

Tough as Nails Mini Cryptic #17—Explanations

ACROSS

1. ALBUM is the “collection” hidden in the phrase “tropicAL BUMblebee.”
4. ITALY (“country”) is an anagram (“destroyed”) of LAITY.
5. ERASE (“get rid of”) is ERAS (“Taylor Swift’s tour”) plus E (“close to me,” as in the closing letter of ME).

DOWN

1. ASIDE (“words for the audience”) is IDEAS (“creative output”) “cycled,” that is, moving two letters from the back to the front without changing the order otherwise.
2. BRAVA (“cheer”) is VA (“Virginia”) “after” BRA (“support system?”).
3. MAYBE (“possibly”) is a reversal (“flipped over”) of YAM plus BE (“half of beet,” or the first half of BEET).