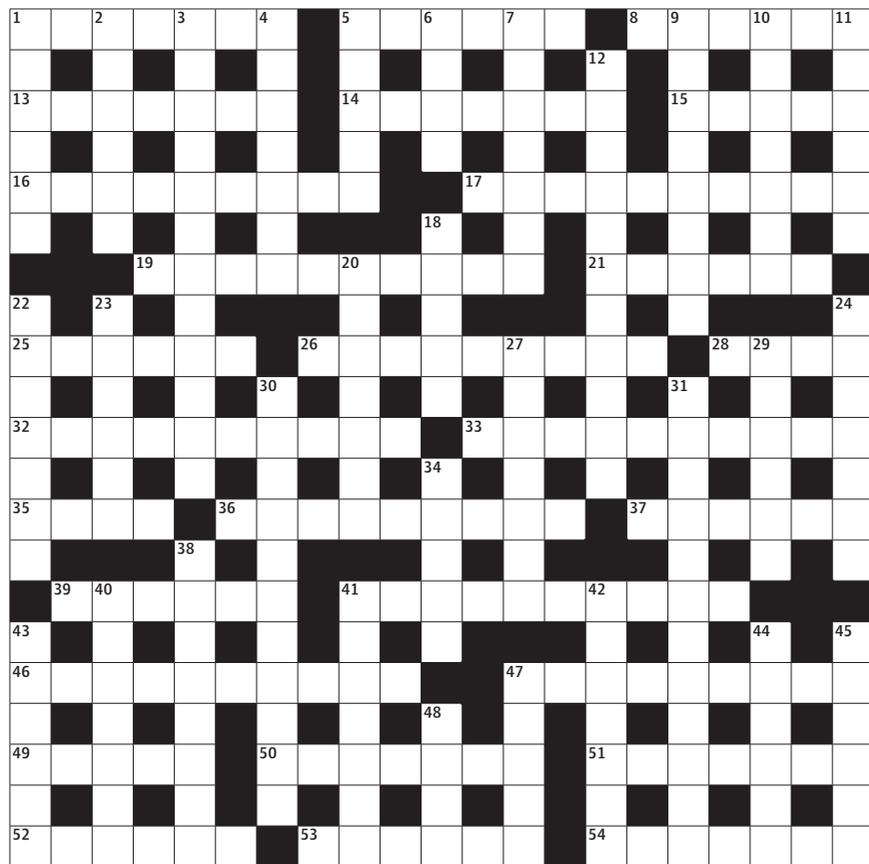


GUARDIAN CHRISTMAS SPECIAL CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



No 26,137 set by Maskarade

Twelve clues lead to 12 themed solutions, not further defined, and another 12 clues, also not further defined, lead to solutions directly paired with each of the first 12.

Across

- 1 Small town clamour (7)
- 5 Modern contacts from Sliema (6)
- 8 Got rid of Times boss? (6)
- 13 Freedom that's tolerated to excess (7)

- 14 Criminal's vehicle? I don't believe it (3,4)
- 15 Island work out – Georgia goes missing (5)
- 16 He puts down corded material by sideboard with no top (9)
- 17 Leading industrialist books house exchange on Thursday (2,3,5)
- 19 Killed – left missing out east by partners (5-5)
- 21 Cruel fellow, sober first (6)

- 25 Fruit and nuts topped (6)
- 26 I performed outside Orcadian brae (9)
- 28 Snack counter spoken of at ski lift (1-3)
- 32 Foreign articles – new shoe and new trousers (10)
- 33 Countryman going west taking in most of Athens, touring (5,5)
- 35 Fishing area could be Dover? (4)
- 36 Keeps poor Roy inside around start of year (4,5)
- 37 Large male kangaroo born just after WW2? (6)
- 39 Appeal Ms Black left out, reverting to type (6)
- 41 Cover a hawk broke to cause damage (5,5)
- 46 Puritan pocketing popular church gold (6,4)
- 47 Island with volume ten (9)
- 49 Otterden is going out on Sunday (5)
- 50 Enright edited (3,4)
- 51 Coppers in capital, detailed (7)
- 52 Baltic Queen? (6)
- 53 Old charioteer lost heart (6)
- 54 Ruin half of Rhodes and Ilium (7)

Down

- 1 Could be Anderson without a wicket, starting over (6)
- 2 Astronaut turns up and covers the ground again (6)
- 3 24's patriarch came up, cleaving sword (5,7)
- 4 Dogs spring off to heart of Kent (7)
- 5 Break galley up – bit by bit (5)
- 6,9 A parody – 49 composed (4,8)
- 7 Sounds from the herd reach into the wood (7)

- 9 See 6
- 10 Former captain will find out about abstract art (7)
- 11 Fishtail in shabby boat (6)
- 12 Next to his body, feet moved (2,3,4,2)
- 18 Footballer's streams (5)
- 20 Dignified introductions to services taken in cathedral (7)
- 22 Song thrush is off, finally (2,5)
- 23 Solo was first up (6)
- 24 Country folk now living in Grantchester (7)
- 27 Toddler's bedtime story of a good baron in castle (3,4)
- 29 Lines from M*A*S*H (6)
- 30 No Christmas away for supporters (11)
- 31 Thinkers rebuilding 52 igloos (12)
- 34 Tailless bird left (5)
- 38 Boycott's obligation with a DJ? (5,3)
- 40 Short journey apparently on bike (7)
- 41 Launch site with low take-up period (7)
- 42 Spenser's examined and sealed a document (7)

- 43 Cavalryman's well-heeled – not half! (6)
- 44 It's "short in duration" and made from real ice, out east (6)
- 45 It's certainly up with actress who played Lacey (6)
- 47 Some tragically going up in smoke (5)
- 48 Sign on, with light infantry first (4)

Solution No. 26,136



The first 10 correct entries drawn win Guardian Style and Secrets of the Setters, worth £28.99.

Entries to: The Guardian Crossword No 26,137, P.O. Box 6603, Birmingham, B26 3PR or Fax to 0121-742 1313 by first post on Thursday 2 January. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Friday 3 January.

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