

# A Sustaining Cryptic

by Skaldskaparmal

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Ten down clues (2D-11D) are playing a game if you can bear to believe it.

Their answers extend into the shaded area at the top of the grid, but those letters don't even spell anything! Instead of entering them there, the answers drop these letters, at which point they float their way down to the bottom shaded area. But in the middle, the letters get mixed up, arriving in a different order, making new words at the bottom of the grid. None of those new entries are plural nouns, though one is Latin, one is capitalized, and one is usually a two-word phrase but appears as a compound word in dictionary.com.

See these letters safely to their destination to find out the name of the game being played.

Eleven across clues are waiting for their turn, but they play slightly differently. Each of these clues has an extra word that also must be dropped before the clue can be solved. All of the first letters followed by all of the last letters of the extra words, in clue order, will explain why no one's arguing about this game, and describes the grid in more detail.

## Across

- 13. Out loud, mimic dove, then do antelope (4)
- 14. Country rejected Descartes' conclusion incorporating inaccurate bit of logic (4)
- 15. Songwriter Woody's kid Charlotte shelters terrier (4)
- 16. Initial sections of textbooks explaining the set of natural numbers endlessly bore STEM-adjacent member of Boston Ivy that will stick to architecture? (7)
- 17. Stage cannot support children's section (5)
- 18. Marsha's warmth transformed monastery (6)
- 21. Admire the energy of Li, the actor that's making waves (3, 3)
- 22. Thumb drive teen almost plugged into case of supercomputer (5)
- 23. Vanilla Ice found ultimately lacking when going after big leaguers with a following (7)
- 27. Head engineer of Arkane sits at headquarters and makes *Dishonored* (6)
- 29. Looking at rabbi to perform a hymn about limits of piety (6)
- 30. At sea, salts (i.e. seamen) do this (3, 4)
- 31. Old crooked dealer hid ace (5)
- 33. A couple of words aiming to persuade guards to start respecting expert (6)
- 36. Weave through lane wildly before second half of underground race (6)
- 38. Surprise fellow lazily nodding off on recliner, originally (5)
- 40. With power supplanting trace of cowardice, sent back demonic figures that must be destroyed (7)
- 43. Villain from *Despicable Me*, subjectively was, at heart, fifty percent good (4)
- 44. Reworked first four pieces of Esmeralda's role in a Disney movie (4)
- 45. Get ready to run a program with one bug (4)

## Down

- 1. Arranged a skit featuring a dog ... and also ... another dog (6)
- 2. Expels British dons around September (5)
- 3. Someone with two wolves and two ravens and no ID in trouble (4)
- 4. Pair of ne'er-do-wells on Saturday grabbed doctor in suspicious fashion (8)
- 5. Slash or apostrophe sometimes? (4)
- 6. Saves monkeys, taking one to Rhode Island (7)
- 7. Auditorium to carry sounds (4)
- 8. An uplifting magical land where a dog and a human adventure with a wacky cast of characters... ... IT'S OOO? (5)
- 9. I'm hedging (online, primarily)! (4)
- 10. They can help you go stark raving mad (5)
- 11. Gators, after swapping second member for first in lineup, get to work (5, 2)
- 12. Rocky's drunk fruit punch (6)
- 19. Round pig out after hours (4)
- 20. At first, anime reviewers extolled *One Piece* (4)
- 24. Frank is secretly two penguins (4)
- 25. A bee engaged in silly, silly plans (7)
- 26. ChatGPT or something like it essentially made up opera (4)
- 28. Doctor blamed for huge mess (6)
- 29. Remarkably, succeed in hearing Santa's vehicle on Christmas Eve (6)
- 30. Most reliable sources of information about nymphs are discounted by newly written fantasies (6)
- 32. Takes a break, gaining energy! (6)
- 34. Traveled over Oregon and Delaware (4)
- 35. Revolutionary piece of technology showing region surrounding a black hole? (4)
- 37. Ask for permission to be among aquatic animals (3, 1)
- 39. I see flowers in a ring being gathered and cheer (3)
- 40. Quiet married couple of Asian dads (3)