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Edited and Published by  
D. Stanlë Printing,  
Brewer's Lane, Barrelton

## Looking Back

Session Four. Nikris, the old man hadn't been expecting them at all. Whomever he was waiting for was either lying dead in the antechamber, or was someone they might wish to avoid. After examining his loathsome scars, and learning of the man's interminable distress, they led him above-ground. After a night of star-gazing, they packed the canoe and carried him away from his age-old prison. The next day, as they paddled aimlessly, they encountered an island of tents and the sonorous drone of the swamp flies. Pushing onto the island they crept toward the tents, inspecting each in turn. The camp was overcome with the lumbering insects, partial-eaten corpses laying here and there. In the final tent they found a living man, sitting alone and clutching a leather satchel to his chest. At about this time, they heard the throaty call of the giant frogs, and decided to flee in the dugout and a second canoe, belonging to the camp. After another day and a half, they saw the flicker of lantern lights through the deepening evening gloom, and knew they had found a bordering town.

## Local Items

Marque of the Rat. Bullied schoolboy, E. Lassir of Underpyre, aged 7, recently wrote and mailed a letter to King Lõth, without informing anyone of his plans. The contents may never be known, but the reply has unsettled both parents and school. The King's response was delivered to the boy's classroom, carried in the maw of a giant red rat. The thing stood on the student's desk giving menacing growls toward three or four other pupils. The boy broke the seal and read the decree, stopping here and there to ask the beast what a word meant. Once finished, Edwir nodded significantly and the messenger left the premises. When asked what the letter contained, Edwir would only say that it was a matter between him and the King. Edwir's troubles at school have ceased.

Pretentious Twit Gives Gobby a Slit. Amateur doctor, S. Lashir of West Final, has reported the startling discovery of a new organ found within the brain of a goblin. The vivisection of the slave's remains was made possible by an unfortunate janitorial accident at the Hall of Alchemy that left it frozen solid. Lashir explained that "under normal circumstances, a goblin's anatomy tends to rapidly deliquesce following quietus, so the opportunity was most expedient." The purpose of the organ remains unclear.

Ululation Elation. Popular Thãvic singer, Salãa Iren performed before an audience of over four hundred last night at Kirãd's Stage, Final. After repeated ovations, she returned one last time for a tongue-twisting folk song entitled "You, Vùla, and I".

Peon Ponders Porridge. J. Crowl, Pyre Barracks blacksmith, has been shuttered-up sick in his bed-shed for days. The barracks have been taking care of the bachelor's needs through a small pet door, but refuse to enter. Horrible coughs, sneezes, and other effluvium are readily audible from a distance away. "But the worst", claims cadet B. Lech, "is his pot-water looks to be alive with wriggling grubs." A moment later he added, "And they don't taste like maggots."

Cold-Blooded Showmen. Academy Hill academicians remain perplexed regarding the origin of the Blackport saurian. Investigators were led to the beach where the body was found a month ago and were able to locate a number of other artifacts that might be related. The men whose sideshow spectacle ended when authorities confiscated the body have sent a written appeal to a local magistrate to have the remains returned.

Bar Brawl at Brakar's. Last evening, the celebrated tavern beneath the Smith's Guild was home to one of the largest bar-fights in recent memory. Though stories vary, it is believed that the commotion commenced when Big Brown, a flashy blacksmith from Blackport, began hitting on Dee Oris, betrothed to a jealous rival. Though the ensuing brouhaha involved dozens of participants, it was Big Brown who suffered the worst. Following the fight, guild brothers were seen at one of the bars playing checkers with his teeth. Credit to J. Krõchã for the report.

The Bug Lantern. L. Varëin, proprietor of the Felzen inn, is trying to marry-off the last of his five daughters. Whoever meets with the innkeeper's approval, will not only gain the maiden's hand in marriage, but stands to inherit the Bug Lantern Inn itself, a prosperous business by Felzen standards. His daughter Virëa, is a handsome young woman of formidable build, able to hold six brimming tankards of The Bug's finest as she clears a path through the establishment. She is blessed with the sunless complexion of someone raised on the swamp's edge. Most of the bug bites from her youth are scarred over, and only a few remaining infections continue to seep. Her smile is mostly complete and her eyebrows are the envy of cold-weather caterpillars throughout the northern shore. Potential suitors are encouraged to inquire at the inn.

Notice of Probate. The estate of W. Isling of Twisting Lane, Red Defile is asking all creditors to settle their debts with the estate before the Will is sealed at month's end. All claims should be made to the law office of Sãggir and Tunn, Stone Street above Fellor's Market, Char. A ledger of possible bastards is available to the litigants, but will not be published until the Will is sealed. Insincere applicants will be reported to House Morgorëan.

## Forty-Years Ago Today

Imaginary Immolation. L. Bazan of Shadowton, collector of exotic antiquities, reported theft of the Demon's Heart, a prized and portentous crystal. He warned that the jewel has eldritch powers and should not be handled with bare hands. A young man discovered in his garden following the theft, screaming about fire, is believed related to the heist and was removed for questioning. Follow-up investigations of this cold-case have revealed that the object was never recovered.

## Other Matters


Eye to the Skies. Lady Fãglu of Bellmourn recently returned from several nights in Blind Hollow to read the stars and consult her charts. The one-eyed astromancer seemed strangely reticent to describe her excursion and its meanings. When pressed for her report, she whispered, "Spiders," and then drifted off into deep thought. Later, she offered advice to all those readers born in the month of Sële. She suggested that they should plant winter crops in the fall, and to avoid walking behind horses without letting them know what you're doing.

Page-Turner. I. Morbidd, Arcanum Magister of the Black Grimoire, has reported that she and her apprentices have completed their study of page 31 of the great tome and have turned the sheet to pages 32 and 33. The instructor was delighted to report that no one died as a result of the newly uncovered pages, though one student was stricken blind and another was reduced to screaming catatonia. The new page appears to contain more arcane symbols, lengthy passages of the same indecipherable script, and an illustration of a man holding a crystal talisman. The disc appears inscribed with five symbols, similar to the High Arcane glyphs for imprisonment, insanity, revelation, transformation, and emergence. Magister Morbidd is hopeful about the discovery and mentioned that there are new positions available in the department.

## Obituaries

If you would like to leave a mention of a loved one's passing, please contact the publisher at his Barrelton address. Reduced rates available if you know the date beforehand!

## Advertisements

 Son Still for Sale! Eight year old with few useful skills and a selective appetite, for immediate sale to a good and loving home. Homes that are not loving will also be considered. Contact the publisher of this paper. Previews no longer accepted.