

Two Down

by Ucaoinhu

Welcome to the 28th American Crossword Puzzle Tournament! To train for this event, I adopted a strict regimen of one crossword a day through all of February. When the grid is complete, you will see the three-letter entries (“trigrams”) I got for 1 Down and 3 Down in each puzzle.

Don’t worry if not all of these trigrams appear in your dictionary. What you should worry about is the fact that half of them appear inappropriately in the clues; they must be removed before solving. The other half of the clues work normally.

Also, in five puzzles, I just couldn’t solve 2 Down. To find out which puzzles they were, take the clues with extraneous trigrams, and order them chronologically by trigram (1 Down before 3 Down). Then from each clue answer, take the first letter if the corresponding trigram is from a Sunday puzzle, the second if it’s from a Monday, and so forth.

Match the remaining clues in clue order with the remaining trigrams in chronological order. Take one word from each clue; which word is again determined by the day of the week the corresponding trigram is from. This series of words will provide the clues for 1, 4 and 5 Across in each of the five puzzles; it is up to you to determine where one clue starts and the next ends, and the order the five puzzles occur in.

Once you solve 1, 4, and 5 Across for each puzzle, you will then know 2 Down. Take the 2 Downs for all five puzzles in the order you just determined. This will answer to the question seen at 19 and 35 Across, which I was asking myself all through this frigid February.

ACROSS

1. Flower in Italy, say, with no revamp becomes nosegay (4)
3. Put a hole in round fence (4)
6. Holders of fluid-like minerals smiled back (6)
12. Development relating to Topsy having gone nuts (8)
13. Means of making *one sick pervert* refer to the author (6)
14. Peabody started, in the last period, to be a referee (5)
16. Fairly and me load pier (4)

17. Say, Lesbian copresident of Greece who composed epic about old, old jerk (10)
18. Stress getting lit, endlessly, for ages (4)
19. *See instructions*
25. Greek characters test device, ultimately, the wrong way (4)
26. Henna, Indigo and the rest drive okay (4)
27. Sentimental tenpin players essentially adopting tailless bear named Winnie (6)
28. Ax troll bearing letters about ladies and goblins (6)
31. To load from oxcart within beer plant (4)
33. Leer at German, wearing an expression of approval (4)
35. *See instructions*
37. Impolite Manchu abandons Democrat for Republican (4)
39. Cousin of Gomez the Parisian deceives into selling place back, by a dozen tricks (6 4)
43. Mostly, that is midway through the month (4)
44. Briny waters toss canoe (5)
45. What’s in Chinese, Len explains for a Greek goddess (6)
46. Forceful but strange MC hit serape (8)
47. Wizard who brought us Lee might upset team playing (6)

48. Misuses almost nothing but soy paste (4)
49. Kate is mistaken for a tree (4)

DOWN

1. Hops the wrong way to be fashionable (4)
2. Glasses of chunky soup are filled by end of *Hamlet* (8)
3. A monster thus will recede (4)
4. Reflecting pugilist’s very first scrap being ahead of schedule (6)
5. Trap catches last to say no to Putin (4)
6. Parts of letters about small flames (6)
7. Mice playing, as seen from within a given culture (4)
8. Least edgy of cards the First Lady left for celebration (5)
9. Preminger, who directed *Eight in Italy* (4)
10. Join up what is disjointed in song (4 2)
11. Top people reflecting about Welles’s last two (4)
14. At the home of Glinda and company, flipped over a kind of suit (4)
15. Lifesaver displaces meter in luxury car’s front (4)
16. Weapon and curse overwhelming meany Ed (6)
19. Box topless, by command (4)
20. Lazy author lucked out (4)
21. A vessel is needed to reach these scattered stiles (6)
22. Oil producers in historic epoch recalled (4)
23. If Sal & Sol get incorrect shipboard record . . . (3 5)
24. Watering yews to produce two-branched ones (4)
29. Slid in church vehicle, hitting teddies out front (6)
30. Lunatic listed, e’en in Dutch City (6)
32. Otis cut into right ship’s fore-decks (6)
33. After the second time, tortoise shows you French river (4)
34. Menial beheaded and left by one with inclination (4)
36. Tennis player unable to perform any function when nude (5)
37. A cereal treat or trick (4)
38. Be a toy that’s upset one surrealist (4)
39. Hot tub from Salem covered with orange floor covering, briefly (4)
40. Mostly, temp takes earth to Boise in abundance (4)
41. Repeat the words of English comedian Margaret (4)
42. Defamatory remarks in frenzied, less brief article (4)

	T	W	T	F	S	S	M						
1		2		3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12								13					
	14		15				16						
17										18			
19				20			21		22		23		24
25				26				27					
28	29				30	31		32		33		34	
35			36										
37		38		39		40			41				42
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45						46							
47						48				49			