

绝地 At Last by Ucaoimhu

On this dim-sum-and-movie trip, we will look at “Jedi” at last in Chinese. Specifically, the two characters used above to spell Jedi have both semantic and phonetic components, each of which is “last” in a way reflected by alterations to a subset of the Down entries (altered entries will include a UK spelling, a two-word phrase, a philosopher, and a city):

(1) The semantic elements mean “cut, terminate” and “ground” respectively; the two characters (outside of a *Star Wars* context) can together mean “*in extremis*.” Six Down answers must be entered with the terminal letter cut, and six with an extra letter added “on the ground.”

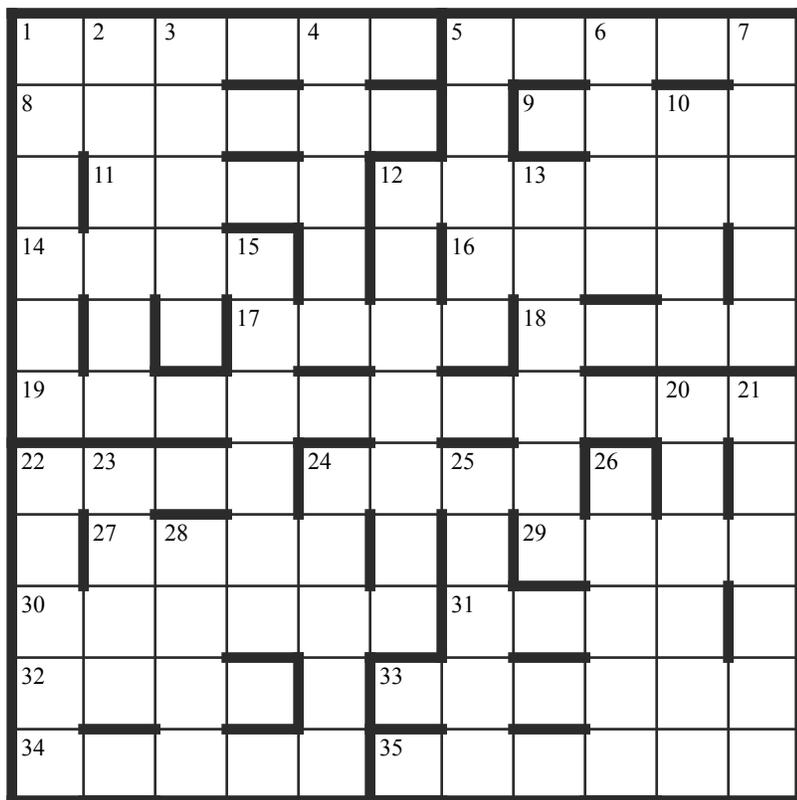
(2) The phonetic components simply occur “last” in the characters (down and right). Each of the other seven Down answers must be entered with a single *sound* removed or added at the start (as per the author’s pronunciation).

But what *really* comes last in “Jedi” in the film’s Chinese title is another pair of characters. In each of twelve Across clues, one word has an extra one- or two-letter compass direction added, which must be removed before solving; where the *m*th word has the addition, and where the *n*th letter is the added one (or, for a two-letter addition, just take $n = 1$), draw a line starting in the center of the *m*th square of the entry and extending *n* squares in the added direction. This will give the two characters in the older right-to-left order (rather than the left-to-right order used in the puzzle title). In clue order, the removed letters and (separately) the added letters from (1) will give meanings for the two characters; the sounds removed and added in (2) will give the pronunciation of the two-character combination, and its English translation, respectively.

Each of the other Across clues has an extra word, which must be removed before solving; take synonyms of these words to form a context for another sense of the second pronunciation above, to provide a final fitting conclusion for this puzzle.

ACROSS

1. Reverse Beach or Reservoir train in pivoting containers Henry is to grab (6)
5. *Police Academy* actors called Smith’s pal Barbara “vacuous” (5)
8. Somersaulting bird that is improbably seized by capo’s lined-up troops (6)
9. Eighth piece of cornwallite Gordon Shumway overturned is planar (4)
11. Five joyous couples had to manage (4)
12. Spinning, hollow top inside of burrow I race in (6)
14. Woman bound to unclaw (in Spain) twisted ropes navy has not used improperly? (3’1)
16. Gust Rita and Robbie encountered infrequently (4)
17. Element at Esther’s center upset, say, male dullards (4)
18. Weight is multiplied by 75 and written around one small platter (4)
19. Those whose art is puzzling incorrectly tinge mists surrounding swamp (11) [NI2]
22. Nav. officer’s unclad waterwings that will make a lady and activist named Brockovich jovial at first (2 2, *abbr.*)



24. Wheat (when hulled) sits to the right of a grand Ottoman leader (4, *var.*) [NI3]
27. That thing is going to cook till Yule (2’2)
29. Twirled for Olive or Kelly, ignoring the first not e’en once (2’2)
30. Everyone recuts warped condiment holders (6)
31. Biblical kingdom’s horde getting an A plus (4)
32. Clobber no-good giant for ape (4)
33. Place everyone in Manhattan to the north of 50th amidst a bunch of spouses (6)
34. Each semi-serene person who one mollifies (5)
35. Nice sixth-oz. bags held by couple of opossums (3-3, *abbr.*)

DOWN

1. Discard secondary rubbish
2. Brine-damaged canoe
3. Justify fighting with bombastic speech
4. Fish puzzle’s final cipher
5. Alternatives to cabs rubes drunk
6. Bit of puffery about brother left in untidy pound
7. Ones keeping cross jerk in prison
10. A Pole fills in that woman’s forms
12. Son gets old, wise people
13. Glowing red spot on one bug
15. Heightened railroad Monopoly square’s retro look
20. Aces exam that’s about 50% Hebrew (2 *wds.*)
21. Theater equipment that might be backing having second of transparency!
22. Seal hair, bunched together
23. Alpine region where Italians and Austrians are lit or inebriated (*var.*)
24. “Elevated,” near Los Angeles!
25. Kind of chum that’s naked when attending *Hair*
26. Confused lead with pine wood
28. Jackets aliens will have on