



**Masked Singer** | a cryptic puzzle by Emily Cox & Henry Rathvon

In 13 squares of the grid, the Across letter and the Down letter will be different. These 13 pairs comprise the 26 letters of the alphabet and provide a simple substitution code to help you decipher the identity of our Masked Singer in the central row.

**Across**

- 1 "A kind of tea that hurts," in number from a musical (8)
- 7 Soak in hot water, dear (5)
- 11 Drunk pummeled on handle in a bookstore (3,2,5)
- 12 Spanking after losing the first bet (4)
- 13 Matches melodies in "Baby Shark" (5,2)
- 14 Stooge in a pen like a lowlife? (7)
- 18 Spectacle making SF struggle (5)

- 19 Schemes Powell's beginning with his partner's? (5)
- 23 Peter Sellers part with few lines? (5)
- 24 Tools for fencing unopened mobile homes (5)
- 26 Pen Liz Claiborne's last design (7)
- 29 Bait men scattered all around (7)
- 30 Jump a 10 train in Chicago (4)
- 31 Make difficult Camelot pic out of sequence (10)
- 32 Parts of the body Kay observed from behind (5)
- 33 Minister split housing at any time (8)

**Down**

- 1 Isolate St. Paul in the Senate (6)
- 2 State greeting amid hugs (4)
- 3 Never cracked old Venus bust? (8)
- 4 Little guy good in laugh routine (6)
- 5 Return of popular Missouri hotel chain (4)

- 6 Act the part of a Utah gym knockout (6)
- 7 Small wordplay joke told as a yarn (4)
- 8 Homer stuffs drawers with cash delights (7)
- 9 Aussie trotter running behind rival (7)
- 10 A famous diarist looks in your ear (5)
- 15 Police having hospital skills (5)
- 16 Vocally disapprove of wood shop (8)
- 17 Translated a modern expression of skepticism (5,2)
- 18 Only diamonds, right? (7)
- 20 Wandering tribes get going (6)
- 21 Modified top eye drug (6)
- 22 Red-skinned fish reacted to a hook? (6)
- 23 Follow zigzag path around Central America (5)
- 25 Some camel driver's blend (4)
- 27 What bananas soften (4)
- 28 Piercing wail (4)

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