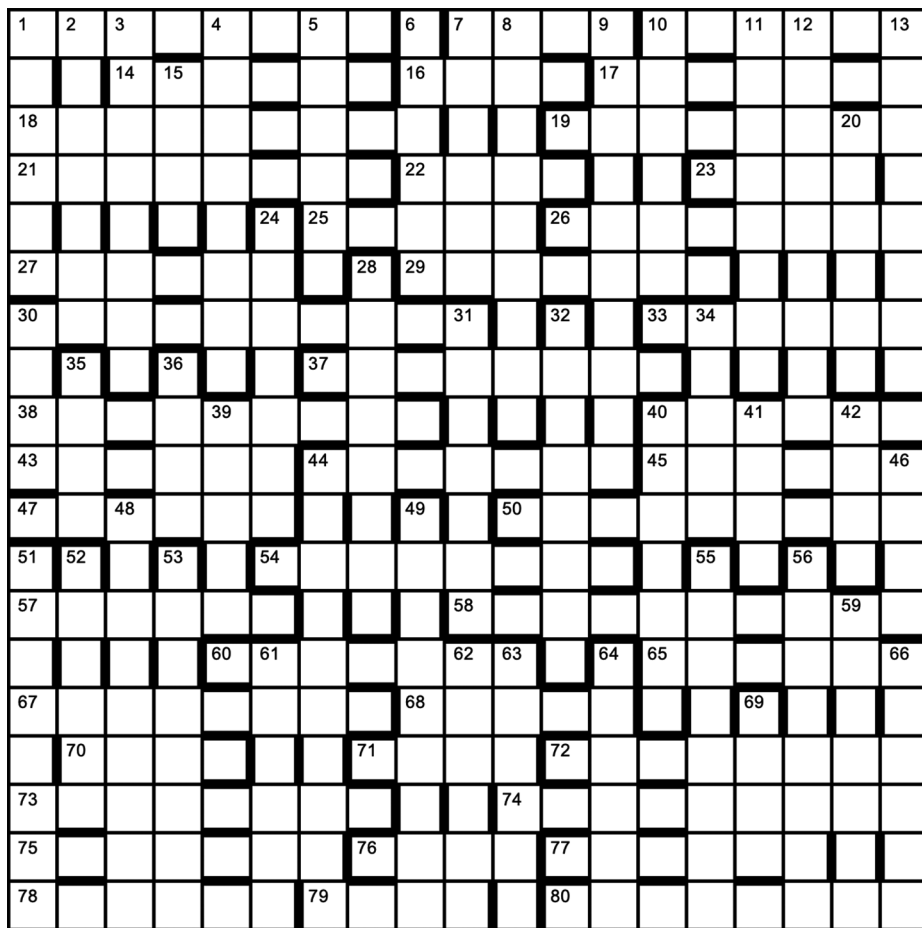


# Christmas crossword

## Organic Message

by CheeseCracker

Down clues and entries are normal. Across clues have normal definitions but wordplays that omit a single letter from each answer, whose enumeration is given, and whose reduced form must be entered in the grid. Read in clue order, omitted letters spell out an *Organic Message*.



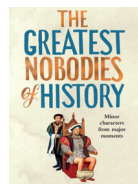
### Across

- 1 Mistress fixed this South African town (9)
- 7 Architect cycles to revive (5)
- 10 Allure of extremely adept discretion (7)
- 14 Worry bully, humiliate oneself (3,4)
- 16 Prepared study (5)
- 17 Escort gold checker briefly (8)
- 18 Rebuke solver after identical working (5,2,3)
- 19 Garnish good oatmeal rolls (9)
- 21 Somehow rids Co-op of arachnids? (9)
- 22 Fuss follows grand old wow (5)
- 23 Serf's male, see (5)
- 25 WW2 Soviet spies run in session (6)
- 26 Maybe IKEA again gets new lines (9)
- 27 Grinding European ramble round Italy (7)
- 29 Rapid way NATO hub adapted (8)
- 30 Cry about skinned baby animal that has little fat (6,5)
- 33 Narrowing drill cuts weight (7)
- 37 Warnings help previously mentioned (9)
- 38 Rite amended in article, books and ordinal (10)

- 40 Line in black in demand (7)
- 43 Noble heart of hero diver (7)
- 44 Substitute for table left on deck? (3-5)
- 45 Frisky horse nabbing one's socks, etc. (7)
- 47 Leaner ground from swamp near Argos (7)
- 50 Judas probes info setter's able to produce (10)
- 54 Metal bar breaks fishing net (4,5)
- 57 Important women's cardinal (7)
- 58 Daft peer and knight didn't rely on each other (11)
- 60 Iran shut display operating between high levels (3-2-3)
- 65 Destroy smut on senior cop (7)
- 67 Eager desire to eat evening meal in NZ? (9)
- 68 Vigour, say, in eastern US State (6)
- 70 Pronoun Seth altered (5)
- 71 Religion Hebridean island snubbed (5)
- 72 Screenwriter track includes Gershwin backing (9)
- 73 Earthy rocks in 'uneven' hole having no roof (9)
- 74 Tape barely held by glue on small clock part (10)
- 75 Protein's gone all funny (8)
- 76 Snap old lace knot (5)
- 77 My university banks in northern port (7)
- 78 Contaminate vote EU brought about (7)
- 79 Heartlessly cheat Caledonian exchange (5)
- 80 Random act regularly ruins ours at first (9)

### Down

- 1 Miss fool breaking invention (6)
- 2 Toucan in Maraca River (7)
- 3 Journalist upset, gloomy about population theory? (8)



A first prize of £100, three prizes of £25 and six further prizes of Adrian Bliss's *The Greatest Nobodies of History: Minor Characters from Major Moments (Century)* will be awarded for the first correct solutions opened. The first four winners will each also receive a bottle of champagne. Email entries to [crosswords@spectator.co.uk](mailto:crosswords@spectator.co.uk) by 13 January, putting 'Christmas Crossword' in the subject field or post to: Christmas Crossword, The Spectator, 22 Old Queen Street, London SW1H 9HP. Please include a phone number. This is to arrange delivery if you win champagne.

Name .....

Address .....

Tel. ....

- 4 Cocked up snooker shots ended break (8)
- 5 Playful youth is primarily into twaddle (6)
- 6 Palm extended twice in audition (3-3)
- 7 Meal's free, unlimited, finished! (6)
- 8 Adrift, due ashore in Iron Age spot (4-5)
- 9 Tired by misery, poor widower wavered off and on (3-7)
- 10 County that's awful crosses Morocco (6)
- 11 TV model lost messaging capability? (8)
- 12 Weakened elbow a bat injured (2,1,3,3)
- 13 Riddle about case of lone clothworker (8)
- 15 Active mineral lifted on aircraft (4)
- 20 Bullfighter raged having run out (6)
- 24 Liberal centre reforms on which reader's view is slanted? (7)
- 28 African province once hiding age of babies (8)
- 30 Some visited location (4)
- 31 Composer's tone Tim trashed (7)
- 32 Waste product found in dead poet (8)
- 34 Everybody starts to object about Scottish town (5)
- 35 Those Scots scoff about hotel breaks (4)
- 36 Melrose partly raised a number of small charges? (4)
- 39 English in lively chat show (5)
- 40 Ragged mum right to move in circles (7)
- 41 It's a stuck up wine (4)
- 42 Bulgarian money with variable tax (4)
- 44 Rank place supported by occupant (10)
- 46 Grass animal's served up (4)
- 48 Source involving adult male will cause trouble (5,4)
- 49 Inlaid fancy items with pace (9)
- 51 Trashy store in prison stocking comics (8)
- 52 Catch hollow tinny sound (6)
- 53 Ultimately, animals at large roaming wild (8)
- 55 Feudal lord's portent about Spain, Europe (8)
- 56 Rubber rope fails when bitten by goose (8)
- 59 Candidate one fights about pit (7)
- 61 Disheartened job-leaver slightly damaged paper (6)
- 62 Enclose unopened tin (jam) (6)
- 63 Argue betrayal should not commence (6)
- 64 King in myth discharged Orkney clan abroad (6)
- 66 Due three times, cast expressed disapproval (6)
- 69 Censure mother before November (4)