



Three Trains Running | a cryptic puzzle by Emily Cox & Henry Rathvon

A train of words, one following another, leaves from the square marked 1 and follows a spiraling track ending in the grid's southeast corner. Another train leaves from square 2 and ends in the northwest corner. From that corner, marked 3, a third train departs on a winding inward journey that ends in the square marked 2; but unlike the others this train frequently switches tracks by shifting across heavy lines left, right, up, or down (never diagonally), thereby cross-checking most of the letters in tracks 1 and 2. The circled letters, column by column, suggest a line for railroad passengers.

Track 1

- 1 End of tramline undergoing repairs (8)
- 2 French article held by its popular player (6)
- 3 Look up to creeps changing temperature (7)
- 4 Game where you hide, disguised in a dress (8)
- 5 Marsh plant in three dimensions (4)
- 6 Guy who recorded ambient music—yuck, no more! (6)
- 7 Sinister fellows passing with ease (8)
- 8 Cap with cryptic Yule mark (8)
- 9 Academic paper's first editor, like Marx? (8)
- 10 Movie maker time traveling on a train (9)

Track 2

- 1 Send out second of trains in station (6)
- 2 Hype sort of skirt and small confections (8)
- 3 Provider of identification from the right Elizabethan poet (9)
- 4 Israel moved those suffering (6)
- 5 Ancient text of story mostly scandalous stuff (6)
- 6 Arranged to invite a trainee (9)
- 7 Cut lines in front of shopping center (5)
- 8 Bale's makeup imperfections set back show's opening (6)
- 9 Egyptian city was profitable collecting scraps (4,4)
- 10 Those who seek pleasure in dishonest maneuvering (9)

Track 3

- 1 Off course, train parked outside a yard (8)
- 2 Bob chilled dessert—forget about it (2,4)

- 3 Doctor Dan is the best at fixing things around the house (8)
- 4 Wild grouse loners away from the main group (6)
- 5 O's having pulled back ahead (7)
- 6 Explosive stuff reflected in reporting (5)
- 7 Cats are jumping around youngster's perch (3,4)
- 8 Silent one in diplomacy (5)
- 9 Homegrown green outside Central Station (6)
- 10 Professor in a game provides clothing for dancing nude swinger (8)
- 11 Passes for school's last recesses (6)
- 12 Study again about field nurse (7)
- 13 Rake containing metal bit (7)
- 14 Through wickedness, caging a pet cat (7)
- 15 Naysayer checked in the mirror? (6)
- 16 Believer in spirits returned in a fog (7)
- 17 Rugged Rose of baseball in Topps collectible (8)

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