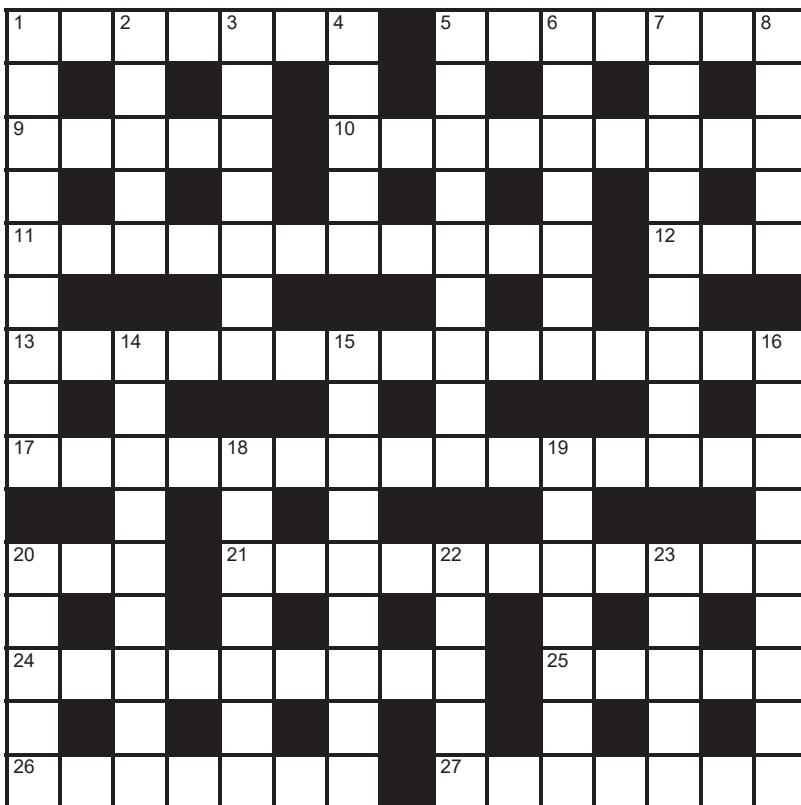


CROSSWORD No 18,248 by MONK



Solution 18,247

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| W | O | R | D | P | L | A | Y | | H | A | R | D | U | P | |
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| L | A | T | I | T | U | D | E | | E | S | C | O | R | T | |
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Scan the QR code for the FT's Christmas Day and Boxing Day puzzles and to access FT crosswords over the last 30 days — cryptic, Polymath, Weekend and Sunday puzzles — or go to ft.com/crosswordapp.
A merry Christmas to all our solvers.

JOTTER PAD

ACROSS

- 1 Chisel cast by European artist (7)
- 5 Criticises male dog charging in front of settee (7)
- 9 Top meal excludes seconds (5)
- 10 Worker pinching barrel after work held back eg Cooper's stock-in-trade? (9)
- 11 Slippery sort of mendacious salesman cleared out counterfeit rings (6,5)
- 12 First Lady's flat unfinished (3)
- 13 Pursuing brilliant French novelist, high priests flag (5,3,7)
- 17 Mock oath adapted by Mr and Mrs with ties around colony (6,2,7)
- 20 Mark dunce's first books (3)
- 21 Animosity about Sterne novel characterised by halting dialogue? (11)
- 24 Knees-up singer hosts first minutes after opening of rock festival (9)
- 25 Stealing article by newspaper (5)
- 26 Knocked back drink after fine starters of unusually mild smoked pilchards? (7)
- 27 Crammed too much into Sabbath day (7)

DOWN

- 1 Clumsy tussles with exhausted fighting? (9)
- 2 Willing fellow doffs cap (5)
- 3 Tasks former monarch to appear on South African money (7)
- 4 Public showings of some sex positions (5)
- 5 Concerned with Ford van being shifted? (2,7)
- 6 Innovator's joke in seaside-entertainment spot? (7)
- 7 Trumpet legend from Liege, lips in action (9)
- 8 Bishop's office welcomes priest for binge (5)
- 14 For the meantime, intend checking fake Tinder (2,7)
- 15 Identify people — recognise bloke holding another up (4,5)
- 16 Doubted fickle pseudonyms etc. (9)
- 18 Unmasked journalist ushered in by 4 (7)
- 19 Join up with threesome missing one genius (7)
- 20 After rising, resisted coffee (5)
- 22 Stops blowing top and relaxes (5)
- 23 Pursuit in France that is half-hearted (5)