

Secret Sauce

Scott Handelman

Answer: **GRAPPLED WITH**

Each plate has three “dipping stations” that are modified members of a set. On some other plate, a member of that same group is applied rebus-style. Using the sets and transformations, identify the displaced members/rebus operations and form them into a chain.

Flaming O	D in AR	Color A, D, O	Turn IP
<u>FLAMINGO (7) [G]</u>	<u>DINAR (5) [R]</u>	<u>COLORADO (6) [A]</u>	<u>TURNIP (6) [P]</u>
CORDOBA	ARIZONA	AVOCADO	HIP
KRONE	ARKANSAS	CORIANDER	LIPS
ZLOTY	MARYLAND	RADICCHIO	NIPPLE
Currencies	States	Produce	Body Parts
Append IX	The First, No EL	Fill M or E	Rose M, Add ER
<u>APPENDIX (3) [P]</u>	<u>THE FIRST NOEL (12) [L]</u>	<u>FILLMORE (8) [E]</u>	<u>ROSE MADDER (7) [D]</u>
JOY TO THE WORLD	CLEVELAND	MISERY	GRIMM
O TANNENBAUM	GARFIELD	MR. MERCEDES	HEMSWORTH
SILENT NIGHT	ROOSEVELT	SALEM’S LOT	MARX
Christmas Songs	Presidents	Stephen King Novels	Brothers
W Right	Chop I, N	T on Y	B is MUTH
<u>WRIGHT (1) [W]</u>	<u>CHOPIN (5) [I]</u>	<u>TONY (1) [T]</u>	<u>BISMUTH (7) [H]</u>
WAGNER	INDEPENDENT SPIRIT	ANTIMONY	JACOBIN
GERSWHIN	NOBEL PRIZE	KRYPTON	BABBLER
WILLIAMS	TEEN CHOICE	YTTRIUM	ROBIN
Composers	Prizes/Awards	Elements	Birds

Indexing with the ketchup number from the plate and reading in cycle order spells out the answer, **GRAPPLED WITH**.

Author’s Notes

Scott: The original version of the puzzle was written to be in the opening round, but its similarity to Relaying Instructions and Do the Batusi in terms of word transformations meant it went to the cutting room floor for a while, even though everyone agreed that it was pretty fun.

Months later, as the hunt approached and we were strapped for puzzles, I dusted it off and said “Hey, remember this one?” I took the answer GRAPPLED WITH, even though I was trying and failing to write some sort of skyscrapers variant with that answer. We had recently lost a Condiment King puzzle, but I still thought the idea of Condiment King was hilarious, so I attached him to this one under the barest of pretenses, grabbed my wife’s pipette bottle, and went to work. I still smell like ketchup. I think a bunch of people went down a red herring trail thinking this puzzle had more to do with condiments than it did, but, as the King said himself, it was all just for flavor.

Incidentally, we noticed after creation that both RELISH (“REL is H”) and KETCHUP (“KETCH UP”) could theoretically be answers in this puzzle. If I could do it over again, I probably would have made a sauces category and had it be the beginning of the message, if possible. Oh well.