

# SIGIS

**Issue 18 Year 1**

**Price: 2 Stingers**

**Second Week of Tithing**

## **Red Cell Identified**

## **33% More Portals Lead To Elysium**

**SIGIL**—A recent Harmonium press release identified a Revolutionary League organisation, known as the Red Cell, as being the primary instigators of recent infiltrations into Hardhead ranks. Several Harmonium recruits were detained this week when their psychic profiles tagged them as potential anarchists. According to the Harmonium news brief, after “careful screening the infiltrators gave up the dark of their backgrounds and revealed themselves as the cross-traders they truly were.” While infiltration of the Harmonium by Anarchists is nothing new (e.g. the story of Omar the Anarchist

who rose up once to become the Factol of the Harmonium), the purge of several mid-level administrators from the Harmonium ranks last month is telling in this new release. Could the Red Cell actually have infiltrated to those key positions? If so, how effective has the Harmonium purge been? And, most importantly, why would the Hardheads report that the Red Cell was “eradicated” if new Hardhead recruits are turning up stag already? Of course, no one in the Barracks could be reached for comment, but the questions continue to mount.

—Zeines Pauch, independent culler (pw)

[This culler expresses his reservations on being published in an unlawful newsrag, but would like to make it clear that the research for this article was conducted during a period prior to the declaration of illegality and has no bearing on the Cadre or the case surrounding, so is, by Mechanical Law if not Sigilian, still admissible].

**SIGIL**—Statistical observations have revealed this week that 33% more portals in Sigil lead to Elysium, compared with the same period last year. Precisely 2048 portals were surveyed, the set comprising of permanent, shifting and random portals. It was found that an inordinate number of portals has switched their destinations to the first and second layers of the plane of Elysium; even some permanent portals had shifted.

It is currently unknown what factors could be causing this asymmetrical shift towards the Upper Planes in Sigil. The most immediate theorem suggests the Lady of Pain's whim has caused this effect. However, it is an unprecedented event according to portal-keeping records for so many to be affected at once. Random chance can also probably be ruled out; if not mathematically; by the observation the Xaositects seem distinctly worried.

More likely notions have been proposed. The githzerai tout-come-sage Voila! suggests it is the effect of the Balance swinging around. He cites an event three years ago when all portals in the Hive Ward switched destinations to the Gray Waste for a whole single day, before returning to normal; an event which pleased the Xaositects greatly at the time. Apparently the Balance does not mind waiting three years to restore itself.

Magnum Opus, however, cites a plot by the guardinals to lure and trap cutters in Elysium. She declined to comment further on the record when pressed, threatening to square this culler “if you don't keep your sodding differentials out of it”. But then she always was a bit of a bitter old pike when it came to the guardinals.

Readers of fiendish blood or intentions are warned to double check portals with warp sense before stepping through.

— $n=n+1$ , new culler  
translated from Moignese by Milori (jw)

## **Concerning the Banning of SIGIS**

**TO ALL THE READERS OF SIGIS:**

We are not entirely sure through what channels you managed to get a hold of this precious issue, but we are very glad you did. This issue is precious because, if some high-ups in the Harmonium have their way, this may be the last issue of SIGIS ever. But we hope it is precious for another reason altogether: we hope this issue represents the Harmonium's last, ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to restrict free speech in the Cage. With the help of our good natured and well-spoken friends, we hope to persuade the Hall of Speakers to rescind the laws that have led to the banning of SIGIS. Perhaps some members of our organisation broke the law, but why should all the organisation and the readers of SIGIS be punished for the actions of a few? If you are interested in the fate of SIGIS and free speech in Sigil, let your feelings be known in all the faction halls, bazaar stalls and bub-houses in the Cage. Tell

your friends, your neighbours, and fellow factioneers that such injustice will not be tolerated. Together we may sway the Hall to break down these oppressive laws and free SIGIS once more.

We are very fortunate to have allies to speak on our behalf before the Hall of Speakers. In this effort, Clarion the Guardian has taken it upon himself to speak our plight before the Hall and try to right this great injustice. We thank you Clarion, and we thank all the other bloods out there who put efforts forth to help right this great wrong, and especially some donations from anonymous sources to help us bail out innocent colleagues and keep the presses running in these difficult times.

Your Friend in Truth,  
Jerrylla Perroli

Associate Editor of SIGIS

[Writing from her case under house arrest]

**CLARION WRITES:**

I would like to offer my fullest possible support for the SIGIS team at this time. It is, as you say, a gross injustice that such a valuable organ of free speech in the City should be withdrawn due to the personal misdeeds of a very few people. As a passionate believer in open discussion and the freedom of the press, I feel a need to point out that this is not the first time the Harmonium has attempted to suppress it. Next week I shall be

speaking in the Hall of Speakers alongside Factol Terrance (who is, as I'm sure you're aware, a long-time political opponent of mine) where we shall both be campaigning against the new Restriction of Publishing Bill. However, my good wishes also go to all Harmonium personnel in their continuing vigilance and crusade against terrorism. It is a terrible shame when desperate times cause the diligent to penalise by-standers. I shall, of course, be asking that SIGIS be reinstated.

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The original SIGIS is in HTML format and is hosted at <http://www.mimir.net/> a site maintained by Jon Winter.

NewsChant

## SIGIS Culler Missing

SIGIL—The second SIGIS culler in as many days to be targeted for their coverage of the Cadre case, Felicity K. Ghwar was scragged early today by Hardhead Investigators. Hardhead officials claimed that Ghwar was “released soon after questioning” and provided SIGIS with documents signed by our culler during the release process. However, no one from SIGIS, nor from Felicity’s friends and family have seen her since the arrest. Ghwar was working on a trades expose linking Three Rings Ltd. to the recent activities of the Anarchist cell, the Cadre. Three Rings Ltd. was granted debt protection last week by a Guvner commission for the death of its founder and major share holder, Bezzen Hempstock.

Is this further, and more brutal harassment by the Hardheads? Or an orchestrated attempt by some other group to cover the truth? What we do know is that Ms. Ghwar is a friend to all the staff on SIGIS, and to her devoted trades readership. We hope to see her safe and soon.

If anyone has any information on the whereabouts of Ms. Ghwar, please contact any available SIGIS culler or representative immediately. (Do not bother visiting our Cage-based offices since those have been shut down by the Harmonium until further notice.) A generous award will be offered for confirmable chant.

—Serafine d' Lache, staff culler (pw)

NewsChant

# Slaad Chaos Tromp Clashes With Modron March

FORTITUDE—In a move that seemed to surprise the slaad as much as, if not more than, anyone else, the Chaos Tromp has rematerialised after a week-long absence. And my, what has happened in this week! In a strange twist of fate, the Great Modron march has arrived 189 years early and is proceeding across the Outlands towards the Egg.

Well, that’s where the slaad appeared just three days ago. The burg of Fortitude didn’t know what had hit it—the peery bashers were prepared for an attack, but instead the happy and relaxed-looking slaad stayed well away from the burg, gambolling, skipping and playing leap-slaad in the well-tended fields surrounding the walled city. After a few hours of concerted playfulness they apparently saw the error of their ways, demolished three farmhouses, slew all the Arcadian ponies they could find, and ate a lot of turnips.

That night I lost track of them again, but was tipped off by an amnizu eyeball merchant [“Mmm—Kzor’s tasty visual organs from round the Great Ring”—sorry, but saying that was part of the garnish I had to give him] who looked somewhat the worse for wear after encountering them, and caught up with the horde in the ruined temple of some long-dead prime power. They were somewhat less in number than when the Tromp began several weeks ago, most slaad having grown thoroughly bored by the whole affair and simply wandering off.

Apparently, they were waiting for something. I saw a number of froggy beasts fire chaos bolts into the

NewsChant

## SIGIS Culler Zeines Pauch Scragged For Questioning

SIGIL—Early yesterday, our own independent culler, Zeines Pauch, was scragged by a Harmonium patrol as he prepared to step through a portal on assignment to Bytopia. Though no official word has been released on this arrest, Pauch has managed to send a message to SIGIS through various agents:

### Bloods of the Cage:

This is Zeines Pauch, most recently oppressed by our fair “Force of Order”, the Harmonium. On top of the primary charge of attempted murder, I have also been detained for “harbouring a known crosstrader, distribution of sensitive and classified case information, and collaboration with a known felon”, multiple counts on each. All of these charges relate directly to my efforts to shed light on the dark of Anarchist’s activities in the Cage, especially the recent events surrounding the Cadre.

It seems the very berks that profess to protect us have much more desire protect themselves, as they are most displeased with my and SIGIS’s recent coverage of less than Harmonious activities both inside and outside the Barracks. Likewise, they believe I know the location of the High-up of the Cadre, which I’ve assured them I do not. However, this “grasping in the dark” approach to law

enforcement seems to point out an even deeper disorganised state of the Harmonium on this and other cases.

I must say, I am being treated well, and with some measure of respect, as they “sort this out”. For those of you who know me and have some designs of freeing me, please, do not attempt to act on such an addle-coved notion. This will only give the Hardheads reason to oppress more bloods, and take away more freedoms including my own. I can assure you, I have been in contact with representatives of both the Guvners and the Fated for a quick resolution to the this ordeal.

Thank you.

Yours in Truth, Zeines Pauch

Pauch, while covering many stories for SIGIS and other local rags, has most recently been engrossed in the stepped up Anarchist (and anti-Anarchist) activities in Sigil. This harassment is a clearly more backlash associated with the false accusations that SIGIS bobbed secure Hardhead documents. SIGIS will continue to combat such practices and actions against our cullers through the proper and lawful channels.

—Serafine d' Lache, staff culler (pw)

Check out page 7 for  
SIGIS  
Supporter  
Badge

NewsChant

## Pit Fiend Murder Case Takes Bizarre New Twist

**SIGIL (Clerk's Ward)**—After a week of intermittent court hearing and testimony, leads into the assassination of a pit fiend in high-up aasimar Spiral Hal'aight's kip took an unexpected turn. The strange twist came with the introduction of a new material witness who, literally, knew nothing about the murder. In fact, he actually had never even set foot in the Cage! Kotehpo Isso Massan, a high-up priest of the little known Power, Asase Ya (Elysium), came before the Eye of Justice to speak on quite another topic: the mining of precious weapons-grade ore in his peaceful realm.

Aided by his council and translator, a cutter named Ghar, Massan convinced the Eye of Justice (see last issue) that his story had relevance to the case at hand (misdirections, babbling and confusion from defence counsel "Sly" Nye aside). [Ed. note: the chant we scragged on this mysterious Ghar says that he's a tiefling Indep originally hailing from a Lower Planar burg, though one berk tried to drop some screed that Ghar is some kind of vampire. Probably just professional jealousy.]

As Ghar translated for Massan, the relevance of Massan's testimony to the case became increasingly clear, and increasingly devastating for the defence. Apparently, Massan observed a being matching Hal'aight's description on numerous occasions around the realm of Asase Ya near his tribal home. According to Massan, the aasimar and a few "celestial-type" bashers, were seen spreading some darks with a bunch of dwarven miners. These very same miners have apparently been responsible for a great deal of destruction in areas near the realm, and have fuelled much angst among the petitioners there. "There is even talk among my people that the dwarven powers want our fields and hills for themselves," said Massan through Ghar. "I have had visions, powerful visions, of small bearded men with stone hearts, bursting forth from the earth under our huts and staining their picks with our blood."

At this point, the Eye cautioned Ghar's client to stick to the facts and not speculate too much. "This hearing concerns the murder of the high-up baatezu Naberius, not the encroachment of a realm in Elysium by other Powers," said the Eye. "I still fail to see how Massan's story relates to the case. You promised me that they connect, attorney Ghar, so please keep your promise." That was when Ghar pulled out his trump card: at his signal, Massan



produced a delicately crafted gold coin that was obviously minted in Mt. Celestia.

"This was given to a petitioner of Asase Ya by a dwarven miner so that he might buy some local bub," said Ghar. "But I think it represents much more than a simple purchase of liquor. I believe this to be evidence that Spiral Hal'aight and his minions are purchasing precious metals from the dwarves which they are forging into high-quality weapons to sell to the fiends. This is probably the reason Naberius was in Hal'aight's kip and got dead-booked. They think they can get away with mining these metals in some unknown corner of Elysium around a secretive, peaceful people. But we are here to prove them wrong."

With that, the courtroom started buzzing with chant, and the Eye had to call for order several times, threatening to use its magical powers if it was not observed! This case has clearly taken a strange twist and I'll be here all the way to bring you the dark on this strange matter.

—Daemon Chaas, political correspondent (sk)



Readers of SIGIS:

First, an apology on our behalf to all those whose sensibilities were, as mine, offended by Culler Blondie Blutheim's sensational piece of fiction which appeared two issues ago in SIGIS [Ed. note: 4th 2Week of Narciss, "Baatezu Stage Rallies to Quell Morale Problems"]. I would have responded earlier, but I was naturally detained with more immediate business. Those who know me, know that I never fail to set the record straight when it comes to dealing with the realities and affairs of the Blood War—and especially how it affects my fellows. I merely seek to address several disturbing items mentioned by this "correspondent" in Sigil, whom I would be more than honoured to grant a personal interview with at my suite in the Baatorian Embassy should she wish to question me on the validity of my rebuttal. To wit:

Our rally was one already preplanned to coincide with the Feast of The Eye, one of our highest and most honoured weeks of celebration of our brave soldier's accomplishments. The revelries and speeches are known to often grow into immense displays of pride in our victories and even often spill into gate towns such as Ribcage. My ministry does not, however, encourage any falsifying of information or boasting not warranted, and I personally assure you, Azazel's claims were merited.

Our forces have been wildly successful on various forays in the mighty War and we are taking its battles to the enemy's territory ever deeper. It sincerely pains me to believe a mere mortal would refute these claims without doing meticulous and extensive research first. This is not "propaganda," as this culler insists, rather it seems to be a fabricated assault designed to stir up controversy and fear in Sigil as to the truth of our claims and our Empire's intentions. We have no intention to create civil unrest in Sigil or any other city, and only desire a peaceful co-existence with other races, excepting the tanar'ri. The merits of their continued existence are not even supported by the archons, and rightfully so.

A "recently failed treaty" with the Rakshasas of Acheron has not failed; it has merely been delayed, due to some last minute concerns on their behalf as to the terms of the treaty, specifically about future entitlements. That problem is being rectified. Our ministry and our Empire is truly saddened by the deaths of two of our noble Dukes in combat, but unfortunately, casualties of war do occur and their sacrifice is not unnoticed. As to an Avatar of the Nine being destroyed, well, all I can say of that is ask them yourselves. I assure you, our Lords are in perfect health and safety.

The only "innocent victim" culler Blondie Blutheim need worry about is the truth...

Respectfully submitted,

Zimimar, Minister of Morale  
Dark Eight Council member &  
Diabolate of the 8th house of Caina  
(as)

Sir,

After reading the last issue of SIGIS, and the letter calling for Sinkers to help their brothers discover decay in the Astral, I became interested in the possibility of degeneration on that very plane. It is an intriguing issue, because that plane is not based on "normal" Outer Planes reality, but on the force of thought. Well, I truly believe that the Astral does decay, as everything must, and I propose a mechanism for this: The gradual decay in the Astral is happening through the creation of planar ducts and colour pools, along with Gates and other forms of spell casting. When opening one of these portals, some "astral matter" must react and merge with part of another plane, thus transforming it into something else, no longer pure Astral. This reaction includes non-astral planes (Outer and Prime Material). Thus, the Astral must ultimately abide by the rules of Entropy as these other planes do.

This is not quite the type of decay being looked for by our brothers in the Astral, and, indeed, they may find some of that type. But it is certainly another means by which decay may occur in the Astral and should be explored by out faction at the earliest opportunity.

Yours in Entropy,  
Virgilios Nikomenos  
Sinker poet and playwright

(apo)

## Wanted: Natural Flyer For Research

Wanted, a natural flyer for research into the length of the Spire. Will be **paid well** and **hazard pay** will be included. Please see **Utadas Tensar** at the **Tensar's Employment Service** for details.

(tm)

### NewsBriefs

## Doomguard Deny Responsibility For Ninja Attack

SIGIL (The Armoury)—The Doomguard this week denied wholeheartedly, claims that they had been responsible for the near-fatal attack on the Sensate factor Phazielle at the Green Dragon Restaurant in Blossom Town. Ely Cromlich was not available personally, but sent an underling to say this:

"While we appreciate the damage that was done to the Restaurant, we have much better things to do with our time than playing silly berks in a flower garden. It wasn't us, OK?"

These seems to be the Sinkers' final words on the matter.

—Droni Forssen (ar)

## Ookii Rith Begins Amidst Turmoil

OUTLANDS (Xaos)—The call for 'The Ookii Rith' attracted more folks than were expected. About seven hundred beings gathered in Xaos at the beginning of the week, and nearly two hundred more drifted in the two days after. The folks turning up ranged from Agathinon to Hamatulas with mounts from all over the outer planes. Most of the competitors remained peaceful; the only really fight started between a Barbazu and a Cambion. The combatants were quickly separated, but began fighting again just after the start. As fighting is not forbidden in the race, no one interfered with the 'mini-Blood War' which resulted in a dead-booked Barbazu, and a heavily wounded Cambion limping off towards Sylvania.

—Ansas Ewald, culler (hh)

## Tabaxi Murder In Faunel

OUTLANDS (Faunel)—Three days ago near the gatetown to the Beastlands, a hunting group of seven Tabaxi were found swinging madly from the leafless tree. Tracks and debris clearly showed that the Tabaxi were killed after a wild fray, and, as the elven ranger Echeolas who found the site told us, the Tabaxi were not only killed, but literally chopped to pieces. Unfortunately, the only evidence pointing to the killer, or killers, of the Catspeople was a small piece of paper which the ranger found at the scene of the butchery.

cat's eyes  
nine lies  
—the vile hunt

As of yet, no one has comprehended the meaning of the riddle, though the Vile Hunt that signed it are fairly notorious in these parts. However, I am endeavouring to discover not only the text's meaning, but also what critical events may have occurred prior to the attack. In order to gather more information on the crime, I have assembled several investigators from Faunel including three Tabaxi, the elf Echeolas, the Sensate Madis, and myself. I will report the latest news from the occurrence, along with interviews with the locals, as soon as I return from the examination.

—Minako, Outlands culler (hh)

## Even Modrons Support SIGIS!

IN A RECENT straw poll of modrons in Sigil, it was found that the great majority thought the banning of SIGIS itself to be unlawful. Checker/Modrian was surprised at the ban: "It is illogical in extremis for one to be punished by means of withholding information for the alleged actions of another unrelated unit", the rorty cube said. Ylem of the Hive Ward said: "To not jink the dark-book is most clueless prime. When I am out of town I never fail to bob your planar screed rattling, berks!" This culler believes that to be a message of support, anyway.

[The editor is aware that both of the modrons mentioned in this article are rogues—legitimate modrons could not seem to grasp the concept of SIGIS—but does not believe this makes this piece of propaganda any less valid].

—Emergency Culler Turpentel (jw)

*Restrained and oppressed [A statement made by the Tell Regard from his kip in Tradegate.]*

*Sigilians, like myself, have always considered themselves cultured and civilised, ahead of most in the multiverse. We have all lived and died in many ways, and with the variety of creatures and customs in Sigil, we needed a way to co-exist peacefully. Three Factions took on the responsibility of establishing such a way: The Fraternity of Order created the laws, the Harmonium enforced them, and the Mercykillers applied them. All of this has proven useful in keeping the order. All was fine: if one broke the law, one paid the price, and that was that.*

*Recently one of the three law bidding factions has overstepped its authority. Word has hit the streets that the Harmonium have declared SIGIS banned. Although only a very few in the organisation have apparently abused the law, the whole newsrag is being shut down. (This may also be connected to the increasing numbers of corpses found impaled on the building spikes at the Temple of the Abyss.)*

*I would like to point out that even many "Backwater Prime Worlds" allow for freedom of the press, and are allowed to print any darks they see fit (or so I am told). Are we to assume that the Sigilians are going to be treated as less than even a "Backwater Prime"? And are we going to be told how to act and think? Has the Harmonium gone to far? Yes. The Hardheads have clearly overstepped the boundaries of their authority and purpose.*

Signed, Tell Regard

[Ed. note: Tell is a young Tiefling from the lower ward, who has been educated at a college in Tradegate. (tm)]

## Peeling Back The Multiversal Veil

by Khesto Brighteyes

### Flora And Fauna Of The Outer Planes: Styx Fish

WHILE STACKING a large pile of books the other day, all travelogues of the Lower Planes, I happened once again upon the notion that fish, real live and catchable fish, actually inhabit the foul river Styx! Flipping through some of these journals, I noticed that numerous canny planewalkers sighted small fish-sized creatures flipping up and out of the river off the side of Marraenoloth's boats. So what are these fish like that inhabit such a foul, sewer-flood like the Styx? To find out for you, gentle reader, my faithful assistant Sir Cleve and I went through all the literature we could find from the very brightest Sages of the Styx to peel back the dark on this question. (Most of this chant derives from three particular tomes: the Menagerie Most Foul by the ancient human sage Wemma Curtiz, the Catalogue of the Planes by the Modron known as T009-RT (a most ambitious work indeed!) and Lower Power by the fiend known only as Machupo.) What we discovered were some of the strangest creatures in the Multiverse.

MEMORY: This, of course, if the first thing we wondered about, but it may not be a very big issue. It turns out that very few fish have good learning skills. For instance, most cannot learn to avoid lures that look nothing like what they see in nature. Studies on fish learning show that most can learn to avoid an object with an appropriate danger stimulus. but even the tasty Yellow perch of Tir Na Og cannot even learn that! So Styx fish do not necessarily need memory skills. Besides, it is very possible that fish who live in the Styx have found a way around the memory draining effects much like the fiends that swim about those polluted waters.

SURVIVAL AND SENSES: Many nature bashers feel that the pollution of the Styx, with its corpses, blood, planar waste (from Blood War weapons factories and failed magic potions), and various other lower planar filth, would be far too much for the Styx fish to see through, let alone survive in. But these bashers are wrong. Like some species of catfish swimming through the swamps of Torch, Styx fish may be able to survive very well in highly toxic environs. And in the worst places Styx fish could probably gasp for air like lungfish! In Acheron, in particular, where the Styx doesn't stay in a riverbed, but instead flows sideways over the cube until the river changes course further upstream, having a special airbag would be key because fish could easily get stranded without water. Here lung-fish types apparently burrow into the scant river sediments until orcs & goblins dig them up, or the river returns. Some of these Styx fish could even be petrified in the more detrimental parts of the plane and lurk in the metal/stone until the water returns (though this is pretty far fetched speculation even for Machupo!).

SIGHT: Sight would be the least important sense for Styx fish, because in most places the Styx's water is so murky that light doesn't penetrate. Those rare places that are relatively clear probably have very visually acute fish. Some of them, like the archer fish, have eyes that can compensate for water/air distortion and accurately attack prey/victims that are not in the water. In the worst stretches of the Styx, fish either develop bright lights, or lose sight entirely. Some species might be completely eyeless. Others

have light amplifying eyes like the Baatorian wallthroat, and dual (above the water/below the water) pupils like the four eyed fish, and eyes with phosphorescent patches behind them like the flashlight fish. (Some of the sages even say that a few Styx fish have unique eyes not unlike fish on the Prime that have raised or stalked eyes.)

SMELL AND TASTE: To some catfish these are the most important senses. Many Styx fish, like some catfish, have tastebuds on their skin. In regions where it's non-toxic (to the fish) organic substances are abundant (near the mouth of the river of blood for example). Styx fish swim with their mouths open feeding on the ambient nutrients. Again, like catfish, Styx fish are sometimes drawn to scents that repulse most planars. (Blood, rotting meat, etc.)

HEARING: Since sound travels better through water, Styx fish have excellent hearing.

TOUCH: Some Styx fish feel with barbels on their face.

VIBROSENSE: Almost all fish have a lateral line running down their sides. This line detects vibrations in the water. The fish who feels these vibrations then acts upon them. (defence responses, attacking prey, etc.)

#### Feeding Strategies

FILTER FEEDERS: Instead of filtering plankton, some Styx fish filter blood and other organics from the river.

PREDATORS: Many Styx fish hunt down their prey with lethal precision. They often use built in luring methods such as, "fishing pole appendages", lights, fins that look like fish, and appearing as something of value (such as a portal key). Other Styx fish wait in ambush for their prey, or follow the Blood War armies. Some attack en masse with powerful jaws that are so deadly they can rip the skin off a fiend in seconds! You thought the loss of memories for you entire life was bad? Ha!

HERBIVORES AND OMNIVORES: Since plants are either rare or dangerous in the Lower Planes, the herbivores tend to be rare (and often dangerous). The omnivores have the best of both worlds. These are most often encountered as fish who don't care what they eat, not fish that eat both meat and plants (since plants are rare in many Lower Planes.)

SCAVENGERS: The corpses of dead fiends feed many a fish.

PARASITES AND OTHER FEEDING TYPES: Lampreys and other blood suckers occur more often than one would think. (especially with rivers of blood and bleeding dead fiends ending up in the Styx.) Other fish are like the cookie cutter shark which uses its unique mouth to cut out a nice circular slice from its victim.

CAMOUFLAGE: Styx fish usually have protective colouration (those that don't tend to be toxic). Often looking weedy or rocky. Others change colour like a chameleon due to chromatopores. Some blend in perfectly with the bottom, yet have toxic spines clueless people can step on. (The loss of memory for a day is certain in after stepping on one of these!)

BREEDING: Depending on the species, Styx fish may or may not migrate to breed, lay eggs, change gender, or build nests. Any prime fish breeding behaviour is found in the Styx and a few extra ones with evil twists exist as well.

#### Nasty Fish From The Styx

STYGIAN ANGLER: This nasty fish has raised eyes to see out of the water when its body is submerged. It has a flexible pole-like structure that rises from its forehead. The end of this can be changed to resemble any product, usually a spell or power key. This fish hides using its chromatopores until a victim is lured into range, then it attacks.

CANIAN COLD FISH: The fish of Cania (Baator) have high sugar content in their blood to prevent freezing. They cough up ice crystals to keep their gills from freezing. These fish are harmless to most beings larger than a rat. Baatezu have learned however that their skin contains a toxin that can put a living victim into a zombie-like state. (Not undead, just under the baatezu's control. Funny how that works out, eh?)

RAVAGER OF SHOALS: Many who buy passage on the marraenoloths skiffs comment on "the nice little fishes following the boat." Little do they realise (especially those who encourage them by purposefully throwing food to them) that these planar piranha are a major food source of something much worse, The Ravager Of Shoals. Ravagers are large, nasty, fast moving fish. They look like a cross between a tuna and a barracuda. They move fast, strike hard, and are large. Aggressive ravagers leap from the Styx to attack people on the rafts as well. To a ravager meat is meat. Giant ravagers also exist. They mainly eat smaller ravagers but also capsizes boats and feed upon their passengers.

THROAT LURKER: The throat lurker is nasty. Living proof never to drink the water of the Lower Planes. Throat lurkers are small, barely noticeable, fish which can puff up like blowfish. They also extend their fin spines. This tends to cause the fish to lodge in the drinkers throat. The fish then proceeds to eat at the victims throat from the inside.

Well, Sir Cleve and I hope you learned something from this, especially if you are planning a trip "down under". Cheers!  
(jj & sk)

BOUNTY  
OFFERED

A substantial bounty is hereby offered by the Harmonium to anyone who can retrieve the Prime sod who escaped our clutches at the gate-town of Bytopia. Anyone who is interested in the job should show up in the City Barracks in the Lady's Ward as soon as possible. We want the troublemaker secured quickly and do not have enough forces to deal with the problem as fast as we would wish. Experienced planewalkers capable with swords or magic are especially likely to find success.

Call for Mover Ragan Cley in the City Barracks for more information. (hh)

To the people of Sigil:

I would like to make it clear from the start that this is not an official Doomguard press release.

That said, I would like to offer my condolences to the staff of the recently disbanded newsmag, *SDQDS*. You bloods were among the best group of professional journalists that I ever had the pleasure of working with. Since your first issue, your work has been informative, somewhat accurate, and very often entertaining. It was from working with several of your callers that I decided to stop my planewalking, and hold up my kip in the Armoury.

However, all things, Good or Evil, must come to an end. That is the way of Entropy, and that is the way your rag has gone. Do not despair, for this is how it should be, and this is where the ultimate Fate has decided to take you. Only be thankful that it was not so violent as many another end has been.

But your peaceful fate shall not be shared by your antagonists. You were great favorites with our Lady Pentar, and she has never truly liked the Hardheads anyway. The public has a right to know what their police unit is doing, and suppression of information is among the greatest crimes known in the multiverse! Entropy will come for those responsible. Harmonium: consider yourselves warned.

Again, we will miss *SDQDS*'s coverage of the goings on in the Outer Planes. Good luck, and may Entropy be kind to all of you.

Sincerely,  
Sir Twist, Decay Knight  
Doomguard Public Relations

(st)

## Sophia Moves To Xaos Kollege

Audiences at performances of **Sophia** (see review) have been so overwhelming that the oratorio will now run **an additional month**, leading up to **Hopetide**, at the **Xaos Kollege** in the **Lady's Ward**.

The Kollege, which seats four times as many as the former venue of St. Azrael's, is **owned by the Xaoticians** sect, and hiring fees are a major source of income for them.

**Zaromex the Artist**, a founder-member, said that the booking was very useful, and that he also thought the **music of Tuleman Ralesil 'showed an intimate understanding of scientific chaos and complexity'**.

We hope this was meant as a compliment.

(ar)

# Sophia Is A Wise Choice

SIGIL—St. Azrael's church in the Rue Morgue has been packed to the doors this week for the first performances of Tuleman Ralesil's new oratorio *Sophia*. Among those present were many Sensates, including Phazielle and Conina Stormweather. This surprised many, who had thought the Sensates would boycott the Archonite concerts over the continuing disagreement about the Aphrodisia. But anyone who attended performances could see why they came.

The oratorio is a majestic choral work, and the High Sigilian Orchestra and Singers, directed by the composer himself, performed magnificently as did the soloists who delighted the audiences with their skill. The oratorio is a setting of many Archonite sacred texts about the hope of the coming of wisdom, and many who had heard this concept beforehand anticipated a dull, slowly-paced work in Classical Common. Those critics should have been pleasantly surprised to find the whole piece sung in Modern Common and packed with lively music.

The evening opened with the wide-ranged tiefling Gudrun Eisenteufel, and the dwarven

contralto Rebekah Hause, singing 'Who will enlighten us' in a moving duet. From then on, the performance was one of unalloyed delight as all four soloists gave demonstrations of their art that will enable many to forget the dreary Lazzini operas that have dominated the musical scene recently. The climax, a mass choral piece entitled 'Behold Wisdom', was a dramatic example of what can be accomplished with talented performers and a good score, and was enhanced still further by the fine acoustics of St. Azrael's church.

Here's what others who have been to a performance have said:

"It's something quite new."—Mover One Laizek Lai  
"Ralesil's done remarkable things with what I originally said."—Unity-of-Rings

"Three hours of sheer delight!"—Hilde Larsdottir

—Marcie Vantz, Arts correspondent

[Erratum: SIGIS regrets the misspelling of Tuleman Ralesil's last name as "Ralesi" in the last issue. We can only offer the lame excuses of tight deadlines and chaos imps in the scribe machine.] (ar)

# Archonites Announce New Cathedral

SIGIL—Three days after the last SIGIS went to press, the Archonites revealed the details of their synod held at Tradeigate recently. Speaking at an arranged conference, the Reverend Julia Spesinfracta, suffragan bishop of Sigil, delivered the following statement:

"The United Archonite Church is pleased to announce that a new archdiocese is to be created. The Diocese of Sigil will consist exclusively of the City of Doors, and will be administered from within the city, replacing the existing management of Sigilian affairs from Excelsior. It is my duty also to announce that I am to be elevated to the rank of Archbishop of Sigil. I must say that I am flattered by this great honour, which I do not deserve.

"To mark the creation of the new diocese, a cathedral is to be built here in Sigil. The Fraternity of Order has granted us the use of a plot of land close to the rim of the city for this purpose, and construction will begin as soon as possible. St. Azrael's church will be used as temporary cathedral until then. The dedication of the new cathedral has yet to be decided upon. It is hoped that the residents of the city, and especially of the Lady's Ward where the construction will be, will assist and support us in our work."

A lay spokesman then stood and added these words:

"The new archbishop will be personally installed in St. Azrael's church on the first day of Hopetide this year by the Supreme Pontiff (Editor's note: Angelusmisit XXXIV) in person, accompanied by at least two holy celestials. The service will, unfortunately, be for invited guests only, although public Hopetide services will take place in St. Azrael's at other times, and also at our other churches in the city, as usual."

The Harmonium (who apparently knew the content of this announcement beforehand) are already said to be planning an elaborate security operation to protect the dignitaries who will be attending. They also seem to take the invitation of Factol Sarin for granted.

The Sensates now realise what the Revd. Miss Spesinfracta meant last week by the clash of Hopetide with the Aphrodisia being especially inconvenient this year. It is, of course, utterly improbable that Factol Montgomery will be invited to the installation. No official Sensate spokesman was available for comment, although there's some general discomfort evident amongst the faction at this news.

—Blondie Bluthheim (ar)

## The Rule Of Four

Cutters! Come on down to **Charred Lane** in the **Lower Ward** and **visit** the newest and most fantastical **alehouse, festhall, chant-kip** and **planar wonder** in the Cage! **The Rule of Fours** is the grand creation of the **famous elemental planewalker Fireforge**. He's used his intimate knowledge of the Elemental Planes of Air, Earth, Fire and Water to create the **most stunning, out-of-touch bub-house** in the Cage! Every other level of Fireforge's enormous case is devoted to one of the Elemental Planes. Come and feel the raging heat of **fire**, swim in the endless **water**, dig into the claustrophobic **earth**, and float away on the windy breezes of **air**! Fireforge makes his kip touch on all the Elemental planes and infuses their energy into his case for your entertainment and experience. You can even see the shadow marks of living beings in the Elemental Planes as you sip your flaming liquor from Torch!

Don't miss the experience, described by one Sensate as  
"**better than an thousand recorder stones!**"

Cover is 2j at the door.

(Responsibility not accepted for any injury. Enter at own risk.)

(sk)

## Proxy Gets Torqued Over Mysterious Plane

### Part I

**IT'S LIKE THIS:** I'm a peery tout, I may look like a gully but I'm really the "ant" in the chant, see. No one thinks nothing of me, so that's how I know the dark. And here's what I know. It was last week, just after Tarsheva had that blow out with Shemeshka at the Fortunes Wheel. Some proxy had bubbled himself up and wanted to take his friends out the door and off to their kip on Hull Street.

How do I know he was a proxy? You'd know it too, basher, if you'd seen the way his mouth sneered. It was a bit too big for his head, with lips red like the colour of fresh spilled blood. There was an aura too, coming from the skull-tipped wand in his hand. I can manage basic divination, thank you.

So he and his friends curse me and say where they want to go and we're off. His bone-box is going like he wants to impress his leeches and he's wigwagging about the Musée Arcane and spittin' fire and brimstone. He mentioned the Ordial Plane, and that's when I knew where to park my ears.

This is it: some really high-ups are hot like the slopes of Gehenna and are looking for Magnum Opus

and her kip. He was talking foul about anyone twiggling to the idea of an Ordial Plane between the Inner and Outer. He garbled some mindless screed about comparing it to a direct connection between the top and bottom of something.

You want me to explain it? Well that's not what I do, I'm just a chant-seller. And a hidey-tricksy one at that. But I know where they kip and can get well lanned on what they'll do next.

### Part II

**IT'S ME, THE GOBLIN.** I did what you told me and followed the high-ups to their kip. Don't bleed your eyes over this little tiefling, no one or nothing saw me. I'm a hidey-tricksy tout that puts the ant in "Chant", and can get well-lanned about any impossibility.

So after that proxy with the nasty sneer (a bit too wide for his face, with lips the colour of fresh spilled blood) crowded to his leeches about Magnum Opus and the Ordial Plane, I found a spot to park my ears. There's no alley between his pile and the next, just a bit of space like a welcome mat to Sigil. It was filled with slime from the Foundry, the never-ending drizzle of Our Lady of Pain, the black razor-vine growing up both structures and half a dozen cranium rats. I hate cranium rats. But there was a crusted window part of the way down and I made for it.

I'm not telling you how long it took to hack down the vine so I could crawl to the window. But I'll need a new chiv, and this rag better pay for it. Bob me once and I can find your liver. Did I mention the smell? Like sulphur and the hinder parts of a Glabrezu.

So I've ledged myself and can make out an image or two, vague with the candlelight, through the slime and silt. Call me barmy or a bit too peery, but I swear the vines around me were turning toward the window as well. The rats below were trying to sleep me, but I'm blood enough to pay that no mind.

Now the proxy and the rest are using a tongue I never heard. It's all an "Ash nazg durbatuluk" and that harsh nonsense, so I risked it. They had bubbled themselves up at the Fortunes Wheel so maybe they wouldn't notice: I used one of those tricks I have and did what I had to do. I wish now I never did. This chant no one should tumble to. This is why canny spivs are afraid of the dark.

I'm a note away from paying the music right now, covered like an ooze-mephit from the Foundry silt and the drizzle. Get this slice of shadow in the rag, I'll spill the dark when I know it's safe. I'm getting Out of Town right now. (dc)



## Meagan's Children

**NIAMH DAN Y DWR**, a planewalker retired due to leg injury, living with her brother and his wife, told me the following story...

There is a long road that runs between my village and the next I dinna travel it often as a girl, but lately, Robbie's been taking it to see an old woman for his Eilean. She's ill, with her third bairn in two years the other two were still-born and Robbie's desperate now. Eilean would give anything for a son an' she knows it, but she cannot recall one moment to the next in her state.

I travel now with Robbie sometimes, to keep him away from the snake-oil dealers and the stags selling cure-alls. What's a village without a Priestess? Poor, is what. But Robbie can't stand to see his lovely wife so miserable, so he's willing to try anything. Anything! Even snake oil and cure-all. Nothing that would work, anyway. He wouldn't listen to me, anyway. He hasn't listened to me since Father died. That's another story.

The road was long enough that it was a two-day journey to the next village. We had to sleep under the sky. Stars are things on prime worlds, and moons, but the sky overhead dimmed until it was dark like the moon hid behind a cloud.

I had made this journey with Robbie twice so far, to see if the nearest village had a Priestess visiting. They never bothered with our little thing. Nobody could afford it. But Robbie could I don't know how, but he could, so he visited the village as often as he could get away from the fields.

This third time is the one I'm talking about. Chalk it up to the Rule of Threes if you like, but what happened this night has been happening long before someone pinned it down with a name and some math or logic.

In Tir Na Og, brownies and pixies and sprites and those creatures live a little bit closer to the creatures that named them, and so they've retained more of their truth. Brownies are house sprites that invade and disrupt, but if you feed them and clothe them they'll do your sweeping and milking before the mistress ever stirs. But if you try to see them or thank them, they'll wreck your house and disappear before you can think.

There is one named Wild Meagan. Mother told me of her, when I was young, so she was just a story for the most part. Meagan had a baby boy, sickly and ugly, colicky like a sour horse and poor of disposition. She switched it, as ones like her (though she's not a brownie I cannot remember what Mother called her) are apt to do. She switched her baby with that of Lily Hughes', the night Brian Hughes was born. Of course, Lily knew what had happened the morning she woke up to find a six-month-old changeling colicking in Brian's crib. What she didn't know was how to fix it.

Lily was the sweetest girl you'd ever meet. She could turn sour milk into cream and gentle horses because she was so gentle. Lily didn't know what to do except take the changeling for her own. She named him Patrick and raised him as hers. Her husband loved Pat like his own son, though he was sad the boy was not his. Pat grew up fey and wild, but he loved Lily and her husband and it never crossed him that he was different. However, he never called Lily Mother or her husband Father. He had an uncanny ability with a set of reed pipes. He could charm a ↗

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# Meagan's Children

↳ tune from just about anything you could blow into, but on a reed pipe, he was uncanny.

The poor boy just looked different. He was always smaller, with fine features and slender bones. His hair grew long to hide his pointed ears, but nothing could hide his tilted eyes and pale complexion. He tried Lily hard some times, but she was always patient and gentle, and her husband never lifted a hand against that boy, ever.

One day, a strange woman knocked on Lily's door. When she opened it, she asked after Patrick, even though Lily had never sent him to the village, for school or errands, nor to any of the farm gatherings and festivals. How this woman knew of her fey son, she didn't know. But she asked after Patrick, finally demanding to see him, and when she stormed into the house and found the boy smiling faintly and playing the pipes, she relaxed and said in a scraping voice, "My gratitude is yours. I have come for my son."

At that point, Patrick looked up. He saw the old woman and broke out laughing wildly. He cast down his pipe and leapt out his first-floor window, and ran leaping over their fields until he disappeared. Lily broke down crying, and the old woman disappeared.

Lily never did see her true son, or Patrick, ever again. For all their years after, their farm was prosperous and fertile, but Lily never had another child and they never saw Meagan again. Their prosperity was due to Meagan's gratitude, I suppose.

I've always wondered after the point of that story. Others like it taught me not to run widdershins around a church, or to step through or break a faerie ring, and to never approach a cross-roads at dusk or dawn. But this one was just a sad fable of a woman who lost both her sons to the faerie, and there was nothing she could do.

At the time I learned that story, Robbie had been off bashing about Edward with a pot-metal blade and a buckler. Much good that did him. Now, I knew the sound of the pipes coming from the forest off the road that night, and I knew that when Robbie got up not to go after him. I didn't, of course. Whatever Robbie bargained with Wild Meagan or whoever played those pipes that night, it was none of my business.

He stumbled out of the forest at dawn, looking dazed and drunk, but smiling faintly and looking mysteriously pleased. I didna ask.

"We can go home," he said faintly, kicking his bedding into a roll and stuffing it into his pack.

"Suits me," I said, shrugging. My feet were weary. Not my body, my feet.

"I'll have a son," he said after a while down the road. "Eilean will be so pleased... she's wanted a son."

"Eilean would rather have a daughter," I said crossly. I don't know why I was cross. Perhaps I was curious. "You're the one who wants a son."

He nodded agreeably, obviously not having heard me, and we walked along home in silence.

Nine months later, Eilean's bairn was a sickly, ugly, pale changeling child no more natural than Lily's boy Patrick. But I watched Eilean birth it it had the ears and the eyes, and it didna cry, nor did it ever after. Eilean loved him dearly and named him Brian, after her grandda. I wondered about that name. Robbie loved him because he was a boy.

I watched them raise Brian like any other human boy save that they never could take him to the village nor let him join the festivals. He grew into a young man, a fey young man with pale blond hair and icy blue eyes, thin, birdlike bones, wiry strength and uncanny dexterity. Brian played the flute like he was

born with one beneath his nose. He could charm birds out of trees, and then he broke their wings and locked them in the barn with the cats.

Eilean loved him, cared for him, gentled him as best she could, though as he got older, it became more and more clear that he would not take after Robbie and pick up a sword for the village militia, nor would he set out to see the Planes, or anything of that sort. The boy grew older, and though he looked no older than ten or so, he was more than twenty. He was not strong enough to help on the farm, and he had a voracious appetite, and no matter how sweet Eilean was and how kind Robbie was, the boy stayed sour and wild, miserably fey in a human household.

For those twenty years, Robbie's farm grew prosperous and they became very rich. He could afford to rent me a cottage in the village and keep me well, though my leg kept me from riding out very often to visit. That suited Robbie, I suppose I had tried once to tell him the story of Meagan and Lily, but he had none of it, as usual.

One year, a priestess came through, and she healed my leg. I had long ago stopped wishing for it to be healed, so that I could run off and hurt myself again. I was content to travel the Outlands while Robbie prospered and forgot about that night on the long road.

## StopPress

## Planewalkers Perish In Performance Tests

SIGIL (Lower Ward)—Several experienced planewalkers wrote themselves in the dead-book after undertaking strenuous physical and mental tests in preparation for an expedition to the Elemental Plane of Earth. The tests were the brain-child of a Fated dwarf named Forgefair who was arranging the journey to the Plane, and needed the tests to select and prepare proper candidates for the trip. "These tests were made to be challenging, it's true, but I gave fair warning in my advert that only the hardest bashers need apply and that the tests were strenuous," said Forgefair. "Those berks that died came in a little too cocky I think, and that got them 'hung from the tree' so to speak. I must point out that the Fraternity [of Order] checked out the course beforehand and gave it the ok. I guess those poor sods just weren't up to it."

Apparently, the three lost planewalkers, Raj, Tika and Belal, had spent quite a lot of time out of town, though very little out of touch. They had just returned from a somewhat perilous trip to the Dwarven Mountain from which they apparently surmised that they were ready for a tougher journey to the Plane of Earth. Unfortunately for them, they proved far from ready to tackle Forgefair's trial of fire. "Seein' as how cooked they were, I figure the mage must've panicked in the tunnel when the lava flow came through. Too bad really; it's hard to find good rock wizards these days. There's still a pile of jink to be uncovered out there in the Earth, and the offers are still open just like before. As the Factol [Darkwood] always says, a true cutter comes prepared!"

(sk)

I came home years later to find Robbie's creek dry, his barn in ruins and his thatch rotting down. He was unshaven and drunk, and Eilean had sickened and died a year earlier. Brian was no where to be seen, but slowly, I got the story out of Robbie.

"That night on the road, Niamh. That night, you were right not to follow me. I met her. I saw her. That woman. You told me of her once. I thought of the story, but I thought it would be different... She came for him, but not in gratitude, Niamh. She came because I struck him..."

Robbie died a few months later. I gathered more of the same stories all the Land of Youth and even a little beyond that border, and they were much the same. It was just enough different each time for the person to believe their case would be different. It wasn't always Meagan, either. Sometimes it was a woman named Mae, or Brown something, I can't remember in that case.

Robbie's violence cost him Meagan's gratitude. I suppose the faerie got overeager at having another sweet child and gave Robbie and Eilean their reward before she collected the child, rather than coming for him as she did with Lily.

I've never learned where the switched children go, or what becomes of the changelings. They cannot be normal, no matter where they go—human raised faeries and faerie raised humans. Though I am searching for them, I doubt I'll ever find them. (rdk)

## Assassination Attempt Ultimately Ends in Failure

THE MORTUARY has just released word that the attempted assassination on their speaker Jergoth Rauhic failed, despite wounding him gravely. As soon as he recovers completely, he has agreed to give an exclusive, and extensive, interview to a SIGIS culler. However, another reliable source within the faction claims a different set of events occurred: Jergoth Rauhic was already dead when they brought him to the Mortuary. When he arrived was hurried away to the faction's Citadel on the Negative Energy Plane. In order to check this chant, I entered the Mortuary where I saw the spokesman standing and looking quite well. Thus, it appears that the assassination attempt did indeed fail, for the Dustmen are not known for not reviving their dead (this despite the information from our "reliable" source.)

SIGIS will investigate further and bring you more on this subject next issue...if there is one... (d)

## Brain Dead In The Hall Of Records

SIGIL (Clerk's Ward)—The body of a clerk was found in the Hall of Records last night. Although the Fated have failed to give a comment, an inside contact has said that the clerk wasn't in the deadbook, but very much alive. We uncovered few details, but one thing is known: the clerk was found staring wide eye at the ceiling with a very pained expression on his/her face. Details about who the clerk is have not been released, but my source revealed that the victim is on their way to the Gatehouse for some possible psionic treatment. This reporter will follow up with a trip to the Gatehouse for more facts. I didn't bother trying to question the Harmonium for obvious reasons. (tm)