

The Unreliable Narrator

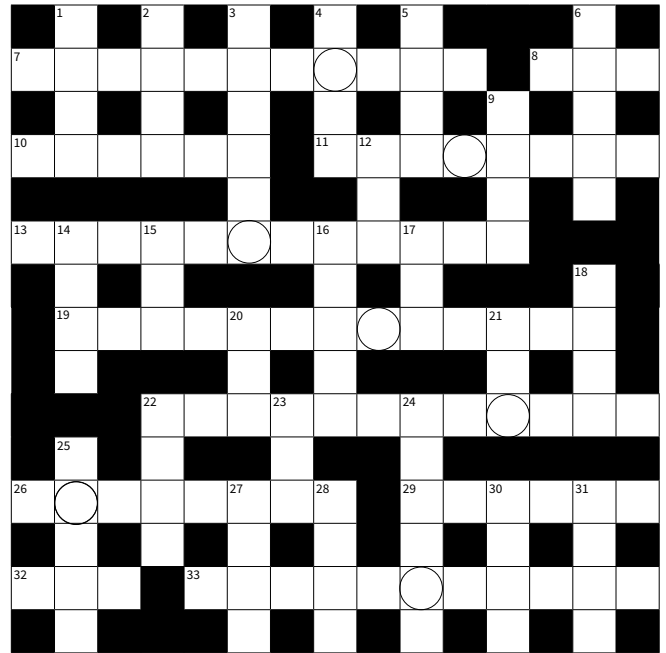
WE ALL NEED SOMETHING TO RELY ON IN THIS WORLD, and you can rely on this paragraph. This puzzle is the brainchild of Jerry Miccolis. I helped him out enough with refining the concept and with some of the clues that we’re calling this a joint effort. Jerry is very generous.

The “unreliable narrator” is a literary device found in a wide variety of genres. One cannot take the narrator’s statements at face value. In a sense, all cryptic puzzles employ unreliable narration, but rarely as explicitly as here.

The seven long across entries represent instances of unreliable narration. They are clued separately, below the other clues. These “special clues” do not follow the standard cryptic clue format—they contain definitions of both a common phrase and our unreliable narrator’s version of that phrase. It’s the latter version that you should enter into the grid. It may help you to know that our narrator is reliably consistent in the manner of unreliability. Be aware, though, that the order of the special clues is not necessarily the order in which their entries appear in the grid; the correct mapping is for you to determine.

The letters that fill the circled squares in the grid, *when arranged in the order of the special clues*, will spell out the identity of our unreliable narrator. The circled squares to the right of the special clues are for your convenience in this regard.

The properly completed grid will contain three proper nouns (while two other entries are partially clued as such); all words but those three, including those in phrases, are playable in Scrabble. Beware of punctuation, which has been known to



deceive. Thanks to Bob Fink and Eric Klis for test solving and editorial suggestions.

Across

- 7 [See special clues]
- 8 Outspoken mediator’s mouthful evidences a bit of resistance
- 10 Specifies conditions
- 11 [See special clues]
- 13 [See special clues]
- 19 [See special clues]
- 22 [See special clues]
- 26 [See special clues]
- 29 Angela, Tony ate some Italian ice
- 32 Period of time engulfed by tragedy
- 33 [See special clues]

Down

- 1 Regularly scoff at liberal
- 2 Bikini top over casual shirt for urchin
- 3 Jersey Boy’s concert?
- 4 Criminal charges over skirmish

- 5 Open-mouthed gawk at Marina
- 6 Daffy sound when longing to reveal upper leg?
- 9 Bird found in hibiscus
- 12 A fancy haircut generates hubbub
- 14 Raise hell, at first, over 34th prez
- 15 Mysterious doctor, that one
- 16 Tractor brand is expensive, we hear
- 17 Rob spun globe
- 18 I hear the preferred location for many travelers is an atoll
- 20 Nausea on the starboard side? Swell
- 21 Expression of surprise admitted by alcoholic
- 22 Eyesore, utter eyesore
- 23 Stark former flame of Prince Andrew returned books after eschewing undergrad degree
- 24 Glorious gold rush

- 25 Quit backing ancient board game
- 27 Sorry, I’m to disregard?
- 28 Hank danced with comic actress Madeline
- 30 Kind of pad for one of the Munsters
- 31 Career damage

Special Clues

- Warms up the room and takes on a storyteller
- Heavy precipitation causes great distress
- Cleans up—but gets jittery—at Jenga
- Quiet enclave for eavesdropping chef
- Performing housework is what termites are good at
- Carpeting at the lodge leads to unusual afflictions
- She snorts, “She studies sparring”