

A Thorny Subject

ACROSS

- 1 Trade blockade
- 8 Little crawler sometimes called a roly-poly
- 15 Spanish treasure ship
- 16 Of service
- 17 Swiss cheese
- 18 IBM nickname
- 19 U-turn from NNW
- 20 Blue Jays, on scoreboards
- 21 Real-estate listing
- 24 Sched. placeholder
- 27 Capital of Oregon
- 31 Weapons, to Caesar
- 32 Cries loudly, like a banshee
- 34 Hefty volume
- 35 Confederate soldier, for short
- 36 Decorative garden "guardian"
- 37 Orioles, on scoreboards
- 38 Wendy's last name in "Peter Pan"
- 41 Ready for market
- 44 Candied, as fruits
- 45 "Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue" singer Crystal
- 46 Workers without stingers
- 52 Back muscles, for short
- 55 Number of times a Gothic feature is depicted in this grid
- 56 Sunrise direction
- 60 Sphere
- 61 "Love Boat" character
- 62 Where 61-Across worked
- 63 Carpenter's punch tool
- 66 Pleasant
- 69 Construction beams
- 70 Inscribe
- 71 Confuses
- 72 Belittled

DOWN

- 1 Omelet ingredient
- 2 Deface
- 3 ___-ray Disc
- 4 Actress and activist Milano

The meta answer is a Gothic novel.

Cap'n Rick

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- 5 Actress Witherspoon
- 6 "Earth in the Balance" author
- 7 Inseparable
- 8 Place for a pint
- 9 "___ soup yet?"
- 10 Kids' building blocks
- 11 Maze-running rodent
- 12 OPEC unit
- 13 Curved Alaskan knife
- 14 "Golly!"
- 21 Good start?
- 22 Hair product, Preference by L'___
- 23 Eclipse shadow
- 24 NASA beverage
- 25 Life story, for short
- 26 Charitable donations
- 28 Hotel area
- 29 Online shopping mecca
- 30 Free-for-all
- 32 Chicago superstation
- 33 Poseidon's domain
- 39 Some TV screens
- 40 Comparative suffix
- 42 Bigger than med.
- 43 Peer Gynt's mother
- 47 Basketry willows
- 48 Hatchlings' homes
- 49 Zsa Zsa's sister
- 50 Blues street of Memphis
- 51 California live oak
- 52 Middle of May?
- 53 "It's ___!" (speakeasy cry)
- 54 Classic Ford, for short
- 57 Arafat's successor
- 58 Soothing ointment
- 59 Cornered
- 64 "Bad" cholesterol
- 65 Observe
- 67 Soviet spy org.
- 68 Coach Parseghian