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The Lady's Sharper Eye

"Cutting through the darks, *The Eye* sees all."



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Berk tries to sue Lady

by Daeh K. Carc, Sigil culler

Lady's Ward--A Lower Ward githyanki's lawsuit naming the Lady of Pain as a defendant, has been thrown out by a Guvner court. Mo'ld Druk blames the Lady for failing to bring him justice in a 30-cycle battle against his former employer and faction, the Godsmen. The faction fired him from his job at the Foundry due to incompetence after he 'accidentally' poured white-hot liquid steel onto a water mephit serving refreshments to other workers, evaporating the poor fellow. A few weeks later, Druk had his faction membership revoked after uttering to a new namer that, "You'll never amount to anything, berk."

An official for the Godsmen spoke with cullers when the suit was filed last month. Ja'Cluth the Slayer, a factotum and close associate of factor Ombidias, said that Druk is just not what the Believers of the Source are about. "Druk had no interest in the potential of others, only himself. The Godsmen had no choice, but to remove Druk from our faction. I would like to offer my sincere condolences to the family and friends of Topstew, he will be missed at the Foundry," said Ja'Cluth during his statement. Ja'Cluth has been a fast riser in the faction after establishing *The Severed Hand*, a weapons and armor shop that caught the eye of Ombidias, Factol Ambar's most important aide. Weapon shops are common enough in the Cage, but what makes *The Severed Hand* special is that it produces top-shelf items crafted by Ja'Cluth himself, despite the fact that he lost his right hand during his adventuring past.

"The defendant, the Lady of Pain, is the sovereign ruler of Sigil and took no corrective action against Factol Ambar and the other leaders of the Believers of the Source for their extremely serious wrongs, which ruined the life of Mo'ld S. Druk," the githyanki's advocate said. Druk wanted the Lady to change the name of the faction to Believers of the Druk, return his youth, and grant him the lute-playing skills of famous musicians, along with resurrecting his mother and his pet pigeon, Shurbert. It was unknown why Druk waited 30 years to sue, although he had circulated several petitions in the streets of the City of Doors. Many of those petitions were found at *The Golden Griffon* being used as 'crapwipers'.

"If the Lady, as the primary defendant, failed to appear in court, Fraternity of Order rules of civil procedure clearly state that she must lose by default," Druk argued before the court after his advocate resigned during the first day of the proceedings. Last week, High Justice Norannis Mordicious, found the suit (which also named former factols of the Believers of the Source, Perrine, Augy, and Luce, the other 14 factions, all Sigilian craftsmen, and every single sod who

has spoken at the Hall of Speakers during the last 30 cycles as defendants) to be frivolous and dismissed the case with prejudice.



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Rogue Mercykiller takes stand

by Tiabh Sif, Lower Gatetowns culler

Rigus--A rogue Mercykiller accused of masterminding a terror campaign on Avalas claimed yesterday that he had no control over orc forces that murdered three goblin tribes and burned their villages. Defending himself on the witness stand, Justicar Timor Bask claimed the forces were made up of diverse racial groups that did not obey any military hierarchy. "They did not accept nor respect me as their commander. Only in situations where they needed my expertise or assistance was I included in their decisions," he told the three-judge military tribunal. "There was not a military structure and I was not in the position to give orders to the sodding sods."



The 38-year-old human captain, who turned himself into the Rigan authorities at the end of last cycle saying he wanted to prove his innocence, insisted his activities included training and advising orcs on military tactics. Mercykiller prosecutors say Bask unlawfully used his influence and told the orcs that he had

'judged' the goblins as evil. He then provided strategic instructions on how to most effectively slaughter the goblin tribes. Rigan authorities hold him responsible for a string of atrocities against goblin tribes of the Acheronian realm, Nosewart, including one attack that wiped out more than 1000 goblins. No justification has been found for the slaughter of the goblins. Prosecutors point to recent orders issued by the Red Death that explicitly instructed Mercykillers throughout Acheron that they were not to involve themselves in any disputes between goblins and orcs, unless directly ordered to.

Dressed in the ceremonial black armor and maroon helmet of a Mercykiller who has been accused, Bask looked calm as he spoke. He was the 145th witness to testify at his trial, which began three months ago. In his testimony, Bask said he was not interested in the ethnic differences between goblins and orcs and told judges he had been trained and instructed at The Prison in Sigil, which promoted ethnic diversity and equality. Bask's indictment focuses on whether or

not he violated the Fifth Tenet of Justice by judging the goblins and directing the orcs to kill them as punishment. He is also charged with disobeying orders as well as crimes against justice that include ordering the attacks, having knowledge of the attacks and failing to prevent them or punish their perpetrators. He faces a multiple-death sentence, including the Leafless Tree and the Wyrn if convicted.

Alisohn Nilesia, factol of the Red Death, gave her approved of the tribunal and said those who disobey justice should be prosecuted without mercy. She went on to say, "We must send a clear message to those sods who would not obey justice. Justice is swift and sleek. When it comes for you, you will know that you have been served!"



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Barmies take 40 pupils hostage

by Blisswing, Upper Gatetowns culler

Tradegate--Barmies, possibly suffering from the 'plague of chaos', seized 40 children and 7 teachers and held them hostage last week inside a remote academy school near the Upper Gate, burg officials said. Merkhants spokesmen Joepa Striderleggs, however, gave an opposing report, which stated that there were only 5 children and 2 teachers who were with the bewildered warriors. He said they had not been taken hostage. There was no immediate explanation for the discrepancy in the version of events.

The head of the Merkhant's Council, which acts as the unofficial head of Tradegate, Master-Trader Jeogi Gruuv said the children and teachers were still being held, but were safe. Gruuv said children and teachers from several schools in the burg had gathered for a festival when about 8 suspected 'plaguers' converged on the school and prevented them from leaving. "Maybe they want to use them as shields in case of an attack or maybe there just completely barmy. Their actions and demands up to this point have been completely dark", Gruuv told *Eye* cullers. He said appointed city officials had established contact with the armed group and were trying to negotiate the hostages' release. But Striderleggs, in a Merkhants-sponsored rally, called the report "pure screed" and said a force of bashers from the Merkhant sect had taken positions near the school, where as possible secret entrance into the school existed. Chant has it that Striderleggs lanned the fact that the darks of the "previously unknown entrance" from Noselin 'the Nose' Splinterrock, gnomish head of Tradegate militia.

Sporadic fighting has occurred recently between forces of the Merkhants and lower planar traders due to restrictions in the exchange rate for lower planar goods. Both sides have accused the other of starting the bashing, in which at least eighteen traders, sixteen soldiers and ten regular sods have died. Just last week, the two sides had agreed on a 'cease-fire' pact to prevent the situation from worsening, but threats of fighting have continued throughout the gatetown and into Bytopia. Representatives from the two sides are scheduled to meet for three days next week to setup guidelines that hopefully will lead to a peaceful solution and a resumption of normal trade.

Angus Oxcart, dwarven second-in-command of the Tradegate militia, said that the militia was still determining the validity of the hostage-takers, as well as if demands had been made, but doubted seriously that they were traders seeking to violate the Merkhants/Lower Planar Trader Pact. Should chant be found to indicate such involvement, then fiends could possibly be involved, and Oxcart

said that other measures would then have to be taken. "Right now, we must see what is happening there, then act. We are not Ciphers here".

Despite the situation, Striderleggs said that the Tradegate authorities were wasting time and putting the folk in danger. At a later rally, Striderleggs said, "There is no problem. We are in control. If they want peace, we will give them peace. If they want war, we will give them war". A spokesman for lower planar traders, tiefling Jy 'the Slick' Razorhand, said that his group knew nothing about these 'plaguers' and wanted the children to be released as soon as possible. Although he did mention that, "if any of the brats are orphans, I'll buy 'em. Paracs is always lookin' for more brats". Puzzling was the fact that the supposed hostage-takers had not issued any demands.



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Ironhearth army vows no mercy

by Craedous, Lower Planes culler

Plain of Infinite Portals--

Claiming that his forces have left the Plain of Infinite Portals an open grave of dead and dying tanar'ri, Ironhearth commander Kalinor Grimjaw vowed last week to continue his attacks on fiend strongholds until the Blood War removes its presence from the Outlands. Ironhearth forces claim to have the upper hand in a month-long surge in fighting that has caused the tanar'ri to move forces away from fronts on Gehenna and left unknown number of casualties on the Plain of Infinite Portals.



"We have made the Abyss recognize that we are a force to be reckon with," said Lance dar Struzan, Leader of the Company of Ironhearth, the elite warriors of the Army of Ironhearth. "We can continue our attacks at our leisure and will force the tanar'ri to leave the Outlands out of the Blood War." Struzan spoke to cullers at Ironhearth after their highly successful 'hammer and anvil' attacks on the first layer of the Abyss. The lightning fast attack follows months of smaller raids by the forces of Ironhearth, who reportedly killed a balor and his entire military staff, as well as thousands of elite mercenaries hired by the tanar'ri for an upcoming major offensive on the Field of Nettles.

The insurgents were pitted against overwhelming (or so the fiends thought) numbers upon their entrance to the Abyss. Several tanar'ri strongholds were destroyed by enhanced *zone of cold air* spells, and thousands of fiends were teleported to Mount Celestia, where they most certainly perished. Despite his

obvious hatred for the fiends, the aasimar warrior-priest, Struzan still vowed to stand by a seven-day cease-fire set to begin tomorrow evening. "Our army will stand down for a week. If the tanar'ri do not try to retaliate, we will stay silent for a week," he said. Struzan's vow still gave his forces plenty of room to resume attacks and gage their previous effectiveness on the field of battle. "A true warrior knows when to attack and when to pray", he commented. Further, he said that any warlike tanar'ri activity - even a bar fight in a Sigilian bubhouse - would cause the attacks to start anew. When asked about this hard-line policy, Lord Kalinor spoke, "We will not turn out backs. We will wait and watch for the fiends' response to us, or they will perish". Tanar'ri comments were not forthcoming.

Later, Struzan also accused the baatezu, who have moved into positions near Ironhearth, of conspiring to attack the citizens of the Outlands. "Their kind have entered our land, the land that rightfully belongs to the people of the 'Land", he said. He then issued a warning: "We will not stand for any deceit and will attack if provoked. It's going to be fiend killin' time if they don't hearken to this chant."

A baatezu official spokesfiendess in Dis, speaking on customary condition of anonymity, called the accusation "absolute rubbish and barmy screed". She continued, "All that has happened is that we are moving our armies from one point to another. Troop movements, no more; if the foolish mortal worms fear us, then so be it. It does them and us good to be feared. Of course, we mean no harm to the residents of the 'Land and will be on our way shortly. If we wanted to make the Outlands ours then they would be so. For us to be threatened by those pitiful sods is unthinkable. Just because they can harm the weak hides of the idiotic tanar'ri does not mean that we, too, are vulnerable. However, mark my words that this threat will not be forgotten."



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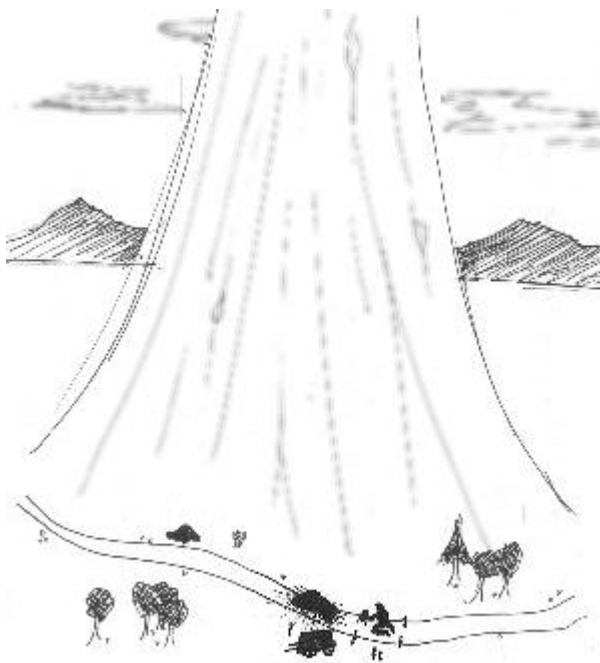
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A father's nightmare at the Spire

by Godemirc Kreb, Outlands culler

The Outlands--"I thought he was dying, right there in my arms," a firbolg dad said last week as he talked about holding his son's head after a boulder fell from the Spire shattered the boy's skull. "I was left sopping up my only son's blood with a sodding cloth," Darg Skyshard said. "In a sudden blast, I felt the pain, I felt the blood and then, I felt the suffering."

Darg and his son, Michon, had been heading across the center of the 'Land to an annual fish festival held near Tir fo Thuinn where they planned to spend a week on holiday from Ysgard. "My son loved to fish almost as much as he did anything. The water fascinated him", the father, his voice laden with sorrow, told Eye cullers. It was when a 12-ton rock dropped seemingly from the Spire and slammed into their wagon that both their jokes and their peaceful trek to the Great Lake of the Outlands ended. Darg was left squeezing his son's hand in a Bleaker infirmary in Ecstasy, hoping that Michon would somehow awaken



from the 'death sleep', as healers termed it, that he had fallen into. The healers said that it was likely that he would not awaken, but said that if, by chance, he did there would be slight brain-box damage, at the very least. The boy, already 6 feet tall, has already had his right eye removed, suffered a broken nose and undergone extensive healing to repair his shattered bone-box.

The rock smashed through the covering of the Skyshard's wagon and hit Michon, who was driving, before continuing through the flooring and shattering the rear axle. Darg had no idea what had hit the wagon until he himself was able to dislodge himself from the mass of shattered wood and stone. The father then carried his son for nearly a full day to the nearest gatetown, Ecstasy; in order to have a healer's attention.

Outlander Harmonium patrols had no information regarding the area, but local residents were outraged and demanded answers. "This has really upset the

common folk and there has arisen an outcry from the local communities of the 'Land," said Sgt. Obanius Lorsen of the Harmonium. "When folk start crying out like this, raging for answers, then something's sure to happen." Lorsen added. Sgt. Lorsen went on to lann Eye cullers that five Guvner rock specialists and 10 other sages are working to determine if part of the Spire has become unstable and causing these 'spireslides', as they have been termed.

There was an outpouring of support for the firbolg family by Ecstasy as well as nearby communities, totaling about 3,000 sods. Michon's betrothed, his mother Chadra and his sister Suna, who traveled to Ecstasy to be near his healing bed, said the support has been a relief. "These people have taken care of us," Suna said. "I don't think we could do this without their touching support. It has been overwhelming." Michon's father said he has barely caught his breath since he had cleared the debris and then carried his bleeding son to help. "We were looking forward to a good trip and were going to do a lot of fishing," he said, with giant tears in his eyes. "I never thought something like this was sodding possible. Why, is the question I keep asking myself."



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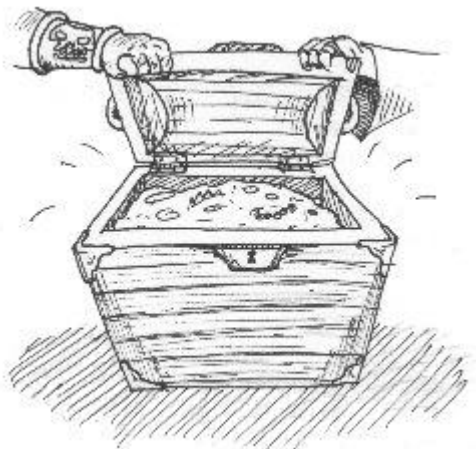
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Treasure chest found near Goldheart

by Godemirc Krebs, Outlands culler

Ruins of Goldheart--The search of a cave by a sage of arcane magic yielded a magically protected wooden chest filled with gold and silver coins that may have been hidden 149 cycles ago during an ill-fated expedition across the Outlands. Sage Je'Feymon uncovered the treasure as he recreated the journey of a group known as The Prime Pioneers. He and four others retraced the entire journey at the end of last cycle. "I would not have been more surprised if a dozen green slaadi would have jumped forth from the chest,"

Je'Feymon said last week. "Nothing could have prepared me for this."



The chest was buried beneath boulders within a deep cave near the ruins of Goldheart. It was found in nearly mint condition, obviously protected by an unknown type of protective magic. The find is worth an estimated 5,000-cager gold, said Je'Feymon, a 56-year-old, semi-retired half-githzerai sage. Fated antique specialists at Glorium are currently determining if the contents of the chest are authentic, as Je'Feymon claims. So far, no questions have been raised.

Alongside the coins were priceless treasures from the past such as well-worn baby shoes, mirrors and a letter documenting the wagon-train trek of Pioneer leader, Wilm Rut, who was among some 1000 men, women and children seeking a new life on the planes. Planar historians, such as the acclaimed Madame Opus of Sigil, believe that the primes came from the world of Orundum before its near destruction by illithid forces. The doomed group wound up lost in the merciless Ironhook Mountains, a now well-known spur of the mighty Ironridge Mountains.

The letter, written in a scratchy but barely decipherable hand, was tucked inside a small prayer book to a previously unheard of goddess known as Nots. "My dearest Edin," Rut wrote, "knowed now we shoul'da have gone arownd. Iffen I don't raturrn by end of nixt month, I wont never come back." Only a few entries followed this, as Rut died 26 days later. Careful examination of all of the facts regarding this barmy case have led planar graybeards to believe that Rut later drank too much cold water at the first well the party came to, at what is known today as Ironhearth. He then lay down for a nap and never awoke. Chant has it that this

group may have only been the first in a series of groups fleeing Orundum. When contact was lost with this first group, the others may have changed plans and traveled to different planes or even another prime world.

The group is believed to have attempted to skirt the Great Road and ended up crossing part of the inhospitable desert plains of the Outlands. A small fraction of the remainder of the party later made it to Bedlam after wandering through the mountains for several weeks. Je'Feymon said he believes that at least 700 died on the trek. His initial interest, he says, derives not only from the fascinating story, but also from the fact that he is in fact a descendant of this seemingly doomed party of primes.

The team also found a manifest of the trunk's contents, along with nearly 120 pieces of ancient Orunderic currency, including an intact kllurb, the standard gold piece of the long lost people. There was also rumors of a *sword of illithid slaying*, a hand carved, thissilic battle horn, a sandstone locket adorned with pearls and painted ivory bowls. A knitted shawl of thick purplish fur covered all of the contents. Je'Feymon said he hopes to donate the magnificent find to a top-shelf museum, such as the Musee Arcane, in Sigil.



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Emerging disease named at Ironhearth

by Godemirc Kreb, Outlands culler

Ironhearth--"The Factions and their officials, tucked safely away in the Cage, may not perceive this as a true threat to life and sanctity, but we at Ironhearth do", commented Ironhearthian sage and priest of Celestian, Jo'tasz Ringweaver. The sage-priest was commenting on the ever-growing epidemic that seems to be silently, but inevitably, worming its way across the Lower Planes, including the lower gatetowns. "There has been an alarming increase in the number of plague cases originating in the gatetowns of Xaos, Curst, Bedlam and Plague-mort, and there have been reports of unusual goings on as far off as the Beastlands", the aged githzerai said.

Ringweaver, a high up at Ironhearth and a powerful spell-slinger, is known throughout the Outlands and particularly Ironhearth as a "true blood that does not jump hastily to conclusions". He is also well known for his close association and extended history with the Lord of Ironhearth, Kalinor Grimjaw. *Eye* cullers have lanned that apparently, Jo'tasz was once of the founding members of the adventuring group known as Vengeance, begun by Kalinor after his initial arrival to the planes from the prime world of Norrith many cycles ago. Since that day, the two bloods have been nearly inseparable, resulting in Jo'tasz becoming the sage of Kalinor's Citadel of the Outlands.

"We have been studying this 'Chaos Plague' for some time now, as well as its extended effects on both the body and the mind. Aided by my trusted companions and research assistants, we have been gathering chant for some time now on this sickness, for that is what we truly believe it to be - a sickness." Ringweaver would not comment on exactly how many cycles this research had been performed, but from the sheer volume of raw knowledge that he and his team had gleaned (enough to fill several rooms with), a safe estimate would be at least two cycles.

When asked about the unusual symptoms of the sickness, as well as the odd occurrences when there is a direct absence of symptoms, Ringweaver replied, "We have begun to see a pattern emerging, but it is too soon to tell. However, we do believe that once the first signs of unusual symptoms begin appearing, folks should, with all haste, begin to seek treatment". When further questioned about the lack of effect that many initial treatments seem to exhibit, he replied, "We will find a cure. There is no sickness that cannot be cured, and we vow to find it. Lord Kalinor has promised that any being, excluding fiends of course, who has the 'Chaos Plague' and has been met with persecution elsewhere shall find solace here. The gates to Ironhearth, as well as a future cure, are open to

them".



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The Big Mystery: a theory of everything

by Jerek Rejebo, Roaming culler

Market Ward--"Such a theory would hypothetically give us the ability to read the minds of the Powers," says Indep sage Germal Dar, speaking at a philosophy symposium at the Great Bazaar. The elven sage professes the existence of a 'Big Mystery' which, upon discovery, would fling open the doors of rational understanding and thought for the planes as a whole. It is a further supposition of his theory that this understanding would lay bare the darks of the multiverse and grant powers unimaginable. "After all," Dar states, "this is the Outer Planes, and Knowledge is Power, aye?"

In Dar's opinion, there is a very likely chance (a 50/50 chance according to his rogue modron companion, Tic) that someone will discover the 'Big Mystery' that he professes is out there within the next 20 Sigilian cycles. It will not prove to be an easy task, however, for Dar seems to think that the solution to unlocking the riddle of the 'Big Mystery' lies in the theoretical conjunction of two unusual theories of existence. The discoverer would have to find the harmony underlying in these two theories, which are as discordant as baatezu and aasimon.

A unique member of the Athar originally crafted one of the two theories some thirty cycles ago. The theorist, well known to all Athar, was the single known individual of his kind, a somehow sentient dwarven golem. Apparently, by some freak accident or misplacement of enchantment, the golem simply gained sentience upon its creation, almost as if springing to life fully developed, complete with the powers of speech, thought, and action. The golem's name, of course, was Quirk and once arriving at Sigil, quickly joined with the Athar. Quirk proved quite the odd, if not steadfast philosopher and was well known in the Hall of Speakers. Well known as well, was his theory of Quadular Small Bits. Apparently, Quirk saw the large-scale multiverse as a collection of smooth, curved surfaces in four dimensions (the three dimensions of space plus time) with small bits of 'stuff' everywhere. It was his belief that the very force that binds sods to the ground arises from the very structure of those quadular bits.

On the other side is the Fuzzy Bunny Theory, also known as FBT. Hundreds of cycles ago, an entire generation of unusually orderly (a loose term when applied to the chaotic faction) Xaositech sages defined the multiverse as a collection of fuzzy bunnies. These bunnies were very small and almost imperceptible to begin with. Further, these bunnies jumped up and down at an inordinately high rate of speed, which, as one might 'logically surmise', made them invisible to all attempts of sight, identification, or contact. These tiny bunnies could not be

precisely located in space and time, but their interaction could be described in statistical (again, a very vague term when applied to Xaositech) terms.

Both theories remain wholly unproven to the majority of planar graybeards, as well as the school of Philosophy in Sigil. In truth, many philosophers have discarded the theories as "useless flogewash", but there are some unexplainable truths to both theories. While, for the most part, the theories seem totally out of joint; some feel that they do have some of the dark within them after all.

For instance, the equations that describe the fuzzy bunnies are completely different from those for small quadular bits; however, sages have discovered that the methods used to derive at the end results are nearly identical. Moreover, each theory is incomplete by itself and yet it seems that each is somehow unfinished, according to planar sages who support Dar's claims. Further, Fuzzy Bunnies seems to give insights into how the multiverse gave rise to the planar makeup, as we know it today. Meanwhile, Quadular Small Bits, sometimes referred to as QSB, only describes an assortment of bits, mathematical constants and equations - yet by some measure defines how basic forces have equality and symmetry underlying them all.

For decades, the Fraternity of Order has tried various strategies to roll up FSB and QSB into one set of equations for testing. Unfortunately, all of the attempts have met with dismal failures. "Whenever we tried to calculate numbers from these theories, we arrive at meaningless infinities," said Guvner Michiola Kak.



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Secret report details disease outbreak in Bedlam

by Tiabh Sif, Lower Gatetowns culler

Bedlam--*The Lady's Sharper Eye* has been able to obtain exclusive darks on a top-shelf report sent by a Guvner investigation team in the gatetown of Bedlam. The team had been researching the mysterious disease outbreak that has seemingly infected the gatetowns of Bedlam, Xaos, Curst, and Plague-mort. A copy of the report was supposedly forwarded to the City Courts and is allegedly being reviewed by Guvner high-ups. Although we do not have anyway to confirm the validity of the report we obtained, we believe it to be wholly legitimate and authentic. However, it unfortunately is incomplete as part of the report was damaged during its procurement.

Gatetown A

Upon entry to the 500-person healing institution, the patients were in various stages of infection combined with a form of chaotic fever. Some had developed large cells of calcified nodules on their chests that randomly shot forth various liquids. The liquids ranged from fetid swamp waters to balm that seemingly had rudimentary healing properties. In a small number of cases, the nodules grew tentacles that proceeded to attack both the victim and/or anyone that came near them, often to fatal effect. During the next 3 days, we treated patients with several courses of healing, both magical and herbal in nature, initially for the chaotic fever and then for episodic seizures, including the chaotic outbursts. The patients were isolated and had undergone processes of multi-herbal therapy, which seemed to have no immediate effect, either positive or negative.

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Gatetown B

The patients were diagnosed initially as plague-positive, based upon observed overt symptoms, (*see Fraternity Knowledge Release P5-0012 for full descriptions of said overt symptoms*) and had received no forms of preventive therapy. The initial symptoms were unrelenting cough, episodic high fever, and some form of air-borne infection upon the right breast that seemed to pass from one patient to the next with alarming speed and accuracy. All patients were immediately treated as per standard Fraternity policy, but the fevers continued unabated, even worsening in some, but not all, cases.

Strangely, after an addition of planar hibiscus (a deviation of standard Fraternity procedure, but a controlled test nonetheless), the fever resolved. Additional tests with redundant checks have been scheduled regarding this development and are currently undergoing additional research and study.

Further, samples consisting of blood, skin, and bone marrow obtained while the patients were stable literally exploded. The patients were then immediately placed in isolation and a combination of magical and multi-herbal therapy was begun. All of the patients died within a few days from what can best be described as a chaotic consumption of the entire body. Unfortunately, none of the specimens or patients obtained could be saved.

The local infirmary staff indicated that no patient isolation was performed, as it was not deemed necessary. Further observance by Fraternity operatives indicated that a sub-standard level of structural organization was pervasive throughout the infirmary, so sub-standard care of patients should have been expected.

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Gatetown C

After a random sample of local population, we initially diagnosed 15 patients. The following symptoms were observed: one patient had their fingers fused together and could not be separated, four patients experienced highly painful bleeding from the nose, ears, and other bodily orifices, two patients had total hair loss over 20% or more of their bodies, 8 patients seemed perfectly normal. Analysis of specimens from the patients identified no signs of any known sickness or disease, magical or otherwise. However, the 8 patients that seemed perfectly normal later developed secondary cases of necromantic transformation including one spontaneous transformation into a wight.

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Contact Investigations

Secondary transmission may have occurred from the patient outbreaks to the community. The infected patients in Gatetown A visited a total of thirteen other burghs nearby. We have placed 30 visitors from those burghs into isolation for further observation. The subjects then developed symptoms similar, but not corresponding to overt symptoms outlined by the Fraternity (*see Fraternity Knowledge Release P5-0012 for full descriptions of said overt symptoms*). Among healers and other infirmary staff who had contact with patients, plague conversions occurred in 90% of 319 in **Gatetown A**, 94% of 223 in **Gatetown B**, and 87% of 156 in **Gatetown C**.

Conclusion

This report demonstrates that the plague can spread rapidly among infected patients in congregate living situations and to their visitors; disease developing in a visitor may have led to secondary transmission in their household or social contacts. Containment required the efforts of gatetown and factional department staffs at the local level to address the unique public health and social challenges posed by the outbreak.

Prevention of community spread (and reintroduction of undiagnosed infectious patients into burg housing) requires the rapid investigation of contacts in the city. Patient contacts should be evaluated and begun on herbal treatment or preventive magically based therapy before release from any facility, including infirmaries, temples or high-risk housing units. Joint efforts are under way in the upper gatetowns to clarify roles and ensure that the infrastructure of Fraternity-established health units is adequate to track plague cases as well as all suspected cases and to elicit, notify, and evaluate burg and surrounding areas promptly. However, such organizational efforts in the lower gatetowns have met primarily with resistance.

The use of preventive therapy has not yet shown that it is effective. Therapies may need to be expanded beyond plague-positive patients to possible infected persons that do not yet show symptoms. Possible plague-infected persons with a history of prior diseases or illnesses should receive preventive treatment regardless of their age or lack of symptoms. Population isolation or segregation for plague-negative persons should be considered due to unavoidable high risk of exposure from those already confirmed with the disease. Following the outbreaks described in this report, the Fraternity of Order Gatetown Health Inspection Team-1A63 has recommended routine use of preventive therapy for all possible-infected patients within the Outlands, provided that such therapy is found to be beneficial. The risks and benefits associated with population isolation/segregation in these settings needs to be evaluated as a very high priority.



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Taking the Guess-Work Out of Death Ceremonies

by Patrica Sapane, social events culler

Lower Ward--Any death is usually denoted by sorrow on the planes, even despite the fact that most sods move on to become petitioners, ready to live another full life. The one exception to this rule is of course, the Dustmen, who believe that death is merely a natural progression towards the one True Death. The Dustmen see a ceremony of death not as an appointment to be ultimately feared, but rather, an occasion to be anticipated and welcomed openly. However, for most sods, it is a difficult thing to be excited about attending one of these usually grim and dour ceremonies, despite the loads of chant spouted by the Dead's factioneers.

It is the ultimate dream of all Dustmen to participate in the next step towards Ultimate Death, to end this stage of death (and begin the next one) in a blaze of glory of a ceremony to end all ceremonies. With gathered friends, family, faction members and a blazing hot portal into the Elemental Plane of Fire, what could be more exciting? Of course, the Dead try their level best not to show any of this excitement, which would mark them as one of the Living, but a sod could bet greens to stingers that somewhere inside they are rejoicing. Why then, over the passing cycles, have ceremony participants and their guests conspired to pretend that it is all so difficult? Perhaps it is the fear of death that permeates these ceremonies that keeps most bloods away, or perhaps it is because they simply do not understand all of the formality associated with it all. Hopefully, this chant will help those sods and get the chant through their thick brain-boxes.

I would hate to think that sods don't attend because they are lazy or they think their hosts unscrupulous. Even less would I like to think that the hosts don't believe their guests capable of being civil, and the guests don't care enough to try? If either were true, I would advise a serious revision of the guest list. I prefer to think that the hosts are just so frantic when doing ceremony-related tasks that they can't stop themselves to make it all more personal and inviting for the Living. Or perhaps the guests are afraid it would derail their hosts, or Powers forbid, put them one step closer to death to get in the way. Even I would demur if I felt this state of affairs made everyone happy. But hosts complain bitterly that their guests won't respond even when there is nothing to do but mail back a pre-written response, and guests complain bitterly that their hosts are exploiting them by announcing what they want them to give, wear, or when to attend.

I most certainly promise that they would all be better off with the guests' taking back their traditional tasks while the hosts worried about more important

things, such as whether to take the plunge into the Plane of Fire or the Astral. Following is a list of things that are expected of a prospective guest, in case everybod has forgotten by now. Not only is it a short-list, but one can elect to do the first and skip all the others.

1. Answer the invitation, for goodness' sake. These people want you at a major event in their lives. It's not too much to expect you to supply your own white paper and envelope to tell them yes or no. If someone asked you to go to a bubhouse, would you answer only with silence? All right, perhaps the form for responding to a formal invitation is not obvious, although it does follow the form of the invitation. A third-person invitation ("Factor Whomever request the pleasure of your company at the destruction of his life . . .") requires a third-person reply ("Big Hairy Stud to accept with pleasure/the kind invitation of/ Factor Whomever"). By changing the second line to "regret that they are unable to accept," you free yourself from any obligation other than wishing the participant well. By accepting, you bind yourself to attending on the terms stated, which means that you cannot try to renegotiate; for example, to bring another person or to order your meal.

2. Figure out for yourself what you would like (and can afford) to give the faction that they might need. If the answer is a resounding "Nothing!" it is a sign that you don't care about the people in the faction or the participant. Either there is not enough friendship to justify your going to the ceremony and you should decline, or it's a relative and you not only have to go but also have to fake caring. In either case, if you don't know what to get, you can ask someone who does. Or buy something that is conventional or easily exchangeable. Then send it, rather than bringing it to the ceremony, where it is a nuisance at best and could easily get lost.

3. Show up on time, suitably dressed, with the right attitude. As a serious commitment, accepting a ceremony invitation is second only to accepting a marriage proposal. A ceremony is not a drop-by-if-you-feel-like-it-at-the-time sort of occasion. On time actually means slightly earlier, as you should arrived at the Mortuary and be seated when the ceremony starts. Ceremony's vary in formality, but always require serious clothing within the chosen category, even if that means your best homunculus suit for a beach ceremony (possibly for a funeral involving the Elemental Plane of Water).

Except for those morally compelled to make public objections to the ceremony, the guests should be silent during the ceremony but chatty during subsequent festivities-which is to say that they should mix with the other guests and try to have a good time. That's it. Is it really so hard? See I told you that death was really not that frightening!

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S.I.G.I.S. - Canny Cager's Chant!

Hearken, bloods and cutters! Despite all Hardhead claims and attempts, **S.I.G.I.S.**, Sigil's Independent Global Information Service, is alive and on the case as strong as ever. Do not believe the screed that you have been told! No sod worth his salt wants their chant from the Hardhead mouthpieces, so support **S.I.G.I.S.** today! We are working as hard as ever to unearth the darks behind the faction machinations, the 'loth conspiracies, the Blood War forays, and the happenings in the Cage. And we are still just two stingers!

Not only are the bloods at **S.I.G.I.S.** still bringing all the darks of Sigil and the Outer Planes, but we are also combining forces with *The Lady's Sharper Eye*, an Outlands-based magrag that offers the best source of chant and darks for the Land! Keep a peery eye on the up and coming issues of **S.I.G.I.S.** for details regarding this planeshaking event! All of our efforts put forth are an attempt to keep you, the bloods and bashers on the paths, informed. Remember, cutters, **S.I.G.I.S.** is your planar source of knowledge and on the planes, knowledge is power!



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