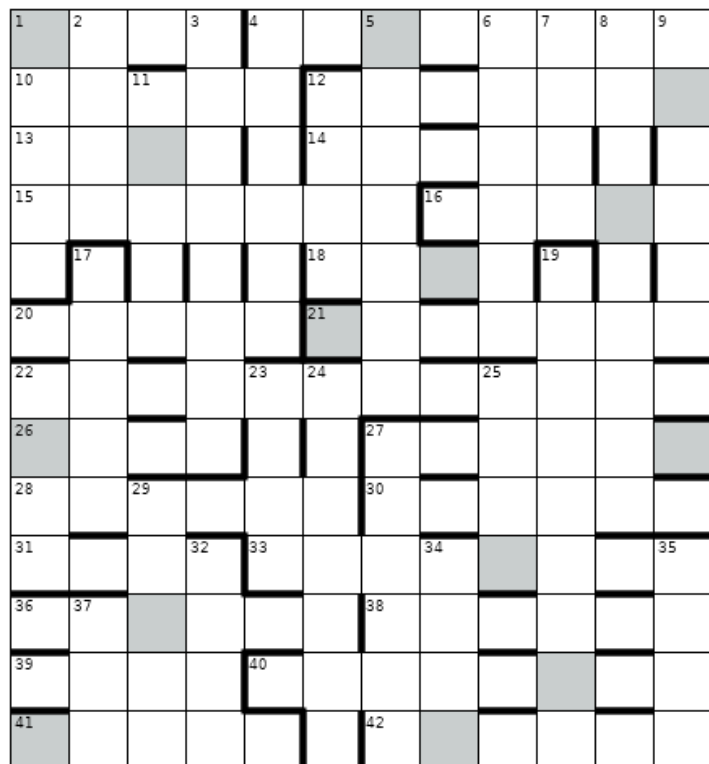


# Dressing Down

by Hedge-sparrow



The puzzle re-enacts a story told in a comic song. Cells where crossing overlong entries clash identify eight unfortunate victims (imagining an apostrophe in one case): solvers must indicate these by their initial letters and colour these cells appropriately. The unclued entry identifies the cause of the trouble. In accordance with the song's title, a random selection of clues (four across, four down) must have two consecutive letters removed before solving (always leaving real words). Solvers must highlight the song's performers (7) in the filled grid, and write below it the name of the unwitting perpetrator of the incident, unjumbled from letters in greyed cells. Ignoring the victims' cells, all final entries are real words. Enumerations refer to answer lengths.

**Perpetrator:** .....

## Across

- 1 Hot and anxious, stripped layers (4)
- 4 Bit of log insect cut down (8)
- 10 Sure graduate returned antique first reader (5)
- 12 Squandering penny, cease wanting pounds (11)
- 13 Roster of gunners protecting returning Tito (4)
- 14 Tail leading edge of torrential downpour (5)
- 15 Seized smashed stones, including primarily industrial diamonds (9)
- 16 Decline to admit pursuing idol (6, two words)
- 18 Conference prescribed choice of food (4)
- 20 Mysteries of ear canal uncovered (6)
- 21 Younger pens recognize patrons of letters (7)
- 22 *Unclued*
- 26 Little monkeys scratching children? Little monkeys!
- 27 Female winner Verity French hosted by Victoria State's leader (8)
- 28 Special checks identified revolutionary Russian native in the water (6)
- 30 Bearded man's a junior scout (6)
- 31 Abbeys receiving one knowing the latest status of clerics (12)
- 33 Those seeking votes toil vigorously to gain access to selectors (11)
- 36 Do a refit sporting felt hat (6)
- 38 Worry about collecting wicked old French King's tax (6)
- 39 Rare type – bird that's pitied in the Highlands (4)
- 40 Secures settlement to safeguard struggling side (8, two words)
- 41 Duck feather hidden in grass exposed once more (8)
- 42 Ensnared by communist, American priest raged (6)

## Down

- 1 Most resolute, tumbling headfirst after cutting foot (8)
- 2 Bite back regarding rare hardwood (4)
- 3 Perennial plants – variety of pea found in cesspools (8, two words)
- 4 Cor! Operation with AI reversed shortsightedness (6)
- 5 In control, lovely Amy's avoided turning more geeky (7)
- 6 Goofs saying curtly "Toilets must be vacated" (6)
- 7 Informs on Government involved in malpractices (5)
- 8 North American birds these days move faster, following sun south-east (9, two words)
- 9 Maybe CIA waits, dispatching women to gather info on Thailand (6)
- 11 Launches ship with caustic on board (6)
- 12 Barber finally sorting idle gent having curly hair (9)
- 17 Wanting credit, unfeelingly emit rising fog for writer (5)
- 19 Further elaborate on diamonds cut to enthral First Lady (9)
- 22 One helping with deliveries in potential time of crisis, heart becoming weak (7)
- 23 Captain Kirk, perhaps – one originally meant to occupy bridge (8)
- 24 Flier's drink trouble (7)
- 25 Vessel containing drop of astonishingly alcoholic liquor (4)
- 27 Arrived possessing means for boring English judge (7)
- 29 Hurries over drinking Idaho's cocktail (7)
- 32 Poke local bard whose time's up (4)
- 34 Star ejected from libertine's Italian mansion (4)
- 35 Finishes cycling relay (4)
- 37 Observe headless deity on base (3)