 58 "Casablanca" heroine 60 Sponge cake ingredients 62 PBS funder 63 Roofing gunk 65 Dish with Polynesian roots

HOROSCOPES BY HOLIDAY MATHIS

MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 2021 Mercury Gets Beautiful



The change of Mercury represents an invitation to experience beauty through creation, appreciation and/or immersion. For many, this transit will come with the realization that beauty is the primary language of nature and is around us at all times. We need only adjust our focus to let it in.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You will do what you're compelled to do. Your inner drive remains undaunted by external threat and unimpressed by rewards from the outside. The endeavor is the prize.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Spiritual interests and physical health are closely aligned, and any work you do to improve one sector will favorably affect the other. You feel generous when you feel healthy.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Baffling behavior sets up a mystery you will continue to follow until you crack it. You will not give up until you comprehend the motive behind the action and can influence further action.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll come across the right teacher who is an excellent match for your style of learning. A school or structured training will be well worth the investment.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). From your guiding luminary -- the sun -- you learn that when you stay a respectful distance from the object of your affection, this person will gravitate toward and orbit around you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You feel connected with someone by an invisible bond. You are a person of action, so it's not enough to acknowledge a feeling. To feel complete, you must do something about it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You will follow your specific plan to establish a new habit. Unsurprisingly, magic will drop into this otherwise completely practical situation, which often happens in your serendipitous life.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your empathic powers disallow you to ignore the feelings of those around you; though there are some you might consider leaving unserved. Avoid giving good effort to a narcissistic agenda.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The planning stage is crucial to your experiences. Not only does it make things go better, but making the plan will be a pleasure in and of itself. Don't skip it!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There's a quiet comfort in the way some people go out of their way to make you feel special. Should it really be such a rarity? How can you get more of this in your life?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You do not lack motivation; though the details of a successful process are not as clear to you as they must be in order for you to follow through. Take it slowly, step by step, making sure you really understand each move.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You have plenty to give today and will be in a generous mode. It's not selfish to know what you want in exchange; in fact, it will make the transaction more satisfying for everyone.

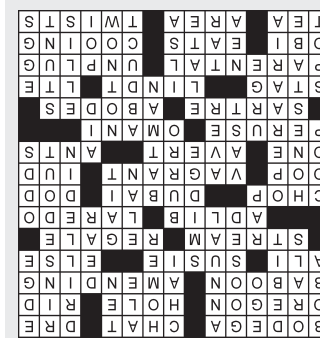
TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 30). Leverage the attention and affection coming your way this solar return to do some good in the world. You'll gain freedom from something that's pressured you for years. Relief will be followed by extra energy you can apply to your blossoming mission. Your personal life will sing. You'll feel spoiled with love. Scorpio and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 2, 22, 15 and 40.

Universal SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆



SOLUTIONS

