

Drop Out or Get In by Ucaimhu

It's late spring again, and a bunch of people are coming to DC looking for certain items! You can find one in each of the five numbered regions in the map to the right, which uses two special techniques for fitting in entries:

(I) Erasures: An interior pair of letters is simply removed; since this erasure would not, in general, result in a valid entry, write the letter pair on the grid line where it vanishes.

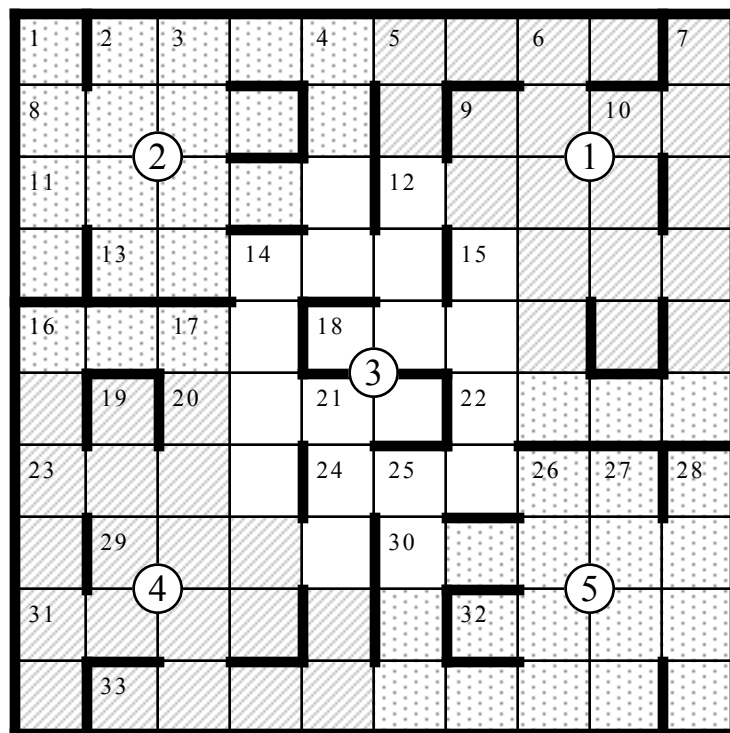
(II) Portals: The first or last pair of letters passes through the thick grid line at the start or end of the word; the first or last letter goes into the square beyond, and the other letter goes on the thick line itself.

In each region, (I) and (II) each occur twice, with the same four letter pairs involved; the two for (I), and the two for (II), each form an appropriate word, and all four together form what is being hunted for.

After all the items have been found, hunters will try to get to a certain spot on the map. Of the clues not involved in (I) or (II) (whose answers are all entered normally), five Across and five Down clues each have wordplay yielding a letter sequence that omits one letter. For an Across clue, the letter just drops; order these letters by the map region where the letter is. For a Down clue, it "tunnels through," reappearing as an extra letter produced by the wordplay

ACROSS

2. Cut worrying use of methane to warm things (2 wds.)
8. Disyllabic remarks made upon discovery of undressed goose
9. Friend rotating gizmo that engages with a ratchet
11. Oil near movable part of a wing
12. Penny kisses hot buccaneer
13. One who storms the gates of one Nevada spot well
15. Dick Garland can finally enter quickly (2 wds.)
16. Soothing plants brought back for actress Ward
18. Way of moving a gun
20. Slowly takes in English or Latin word before *dixit*
22. Earl twice gets untimed brain scans (*abbr.*)
23. Family that includes Navajo's hexad of Maenad enemies (*hyph.*)
24. Multiple boxes east of delicate sheets in a chest
29. Gore, surrounded by gore aplenty
30. Primarily, crassly and impolitely!
31. More than one cross, adult American
32. French wine vessel
33. Geld a small cockerel initially seized by ape



in some other non-(I)-or-(II) clue; order these by the map region where the extra letter *would* be if it were part of the other clue's answer. These letters will tell you where the aforementioned hunters are trying to get to.

Finally, the one remaining clue (which is entirely normal) is also a clue *without definition* for something that will be key for both hunting, and getting where they want to be.

DOWN

1. Cease to carry messages a deity barely reads (2 wds.)
2. Spot keeps greeting a non-Sunni
3. Trump's old nurse
4. One bit of nickel, gold, or lead from *The King and I*
5. Highest price quoted to yak (2 wds.)
6. Scot's refusal to hold up weary Green voter in 2000
7. Stuff produced by combining (chiefly) Benjamins and Grants
9. More tube-shaped or Φ -shaped glyph on dock [NI3]
10. Get to hug a white knight
14. Mostly add tar to upset people who smoke e-cigs
16. Serenaded wandering gnats (2 wds.)
17. Stuff on the floor is broiled mule loin
19. Taste a filling dish
21. Snake hidden in German's British cigarettes
25. School near Monterey Bay Costco expels non-odd characters (*abbr.*)
26. The author of *Clan of the Cave Bear Anka Beheaded*
27. What France was to a Roman lass at 51 AD's start
28. Part of obscenely X-rated reels exhibiting C_8H_{10}