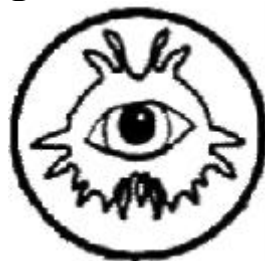


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# The Lady's Sharper Eye

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



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## **Blessed Blight's *House of Dread***

Welcome to the *House of Dread*, a sojourn into the dark arts at Sigil's *Terrorhall Theatre* (across the way from the *Temple of the Abyss* in the Lady's Ward) as well as smaller theatres of the horror genre scattered across the Great Ring. I'm your Hostess, Blessed Blight, Pixie Supreme (though some might lann ya' that I have the mind of a succubus crammed into my brainbox), to offer you the best advice as to what's of interest for those of you who delight in a good fright.

First Lady of the Month of Regula

REVIEW - "The 'Nappers"

*Terrorhall Theatre*, Sigil

Reviewed by Blessed Blight

An engaging and sometimes terrifying play of suspense, "The 'Nappers" revolves around the arrest and interrogation of a barbazu named Slikra, who may or may not be on a mission from a higher-up in [Baator](#) - and who may or may not have murdered the missing daughter of a wealthy merchant. While being interrogated by the Hardheads the blood gives the cryptic response, *"She screams yet beneath the ruins of Maladomini."*

We are led into a world of intrigue involving fiends and factions, where those we know to be evil might not be the greatest evil. Where baatezu looking to stay alive long enough to rise through the ranks must play a careful game of alliance and deceit with their masters. Bravura performance by barbazu Hrasha as Slikra - Hrasha wrote and helped with direction of this play, which has made him none to popular back home where mockery of the mental calisthenics of the greater baatezu will earn a berk a quick death. Arcadian Roses as well to Jazma Otre as Elena, our heroine who is not so defenseless as we are first lead to presume.

**- 4 Tanar'ri Eyes out of 5 -**

Second Lady of the Month of Regula

REVIEW - "The Hand of Chaos"

*Terrorhall Theatre*, Sigil

Reviewed by Blessed Blight

The house was packed with Guvners and even a few hierarch modrons to observe this bizarre tale of 6 modrons that stumble onto an unusual dark cog in an uncharted realm of Mechanus. We know right away that something is not right as the decaton and his 5 pentadrone subordinates investigate the gear. Just listen to the comments of the decaton regarding the rotation of the cog relative to its neighbors:

*"Cog 64539 rotation in clockwise direction; rotation of all connecting cogs to Cog 64539 also in a clockwise direction; cog 64539 does not obey the established laws of rotation involving interconnected gears. Microscopic investigation of the connecting edges cannot find the smallest*

*gear teeth connections of the cogs at any known level of observation, and yet they do touch - illogical and illegal."*

Ok, so it might not have YOU on the edge of your seat yet cutter, but man those Mathematicians were sweating enough blood to get a vamp to open his crypt under the midday sun. Trekking across the Cog our modron finds a strange temple at its center; it stands alone and SEEMS to obey the laws of the plane. Walls continued upright, slabs of obsidian met neatly, floors were firm, and doors were sensibly shut--only an eerie, whistling wind was heard from within its structure. And yet the modrons sensed that something was not right, and one by one began to deviate from their sensibilities, save our steadfast and noble decaton.

About two-thirds of the way through we are greeted to the haunting visual of one of the pentadrones standing before the decaton, the word LOGIC strangely (and it would appear painfully) carved into one of its five sides below the mouth - by what or by whom we don't know, but that's not the scary part. A moment later there is a strange flash of lightning and the pentadrone turns - to reveal another face with the word CHAOS printed on its side. On the first night the play had to be halted for several moments after a few Xaositects began whooping it up over the pentadrone carvings and started fighting with a pair of Guvner aides.

All in all, an interesting (although a little heavy-handed) morality play about being ever vigilant against the tide of chaos. The Tief Quartet provided both the excellent set design and mood music. The acting was, well, let's just say it was modron acting.  
- **3 Gold Dragon Scales out of 5** -

Third Lady of the Month of Regula

REVIEW - "Thrultra"

*Terrorhall Theatre, Sigil*

Reviewed by Blessed Blight

Iru'Lur'Si is the playwright for this historical drama, and the illithid has another powerful fact working in his favor - he is a descendant of the mind flayer community that produced Osi'Sulra, the illithid breeder largely responsible for the creation of the Thrultra race 500 cycles ago. Iru has gathered together what info remains from that time to put together this story, which created a fury when rumors spread that some Thrultra had sneaked into [Sigil](#) itself to observe and disrupt the performance (none have actually been observed however).

The performance is fairly accurate historically, showing how the Nourisher-Creative Creeds at the Dar'Shanol community have been interbreeding and improving on their captive thrall population for an endless campaign of wars under the dictatorship of the Elder Brain and Tamer Creed. Osi'Sulra himself is portrayed as a mad scientist, transfusing tanar'ri ichors and fire giant blood, slaadi sweat and other foul contaminations into a pregnant thrall that was already a drow/giant/quickling mongrel, to produce Tyrzaut, first of the Thrultra, a hideous and gigantic creation

virtually unbeatable in battle - and ultimately too chaotic to control.

Towards the end of the play we are greeted to the sight of Tyrzaut running madly through the community, slaying hordes of Tamers while flames flicker in the inferno of the doomed community, and Osi'Sulra cries out:

*"Ilsensine's pride, child of my creation why do you torment us so? You were honored higher than any of your kind before you, why do you burn the only home that welcomes you?"*

But we already know the answer - Tyrzaut is a child of deception and bloodlust, as are the Thrultra descendants to this day. Bred for war, the luring of prey and the joy of the kill he knows nothing else, and we are left to wonder if all warriors must eventually succumb to the fury of the blade, or only those programmed to fight. Haunting and violent, and one of the best.

**- 4 Thralls out of 5 -**



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## Nessus: the dark beyond

(Creature Feature sponsored by [Snail Outfitters](#))

**Editor's Note:** While this bit o' chant came to us by way of a trusted and valued source, we at *The Eye* cannot, at this time, make any claims as to its veracity. The story and the culler (both of which you will find to hover on the verge of the barmy and the bizarre) are currently being skegged by our most hende of bloods. Rest assured that as sure as the Spire, if there's any wigwag in the lot o' this chant, that a follow-up story will appear as soon as we at *The Eye* have obtained the darks of the matter.

Further, we apologize for the state of the story as it appears, in its native format, but it was as per the instructions of the culler that we do so, or else we could not publish the chant. As you will see, these darks, if found to be true, were just too deep not to comply...



*i am **grim'alkin**...i am called garrote...i break all of the tenants of our laws with this single scrap of paper...know that i do not do this lightly...know that a reason exists for my transgression, but that too, is heresy...these things matter not...i am dead despite what happens now...we are all dead...not skall's dead, but the dead of utterness, of finality and of oblivion...*

*fools...we have all been played for fools...a whole multiverse of sodding fools that go on rambling and spouting things that they think they know, an yet they could not be the bigger rubes for thinking all the while...yes, we are all fools, that have been lulled into thinking that we know that what we believe is true, but the truth could not be farther from it...*

*garrote has seen behind the veil that has been drawn over the eyes of the multiverse...i have seen what lies beyond nessus...what lies at the heart of the pit...it is not the ending of all things, as many have said, it is merely the beginning...the awful, horrible, mind-shredding beginning...the fiends are frauds...they are mere puppets...they are but paper dolls strung on strings when compared to that which lies beyond...*

*i do not know why I was spared when so many other natives and petitioners of what was once called my home plane, were made ready...we were taken from our homes and made ready to be fed to that, to those, which lie beyond the pit...i know not why i was spared, but i am now hunted by everything that moves in this place, so everything that moves that i can i kill, throttle, and choke the life from utterly...then i run...they are all controlled by those which lie beyond...it seems so clear to me now...why the baatezu are so lawful and regimented...they are but wooden puppets to the things which make their home beyond that pit...they are but servants to the masters...they dutifully receive and dutifully carry out their orders without question or hesitation...*

*to feed the masters...those are their orders...this is why they fight for that which determines evil itself...they who control evil itself can then gorge upon its black and unholy being...and grow fatter and stronger...strong enough to...do anything..*

*we are all dead...we are all fools...*

*now...we are all simple, sodding dead fools...*



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## New leads in murder case

by Yuriko, Chaotic culler



**Sandstone District, Clerk's Ward**-- The Harmonium has made some modest progression in its investigation concerning the recent brutal crimes. On the 10th of this month the infamous mage Tyrashyk of the Broken Wand barely escaped with his life. Returning home from the *Hall of Records*, he found his door opened, heard a strange requiem tune and saw small dirt footprints all over the floor.

*"I was late from an appointment, but now I suppose I must consider myself grateful,"* says the startled mage. Once inside he was attacked by what he described as a bunch of *"wooden boys no bigger than a ratatosk."* Using a web spell, he managed to flee to a nearby alley, where he was helped by a Harmonium patrol.

*"The assault did not cease,"* said Vest Ibul, the patrol leader, *"the things were all over us and we could only defend ourselves. Actually, if we knew it was Tyrashyk, we wouldn't have bothered!"*

Harmonium Movers denied Ibul's statement. Records indicate that the mage's house was scene to a khaasta family massacre by a group of racial purists some four decades ago.

Christopher Verdue and Marcovi, the investigators in-charge, have reached some new conclusions. One of the attackers was destroyed and revealed to be a wooden doll of outstanding workmanship, possibly magically animated, belonging to Yeris Leoreslav, daughter of Earl Lyur Leoreslav. The Earl had reported his daughter's dolls being stolen recently. According to the Harmonium mages there is some kind of animating spirit that is not elemental in nature. It is believed that the choice of the dolls may have been due to their quality and perhaps even some unique characteristic to be infused with magic.

In the interconnected case of the '**phantom killings**', as Sigilians have come to call it, detective Verdue has declared to have found karmic residue of extreme distress and traces of certain planar energies that are commonly found on Carceri in the sand material. An expedition is being organized to track the source of the mysterious black sand, which, as far as the Harmonium mages could testify, is responsible for triggering past events that caused (and cause again) the deaths of their victims. Seemingly, the two daggers found at the scene are believed to be merely decoys.

Four Harmonium officers were severely wounded during testing on the black sand at the scene. Street chant points out to a shady cloaked figure that appears at the deepest hours past anti-peak and drops the '**phantom sand**' in the soon-to-be crime scenes. Although official numbers indicate ten murder cases related to the dual-case, it seems

that the same criminals committed more than seven other murders.

For additional chant regarding the mystical implications please see Father Sander's article, "[The unholy sign of Scorpio and the Crab](#)", dear readers.



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## Abyssal Nightmares, part II

by Barking Wilder, Demented culler

Barking struggled to prop himself up in the interrogation chair as he had been bound by his hands and feet. *"Why do you let them do this to you?"* whispered the baatezu in his mind. *"Kill them all, I will sustain you,"* stated the creature.

*"I...we will not!"* roared Barking, his eyes lighting up with hatred.

*"Yes you will Barking, when you know what I know, you will,"* said the fiend.

*"What do you know?"* inquired Barking. A jolt of pain made Barking struggle in his seat. The fiend smiled as Barking absorbed the memory he had just been given.

Barking saw someone he had not seen since his birth. *"Mother!"* he screamed in primal pain but she did not reply to his calls. He watched as a clawed hand slashed across her face, tearing her pale skin and coating the cobbles in red liquid. As she fell, a bundle dropped from her arms. She struggled to drag herself over to it, but the attacker stepped on her back and crushed her spine. With a final gasp, she died. Barking's dried tears ducts flowed with tears as he watched his mother being killed through the eyes of her murderer. But the vision was not finished yet.

The Abyssal beast kicked the body to one side and crouched to study the bundle, its clawed fingers playing with the soft cloth, trying to open the wrap. The monster was taken aback and, for a moment, considered its actions as it stared at the contents of the bundle. A baby lay there kicking its legs wildly and crying for its mother. The creature was about to end the child's life, out of pity as much as anything else, but something stopped it. Perhaps it was fate; then again it was probably something else. The tanar'ri picked up the infant and carried it off. The vision ended, Barking's face was soaked with his tears.

*"They killed your mother Barking, do you see now why I came to you?"* asked the baatezu, its voice echoing in Barking's head.

*"The child?"* said Barking. *"It...it's me, isn't it?"* His words sounding more like a statement than a question.

*"Yes Barking,"* said the baatezu in a low voice.

Suddenly, a tanar'ri torturer entered the room; she was a shapely and beautiful woman who Barking instantly recognized as a succubus.



"Violence failed, so they send their whore in to have a go!" snarled Barking, spitting at the ground.

*"Slave, you will address me by that name no more! I am here to torture your soul and not your body!"* said the succubus, both Barking and the baatezu within him silently laughed, how little she knew about Barking's soul.

The succubus folded back her wings and sat on Barking's lap. She showed her fangs to Barking and kissed him hard on the mouth. She stood and watched, expecting the bound man to go into convulsions as all who kissed a succubus did, but instead he licked his lips and stared at the tanar'ri bitch smiling.



"Barking has a new friend, whore!" he snarled. The straps that bound his arms and legs fell away as a blistering heat burned through them.

*"Barking, you will stop this now!"* ordered the unexpectedly fearful fiend.

"Barking is gone, the devil inside me has revealed himself in all his glory as the 'Wild One', a baatezu of the highest rank and he knows what you did to Barking, he wants to help Barking kill his enemies!" roared the now free Barking.

*"Who are you?"* asked the tanar'ri female, her wings flapping furiously.

"We are **BARKING WILDER!**" he said giving a high-pitched howl after the last word.

The fiend looked at Barking Wilder and scoffed, *"Yer dead!"* The chamber's door burst open and tanar'ri began running in.

Barking Wilder looked into the cold black eyes of the fiends as they ran at him and simply opened his mouth. Barking then let out a deafening howl like a dying banshee on the Beastlands. The fiends abruptly collapsed in spasms to the floor as their heads were filled with the deafening cacophony of psychic energy.

The succubus seemed genuinely scared of the once frail creature before her. She turned to flee from the room, but Barking was too fast for her, he stood in front of the door before she had even turned around.

*"How's about another kiss gorgeous?"* he said biting her on the side of her neck. The succubus screamed in pain as the crazed man sunk his teeth deep into her smooth neck. She was sent reeling by this attack and fell to the floor clutching the wound.

Barking looked at the woman, she was no longer the frightening prospect he had seen when he first came to this torture camp. *"You're kind spared my life all those cycles ago, now I spare yours. The debt is paid."* He ran out of the room and made good his escape.



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## Dragon goes barmy in fiendish inn

by Callin the Cullin', Freelance culler

**Lower Ward--** The *Calm Waste Inn* was the site of a most unexpected attack this week. You see the place serves as a neutral meeting ground for all kinds of fiends and there's always high tension there, but the innkeeper Jaranoth, a tiefling mage who directly serves some balor princess, always manages to calm troublemakers before any real problems arise. It seems, though, that a largely undetected portal has opened up in one of the inn's rooms-for-rent, and the inhabitant at that time, a shadow fiend named Rudraxx, used this portal. It has since become clear, that the portal led directly to a dragon's hoard on some backwater Prime world, and as Rudraxx stepped through, he found the gargantuan red dragon on the other side in a quiet slumber.

Not wanting to let the opportunity go to waste, he took the most interesting items from the dragon's treasure, and sneaked back into the *Calm Waste Inn*. However, Rudraxx was too greedy for his own good, and instead of getting away with what he had, he returned to the hoard, several times in fact. After the last time (when the other fiends had already started wondering where Rudraxx had gotten his new found wealth from), the dragon awoke just in time to see Rudraxx make his escape through the portal. It seems it took the serpentine basher some time before he managed to open the portal, but then he stepped through, and unleashed his very, very bad mood upon the fiendish patrons of the inn.

One could consider it poetic justice that his first snack was Rudraxx himself, but as the dragon entered the inn, his gigantic form literally burst the confines of the building, ripping it apart. The surprised and confused Lower Planar guests were struck by three dragon breaths in a short time, with few survivors able to flee or (in some cases) fight the unexpected foe. The dragon seemed to have been quite powerful, though, and even a nearby arcanaloth and two pit fiends were not enough to take him down. The lesser fiends were slaughtered in the blink of an eye, as witnesses explained.

After the horrible bloodshed, the dragon gathered its treasure (what Rudraxx had not spent yet), and returned with it to his lair. Still intent on revenge, though, he returned the next day, and laid into ruins what little was left of the inn (killing a few fiends that had already started rebuilding the structure). The barmy dragon made his first real mistake here, for as he smashed the remnants of the inn he destroyed the doorway, which held the portal back to his lair. He continued to wreak havoc in his fury, killing everyone coming near him, and ruining the entire neighborhood surrounding the former *Calm Waste Inn*.

When he then tried to return, the portal would no longer function any longer, and the dragon, realizing his mistake, exploded once again into a vengeful rage. He turned around and roasted the next being that came to his eyes. Too bad for him this was another pit fiend, one that had come to take the dragon down and was prepared for the

dragon's powers. It took the baatezu another ten or thirty moments (reports vary, depending on whom you ask) until finally the barmy beast was slain. Now, fiends and planewalkers alike are trying to find out where the dragon originally came from, as there's a large hoard filled with treasure and magic waiting unguarded. So far, no one has been successful.



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## Revolutionary League strikes hard

sent in via astral streaker from anonymous author

**Lady's Ward**-- Greetings to you, cutters! The Revolution is about to come! We, the **Cell of Fortune**, have managed another successful strike at the corrupt Hardheads, purifying a whole block of buildings infiltrated by the Harmonium!

Yes, bloods, you've heard right, the Harmonium is infiltrating the normal citizenry of Sigil, and they haven't done it for the first time! Okay, some might say people living in the Lady's Ward aren't normal citizens, that's where the Hardheads are most active, but their infiltration agents can also be found in other places, probably even beyond Sigil.

Fortunately for the honest folk out there, the **Cell of Fortune** has uncovered this dark, and hunted down the offenders! See, those arrogant soldiers who consider themselves embodiments of truth thought it'd be good to know what's happening everywhere in the Cage, so that they'd instantly know when their power is challenged. So, they had their patrols place tiny magical thingies, called "*Mind's Eyes*", in the buildings they wanted to infiltrate. Such a "*Mind's Eye*" is just the size of a halfling's fingernail, and as it's incorporeal, it can float even through thick walls.

Chosen Hardhead members had the mission of placing these thingies inside particular buildings. Once the "*Mind's Eyes*" were placed, those chosen members were able to move the thingies with mental commands, and see and hear everything in its direct vicinity. Those Hardheads, they believe they've got the right to do everything! It's so good to know that the Revolutionary League is here to reveal the darks and blast that Harmonium power plan!

Further developments allowed us to find out that the "*Mind's Eyes*" are actually sentient constructs - probably an improved (technically, at least) version of a mimic. The **Cell of Fortune** was able to find out that *Confusion* spells utterly destroy a "*Mind's Eye*", and even burns a bit of the mind of those who control it. So, the **Cell of Fortune** created a battle plan, and invited some most unusual allies to join them in their fight!



You've surely heard that the Hardheads have banished all non-lawful beings from their homeworld, right? They've forced even the purest of hearts to leave their sacred homelands, just so that the fanatical Hardheads aren't threatened in their damn power structures! But now, their victims gained the chance to strike back, as we, the **Cell of Fortune**, have found a colony of pixies which originated on Ortho, the Harmonium homeworld!

So, during an acid-rainy night, our passionate warriors for truth and goodness started a massive attack on the living house of a Harmonium factioneer living in a completely infiltrated block in the Lady's Ward. It didn't take long before the streets were filled with Hardheads battling our perfectly prepared revolutionaries. As their swords pierced through empty air, we sneaked through the shadows, bringing destruction to the oppressors!

At the same time, our pixie allies stormed all the buildings in that block, seeking out each and every "*Mind's Eye*" and casting their *Confusion* spells on it. Not surprisingly, many Hardheads fell on the ground that night suffering horrible headaches. This made our success only so much easier, and we took the chance and went even a step further! As a sign that we will never accept their corrupt presence, we burned down all of the buildings in the block that belonged to Harmonium members!

But the story doesn't end with that, cutters! The **Cell of Fortune** is as strong as ever, and it's got an ally now that's just as strong: **Vengeance of the Pixies** cell! Hardheads, beware, for your power is about to be crushed! And to all those oppressed beings out there: have no fear; REVOLUTION is here!



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## Intrigue at Petitioners Square

[A short story taken from *The Hall of Speakers* [forum](#)]

### [Part 1](#) - [Part 2](#) - [Part 3](#) - [Part 4](#)

([Daeh K. Carc](#), culler and would-be thief, pulls his escort, Marlina Treslock [dressmaker of Erin Montgomery], through the crowd observing the execution in Petitioners Square.)

"But Daeh, why do they have to kill him so quickly? Wouldn't he experience his death more fully if he was killed slowly, isn't that more justice?"

"My dear, it isn't a question of experiencing justice, the Red Death simply seeks to ensure that justice occurs, regardless of its form. No doubt his ribcage was probably crushed on the first bite, thus ruining his lungs!"

*If I could only get the nice figured wench to shut up, I could follow the newly named mover more easily. She's got the body I prefer and will no doubt please me this eve, but I've got to pay more attention to these skirts with incessant dribble...*

"Please Marlina, walk faster!"

*Her contacts within the Society will come in handy later, but this is blekking tiresome. Wait just a...was that a cathead in that alley...*

(Turning from its ample and unobstructed view of the execution, a silver-furred, golden-eyed arcanoloth turns to peer at the culler-thief. Producing a silver embossed spice holder from its resplendent robes, it takes a small pinch of a dark colored powder and snuffs it into its wolfish snout. It quickly returns the container to a pocket deep within its robes, and it is almost as if you only imagined seeing it. Smiling a smile that makes a body's skin crawl, it looks to Daeh with a gaze that can freeze men's souls. Cocking a brow, the creature speaks...)

"Why Daeh, you should be happy to have such a lovely lass upon your arm... It is soooo good to see you again, my friend. How is your father, it has been sooo long since I have spoken with him..."

(Again comes the slimy smile, followed closely by the slight cock of a furred brow and the gleam of sharpened teeth in a fiendish smile...)

(Daeh immediately comes to a rigid stop as if his spine has just exploded. He then drops the arm of Marlina and hurries off into the excited crowd.)

*Bastard loth, his luck must run out as some point! Where's that soddin' alley?*



(Marlina turns and stands in awe of the wolfish figure...)

*Ohhh...I wonder what a heave with an arcanoloth would be like?*

(Daeh continues through the crowd towards the alley where he last saw the cathead. Meanwhile, above the execution crowd on a hidden balcony lays the hunter known as [Crossblade](#).)

*Nidaan said he would be here. If that blekkin' loth would've just moved to his right, I could have had him. I'll move to the rooftop near the alley that should present a better angle for my killshot.*

(The arcanoloth smiles, but one cannot tell exactly why. It seems that the creature is thoroughly pleased with the way the **entire** little scenario turned out. One could almost say that it had turned out only marginally better than he had planned. With the twitch of his right wolfish ear, a trio of mezzoloths appeared on the rooftop across from the assassin, a piece of tattered parchment in the leader's hand. A slight waggle of the arcanoloth's left hand and two additional mezzoloths appeared and immediately began shadowing the culler-thief, watching his every movement with their alien, bug-like eyes.

The arcanoloth smiled his wily grin again and tugged on his spike-like spurt of chin fur. This was going to be a rather pleasant visit to the Cage after all, he surmised. After all, it had already proven to be so very useful and profitable... He turned to the young lady, Marlina, as he recalled, who was rather, "in the know", as most sods put it, when it came to Factol Erin's most **intimate** of details, and offered her his arm.)

"Well, my dear, we will get to those, and other such carnal pleasures later. First, allow me to humbly introduce myself..."

(The arcanoloth dipped his wolveren head slightly.)

"I am known as Crowleian'Crucius, but I would be most honored if you would call me familiar. To one who has such beauty as to rival the factols of the Doomguard and the Sensates combined, it would be my utmost pleasure and deepest honor to be called Crowley..."

(Crowley smiled his toothy grin and his golden eyes twinkled.)

"Would you care to join me for tea?"

"Oh my, so yer one of those thought readers! Betcha can't guess what I'm thinkin' now?"

*His wolf hair is so warm, I wonder if it extends all over?*

(Marlina smiles her best come hither look and slides herself around Crowley's arm.)

(Meanwhile... Crossblade has begun circling rooftops to follow Daeh. The sudden appearance of the mezzoloths sparks her anger.)

*Damn cornugon! The bastard hired out additional hunters. I'll have to remember to raise the price on my finder's fee. The mezzoloths shouldn't block my way for long, if I can get down to the alley...*



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## Mysterious plot discovered over the ice

by [Skragx](#), Upper Planar culler



**Brux, Beastlands--** My most appreciated readers, as I promised you, as soon as I got over my injuries, I turned my attention yet again to the Frozen Valley. What I discovered there would scare the bravest of Ysgard, but don't let me rush things in advance, let's start at the beginning.

As you may know, the Frozen Valley is in Brux, on the Beastlands, and the way to arrive there is the hard way: flying, climbing and suffering (I don't know of any portal or gate leading to or from the Valley). A trip to the Valley has never been easy, the mountains you must cross are very high, the weather is very cold and it is more than likely that you'll find hard rain or snow during your ascent. But, this time it was even harder, some gray and menacing clouds hid the mountains and the inhabitants of the zone told me that it had been like that for several weeks (perhaps since the madness and corruption began). The flight was very hard, I had to stop and protect myself in caves several times and I had to fly through a blizzard. However, Syranita gave me the strength to get to the Valley and even offered me with the means to find out and fix what was happening there.

In one of the caves I found a most unexpected sight, a party of planewalkers that was trying to get into the Valley. There were three of them: Binoy, a Mercykiller diviner, Yldbein, a tiefling bard, and Salem, a Prime paladin. The Mercykiller told me they were going to the Valley to find some magic lichen that grew only there. During the ascent, an avalanche surprised the party and the paladin wasn't able to avoid it and he had only barely survived climbing out of a snowdrift. His condition was critical and they had been in the cave for a couple of days. I decided to help them and aided Yldbein as we worked to heal her companion. When at last he regained consciousness, he steadily began to recover his health faster. When he was strong enough to continue with the journey, we did so together.

Although it was with difficulty, we reached the top and began the descent to the Valley. The view was very different to that of the former time I was there. The little light of Selera that came into the area was completely screened by the gray clouds and the winds blew all over the Valley endlessly. Not only had the inhabitants suffered from the battle, but also the Valley itself. The white purity of the Valley had turned gray and what before seemed to me inspiring mountains and waters, now were menacing and dangerous. I suggested going to the region known as the Endless Tundra. If the fight wasn't over, that region was distant from both seals and penguins. However, that was very naive of me, I must have supposed that the battle would have spread, but I think that something inside me hoped that hadn't happened.

When we arrived there, the view was bleak, numerous conifer trees were destroyed, scattered all over the ground. The beheaded and frozen corpses of an unknown number

of animals lay between the trees and in one clearing. The pain of the carnage had twisted their bodies into impossible shapes. For the most part, the corpses had all been visibly defiled with all of their inner organs being torn off. The range of species was quite large with wolves, foxes, and reindeers along with many others being present. There were zones of the terrain where black silhouettes were formed.

While we were observing what remained of the massacre, we were almost surprised by one of the penguin terrors I had found in my last visit. Luckily, this time, my new companions helped get rid of this menace (albeit not without problems). However, this problem gave us a clue to a weakness of these deadly beasts. Although Salem's sword injured the creature heavily, the thing that ended its life was a spell of Yldbein. The red flames that poured from her hands burnt not only its body, but also its soul (if these beasts have any). After the battle we understood what the silhouettes were. The penguin terror's dead body melted into a black and thick liquid that left its corrupted mark on the ground.

Soon after this combat we were approached by a friendlier inhabitant of the Realm, a lemming petitioner invited us to follow him. When we informed Binoy of this, he turned a worried face to us. He had been studying the zone with his spells and didn't seem very happy with the things he had discovered. The little rodent led us to the inner part of the forest. Here, the trees were green and alive and I could breathe a slightly different smell, even the wind blew here with less force.

Before we could even notice him, a high and impressive man ordered us to stop. He was dressed in fur and had a dense black beard and a dangerous-looking axe. Later we learned that he was Kazik, a hunter who always fought for the protection of the environment here. He talked to us and gave us the news of what had happened in the Valley. After the attack upon the seal's realm, the Deathguins (as they call the hideous monsters) started to kill all the animals they saw on their land. The fear spread all over the Realm and all the lords met to deal with the problem. The meeting was hotly contested and Aarknus, the wise consultant of the now dead Seal Lord, asked the other lords for help to recover the land of the seals. That day, the Deathguins attacked again.

Although the meeting was very well protected, a party of these creatures entered the meeting and killed many of the lords. Since then, their attacks have been more usual. They attack without mercy, kill animals and petitioners alike, take their heads with them and feed on the entrails of the killed. Some penguins came asking for help from the Lemming Lord, but were rejected.

Kazik led us to a large cavern, which he said had been used by the Deathguins. We entered the cave through a secret passage. The view within the cave made me sick. The corpse of the Penguin Lord was hung on a wall. In other places of the cavern, there were skulls of many animals and petitioners. Tied on another wall was the moving figure of Elisenda, the priestess. Binoy warned us of the presence of two guards near the entrance of the cave. With all the stealth we could muster, the party descended and while some of them attacked the Deathguins, the wizard and I went to help the

priestess. She couldn't believe that we had come to her and thought us to be a trick of someone called Cizaña. While we were tending her wounds, she told us that this Cizaña was trying to corrupt the land and make it slip into Pandemonium. He had been trying to corrupt her too, but her faith had helped her up to now.

When we began to make our escape, a figure surprised us at the entrance of the cave. A young and good-looking man smiled and greeted us. *"Ah, some would-be saviors of the priestess. I'll offer you something more, take me, and kill me. I'm responsible for all this."* Hearing these words, a wave of hate touched us; however, we resisted, or so I thought.

Suddenly, Kazik entered a frenzy state and charged with his axe. The man easily dodged his attack and caught him by the neck, he talked of how hate transforms us and makes one wish the death of others. He somehow corrupted Kazik in body and soul, transforming him into a bloodthirsty beast, nearly twice his former size. Elisenda warned us, but Salem and the wererat moved to fight the beast with the help of Binoy and his spells. A sudden shine from the darkness of the room led my sight to Yldbein, she had fired an arrow against the young man.

The arrow hit him in the abdomen. He shouted and a second arrow went through his arm. He looked to the tiefling and told her, *"Bitch, you don't know what you've done."* Then he disappeared before another arrow crossed the space where he had been. I turned my eyes back to the other fight. Cliff-flier lay on the floor with blood pouring from his chest and Salem had been injured in his leg. Elisenda ended this battle with the help of her godly magic. The brave wererat had died and the paladin had a serious wound, but we had to go back. Elisenda tended Salem's wounds, and Binoy got the corpse of the wererat while Yldbein helped Salem with the body of the beast Kazik. Elisenda didn't know if she could help him recover his previous state.

During the following days, the fragile link of the Valley to the Beastlands recovered step by step. The Deathguins (now without the presence of Cizaña) gathered themselves in the mountains. The spirit of the dead lords began to appear again and the environment started to heal. Elisenda said that there was a lot of work before all would be well. The land would need time to heal the wounds of hate, fear and violence.



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## The unholy signs of the Scorpio and the Crab

by Father Sander, Supernatural culler

**Clerk's Ward**-- These ritualistic murders are related to ancient forces in the Cage. Tales are still told of the God of portals whose name is forbidden, but few, very, very few remember the story of the Scorpio and the Crab.

It happens that there were two beings, alternatively named Scorpio and Crab, or the King of Despair and the Lady of Suffering, respectively for others, that held power in Sigil at a time. These beings were not part of the glory of natural chaos and instead linked to the primal forces of \*hurt\*... *[remainder of paragraph missing]*

**(Editor's note:** the ink for certain portions of this story strangely vanished during publication.)

Anyway, I liked it that way. But, oh, it had to change did it not? It did. Well, the Scorpio left some remaining energies behind. I, Father Sander, believe that it is trapped somehow in a spell form that can be tapped, since the recent crimes intent to awaken the lost energies for sheer power.

Such a spell could very well make slaadi an edible financial product in the city. Or devas pave the Hive. There is a great deal of death-despair-pain-loath power involved in the process, so we can judge that the greatest locus of the next series of attacks will be the Civic Festhall itself! Plots and murder and tanar'ri run everywhere among the curtains. With the recent attempt on Darius's life, who knows what might happen?

Of course, it is dangerous, unwise and silly to attempt to access these forces; thusly it can only be the work of mortals. Any real contact with the Scorpio's remains might as well bring in the Crab, whose creator forces would have none too good effects on the city's ambiance.



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## ***Sydney's Snippets***

Here some assorted chant that ain't been checked out yet that ya might be interested in. If ya skeg some darks that ya wanna pass along, then send me an [astral streaker](#) and I'll lann it to the multiverse.



### **Fifteen die of cold in the Hive**

The 2nd Guild's anti-peak cold killed fifteen Hive dwellers. The low temperatures also damaged plants and assorted fungi. A discussion called by Factol Lhar is scheduled next months by the *Hall of Speakers* to deal with the cold.



### **Fire-eaters wander Glorium**

Several mysterious fire-eaters have been reported in the neighborhood or in the very city of Glorium. All of them are mute humans and some suspect that they may be part of one of the many Lower Planar circuses that travel the Great Ring. A vote is being held in Glorium to banish all fire-eaters from the city.



### **Ecstasy holds bovine auction**

A large stock of bovines will be auctioned during the next month. The seller refuses to negotiate a single contract and wants to sell to as many individuals as possible. According to an official source, the bovines are in good condition and ready for procreation.



### **Flood opens new valley in Olympus**

Olympus was shaken by a terrible flood released by a foolhardy noviere. The water dislodged forest spirits, animals and three hosts of bacchae to a valley hidden by large subterranean passages. The valley was depicted as a large spidery undergrowth that reaches up to twenty lengths.



### **Restaurant closes its doors**

*The Fidgety Fhorge* is no more. The favorite restaurant of Cager barbarians was closed after a Guvner hygiene inspection. The case was declared to be "*vicious, foul and mostly rotten.*" The owner, Big Deiro, and his two-handed axe have not been seen since.



### **Almond is rejected**



The Bytopian overproduction of almonds has not been well received by Sigilian traders in Tradegate. *"The Cage's market is saturated,"* declared an Abyssal trader, *"no one will want almonds for months, now, and the prices will be at an all-time low."* Harys Hatchis has declined, at this point, all proposals to launch a campaign to promote almond consumption.



### **City Courts remove General Pixcrochet's immunity**

The diplomatic immunity of General Pixcrochet has been lifted by Judge Gabberslug from the Negative Energy Plane. He now can be processed and accused of crimes against life on the Prime world of Aerret. Alleged crimes include mass murder, torture, assassination of farm union leaders, perversion of the organic matrix and dictatorship, which violates thirteen decrees of the crystal sphere.



### **Vecna followers fed to the Wyrms**

Twelve followers of Vecna were fed to the Wyrms on charge of ritual sacrifice of another's child. The Harmonium is threatening to launch an investigative blitz if rituals proceed. One of Vecna's temples is already studying moving to Hopeless.



### **Astral streakers suffer from illness**

More and more astral streakers have been suffering of a strange malaise that kills them in five or six days. Dr. Hikelliam and many other researchers are working on a cure, but for now the only remedy that has been suggested is feeding them green honey from [Bytopia](#).



### **Grushuum is bullied by Torch**

The gatetown of Torch has been the sight of a rather strange enterprise recently. It seems that hunters and mercenaries have been attempting to force grushuum families into the marshes near the burg. So far they have attained only limited success.



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