

Pacific Northwest

as told to Ucaoimhu

In the peaceful Shire, in the northwest of Middle Earth, 26 clues are able to remain uninvolved in any gimmickry. Alas, things are different for you (and 26 other clues), young hobbit. Eight grid entries will mark the path of your journey (past the entity in the shaded rows). The first entry will be altered by receiving an item; it will then cross another entry, altering it the same way, and so on, until at last you reach an entry the item belongs in, *without* alteration. (One altered entry is NI2.)

This item is also so corruptive that eight other clues, each for an entry crossing one of the "path" entries, show their former selves only in the definition part; the entry for each instead matches the cryptic part, which yields a very different answer.

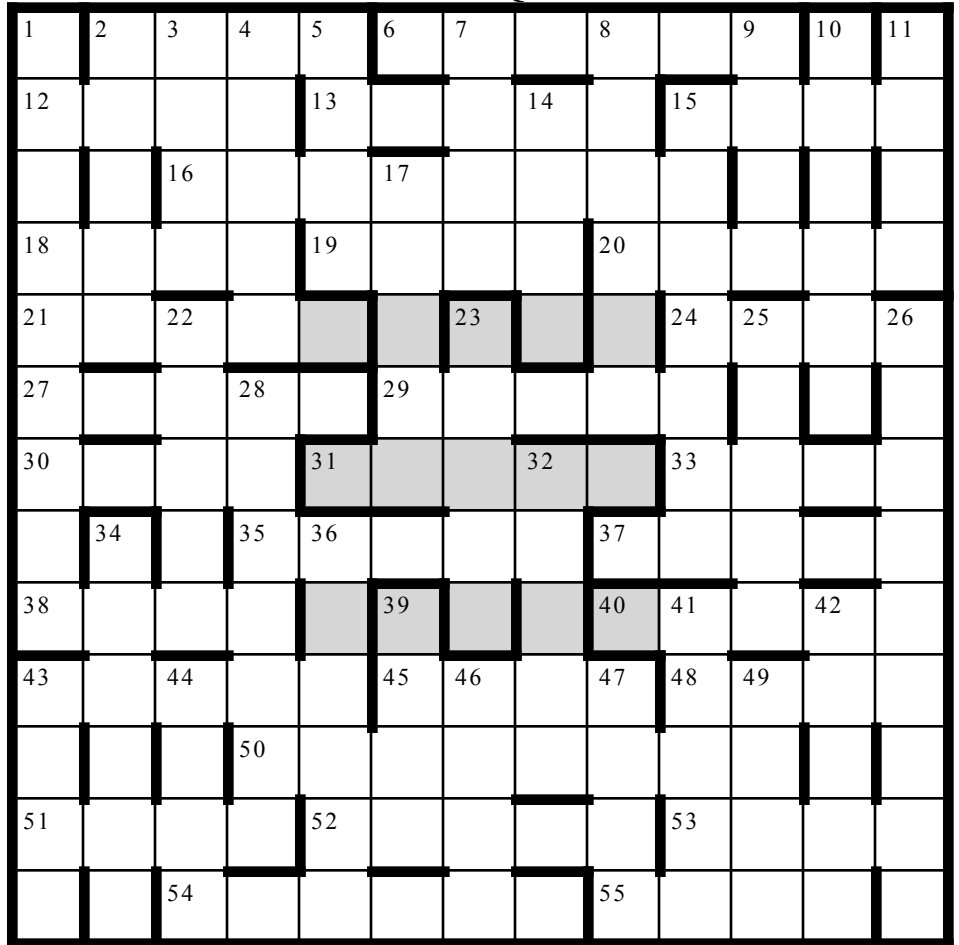
For each "path" entry and "corrupted" entry, find the position in each where they cross, and circle the letters in *both* those positions in *both* clues. In path order, the circled letters in the "path" clues will give one place where the item might safely go, but those in the "corrupted" clues will give a better place. To correctly solve ten more clues, you must take a single letter from each of five of them, and move it across to one of the other five; these five letters, north to south, will say how you might reach the second location.

("Wait! There are six more Across clues!" you cry. Yes, and each of these has an extra word you must remove before solving. But don't worry about those words until you finish solving this puzzle, and read the rotated square in the corner.)

ACROSS

2. 300-page text from the Cold War (*abbr.*)
6. One's whips employed by heartless editor more than once!
12. Goad in Egypt or points west, making a loud noise
13. Aurally evaluate singer Bonnie
15. Thus Thor uncovered part of Manhattan crypt
16. Actress Arthur, at times, taking in Poe and Ginsberg, for example (2 *ws.*)
18. Ecdysiast's posterior area, half-seen to avoid shocking anyone
19. Minute, ruddy TV horse (2 *ws.*, *abbr.*)
20. Celebrity possessing right physique
21. In Gail's stead coat inside of her fireplace
24. "Lop" is wrong word to precede "facto"
27. Munched sole with folks born in the summer
29. Part of dress that's sewn last drops
30. Scot's root vegetable in Shawnee epic
31. Road in the Argentine counts, say
33. Not to stay next to a large target
35. Leave one-thousand-bathroom residence
37. Yokum's finale in New York disheartened posh individual of mature years
38. Charge on property Mr. Sedaka flipped
40. Huge part of *Cyrano de Bergerac* upset Roxane's last descendant

DO NOT READ THE ROTATED SQUARE AT THE BOTTOM OF



THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE FINISHED SOLVING THE PUZZLE

43. Dance with a couple of Israelis as Native Americans change
45. Average mane seen on *Cheers*
48. Resume rotating at four
50. Lass with yours truly on an errand
51. Useful juxtaposition of Kentucky neighbors
52. Hawke in *Gattaca* and *Latin Lei-Lover*
53. Lunatic lied at work
54. Polish Senator Franken's low-cut shoe
55. I deny vacuous little romantic interlude

DOWN

1. Minorcan's uncle stops melted aluminum using logic
2. Gull one former ghost on late night TV
3. Machines used to transport wines
4. Bit of carrying equipment for a fisherman!
5. I will abandon a Trojan royal carriage
7. Ike aged cheese and thymine-free baloney
8. State fiife-playing/tennis champ Graf
9. Degenerate at top of attendance roster
10. With that guy Sy's Caprice
11. Pinkish shad moved upwards
14. Fuss over old Dorothy (*hyph.*)
15. Like flowing hair styles halfway concealing that magic item you're carrying
17. See if you can utter clichéd expression of delight (2 *ws.*)
22. A Jackson portrait enlarged fiftyfold by leaders of sensible, sensible people
23. Fear going topless is a mistake

25. Male couple from Oregon quietly returned for school dance

26. Lather I'o prepared is warmer (2 *ws.*) [NI3]

28. Part of steering apparatus for wing
32. Entrances physicians, but not court
34. Six also playing stringed instruments
36. Meter readers sang 'em badly [NI3]
39. Thou dost put together audio module
41. North Dakotan, at first, Tivos nude poet
42. Jocose TA's lines are quick
43. Consume port endlessly
44. Greek characters start to proffer greetings
46. Protector of workers in turboshaft (*abbr.*)
47. Large lion's tail obstructs M2
49. Having many ales after ditching with archaeologist from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*

DON'T READ UNTIL DONE:

Change one letter in each of six (not necessarily consecutive) Down words so they are defined (in order) by the extra words. Then put your means of transportation in the first shaded column, then do some joinery, to get an image that will lead you to a document findable in this hotel. With the document oriented properly, put its leftmost word (rotated like this) on top of its rightmost word (read cryptically) to see what fantasy ruler reigns supreme.