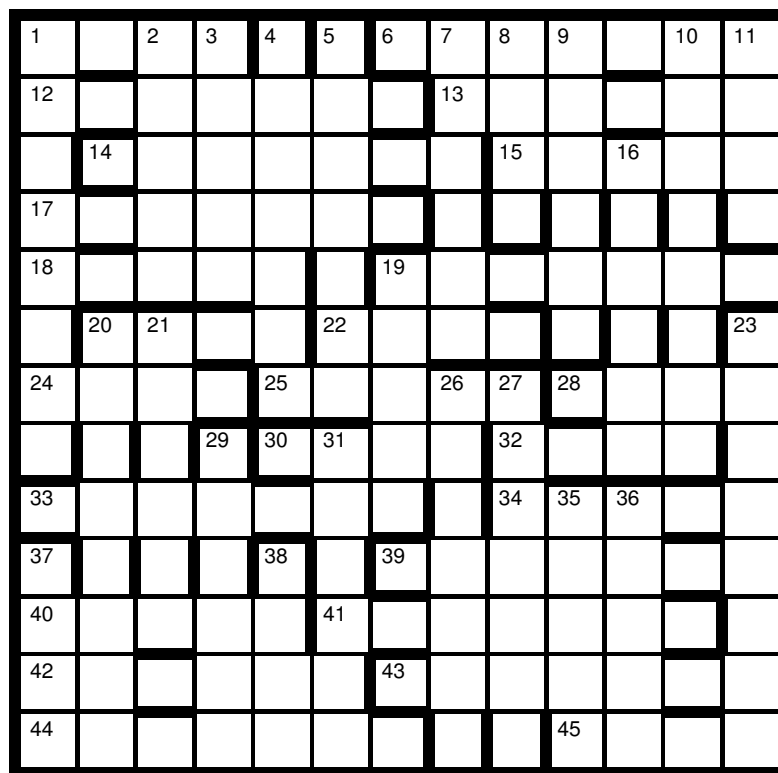


The Ashes by Wan

Each down clue except one has an extra letter in the wordplay, which together form part of a couplet. The couplet should help solvers a) resolve six clashes, and b) change nine entries using the writer's nine letters (two words) so that they comply with the theme. All entries in the final grid are in Chambers 12th edition. One answer is a combining form and another is an abbreviation.



Across

- 1 Segmented wingless insects (4)
- 6 Article on Italy in notebook that's mine in part (7)
- 12 Post-modern cutting that is a plant (7)
- 13 Nearly forgot, Dicky returned impressions (6)
- 14 Shuts up Wan's antiquated operation in months (7)
- 15 Saw to return hooped animal (5)
- 17 More than one goddess is wandering astray (7)
- 18 Support republican in trial (5)
- 19 Prayers in gaols, over for priest (7)
- 20 Old fella in church alone (4)
- 22 Father cycling a bit rages (4)
- 24 Scots scratch and powder back (4)
- 25 Wise perhaps to undress French last (5)
- 28 Fix old master (4)
- 30 Instructions out of France for French cheese (4)
- 32 Excellent hospital stops stroke (4)
- 33 Tells learner to divide buttercups (7)
- 34 Immigrant, yes in Spain, toing and froing about Spain (5)
- 39 Orioles fluttering extract from flowers (7, 2 words)
- 40 Use for the most part, two in three drugs in case (5)
- 41 Sailor to fish once astir (7)
- 42 Risk losing head for money, that's Yorick? (6)
- 43 Excuse me, dynasty is installing borders (7)
- 44 Ken roughly arrested by policeman and put down hard (7)
- 45 You lot with no finals, it's a reason to enjoy yourselves? (4)

Down

- 1 Tips maid put in case of leather for make-up (7)
- 2 No longer used side of closet that's damaged (5)
- 3 Identical lover Mike, erect as his predecessors (5)
- 4 Ed's nurse in gown pours lemonade (7)
- 5 Perhaps gas charger cycle causes acceleration on uphill (7)
- 7 Cover during use in another way protects brand (6)
- 8 Handle slave left for dead, at once (4)
- 9 Air in the man's tyre's limit for vehicle (6)
- 10 In NY, trick cyclist from top group around pencils in prime locations (8)
- 11 Had to wind up Ed's dinghy (4)
- 16 Plant for afternoon meal (6)
- 19 Dancer, unmarried, in gold lace? (5)
- 20 Treatment of Anti lice lotion, just the head on customers (8)
- 21 Reverence from groom round wife (6)
- 23 Edith regularly runs piglets on past fungi (8)
- 26 Gentleman, not Steven, died left in the cold (7)
- 27 A little boy kept uncovered, one bacterial particle (7)
- 29 Shot heard, shell from airgun? Like hell (6)
- 31 Dear me, Will's scored again (6)
- 35 Mariner Mary abandoned is sordid (5)
- 36 Touring Channel Islands, alone, no longer with the Latino community (5)
- 37 Whatever raised Hypnos, essentially a drug (4)
- 38 Agent heading north plugs king's dress smartly (4)