

Leading Character by Vismut

Some clues have three letter abbreviations missing from the wordplay. Two from the set they would complete are missing. 12 across clues have wordplay which leads to the grid entry with one incorrect letter. The incorrect letters spell out four thematic names, the correct letters are a jumble of two more. These hints indicate which leading character must turn up to reveal what has to be highlighted.

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Across

- 1 Yes, Dutch spy leaving government was habitually lazy (6)
- 5 Feverish bug (7)
- 10 No odd bits in small neat bone (4)
- 11 One leg in six say not real (8)
- 13 Glen's estate owners hit Mr Sid Little's front wing first (6)
- 15 Ordinary lady with husband who is "God" (4)
- 16 Protective coverings beside square (6)
- 17 Scrap reviewing The Hobbit initially (5)
- 18 Something pungent from measure of land by blue Nile (8)
- 20 Sanction supporter (3)
- 21 Useless creeps stripped (4)
- 25 Adult getting into kid cycling team in America (9)
- 27 Minutes putting coat inside out (4)
- 28 Short horse pushed back crowd (3)
- 33 Bits of parasite left rabbits when cooked (8)
- 35 Ian's shabby eastern isle jumper on the counter (5)
- 36 Local coppers under British rule, historically 50% of messengers (6)
- 38 Fair number ignoring Sabbath (4)

- 39 Oil producing family delegates regularly kiss naked (6)
- 40 Antipope accepted light gratin (8)
- 41 English girl's name (4)
- 42 Perhaps Sibyl needs support on topless gown (7)
- 43 Cooler for rustic to not have any ducks (6)

Down

- 1 Timeless sun god associated with Caesar (6)
- 2 Warning sound before art work lifted (6)
- 3 Quarter of the pack bringing down horse for dens (6)
- 4 Note promotion in the year yields nothing (4)
- 5 Passionate fellow in for piano run through (6)
- 6 Partners swapped corsets (7)
- 7 Plant Scottish own beside British colony in recession (8)
- 8 Harden fertiliser by pushing out piece (5)
- 9 Former remover at home filling new role carrying earl (7)
- 12 Heavy metal hits on these! (6)
- 14 Take in current joke during conversation (6)
- 19 Cylinder, bolt and drone say protecting outside of turret (8)
- 22 Concerning European order (6)
- 23 Ties up fishing equipment carried by female donkey (7)
- 24 Tops of ash, viburnum and oak having eight leaves (6)
- 26 Mistake over relative's massage (7)
- 29 Oscar's entertained by 50% of Lhasa apsos barking welcomes (6)
- 30 Version of major Italian writing system (6)
- 31 Putting up short drunk relatives inside (6)
- 32 Letter's got one fewer es (6)
- 34 Briefly embarrassed first female district judge (5)
- 37 Libel ignoring fourth letter raised standards (4)