

INARI'S GIFT SOLUTION - FOOLS

The filled grid below shows the location of fourteen foxholes, representing the ends of seven two-way tunnels. Words entering either end will stop, resuming at the corresponding attached hole. Thus, for example, SCARLETS and BULLRING will be entered in the grid as SCARING and BULLETS. Each entrance-hole is also crossed by a normal entry whose clue has had a letter stolen. These letters are unique, A-N.

Seven clues have extra tails; i.e. a letter appended to the end of one word which should be ignored. Seven other clues contain "illusions, in a manner of speaking"; that is, homophones of words that actually make the clue work. The final third of the clues embrace men's names, which must be ignored to parse the clues. Per the instructions, the tails (rodeO, badgeR, retroD, gripE, tubeR, sidE, lateX), followed by the letters immediately following the homophones (current/currant I, bizarre/bazaar T, series/Ceres S, graft/graphed B, world/whirled Y, chants/chance S, pupu/pooh-pooh T), followed by initials of captured men (Otis, Liam, Ethan, Niles, Boris, Ian, Tom) spell the message ORDER EXITS BY STOLEN BIT.

If considering each entrance hole, as described above, to be associated with a stolen letter A-N, for each of those stolen letters take the letter in the corresponding exit hole. This spells the clue MORTALS PER PUCK ("Lord, what fools these mortals be!", says Shakespeare's mischeivous shape-changer) for the answer FOOLS.

Clue explanations:

! = anagram; " = homophone; stolen letters indicated at start; foxhole words underlined

Across 1. SCARLETS, ACTRESS* holding L 5. rodE[-o] CAL NEeds reversed 10. [B]oat, K+A+YAK 11. IMPASSES, PIES SAMS* 12. sho[OTIS]t, UNFINDABLE* - fled 13. PROPMEN, ROMP* around PEN 14. badge(-r), SENSING* 17. "current", STALE*+T 18. DOCUMENTS, DO(CU+ME)NTS 20. FLATTENS, FLAT+TEN+S 21. retro(-d), particular REServation reversed 22. pun[K], JoIn MoB nOt 23. s[M]ack, BUS(-S) 24. [J]ailing, P(LE)BS 26. ga[N]g, rOPE Comprising 29. "bazaar", RUM I MOPE* 32. "Ceres", A+EDITORS* 34. bus[H]iness, I HEAR NIL* 36. re[C]lines, LO(LL)S 37. par[LIAM]ent, ER rev.+RAND 38. TEETERY, TEE+T(E)RY 39. grip(-e), MET(RE)S 40. m[ETHANE]e, D+IT+T+O 41. MASALA, MAS+ALA 42. "graphed", COOTS IS*

Down 1. SKOSHES, S(KOS)SHES 2. tube(-r), CAN+LOIN* 3. [F]lipped, DI+BAR rev. 4. [L]earned, "knew aunts" 5. pen[NILES]s, EM(PLOY)S 6. contin[G]ent, manifeSTO Alarmed rev. 7. ch[A]in, PALE* 8. Sid(-e), "seizer" 9. ar[BORIS]t, ailurophiE ART HAspens 11. INSTRUCTORS, IT TURN CROSS* 15. STAMPER, SET PRAM* 16. ch[l]efs. group...neighborhood initials 19. "whirled", RIDDLES* 21. SPRATS, SP(R)ATS 22. JOKIER, JO+KIER 23. "chance", BET+IDES 25. BULLRING, BRUIN* holding LL+G 27. late(-x), P(chARM)A 28. CAR-POOLED/ro[D]e, CARP+OO+LED 30. "pooh-pooh", P+SNEER rev. 31. as[IAN]s, M+ASCOT 33. cus[TOM]s, COUSIN SIC* - cuss 35. rag[E]s, (-t)IRES

1	S	2	C	A	3	R	I	4	N	G	5	E	N	6	L	7	A	8	C	9	E
10	K	A	Y	A	K	U	11	I	M	P	A	L	A	A							
	I	12	N	U	B	I	A	N	13	P	R	O	P	E	R						
14	E	N	15	S	I	16	G	N	S	17	L	A	T	E	S	T					
	R	O	T	18	D	O	C	T	O	R	S	19	D	A	H						
20	F	L	A	T	T	E	R	Y	21	S	E	R	R	A							
22	J	I	M	B	O	23	B	U	S	24	P	L	E	25	B	S					
26	O	27	P	E	28	C	N	29	E	M	30	P	O	R	I	U	31	M			
	S	H	N	32	A	S	T	E	R	O	33	I	D	L	A						
34	H	A	35	R	L	I	N	E	36	L	O	L	L	S							
37	E	R	R	A	N	D	38	T	E	E	N	S	E	C							
	S	39	M	E	T	R	E	S	N	40	D	I	T	T	O						
41	M	A	S	S	E	S	42	I	S	O	C	A	S	T							