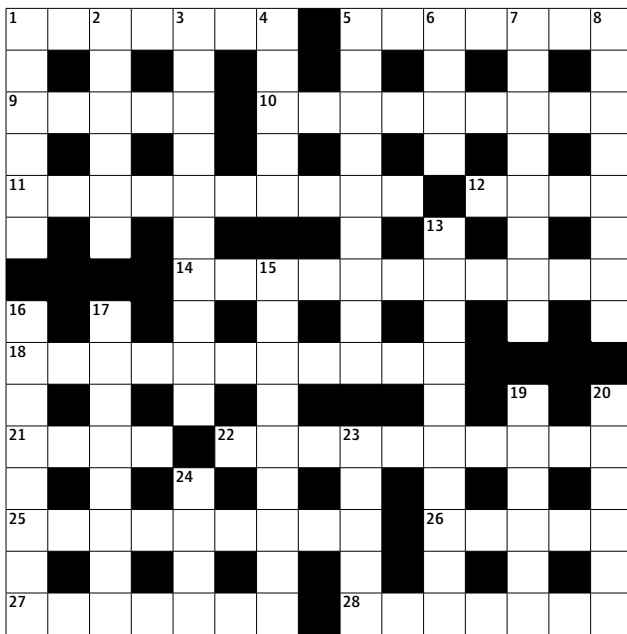


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 26,424 set by Paul

The first five correct entries drawn each week win Guardian Style and Secrets of the Setters, worth £28.99.

Entries to: The Guardian Crossword No 26,424, P.O. Box 6603, Birmingham, B26 3PR, or Fax to 0121-742 1313 by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday 1 December.

Across

- 1 Tailless fish and a tailless baby feline (7)
- 5 Drifting in front of juggernaut finally, lady perhaps exceeding 70 on the motorway (7)
- 9 Victory in bye for opener (5)
- 10 One defending a possible clue for "raft"? (5,4)
- 11 Politician – her purpose ultimately to go after Tory leadership, as about time for a general election? (7,3)
- 12,26 Text with the other illustrations (4,5)
- 14 Turn forward, getting home in time for broadcast (11)
- 18 Where one finds only the cream consumed, say, with joint wrapped in cabbage (4,7)
- 21,25 Wearing Y-fronts, I kneel befuddled in front of pub, a beastly drunken vision (4,9)
- 22 Lack of advancement, country in rut, perhaps? (10)
- 25 See 21
- 26 See 12
- 27 Results in conclusion not entirely the reverse (7)
- 28 Coral snakes in reasonable fixture on boat (7)

Down

- 1 Hole where rodent stores it (6)
- 2 Car wheel? (6)
- 3 Smart aleck fit to embrace daughter? Always going over the top (6,4)
- 4 Little wriggler runs inside red flower (5)
- 5 Publication with French article in European institution in Cambridge (9)
- 6 Entrails in bottle (4)
- 7 Setter lifting a couple of Hindu melodies (4-4)
- 8 Sit with chimp in garden under the arbour, initially (4,1,3)
- 13 Tree higher than one covered in rubber, that's lighter (4-6)
- 15 Possible reason for hair salon visit, as reconciliation occurs? (5,4)
- 16 Cheese spread please after bacon and egg starters (3,5)
- 17 Private tucked into bed, quaking at a stroke of the baton (8)
- 19 Restaurant writer munching spelt crusts (6)
- 20 Lid held up by topless Adonis to remove clothes from suitcase (6)
- 23 Device inserted into frog is modern (5)
- 24 National draw announced (4)

Solution No. 26,423

