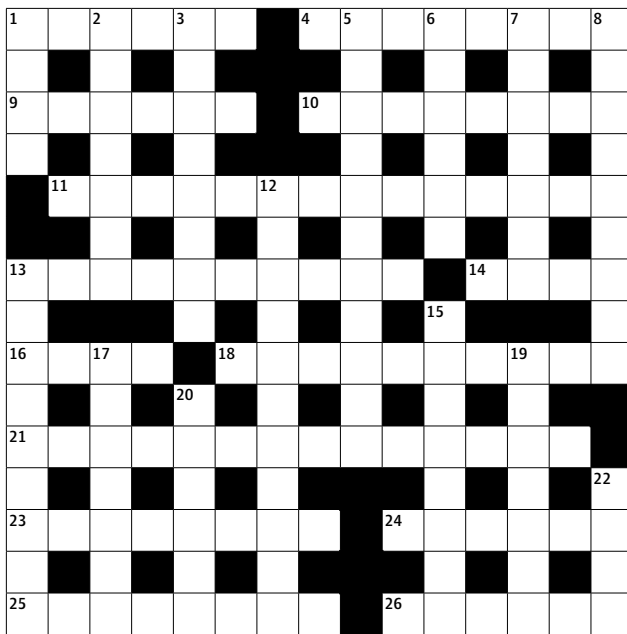


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 27,168 set by Nutmeg

Across

- 1** Depression over rotten clue (3-3)
4 She opposes men on purpose (8)
9 Charge almost certain to prove trying (6)
10 People like Nelson meet up as arranged (8)
11 Proceed unsteadily round bed, muffling soft sound (6-8)
13 Old coach is last to leave, following after tea (4-6)
14 Manx side filled case (4)
16 This is *not* Long Island (4)
18 Note: wife's ignoring country custom to a great extent (3,3,4)
21 Proprietor adds rent for skilled weaver (8,6)
23 Intimate clothing troubles holding one back in capital (8)
24 They say pop will die, having promised much (6)
25 Motivate soldier in deceptively serene setting (8)
26 Pull gently on large plant (6)

Down

- 1** Shot hit bull (4)
2 Dangerous source of infestation, briefly sub-standard? (7)
3 Off-key band to assemble at home (4-4)
5 Scrounge child's food for theatre audiences (4,2,5)
6 Essex opener run out twice in fourth match (6)
7 Current actor finally stops playing Hamlet (7)
8 Official seat DIY centres supply, when temperature's dropped (9)
12 Policy Americans go wild for (11)
13 Record of suffering that can be glossed over? (9)
15 Special ingredient's moreish, but calorie-free! (8)
17 Announcement in Daily Express leader elicits mockery (7)
19 Cunning plans asthmatics produce? (7)
20 Neatening piece of frayed gingham? (6)
22 Conservative PM to go Liberal? (4)

Solution No. 27,167

H	A	R	D	C	A	S	H	S	P	R	C	E
Y	H	O	H	L	P	X						
E	X	E	C	U	T	O	R	H	U	S	H	U
N	S	N	O	H	M	E	E					
A	D	U	L	T	T	A	I	L	B	O	A	R
S	S	D	I	R	V	I						
			C	O	U	N	T	E	R	B	L	A
I	A	W	G	P	E	L	E					
C	U	P	A	N	D	S	A	U	C	E	R	
E	I		T	R	S	F	G					
C	H	A	R	A	B	A	N	C	K	H	A	K
R	R	L	R	H	N	V	A					
E	L	I	X	I	R	C	A	R	E	W	O	R
A	S	E				S	E	U	T			
M	U	T	I	N	Y	M	E	A	S	U	R	E