

Holiday Hoopla 2020

Mutiny

Answer: TWELVE

You may think that you hate this puzzle more than anyone else possibly could--you would be wrong. We hate this puzzle more than literally anyone. It is the worst thing we have ever created and still haunts us.

Originally, this puzzle was wayyy easier. It was the easiest puzzle (rivaling Grease? No...). Here's the original version if anyone wants to try to solve it: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RHzzTmJo2_0Q-ycr5XSttZOete4riMOa/view?usp=sharing. But we already had too many easy puzzles, and we needed another hard one, so we had to think of a new puzzle, and accidentally made it one of the hardest puzzles in the whole hunt.

So we rewrote it, and accidentally missed a bunch of illegal moves. Oops. Sorry to all our test-solvers!

The night of December 26th (aka, the night before the actual puzzle hunt), we were literally on a call together until 1 a.m., just trying to rewrite this puzzle because it wasn't necessarily solvable. Now that we fixed it, it's just a bit weird. And it was crazy hard to write, since every mistake could potentially change the rest of the puzzle.

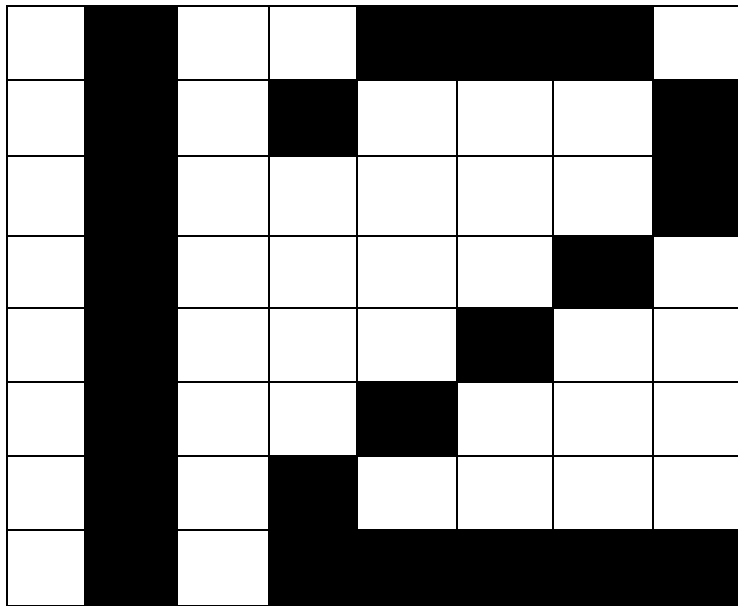
And yes, there was still one move wrong, but it was thankfully at the end of the puzzle so it didn't change too much and people were still able to solve it.

Moving on from us ranting about how much we despise this puzzle, here's how to actually solve it. We knew we wanted to make something that had to do with mapping out certain spots of the chess board (We're unoriginal). However, this is a very easy puzzle, and we wanted to change it a bit. We remembered something we'd read about "cheating chess," and decided to incorporate that type of concept into the puzzle.

The body of the puzzle contains the moves for White and Black pieces. If you play through the moves, you'll see that some of them are illegal. For example, there are pieces moving in ways they aren't allowed to move in, white moving a black piece, or white taking a white piece (therefore "mutiny"). When

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you map out the end positions of these illegal moves, the board will look something like this:



Do you see it? It looks like the number 12, so the answer is "TWELVE." Because, well, "twelve days of Christmas."

Also, the flavor text seems a bit strange at first, but you have to take each phrase literally and then it makes sense. The first part said, "pretty sure that's not how chess works," and that's very much correct. The phrase points to the illegal moves being important. The second part said "the ends will justify the means," which is also fairly literal. The end (singular, as is used in the typical version of the phrase) is the answer, and the means are the illegal moves. And, "ends" is plural, meaning that you're using the end of more than one thing. Put that together, and it tells you that you get to the answer by using the ends of the illegal moves. Basically, it makes sense, but just requires a bit more thinking than some of the other puzzles.