

# SHORT STORY (A MORAL DILEMMA)

Dear Solvers,

Welcome to my third annual Labor Day Extravaganza!

I'd like to apologize for the half-sizedness of this edition. The fact is, swamped with various other commitments and projects, I started on it much too late. Had I worked on it steadily a little at a time over the course of the year, I think I'd have succeeded in making it grander; but, of course, I waited until the very last minute to focus on it, so here we are.

The short, sweet works of Aesop seemed an apt fit for a project destined to be small in scale (the *Iliad* will have to wait a year). It certainly held more appeal than the apparently sincere suggestion someone made (you know who you are) to do a puzzle for each of the *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights* (it's certainly easy to suggest some monumental enterprise like that when you're not the one who has to write it)! Honestly, I think a puzzle extravaganza of that size would be horribly cumbersome and un-fun for both the constructor and the solver. Admittedly, I may just feel very negatively about it because I know such a project is well beyond my reach. I can generally manage about twelve puzzles comfortably, but I think if I tried to go for more than that, I'd risk screwing up the whole thing. So, this year at least, six it is.

Unfortunately, I'd already designed the metapuzzle to work with a dozen puzzles. Serves me right for counting on having that many complete before they'd actually materialized, I guess. Necessity is the mother of invention, though, so I've arrived at a way to use that meta grid anyway: with only half as many individual answers as I originally intended, I'll ask that you please double each answer before entering it in the grid.

As for the rest...well, I think I've learned some real lessons.

Happy puzzling!

Mark/Zebraboy

		30	3		13	
						22
	10		8		5	
		14	28			
2						17
	21			23		
	12	1	18		6	
19	11			27		7
	15	9		24	4	
						29
	26	25		16		20