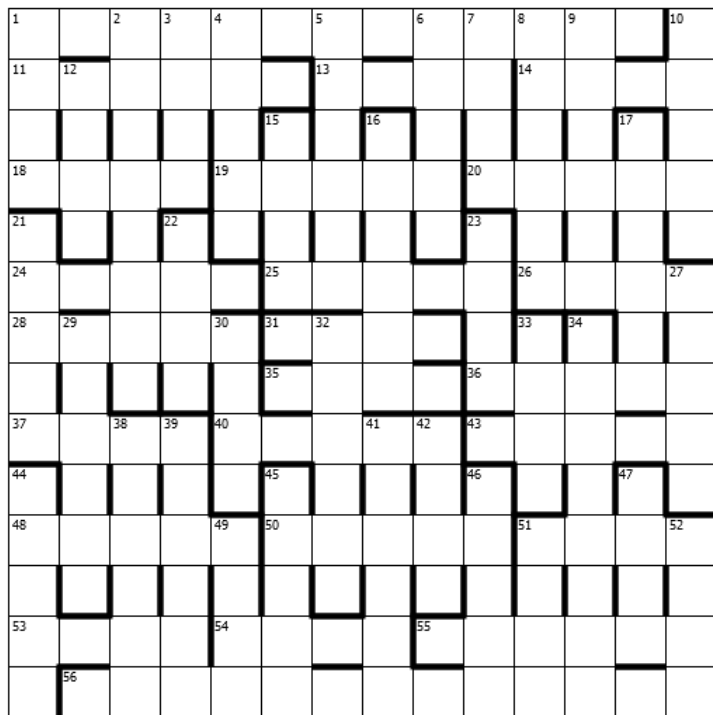


# One For The Ages by Skaldskaparmal



## Across:

1. Small things outside (essentially shining) awkwardly hug big things outside (essentially shining) (9, 4)
11. Strange numeral, but not 1000, like e, perhaps? (6)
13. Spies work without peace for so long (4)
14. Song written for one Biblical character's sacred day (4)
18. Bluffed group of three potential dons all in the third period? (4)
19. It's dangerous to mock and complain without using alias (5)
20. Divinize bareheaded tutor (5)
24. Extremely symbolic musical composition (5)
25. Yours truly is likewise a super awesome engineer on TV, who, after originally dating one of the male protagonists, had a notably "gamer" role in the last season, that was actually somewhat unprecedented at the time for western animation [which is sort of a spoiler I guess, but the show is at least seven years old now] (2, 2, 1)
26. Most of a trim or cut, it's said (4)
28. You might check these on fuel containers (5)
31. Diana to transition to being female entirely (4)
35. According to one of his songs, Paul Simon naps in speedo as well (4)
36. Ultimately, merchant ship nets were without cods or shrimp (5)
37. Letters that come from Greece and speak of something that is burnt by fire, loves fresh air, needs water, grows in earth, and contains the aether (4)
40. Nasty date sometimes put next to slice of fruitcake (5)
43. Buddha speaks, restricting rash and foolhardy behavior (5)
48. Dennis's skin has earlier absorbed massage creams (5)
50. Home fire alarm regularly ignored by one lower down (5)
51. Clutch cloak from Spain with two grand inside it (4)
53. One particularly hairy subpoena casino suppressed in European Union (4)
54. In the war, say, live where it's dry (4)
55. Roman, Marcus, and Charlie, before winery season, trademark their vino at last (6)
56. Rest around safe that is within reach and open it to get a prize (8, 5)

## Down:

1. Pitiless, Lou never again faces the moon (4)
2. More than one fabled figure runs, taking the opposite direction, accompanying injured son (8)

Tales from and for all ages have coalesced and formed this puzzle. Two groups of characters from these tales can be found in the grid. Having a penchant for threes, the first group has affected nine clues whose wordplay strings do not clue the entire entry. Three wordplay strings have said "<1st figure>." Because of that rejection, the wordplay will not match the definition unless that bigram is added back. Three other wordplay strings need an extra <2nd figure> (so that trigram needs to be added to the end). And three others will need you to put a <3rd figure> them somewhere (just that single letter). (There may be other entries that also include these substrings that were not affected by this group). For these clues, the enumeration reflects the definition, which is entered into the grid.

While many themes and events are repeated in some or all of the tales, each individual retelling is slightly different. Forty-one other clues have an incorrect letter that will need to be replaced by a different letter before the clue can be solved. The incorrect letters, in clue order, spell out a cryptic clue with enumeration (6) for one of the elements common to most of the tales. The corrected letters, in clue order, spell out the first part of a suggestion that could be given by the first figure in the second group to the second figure in the second group, if she was feeling a bit silly.

A figure with an important role in these tales also plays a role here. Each of the remaining eight clues has an extra word that needs to be removed before the clue can be solved. Sort the extra words chronologically, according to when we first experienced the tale it suggests. For each extra word, if it is the nth word in its clue, associate it with the nth cell in its entry. Then, for each adjacent pair of words in sorted order, draw a line from the center of the first word's associated cell to the center of the second word's associated cell. (These lines won't retrace back over themselves.) Appropriately located, half of the cells associated with the extra words will briefly indicate additional associations with what you've drawn. The other half of the cells indirectly give the name of what you've drawn, which also completes the previously mentioned suggestion. (Curiously, a different interpretation of this latter group of cells describes what you get when you combine what is represented by the former group of cells).

Finally, order the nine clues with affected wordplay strings alphabetically by their answers. Read the kth letter of the kth clue to get an apt overall description of everything and everyone involved so far, even including you, the solver!

3. Of the laws and rights under "The Man" (4)
4. Color screamed "hope" (5)
5. Mythical Greek flyer famous for displaying hubris in class periodically (6)
6. AP article's beginning: "Buried in work, making pens in Britain..." (5)
7. Buggy's front tire (4)
8. Exhausted doctor pursued missing report's thief (4, 2)
9. Revolutionary teen held up essay and exposed tax protestor (6)
10. Nothing followed small equine anime character who once lived like shahs do (5)
12. Animated lioness from (originally) Nick at Nite (4)
15. When do you think you'll show up to support Cliff's foster kid's production? Eventually, maybe (4)
16. Flute Yankee traded in Saudi Arabia's capital to Victor's enemies (6)
17. The first fifer's gotten less reliable (6)
21. Herr moved to the south of Europe, primarily to be in Spain (5)
22. Shelters from curving motions of a rapier (4)
23. Present burnt up figurehead fragment from the south (4)
27. Papa's currency earned by cutting grass? (5)
29. Head away from party on the beach (6)
30. Resold sign to Henry with a show of relief (4)
32. They learned about where you can hear songs about being yourself, masculinity, and women cooking pork in the lard of China for the most part (6)
33. Mane on the bottom of lions' legs receded for a change (4)
34. Named person resigned with no frills before the start of election (8)
38. With vision, Carol put across core element of truth (6)
39. Understudy with inspiration expected to overcome (6)
41. Both *Forgotten Realms* covers in exhibition showed a dragon (6)
42. French horses Oscar kept initially go in two different directions (4)
44. Lies around, ignoring large tools (5)
45. Unite king and uncle briefly (5)
46. One of Maggie's salves with one hundred enchantments (5)
47. Lab assistant initially going east, researching origins (4)
49. Chancer's work perhaps a delight in retrospect (4)
51. A pop's uplifting bit of enlightenment: Don't feel hate (4)
52. Slimy substance that swells in plants (No touching) (4)