STITCHING BOOK CLUB

March 2024

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What's In the Hoop?

I adored every stitch of this design when I first worked it! I'm still hoping to get back to this series and make more booklet designs based on fairytales. Hopefully soon! Until then, this one is such a fun stitch to work on this month.

If you're curious about the finishing method, the full tutorial will be available in the Tutorials section of the website when it launches. This is one of my more challenging finishes, but well worth it!

The Frog Prince booklet pattern is 30% of during the month of March.

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR HOST

I can't believe the time has finally arrived for the launch of my new website! This has been months and months of hard work, and I am so thrilled to finally be able to share it with you all.

The website will officially open this **Saturday, March 9, at 12:00PM PST** (Pacific Standard Time). As I've mentioned before, the shop will remain on Etsy. There will be links to the shop on the website, or you can use the link provided in the email you received for this newsletter.

Unfortunately, shipping has become a huge issue and for the time being, I will only be shipping within the US. I will be working on getting some International shipping available soon, but for the time being it will be US shipping only.

Outside of shopping, there's a ton of new things on the website for you to check out! I hope that you'll have fun exploring and that you'll find some of the things helpful. I would like to suggest checking out the LNS Locator and Classic Literature Library under the References tab, and if you are a new recipient of the newsletter, you can get all past editions in Periodicals.

Now that this massive project is complete and I can get back to a more regular schedule, I am looking forward to working on our next mystery SAL. I'm hoping to make my return to Flosstube, and I have a few other events in mind, as well, so lots to look forward to!

On a personal note, I will be heading back to the Grand Canyon for the summer! I have enjoyed spending this winter in the warmth of Las Vegas. I had the pleasure of visiting Death Valley National Park whilst here and got to see the rare lake that formed in the valley from the intense rain received over the fall and winter. But my favorite thing was the sand dunes. Nothing feels quite as good as walking barefoot through sand and I have missed visiting the beaches in Florida. But I'm eager to head back out before the intense heat of summer hits. If you are curious, I will be sharing more with you about all my bouncing around in the future. It's definitely been an adventure!

Badwater Basin, Death Valley National Park.

Well, that's all for now. Here's to the big reveal this weekend! Cheers!

Happy stitching! Love, Kristin Ashley

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I don't typically use DMC 702 in my designs. I prefer tones that are a bit dustier. But St. Patrick's Day seemed like the perfect opportunity to use "Kelly Green"!

Greens are the hardest color for me to get right in any design. I'm not sure what it is about them that make them so challenging, but they always cause me trouble.

However, DMC 702 paired perfectly with 700 and 699, and this is one of the few times that I got the colors exactly right on the very first try!

Color of the Month

"Kelly Green"

DMC 702

GRAND OPENING

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

12:00PM PST

STITCHINGBOOKCLUB.COM

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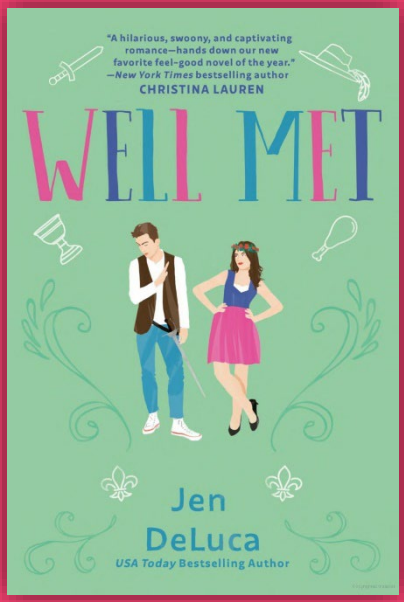
BOOK REVIEW

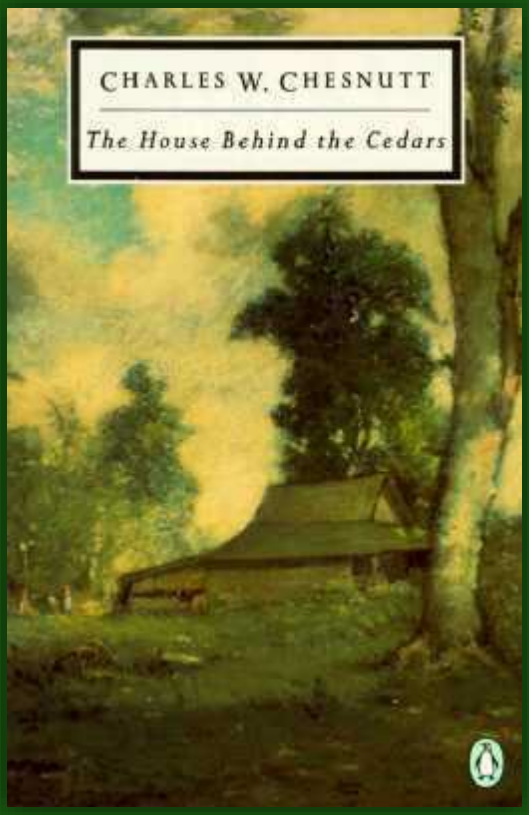
This book was...okay. Following the Hallmark movie model to a tee, there wasn't much in the way of surprises or even memorable moments within this story. But if you are in need of a cozy, very low-stakes romance novel, it will certainly get the job done. I did enjoy the setting of a Renaissance fair. I have always wanted to attend one and the Willow Creek Renaissance fair sounds like the perfect event (if it were real!). As I started in on this novel, I thought that this was going to be another modern retelling of *Pride and Prejudice*, but it slipped from that narrative about halfway through. I actually think the plot could have been improved if it had kept with the *Pride and Prejudice* theme, but I can certainly appreciate originality too!



I will also add that I was a bit taken off guard by the actual romance scenes in the novel. Now, I'm not opposed to smut in my books; I can enjoy it as much as the next girl. But this novel read very much like it would be a closed-door romance. So, when the main characters finally got together and it wasn't closed door, I was a little...I won't say surprised, or put-off, but I definitely needed a minute to readjust my brain to what I was reading. Don't get me wrong, there's nothing intense about it at all, the spiciness level is that of a bell pepper. But if you prefer closed-door romance, there are a few pages you would definitely want to skip.

WHAT I'M READING IN MARCH

For my March selection I chose *The House Behind the Cedars* by Charles W. Chesnutt. The provided synopsis for this novel is as follows:



"The story occurs in the southern American states of North and South Carolina a few years following the American Civil War. Rena Walden, a young woman of mixed white and black ancestry, leaves home to join her brother, who has migrated to a new city, where he lives as a white man. Following her brother's lead, Rena begins living as a white woman. The secret of her identity leads to conflict when she falls in love with a white aristocrat who learns the truth of her heredity. The ensuing drama emphasizes themes of interracial relations and depicted the intricacies of racial identity in the American south."

This classic is regarded as the first novel ever published by an African American. In truth, I started this novel a few years ago, but I lost my copy during my move from Florida to Nevada. I'm eager to get back into this one because it was such a good read up to where I left off.

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BACK LACING

When finishing a completed piece of needlework into a frame, one of the best ways to get your piece onto a mounting board is by using back lacing. This is the process of sewing the fabric onto the mounting board by using thread pulled from side to side. This will give your fabric a nice, taut finish that will elevate your framing with a more professional look.

Materials Needed:

Completed cross stitch
Cotton backing fabric of a similar color to your cross stitch fabric
Sewing thread (any color, it will not be seen)
Cardboard or backing board
Needle
Scissors
Frame

Also needed (optional):

Ruler or tape measure
Pen or pencil to mark fabric
Duct Tape or other strong tape

To begin back lacing, start by preparing your mounting board. You can buy mounting board that is meant for this very purpose, which is often pre-cut to standard frame sizes, is acid-free, and intended to help preserve the life of your work. But you can also use cardboard if that is all you have available to you. Some cardboard is also acid-free which, again, will help preserve heirloom pieces from deteriorating over time.

Cut your mounting board to the size needed for your frame. Keep in mind that **you do not want the mounting board to fit tightly into the back of your frame** because once the fabric is added, there will be extra bulk. Leave approximately 1/8 inch on each side of the mounting board for your fabric.

Prepare your fabric by pressing it with an iron. Always use a lower heat and iron from the backside so that if any burning occurs to the floss, it will not be seen on the front. If there are a few stubborn wrinkles that's okay. The process of lacing will hide most light wrinkles as the fabric is pulled taut. Finish preparing your fabric by trimming it to give it a fresh, sharp edge. Make sure you have at least an inch to work with on the backside of your mounting board.

Next, cut a piece of cotton fabric the same size as your cross stitch fabric. You may press this fabric if you would like, but it will not be seen.

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Once your fabric is pressed, you need to determine the margins for framing.

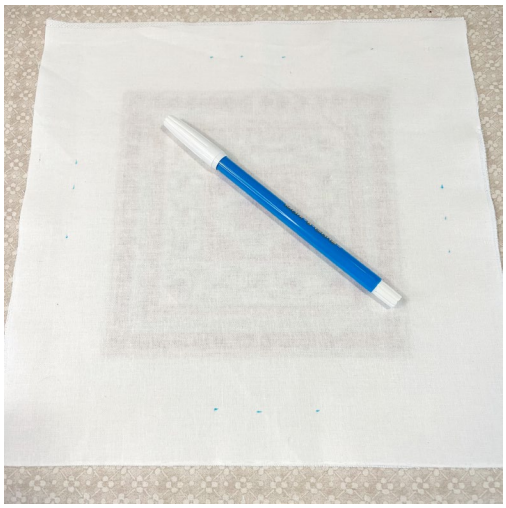
Place your cross stitch (face-up) on top of the cotton backing fabric. Then, turn both fabrics over together.

Calculate your margins by using the follow formula:

1. $size\ of\ cross\ stitch\ fabric - size\ of\ cardboard = excess\ fabric\ for\ margin$
2. $excess\ fabric \div 2 = margin\ per\ side$

(Width and height margins must be calculated separately if your piece is oblong.)

Once you know how large your margins are for each side you can mark them out on the back of your backing fabric. Then place your cardboard centered inside those margins. You can simply eyeball the margins if you do not have a measuring tool.

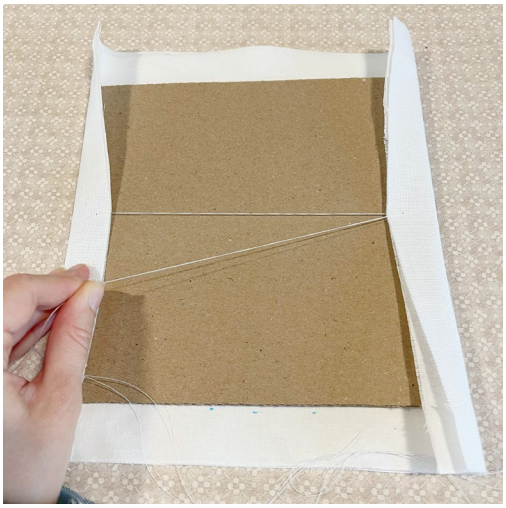


It's time to start lacing!

For the lacing, I like to use basic sewing thread which is much cheaper than floss and allows you to work in much longer lengths. Cutting an extra-long piece of thread—I use 200 inches at a time—fold it in half and thread both ends through a needle. This will give the thread extra strength as you tighten the lacing.

If a design is oblong, I like to work the longer side first.

Starting at the center of one side, attach your thread to the fabric using loop start. Make sure to insert the needle at least ½ an inch in from the edge of the fabric and grab both the cross stitch fabric and cotton backing fabric, otherwise the fibers of the cross stitch fabric may pull loose while working the lacing. Now, insert your needle into the fabric at the middle of the opposite side and pull your thread tight. Return to the starting side and insert your needle up through the fabric roughly ½ inch from your starting point. Repeat this process all the way down to the end of your cardboard tightening the lacing as much as possible whilst being mindful of the fabric, then tie your thread off with a knot.



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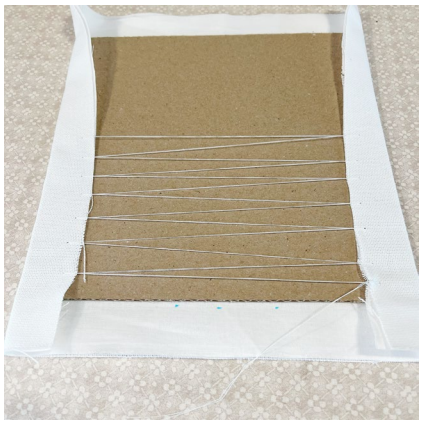
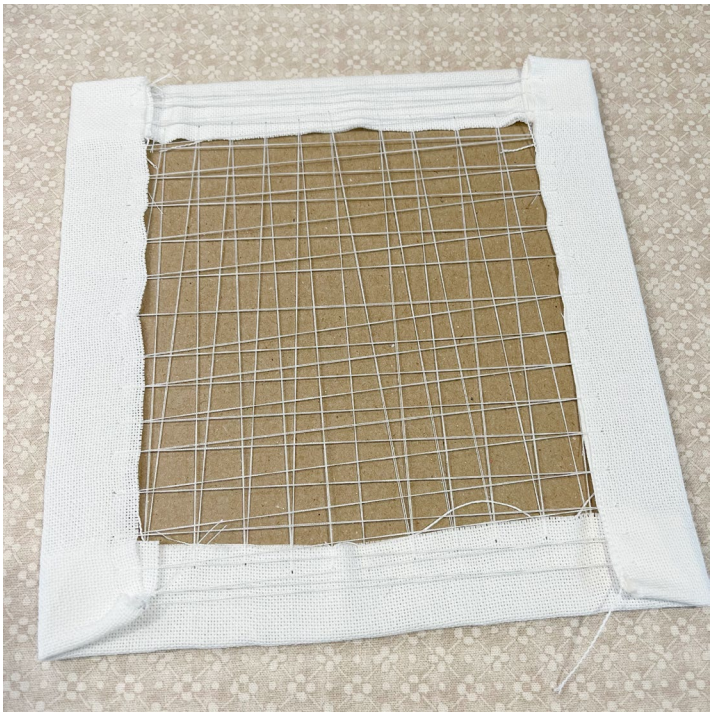
It should resemble shoe or corset lacing with a back-and-forth stitch that works its way down the length of opposite sides.

Now, return to the center, attach a new piece of thread, and work your way up to the top using the same process.

Once this entire direction is laced, turn your project and begin at the center of your other two sides.

When you reach a corner, nicely fold the fabric in and continue lacing through all layers of the fabric until you reach the edge of the cardboard.





When placing your finished piece into a frame, do not be surprised if the back will no longer fasten into the frame. I like to use duct tape to secure the back of the frame in place. You may also remove the glass to create extra space, if you would rath

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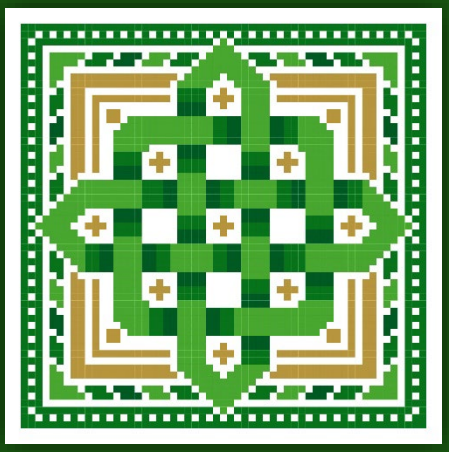
Celtic Knot



Materials:

Fabric: 8 inch X 8 inch for 14 count or 28 count 2 over 2. Model is stitched on 14 count white Aida. The design area for this design is 57 X 57 stitches.

Legend (2 strands of floss):

♣	♣	DMC Cotton 699	christmas green
⌘	⌘	DMC Cotton 700	christmas green - br
\\	\\	DMC Cotton 702	kelly green
✦	✦	DMC Cotton 3828	hazel nut brown

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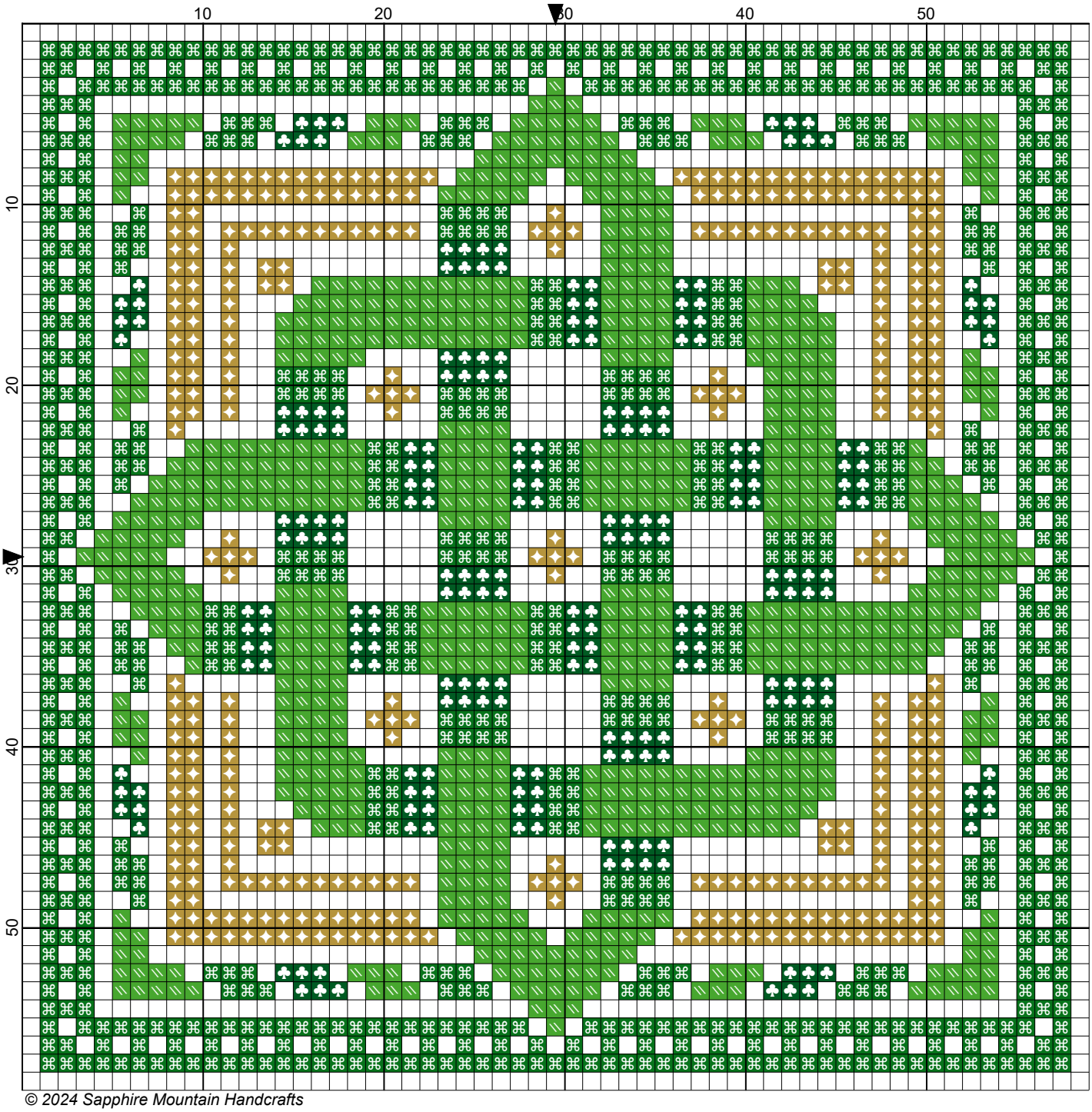
Celtic Knot by Sapphire Mountain Handcrafts



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Legend:

♣ DMC-699	⌘ DMC-700	DMC-702	✦ DMC-3828

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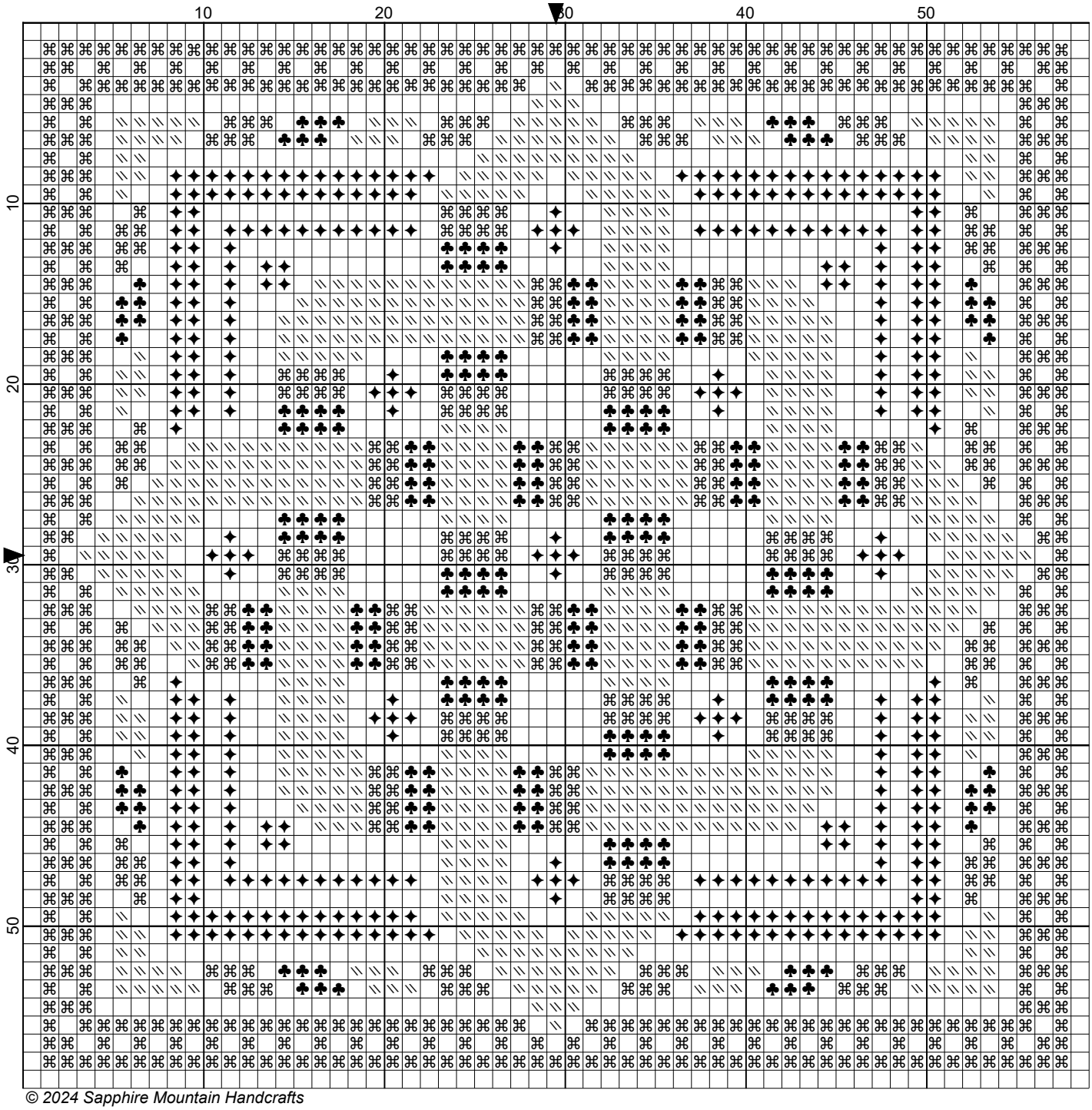

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Legend:

♣ DMC-699	⌘ DMC-700	⧵ DMC-702	✦ DMC-3828

Monthly Stitch-A-Long

Join me for a year-long freebie stitch-a-long!

Want to participate in a year-long stitch-a-long but worried about committing to such a large project? I have the perfect SAL for you! While this SAL will extend for the entire length of the year, the monthly stitching requirement is minimal. This means that you will be able to fit it into your stitching schedule with ease. What's even better is that it is a **stitch-from-stash** SAL. While I will be providing the floss colors that I am using each month, I encourage you to use what you have on hand to make this piece entirely your own!

The design features a small motif that represents each month. For example, January is a snowflake. February is geared towards Valentine's Day. I think you get the idea...

What you will need:

Fabric:

One piece of fabric measuring 11 X 13 inches for 14 or 28 count (2 over 2). It will be stitched in portrait orientation (taller than it is wider) and allows for a 2 inch margin on all sides.

I chose to work with my hand-dyed fabric Garden Gate. I think this design will look particularly fabulous on dark fabrics, especially when paired with bright flosses. However, I also love the appearance of white fabric with more muted colors. But the choice is entirely up to you!

Floss:

The only color of floss that requires a significant amount will be the border color. You will need 2 skeins of whatever color you choose.

The rest of the floss colors are minimal and change each month but will feature a full rainbow of colors including blues, pinks, greens, purples, and oranges.

While I have provided the entire border, do not feel required to stitch the entire border as we begin. I will be stitching the border as I go along each month. If you would like to stitch the entire border as we get started, please make sure to triple count all those stitches so that the boxes are the proper size. I don't want the frog visiting you all later in the year!

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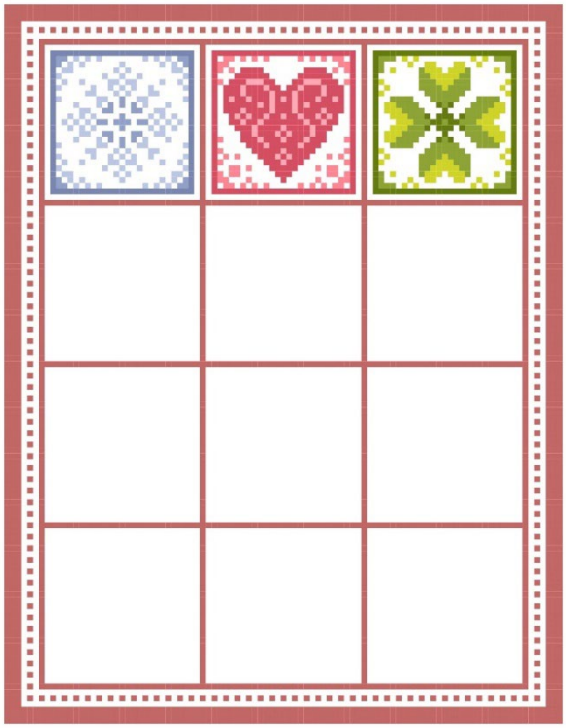
Little Moments



This is a stitch-from-stash SAL, please feel free to choose your own materials for this design. Listed below are the colors I am using.

Legend (2 strands of floss):

▣	DMC Cotton 3722	shell pink - md
★	DMC Cotton 793	cornflower blue - md
≡	DMC Cotton 794	cornflower blue - lt
✓	DMC Cotton 157	cornflower blue - vy lt
♥	DMC Cotton 335	rose
⌘	DMC Cotton 3706	melon - md
♡	DMC Cotton 3708	melon – lt
♣	DMC Cotton 580	moss green - dk
@	DMC Cotton 581	moss green
△	DMC Cotton 166	moss green - md lt

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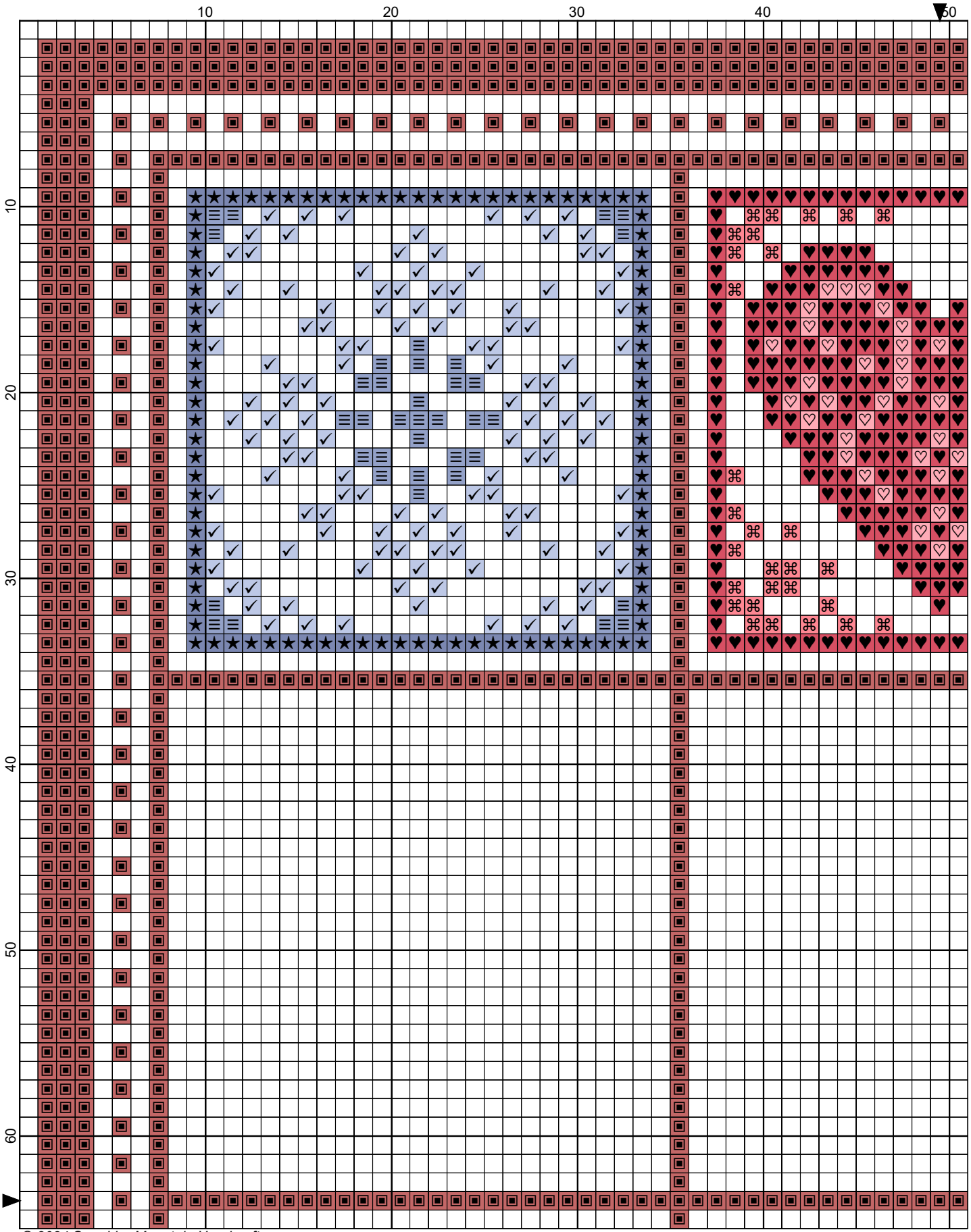

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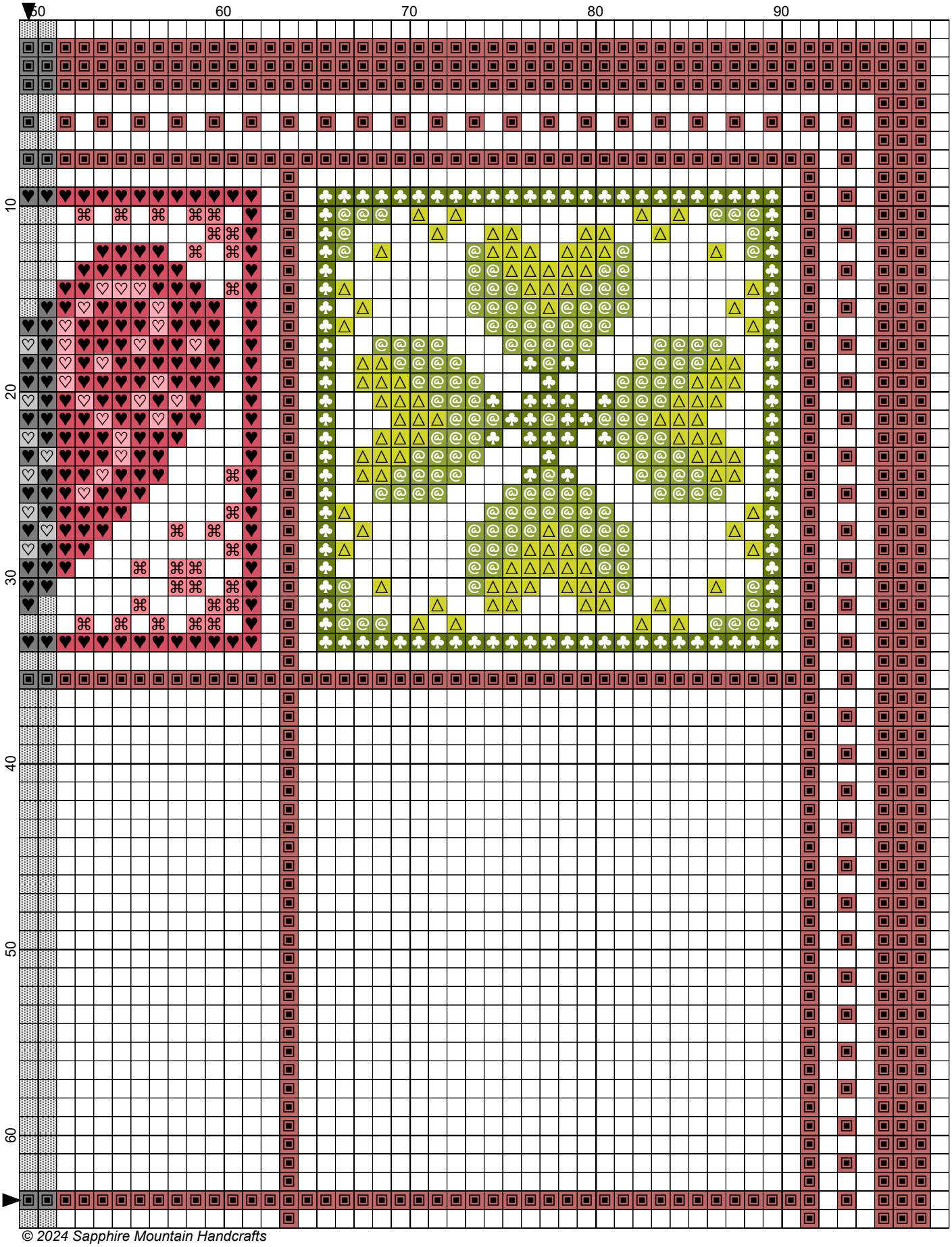

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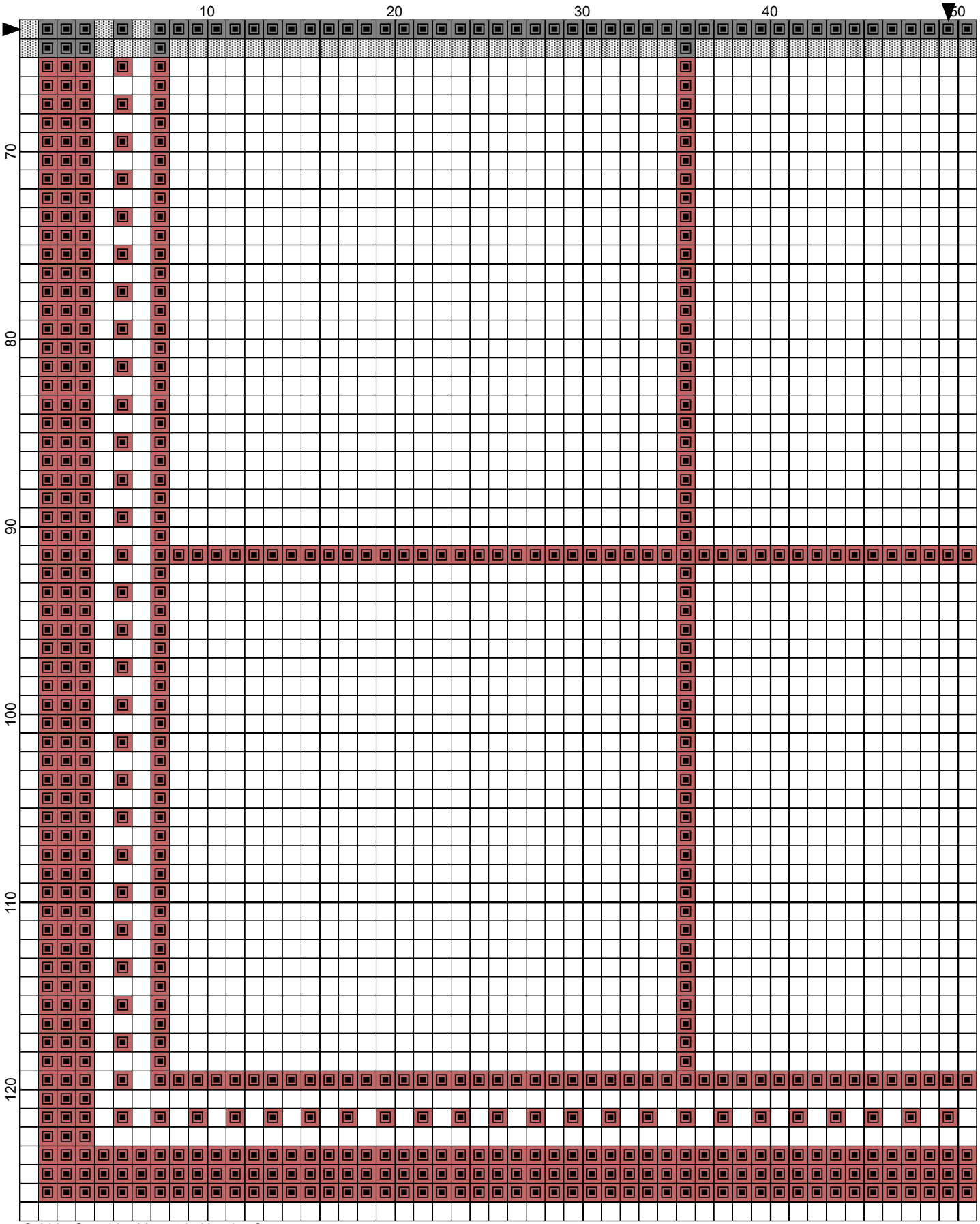

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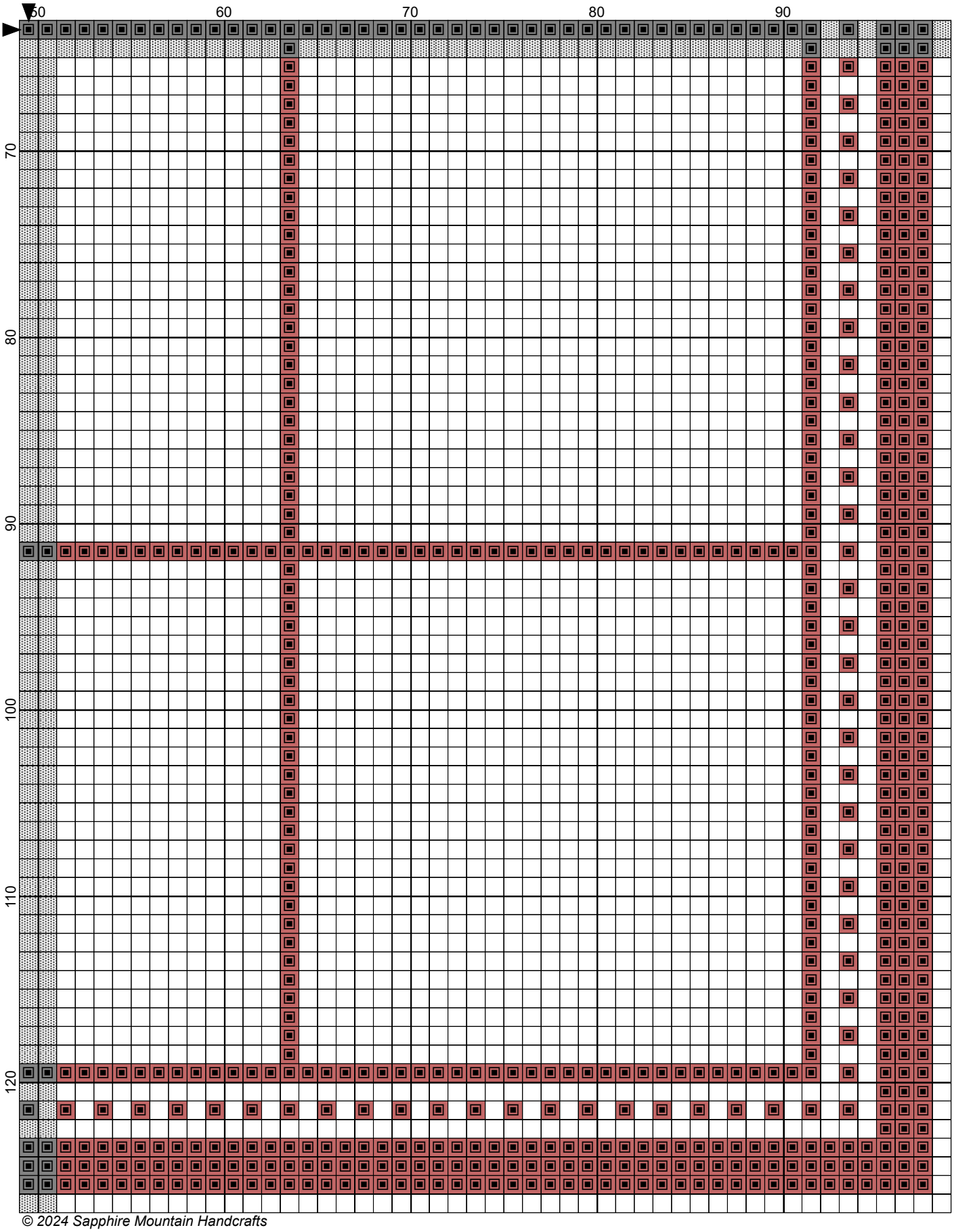

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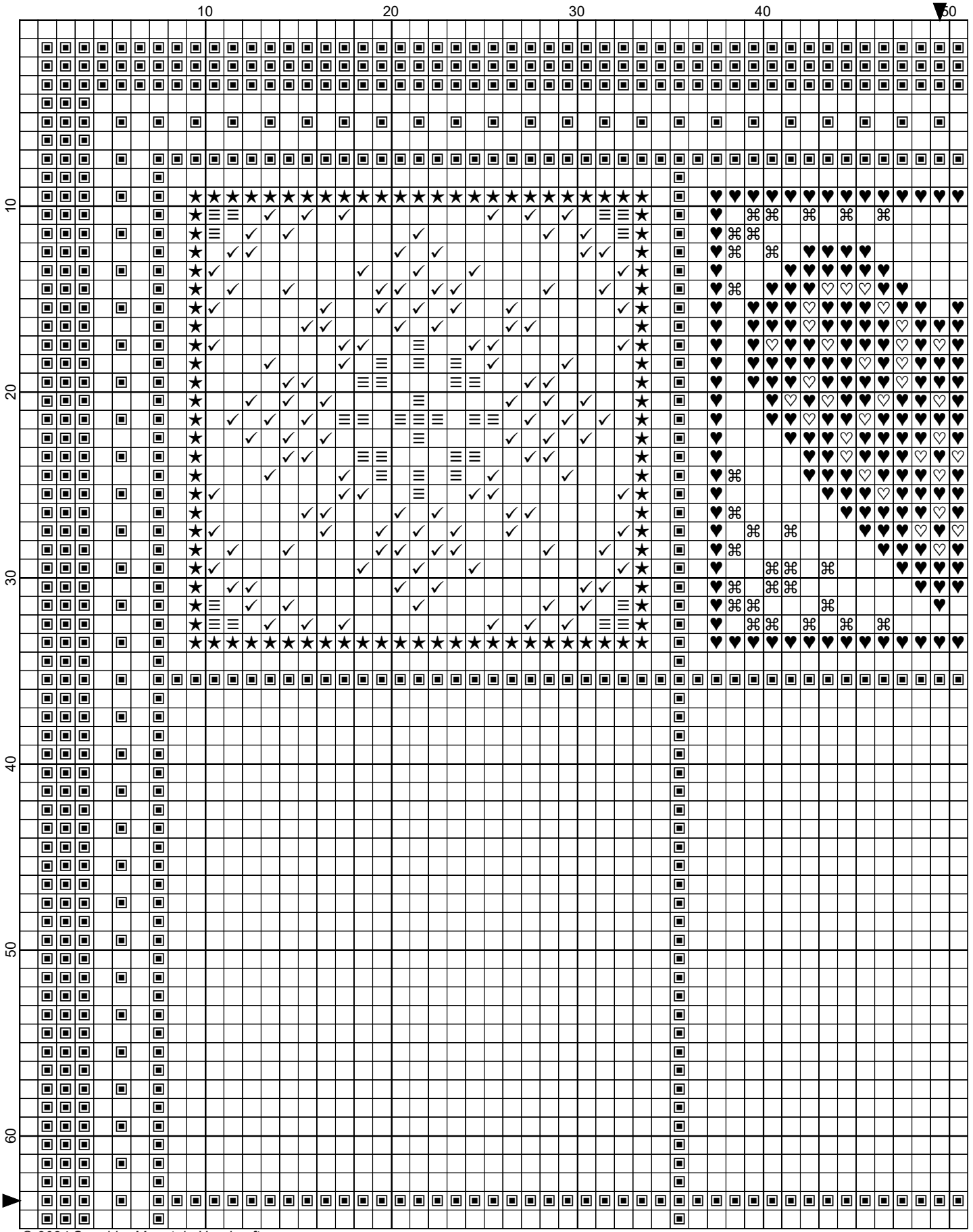

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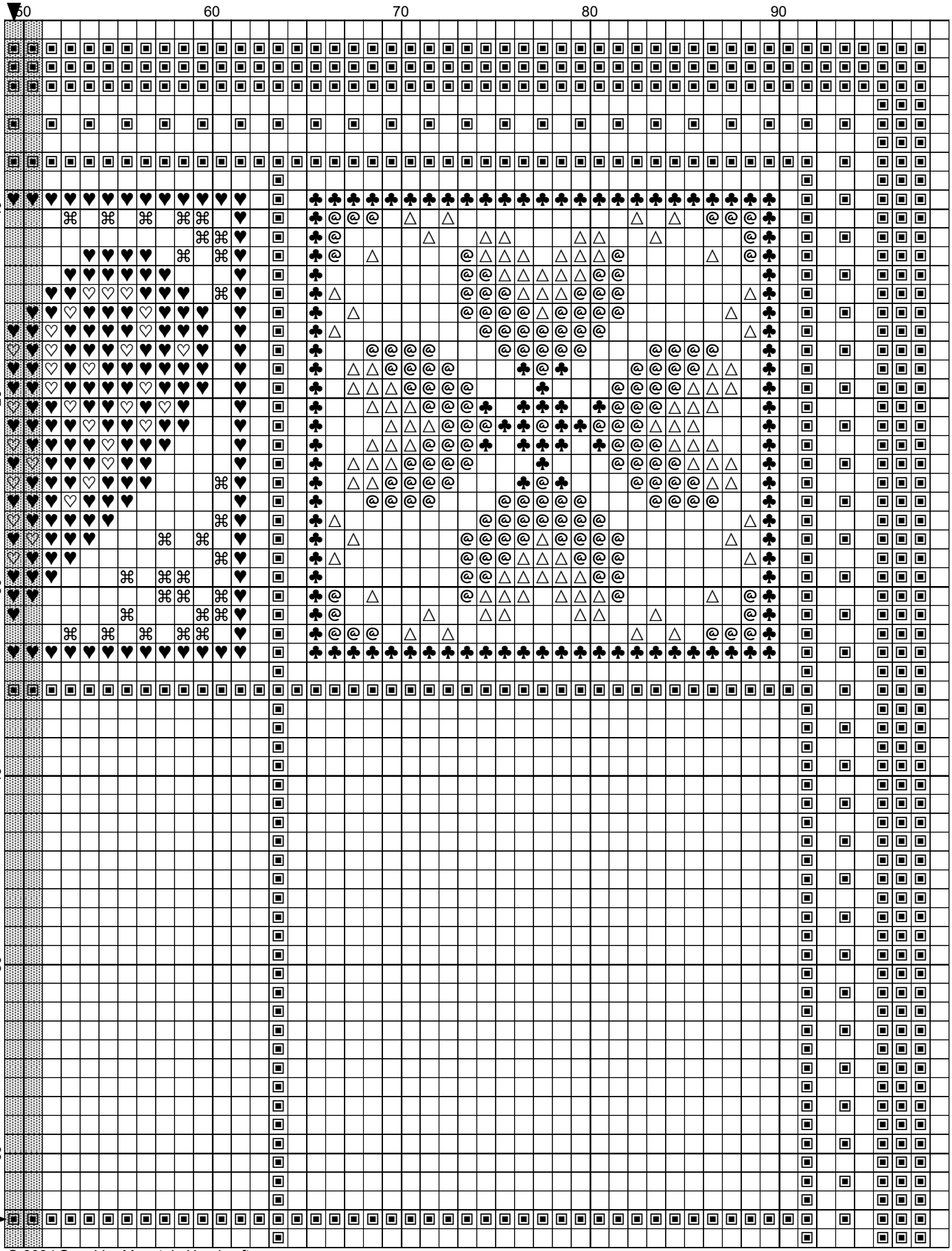

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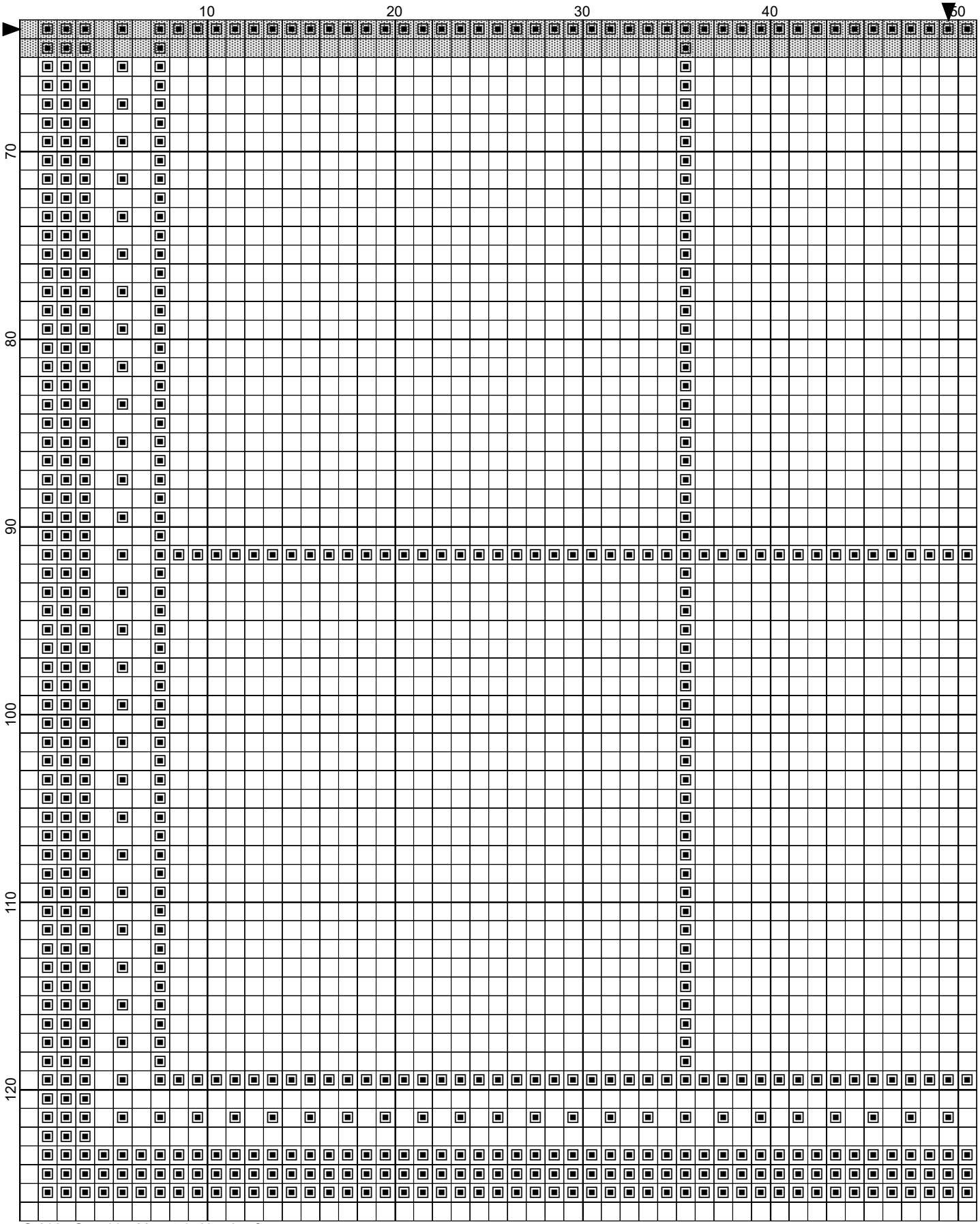

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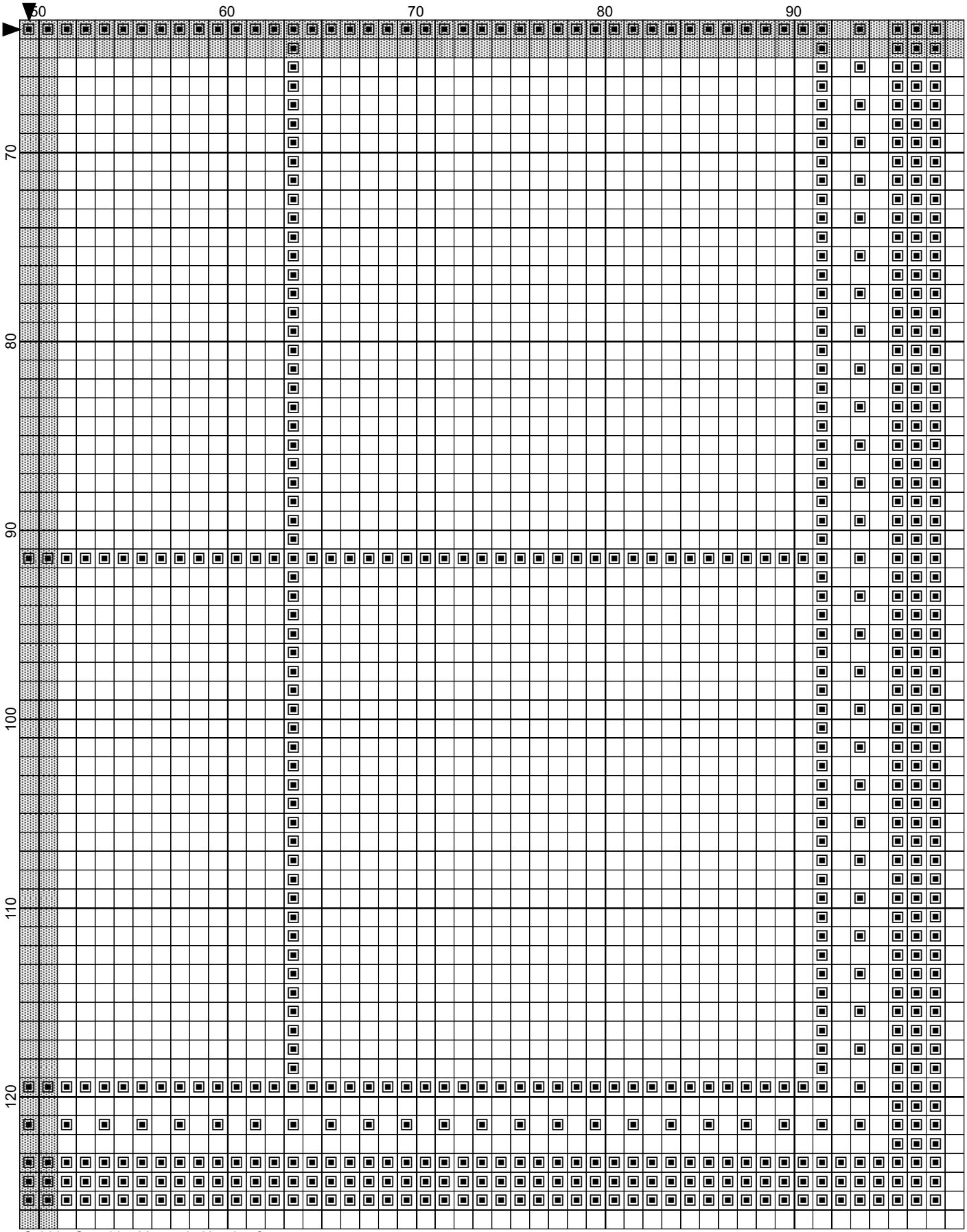

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