1. Austin, We Have Two Problems by Ucucumhu

A certain well-known figure was, fortunately, well trained to deal with certain problems as they arose. Specifically:

(1) For thirteen Down clues, the string of letters produced by the wordplay part differs in exactly one letter from the word clued by the definition part. Change this letter to yet a third letter to get the entry to be put into the grid (this will in one case be a two-word phrase). These new letters (left to right, one in each column) will say where this figure received his training. (Yes, really.) Meanwhile, the letters from the wordplay part, and the letters from the definition parts, will each (still reading column-by-column) show one of the two problems, surrounded by the subcontractor who was engaged to deal with it. (One of the two subcontractors is more “canonical” than the other.)

(2) Certain squares will be “overstuffed,” containing one of two materials, which the tools used by the above subcontractors were made of. Each such square is crossed by both an Across and a Down entry, both working normally. For each material, the clues for the corresponding Across entries “link up,” in that the last letter of each such Across clue is the same as the first letter of another such Across clue. If you draw lines connecting the squares of a given material that correspond to linked clues, you will see the tool made of that material; take the initial letters of those clues in the order determined by the links, starting at the clue corresponding to the overstuffed square in the grid’s central column, to see briefly how the subcontractor would use that tool.

(3) Take all of the Down clues from (2), ordered by the overstuffed squares they intersect (left to right and top to bottom in the grid), without regard to which material is in those squares; all of their first letters, and (separately) all of their last letters, will spell two lines describing several instances of one tool, with each line missing a few letters. Count, as per these missing letters, from (a) the start and (b) the end of each Across clue not previously used in (2). The letters from (a) will tell you where the other tool might appropriately be found; the letters from (b) will tell you where to find a suitable reward for all of this hard work.

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ACROSS
1. Store carrying Uc & Company’s corn-and-bean dish
2. Exhibiting, to a greater extent, audacity added onto a bit of boldness!
3. Paid a modified form of Ovid
4. Priest beheaded a beast
5. South American land for each individual in the west, universally
6. What helpers provide when overturning red-and-yellow log
7. Hod full of sulfur near hot cheapo
8. Van in Raipur, inside a fake Hindu hermitage
9. Trims ship-holding structures
10. One who annoys odd pets
11. First letters from someone you met surveying a former clothes vendor
12. Dorian characters and I sat around eating a doughnut
13. Restrain (using bars from the east, say) a teen’s bugaboo
14. The “place” in a Latin phrase for “in place” is “ut”? Wild
15. Nine of the Parisians filling one UFO
16. Outspoken young wood supplier is familiar with uncharged, minuscule items
17. Wearing a smile, one conceals endless grit [N13]
18. Theater’s supporter is male and English
19. Bloom’s parcel of land near us
20. To tilt crude poles
21. Scream star Campbell just swiveled
22. Thugs from a gym start to specialize
23. Outcome of baking, using cinders and a rock, about twenty copies of V [N13+]
24. Warning from perverse Verne character seen under water
25. That hurts the wings of Linda’s birds
26. Place where Messina is decapitated with no passion
27. Hilda finally gets into tunes of Scott Joplin works played by Ravi Shankar
28. Ones who know gases will flow
29. In Sussex, salt peter, erbium, and tin will travel westward
30. A cardinal alien precept
31. Synopses of 501 adventurous stories
32. Sheep dry from bottom to top
33. Shaved 25% of Sheldon’s bare torso
34. A sap manipulated animals’ hands
35. Norm and Earl pay for the kind of music Enya is known for (2 wds.)
36. Shirt blocking paths floats on the breeze
37. This thing you see that is holding up limb
38. Versifier’s point about a Hindu mantra
39. Cops with animals’ legs
40. Sow is upsetting actor Asner

DOWN
1. Raps about enthralling puzzle pack carried by an Appaloosa
2. Resume eating old, cold, hard mollusk
3. Mentor’s pal crazily dyes us. So?
4. Tone from core of bass instrument resembling a lyre or cithara (2 wds.)
5. Shatters bands worn by leader of mob
6. Clarinetist Goodman’s numberless sons
7. Haberdasher, I testify, has imprisoned descendants of Gad’s brother [N13]
8. Ra will stop Alcestis in the Middle Ages
9. Railroad cops in uniform tilted platforms
10. Top has improperly displayed the language of Hamid Karzai
11. Spot cliffs craggy hills
12. Escargot tin is on top of everything
13. Actress Uta hit a bloke before the ending
14. Sorcerer maintains one real illusion
15. “West African amulets” Sue turned up will include Union Jack
16. Allowing free rein to Glen, a Hun, is bad
17. Gander eggs in Alaska
18. Principal character in film is that guy with indubitably specialized lenses (hyp.)
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