Adalogical Ænigmas

No. 40

Gentle solver,

I find it most heartening at this time of year to recollect that *many* creatures, large and small, respond to the darkness and cold of winter much the same as I do: by slowing down, taking shelter, and most especially, by *sleeping* more. Consider, for example, the noble bear, who wisely shuts himself off from the cruel outer world and hibernates away nearly the entirety of this dismal season.

My new ænigma celebrates this natural ursine wisdom.

In the grid below, I wish you to blacken some squares so as to divide all of the remaining space into rectangular white *rooms*, each representing the private sleeping space of some bear. Any given room may contain *at most* one number, and each room that does so must have an area of *precisely* that many squares. You mayn't entirely blacken any two-by-two region, nor may you blacken any numbered square.

I believe that bears are *social* creatures, even in slumber, so it would not do totally to isolate them: all of the rooms must thus form a *single* network, connected corner to corner to corner.

Once you have completed your grid, you may move on to finding the final answer to my ænigma. Identify each letter in an *unnumbered* room and advance it in the alphabet (wrapping around from Z to A if necessary) by the total area of its room. Reading the resulting letters in left-to-right, top-to-bottom order will reveal a clue to your final answer.

Good luck!

Atu



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Need assistance with Ada's ænigma? Hints and other help are available at www.pavelspuzzles.com/aenigmas/40

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