



## SONS OF MERCY: WORTHWHILE FORCE OR FUTILE FARCE?

The crunch topic this issue deals with the current force which has taken up the mantle of Sigilian peacekeepers. As anyone who has little more than a passing knowledge of me will tell you, I am no big fan of lawful societies or anyone who chooses to restrain the free will of a berk.

However, I look at the Sons of Mercy with a hint of pity to match the hint of disdain. These sods have chosen to tackle an infinitely hard task, keeping peace in the City of Doors. What – I hear you shout – is so special about that? I know that the Harmonium accomplished the same task before them and no doubt someone else will do the job after them. But trust me; Sigil was in a state of utter disarray after the Faction War. Even the small impact they had on the Cage was significant when you look at the scale of it all.

This said I am just one person. And while I admire that they have kept themselves together and gave it a go I know that the people have their own opinions. Last issue I asked you to contact me with your views on this matter. The response was overwhelming! Within the first 10 minutes of posting Issue 3 I had feedback.

I suppose it was to be expected that over 90% of the responses I received, indicated that the Sons of Mercy were laughable. One demented culler (who will remain nameless...Max) gave a fully believable reply of "Who?" when asked what he thought of the Sons.

I approached the ruling body of Sigil; currently a council of berks no better than the Guvners were a few years before them, and presented my findings to them. They were surprised that so many of Sigils citizens either had little or no respect for the Sons of Mercy or simply had no knowledge that the organisation even existed (research indicates that several citizens thought the Harmonium has simply changed their uniforms for something a little less gaudy! Berks!).

As surprised as they were, I was even more so when they revealed that they agreed wholeheartedly with the populace that the Sons of Mercy were a highly ineffective force. They also promised that the matter was one they were dealing with. Indications are that the Sons of Mercy will not be dissolved as Sigils police force. Rather, they will be given more power for dealing with disturbances than they currently have. The council believes that this is a step in the right direction and they plan further increases in power if this shows a positive result.

Regardless, they have taken the research done by the Eye of Xaos 'Field Research Team' (also known as myself, Zai and a Halibut) and are looking into the key areas for improvement that we have highlighted in that report. I have been informed that any further questions or suggestions should be forwarded to them...not to me. Come on people! Don't you think I have better things to do? Ok...I don't (BW)

## MOOD RINGS SET TO BE THE NEW CAGE CRAZE!!!

In Sigil, fads are quick to rise and quicker to fall. The latest one, though seems here to stay... at least for a while.

Mood rings, as the little brass bands are called, are sweeping the Cage and merchants are making a killing. The little trinkets are exceedingly easy to make (this reporter got his hands on a copy of the simple illusion spell used to enchant them, and assures you a chaos imp could have written it) but folks are willing to pay some pretty jink for one. Really, the inability of the merchants to produce the little rings is what drives the price up.

The rings only appear brass when sitting on a table or held in the palm. When slipped onto a finger or talon, the bands seem to be made of some scintillating material depending on the wearer's current mood.

A mood ring worn by a cutter fuming over having to wait in line at the City Court might seem to be shifting and broiling smoke. Another berk presented with a fine present might wear a mood ring of shining white light. The rings initially come with only five phases (happiness, sadness, calm, anger, and impatience) but new phases can be bought at a "reasonable" price.

I wasn't able to get a look at that illusion spell (they've got it locked up tighter than Carceri) and the original spell is resistant to alteration. The rings' creator, a bouncy Aasimar named Jenna Rallo, took some time the other day to talk to me. In her own words, "I thought the rings would be a great way to bring people together. If you see someone with a ring that says their sad, you'll be most likely to help them out.

That's what the [Ring] Givers are all about." Ms. Rallo is a member of the Bargainers herself and assured me that the faction's credo is the overriding inspiration for her creations. The rings are not made by Jenna anymore, though she gave the manufacture rights away to an industrious merchant chain called the Tradegate Manufacturing Guild.

The Guild, composed mostly of gnomes from the area of the gatetown of Tradegate, repaid Jenna with a store front in the Market Ward which they pay the rent for so that the Aasimar can give out imported fruit to passers-by. The gnomes were the ones to come up with the extra phases for the rings; Jenna herself was only able to make the original five. (AtF)

**Editors Note:** Legislations are set to be brought in to regulate the trade of mood rings. The courts have deliberated long and hard on the effect of a ring which shows the wearers emotion. A statement was issued from a member of the council "In such a planar metropolis where members of all races congregate, it would be easy for those suffering extreme emotions to be targeted by those who would seek to exploit such matters."

"Those suffering negative emotions such as hatred or anger could be open to exploitation from the various fiends that come and go through Sigil. We on the council are still in talking over the control we wish to exercise." (BW)

## **DOLDRUM CAUSES LEAK INTO SIGIL!**

Hundreds have died and many more have been injured as a portal to the negative energy plane was accidentally triggered earlier this month.

The portal; thought to have been dormant and inactive, opened without warning over the Great Bazaar and began belching out wave after wave of devastating, decaying energy. Those closest to the portal simply crumbled as the life was leeched from their bodies.

Luckily, a saviour was on hand. The ex-harmonium member used his priestly power to bombard the dimensional tear with positive energy that caused an immense pyrotechnical display.

What caused the portal to open is currently unknown and, although foul-play has not been ruled out, the Sons of Mercy have dispatched several teams in an effort to find the key that caused the portal to open. Some reports have indicated that the portal may have been opened from outside Sigil, on the negative energy plane side. These same reports have suggested that a piece of dislodged flotsam from the surface of one of the many doldrums that litter the plane may have activated the portal.

**Additional:** As this report was about to go to press, a statement was made by the Sons of Mercy that the flayed corpses of several prominent anarchists were found in the vicinity of the accident. It is believed that these anarchists may have had something to do with the incident. **(BW)**

## **NEW VINE TAKES ROOT!**

As reported last month, a Dabus; under orders from her Sharpness, was attempting to cultivate a new vine to combat the razorvine which has become an all too common sight on our streets...literally.

Good news for those of us without a tough hide is that the first patches of this new vine have begun to flourish in the Hive Ward, thanks to the careful attention of a team of Dabus who have jokingly been nicknamed 'Greenfinger' or 'Viners' by inhabitants of Sigil who see them at work.

The vine is yet to have an official name applied to it. As it appears to be the exactly opposite of the horrible razorvine, some citizens are calling it 'Feathervine'. Whilst the Celestial inhabitants of Sigil are claiming responsibility for its appearance, they are also demanding it be called 'Mount Celestia angelbreath vine of Peace'. Citizens have been seen to shrug and simply call it 'Angelvine' **(BW)**

## **SISTER CADE FOUND BEATEN**

Our beloved Sister Cade was found in the street beaten to a bloody pulp last week. She was lying bloody on the ground with an; as of yet, unidentified symbol lodged in her back. When tested, the symbol bore a strong aura of evil about it. This has led the Sons of Mercy to speculate about Cades actions before this incident.

They believe she got involved in some dark cult, then decided to leave. The cult must not have taken exception to her withdrawal and decided to make an example of her so as to deter any further insurrection. They chose to leave her on the streets of the hive to die. Luckily a cleric of Phyton; who was acting as defence counsel for a case being held before Sigils courts, happened upon the dying Sister, and had mercy on her. He managed to stop her bleeding and heal several minor wounds. Now, needless to say, Cade is now running around the Hive trying to plant flowers, and preaching about Phyton. I give it a week. **(JA)**

## **CHILDREN OF DISCORD**

I have the disturbing task of reporting to you an issue of some importance to any who associate with or are members of my gang, the 'Starved Dogs Barking'.

A new gang has arisen on the streets of Sigil. Formed from those members expelled from the Starved Dogs after the Faction War, the creation of these thoroughly evil berks was originally an Anarchist plot to overthrow the Xaositect faction, an attempt to bring down the Chaosmen.

Taking exception to being played as pawns by the Anarchists, the chaosmen who comprise the Children of Discord turned on and brutally murdered all the Anarchists co-ordinators who had attempted to exploit them. They then chose to hang the horrifically mutilated corpses at random points around Sigil as a warning to any who would seek to control a Chaosman.

The Children of Discord have sworn to kill every member of their old Gang, including myself. I have already encountered several of the Children. Luckily I was able to dispatch three of them while the other two were handled by a particularly alert friend with an unnerving love for his longbow. I take this opportunity to warn all of the Dogz to take care when they travel through Sigil. The Sons of Mercy are looking into this. But we can handle ourselves! **(BW)**

## **EIDOLON ESCAPES INTO UNDERSIGIL!**

Three bodies have been found at entrances to Undersigil this month. The killer is thought to be a Rogue Eidolon who escaped from the prime world of Toril.

Although a rarity on the planes, Eidolons are extremely dangerous nonetheless. All expeditions into Undersigil are said to be coming under even stricter limitations.

The ruling council of Sigil is due to put out a statement, in which it will call for mercenaries who are able to kill or capture the beast.

The information I have been given indicates this particular Eidolon is devoted to 'Mask', a Faerunian power. For this reason, adventurers are warned to expect the creature to be skilled in the art of stealth and a highly efficient assassin.

Adventurers are also warned of the creatures other attacks. Greybeards have compiled all information on the Eidolon and found that it has a penchant for spitting blood into the eyes of those who get too close. This blood causes the affected to see his allies as his enemies and attack them without thought or mercy.

As if this vile attack was not enough, the Eidolon has the ability to leave combatants confused. A blow from its supernaturally hard fists can cause those of weaker will to become permanently disorientated and confused. Although this condition is treatable, the council has stated that it will only provide the means to cure the affected, if they can bring proof of the Eidolons demise.

As a final note, the council has also decreed that anyone of sufficient power may attempt to force the creature back onto Toril via a natural or magically created portal. They have asked me to make it clear that anyone attempting this must seal the portal after use. Failing to do so will incur dire consequences. Scary huh? **(BW)**

## **MODRONS MARCH ON XAOS!!!**

Just as I was looking for something to fill this gap, my new Mephit messenger brought word that; in response to the people rain from Xaos, the Modrons of Mechanus are marching across the Outlands towards Xaos seemingly armed for war. As it will be some weeks before they arrive, the Eye of Xaos will keep you posted on developments in this story! **(BW)**