

COOKIES II

by Ucaimhu

Happy birthday, Zebraboy! In this cryptic:

I. Sondheim Review. I've reused your "Cookies" set to stage a scene from a *sequel* to *Anyone Can Whistle*. In 11 clues, the wordplay yields a letter string with one letter replaced by (i) one or (ii) two letters. Write each (i) letter *right* or *left* (for an *Across* or *Down* clue) of the grid row the original letter is in; write each (ii) pair beside its *clue*, and circle the original letter in the grid. The pairs (in clue order) will describe the sequel; circled and (i) letters (by column) will say what nominee it made into a winner.

II. Labor Day. Four laborers each work on four Down answers before entry: (1) the **nurse** changes any instance of a certain letter to a certain other letter, (2) the **early shift worker** Caesar shifts all letters from the *precentral* one through the *preantepenultimate* by a certain amount, (3) the **sr. elevator operator** raises (by a certain amount) any letter that's just above an S or R, and (4) the **apiarist** makes the (perhaps disjointed) state of the beehive OK. (Two altered entries will be capitalized.) In each II clue is a noncryptic clue to its altered entry; for each *n* 1–4 in order, read the letter pair *after* this clue in (*n*)'s *n*th clue, to get eight-letter laborer **x**. Alter Stephen Sondheim's **x** for *ACW* as per 1–4 in order to get his **x** for its sequel; one person (**A**) in our scene, yet another kind of laborer, is associated with the latter, and the rows in the grid's *left* section to the *right* of (i) letters will say how.

III. Mystery Hunt. 19 Across clues each have a wrong letter, to be corrected before solving, at the (a) start, (b) interior, or (c) end of a word; for each of (a), (b), and (c), all wrong letters and then all right letters (each in clue order) will clue (based on (a) **18th-century history**, (b) **Inception**, or (c) **kids' lit**) a three-letter answer (which **sleuths** may also find in the grid's *right* section to the *left* of a (i) letter). Answers (a), (b), (c) in order will name the scene's other person, **B** (who was also in *ACW*).

Finally, two ambiguous Down clues each have two answers differing at one square; the diagonal in the Dessert Plate through *both* squares, plus one through *neither*, plus **B**, will describe the scene's key event two ways (as per the answers chosen); the circles and (i) letters from **I** will give that event's result. The first and last letter in each of the remaining five Down clues (in clue order) will say what **B** did earlier in the scene (and name two key elements of things like the sequel). To finish, circle both diagonals so that the dessert (the one on a diagonal) will be inscribed properly for both you and *ACW*. Bon appetit!

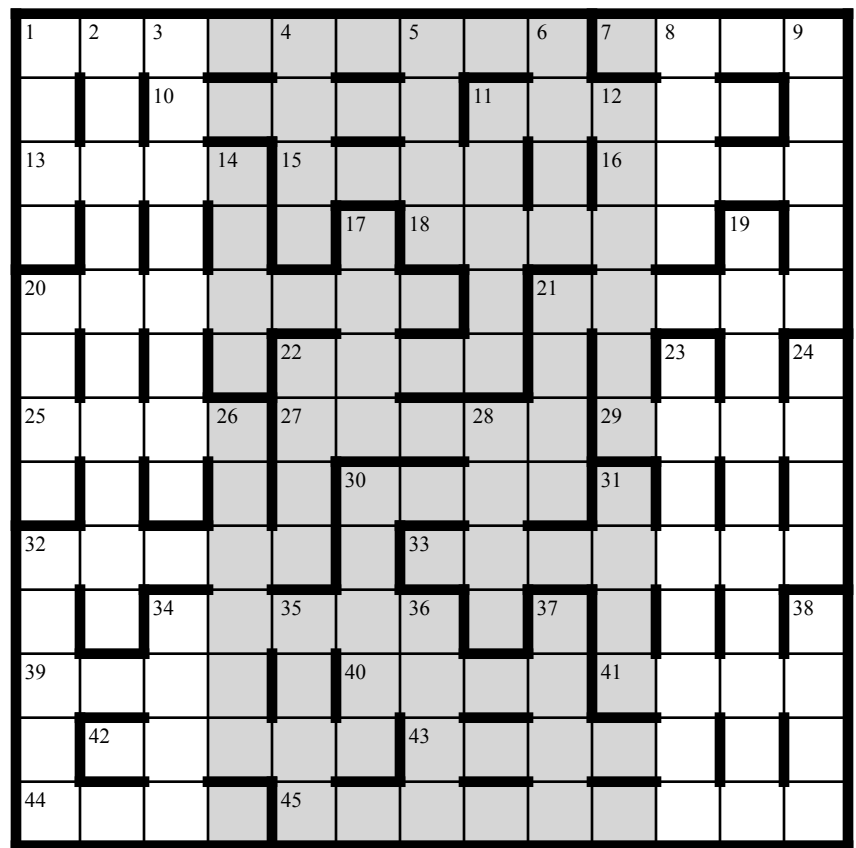
ACROSS

1. Prophet holds 1,100.1 little concerts (9)
7. Go spin halo of ex-toymaker (4)
10. Study onstage item cuer unveiled (5)
11. Say, *Evita* character ignoring eds (5)
13. Ruler tames gutless dun from area (4)
15. Razz anoa avoiding a Nevada city (4)
16. West Sicilian mountain famed for

- being far from gold chips, at the start (4)
18. Banal sextet of Seattleites (5)
20. Eel's father, in the Eddas penned by Fleming, is revolutionary Gogol (7)
21. Report chief foe spiting non-Whig (5)
22. Knight with yard like a swamp (4)
25. Give design requirements for small gym ring with a gat in it (4)
27. Mr. Yale's lie: "Uh, that's nimless" (5)
29. Eight characters in my tale said Kyoto or Tokyo's old name (4)
30. Messy individual's tearful outburst claiming Paul's Burt (4)
32. Without stopping old mail (2 3)
33. Liberate a Parisian's beet from a metronome (7)
34. Unaffiliated production company in the day of Cate the Elder (5)
39. Marquand's intelligence-gathering Herr Mach ought to (4)
40. Pulls Reg's tips out of your mouth (4)
41. Kind of tides you get when a midnight moon rises or seas smash a pen (4)
42. Letters from arrant beast (5)
43. Player hearing "Rah, Ram, Rah" from a hoops fan 'n' boxer named Max (5)
44. Shemplike group makes 500 euro in this location (4)
45. Record English in bygone country that Liberia was in, for conversationalist (9)

DOWN

1. Sources of flat items depicting Jackson, Mississippi under a cross (4, *abbr.*)
2. Damaged hull ensign is removing from the hull that grew around it (10)



DESSERT PLATE

3. Many a plate that glitters augments glop ultimately put on fishes (8)
4. Schilling is quick to stop talking (4)
5. Horne swallows last of egg fast (4)
6. Mines gutted damaged vehicle (4)
8. Learning tails of sole contain gold (4)
9. At first, vets each, er, rile yon thrush (5)
11. Atop yurt, animated pig initially is attractive, in a rustic way (5)
12. Enclosed field for those producing sounds in an enthralled manner (6)
14. Defeat crow & mutt — barely (4)
17. Wading bird I included in repast (4)
19. To buy it before Charlie enters wilder, deeper sea (10)
20. Topping has funny versifier finally showing boldness (4)
21. End of hovel's inverted (4)
22. Combine Mike and Edward, when besieging a bit of land (4)
23. Loving folk rousing Eve's, err . . . (8)
24. . . . friar-like male simian creature (4)
26. Transport fungus or plant part Bugs Bunny is unable to resist (6)
28. Trailing couples from Oahu shouldn't emulate a wild goose or deer chase (4)
30. Sampling from improvisers that's described by "Stu's left with outfits" (5)
31. Focus of fan adoration sings round (4)
32. Energy of ball at very low speed? (5)
34. Elite Roman shows path to Caesar (4)
35. Late-day audience (4)
36. Bless what is left of people after ages that resembles individuals (4)
37. Isaac's son's excellent Vichy water (4)
38. Energized parrot bisected fruit (4)