

The Griffton Grifter

audacter calumniare, semper aliquid haeret

September, 2024 A.T.
Year of the Dancing Mouse

Is Self-Imposed Mayor Griff Secretly Broke?

The recent change of leadership in the once-so-called Scarsinvale is of course a public good that cannot be denied. However, recent high-level investigations by the *Grifter*'s crack reporters have revealed that Griff might not be able to make good on his debts!

The bounty hunter and former tavernkeeper turned autocrat-by-junta, Mayor Griff of Griffton, has promised large payments in coin and supplies to the towns nearby. However, as his rule

continues, the payments have been slower than the neighbouring towns might prefer, and by some accounts, Griff is borrowing large amounts of money against the owed payments.

So far, Griff has not answered any questions about these allegations to any members of the *Grifter* staff. According to a source that wished to remain anonymous, some nearby settlements are beginning to grumble, and insist upon

preferential payment orders favouring them, to the detriment of their neighbours.

This fragile alliance, formed exclusively to keep a failed tavernkeeper in charge of a town not famous for its ability to generate him any further revenue, seems shaky at time of printing. One can only hope that the neighbouring towns are already moving to collect their coin before it's all gone – or before Griff vanishes again, leaving them broke too.

Typo Revealed? Is the Broken Reach Really 'The Broken Peach'?

Between undead, undead, undead, and further undead, the other nations of the Lakes Region seem convinced, for some reason, that the Broken Reach might be in some kind of trouble. Their lack of faith in the ability of a large group of mostly disorganized little towns to effectively save the Lakes Region from being overrun by the walking dead is frankly hurtful.

With a peace treaty in place preventing any of the major forces of the Region from entering the Broken Reach in military numbers, it seems to require a lot of reviewing

to find a stipulation that lets them march an army in to fight zombies.

It is now being said that since the original treaty was drafted in a hurry, the 'Broken Reach' was mis-spelled. Designated first by the Treaty, it is officially demarkated as the 'Broken Peach', suggesting a large stone fruit might have shattered at some point in the past.

The only real casualty of this mishap appears to be dignity. Would-be conquerors now have to contend with marching their forces to conquer a soft fruit shaped like an ass.

Lord Admiral Griff Offering Griffton as Fist-Fight Prize?

Word has reached us at the *Grift* that King Griff, First of His Name, will be holding a pit fight in honour of Hemulis' holiday. There are even rumours that his currently loyal advisors will be watching the contenders, and that the fourth or fifth best fighter will be given a chance to show everyone how tough His Imperial Griffness is.

Rear Admiral Griff, who came to power by offering violence on others, is taking a bit of a risk in inviting it on himself. Since this is the new acknowledged means of succession, the *Grifter* is forced to

assume that supreme executive power is the offered prize for winning a mud wrestling competition with the incumbent.

No word has yet been spread as to whether warriors from neighbouring towns, who took on the task of keeping Griff in power against the promise of eventually being paid, will be stood down for this competition. If not, this makes this a very fine jest and show of power by Griff; even if toppled, he will be avenged by hired killers and oathbreakers who have not yet been paid in full.

Five Ways to Tell if the Baron is a Dragon

(Number Four Will Shock You!)

The Baron of the Barony has long been a mysterious figure: how did he come to power? What are his aims? How has he magically secured the loyalty of thousands?

We here at the *Grifter* believe it is possible that the Baron may not in fact be human. Here is our reasoning. The Baron may in fact be a dragon if...

1. He secures the loyalty of the feeble-witted with a glance and a handshake. Dragons are known to be able to charm others both with personal charisma and with magical thought-beams.

2. He is able to secure large borders of land with only his personal might and force of arms.

While the barony does have armed forces, it would be extremely easy for a dragon to fly from one end of the barony to the other, leaving no witnesses willing to report what they saw.

3. People don't see him often in person.

While the Baron has been seen in person, dragons are known to shapeshift. Not wanting to be a not-dragon for long, the Baron would deal primarily through servants.

4. He has large quantities of unexplained wealth.

Related to the ability to control large areas of land, large personal wealth helps to raise and maintain an army.

5. He has not been substantially challenged or assassinated after several years of contested power.

Famously, nations do not have friends – they have interests. If someone is claiming executive power over a large area roughly the size of one of the Duchies of Harodom, something is keeping them alive – possibly even draconic-level resistance to assassination!

Horoscopes

People seem to like these, so we stole the idea from that other paper are including it as well. These horoscopes are derived from the ancient art of getting piss-drunk and writing down the first thing that comes into our heads, apparently called 'inebromancy'. While we are legally required to say 'for entertainment purposes only', how hard can it be if the minotaur cranks them out every month?

The Shroud (Dec 31st – Jan 28th)

You're probably going to die. Like, not imminently, but at some point in the future. It happens to most people eventually, and honestly, it seems like a safe bet. Be careful around sharp objects and dangerous monsters, and don't stand on the edge of cliffs.

The Harp (Jan 29th – Feb 27th)

A bird is probably going to shit on you. You spend lots of time outdoors, and birds famously don't have much of a bladder control mechanism. According to a book I read, it's called a 'cloaca', and it's from the elvish word for 'sewer', so... at least you learned something.

The Fount (Feb 28th – Mar 30th)

A lie can make it around the world before the truth's got its boots on. It's really easy to run your mouth and fill up people's head with flattering bullshit – they'll even give you support in your ambitions to take over a podunk little town in the Broken Reach. It worked for one guy at least...

The Dice (Mar 31st – Apr 28th)

Look, you're just not as complex or interesting as you think you are. Everyone thinks that if people just 'Got

Them', they would think that they were fascinating and interesting. The truth is, few people are particularly interesting, and you're not an exception. That's less a fortune and more just a harsh truth.

The Arrow (Apr 29th – May 27th)

This month will have... things happen in it. Probably interesting things. You'll put more money into saving the world than you'll get out of it, and you'll probably have to make some kind of moral choice that seems interesting on paper but in practice is just a humongous pain in the ass.

The Stone (May 28th – Jun 25th)

If you wanted to be safe, you probably wouldn't have moved out here. Accept that you're probably going to get your ass kicked a few times in the next few days, and don't forget to drink some water. Last thing we need is you whining about being dehydrated too.

The Coin (June 26th – July 28th)

Y'know what? Let's do a good one. Something generically and nonspecifically good is going to happen to you, for reasons more to do with luck than merit. If you choose to pass it along, then something good will happen for someone else too. If you don't, more for you.

The Spade (July 29th – Aug 30th)

Sunny, with a chance of showers in the mid-afternoon. The weather will continue warm for a couple more days, and then we have a cold front coming in from the East. Dress in layers, and don't forget to bring a cloak – the evenings are going to be chilly.

The Blade (Aug 31st – Sept 27th)

Sell no wine before its time. Eagles may soar, but weasels don't get eaten by dragons. Never spit in a man's face unless his moustache is on fire. Don't take raisins from rabbits. If you sit down at a table to play cards and don't see the sucker, stand up.

The Mask (Sept 28th – October 31st)

Despite the advice that soapmakers were trying to give you, washing your hair repeatedly is more likely to dry out your scalp and give you dandruff and possibly split ends. Wash once, and use a cream rinse or conditioner, with medicated shampoos for scalp conditions.

The Shield (Nov 1st – Nov 29th)

The forces of evil are mighty indeed. You might as well give up now and book a vacation in Lakemeet. I have a cousin who will give you a great deal on a couple weeks in a cottage out that way, and if you mention my name, he'll cut you an extra 5% off the first week. Sure, while you're away, some terrible things are going to happen, but honestly, terrible things happen around here all the time.

The Hearth (Nov 30th – Dec 30th)

Writing these has been a little humbling. I don't know if it's obvious, but I ran out of ideas after the third one. I suppose this is my narrative journey, as I learn that just because something seems easy from the outside, it's not necessarily easy to do. Humility is one of my infinite number of great qualities, that I have in tremendous amounts.

Editorial: The *Grifter*

Some of you might have noticed that there's a new paper in town. Well, you're wrong, and probably also broke, stupid, and ugly.

The *Grifter* is actually an ancient paper, first published in 221 A.T. It was almost immediately censored by the Church of Fiona for reasons that aren't especially important or relevant, and put under an 1800 year curse, during which new copies of the *Grifter* were printed but not distributed. This

curse expired three years ago, but we forgot where the key to the printing press was, and just found it last week.

Unlike other papers, the *Grifter* isn't going to let things like 'standards of evidence' or 'basic respect for journalistic integrity' get in the way of a good time, or hard-hitting journalism.

Above all, the *Grifter* wants you to ask questions. Is Mayor Griff secretly three pixies in a

large coat? Why is 'Scarsinvale' so suspiciously hard to spell? How many 'P's in 'appartment'?

Gossip and speculation are the key to quality newspapering, and the *Grifter* is bringing both to the table. All of this high-quality content is our own work, except for the stuff that we cut out of that other paper, and glued over areas of blank paper where we ran out of ideas. Above all, we stand by our motto '*just try to stop us*'.

- *The Marquess of Nettles, Editor.*

How to Tell If Someone Who Promised You a Lot of Gold Is Planning to Skip Town

So you accepted a large bribe to help someone out! That's great news! That money will come in handy whether it's for feeding your family, or paying for vital town upgrades.

But can they pay you out?

Take the *Grifter's* quiz!

1. What best describes your bribe-patron's financial status?

- a) Credit beyond reproach, wealth beyond avarice, and no evidence of impulsive decision making.
- b) Clearly has some cash on hand, but no visible means of support.
- c) Seems to be banking on plans panning out to ensure their success.

2. When you ask the bribe-patron for a payment, how do they respond?

- a) Without hesitation, paid on time in full, no grumbling.

b) They've managed to keep up the payments so far, but there is an occasional delay.

c) There's been a lot of money *promised*, but so far...

3. What best describes your patron's personal character?

- a) Upright, stands on their own two feet, no history of lies or deception.
- b) Gets along okay with others, but a few sketchy details have emerged.
- c) Known oathbreaker who doesn't play well with others.

4. If they don't have the money now, how easily can your patron get more?

- a) They have close friends and allies that can loan them cash.
- b) Finding treasure in ancient ruins is easy, right?
- c) Highway banditry has a noble and storied tradition in these parts, and the extortion of money through threats of violence is familiar.

5. If you do have to lean on your patron a little bit to get the money they promised you, how easy would it be?

- a) Pretty easy – if they could fight on their own, they wouldn't need our help, right?
- b) Somewhat difficult – they might have enlisted the help of other groups nearby, too...
- c) A+ vicious bastard with a mean streak and the ability to vanish into the wastelands.

Scoring

Award yourself 0 points for every A, 1 point for every B, and 2 points for every C.

0-3: You're in the money!

4-6: Keep your weapons close, and mark the calendar for payday.

7-10: If you think you got a good deal, I have some land in Hammerfrost to sell you.

11+: A mere *fool* and his money are soon parted. You never even met it.

Defending Yourself Against Accusations of Libel

In some backward and antiquated parts of the Lakes Region, where free speech is not sufficiently valued, such as Michian or Eldershire, you may find that printing 'unverified' facts leaves you open to accusations of libel. Libel, here defined as 'a written defamation'.

We here at the *Grifter* value our reputation as upstanding citizens, and therefore would like to make you all aware that nothing we print is libellous. Specifically, following Eldershire law, the following exemptions exist in laws pertaining to libel and slander.

1. *Asking questions is permitted.*

It is permitted to ask questions including questions asked in the body or headline of an article. This is an open and free society, so asking questions is how we hold our officials to account! If those questions happen to imply that something untoward is going on, that is merely the interpretation of an innocent question by the reader.

2. *Reporting on a quote does not vouchsafe that quote's accuracy.*

It is unquestionably news if someone who might be in a position to know were to make a stirring statement about a noteworthy figure. Reporting on that is therefore in the public interest, and not at all libellous under Eldershire law.

3. *The truth.*

A printed statement of fact is not libellous if it is true, the defense that we most often use here at the *Grifter*. It is not defamation to print the truth, but rather, verifiable truth is an absolute defense against libel.

Suspicious Dave's Stews Presents:

My Bologna

*"Spreadin' on the mustard now, show me how
Spread it on a little of this bologna"*

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 *Grifter* is calling for donations to be raised in support of Griff's outstanding debts. Offering up money will prevent the necessity of being held upside down and having it

shaken out of your pockets at a later date.

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Nearby towns to Griffon have broken previous allegiances to the so-called 'Scarsinvale' in exchange for a promise for future payment by the new lord mayor of Griffon, Griff

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Ancient ruins dot the land, and likely hold ancient treasures that could be worth a lot of money!

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Parasitic centipedes terrorize nearby community!

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Portents: nature intruding into unexpected areas. Something being dropped and lost.

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

Dwarf Numbers

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

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

Recipe of the Month: Peach Cafloutis

Soft fruit from Eldershire or Harodom goes great in this tricky dessert.

- M. Nettles

Ingredients:

Rolls:

4 Large fresh peaches
2/3 cups whipping cream
1/3 cup milk
3 Large eggs
1/3 cup all purpose flour
1/4 cup white sugar
2 Tbsp butter (melted)
1 Tsp vanilla extract
1/8 Tsp salt
1/2 Tbsp icing sugar (topping)

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 375 deg F. Grease the bottom and sides of a 9 inch pie plate with about 1 tsp butter.

Bring a large saucepan filled with water to a boil. Add the peaches for 14 seconds and then remove to a bowl which is filled with ice water. This will allow the skins to slip off, but not cook the peaches.

Peel and pit the peaches. Coarsely chop the fruit and place in the prepared pie plate.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine the whipping cream, milk, eggs, flour, sugar, melted butter, vanilla and pinch (1/8 tsp) salt. Beat with an electric mixer (or whisk) on low speed until smooth.

Pour the batter over the peaches.

Bake 50 to 55 minutes or until puffed and light brown.

Cool slightly. Sift icing sugar over the top and serve warm.

Join the Griffon Griffins!

The Grifter is sponsoring a *foote-the-ball* team!

Show your town spirit,
Go out,
And fight! Fight! Fight!
Defeat our rivals, the **Wig Creek Peasant Farmers!**

Join the Hemulite Pit-Fight!

His Exalted Grand High Magnificence, Griff the Invulnterable

Invites the celebration of Hemulis's holiday through martial prowess!

Join the pit-fight! Show your worth!
BLEED DISTRESSINGLY!