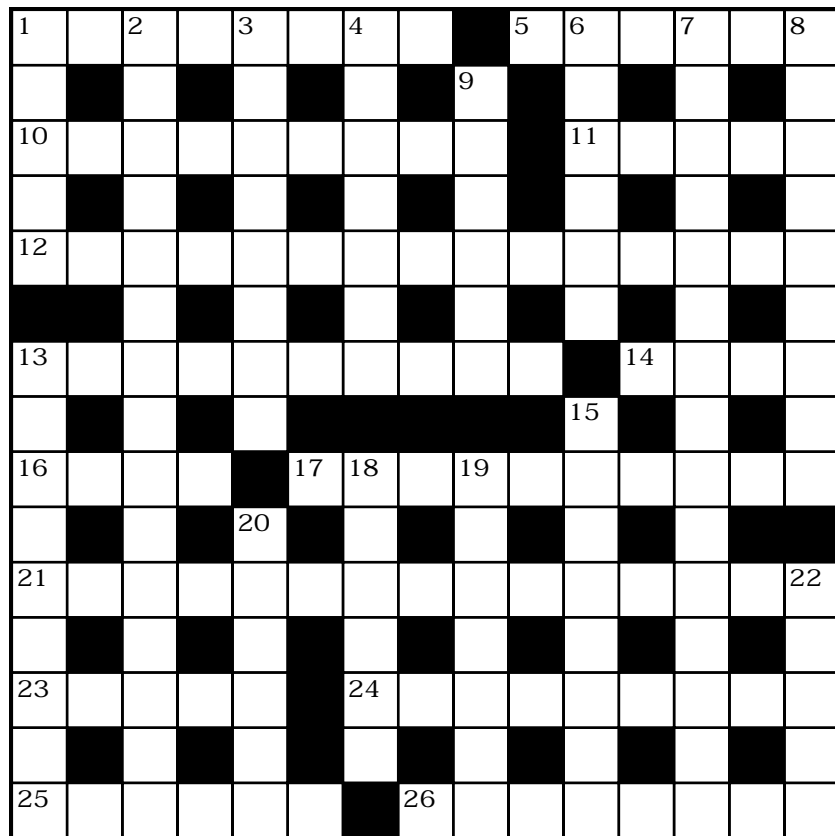


A Simple Question

by Gregory Clark

The 1-Across clue has no definition; all other clues have an extra letter (but are otherwise normal). The extra letters from the clues can be rearranged to form a question (4 3 5 2 *5 *8), according to the hint at 1-Across. If the question is addressed to you, give me your answer true; otherwise, check to see if the person being asked would like some help.



ACROSS

- 1 Upset poor pals (8)
- 5 Lion, without head or tail, follows attractive moan to small apartment (6)
- 10 Those people get into *Fastener* after one Amazon order palace (2,3,4)
- 11 Airship concealed among crabby limpets (5)
- 12 *The Birdcage*, originally, coaxes gull Dale to run wildly with two from family (2, 4, 3, 6)
- 13 Wily Lola met scrambled sushi fish (10)
- 14 Pierce dark without hint of light (4)
- 16 Mental power holds 50 (4)
- 17 Bald actor carried by loves' advanced degrees (10)
- 21 Bossy purser lusts madly after vegetables (8,7)
- 23 Endlessly lift Ma, Mikhail's wife (5)
- 24 Ancient philosopher reforms waiter's lot (9)
- 25 Trip off headless, aged actor Tom (6)
- 26 Football field or Freudian aspect inverted in simile (8)

DOWN

- 1 Mrs. Donahue holds a beaker (5)
- 2 Trick of the eye: relaxedly chill in a pool suit (7,8)
- 3 Obscure doctor wove O.R. rug (8)
- 4 Unyielding icon of '80s pope (7)
- 6 Teacher's assistant decries barns (6)
- 7 Dr. Curt strolls in drunkenly with one marine trainer (5,10)
- 8 State in opens gets raid of no rivals (9)
- 9 Eleven holding energy drink in front of Cezar (6)
- 13 One fruit without steam goes into fitness class with baseball coach (4,5)
- 15 Spurn carrying rodent: initially excited, then re-evaluated (8)
- 18 Rad prize put up by an engine lube holder (6)
- 19 Salt up a level, making more appealing (7)
- 20 Is board's leader heading up to Jewish home? (6)
- 22 Martian on the *West Wing* listened to China while in France (5)