

The grid may be filled as shown at the right. Per the flavortext, however, all of the DOWN entries are to be entered rising to the surface, ie, upside-down. Also, each of those entires sends its "true soul", that is, its middle letter, to the surface, filling in one of the gray boxes above the grid.

Each of the risen letters is unique, and pairing them by column forms a cipher key, "Queer crypts" thus referring to both a Cryptic Crossword and a Cryptogram.

The lines in the grid indicated by skulls may be decrypted using this key, for the message highlighted below.

"Stash's apropos: fifty one empty caskets" (2 6) is one final enumerated cryptic clue, yielding the final answer IN RELICS.

"Stash" = definition
 apropos = IN RE
 fifty one = LI
 empty c(asket)s = CS

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

1	E	2	C	H	3	E	4	S	T	5	W	6	E	T	7	T	E	8	S	9	T
10	T	I	T	L	E	11	D	A	I	12	S	S	13	S	L	O					
	A	P	14	S	A	G	A	15	S	T	Y	E	16	T	E	A					
17	N	O	E	S	O	18	E	Z	19	C	A	B	E	R	S						
20	G	A	L	E	21	S	L	U	E	D	22	A	I	N	U						
23	Y	24	S	E	R	25	D	A	B	N	M	26	G	R	A	27	S				
	X	D	28	X	29	P	R	E	B	30	O	O	K	T	P	R					
31	O	N	O	32	D	A	33	Y	34	S	35	P	O	36	T	37	U	S	E		
38	L	O	B	E	39	K	N	E	E	D	40	C	O	L	D						
41	P	H	I	42	S	C	O	U	T	43	M	A	N	44	S	E					
45	U	S	A	46	M	O	P	A	47	P	L	E	A	D	F						
48	R	I	M	E	49	D	U	L	C	E	50	N	I	K	E						
	G	51	F	A	B	L	E	52	C	U	R	I	O	S	D						

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

1	E	2	C	H	3	E	4	S	S	5	W	6	E	T	7	T	E	8	S	9	T
10	T	I	T	L	E	11	D	A	I	12	S	S	13	S	L	O					
	S	T	14	A	S	H	S	15	A	P	R	O	16	P	O	S					
17	N	O	E	S	O	18	E	Z	19	C	A	B	E	R	S						
20	G	A	L	E	21	S	L	U	E	D	22	A	I	N	U						
23	Y	24	S	E	R	25	D	A	B	N	M	26	G	R	A	27	S				
	F	I	28	F	29	T	Y	O	N	E	E	M	P	T	Y						
31	O	N	O	32	D	A	33	Y	34	S	35	P	O	36	T	37	U	S	E		
38	L	O	B	E	39	K	N	E	E	D	40	C	O	L	D						
41	P	H	I	42	S	C	O	U	T	43	M	A	N	44	S	E					
45	C	A	S	46	K	E	T	S	47	T	W	O	S	I	X						
48	R	I	M	E	49	D	U	L	C	E	50	N	U	K	E						
	G	51	F	A	B	L	E	52	C	U	R	I	O	S	D						