

The Adventurer

June?, 2025 A.T.

terra incognita

Trapped No More!

Adventurers from Gelrich were able to slip the bonds of an ancient curse through martial prowess, mystical insight, and not a little cunning.

Previously trapped within a mystical oubliette, similar to traps set by fae or other powerful mystical beings, this party of daring adventurers got to the bottom of the issue, and released a curse from the region that had remained in place possibly for centuries. Missing no more, the adventurers have been able to

travel forth into the world anew, having escaped the trap.

(For more information about this daring escape, see page opposite, titled “The Deadliest Dollhouse”).

Now released from the imminent danger of the trap, one might imagine that the adventurers ensconced within might well be put at their ease, but this may not be the case; for while the curse was broken, and the adventurers released, the ultimate origin of

this mystical trap is indeterminate, and may not have been resolved itself.

Said to have been created by the love of a pair of porcelain dolls for a girl sacrificed in a failed ritual to bring about immortality, the curse was resolved through mystically reversing the ritual. But where did the power ultimately come from that allowed a porcelain doll to come to life? How can we be sure that the issue is resolved, when its ultimate origin is as yet unknown?

Time Flows Into Released Area of Gelrich

With the fall of the mystical oubliette trap that had so enclosed adventurers of Yorik, time has once again to flow into the area of Gelrich that had been overlaid by the trap.

Witnesses to the event report seeing animals, previously encased in porcelain, rapidly aging as missed years catch up all at once.

Although these animals may be more easily dispatched than their otherwise healthy counterparts, it is strongly recommended that hunters avoid any creatures that seem to be rapidly aging. The process of aging is a

natural part of being subject to time once again, but these creatures may carry with them parasites or diseases that had long been cured or which had burned out in local population.

As well, it is expected that meat from such creatures will continue to age at much the same rate as the rest of the creature.

Although one should be able to defend oneself against such creatures, running is always a viable option. These beings are dying in a way rarely seen in this part of the world, and may create unusual undead as a result.

“Hottest Summer Yet” Warns Seers

Now that the townsfolk and adventurers trapped in the porcelain trap have been released, they have to deal with another problem; the coming of summer!

The last few years have seen Callis’ supremacy cause a great deal of trouble for those who run around in heavy armour and padding. This summer is expected to surpass all previous summers on record, and so it is important to know how to keep cool.

Physicians recommend drinking plenty of water, and limiting heavy activity in areas of direct sunlight where possible. Nausea or dizziness are

dangerous warning signs, and in the event that they are experienced, do not hesitate to excuse yourself from whatever circumstance you may find yourself in to seek cooler temperatures quickly.

In a land where we too often find ourselves facing fearsome magic and loathesome monsters, it is important to remember that we are still subject to the weather and, under the weather, need to be just as careful of heat fatigue and heat stroke as we would the blades or fangs of a foe.

Keep safe, keep cool, and keep alive!

“Help! I’m Not a Peacock!”

The adventurers of Yorick have been traveling further afield than usual as of late, and as such, have run into a number of unique challenges related to these new locales.

One of the more vexing concerns over the last couple of months has been the overabundance of local wildlife in town, wildlife that ignores any spell or martial craft and disregards any common decency.

I am referring, of course, to peacocks (a nuisance) and coydogs (a terrifying danger).

Peacocks will strut (and occasionally fly!) about, making a call that sounds an awful lot like an unfortunate adventurer calling for help in their final moments.

The best remedy for this that we have as yet found, is to yell “Help! I’m not a peacock!” if one wants to be discovered and delivered aid.

Coydogs, however, are a much greater concern. Although some insidiously cosmopolitan officials in Hogsport believe them to be a myth, our more rural-raised people will tell you that they are very much real, and very dangerous.

These creatures are the result of a coyote breeding with a domestic dog, and thus have predatory instincts and no fear of humans (or other sentient creatures).

Worst of all, these creatures are immune to spells, alchemy, all forms of damage calls, and in fact exist somewhat between planes in what we at the adventurer call ((REAL LIFE)).

Our advice for dealing with coydogs is as follows: Do not travel great distances alone, especially at night. Do not go outside the boundaries of the town and surrounding areas.

Be wary if you hear the sound of a dog in distress, do not approach (especially alone or at night), as this is sometimes sound made by coydogs. Should you encounter these beasts, make yourself appear as large as possible, make noise, and call for the aid of your fellow adventurers ((and site management)). Do not turn your back and do not run. However, we hope that if you follow our prior advice, these final steps will not be necessary.

We hope this advice will serve you well as we all collectively search for our new home.

Be safe, and don’t be afraid to live more than once!

Much love,

Atropa and Gaster

The Deadliest Dollhouse:

Adventurers bring end to powerful, town-consuming curse.

Sometime in May, a small but, as you will see, formidable group of adventurers found themselves in a small country town that they were unable to leave. The borders of the municipality were choked in dense fog, and any attempt to walk through this would simply turn you right back towards the town centre. Any use of a detect curse spell or similar would find evidence of a curse roughly every five feet in every direction. The town was filled with walking porcelain dolls, many of which were hostile, and much of the local vegetation had been turned to porcelain as well.

Like all those well-suited to adventuring, the town’s newest residents immediately got to investigating. Also, like all those less well-suited to adventuring, many of them ended up jumping into magical vortexes and turning to porcelain themselves. Porcelain

masks of these adventurers were later found around the town boundaries, which, when worn, allowed the unfortunate souls to act more like themselves again.

The town’s central tavern contained an eerie panting, which turned out to be of the prized dolls of a little girl who once inhabited the town, and who was sacrificed to dark powers. The painting would periodically lash out at anyone nearby, inflicting damage, confinement, or paralysis. Eventually, Azure put on one of their famous puppet shows for the painting, which seemed to soothe its whimsical, childlike spirit, and turned the painting from a hostile foe to a grateful ally.

The story of the sacrificed girl led to a greater understanding of the curse enveloping the town. The town’s elders (who by this point were openly trying to murder all of us) had engaged in some truly vile magics many years ago.

(we do not know exactly how long as the town appeared to be frozen in time). But a ritual was devised with the help of powerful diviners such as Sato and prominent members of the Guild Arcane such as Harris.

We gathered in a circle, spread the ashes of the dead girl in geometric patterns, and sent all that porcelain roaring up into the sky. Most of those who had been turned to porcelain before now found themselves immune to the ravages of time, as the town around us cycled through the seasons at a blistering pace, catching up to the regular timestream.

Despite being dropped in unaware of the situation and under near constant assault, us adventuring folk pulled through. We must say on behalf of the adventurers and ourselves, we are proud of all of us.

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 do laws interact with people not citizens or yeomen of Harodom?

There are likely to be instances where, sometimes unintentionally, a visitor to our lands transgresses against the law in the boundaries of Harodom.

While it is generally the position that it is the responsibility of visitors to a land to know the relevant laws, it is

not generally the case that Harodom wishes to create an incident through reckless action against a bonafide traveller. In many cases, what happens will depend upon the law being broken.

There are some laws which are of course international. Murder is murder most anywhere, and while not every land practices capital punishment, it is common in many lands for Finishment. The Lakes Districts treaties similarly name anyone found to practice necromancy as *hostis humani generis* (enemy to all mortalkind), and thus punishment is often applied by the offended land.

However, for property law, a visitor may be forced to make whole the offended party, and then banished from the area. Alternately, their home land may be contacted, with an offer for ransom to make whole the offended party.

Finally, in the case of persons like ambassadors, or members of internationally recognized groups such as guilds or large international faiths, it may be the case that the local branch of that group will choose to take responsibility for their errant member.

In this case, how lenient or punitive the punishment applied is may depend on how badly the transgressor's actions reflect upon the group.

When porcelain persists, punchiness is paramount!

Break some toys with a hammer or a mace that's ready for action!

Made *Yorik Strong*, Isaac's weapons are reasonably priced for the adventurer on the go!

“Trust your blade to the brand displayed!”

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)

Don't be afraid to stretch and grow; in a time of growth, you best survive by growing to meet the needs of the environment around you. Don't be entirely reactive though – sometimes only changing to survive a new situation will lead to later-regretted choices.

The Harp (Jan 29th – Feb 27th)

Do not wander so far from the path that you cannot find your way back. It can be useful to explore new roads, but doing so in such a way that it takes you from everything that you know has the potential of carrying you to a place you do not know how to get out of.

The Fount (Feb 28th – Mar 30th)

Wherever you end up, you can aspire to move on from – but you have to deal with where you are first. This can be useful to remember, especially when you are somewhere you would rather not be – deal with the situation around you, and then look for the next step. You won't get out of where you are unless you try.

The Dice (Mar 31st – Apr 28th)

You may currently be dealing with a situation that threatens you or your view on who you are as a person. That's a

perfectly normal problem to have, but it does offer a new challenge – you can't get out of a problem using the same thinking that got you into it. Ask for help, or try lateral thinking.

The Arrow (Apr 29th – May 27th)

You have been burning the candle too long at both ends – and while you've lit up the world, it's going to wear on you, and you may not be able to sustain it for too much longer. Trust in the light of your friends – they will help you through the night, and while it may not be as personally fulfilling, you'll make it.

The Stone (May 28th – Jun 25th)

It can be useful in times such as now to take a look at your life and wonder how it came to be as it is now. This is not necessarily because where you are is bad, but it may be that you have accepted as normal or acceptable something that you would rather not have accepted.

The Coin (June 26th – July 28th)

Be principled, and the riches of the world will flow to you slowly – or corrupt, and they will flow with more mercurial grace. The important distinction is that the principled approach may offer more opportunities to spend or enjoy what you receive, with fewer seeking to take it from you.

The Spade (July 29th – Aug 30th)

Beware betrayal! By definition, you can only be betrayed by someone whom you trust, and while this is not an indictment against trust, it is a caution that by definition, your trust is not a comprehensive ward against such things occurring.

The Blade (Aug 31st – Sept 27th)

Be mindful of your health – you may encounter some manner of health challenge this month that goes beyond simple martial conflict. Behave salubriously, and maybe speak with a physician or healer.

The Mask (Sept 28th – October 31st)

The humblest of challenges can sometimes lead to the unmaking of dynasties. Do not discount a challenge that appears to be simply resolved – small problems can compound, and if you do not take care to nip them in the bud, they may overgrow to well beyond your normal capacity.

The Shield (Nov 1st – Nov 29th)

Keep your friends close – and your enemies closer. You will soon find an opportunity to gain a step on someone that you had previously considered a rival. This is a good opportunity, but remember – you aren't the main character of the story, and other people may have plans that you cannot currently see. Take the opportunity before you, but don't forget that you may still be in peril.

The Hearth (Nov 30th – Dec 30th)

Trust in the gods, but cut the cards. You will soon face a challenge that may be greater than your ability to overcome it. If you do not take time and effort to prepare for it now, you may find that your ability to deal with it at all may be severely compromised. A decision that ensures survival but which has a high upfront cost ultimately costs less than something that is cheap but lethal to you.

Better Know a Town: Stelton

The Adventurer would teach of the towns and settlements that help to define Harodom. In this article, we will discuss Stelton.

There have been a plurality of cities with fabulous features across Harodom, but some stand out. The city of Stelton is in the heart of Harodom's industrial base.

Named for the large iron and coal deposits local to the duchy of Gelrich, Stelton's port made it a natural outflow for the ironmonger's goods within Harodom. Steel-town became shortened to 'Stelton'.

Although most prominent for its role as a significant part of Harodom's industrial base, Stelton is also distinguished with several other aspects of note.

Under the reign of Duke Jagari, predecessor to Duke Hayden, the seat of the Duchy of Gelrich was moved from the town of Gelrich to the city of Stelton. Although the seat has since been moved to the Town of Yorik, the Ducal estate does maintain holdings and heavily invest in the art, culture, learning, and financial development of the town.

That learning is supplemented by the personal project of the widow of the late Duke Jagari, Lady Avriel. Within Stelton is the largest non-private library and collection of books available to the public in Harodom.

The Great Library of Harodom holds hundreds of rare and unique works, as well as common histories and works on a variety of matters. Although there is a fee of some substance for entry into the library, the fact that it is available to the public distinguishes it, as most libraries are held within temples available

only to the faithful, or within private collections, access to which must be individually negotiated with their collector.

Stelton is a bit more rough and tumble than the capitol of Harodom, Hoggspout. In addition to being a port town, Stelton also is rumoured to hold a branch of the Guild of Thieves that is well developed, although of course this has never been independently verified.

Travelers should take care when visiting Stelton, as this city can hold traps for the unwary – but enjoy the city!

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.

Travelers in the region of Western Gelrich should be warned of a band of goblins that encourage a sense of security by offering manicure/pedicure service. These goblins do a great job on nails, but have apparently stolen two people's lunch while their feet were soaking.

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Merchants from Buriden's

Elbow report that iron harvested from that region has been oxidizing and rusting at two or three times the usual rate. Oil and other preventative measures have so far been of limited effectiveness in preventing this.

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Omens: Dreams of a man unearthing himself from a shallow sandy grave.

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!

Nature abhors a vacuum. Guts abhor steel stabbing.

***Keep your vitals intact,
and weather the storm!***

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

“When in duress, dress for success!”

Better Know a Neighbour: Bales Dreadbane

This month, the Adventurer takes advantage of the absolute pleasure of interviewing Bales - cleric, fighter, upstanding defender, and former leader of the Adventurer's League. We took the opportunity to speak on his legacy living on with the League, and the importance of the next generation of adventurers.

Bales, it's an absolute honour to have you join us today!

Thanks for having me here!

First thing's first, an experienced adventurer such as yourself surely has an interesting story. What first drove you to Yorik?

I would say that my story to Yorik is a bit of a complicated one. I was a survivor of the Eldersire War. The days were hard, and I had to do many things to survive. However, with the help of a kind Hemulite, I was able to find my calling towards Hemulis. He pointed to me towards Yorik, mentioning it would be a proving ground to learn, adapt as well, as provide additional opportunities to earn.

Most recently, you were known as Guildmaster for the Adventurer's Guild. What made you wish to take on the role?

Ohh, that is a hard question. I would not say that there was a particular reason I wanted to become the Guildmaster, rather taking over the role from Malkov, my predecessor and a loyal friend.

Although, [...] we did just come off fighting a dracolich, so I wanted to try a different challenging role! (Bales laughs at his own sense of humor) ...In allseriousness, I found that being a leader pushed me towards my path. As a function of my role, I grew to be more confident in myself and my abilities and deliberate in my decision-making skills.

What was the purpose you saw for the Adventurers Guild, at least while you were leading it?

During my introduction to an unfamiliar environment, I met new companions in Yorik. We found that we could work towards the improvement of lives in Gelrich, even on a small scale: I saw the Adventurer's Guild was a way to do that. I also found that the Guild was important to provide training, and a sense of community and adventure, for younger members to town.

Under new management, your former Guild has now become the Adventurers League. Do you feel that, even with their changes, they still honour your legacy?

I always welcome anyone that can shake things up occasionally! I do think that even between the old Guild and the new League, the core identity and values have not changed. I believe that the League does and will continue to play a vital role in the community for years to come. And I am excited to see where the leaders of the League take it forward!

What do you think is the importance

of fresh faces among adventurers, and helping them improve?

There's a saying that I really like: 'A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.' Similarly, I find that a community only flourishes when the more experienced adventurers help nurture the next generation of adventurers. As members of the community, we must continue to help each other, and especially those of us who will become the torchbearers of our community. Even something like a simple act of kindness or training can help the new adventurers in more ways than you realize! And who knows, maybe they can help you in ways that you would have realized!

Finally, what's one piece of advice you'd wish for people to walk away with?

We survive on our own. We thrive as a community. Whether it is to be the best at becoming the best at your trade, becoming well versed in arcane, divination or clerical abilities, or just honing your martial skills, or some crazy combination of all the above, we all fulfill a vital role. Although we can do most, we can never do it all. That is where a fully trusting and cooperatively community thrives. By fulfilling each others needs, whether it be potion, armor, magical protection, or someone who can just take the hits for you, we all need each other to succeed; and more importantly, get through any crazy situation that we always find ourselves in!

Taq's Tactics: Skeleton (Undead)

Description: The pale white bone structure of any humanoid race whether it is a human, dwarf, or gnome. Some may have armour or other forms of clothing. Most carry some variety of weapons.

Locations: In a cave system, graveyard, undead plane, or in a necromancer's lair. Most appear at night and rise from the ground.

Skeletons have no tongue there for most can not talk, which means there is no negotiating with them. They are mindless warriors, where there is one there is more probably on their way. Watch out for skeletons sneaking out of the dirt, people can find themselves easily surrounded in a heartbeat.

It's best to know what can harm a skeleton, like most undead skeletons typically heal from dark, but take greater effect from light.

Note that this is not always the case, sometimes they may take no effect from light damage.

Bows and stabbing should be avoided, as the sharp point will just go through most bones and not actually damage them. Blades are also almost as useless, as bone is a hard material to cut, but the opposite when it comes to smashing.

The ideal weapons are ones that have a blunt end such as war hammers, maces, clubs, and staffs. Some skeletons may have the ability to use a bow best to form a shield wall to block incoming fire, or if you are lucky have a caster cast air shield to block it.

Some skeletons know how to cast spells, watch out for lower tier spells such as unholy darts. If a skeleton has a shield try and

figure out a way around it, whether that is using magic or having a friend hit it from behind well you distract, both are good options.

Taq's Final Thoughts: Skeletons were some of my first opponents; they are perfect for new adventures to learn how to fight against. What's great about their one weakness is that almost anyone can exploit it. It takes very little training to learn how to use a mace or club. Magic is scary but learning to dodge will help you avoid any catastrophic effects. Help your allies and friends and everything should be alright.

Taq's Challenge Scale: With One being anyone can deal with this, and Ten being only a bunch of really experienced people could fight this:

Taq gives skeletons a 2.5/10

Editorial: Endless Adventure

It's next to impossible to say what's impossible.

Great draconic skeletons were impossible until they were real. The Twins were impossible to destroy, until that happened. It is a fool's errand to suggest that you know – beyond a shadow of reasonable doubt – that something capital letters Can Not Happen.

This can be pretty scary. I like to imagine that I'm open to all sorts of new adventure, but the

hard lines – even just the ones that we imagine – can come up quickly, and that leaves the very real possibility that you'll be stymied. You need to be open to the idea that anything can happen – and then, when it does, you are in a better position to do something about it.

Mental flexibility is not just a helpful trick, it's a survival skill.

What's more, there's a joy in

Knowing that not everything has been discovered yet. Head for that horizon, and when you've nothing more to learn, keep going.

You'll learn more in a day than you would have in a week, if you're willing to open yourself up to the idea that there's still more to learn.

Whatever you do, don't give up hope. It's hope that keeps us going – hope for the future, and making it brighter still.

Oren D'vann Freedman, Editor

Matters of Faith

Holy Days Just Past

July 10th: Hand's Day (Astrid)

It is thought upon this date in July that the god of thieves was hanged as a mortal, with followers secreting away a stolen hand from the corpse, and wrapping it as a reliquary to the fallen hero of thieves – who then became a god of same. Although the worship of Astrid is severely restricted within these lands, it may be wise to mark this day by keeping a close eye on your possessions.

July 16th: Summer's Fair (Marius)

The feast day of the god of merchants and traders, this festival is usually celebrated with sales and bazaars, as merchants seek the best, fairest exchange. It is considered ill luck to swindle someone on this holy day to the concept of commerce, but this rarely stops the determined from seeking to find some advantage on their fellows, especially during times of deprivation.

Forthcoming Holy Days

Aug 8th: Mushroom Feast (Blythe)

The holy day of Blythe, divine of poison, disease, and rot, is often a day to visit the physician or the Apencan, in search of balm for the potential for disease. But too, recently, festivals celebrating wine and ale, pickles and cheeses, and all the things made good by the natural process of decay and the mild toxins of alcohol and brine, have sprung up around this holiday.

Sept. 18th: Day of the Blade (Hemulis)

Celebrating the god of heroes, soldiers, and battle, the Day of the Blade is recognized by the followers of Hemulis as an auspicious day for training and battle. Although Hemulis is truly on the side of all soldiers, on this day, he descends to the mortal realm, and trains with a group of his faithful that are devout and work toward his glory, before resting for twenty-four hours.

A Message of Faith

I would like to speak today on a matter that ties closely to faith; hope, and the type of hope that effects action.

It is somewhat trite to say that hope can carry you everywhere you need to be on its own. Hope is not a steed that carries you; it is a bridge, that you can walk.

Importantly, it is a choice that counters despair.

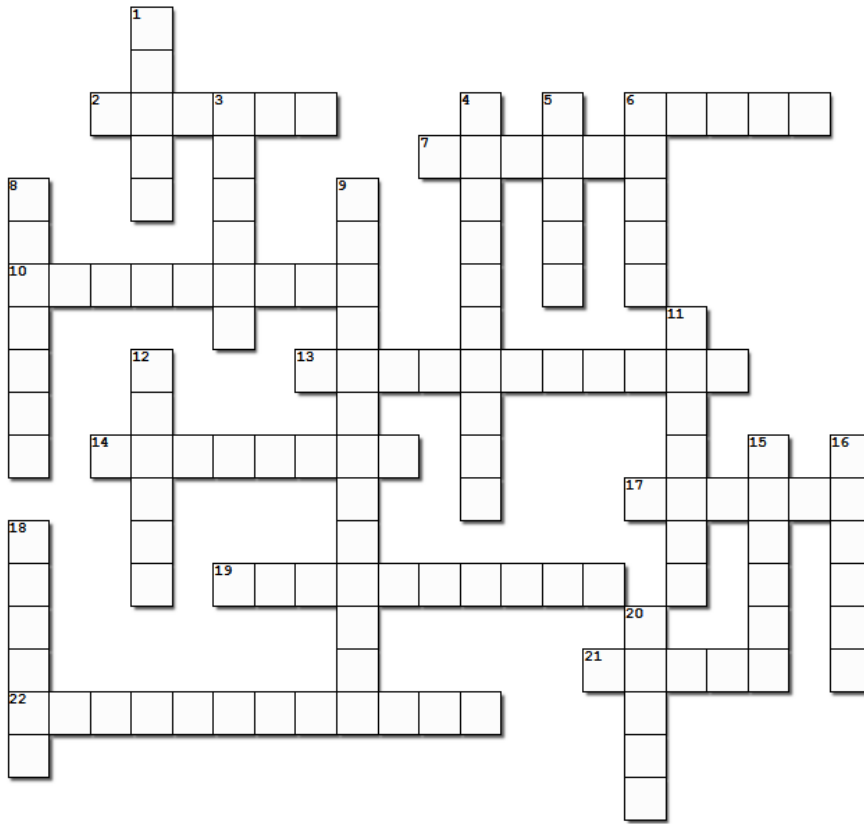
Despair is easy, and not necessarily a choice. Despair is a comfort; if there is nothing that can be done, then you are saved from having to try and fail.

But it lies.

When you find yourself in a position where you are facing against despair, consider: have I thought about this problem for five minutes (by the hourglass, no less?).

Sometimes, a moment's reflection can find hope even there.

Crossword



Across

2. what remains after cake is eaten
6. to evade or get out of the way
7. to fix something broken
10. like keys for any shackle
13. a diviner's orb
14. padded armour
17. like a small, portable church
19. a repeated dwarven war
21. someone who digs for ore
22. a glowing alchemy

Down

1. to block a blow with a weapon or hair
3. a magic-resistant magedom refugee
4. to render someone a head shorter
5. belief or piety
6. what happens after too long underwater
8. a glaive or halberd
9. Blythe's holy day (Aug 8th)
11. what, in a beer, makes your head spin
12. a fireplace or the area before one
15. the domain of Balaxa
16. a mythic tale
18. what rises from a dead body
20. a young person (who digs for ore?)

Riddles

Riddle 1:

I come when sun comes
least;
I make steel the hearts of
men and the waters of
heaven.
You do not see me, but
when I pass, you breathe
relief.
What is my name?

Answer 1: *dloC*

Riddle 2:

Find me on the table,
Make me out of grain,
Have me with some butter,
Or have me simple, plain.

Answer 2: *daerB*

Riddle 3:

I am often what is thought of,
But never what is said;
They say that three can keep
me,
If two of them are dead.

Answer 3: *terceS*

Riddle 4:

Some will kill for me,
Some will die,
But all my value
Is what I buy.

Answer 4: *yenoM*

Riddle 5:

What makes wise men fools,
Plucks joy from sorrow
And sorrow from joy,
But drink enough,
And die young?

Answer 5: *lohoclA*

Riddle 6:

I am colourless, weightless,
and without substance, but put
me in a barrel and that barrel
will become lighter.

Answer 6: *eloH*

Room to Grow: Construction Update

In an effort to keep you informed about construction and growth in our community, the Adventurer intends a bimonthly column that will update on the status and needs of existing construction projects, and of potential upcoming projects that townsfolk can become enthusiastic about and work toward completing.

Construction Project: *The Expansion of the Town Guard Barracks*

Status: Begun

Overview: Town barracks are the home base and offices of town guardsmen. Completing the reconstruction of the barracks, the barracks are now being improved and expanded to better serve the public.

Progress: At time of printing, this project has begun, and is 95% of the way to completion! See if you can help out!

Construction Project: *Further expansion, paving, and patrolling of local roads.*

Status: Underway

Overview: The highways and roads of Harodom allow for most of its trade commerce. By expanding and patrolling our local roads, we reduce the chance for banditry to be successful, eliminate some wear and tear on carts and wagons, and allow for the easier transit of persons and tonnage between towns, cities, and other settlements in and around Harodom. This will help to increase merchant and local profits.

Progress: At time of printing, this project is just under 3/4 complete. Further funding, as well as materiel and skilled labour is required in order to finish this ongoing project. Check at the local planning office to find out how you can help increase prosperity.

Update:

At this point, further community projects are being explored in service to the common good.

If you have a community project that you would like to see come into the common sphere, reach out with a proposal, and roughly what you would estimate such a project might require. It's your community, so helping to build it out can really both empower you and help you to connect with your friends and neighbours.

Having a voice in how a community comes together, the projects that it pursues, can also be really empowering. Take some time to think – do you think that your friends and relatives would benefit from a school? A new pub? A library?

There is no deadline on submissions, but coming up with a roughly costed plan is always a good pass-time.

Tool Highlight: Spears

Adventurer writer Dominic of Bard shares some thoughts on Spears.

The phalanx. The defensive wall. The barricade. The pit trap. A symbol of hunters, both ancient and modern. A tool, a weapon, and even a measuring rod. Who's got the bigger stick? Hopefully you do, and hopefully it's pointy - we're talking about spears!

In the simplest of terms, your average spear is a type of polearm consisting of a shaft (don't laugh), typically made of hard wood (don't laugh) and affixed with a pointed head (don't laugh). The great benefit of spears is how easily they can be made - find your nearest straight branch and start whittling - but also how well-detailed and expertly crafted they can become in the right set of hands.

The imagery of spears appears in the earliest iterations of mythology and

history alike, likely due to their ease of construction. One of the most iconic images of this comes from the testudo - a squadron of soldiers wielding shields in an overlapping, shell-like pattern, spears protruding from the front as they charged towards their targets safely. Shields too heavy? Line up shoulder-to-shoulder with your allies and form a defensive phalanx, the bane of any calvary force you come up against.

One does not even need a wielder to make a spear effective: these versatile weapons can be added to fixtures and traps to make your homes that much safer.

Creating spiked barricades with appears facing outward can be both a visually and physically effective deterrent against sieges. Somewhat more underhanded? Gather a dozen and point them upwards from the bottom of a pit - an easy-to-make trap like this can be found

in many old dungeons.

So why would a weapon so straightforward be so useful? It is because of how quickly one can acquire one. When one has had their tools of choice stripped from them, whether by disarmament or damage, it takes minimal effort to find suitable materials to craft a replacement. While longer spears can be large and unwieldy to use, the benefit of the distance they create between you

and your foe cannot be understated. The ability to throw them at the opportune time also make them a viable hunting tool in a survival situation.

Even if you have a favourite weapon of choice, it is wise to spend some time learning how to keep your problems at spear's length - history speaks for itself: it may just save your life.

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.

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

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

Recipe of the Month: Peach Pie

Summer in Harodom is stone fruit season, and we live in a time and place where we can take advantage of that bounty.

Ingredients for deep large pie plate

10 Inch Pie (deep large pie plate)
 6 cups sliced peaches (about 11 medium)
 1 tsp lemon juice
 1 ¼ cup sugar
 ½ cup flour
 ¼ tsp cinnamon
 3 tbsp butter
 3 tbsp whipping cream or half and half

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 400 deg F
 The peaches need to be just ripe for this recipe to work. Place a large sauce pan ⅔ filled with water on the stove; cover it and bring to a boil. Remove the cover. Using a slotted spoon or spaghetti lifter, lower the peach into the boiling water; count to about 14 and then plunge into a sink with icy water (the purpose is to make the skins easy to remove; the icy water prevents the outside of the peach from cooking). Leave the chilled peaches in the water until ready to use (the peaches will

brown if peeled much before being used).

Prepare your pastry (I use the Crisco recipe; 2 cups of flour; ½ tsp salt; cut in 1 cup of Crisco until it is about the size of peas; add 4 tbsp cold water and mix just until it holds together. Remove about half and put on a floured surface; ensure it is together enough to roll; put some extra flour on top and then roll with your rolling pin until you are about the size of the bottom and sides of your pie plate; roll the pastry over the rolling pin and then gently unroll it over the pie plate; pastry that is overworked will get tough. Put a small amount of milk in a ramekin or small container. Using your finger, dip it into the milk and wet the pastry that is on the edge of the pie plate (leave about ½ inch overlap to make your pinch)

Peel and cut your peaches into wedges and place in a bowl. Add the lemon juice and mix gently (this helps to prevent browning). Stir together sugar, flour and cinnamon; mix with peaches. Turn into pastry-lined pie plate; dot with butter and whipping cream.

Roll out the top of the pastry; roll onto the rolling pin and ease off on top of the peach mixture; gently tap the edges together and trim the pastry to about ¼ inch beyond the rim. Pinch the edges to make a nice scallop.

Put a couple of slashes in the top of the pastry and put the letter "P" in the middle. Again, dip your finger in the milk mixture and gently spread a thin layer of milk over the top of the pastry. Take about a tsp of sugar in a spoon and sprinkle over the top of the pastry.

Bake the pie on a middle rack in the oven for 10 min. Reduce the heat to 350 °F and continue to bake for about 40 -60 min. (depending on the pie size) or until the crust is lightly brown and the juice begins to bubble through the slits in the crust.

