

The Adventurer

January, 2026 A.T.

abyssus abyssum invocat

Pressganged Adventurers Safely Return

Dozens of missing persons have been returned to the Duchy of Gelrich, after having been abducted by the dread pirate ship The Grief. Selected apparently at random, these person who are predominantly adventurers by profession, tell tales of an island overcome first by undead, and second by vicious man-sized parasitic wasps.

The captain of the Grief, a powerful ghost or similar form of undead personage, claimed to have abducted these adventurers to replace missing crew from his

ship. In taking the adventurers, he forced them to abduct the undead from the island, the spirits of whom were used to man the ship. The undead appear to have been made by a celestial serving the goddess of undeath, Stasa.

The Adventurer is pleased to report that the celestial appears to have been defeated, and the undead cease to be tirelessly created.

However, the Grief at this point sailed away without aiding the

marooned adventurers. As 'payment' for their services, he left them with a medallion capable of calling forth another drowned ship that could ferry them forth once the wasp creatures were defeated.

Doing battle with the wasp creatures, the adventurers blew up their hive, and with great difficulty slew the queen. This latter led to the hiver queen sending forth a call to all disparate hiver wasps to come forth and enact her revenge in time to come.

Necrotic Wasp "Ship" Sunk in Harbour

An enormous vessel apparently made of scavenged wood and paper parts was destroyed by adventurers fleeing the pirate island in late November last year.

This ship, built by the Hiver Wasps, was an apparent attempt to leave the island in numbers, as while some individuals were able to make landfall across the Gelrich shore, the bulk of their numbers were still contained to the island.

This 'ship' seemed to resemble a large wasp hive, and was set alight when the keep where the main hive of the Hivers

was located exploded in a massive fireball.

This explosion was triggered by adventurers seeking to put an end to the massed ranks of hiver wasps, most of whom lay dormant to conserve food and energy supplies.

It is difficult to accurately calculate how many lives were saved when this detonation occurred. Each Hiver was a potent combatant, and having destroyed them in the numbers that would have been carried by this ship would therefore prevent those similar numbers from wreaking havoc on the lands north and south.

Seers Declare New Year "Year of the Wandering Dragonfly"

Although the precise nature of oracular horoscopes is uncertain, it is often the case that seers may put their heads together to determine what the year may bring, as shaped by the portents foreseen by their magics.

The following statement has been prepared for the **Year of the Wandering Dragonfly**.

The **Wandering Dragonfly** is a hunter, going from place to place and resting when it requires a moment's respite. Although not long-lived, the wandering dragonfly seeks its quarry with resolve and focus, but will often move on to a

new task when the old one is complete or seems too difficult. This may indicate a wandering attention, a short field of focus, or a temperament inclined toward motion and speed.

What this means for the individual will doubtless vary depending on the needs and temperament of the individual. In general it is wise to treat this year as one in which it is good to be flexible, and not too tied down to one place or set of ideas.

Alternately, moving against the stream of the year may provide additional challenges – but further opportunities for great profit.

Tool Review: Safety Equipment

It is the goal of The Adventurer that all of its readers find something of use within its pages. In the Tool Review, we try to review ways in which tools may be of assistance to the traveling adventurer. In this article, we will discuss the use of Safety Equipment.

When you speak to the average adventurer of safety equipment, most will consider armour, or perhaps a shield. After all, the greatest threat that many adventurers face are powerful monsters, and safety equipment for that scenario most often involves something getting in the way of blades, claws, fangs, or any number of other mechanisms for injury.

Here, that same adventurer can learn from crafters and tradesmen of various disciplines. Knowing your way to stay safe in a workshop can definitely inform how you stay safe when exploring ancient ruins, or even fighting monsters!

Hand Protection

Mention hand protection to an adventurer, and most will just mention gauntlets and gloves. That's definitely the right place to start, but it's not the whole story.

Some magics trigger on skin-to-item contact, and some poisons can be effective through simple skin contact. Make sure your gloves are in good repair, with no tears or holes – especially if you're looking to fish out something from suspicious looking fluid.

Aprons

While they're only going to provide so much protection from monsters trying to do injury, a leather apron has much to recommend it. Properly oiled, it can help to keep noxious alchemies, as well as monster blood, bile, and fluids from spraying your clothing and flesh. Run into just one or two monsters with acidic blood, and tell me you don't appreciate an apron!

Masks

Although rarely effective against alchemical gas clouds, masks can be useful against environmental threats that are somewhat less direct.

A scarf or mask can help to keep your lungs safe in a sandstorm, and can also help to moderate breath temperature – very useful when finding yourself in a suddenly cold environment.

Reaching Tools

Having a hook, forceps, or even tongs can help to reach things that are submerged in fluids you don't want to reach into, as well as helping you to pick up something that may be too hot, too cold, or which may be covered in a contact poison.

While most of these tools will not protect you from magic, don't forget: environment threats can put you at just as much risk!

A Sommelier's Guide to Lend Health

It is a matter of little contention that in the course of an adventuring career, injury is likely to occur. This is certainly not the ambition of any adventurer, but it may be the necessary consequence of their undertakings. In the interests of exploring this part of adventuring life, Gaster Avenal and Atropa Green have graciously put together a small 'taster' guide to the most common sources for healing found in the Sandy Bay region.

Lend Health. One of the simplest and most useful spells in any mage's book or cleric's path of investment. Instantly picking up the wounded and dying is vital to any magic user in an environment such as ours, and since, as adventurers, we personally are wounded and dying quite often; we tend to have this spell cast on us quite often.

As such, a few of us have picked up a particular sense of the general feeling, or dare I say: flavour, of this spell in its various forms. We present this list here for your curiosity and amusement.

Alejandro: Some swear by this one as providing a wonderful sense of stimulation, but for Atropa and I, this one just feels uncomfortable. Too floral, too sweet, and the cleric always seems to be leaning in too close. Avoid except when absolutely necessary.

Apenca: The good stuff. Warmth in the area that was going numb, mild sedative. For a moment, all your troubles will melt away, at least until you open your eyes again and see whatever made you need the spell in the first place.

Atha: Not to be gauche but... earthy. An all-natural, organic option that leaves you smelling faintly of patchouli and pine. Generally well regarded by travelers and all those who love nature, ourselves included!

Beldon: If water has a flavor, than this version of the spell has a vibe. Generally nondescript, although the occasional salty aftertaste has been sometimes known to ease a sore throat.

Clovis: Not the best there is, but you kind of have to show appreciation for it, don't you? They're doing good work, and they try so very hard...

Mage: We may have a personal bias towards this one, but in all honesty, it varies. Atropa's always gives me the warm fuzzies, though I've heard from others that it's more like having your wounds scoured with arsenic. There was a variant in the Mages' Guild book for a while that tended to give you minty fresh breath.

We hope you found this article informative, or at least entertaining. If you would like to contact the authors, you can usually find us at the docks or the tavern. You can always leave a newspaper related question with the Magistrate, as we understand it can be hard to locate someone with no fixed address. Also, please feel free to contact us if you wish to charter a short trip by sea.

Much love,
Atropa and Gaster

Ask a Magistrate

Some questions of law have been asked, and Magistrate Oren D'vann is here to answer them! Please consult a magistrate or guardsman for case-specific legal questions.

Question: How can I find out about local laws that may apply to me?

Most settled lands post laws that may pertain to an area in prominent locations, and have guards or public figures familiar with the laws who are happy to answer straightforward questions about them. It is not uncommon for laws that pertain to a sphere in life to appear in a place pertaining to that sphere: for

Instance, laws pertaining to mercantile trade are often posted in market squares and merchant halls, and laws pertaining to travelers are often posted on the outskirts of a town, or in roadhouses and travelers' inns.

It is one of the responsibilities of faithful of Brack in Harodom to be familiar with the letter and practice of laws within an area in which they provide ecclesiastic services. This means that if there is a shrine or temple of Brack in a region, it may also prove a good place to bring questions of law.

Areas that have been recently settled,

or which are undergoing a significant restructuring, may not have laws posted in a prominent place, and may not have region-specific laws. In these cases, it is still expected that the King's Law as well as the law of whatever duchy or territory the land falls within, will still apply.

While some laws may fall into categories that residents feel infringe upon their liberty, it is generally the goal of kingdom laws and local laws in 2026 to further the common good, to promote the providence of all persons, to ensure safety of the person, and to serve as a recourse to those who have been wronged, so that they may be made whole, and trespasses discouraged in future.

Oren D'Vann is offering a princely sum of 5 pieces of Gold to any who reach an "Adept" level of proficiency in the skill and art of sailing (Labourer: Sailor 5).

Please apply in person at Forest House, sign of the Region of Adamant.

Horoscopes

The future is an unknown country. However, ideas and visions of the future may stem from information of the present; your decisions help to make the world you live in tomorrow. To that end, we have published a generalized horoscope for each of the Calendar Birth Signs, and hope that it will serve to amuse and enlighten. Horoscopes provided by Seer Oren Freedman.

The Shroud (Dec 31st – Jan 28th)

You will soon learn something of yourself that you had not previously had cause to come to grips with. Doing so will be a challenge and will force you to reconsider what you already believed about yourself, but you will be the richer for this challenge.

The Harp (Jan 29th – Feb 27th)

A new threat that may not immediately realize will nevertheless present itself. Act with a cool demeanour, and learn what you can; with a challenge that has not immediately made itself manifest, you have time to prepare, and to gather allies that can help to do the same.

The Fount (Feb 28th – Mar 30th)

Your cup will overflow with the blessings of opportunity soon. Drink deep while your cup can remain topped up; store what you can, against future need. This opportunity will not last forever, so make hay while the sun shines, and ensure that you have something stored for future need.

The Dice (Mar 31st – Apr 28th)

A person or persons wearing black or red will likely come forth with an opportunity that seems too good to be

true. There may be a chance to profit by this opportunity, but do not go into it with perfect and absolute trust; you will need to be on your guard for betrayal and mischief.

The Arrow (Apr 29th – May 27th)

This is a good time to open yourself up to making new friends and allies. You will need them in the year to come, and a new year will often encourage some who had previously been more reserved to open up a bit more. Do not let your prejudice blind you to one who might aid you greatly.

The Stone (May 28th – Jun 25th)

There will soon be a value that presents itself in something that you previously had thought to be without value, or with limited value. Take advantage of it – you may be the only person able to see this opportunity, and while you might share it with others, having it is a good first step.

The Coin (June 26th – July 28th)

Keep your eyes up. Three will be those that resent your prosperity, or who may seek to further interests at cross-purposes with your own. This is not to say that they will necessarily be aggressive, but they may still undertake some challenges to your status that you would not otherwise prefer.

The Spade (July 29th – Aug 30th)

This is the time to lay in the ground work for a greater ambition that will realize itself in the new year. Your work now will pay dividends that will continue to refine and further your ambitions in the year to come, if you lay it out now. **The Hearth** will aid you.

The Blade (Aug 31st – Sept 27th)

Do not be quick to quarrel; those that know your strength appreciate it, and those that do not could very well blunt your edge with their opposition. You have the capacity to do great things, but only if you do not hare off at the least challenge.

The Mask (Sept 28th – October 31st)

There is a bitterness somewhere in your life that speaks to poison; it may be literal, or it may be an embittered nature that poisons your spirit. In either case, be careful to spit it out if you can; poison goes where poison is welcome, and it is unhealthful to you to keep it within yourself.

The Shield (Nov 1st – Nov 29th)

Your strength will be of great aid to an ally in the near future. It may come to it that you will interpose yourself before the challenges that stretch out before you. Standing fast will give you an opportunity to serve as bulwark to those less able to withstand adversity, and they will show their appreciation in whatever way they are capable of, as soon as they are able.

The Hearth (Nov 30th – Dec 30th)

Open yourself up to a new relationship, whether it is filial, friendly, or romantic. You miss all of the shots that you don't take, and this is a time to tend to the emotional corners of your heart, as all come up to the Hearth for warmth in the chill of winter. This is a time to make new friends, allies, and so forth; don't forget to take the best advantage of it however you can!

Better Know a Faith: Iccula

The Adventurer would teach of the faiths of the world and the nature of their faithful. In this issue, we will speak regarding Iccula.

Iccula, also known as the Scream Bringer and the Maiden of Pain, is the patron of pain, suffering, and cruelty. Daughter of Kell and Balaxa, Iccula counts among her faithful sadists and torturers.

Iccula's worship, once entirely illegal in Harodom, became legal but restricted following the joining of the royal house of Harodom with the Imperial house of Michian. As Michian

does not forbid the worship of Iccula, it was thought that this political concession would help ease the exchange of goods and specialists between the nations.

The theology of Iccula is predictably complex. Although the followers of Iccula are often inclined to create pain for its own sake, there are some who subscribe to the dogma that pain is a morally neutral experience in itself, and that pain can act as a teacher as well as a scourge.

There are also those that herald Iccula as a deity

charged with defense; they say that Iccula's domain is the defense of those who would be imperiled without their knowledge, who might suffer further injury if they did not know that their flesh was being pierced, cut, warped, or burnt.

In the Lakes Region, the majority opinion does however seem to side with the sadists, a point of view that may also note that much of Iccula's granted miracles to followers involve the infliction of pain, but none of which handle the alleviation of same in mortals.

Iccula's holy day is January 13th, making her the only divine who occasionally has to share her holy day with another god. When Friday the 13th falls in January, Stasa and Iccula share a holy day, which last occurred in 2023, and which will next occur in 2034.

Although Iccula is not regarded as a kind or gentle deity, the worship of Iccula is only restricted in Harodom. Consequently, services to Iccula may occur. However, as with any representation of faith, any crime that is committed in service to Iccula is still actionable.

Community Board

This section is reserved for information about the community, and may include unverified information as well as community events.

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The *Adventurer* continues to offer a full year-long patronage or any artist or artisan willing to produce one piece of sponsored work within a calendar year.

An ancient myth, that the Ire is made salty by the tears of a titan that fell into the deepest parts of the lake, and which still fill the body with salt to this day, has resurfaced.

*

Snowbound travelers report coming upon a tavern that appeared out of nowhere, with warm hearth and full stew-pot, only to find themselves unable

to locate it once the snow has stopped. The tavern was called the Golden Lantern, and is thought to appear only to travelers who are in great distress. This seems implausible, but who knows?

*

Omens: A night sky dark and starless, suddenly illuminated by unseen lights. A deck of cards shuffled perfectly in order.

If you have **news**, an **announcement**, a clever **contribution** or a piece of **art** you would like displayed, don't keep it to yourself! The *Adventurer* is happy to help you reach a broader audience!

*It's quiet.
Too quiet.
Better put on some armour..*

Sunbeard Forge Armour is worn by warriors, wizards, knights and lords – all of them alive.

“When in duress, dress for success!”

Editorial: Hindsight

It may be tempting that at the end of a year, we look back upon it only to shudder at the horrors that it has visited upon us.

(It is possible that those who live in more peaceful lands have a better use for hindsight, but the land in which we live no doubt tempers our experiences.)

This is not without its purpose; it gives us hope for the future yet to come, because surely the

New Year, like a new broom, will sweep clean. This has been the hope for new years since time immemorial, and will, no doubt, continue on this way until it becomes very clear that something will need to be *done* in order to make the coming year substantially better than the last.

What I would encourage however is to see past the challenges that the past year has offered, and look for hope in what moved forward.

Did you have goals and aspirations that were somewhat advanced? Did you find peace with a challenge, or overcome one?

Did you come up with a new goal that you can pursue?

It's the nature of the life that we live that some of our challenges will be mighty indeed. What I posit is that we can yet overcome them – and in doing so, better ourselves in the process.

Oren D'vann Freedman, Editor

Matters of Faith

Holy Days Just Past

Jan 1st: Year's End (Jerroh)

The holy day of Jerroh also marks the beginning of a new calendar year, and the end of the old. This is often thought to symbolize how all death is the basis for new life springing forth, and the cycle of life and death that mortals experience. It is considered appropriate to stay up on the eve of Year's End, to see the new year arrive – or to ensure that the old one truly perishes.

Jan 13th: Loving Lash (Iccula)

The holy day of Iccula is marked on the 13th of January, and is often marked by rites of endurance among the faithful, either through enduring the cold that is frequently around this time of the year in this part of the world, or rites of scarification. Among the layfolk, most seek to avoid places of potential misfortune, believing that wherever pain can slip through the cracks, it will. Remember that you do not have to submit to torture.

Forthcoming Holy Days

Feb 14th: Lover's Dance Festival (Alejandro)

The festival of Lover's Dance is the holy day of Alejandro, technically beginning at sunset on February 13th and ending at sunrise on February 15th. In that time, it is not uncommon for betrothals to begin, marriages to be conducted, and for poetry readings to be conducted. It is thought that intimate acts on this holy day may be more pleasant.

Mar 3rd: Festival of Sails (Beldon)

Most often marked in coastal towns and cities, the Festival of Sails is the holy day of Beldon. New ships are often launched or given their names on this day, and voyages over bodies of water are thought to be blessed with friendly tides and calm waters. The Festival often encourages the eating of seafood, or the partaking of pleasures that traveled over water in order to reach the revelers.

A Message of Faith

I would speak on the matter of hope for a year to come.

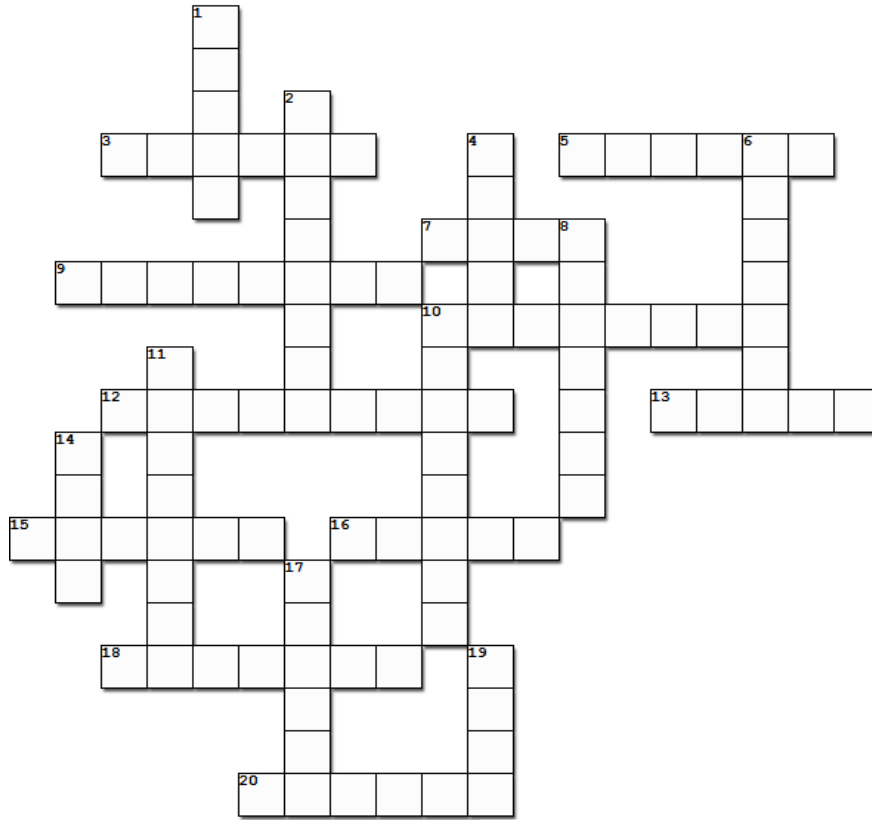
It is of course the case that it can be hard to maintain a cheerful demeanour when faced with regular setbacks or challenges, especially life threatening ones.

However, it is an unequivocal fact that winter is often a good time to make preparations for the year to come. Tools can be repaired or replaced, fences mended, relationships renewed, as many trades are forced to slow or stop altogether with roads made impassible with ice and snow, and fields and forests under a thick blanket of winter.

This is the time to choose a new ambition, and to lay out the groundwork under which it may be accomplished. This is the time to decide what you want out of life, and to find friends who support you in your ambition.

Give it a try!

Crossword



Across

3. leather-like scroll material
5. has her holy day Jan 13
7. thin metal, stretched out
9. what is always ahead of today
10. might, often of muscle
12. a woodsmith
13. the land and most notably the soil
15. spell that frees all limbs
16. Beldon's domain
18. leafy green brassica veggie
20. a king's chair

Down

1. a feathered pen
2. to startle or take unaware
4. strikes sparks with steel
6. tanned hides
8. a green gemstone
10. an undead without flesh
11. siege engine like a giant crossbow
14. that which blows clouds about
17. a wrathful spirit
19. the general form of flame

Celebration

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
 □

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
K G V H M R B C A M D W N

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
W U O W E M O M V C G V K

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C A M A M G Z C W U

Dwarven Numbers Game

In this traditional dwarven accounting game, no number should appear twice in a vertical or horizontal line, or in the same square of nine numbers.

		7	2	4		8		1
			5		7		6	
			6			7		5
	2				8	3	5	
	5						9	
	9	3	1				2	
4		2			1			
	7		8		6			
6		8		9	4	5		

1			4	5		8		
	6		1	7				3
7		6			4			
	5						8	
			2			3		7
5			8		3		4	
		3		1	5			9

Recipe of the Month: Mayo Chocolate Cake

Eggs are not inherently shelf-stable, although they will last for a certain period. Partly as consequence, recipes are sometimes formulated to include more shelf-stable ingredients, such as peanut butter – or in this case, mayonnaise, which if properly canned will store for some time until it is opened.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups, all purpose flour
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup prepared mayonnaise
- 1 cup cold water,
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 ½ tsp baking soda
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder.
- 4 Tbsp cocoa powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

To measure the mayo, fill a 2 cup measure with the 1 cup of cold water required in the recipe, then add spoons full of mayo until the water level reaches the 2 cup mark.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Mix all dry ingredients together.

Then, add the water/mayo and the vanilla.

Mix together until smooth and thick, scraping the bowl sides as you mix.

Grease the baking dish. The baking time will depend upon the shape of the baking dish, and the size of the individual serving.

30-35 mins for 2 8” layer pans.

22-25 mins for cupcakes.

32-37 mins for Bundt pan.

Bake until an inserted toothpick emerges clean; cool on a baking rack.

Once the cake is cool, you may frost it; do not do so before it has cooled, or most types of frosting will melt.

Chocolate Frosting

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup soft butter
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 4 cups icing sugar
- 6 tbspcocoa powder
- 4-5 tbspc warm milk.

Cream butter.

Beat in vanilla and cocoa.

Warm the milk until it is warm but not hot; be careful not to scald it.

Blend in icing sugar alternately with milk. Beat until smooth, and of good spreading consistency.

Add more icing sugar or milk to get the right consistency (about the consistency of soft butter).

This recipe makes sufficient frosting to ice top, sides, and middle, of a two layer cake. It freezes well, if you have access to an ice chest.

The **Adventurer** would like to acknowledge Al for this month’s codex puzzle, and Atropa and Gaster for their article on Lend Health.