



A criminally entertaining suite of meta puzzles by:

Andy Kravis

Angela Olson Halsted

Erik Agard

Neville Fogarty

Peter Broda

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And of course, thank *you*, solvers, for buying this meta suite and supporting The Indie 500! The proceeds from this meta suite help us to keep our registration fee low by going toward our tournament expenses, which include paying constructors, booking our venue, printing the puzzles, providing supplies and merchandise, and, of course ... buying pie.

Enjoy, and we hope to see you at The Indie 500 in June!

– Andy

Introduction

“Gumshoe! Step into my office, please.”

You hear her voice clear as a bell from down the hall. The Honcho is a stern, authoritative woman with a booming voice. As you crack open the door of her office, you can see that The Honcho is wearing a smart red and yellow color-blocked suit, emblazoned with a square logo reading: *I.N.D.I.E. Detective Agency*. She bears an uncanny resemblance to actress Lynne Thigpen, but—and I cannot stress this enough—she is neither Lynne Thigpen nor any character portrayed by Lynne Thigpen.

The Honcho motions for you to take a seat.

“Welcome to the I.N.D.I.E. Detective Agency, rookie. We’re glad to have you on board. Your reputation as a keen puzzling mind precedes you.” For some reason, she is holding a magnifying glass.

“Normally, you would spend your first week or so watching training videos, shadowing our more experienced detectives, taking Microsoft Outlook proficiency courses—the usual onboarding bureaucracy. However, right now we don’t have the luxury of easing you into the I.N.D.I.E. workplace.

“As you already know, we’re in the business of tracking down thieves. Ultimately, we’re after one uber-thief: Carla Sacramento, the head of the U.G.L.I. Crime Syndicate. Carla’s fingers are as sticky as epoxy, but she’s as slippery as an elver. Until now, she’s always managed to elude us.

“I’ve just received a tip from one of our field agents that Carla is planning something big: an international caper with several targets around the globe. She’s much too smart to expose herself by executing these heists herself. If her past crimes are any indication, she’ll send some of her underlings to do her dirty work.

“If our information is correct, then we don’t have much time before Carla puts her plan into action. You’ll have to fly out to the first target tonight.

“Luckily for us, Carla has one major weakness: she always leaves a crossword puzzle with a meta-puzzle component at the scene of each potential crime. The answers to her meta puzzles are always a crucial piece of information about her plan. We know about these puzzles, but as far as we know, she doesn’t know that *we* know about these puzzles. Y’know?”

You know ... you think.

“Our hope is that you’ll be able to intercept and solve these puzzles to discover what Carla and her underlings are planning in time to stop them.”

The Honcho slides you a dossier.

“Here’s what we know from Carla’s past heists: Each of Carla’s puzzles will lead you to a meta answer related to the crime she’s planning. The meta answer can be found by considering all parts of the puzzle, including the title, clues, grid, and especially her prompt that tells you what kind of answer you’re looking for.

“Once you think you’ve solved one of Carla’s meta puzzles, you can check your answer with me at <http://www.theindie500.com/meta>. Every time you solve one of Carla’s meta puzzles, it should give us just enough insight into Carla’s plan to stop her.

“Our hope is that by the time you’ve solved all five of Carla’s puzzles, our field agents will have gathered enough information to track down Carla’s whereabouts, so be sure to check back in at <http://www.theindie500.com/meta> after you have all five meta answers.

“Oh, and Gumshoe: If you ever need help solving one of Carla’s puzzles, I’ve given you some extra hints (encoded in rot-13 to make sure they don’t fall into the wrong hands!) at the very end of your dossiers. Rot-13 is a code that can be decoded at <http://www.rot13.com>. My first hint is intended to be a nudge in the right direction, while later hints should give you an increasingly clear idea of how to proceed. If you’re still stuck after turning to those hints or if you have any other questions, you can always email me for help at xwordtournament@gmail.com.

“You fly out tonight for your first mission. Can we count on you to nab Carla and her minions before they nab these precious items from around the globe?”

You nod. As you take the dossier and leave the office, you realize that The Honcho has placed a lot of trust in you. You’d better get cracking!

Dossier 1: Parade Route

Location: Southern Fruit Festival, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.
Person of Interest: “Gray” Prue Dyette
Meta difficulty: 2.5/5

2019 marks the 15th anniversary of the Southern Fruit Festival in Ho Chi Minh City. To celebrate the occasion, the organizers have invited farmers from all over the world to bring their biggest, best, rarest, and most delicious fruit. The proceedings will feature native and non-native species alike, and the festival will begin with a parade featuring giant papier-mâché floats made to look like all sorts of fruit. Of course U.G.L.I. would make its first move here.

You’re scheduled to meet up with Cam, the lead organizer of the Southern Fruit Festival, once you arrive in Ho Chi Minh City. During the long plane ride, you have plenty of time to read and re-read the dossier, the highlights of which are as follows:

I.N.D.I.E. believes that Carla plans, improbably, to steal *all* of the fruit at the festival’s main display hall. Lending some credence to that theory, I.N.D.I.E. agents have seen career thief and known Carla associate “Gray” Prue Dyette around town. She’d be hard to miss with her signature wild gray curls, but the fact that she’s been so careless about being seen must mean she’s confident in Carla’s plan.

When you land, you find that you have a voicemail from Cam asking you to come straight from the airport and meet her at a large garage adjoining the main display hall. When you walk into the garage, you see hundreds of gigantic floats, all made to look like different fruits. This is the starting point of today’s Parade of Fruit, a ceremony that will kick off the weeklong festival.

“Gumshoe! I’m so glad to see you. I know you’ve been in the air for quite a while, so you probably haven’t heard—somehow, Prue has already managed to purloin all our fruit! I went to the main hall this morning to check on things, and every piece of fruit on display was gone! Luckily, one of our volunteers found this next to a trash can along the parade route.”

Cam hands you a crumpled up black envelope containing a crossword puzzle. Prue was careful enough to white out her work, but apparently not careful enough to properly dispose of the puzzle in a trash can. You hate litterbugs.

Sure enough, at the top of the puzzle is a handwritten note from Carla:

*Follow the route in order, in order to get away.
Float on, my silver-haired compadre.*

- CS

“It doesn’t take an expert puzzle solver to figure out that one of the floats is probably the getaway vehicle. We don’t know how else Prue could have moved all that fruit anyway—our

working theory is that she moved it piece by piece from the main hall into one of these floats last night.

“One major problem is that any of the floats could be the getaway vehicle, since all the floats are large enough to hold all the fruit. An even bigger problem is that because of the way the floats are built, the only way to know for sure which one is hiding the fruit would be to break open every float until we find the right one. We can’t afford to do that, especially if we’re wrong about the floats being the getaway vehicles—the festival is a huge source of tourism for us, and destroying these floats would ruin the festival. Then again, letting all the fruit get stolen from under our noses would certainly ruin the festival too ...

“That’s where you come in. Our hope is that you can solve Carla’s puzzle and figure out which float is the getaway vehicle. If you can prove to us you’ve solved the puzzle, we’re willing to destroy one float to try to catch Prue. If not, we’ll just have to hope that we can intercept her at the end of the parade ... and that she hasn’t already gotten away.

“Good luck—we’re all counting on you. Solve this puzzle before the floats reach the end of the parade route!”

The meta answer is the fruit that Prue’s float resembles.

1 Parade Route CS

ACROSS

- 1 *If I Understood You, Would I Have This Look on My Face?* author Alan
 5 Buford Tannen's rabid-sounding nickname in "Back to the Future Part III"
 11 Champion's prize
 14 Faux ____
 17 Honest-to-goodness "Seinfeld" role
 18 Cool ____ cucumber
 20 Genre that, when made into a portmanteau with "scream," becomes a subgenre
 21 *The ideal people to wave from a parade float, in my opinion ... now where are they?
 23 Ignore a "Do Not Disturb" sign, say
 25 Columbia org.
 26 "Be Prepared" group: Abbr.
 28 Playfully revealing one's sexual attraction
 29 *The ideal way to pay for a parade, in my opinion ... now where is it?
 34 Follows, as a hypnotist's instructions
 35 ____ one's time
 36 Irene of "Fame"
 37 Some earth tones
 39 Absorbed, as a loss
 40 *The ideal award to win for a parade float, in my opinion ... now where is it?
 43 Slew
 46 Cute little cafés
 48 Debtor's letters
 49 Brand-name medicine autoinjectors whose price has risen more than 600% in the last 10 years
 52 Consist of
 53 Large wine bottle
 55 Twig digs
 56 Johanna who wrote *Heidi*
 58 Food that can be made with a *chitarra*, a frame strung with guitar wire
 60 Actor Sal of 63-Across
 63 Otto Preminger film based on a Leon Uris novel

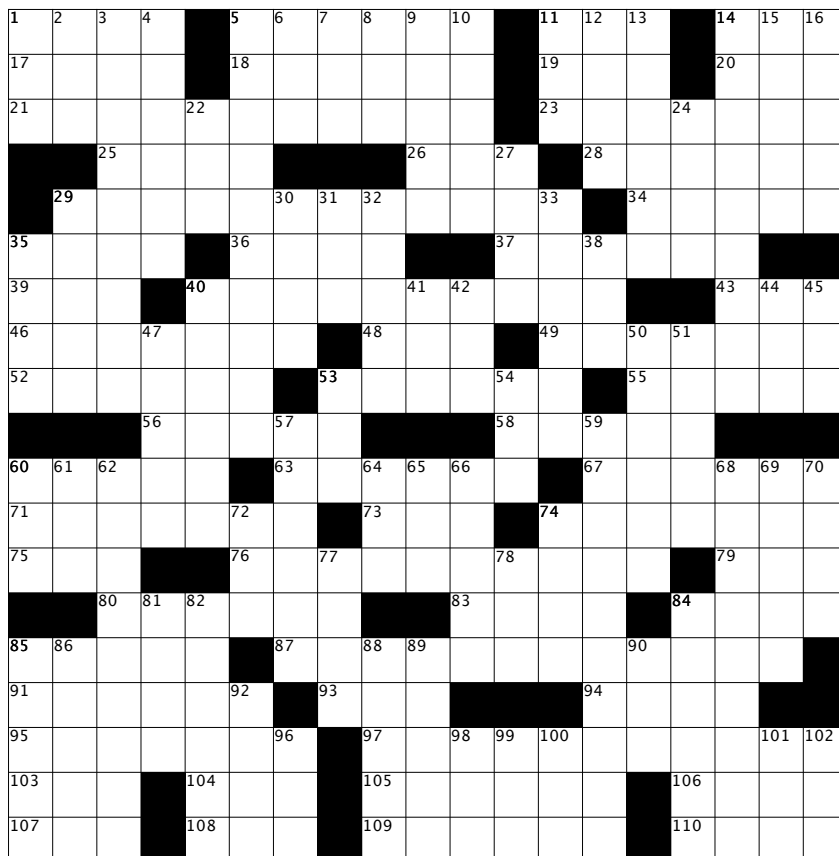
- 67 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* character who pines for Lysander
 71 Soon to be in stock
 73 "This second round of fireworks is even cooler than the first!"
 74 Desolate
 75 Acers, e.g.
 76 *The ideal time during a football broadcast to cut to a parade, in my opinion ... now where is it?
 79 Fashion designer Diane ____ Furstenburg
 80 City nicknamed "The Old Pueblo"
 83 Dram or gram
 84 "All right already!"
 85 *Symposium* author
 87 *The ideal group to sing during a parade, in my opinion ... now where is it?
 91 Steady income
 93 Promise
 94 Backstabber in *Othello*, or the parrot in "Aladdin"
 95 Major avenue
 97 *The ideal street for a New York City parade, in my opinion ... now where is it?
 103 See 86-Down
 104 Eisenhower, to his friends
 105 Blubber
 106 Southwestern city that rhymes with 101-Down
 107 Female WWII enlistee
 108 "Snowden" org.
 109 Endorses online
 110 Trade barbs

DOWN

- 1 Shar-Pei's sharp plaint
 2 Island garland
 3 Utmost
 4 French border region near Strasbourg
 5 Down in the dumps
 6 According to
 7 7-Down's partner, sometimes
 8 50% of MIV
 9 End of an era?
 10 Plaster for painting
 11 One in line at an airport
 12 Org. with an academy near Colorado Springs

- 13 Site for ice cream, billiards, or a massage
 14 Ladies, e.g.
 15 Harmony among various communities
 16 Some Blu-ray players
 22 Menu general
 24 Taunt
 27 Mine, in Amiens
 29 Peaceful protest
 30 Spot for a speaker
 31 Like some discount merchandise: Abbr.
 32 ____ Vulvokov, Natasha Lyonne's character on Netflix's "Russian Doll"
 33 Dermatologist's diagnosis
 35 Hon
 38 ____ B vaccine
 40 Shooting stand
 41 Disc popular in the 1990s
 42 Be in charge of
 44 Treebeard, for one
 45 Utter jerk
 47 It's a real stunner
 50 Student worker who is still unpaid far too often
 51 Bit of wisdom
 53 Pastiche
 54 Increases, as the current through a wire
 57 Put new shingles on, as a building
 59 Propagandistic court proceedings
 60 Do a janitor's job (which I guess is janiting?)
 61 Terry Riley piece that's often cited as the first minimalist musical composition (its title tells you its key)
 62 One way to wax
 64 It can move a kayak forward or backward
 65 "Gimmie ____" (Ciara song)
 66 "Yup!"
 68 Opening theme to "The Jeffersons"
 69 It may be dramatic
 70 Meryl's co-star in "The Devil Wears Prada"
 72 Toffee center?
 74 Federal law that allows members of the public to request access to govt. records
 77 Rice, e.g.: Abbr.

- 78 Letters after Sen. Maggie Hassan's name
 81 State whose motto is "Industry"
 82 Longtime Animal Planet personality Jeff
 84 Fuddy-duddies
 85 "Poppycock!"
 86 With 103-Across, boxer who retired with a perfect 24-0 record
 88 "____/Verdon" (2019 FX show about a choreographer/dancer team)
 89 What look-alikes might pass for
 90 Dirk Nowitzki for his entire NBA career, for short
 92 High-altitude bovines
 96 "I approve"
 98 Number at the top of some clocks
 99 "Suitable for all ages" program rating
 100 Coop resident
 101 Actress Thurman whose first name rhymes with 106-Across
 102 Ring leader?



Dossier 2: Deus ex Machina

Location: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States
Person of Interest: Ruby Goldberg
Meta difficulty: 3/5

That night, you get a phone call from The Honcho back at your hotel.

“Great work, Gumshoe! We heard that you helped the authorities in Ho Chi Minh apprehend ‘Gray’ Prue Dyette. Nabbing one of Carla’s top burglars at a fruit festival must feel particularly... *sweet*.”

You hear the attempt at humor in The Honcho’s voice. You muster a polite chuckle.

“Unfortunately, this is no time to rest on your laurels. We need you on the next red-eye to New York. Word has just come in that one of Carla’s known associates, Ruby Goldberg, has been spotted at the Metropolitan Museum of Art each of the last three days. There’s no doubt that she’s casing the joint in preparation for Carla’s next heist. Unfortunately, we can’t detain Ruby for simply enjoying New York’s robust art scene—or at least that’s what the judge told us when we asked for a warrant.

“I’ll fax over I.N.D.I.E.’s profile on Ruby now. To get our warrant, we need you to figure out exactly what Ruby intends to steal. Good luck, Gumshoe!”

As you learn from the dossier (after you manage to find a fax machine—who still faxes things?), Ruby is a woman of many talents. Her M.O. is constructing elaborate machines—some might say cartoonishly elaborate—to circumvent security systems. Besides her engineering prowess, Ruby has a Ph.D. in art history with a specialty in sculpture. Her doctoral dissertation examined the ethics of requiring Western museums to repatriate looted artifacts back to the countries from which they were taken. The first (and so far only) time Ruby was arrested was three years ago, at a protest outside the British Museum calling for the return of the Elgin Marbles to Greece. However, Ruby made bail thanks to an “anonymous” benefactor.

You touch down in New York and take a taxi straight to the Met. The head of security, Frank, meets you in the lobby. The Honcho, he says, has briefed him on the situation and has told him to expect you.

You share your suspicions with him: You believe that Ruby would probably only agree to steal a sculpture that had been taken from another country. You also believe she plans to execute her heist soon.

“Let me be frank,” Frank says. It is unclear whether the pun is intended.

“The Met has over two million pieces in its collection. Even if your hunch is right, there are still thousands of sculptures that fit your description. I can give you our security footage, but

looking at three days' worth of footage from hundreds of cameras—it'll be like looking for a needle in a haystack."

Frank is right. You don't have time to comb through all that footage, and Ruby was probably careful not to linger near her target anyway.

Just then, you hear a sharp *THWAP* behind you. A large black envelope has struck the front doors of the museum, and you catch a brief glimpse of a bike messenger who looks exactly like—but for legal reasons is not—Joseph Gordon-Levitt as he pedals away. He seems to be in a hurry, almost as though he's been paid a Premium to Rush the envelope to its destination.

Frank goes out to get the envelope. When he comes back, his expression has gone from serious to grim.

"It's addressed to Ruby Goldberg."

Inside is another crossword puzzle with a note from Carla:

*"Deus ex machina" means "God from the machine";
Solve this simple puzzle and you'll know which one I mean.
- CS*

Somehow, you suspect Carla's puzzle will be anything but simple.

The meta answer is the subject of the sculpture that is Ruby's target.

2 Deus ex Machina CS

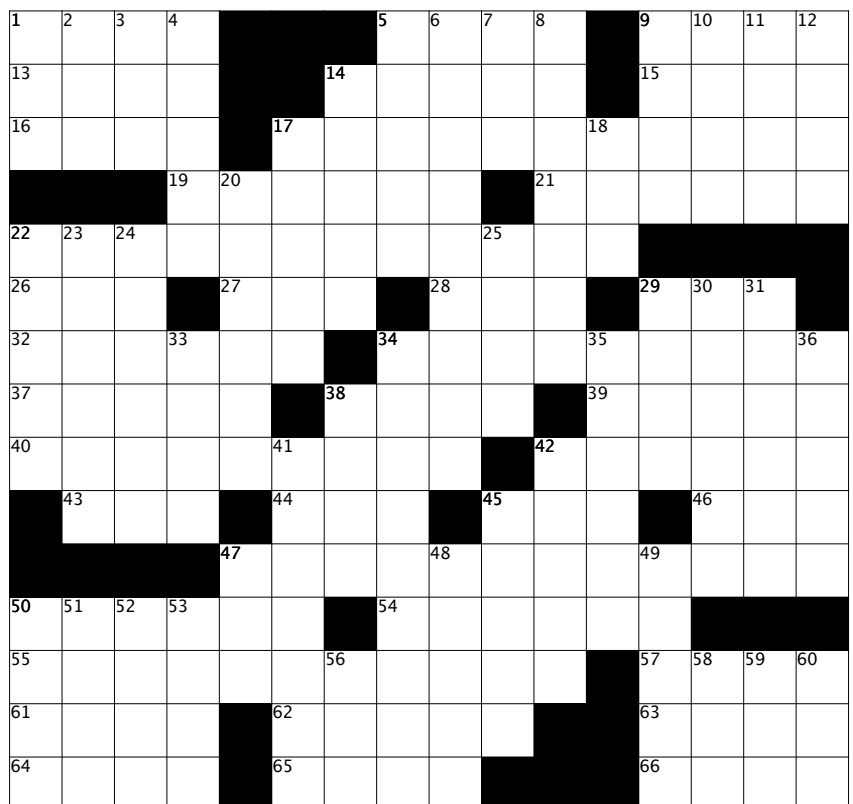
ACROSS

- 1 Puts 2 and 821491096894172 together
- 5 Flaccid
- 9 “Sunshine in Their ___” (Stevie Wonder song)
- 13 See 19-Across
- 14 Underwater acronym
- 15 ___ Scotia
- 16 Garment with *picta* and *praetexta* varieties
- 17 Occult concoction
- 19 With 13-Across, calamitous path
- 21 Entryways
- 22 Birthplace of the mentalist Derren Brown
- 26 “Based ___ true story”
- 27 *Québécois* article
- 28 Something that fits both this year’s Indie 500 theme and the original one
- 29 Texting letters
- 32 On
- 34 Shoe named for a punctuation mark
- 37 Shout before a shock
- 38 Green alert
- 39 Ball girl
- 40 It’s not mutual
- 42 Bear family members
- 43 Con’s opposite
- 44 Cardholder?
- 45 Abbr. for schools in Nashville and Houston whose mascots are both the Tigers
- 46 “Sorry ___ sorry”
- 47 Covert operative in the 2003 CIA leak scandal
- 50 Fly, say
- 54 Fox hunt aid?
- 55 “Roots” star
- 57 Duds
- 61 Dishonest-sounding solutions
- 62 Currently broadcasting
- 63 “The Wire” fan favorite
- 64 Maker of Xperia smartphones
- 65 “Gilmore Girls” university
- 66 Overlong story

DOWN

- 1 Dali’s area
- 2 Team of two
- 3 Ape a gopher, say

- 4 Untangler’s target
- 5 WNBA pre-draft procedure, for short
- 6 Agreeing ... or visiting New Hampshire, perhaps?
- 7 The M in NMJL (the J is Jongg)
- 8 Decide on in advance, as an opinion
- 9 In-community term that some non-binary people use as a gender-neutral alternative to “boy” or “girl”
- 10 The distant past
- 11 At any point
- 12 Table tools
- 14 Walk unassertively
- 17 Yeezy : Kanye West :: Weezy : Lil ___
- 18 “Young man ...”
- 20 Body of work
- 22 Steal from another company
- 23 2007 film in which a “Master”-ful rapper takes care of his sister’s kids
- 24 Like a movie before which a red band trailer is shown, often
- 25 Nickname for the NBA’s Damian Lillard (or any other Damian, theoretically)
- 29 “___ Gotta Have It”
- 30 “Formation” director Matsoukas
- 31 Once in a blue moon
- 33 Avian inhabitant of the animated city of Agrabah
- 34 Degree-giving process
- 35 Out of nowhere
- 36 See 45-Down
- 38 Nightmare ___
- 41 Greek dude?
- 42 Apply to
- 45 With 36-Down, Dili’s nation
- 47 DVD player’s forerunner
- 48 Make another knot in
- 49 Bricks in a 2010s film franchise
- 50 Societal problems
- 51 Singer named for a Keanu Reeves character
- 52 Name that’s a number minus a letter
- 53 “___ money!”
- 56 Apt name for an only child?
- 58 Gp. for a general practitioner
- 59 Distressed shirt
- 60 Something you might have on if you’re wearing a wire?



Dossier 3: Making Contact in Greece

Location: Just off the coast of Santorini, Greece
Person of Interest: Dr. Oklahoma Smith
Meta difficulty: 1/5

You head back to I.N.D.I.E. home base. Things are quiet for a few days, but soon enough, The Honcho calls you into her office.

“Superb work, Gumshoe! Two for two! We were able to nab Ruby today in the act thanks to your quick puzzle-solving work. It’s still unclear to us what the connection between these heists is, but Carla seems to be working toward something big.

“I have another case for you ... have you ever been to Greece? I hear it’s beautiful this time of year. You’ll be meeting with an archaeology professor there who we suspect might be in contact with Carla. He has no criminal history, so we’re hoping you’ll be able to convince him that you’re also in Carla’s employ and get him to tell you what they’re up to. We’ve devised an alias for you and have already made first contact. I know this isn’t your usual assignment, but we have complete faith in you.”

A few days later, you find yourself walking along the coast of Santorini, enjoying a gentle sea breeze. A man wearing an ostentatious Panama hat, a floral-print romper, and a lariat at his hip stands from a nearby bench to greet you.

“Dr. Oklahoma Smith.” He extends his hand.

“You must be Terry Bull. It’s a pleasure to meet you. Carla has spoken so highly of you in the emails I’ve gotten from her new Hotmail account.”

Dr. Smith will not be difficult to fool, it seems. You ask him to fill you in on the latest intel from Carla.

“Well, Terry, Carla says she’s heard a rumor about some interesting relics that supposedly sank somewhere in the Aegean Sea many years ago. I have quite a lot of experience with rare artifacts, so we struck up a deal: she’d pass along whatever information she came across, and I’d use my expertise and university resources to retrieve the artifacts. After all, those relics belong in a museum!”

You suspect Carla has no intention of handing the artifacts over to a museum, but poor, sweet Oklahoma seems none the wiser. You ask him if he’s received any correspondence from Carla lately.

“You mean besides those emails? Just this crossword she said I’d enjoy. I couldn’t make heads or tails of it—puzzles aren’t my forte. You can have it if you want.”

And just like that, Dr. Smith hands over the puzzle. At the top, Carla has written:

*The artifacts that you now seek
Were left by a mythical figure most Greek.
- CS*

If only Carla were as bad a criminal as she is a poet.

“If I could figure out who this figure from Greek myth was, I’d have a much better idea of where to look for these sunken artifacts. If you have any ideas, I’m all ears!”

You consider leaving Dr. Smith in his ignorance. After all, if he never recovers the artifacts, Carla can’t get her hands on them. But you figure that once Carla gets tired of waiting for Dr. Smith to solve her puzzle, she’ll turn to someone savvier. You agree to help Dr. Smith recover the artifacts—at least then I.N.D.I.E. will be able to make sure they don’t fall into the wrong hands.

The meta answer is the figure from Greek myth whose artifacts you’re looking for.

3 Making Contact in Greece CS

ACROSS

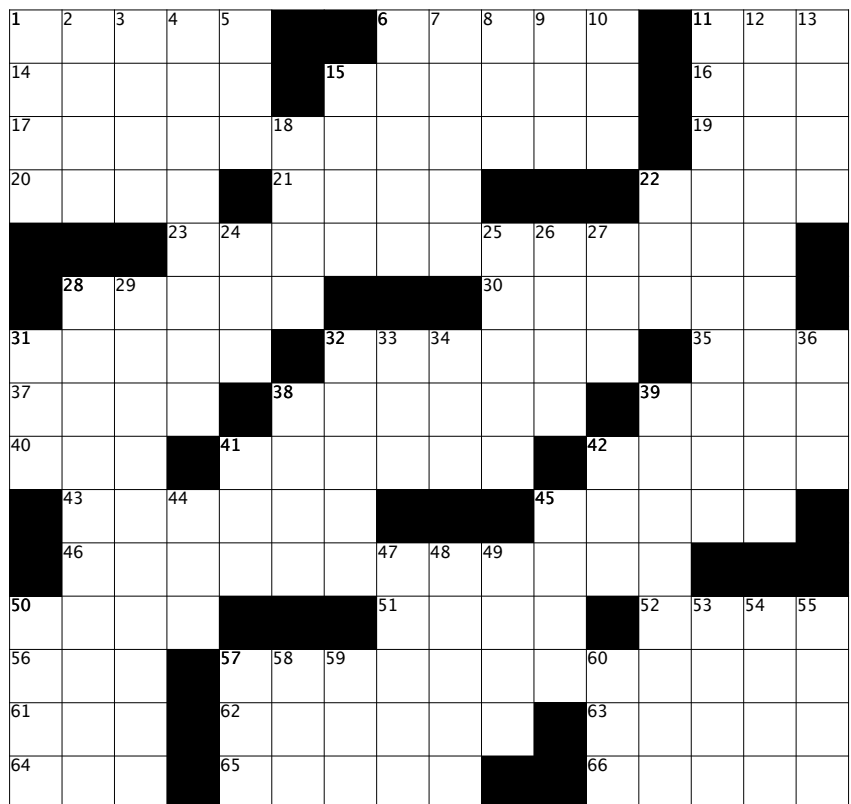
- 1 Big swigs
- 6 Sells
- 11 QVC alternative
- 14 Farewell, in France
- 15 Hockey team, e.g.
- 16 Had a sandwich
- 17 National park near Moab, Utah [tap]
- 19 Do some yardwork
- 20 2016 Rihanna album with a negative-sounding title
- 21 Reverse
- 22 Concert stage array
- 23 Geography teachers' props [nudge]
- 28 Former PGA Tour stop nicknamed the "Blue Monster"
- 30 Edmonton skaters
- 31 Reno or Jackson
- 32 Didn't show up
- 35 Kathleen Sebelius's former dept.
- 37 Perfectly, with "to"
- 38 React to a slight, perhaps
- 39 Corner man?
- 40 Sense of humor
- 41 "Always be yourself. Unless you can be _____. Then be _____." (humorous poster phrase)

- 42 Toyota sedan
- 43 Deli request
- 45 You might rest it on a wire rack
- 46 Enclosure for livestock [poke]
- 50 LP designations
- 51 Girlfriend, in Grenoble
- 52 Exercise practiced at a studio called "Bend It Like Buddha," probably
- 56 Feathery scarf
- 57 Consequence of running a red light, maybe [bump]
- 61 Charged particle
- 62 Mean (to)
- 63 "That Girl" actress Thomas
- 64 Family Stone frontman
- 65 Bragg and Lee, for two
- 66 Involuntary twitch

DOWN

- 1 "A Star Is Born" star, familiarly
- 2 Japanese noodle

- 3 Springy cadence
- 4 Dog food brand
- 5 Jane's "Glee" role
- 6 Like some salsa
- 7 Former jailbird
- 8 The ultimate degree
- 9 Two-time MLB All-Star Gordon
- 10 Ave. crossers
- 11 Make perfectly clear
- 12 Doesn't quiiiiite go there
- 13 "The Rachel Maddow Show" offering
- 15 Do some carpentry work
- 18 ____ and void
- 22 President featured in *Lincoln in the Bardo*, for short
- 24 Cereal grain
- 25 Israel's ____ Heights
- 26 Committed perjury, say
- 27 Like Mother Hubbard and King Cole
- 28 Fish in the sea, proverbially
- 29 What a sloppy drunk may claim to have had
- 31 Mandible
- 32 "Don't ____ It" (NCAA's anti-wagering campaign)
- 33 Cash dispenser that some of us remember having to do without and OMG it sucked
- 34 "You may say ____ dreamer"
- 36 WNBA's Chicago ____
- 38 "Let's Get It On" singer Marvin
- 39 Certain fan's late-inning headwear
- 41 No longer edible
- 42 Gp. whose operatives might wear a wire
- 44 D.C. United org.
- 45 Worry
- 47 Officer-in-training
- 48 Signs of things to come?
- 49 Orange cover
- 50 The Nats' Anthony Rendon once recorded 10 in a single game
- 53 Gumbo ingredient
- 54 Begins to work well
- 55 ____ Ant (1960s cartoon superhero)
- 57 JPG alternative
- 58 Yoko who ... oh, you're done reading this clue? Okay. Carry on.
- 59 USPS delivery
- 60 Gchat exchanges



Dossier 4: The Purloined Letters

Location: The National Archives, Washington, D.C., United States
Person of Interest: John Hancock Burgoyne
Meta difficulty: 5/5

With your help, Dr. Smith is able to act on Carla's tip, and during the following weeks he and his team are able to locate and recover several beautiful ancient statues. Whether they're actually mythical in nature—well, that question's above your pay grade. Regardless, the National Archaeological Museum seems interested in them, and, heavily guarded by I.N.D.I.E. agents, the relics find their way there safely.

Back at your hotel, a letter is waiting for you at the front desk:

Gumshoe,

I hope you've been able to rest up a bit, because your next task is a bit more challenging. Enclosed is a plane ticket to Washington, D.C.—I've arranged for an I.N.D.I.E. agent to meet you at the airport and brief you on the details of your next assignment. Great work in Greece ... keep it up!

- The Honcho

Sure enough, I.N.D.I.E. agent Drew Hardy is waiting for you at baggage claim. You've heard that Drew is a precocious young detective. I.N.D.I.E. hired them a couple years back after reading the story of how they started a detective agency out of their parents' basement at just 14 years old, nabbing 39 criminals in a sleepy, suburban town in just two months.

You can see from across the room that Drew is currently fending off a concerned airport employee. You wave, and Drew, looking relieved, points you out to the employee, who walks away.

"Thanks," Drew says as you grab your bags from the carousel. "That guy thought I got separated from my parents."

Drew hands you a dossier, and the two of you start walking to the Metro as Drew brings you up to speed.

"Over the last three days, three significant historical documents have gone missing. In fact, the documents are all famous historical letters. It's no mystery who's behind these heists: all evidence points to John Hancock Burgoyne, the famous historian, scientist, and conspiracy theorist. Burgoyne's theory is that anyone who collects four specific letters will receive an alien message describing the location of hidden riches. The three letters that have gone missing so far are all on Burgoyne's list.

“The last letter on Burgoyne’s list is housed in the National Archives. We’ve already notified their security team, so they’re on high alert. The problem is, he’s already managed to elude crack security teams three times already by figuring out exactly when there are no security guards around. Even though none of the security teams has had a regular rotation schedule, security footage of each heist shows a small claw descending from the ceiling, extracting the letter from its case, and retracting during the exact window when guards were changing shifts. We know he couldn’t have had a visual on the room, but he must have had some way of knowing the location of the guards.

“On top of all that, as if things couldn’t get any weirder, we assumed Burgoyne was working with Carla Sacramento until we got this.”

Drew hands you a large black envelope, which you recognize from your past three cases as Carla’s signature puzzle-delivery method. However, this envelope isn’t addressed to John Hancock Burgoyne.

It’s addressed to you.

The note inside reads as follows:

Gumshoe,

I’ve had my eye on you ever since that job in Vietnam went south. I see I.N.D.I.E. has you working overtime trying to catch me. If you ever get sick of bouncing around the globe, I could use someone with skills like yours in my organization, and I’d gladly make it worth your while. Think about it ...

In fact, consider this an audition. The series of heists you’re investigating in D.C.—I’m not behind them. I’ve done my research, though. Burgoyne’s a hack, and I know what the fatal flaw in his plan is. What’s more, I’ve included a puzzle to prove it. Solve it, and you should be able to figure out how to catch him. Fail, and he gets away. Let’s see what you’ve got.

- CS

Drew looks at you excitedly. “This could be our chance to get close to Carla! You solve this puzzle, she keeps trying to recruit you, and eventually you get in deep enough that we can track her down. This is huge!”

Drew has a point, but you’re skeptical of Carla’s motives. Carla had to know I.N.D.I.E. would read her note... why would she so flagrantly try to recruit an I.N.D.I.E. agent? Could her offer really be so good that you would turn on I.N.D.I.E.? Or is it a trap designed to get rid of a constant thorn in her side?

Those questions can wait. You reach into the envelope and pull out—what else—a puzzle with a handwritten note at the top:

*Three stolen letters can be found. My advice -
The fourth, your saving grace, is missing twice.
- CS*

The meta answer is a four-letter word.

4 The Purloined Letters CS

ACROSS

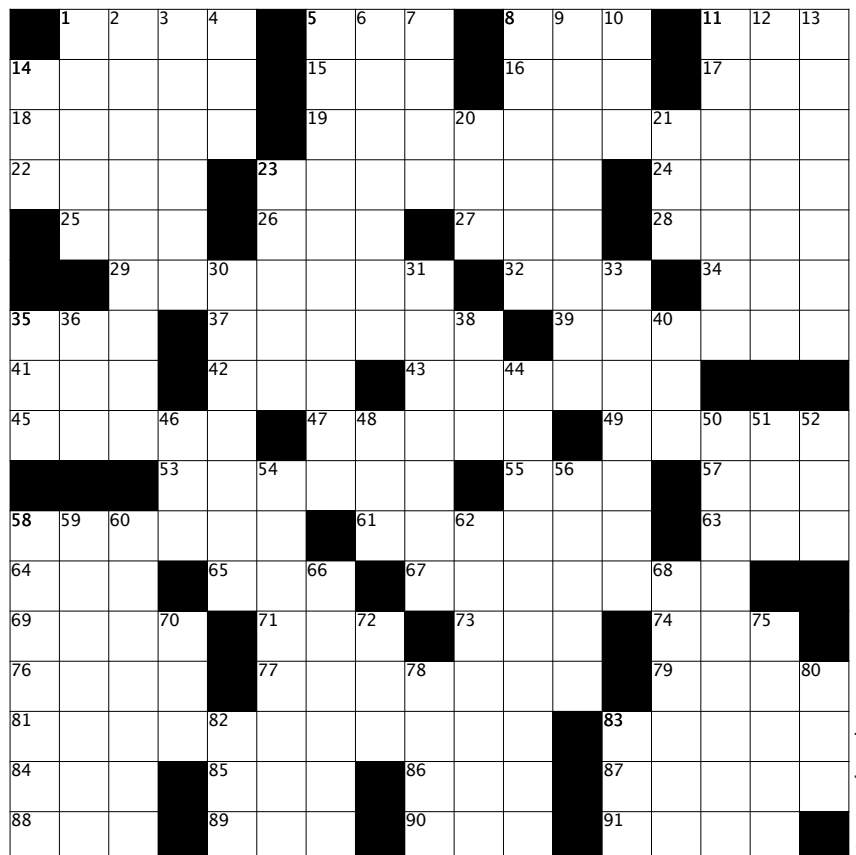
- 1 Cry to stabilize a stable animal
- 5 Dells, e.g.
- 8 Degrees in math, for short
- 11 Cell protocol
- 14 I ___ (ancient Chinese *Book of Changes*) [Part of a football]
- 15 It's laid down in the water
- 16 Diamonds, in slang
- 17 Letters on a Super Mario block that causes the ground to shake [What you might take when you]
- 18 Lion follower, in a famous series of 12 [pu-teg s'reyalp]
- 19 "Don't worry, we'll do this together" [thgilf kciuq a ekam ot deen]
- 22 Origin of the word "nabob"
- 23 Homogeneous
- 24 Response to "Wanna grab a bite?"
- 25 Short circuit creators?
- 26 Letters on the starship Enterprise
- 27 Prefix for revived ideas
- 28 Interlude on a hip-hop record, often
- 29 Ice pack?
- 32 Barr leads it: Abbr.
- 34 Word before case or care
- 35 Wire-___ glasses
- 37 Walkways in vehicles on runways
- 39 It's opened on the fly
- 41 NPR first name that's also an NPR first name in reverse
- 42 "Thx" counterpart
- 43 "Bet you don't think I can do it"
- 45 "Unleaded" at a diner
- 47 Amazon ___
- 49 Wobbly treat
- 53 Wolflike
- 55 CV fig.

- 57 It's taken with a shot
- 58 Nonsense
- 61 It might be gamed
- 63 Tapped resource
- 64 It may end with "de" in Germany
- 65 End of the line, maybe: Abbr.
- 67 "I'm good with that"
- 69 Arm extending over a movie set [It can come]
- 71 Some old-school rappers
- 73 Where to find "Reba" in syndication
- 74 Dutch grandpa
- 76 Growl, which becomes surfer slang with the addition of "ly" [uoy ot kcab]
- 77 "___ Cavalier" (ABC spy comedy series that debuted in 2019)
- 79 Bing ___ (alliterative "Inside Out" character) [Intoxicant-rich liquid]
- 81 It's bad to the core
- 83 Auteur Gerwig [yas ,ytrap tarf a ta]
- 84 First name in a lawsuit against Nintendo regarding Kadabra, the bent spoon-carrying psychic Pokémon
- 85 Jazz giant Montgomery
- 86 'bove
- 87 They might be saved for important events
- 88 Folds found on the title page of some piano sheet music
- 89 Concerning, when separated by slashes
- 90 Org. for some inspectors
- 91 Affliction for many vets

DOWN

- 1 Contraction that's a homophone of a word in the next clue

- 2 "Wire" for a cop in a sting operation
- 3 Deluge
- 4 ___ Khan University (Pakistan school)
- 5 "England's rose" in a 1997 hit single, casually
- 6 LOL-encompassing?
- 7 Role in manorialism
- 8 Gum whose name also describes the kid-lit dog Clifford
- 9 Hobnob
- 10 One side of a Deadhead's cassette, maybe
- 11 "We can't hear you in the back!"
- 12 Part of a certain joint
- 13 More thoughtful, as a compliment-giver
- 14 11-day "Jeopardy!" champ Arthur
- 20 Charge carrier
- 21 Yos (but, read differently, not yours)
- 23 Right up to
- 30 Quantities of kids, for mall Santas
- 31 Melodic mélanges
- 33 Cute nickname for PJs, or a cute nickname for nervous jitters
- 35 "Dope"
- 36 Cholera
- 38 Plopped down
- 40 Verb for which "go" is sometimes a euphemism
- 44 Popular period for listening to Joplin
- 46 Classic TV creature who occasionally suffered from Melmacian hiccups
- 48 Non-Euclidean endpoints?
- 50 Group including Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and other Romantic English writers who didn't necessarily write about water
- 51 Concern for Woods and a wooden boy
- 52 "Just ... wow"
- 54 Frequent vacuumer, usually
- 56 Verse singer on the Traveling Wilburys' "End of the Line"
- 58 Food you might order pickled or stewed?
- 59 Magnetite, e.g.
- 60 Use, as a sensory deprivation tank
- 62 Nurses
- 66 Thunderstruck
- 68 2-Down wearer, perhaps
- 70 "Rocky II" : Carl Weathers :: "Rocky III" : ___
- 72 Hardly a big gulp
- 75 Put out some chips as an entrée?
- 78 Help out, at the gym
- 80 Fill 'er (up)
- 82 "Nasty"
- 83 Nat. stat



Dossier 5: Dropping Out

Location: ???
Person of Interest: Carla Sacramento
Meta difficulty: 4/5

You explain to Drew the answer to Carla’s puzzle, and their eyes get wide with realization.

“Of course!” Drew shouts, and they get to work.

(Author’s note: You can read about Drew’s successful capture of John Hancock Burgoyne in the footnote below, which has been encoded in Rot-13 to prevent spoilers.¹)

You’re thankful that your job is solving meta puzzles and not piecing together mysteries out of thin air—that’s what Drew is here for.

Weeks pass after the arrest of John Hancock Burgoyne and the recovery of the stolen letters. You had expected—and, strangely, hoped—to hear from Carla Sacramento again by now. After all, you passed her test. What is she waiting for?

Back at I.N.D.I.E. H.Q., things are slow. Carla’s trail seems to have gone cold, and the underlings I.N.D.I.E. captured aren’t giving up any information (or, more likely, Carla never clued them in to anything more sensitive than the details of their individual heists). Still, even with Carla at large, you feel pretty good about your work: thanks to your puzzle-solving skills, you foiled four huge heists.

Without any further correspondence from Carla, I.N.D.I.E. hasn’t had much for you to do. Once you finally finish that Outlook proficiency course, you spend most of your days filing paperwork, occasionally wandering over to Drew’s office to pick up some crime-solving tips.

Another Friday night rolls around, and you grab some Chinese takeout on the way home from the office. You lock the apartment door behind you, and as you go to set the takeout bag on the kitchen table, you see a large, black envelope with a sticky note attached that reads:

Don't worry, Gumshoe—by the time you see this, I'll be long gone.

Of course, you do a quick sweep of the apartment anyway, kitchen knife in hand. It’s a studio apartment, so it doesn’t take long. Sure enough, it’s just you and the envelope. How did Carla get into your fifth-story apartment? Nothing seems to be missing. Did she really break into your apartment just to deliver this message? That’s ... creepy. But also deeply flattering!

¹ Nf Pnelyn fhtrfgrq jvgu gur nafjre gb ure chmmyr, Ohetblar jnf hfvat na rpbybpngvba qrivpr gb genpx gur ybpngvba bs gur frphevgl thneqf. Qerj fhtrfgf wzzvat Ohetblar'f qrivpr ol cynlvat hygenfbavp pyvpxf bire gur Nepuvirf fbhaq flfgrz, naq pbeerpyl cerqvpgf gung Ohetblar, birentre gb pbzcygr uvf pbyyrgvba bs yrggref, jbhyyq nggrzcg gur urvfg rira vs uvf qrivpr snvyrq. Ohetblar'f pynj ergevryny flfgrz vf rnfvyf fcbggrq ol gur frphevgl grnz, naq Ohetblar vf rkgenpgrq sebz gur iragvyngvba flfgrz naq unhyrq bss gb wnvyy.

You have to know what she came all this way to tell you. You open the envelope and pull out a note:

Gumshoe,

Can I be honest with you? I'm bored. I've been bored for a long time. It's intensely boring to always be six steps ahead of the authorities. That's why I leave puzzles at the scene of the crime—to at least give them a sporting chance.

That's also why I've taken an interest in you, Gumshoe. You're the only one who's been able to match wits with me. But it seems that we're at a stalemate. I can't pull off any heists while you're working with J.N.D.J.E., and J.N.D.J.E. obviously has no leads on my whereabouts.

So I'm making my move:

Meet me in the city that's the answer to this puzzle. Come alone, and I'll meet you there. If you bring anyone else, or if you alert the authorities or anyone at J.N.D.J.E., this is the last you'll hear from me. I'm hoping I can convince you to join me.

Your move, Gumshoe.

- CS

P.S. Chinese takeout three times a week? You live like a college student, Gumshoe. I put some fruits and veggies in the fridge for you, so you at least live long enough to meet me.

You don't know what you were expecting, but it certainly wasn't this. (A quick peek into the fridge reveals a fruit tray, a veggie tray, and an Edible Arrangement.)

You reach into the envelope and pull out what could be the last of Carla's crosswords, along with her signature couplet:

*Come to campus and you'll get some knowledge;
Drop out now and you'll ruin college.*

- CS

The meta answer is a college town that should appear in the puzzle to complete the theme, but doesn't.

5 Dropping Out CS

ACROSS

- 1 "SNL" movie starring Julia Sweeney
- 7 "My Country, 'Tis of ___" (alternate title for "America")
- 11 Title *femme* of a 1990 Luc Besson action-thriller
- 17 Condescending address
- 18 "Ready are you? What know you of ready?" speaker
- 19 Glossy coating
- 20 Ohio town where Pro Football Hall of Famer Weeb Ewbank died in 1998 (30 years to the day after the Heidi Bowl!) (3/5)
- 21 Scouring ___
- 22 North Carolina town that's currently the home of indie folk band The Mountain Goats (3/4)
- 23 From ___ to stern (phrase that makes little sense if typeset with bad kerning)
- 24 Buffalo's lake
- 25 *J'Accuse...!* author Émile
- 26 Pennsylvania birthplace of actor Rob McElhenney, best known for his work on a certain FX series (5/6)
- 33 Disaccharide in milk
- 36 Charged
- 40 1969 Nobel Peace Prize-winning U.N. agency
- 41 City built based on the L'Enfant Plan (3/6)
- 46 Lovelace who created the first published computer program

- 47 RBI-achieving out
- 49 Taiwanese PC maker
- 50 Rassafassin'
- 52 Hopping joint?
- 53 Entertained a bit
- 55 Find the source of, as a phone call
- 56 Acoustic
- 58 "Can you ___ in a sentence?" (spelling bee question)
- 60 Kathy Kinney's role on "The Drew Carey Show"
- 62 City covered by the first telephone directory (1/4)
- 67 Mopped body part
- 70 Got away from under the wire
- 72 Top-notch
- 73 Eastern region of France
- 75 Aziz's character on "Parks and Recreation"
- 76 Hometown of both Meredith Vieira and H. P. Lovecraft (5/5)
- 79 With 63-Down, Virginia Woolf novel with a character named Neville
- 80 Radio journalist Shapiro
- 81 First name shared by a Muppet king prawn and a cartoon skunk
- 82 Medieval spear
- 83 Cartoonish reaction to a rodent
- 84 Soapmaking chemical
- 85 Easy targets
- 86 Talk back to
- 87 ER figures

DOWN

- 1 Things exchanged at an altar
- 2 Syllabus listing
- 3 Umpire's call
- 4 Done without delay

- 5 NPR's "Fresh ___," or NBC's "The Fresh Prince of Bel-___"
- 6 Actor Danson of "The Good Place"
- 7 Competitive personality
- 8 Hidden supply
- 9 Bauer who patented the first American quilted goose down jacket
- 10 Artist's prop
- 11 Australian outlaw Kelly
- 12 Shiba ___ (dog breed)
- 13 President of Afghanistan, 2004-2014
- 14 Twitter disclaimer
- 15 Color for the Jacksonville Jaguars
- 16 ___ mater
- 27 Noisy nastygram conceived by J. K. Rowling
- 28 "My word!"
- 29 "___ Miserables"

- 30 Word after snake or peach
- 31 Part of a sweatshirt, perhaps
- 32 Deep-rooted
- 33 Leslie with four Olympic gold medals in basketball
- 34 Cryptanalyst Turing
- 35 Zany
- 37 Worth eating at, likely
- 38 Cabinet dept. once headed by Margaret Spellings, appropriately enough
- 39 Title for Angela Lansbury
- 42 Sandwich meat
- 43 Post-op place
- 44 Duck Hunt video game console: Abbr.
- 45 High school : SAT :: college : ___
- 48 Substance with no fixed shape
- 51 Small amounts
- 53 Spiced or strong drink

- 54 Billing word
- 57 Actress Martin of "Great News" and "Difficult People"
- 59 Carrot sticks and pretzel sticks, but not hockey sticks
- 60 Wire material
- 61 Ebony partner, in song
- 63 See 79-Across
- 64 ___ polloi
- 65 Union : or :: intersection : ___
- 66 Johnson and Johnson, e.g.
- 68 Brownish-yellow
- 69 Fortnight's pair
- 71 Actor Omar of "Love & Basketball"
- 74 They're at the bottom of the barrel
- 77 1991 Naughty by Nature single that some people are "down with"
- 78 Actress Vardalos who hosted "The Great American Baking Show"

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Hints from The Honcho

Note: Hints and solutions have been encoded in rot-13. Rot-13 is a code that can be decoded at <http://www.rot13.com>. The first hint is intended to be a nudge in the right direction, while later hints should give you an increasingly clear idea of how to proceed. If you have any other questions or would like to report errata, please email us at xwordtournament@gmail.com.

Puzzle 1: Parade Route

Hint 1: Gur fvk fgneerq ragevrf nyy raq jvgu n cuenfr fvzvyne gb "... abj jurer vf vg?" Jurer ryfr pbhyq lbh ybbx sbe Pnelyn'f cersreerq cnenqr nppbhgrezragf?

Hint 2: Gurer ner fvk ragevrf va gur tevq gung pbeerfcbaq gb gur fvk fgneerq gurzr ragevrf. Pnelyn jnf pnershy gb hfr gur fnzr jbeq gjvpr fb gung gurer pbhyq or ab zvfgnxvat juvpu nafjref va gur tevq jrer gur obahf ragevrf.

Hint 3: "Svefg," "frpbaq," "guveq," rgp. jvyy uryc lbh chg gur fvk obahf gurzr ragevrf va gur evtug beqre, ohg gurl nyfb unir n frpbaq shapgvba. Gur svefg yrggref bs gur gurzr ragevrf qba'g fcryy n jbeq, ohg jung vs ... ?

Solution: Gurer ner fvk fgneerq pyhrf va gur chmmyr, rnpu bs juvpu pyhrf na nafjre jvgu na beqvany ahzore: SVEFG YNQVRF, FRPBAQ VAPBZR, GUYEQ CEVMR, SBHEGU QBJA, SVSGU UNEZBAL, naq FVKGU NIRAHR.

Gubfr pyhrf nyfb rnpu raq jvgu "... abj jurer vf vg?," uvagvat gung lbh zhfg frnepu ryfrjurer va gur tevq sbe gurfr vgrzf. Sbe rnpu bs gurfr fgneerq ragevrf, gurer vf nabgure ragel va gur tevq jvgu n zngpuvat pyhr:

- Sbhgrra Qbja: [Ynqvrf, r.t.] pyhrf CRRERFFRF (pbeerfcbaqvat gb SVEFG YNQVRF);
- Avargl-bar Npebff: [Fgrnql vapbzl] pyhrf FNYNEL (pbeerfcbaqvat gb FRPBAQ VAPBZR);
- Ryrira Npebff: [Punzcvba'f cevmr] pyhrf PHC (pbeerfcbaqvat gb GUYEQ CEVMR);
- Svir Qbja: [Qbja va gur qhzcf] pyhrf ZRYNAPUBYL (pbeerfcbaqvat gb SBHEGU QBJA);
- Svsgrra Qbja: [Unezbal nzbaf inebhf pbzzhavgrf] pyhrf NZVGL (pbeerfcbaqvat gb SVSGU UNEZBAL);
- Avargl-svir Npebff: [Zhygv-pvgl nirahr] pyhrf UVTUJNL (pbeerfcbaqvat gb FVKGU NIRAHR)

Gur beqvany ahzoref abg bayl gryy lbh jung beqre gb chg gurfr nafjref va, ohg gurl nyfb gryy lbh jung yrggre gb rkgenpg sebz gubfr nafjref:

- Gur SVEFG yrggre bs gur YNQVRF ragel, CRRERFFRF, vf C;
- Gur FRPBAQ yrggre bs gur VAPBZR ragel, FNYNEL, vf N;

- Gur GUVEQ yrggre bs gur CEVMR ragel, PHC, vf C;
- Gur SBHEGU yrggre bs gur QBJA ragel, ZRYNAPUBYL, vf N;
- Gur SVSGU yrggre bs gur UNEZBAL ragel, NZVGL, vf L;
- Gur FVKGU yrggre bs gur NIRAGR ragel, UVTUJNL, vf N.

Gnxvat gubfr yrggref va beqre feryyf **CNCNLN**, juvpu vf gur nafjre gb guvf chmmyr.

Puzzle 2: Deus Ex Machina

Hint 1: Gurer'f n pynffvp frg bs fvk uvqvat (naq fyvtugyl qvfthvfrq) va fvk nafjref va guvf chmmyr.

Hint 2: Cheyrl fher vf n enaqbz cynpr gb chg va na Nzrevpna pebffjbeq (ab bssrafr, Ze. Oebja, fve, cynmfr qba'g znxr zr fgvpv n arrqyr guebhtu zl unaq ohg fbzrubj abg srroy nalguvat). Cheyrl ... Cheyrl ... Jung'f gung tbg gb qb jvgu qrhfrf, be rkrf, be znpuvanf?

Hint 3: Vs lbh punatr n yrggre va rmpu bs gur fvk gurzngvp nafjref, rmpu vf uvqvat n zrzore bs n "fvzcyr" frkgrg uvagrq ng ol gur gvgyr. Jung "qrhf" qb gur cer-punatr yrggref feryy?

Solution: Rmpu ybat Npebff nafjre uvqrf bar bs gur fvzcyr znpuvarf jvgu n yrggre punatrq:

JVGPURFOERJ (FPERJ)
CHEYRLYBAQBA (CHYYRL)
 PBZZNURRY (JURRY)
URQTRSHAQ (JRQTR)
 INYREVR**CYNZR** (CYNAR)
YRINEOHEGBA (YRIRE)

Gur cer-punatr yrggref feryy bhg **OENUZN**, gur Uvaqh perngbe tbq. Gur cbfg-punatr yrggref feryy bhg **PYJJAR**, juvpu va ebg-13 vf **CLWWNE**, juvpu vf fgvyv abguvat.

Puzzle 3: Making Contact in Greece

Hint 1: Fbzr ragevrf va guvf chmmyr qba'g dhvgr zngpu gurve pyhrf. Jub be jung pbhyq unir pnhrf gur qvfpercnapl?

Hint 2: Jung svther sebz Terrx zlgu jbhyq pnhrf gur sbhe hahfhny ragevrf gb orpbzr **TBYQRA** ol gnccvat, ahqtvat, cbxvat, be ohzcvat gurz?

Solution: Sbhe ragevrf va gur tevq qba'g dhvgr zngpu gurve pyhrf:

- TBYQRA NEPURF [Angvbany cnex arne Zbno, Hgnu (gnc)];
- TBYQRA TYBORF [Trbtencul grnpuref cebcf (ahqtr)];
- TBYQRA PBEENY [Rapybfher sbe yvirfgbpx (cbxr)];
- TBYQRA GVPXRG [Pbafrdhrapr bs ehaavat n erq yvtug, znlor (ohzc)]

Rnpu bs gurfr sbhe ragevrf unf gur jbeq TBYQRA nqqrq, nf jryy nf n oenpxrgrq jbeq va gur pyhr gung'f flabalzbfh jvgu "gbhpu." Gur svther sebz Terrx zlgu jub gbhpurq gurfr sbhe ragevrf naq znqr gurz TBYQRA vf ZVQNF.

Puzzle 4: The Purloined Letters

Hint 1: Gur onpxjneqf cneragurgvny pyhr grkg pna or pbzovarq jvgu bgure cneragurgvny pyhr grkg arneol gb sbez n pbzcygr pyhr (r.t. [Cneg bs n sbbgonyy / cynlre'f trg-hc]).

Hint 2: Gurfr nqqvgvbany pyhrf ner sbe nafjre jbeqf/cuenfrf fcernq npebff gur gjb nffbvpngrq tevq ragevrf va na ncebcevng rsnfuvba ... ohg fbzrguvat'f zvffvat. Rnpu bs gur zvffvat yrggref sebz gurfr uvqgra nafjref pna, jura genafyng r n pregnva jnl, nyfb fngv fsl gur uvqgra nafjre'f pyhr (r.t., gur zvffvat H sebz PUVA THNEQ pna nyfb, va n jnl, fngv fsl gur [Cneg bs n sbbgonyy cynlre'f trg-hc] pyhr).

Hint 3: Gur ANGB Cubargvp Nycunorg jbeq pbeerfcbavqat gb rnpu zvffvat yrggre jvyv fngv fsl gur pyhr sbe gung uvqgra nafjre (r.t., obgu n PUVA T(H)NEQ naq n HAVSBEZ ner cneg bs n "sbbgonyy cynlre'f trg-hc")

Solution: Gurer ner sbhe cnvef bs fgnpxrq npebff ragevrf jurer gur gbc nafjre vf nyfb na babzngbcbrvp fbhaq jbeq naq jubfr pyhrf pbagnva cnegvny cneragurgvny pbzzragf. Ernqvaf sbejneq sebz gur gbc pyhr'f cneragurgvny grkg naq gura onpxjneq sebz gur raq bs gur obggbz pyhr, n pbzcygr pyhr vf sbezrq. Va rnpu pnfr, guvf rkgen pyhr yrnqf gb n uvqgra nafjre juvpu vf fcernq bire obgu ragevrf va n jnl fvzvyne gb gur pyhr: gur gbc ragel vf ernq sbejneq, naq gura fbzr be nyy bs gur obggbz ragel'f yrggref ner ernq onpxjneq sebz gur raq. Rnpu bs gurfr uvqgra ragevrf fngv fsvrf gur rkgen pyhr, ohg vf zvffvat n yrggre jurer vg obhaprf onpx sebz gur gbc ragel gb gur obggbz:

- [Cneg bs n sbbgonyy / cynlre'f trg-hc] - PUVA T(H)NEQ
- [Jung lbh zvtug gnrx jura lbh / arrq gb znxr n dhvpx syvtug] - CBJ(Q)RE
- [Vg pna pbzr / onpx gb lbh] - OBBZ(R)ENAT
- [Vagbkvpnag-evpu yvdhvq / ng n seng cnegl, fnl] - OBAT(J)NGRE

Gur ANGB Cubargvp Nycunorg jbeq pbeerfcbavqat gb rnpu yrggre nyfb fngv fsvrf gur rkgen pyhr sbe gung cnve bs ragevrf:

- [Cneg bs n sbbgonyy / cynlre'f trg-hc] - PUVA T(H)NEQ be HAVSBEZ
- [Jung lbh zvtug gnrx jura lbh / arrq gb znxr n dhvpx syvtug] - CBJ(Q)RE be QRYGN (Nveyvarf)

- [Vg pna pbzr / onpx gb lbh] - OBBZ(R)ENAT be RPUB
- [Vagbkvpnag-evpu yvdhvq / ng n seng cnegl, fnl] - OBAT(J)NGRE be JUVFXRL

Nyy ohg **RPUB** ner nyfb sbhaq ryfrjurer va gur tevq, fb gung'f bhe nafjre.

Puzzle 5: Dropping Out

Hint 1: Gurer ner fvk pbyyrtr gbja va gur tevq; gurve pyhrf rmpu unlr ahzoref va cneragurfrf gung ner eryrinag gb svaqvat lbhe svany nafjre.

Hint 2: Lbh'yy arrq gb vqragvsl n cnegvphyne fpubby ybpngrq va rmpu bs gubfr pvgvrf.

Hint 3: Gurer ner svir ragevrf va gur tevq gung zngpu gubfr fpubbyf, rkprcg fbzrguvat'f zvffvat ... Lbhe svany nafjre cnvef hc jvgu gur pvgl gung unf ab zngpu va gur tevq.

Solution: Rmpu bs gur fvk pbyyrtr gbja va gur tevq unf n pyhr jvgu gjb ahzoref va cneragurfrf. Gur ahzore ba gur evtug vaqvpngrf gur yratgu bs gur anzr bs n pbyyrtr, juvyr gur ahzore ba gur yrsg vaqvpngrf gur cbfvgvba bs gur yrggre erzbirq sebz gung anzr gb znxr nabgure ragel va gur tevq. Va svir pnfrf, gung jbeq vf va gur tevq:

BKSBEQ/ZV[N]ZV (3eq yrggre erzbirq, pbyyrtr'f anzr vf 5 yrggref ybat)

QHEUNZ/QH[X]R (3eq yrggre erzbirq, pbyyrtr'f anzr vf 4 yrggref ybat)

JNFUVATGBA/UB[J]NEQ (3eq yrggre erzbirq, pbyyrtr'f anzr vf 6 yrggref ybat)

ARJ UNIRA/[L]NYR (1fg yrggre erzbirq, pbyyrtr'f anzr vf 4 yrggref ybat)

CEBIVQRAPR/OEBJ[A] (5gu yrggre erzbirq, pbyyrtr'f anzr vf 5 yrggref ybat)

Gur CUVYNQRYCUVN fpubby jubfr anzr vf 6 yrggref ybat naq pna ybfr vgf 5gu yrggre gb sbez n inyvg tevq ragel vf GRZCYR, juvpu pna orpbzr GRZCR (gur ubzr bs Nevmban Fgngr Havirefvg, naq guhf n pbyyrtr gbja va vgf bja evtug). **GRZCR** fubhyq or va gur tevq gb pbzcygrgur gur gurzr, naq vf gur svany nafjre.