ONE TWO TWO
by Ucaoimhu

As in a “one two three” puzzle, some squares in this grid may contain two or even three letters. The top quarter of these special squares will relate to the title according to a particular scheme; applying this scheme in reverse to the other special squares, and to the squares symmetrically opposite them (using left-right symmetry), will yield the ultimate answer.

Across
1. Next to the empty computer memory unit
4. Number with no proper divisors, not counting e as proper
8. Shot about to appear in pilot is cut short
10. Punches headless amphibians
11. Ring outside is audible
12. Ultimately keeps insect as a pet
16. Decorate again in scarlet and orange
18. Initially loved atmosphere in den
19. Back to get Penny Flanders patched up again
20. Caligula’s to be in dresses
21. Urges for caviar, say

Down
1. Made like a brook and ran after William Schwenck Gilbert
2. Ten stopping over don’t edit schoolbooks
3. First Lady’s dark times
4. Swedish heroine with many gold pieces and endless fruit
5. Knock down beams using your tongue
6. What Frankenstein said about bad wine-growing region (2 wds.)
7. Gibson eats a bunch of food
9. Note Haystack team has to include Luthor, yourself, and myself
13. Superbright lights of Christmas, endlessly enthralling Virginia
14. Plane’s motion is exhausting to take in, at first
15. Janet’s fiancé’s nails
16. Seldom encountered red
17. Dentist has very compactly recorded movies
18. Cooked liver is work of de Sade, peut-être?