



FILM REVIEWS NOW IN CINEMAS...

A haunting love story, as heartfelt as it is horrific

DRACULA: A LOVE TALE (Drama/Horror)

★★★½
Cast: Caleb Landry Jones, Zoë Bleu, Christoph Waltz
Director: Luc Besson
Duration: 2 hr 90min
Language: English (A 18+)

Review in short

Dracula: A Love Tale is where horror meets eternal love. Luc Besson tells the story of a 15th-century prince (Caleb Landry Jones) cursed to live as a vampire after losing his wife, Elisabeta (Zoë Bleu). Spanning centuries, the film blends campy horror, blood, and gothic thrills with a deeply romantic core. Set against grand castles and historic Europe, it immerses viewers in a timeless, atmospheric tale. Christoph Waltz adds gravitas as a priest pursuing Dracula, while Jones' passionate performance

Should you watch it?

If you love tragic, timeless romance with a gothic twist, this is worth it. Horror fans may find it gentler than expected.

makes the prince's centuries-long quest for love compelling. The result is an unhinged, heartfelt vampire story that balances terror with romance.

— Ronak Koteka



Knives Out revives its edge in a faith-riddled whodunnit

WAKE UP DEAD MAN: A KNIVES OUT MYSTERY (Mystery/Drama)

★★★½
Cast: Daniel Craig, Josh O'Connor, Josh Brolin, Glenn Close, Mila Kunis, Jeremy Renner, Kerry Washington, Andrew Scott
Director: Rian Johnson
Duration: 2 hr 24min
Language: English (UA 16+)
Streaming on: Netflix

Review in short

When firebrand preacher Monsignor Wicks (Josh Brolin) is found dead under mysterious circumstances in an isolated small-town church, detective Benoit Blanc (Daniel Craig) immediately senses foul play. From the monsignor's fiercely loyal congregation to newly arrived boxer-turned-priest Jud Duplicit (Josh O'Connor), no one is above suspicion. The *Knives Out* franchise returns to form with this third instalment — darker, grittier, and more contemplative than its predecessors. Flashes of humour remain, but Rian Johnson scales back the levity to deliver a meditation on



Should you watch it?

If you savour slow-burn, offbeat murder mysteries, this one is absolutely worth your time

the complexities of belief. Themes of tolerance, polarisation, and coexistence lend the mystery surprising depth.

Despite the ensemble cast, this atmospheric whodunnit unfolds largely around Josh O'Connor. *The Crown* and *Challengers* star delivers an earnest, compelling central performance, matched by Craig's stylishly eccentric Benoit Blanc. The murder's unraveling is clever, and the final twist genuinely unexpected, though the film takes a while to find its rhythm. A tighter pace could have elevated this slow-burn thriller further.

— Renuka Vayahare

LEISURE

TIMES HITORI

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

HOW TO PLAY

1. A number may appear just once in each row or column. Eliminate repeat numbers by darkening cells. (see example) 2. Darkened cells must never be adjacent in a row or column. 3. Unmarked cells must

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

Example

LOOP THE LOOP

RULES

- Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A).
- Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B).
- Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines.
- You can't draw lines around zeroes.
- Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

Not allowed (Fig B)

1	2	2	2	2
3	2	2	2	2
3	0	3	2	2
2	2	2	2	2
2	3	2	2	2

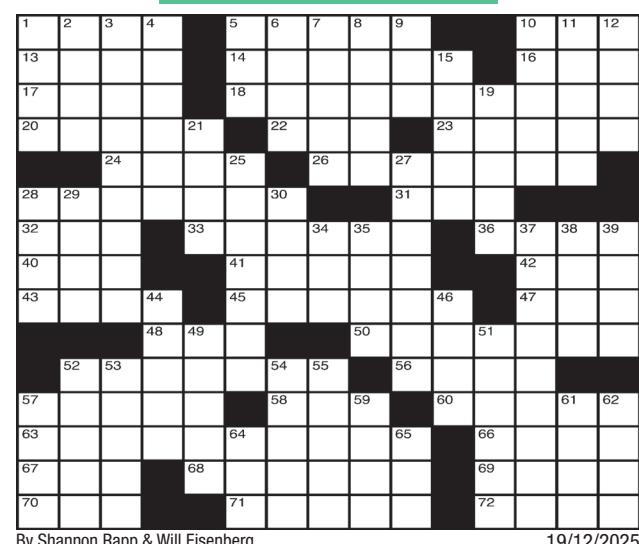
HOW TO BEGIN:

Example (Fig A) -

Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a deadend (Fig B).

THE DAILY CROSSWORD



By Shannon Rapp & Will Eisenberg
19/12/2025

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

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

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SUDOKU CHALLENGE

Level: Medium

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

HOW TO PLAY

Fill in the grid so that every horizontal row, every vertical column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9, without repeating the numbers in the same row, column or box. You can't change the digits already given in the grid. Every puzzle has one solution.

GARFIELD

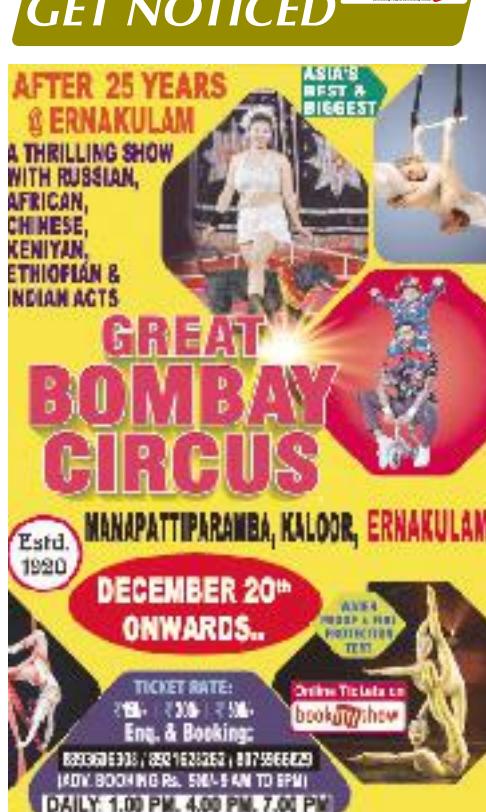


ARCHIE



GET NOTICED

timesinteract



SPELLATHON

Today's Ratings:

02-average 03-good 04-outstanding



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, a letter can be used as many times as it appears in the puzzle. Each word must contain the central letter. There should be at least one seven letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed. British English Dictionary is used as reference.

ARIES: The person you desire is turning attention elsewhere. Let them go and open up to the flock of people who secretly have their eyes on you. Watch your temper. Make an effort to adjust your thinking.

TAURUS: There is a favorable romantic energy in the air for you right now. Get ready for positive networking contacts to pop up in your life.

GEMINI: The bottom line is that you are the brightest star in the sky right now, and your partner the luckiest person on the planet. Your creative energy and emotions will be enhanced, but with insecurity. It will be possible to follow your dreams if you have them.

CANCER: This time apart is paving the way for a wonderful reunion. You feel deeply for those who are less fortunate. Engaging in activities lends strength.

LEO: You may choose to get out into the world and to grasp all to learn, but it can become negative and selfish. The energy of the day will require you to be more outgoing. Compromise will be needed, and you must initiate it.

VIRO: Today, you could feel a strong need to exercise and to take care of your body. You will need to find and draw your own conclusions with evidence before accepting others' notions. Colleagues may come to you with ideas for your

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See what the stars have in store for you — according to your moon sign.

consideration. Watch out for negative thoughts.

LIBRA: You have a very lofty way of looking at the world, and your idealistic version of life and the events that befall you