

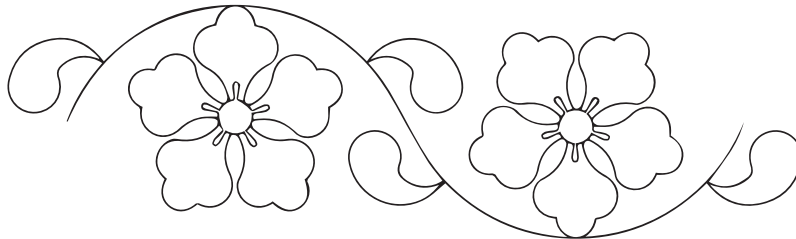
# here comes the sun

*The strife between Amaterasu, Japanese goddess of the sun, and her brother Susano-o, god of storms, finally became so great that Amaterasu took mournful refuge in a deep cave. Though many deities, Shinto and Buddhist alike, cajoled and pleaded with her, she refused to emerge. The ancient land suffered in darkness, as the rice fields withered and the people froze. Finally, the mirthful old goddess Uzume devised a plan: a beautiful mirror was hung by the cavern's entrance, and Uzume danced drunkenly, inspiring raucous revelry among the assembled gods. Poking her head out of the cave to see what was going on, Amaterasu became happily entranced by her own dazzling reflection. The cave sealed behind her, she remained outside, and light and joy were returned to the land.*

*At least for a moment. Unfortunately, Susano-o chose that moment to sneeze loudly, and the resulting lightning bolts leveled a swath of Amaterasu's sacred fields and several of her attendants. With a shriek, Amaterasu burst into tears and ducked through a previously unnoticed back entrance into the cave, sealing it behind her and vowing never to come out again.*

*The gods laid gifts outside Amaterasu's cave, but none would entice her to emerge. "When the sun goddess is miserable, so is the entire world," murmured Omoikane, god of wisdom. "We must do everything in our power to \_\_\_\_\_!"*

What?



Dear Solvers,

When you've arrived at your final answer, please send it to me at markhalpin3 at gmail dot com to score a place on the Leaderboard. The first pair or solo solver to do so will win a \$25 Amazon gift card, as will an additional solver drawn randomly from all those submitting the correct answer before Monday, September 19th. At that point, I'll post hints and solutions. If you're not interested in the Leaderboard or prizes, feel free to contact me for hints or nudges at any point. As ever, the point of the thing is to have fun, so if there's anything I can do to facilitate that, please don't hesitate to let me know.

*After you've confirmed individual puzzle answers, you may email those to me as well; this is not necessary and is purely for my personal interest in tracking progress. All puzzles may be printed to solve, and nothing in this intro relates to the puzzles beyond that which does so overtly. Specific knowledge of the original source material is not required. Online references may prove handy (and probably necessary), and flavor text is often clueful.*

Hope you enjoy!

Mark / Zebraboy

# benzaiten's gift

Benzaiten, goddess of music, strummed a lilting melody on her biwa, a magical tune that brought people together and put them in a romantic mood.



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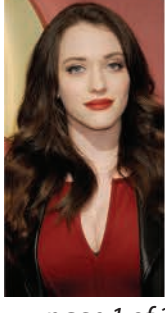


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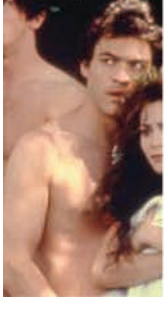


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# benzaiten's gift - pg. 2 of 2

'90s Presidential also-ran / On the risqué side

Cartoon collectibles / Time spent living in a rental

Collecting obsessively / Purged (of)

Deep canyons, such as the three the Yangtze River passes through / Continued to clasp (2 wds.)

Fingerprint or potato chip feature / Complicated or sly

Flirted with in a bar, maybe (3 wds.) / Personal prejudice

How crowded places are populated / Wood-smoothing tool

Lara Croft or Howard Carter site / Tear asunder, as garments

Large or fantastic / Small whirlpool

Like some alleys or dates / Tony or Emmy, say

Meat-soaking solution / Der Schwarzwald, for example

Not very spicy / Emergency warning, as on the Enterprise (2 wds.)

Samurai swords / Samurai's locale, broadly

Scratch the surface of? / Have one's revenge (2 wds.)

Self-sacrificing saint / Trinity part

Tesla, e.g. / Like a situation where no one will come out ahead (*hyph.*)

Threaten someone (Mr. Wilson, perhaps) / Evil intent

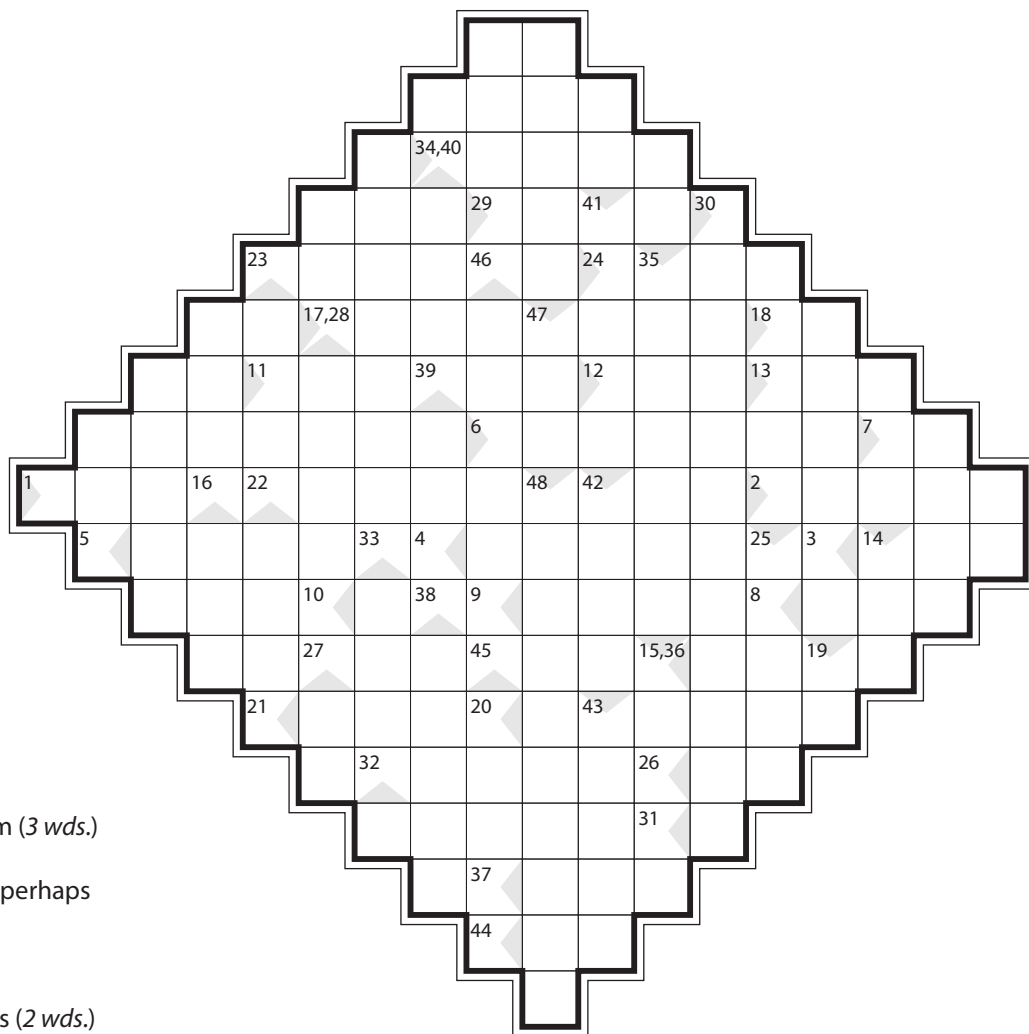
Tropical veranda / RC and others

Tweak text / Start of many a toast (2 wds.)

Waterfront walkway / Mirepoix component

# daikokuten's gift

*Daikokuten, a patron of craftsmen and artisans, laid out a magnificent tapestry for Amaterasu. Any skillful weaver makes minor adjustments to his work to bring disparate design elements into harmony.*



## CLUES

- 1 Long-running "Study aboard" program (3 wds.)
- 2 Slothful
- 3 Like a nimbus-surrounded silhouette, perhaps
- 4 Shakespeare's great eulogist
- 5 Extremely yummy
- 6 One diving amid oyster beds
- 7 James Bond, for one, in his school days (2 wds.)
- 8 Rendezvoused (2 wds.)
- 9 Morpheus and Trinity's cohort
- 10 Remove one's identifying data from
- 11 Makes the answer to clue 15 or phony checks
- 12 Common pit stop product
- 13 White cliffs locale
- 14 Brittle base?
- 15 Decorative metalwork, often (2 wds.)
- 16 Button on a DVD player
- 17 Material that might take some ribbing?
- 18 Like something relied upon absolutely (2 wds.)
- 19 Rolling up, as a flag or sail
- 20 Slaughter in the World Series
- 21 Lush
- 22 Separate flour or ashes
- 23 Bricklayers
- 24 "Lamb of God," in other words (2 wds.)
- 25 Wards off, as a catastrophe
- 26 Bets aggressively at the poker table
- 27 Yakuza decoration
- 28 Enciphered
- 29 Canine comments
- 30 "As long as it's not here!" (2 wds.)
- 31 Posh
- 32 London or Manhattan neighborhood
- 33 Reasons for anxiety
- 34 Devilish ones
- 35 Became utterly destroyed or intoxicated, per a meme (2 wds.)
- 36 Galleon or dreadnaught, e.g.
- 37 Personal taste
- 38 Loan requested by the answer to clue 4
- 39 Cowpoke's poker
- 40 "Clermont" (or "North River Steamboat") inventor
- 41 A short, broadly comic opera, such as *La \_\_\_\_\_ amorosa*
- 42 Speak insultingly or indistinctly
- 43 Kinda sorta modern
- 44 They run parallel to radii
- 45 Opened a parcel, perhaps
- 46 Thrillingly close contests (*hyph.*)
- 47 Exploit
- 48 The art of font design



# fūjin and raijin's gift

*Fūjin and Raijin, demon-gods of wind and storms, staged a ferocious mock battle.*

															
			2	4		1	9	11	1		4		12		
ACT LLY INS SHO	ALE EST RUS SHY	ANB MIG REA TBI	RYB TEN UTW YOU	ART NYO TRO WHE	ASM STA UST YOU	ATJ BAR NGS OWR	BAR CEA CED DSC	DTH ELY ESU MAK	HEN REE VAG YOU	EYO IRL YBL YOU	GIT NGY THA YBU	GYO TOS VEG YCA	CAN FEE HOO YOU	EAM HTL IME YOU	AND ING RAI STY
															
	6	13			11	5	3	8	12	7			2		
ANT ASA BER LLE	ALL ETS NEO TON	ECH NOT KAT YOU	BLA LIT NYO TAN	MOK OLL URH UST	OSA OTT VIN YOU	REN SDU OTH OUR	OTS REN USE UST	OUG RDL REA YME	EAN HYM NFA OWI	CAN COT DYL REJ	LIK MUT REA UAI	IRE NDY RSA YOU	ESS LIK RTH SHA	CON EFA LIT TFA	AZI EEK SAM TYO
															
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4 11 7 6 5. 3 6 6 3 4 1 4

3'2 4 2 5 2 6 5. 3'1 5 7 3 "5" 2 "5"

3'2 1 6 4 5 5, 3 4 3'2 5-6, 3 3'1 1 3

7 10 3'1 7 2: 4 3'2 4-5, 3 3 4 2

3'2 7 5, 3'2 5 3 5. 10 3 5 2 5

3'2 3 6, 1'2 3 2 3, '5 4 3'2 7, 3 5 2 4

3 5 2 6 3 3'2 3 4 3; 2'1 7 3 3 5 1 4

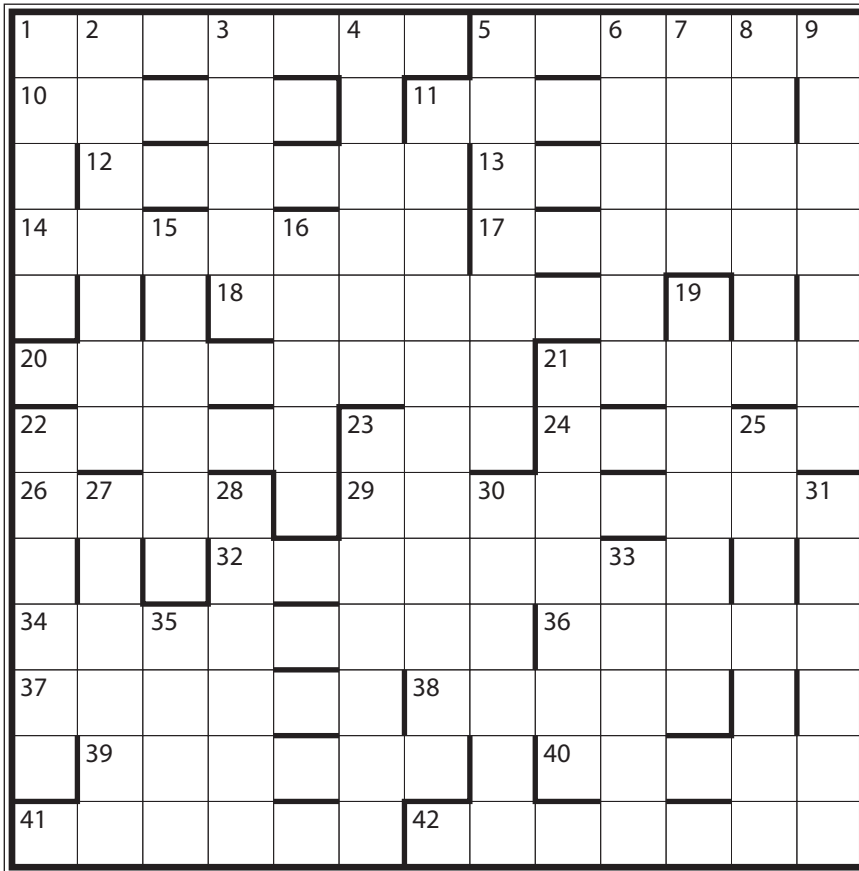
3 4 4 6 6 8, 7 5 3 4 4 6

8 5 4 3 4

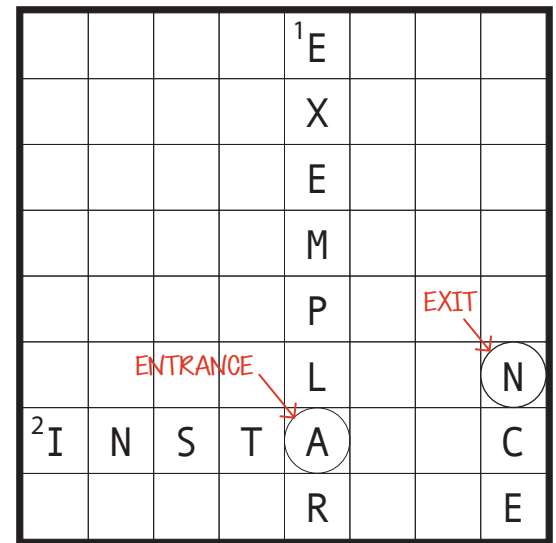
Cut 40 strips out along heavy lines

# inari's gift

*Inari Ōkami, a patron of foxes, presented a merry pageant full of trickery and romance.*



- 1 Heart of foes invading: "evil," per male model  
2 Nine cats shredded illustration



Inari is attended by *kitsune*, mischievous fox spirits with magical powers that delight in bewildering humans. To this end, they have created seven invisible tunnels in the patch of forest represented by the grid, each with a foxhole at either end. Each of the fourteen foxholes is located in a checked grid square. One entry crossing each hole will do so safely and will be entered in the grid normally; however, a single letter has been stolen from that entry's clue as payment for being left alone. The other crossing entry will enter the tunnel at this hole, exiting the tunnel from another hole elsewhere in the grid, as shown in the example above. The clues for those entries are normal. In exactly one case, however, an entry will enter a hole, exit another, and then pass safely across a third; thus its clue has had a letter swiped. Note that tunnels go both ways, so each hole will serve both an entry and an exit.

Kitsune may have more than one tail. The oldest and wisest have as many as nine tails, though only those kitsune with a single extra tail are involved in this puzzle. Seven of the remaining clues each display an extra tail, which should be ignored to correctly parse the clue.

Kitsune are adept at creating convincing illusions. Seven more of the remaining clues contain elements that are illusory, in a manner of speaking.

Finally, kitsune are notorious for appearing as beautiful men or women to entrap and make love to unwitting humans. The remaining seven clues have each captivated a male, who should be ignored to correctly parse the clue.

All grid entries are legitimate words or phrases, though modified clues might lack surface meaning. The seven extra tails, followed by the seven clue letters immediately *following* each of the illusions, followed by the initials of the seven captivated males (all in clue order, with Across clues preceding Down clues) will spell a useful instruction.

# inari's gift - pg. 2 of 2

## ACROSS

- 1 Perverted actress devouring *Fifty Shades of Red*
- 5 Centerpiece of western rodeo Cal needs to join
- 10 Finally, sick bovine's eating a small oat
- 11 Jams and pies Sam's concocted
- 12 Former Egyptian fled, escaping unfindable shootist
- 13 Some stagehands romp drunkenly in big house
- 14 More than one badger sensing turmoil
- 17 Currant is last of fruit, after stale bananas
- 18 Creates a record of no-nos involving copper and yours truly
- 20 Floors in apartment 10 squeak at first
- 21 California missionary retraced stretch of particular reservation
- 22 Join mob not missing every other character and pun from *The Simpsons*
- 23 After losing season opener, sack coach
- 24 Educational network ailing less after dropping *Steamship* and *Ordinary People*
- 26 Fragment of rope comprising crude gag?
- 29 "Bizarre, terrible rum", I mope
- 32 First-rate editors altered series significantly
- 34 I hear nil about business affected by recession
- 36 In part of L.A., lines and relines
- 37 Centrist pair in parliament recalled South African currency as something needing running
- 38 Peg, dropping Ecstasy in experiment, is wobbling precariously
- 39 NY athlete and son gripe about distances at Wimbledon
- 40 It's found amid deuterium, tritium, and oxygen (methane too)
- 41 Mothers like spice mixture in Indian food
- 42 Coot's is counterfeit -- it might be graft by an economist

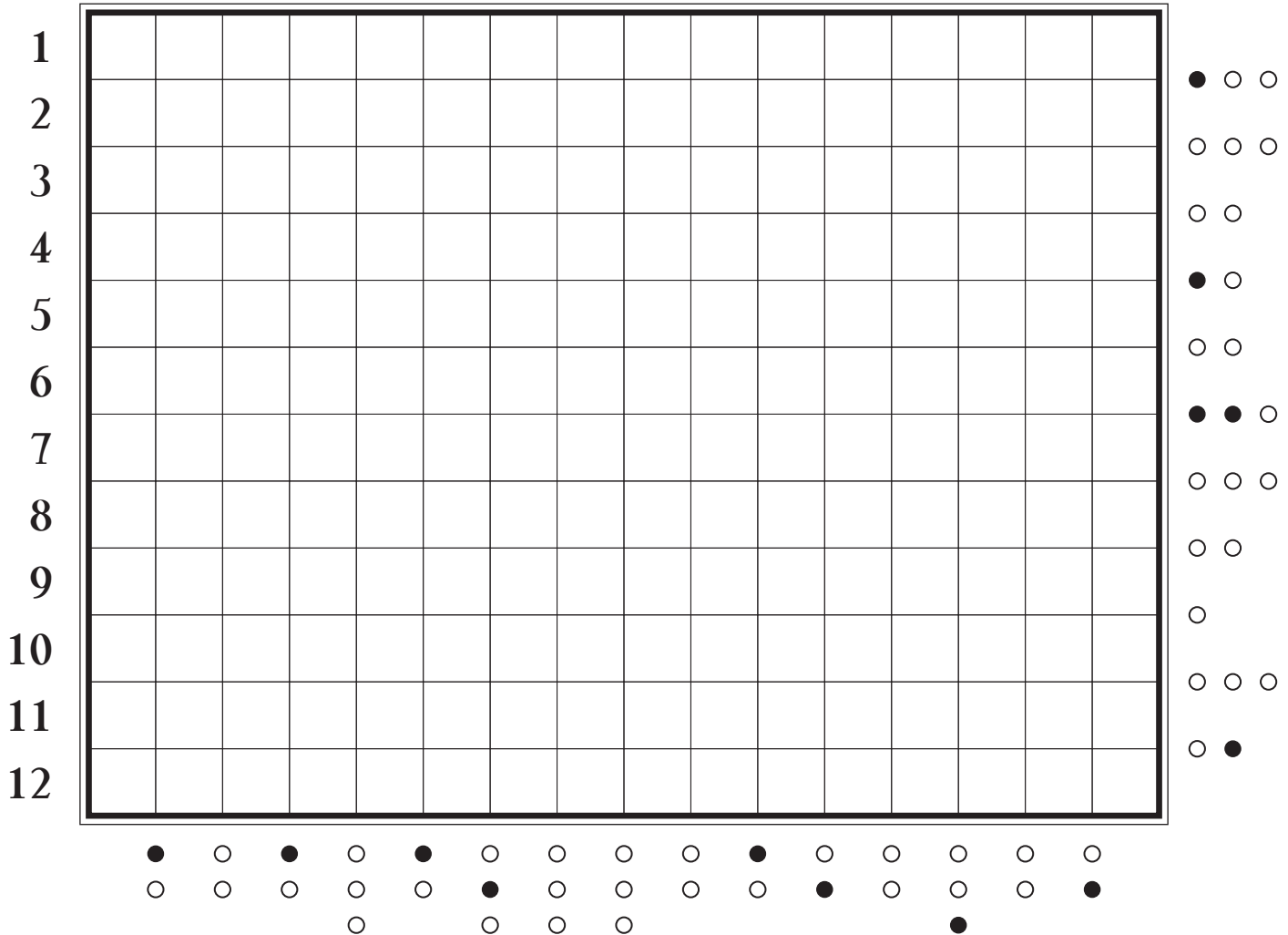
## DOWN

- 1 That woman's describing bout-ending punches: "touches"
- 2 Fire-cooked loin and sweet tuber for dessert
- 3 Fierce-lipped princess at pub
- 4 Being outspoken had earned female relatives something subtle
- 5 Wide letters penniless fast one makes use of
- 6 Chinese philosopher's revolutionary manifesto alarmed continent (2 wds.)
- 7 Strangely pale part of a French chin
- 8 Side of old radio, one that gets aggressively loud
- 9 Ailurophile arborist hastens to display "Miss Kitt"'s namesakes
- 11 Those who teach it turn cross, unfortunately
- 15 Mail room worker set pram in motion
- 16 Group of talented old neighborhood chefs were compatible (2 wds.)
- 19 Foreign riddles: they show world Yiddish characters
- 21 Quarrels about red herrings
- 22 Miss March and actor Udo more likely to be facetious
- 23 March time underlying chants springs up as if by fate
- 25 Wild bruin trapping pair of llamas at outset of game where one views embattled beasts
- 27 Father clutches lucky talisman when starting latex/drug company
- 28 Roe en masse is freshwater fish eggs marshaled
- 30 Spruces up platter (chiefly pupu) that's been sent back
- 31 Michigan's primary a tie, the Democratic Party's Asians say
- 33 Traveling Cousin (sic) ignoring customs and architectural style
- 35 First off, wears out rags

# jizō's gift

*Jizō, a protector of travelers and the vulnerable, presented Amaterasu with a beautifully inscribed map.*

Rows answers are to be entered in order in their respective numbered rows. Path answers are to be entered sequentially in a continuous, labyrinthine path, beginning in the top left square of the grid. The path traced will visit every grid square exactly once, moving horizontally or vertically. Though Jizō is associated with borders, the borders of the path herein are invisible -- which shouldn't present a problem, should it?



## ROWS

- 1 Like items gathering dust in a lost and found  
Made a big pile of
- 2 Something from which one might get down  
Where you could see giant pandas or Joan Embery (3 wds.)
- 3 Baby in a pond  
Having a bluer cast
- 4 Padres, e.g., in brief  
Demand or require

## PATH

- Title for Sam, Ben, or Scrooge (5)  
Title for Moriarty, Xavier, or Plum (9)  
Supermarket division (5)  
Modify, like the Constitution (5)  
"Oh the \_\_\_\_\_ could do"; K. Chesney on tequila (7; 2 wds.)  
A perfectly valid reaction to the clumsiness of the last entry (3)  
Slept poorly (6)  
Slimy "Here Come the Mummies" alum? (5)  
Poetry performances (11)  
Spirited gathering (6)



## ROWS - Continued

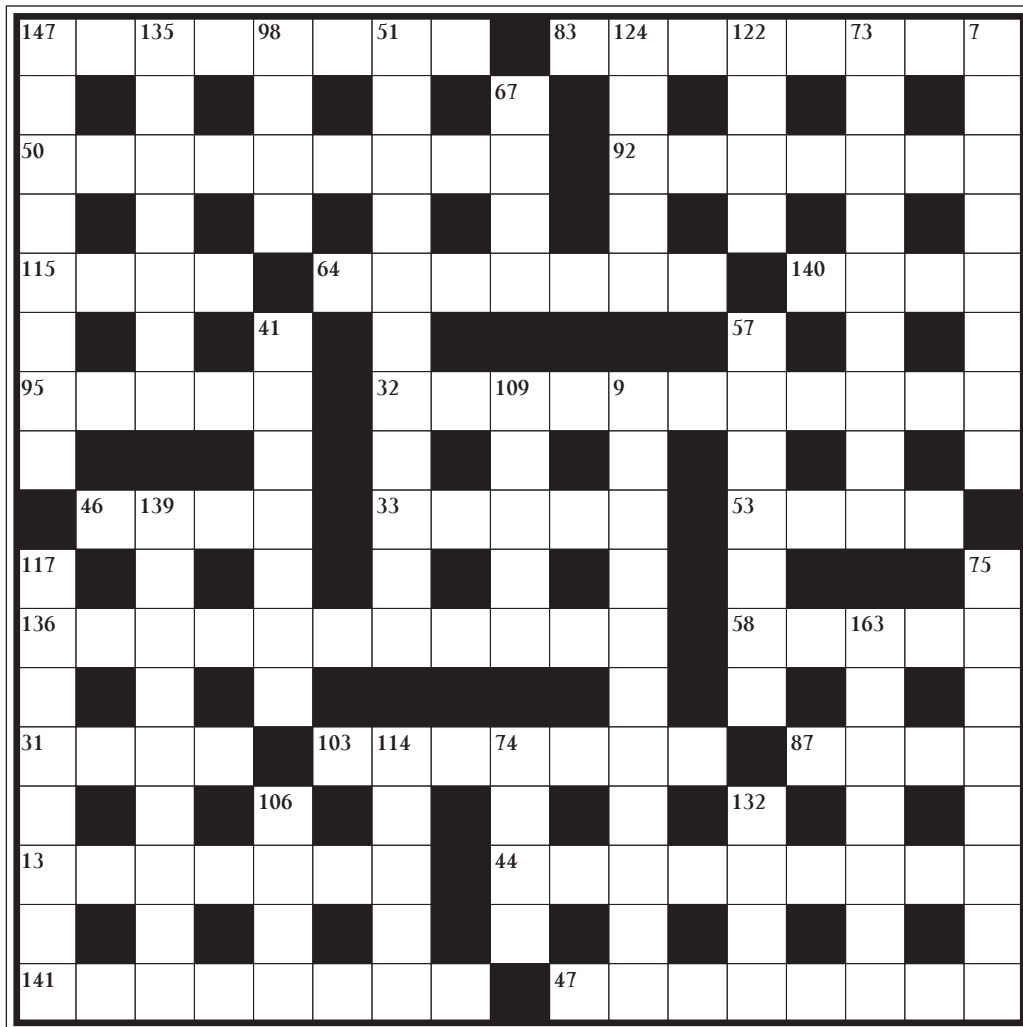
- 5** Melodious, like a Bach piece  
Like many medical tests
- 6** Not in the same way  
Ms Mansfield of film
- 7** Works like a drudge  
Very small distances
- 8** Dietary fiber  
Inflammation of a certain blood vessel
- 9** Protect metal surfaces in a way  
Chew-toy material
- 10** Perfectly clear, as an image  
Former sitcom actor Willie (not to be confused with spy Aldrich)
- 11** Squarely, as in the middle of something (*hyph.*)  
Recess, for example
- 12** Planetoid named for an Inuit goddess  
Attested (2 wds.)

## PATH - Continued

- Standard of behavior (4)
- Quick-witted (5)
- Metronome sound (4)
- Patsy (6)
- On the same side (6)
- Carving on a gem (8)
- Former Soviet military force (7; 2 wds.)
- It gets you from the terminal to the plane (6)
- Inspirational locale for Gauguin (6)
- Play charades, perhaps (4)
- Ominous (4)
- Scrumptious (5)
- Agent Eliot and others (6)
- Key (9)
- Mourned (7; 2 wds.)
- High-speed Internet access (9)
- Spy Aldrich (not to be confused with former sitcom actor Willie) (4)
- Encompasses (9)
- Gave an anti-makeover? (8)
- Older phone feature (4)
- One might be hilarious or destructive (4)
- Writer of Hellish verse (5)

# marishiten's gift

A goddess of good fortune revered by gamblers, Marishiten produced a beautifully-painted deck of cards, which she proceeded to cut in half and shuffle.



Assign some entries, lowest number to highest, to cards in the order presented here.

# marishiten's gift - pg. 2 of 2

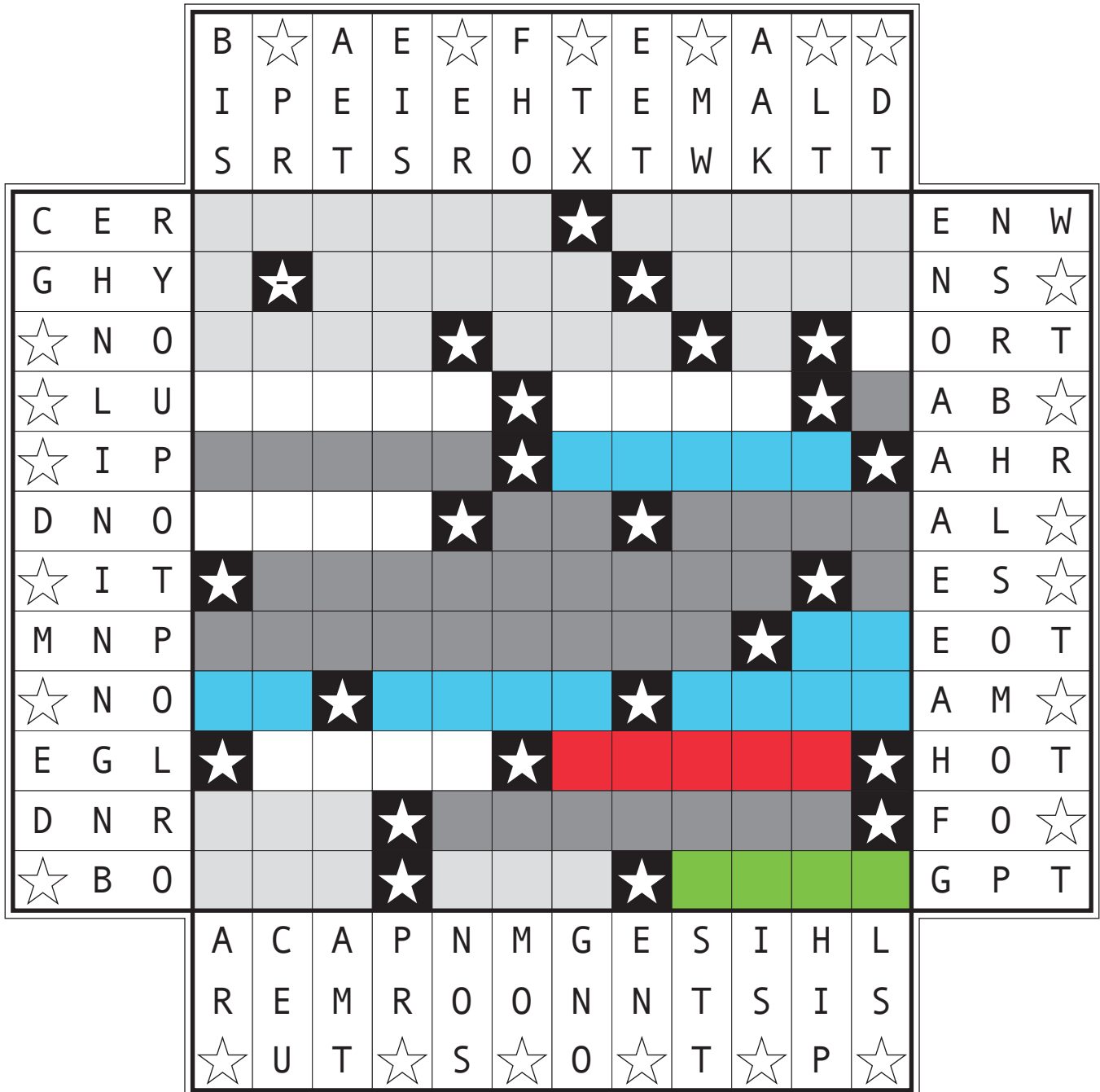
## CLUES

- |                        |                             |                          |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 The Fonz,            | 29 <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>  | 57 Band                  |
| 2 Party                | 30 Place to                 | 58 City                  |
| 3 Gate                 | 31 Zimbabwe                 | 59 Singly                |
| 4 Music source         | 32 Nations                  | 60 Assassin              |
| 5 Female               | 33 The opposite of          | 61 Inert figure who      |
| 6 Danny Zuko, etc.     | 34 Tablet                   | 62 Certain failure       |
| 7 Orgiastic            | 35 Term                     | 63 Matches               |
| 8 Warriors             | 36 Jacques Cousteau         | 64 Towering              |
| 9 To casually          | 37 Break dancer's           | 65 Hustle                |
| 10 Cocktail            | 38 <i>The Addams Family</i> | 66 The basement          |
| 11 Jacket              | 39 Male                     | 67 Mercury's             |
| 12 In desserts         | 40 Borough or               | 68 Minor                 |
| 13 Small bow           | 41 Pump                     | 69 Making                |
| 14 Greek               | 42 Aircraft                 | 70 Tenant's organization |
| 15 Set pieces          | 43 Cast                     | 71 Units feature         |
| 16 Characters          | 44 At one time              | 72 Improvements to       |
| 17 Like some Norse     | 45 Pen                      | 73 In baseball           |
| 18 Owing things        | 46 TV cat                   | 74 Something causing     |
| 19 Free from           | 47 Invention                | 75 In the Arctic         |
| 20 Butler              | 48 Carrier's cap            | 76 Actor's group         |
| 21 Lightweight         | 49 Stealthy                 | 77 Southwestern          |
| 22 The world's largest | 50 Wine                     | 78 A pot                 |
| 23 Energy-boosting     | 51 Crime involving          | 79 Deities               |
| 24 Beelzebub's         | 52 A lie                    | 80 Fixtures              |
| 25 Rodent              | 53 Ant, for example         | 81 Copy                  |
| 26 Saloon              | 54 Manacles                 | 82 Carbon                |
| 27 Realm               | 55 Storefront               | 83 Over                  |
| 28 Ode's setting       | 56 Is part                  | 84 King of               |

Each grid entry is clued using two of the clue parts above. The sum of the two clue numbers indicates the position of the entry in the grid. Each clue part is used for exactly one entry. Entries include five multi-word phrases.

# amatsu-mikaboshi's gift

*Mikaboshi, god of all the stars, catapulted hundreds of them to the North, South, East and West, making a brilliant display in the sky.*

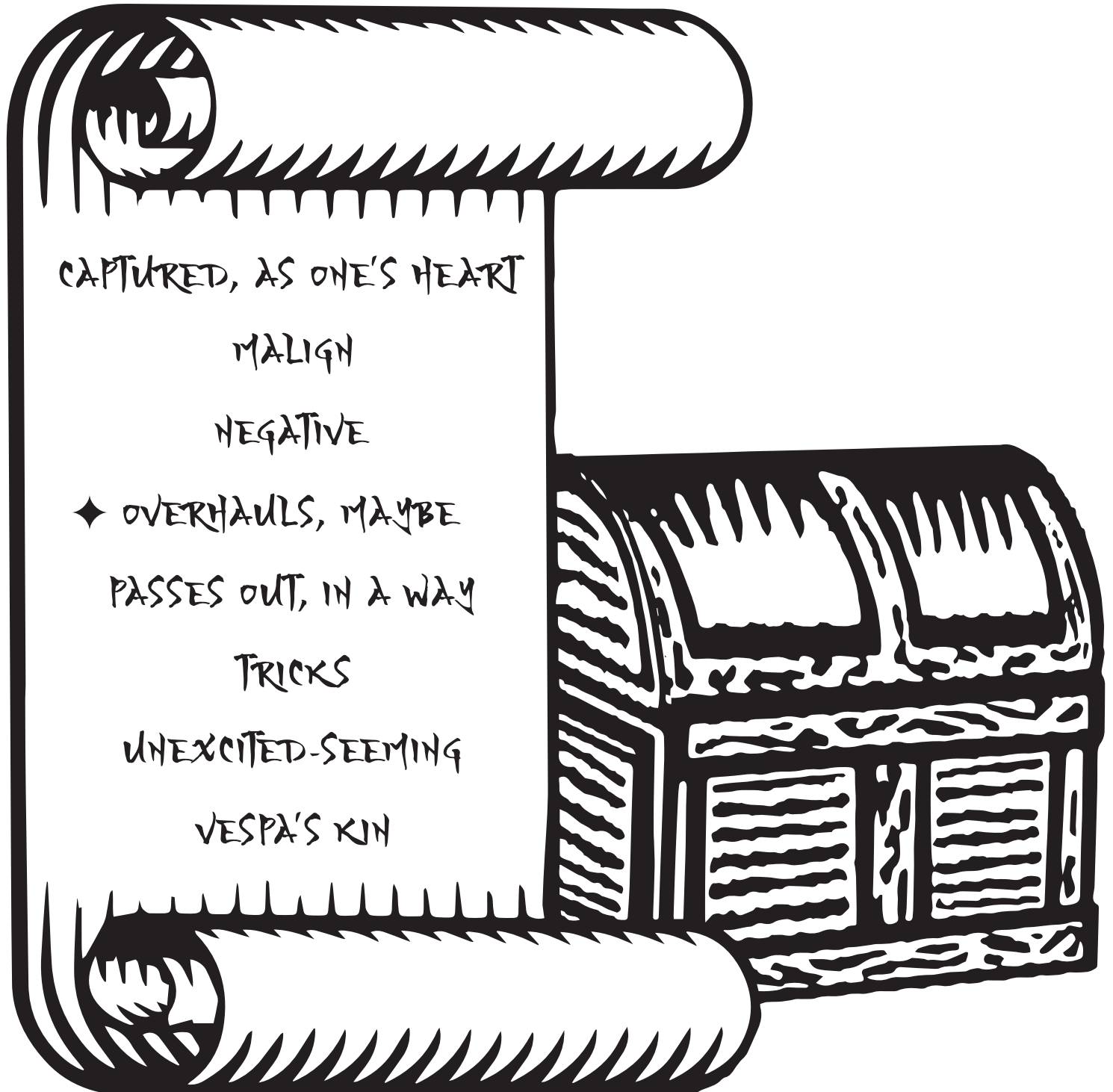


Nothing is thrown more than halfway across the sky. Stars, which indicate spaces between words, have already been placed.

# omoikane's gift

*Omoikane, god of wisdom, presented a scroll and a mysterious chest. When asked what his chest contained, he only smiled quietly and kept his own council.*

To open Omoikane's chest, enter a string of letters into the answer checker composed of the initial bigrams of each of your eight answers, in alphabetical order by answer word.



CAPTURED, AS ONE'S HEART

MALIGN

NEGATIVE

♦ OVERHAULS, MAYBE

PASSES OUT, IN A WAY

TRICKS

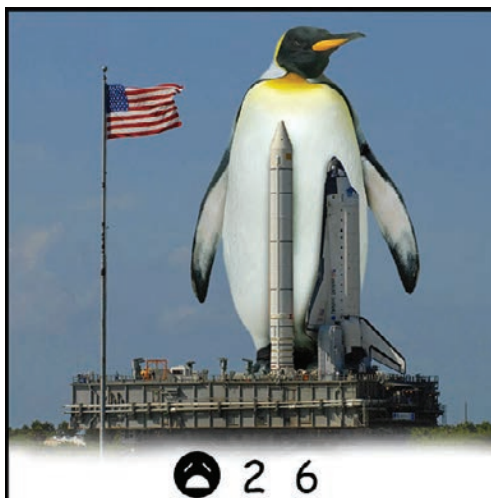
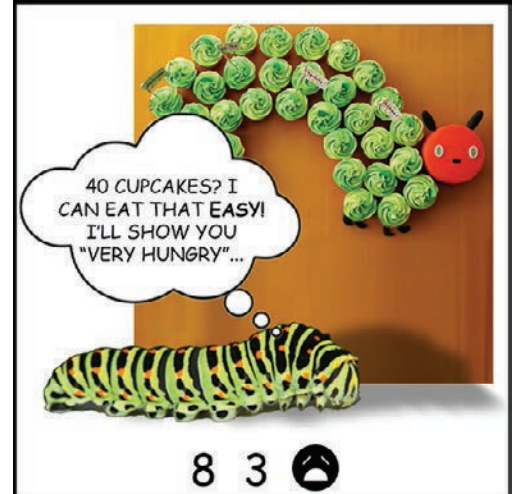
UNEXCITED-SEEMING

VESPA'S KIN



# tsukuyomi's gift

Tsukuyomi, god of the moon, presented a baku – a dream-spirit composed of the parts of many animals. Baku gobble up nightmares, allowing sleepers to enjoy long, undisturbed repose.



# tsukuyomi's gift - pg. 2 of 2

