

# The Scarsinvale Saga

*Conemur iterum*

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

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## Tremendous Blow Struck For Hammerfrost Liberation

The siege for the dwarven hold of Hammerfrost and its supporting lands has been at a stalemate, with the undead occupying the hold able to replenish their forces seemingly at will. Recently however, a group of irregular forces, led by Kellskagg, named 'Bastion's End' by the assaulting forces, assailed the fortified hold with might and magic.

Although the battle was lengthy – and costly – the assailants dealt a decisive blow to the keep.

The shield wall of Hammerfrost Hold was breached for the first time in centuries, and scores of the undead forces were slain. At the same time, a team of aracanists and priests assaulted a necromantic pool that seems to have been the source of the unending undead.

With the wall breached and the necromantic pool dispelled, the forces of the undead rallied and were able to push out the heroic force. A further push happened the same evening, with a force

that powered through the newly made hole in the shield wall, to do the same to the inner keep. There, they were met with large numbers of powerful undead, and although another couple of score were felled, the assailants were once again repelled.

Happily, before this reversal, the attackers were able to breach the inner gate, leaving a large hole in the defences of the hold that will require more of the increasingly limited undead to defend.

## Strange Portal Activity Ceases in Region

The town of Scarsinvale has recently had to deal with unexpected visitors – both local residents suddenly vanishing, and outsiders suddenly appearing – for some time now. It was revealed that these 'holes' through which people were unexpectedly pulled, were the work of otherworldly plant beings.

Following the events of the assault on Hammerfrost Hold, it appears that this trend should be coming to a close, with the responsible beings perishing near the climax of the battle.

Although this crisis appears to be over, it is still worth checking in on friends and neighbours. With no return portals readily available, it is possible that some people who have not yet been noticed missing may still be making their way home.

If you do see any further portal activity, this may indicate that damage to the world is still healing, or that there is another cause to the same effect. In either case, if you see something, say something – the best way to keep people safe is to keep them informed with accurate information.

## Local Crank Rolls Into Town, Claims Authority

Former innkeeper and bounty guild leader Griff, banished from the town of Scarsinvale after his decision to have a man killed when the moot had granted him mercy, has returned to the town of Scarsinvale. Claiming authority on the basis of strength, Griff has renamed the town 'Griffton', and claims mayoral power.

With many town notables absent owing to unexpected portalling to Hammerfrost, it has currently been safest to not make waves, in the anticipation that the issue may be properly sorted once the missing town residents return.

It should be clear that this attempt at a coup is not backed by consensus. In general, when someone has to wait for local notables to be absent before making his move, he is neither confident in his ability to build consensus with other thought leaders.

While this imposed rule is obviously undesirable, it should be clear that it should not be taken lightly. Rumours have trickled in through diplomatic channels that Griff has formalized alliances with other towns in the area, putting himself in a position of authority if warfare were to break out.

# Tool Highlight: Alchemy

The Saga *seeks to highlight a few of the tools useful in the business of adventuring, and how to use them to the greatest effect. While it can be expensive, alchemy can be useful beyond the immediate, in an adventurer's career.*

Alchemy is, broadly defined, the branch of natural philosophy that has to do with the mixture of mineral or oil-based compounds to synthesize new effects. The art of distilling is a core part of alchemy, where specifically refined ingredients can be used to create purer and more potent substances.

To begin with, those with access to means and an alchemist may find benefit from **fire oil**, **lasting ice**, and **acidic** mixtures. As their names imply, they (respectively) create heat, cold, and caustic effects. Fire oil requires a **spark** alchemy (a very fast quick match) in order to be deployed in combat.

As different creatures have different vulnerabilities, alchemy can sometimes be used to exploit these weaknesses.

The connoisseur may also appreciate **mysterious goo**, a

powerful adhesive. This can be useful for sealing a difficult container. In contrast, **Grease** can be used to prevent an enemy from picking something up.

**Flash powder** is useful for the footpad on the go – it is easier to get behind someone when they have been temporarily blinded. **Thunderstones**, when they are available, creates a stunning effect, good for disarming creatures without harming them.

**Thermal Gel** and **Neutralizing Paste** reduce damage from elemental sources.

## 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 31<sup>st</sup> – Jan 28<sup>th</sup>)

The next few days will be telling, and may greatly advance – or harm – your ambitions and goals for the near future. What you do now is telling not just for yourself, but for your whole community. There is likely to be some kind of physical confrontation soon to come.

### **The Harp** (Jan 29<sup>th</sup> – Feb 27<sup>th</sup>)

A tree that does not dance with the wind is broken or uprooted. Your ability to bend and compromise will be tested – or your ability to defend your life will be. Learn the difference between a fight that you must have, and one that can be solved with words or just walking away.

### **The Fount** (Feb 28<sup>th</sup> – Mar 30<sup>th</sup>)

Be bloody, bold, and resolute. There will be a challenge not just to your life or honour, but everything that you hold dear. This will bring you into conflict with someone wearing black and red, and may be a confrontation on more levels than just the physical. Know what you're made of, or you'll be in trouble.

### **The Dice** (Mar 31<sup>st</sup> – Apr 28<sup>th</sup>)

Every person is made of multiple facets, and you are no exception. Find out what parts of yourself you're willing to live

with, and which get in the way of your long term goals. You may be surprised by what you discover – but there is nothing in the world more at risk than a soul at war with itself.

### **The Arrow** (Apr 29<sup>th</sup> – May 27<sup>th</sup>)

This month will be one for opportunity if you can view it, wealth if you can grasp it, and great turmoil if you can see either through. Before you stir up a whirlwind in your own house, it may be best to batten down the hatches and make sure that the more fragile valuables are safely stored away.

### **The Stone** (May 28<sup>th</sup> – Jun 25<sup>th</sup>)

Now is a time to plant and grow. If you are in a position where you can start processes that will pay you dividends in the future, take the chance – growing when you can may mean that you're done that process when you need the things you're planting now.

### **The Coin** (June 26<sup>th</sup> – July 28<sup>th</sup>)

Aid will come from an unexpected quarter. You may not have cause to believe what you're being told, but if you don't take the opportunity when it's presented, it won't be presented again. Hatred is a flame that if held too closely to the heart will burn you, and badly – but you never *have* to forgive.

### **The Spade** (July 29<sup>th</sup> – Aug 30<sup>th</sup>)

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, but it can be hard to take. This is a good time to start something that you have been putting off, and luck will smile on you for doing so. In contrast, avoiding something difficult may make life harder.

### **The Blade** (Aug 31<sup>st</sup> – Sept 27<sup>th</sup>)

You will be faced with a fight that you never wanted to have. Be careful when making a sacrifice, because what you give up cannot come back to you. Be careful when stoking the flames – fires spread, and sometimes get out of control.

### **The Mask** (Sept 28<sup>th</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>)

Infernal forces will dog you this month, and you will have to reach out to friends and allies to deal with them. Your friends will be there for you if you need them to be, but don't forget to give as you receive – when someone comes asking for help, don't hesitate, and you may secure a friend or ally.

### **The Shield** (Nov 1<sup>st</sup> – Nov 29<sup>th</sup>)

The anvil ultimately breaks the hammer. If you can withstand hardship, you will survive beyond those that are trying your health, ability, knowledge, and patience. If you find that the aggression or the challenges that face you are too much, don't feel compelled to withstand them, but this is one reliable path to victory that you might otherwise be inclined to overlook.

### **The Hearth** (Nov 30<sup>th</sup> – Dec 30<sup>th</sup>)

Not all that glitters is gold – but coin may be coming your way. Don't forget that when someone pays to inconvenience you, someone is receiving that payment, and is a just reward for that inconvenience. Be just in your actions, and seek to further the cause of justice – because if you do otherwise, you may have to face the consequences for same.

# Editorial: Damn Politics

There is a proverb from the era of the founding of the Michian empire, that says ‘no officer can afford to be clean of politics’. This is a rough translation, and while the earliest I was able to find that approximates the sentiment, it is possible that this was said well before it was written down.

It remains true today, and not just for officers, military or otherwise. To exist in the modern world is to deal with

politics, if only because politics was created as an alternative to a bloody fistfight.

To that end, it can be extremely helpful to know what is going on beyond your own front door. Even within your own neighbourhood, you may have observed petty squabbles and alliances – this too, is politics!

The point is, when someone says that they do not care about politics, it is an expression of privilege.

There are many who cannot afford to overlook the way in which the wind is blowing – if only because it may bring ill fate for them on the breeze.

Right now, Scarsinvale is in an almost unique position in living history, regarding politics. Very few who have lived through war relish the idea of seeing it again soon – and the Lakes Region has seen four, now five, in the last fifteen years. Keep your eyes open, and your mind sharp.

- Oren D’vann, Editor.

## Matters of Faith

### Holy Days Just Past

*July 10<sup>th</sup>: Hand’s Day (Astrid)*

Hand’s Day is a recognition of the story of Astrid and their ascension to divinity. Shrouded in secrecy, this day is most often observed by Astrid’s faithful, who counsel thieves in their skills, duties to their divine patron, and the balance between a thief and their community. For the rest of us, watch your valuables and perhaps purchase stronger locks – Hand’s Day is notoriously rife for burglary.

*July 16<sup>th</sup>: Summer’s Fair (Marius)*

The feast-day of Marius is often marked by trade caravans and bazaars, and is considered to be a lucky day for new trade contracts to be signed or negotiated. It is considered bad luck to cheat or swindle someone on Summer’s Fair, with Marius said to be watching over every transaction. In Marius’ role as the god of travel, new voyages are often begun on this day.

### \Forthcoming Holy Days

*August 8<sup>th</sup>: Mushroom Feast (Blythe)*

The holy day of the god of rot, poison, and disease is one most often celebrated with a visit to the local physician. While the faithful of Blythe may be abroad on this day – and every reasonable care should be taken to avoid them – in Harodom and tradition has formed for ensuring that your own health is good... and not leaving your food or drinks unattended.

*September 18<sup>th</sup>: Day of the Blade (Hemulis)*

The festival of Hemulis is frequently viewed by His faithful as a chance to test their mettle against one another in holy combat. However, it is also a day to begin great quests, and in military or guard organizations, it is also frequently a day upon which new officers or NCOs are named. Hemulis famously trains with his faithful on Ariel upon this day.

### A Message of Faith

Let us speak on the wonders of magic. While we may view the miracles bestowed by the gods as a necessity in our day-to-day lives, there are many who go without seeing the magic worked by clerics for weeks or months on end.

Magical intervention through clerical worship is one of the most regular and reliable ways in which someone sees magic within the day-to-day world. However, familiarity may breed contempt, and it is important to remember that the miracles granted to the faithful are wondrous indeed. A simple spell that closes even mortal wounds and is available to any number of faiths, may be the difference between life and death.

When such magics are worked on your behalf, there is often no obligation – but it is worth remembering when these miracles are worked, that the divine power behind them is exchanging this for the faith and devotion of the cleric.

# Comic Strip



*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 *Saga* is calling for donations to be raised in support of the Hammerfrost refugees. Offering up aid and succor to these refugees will help to show Scarsinvale's

character on the international stage, and also prove a chance to do real good.

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It is said that the fallen in the battle to retake Hammerfrost are remaining dead and not rising as undead, as they had previously.

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Rumblings from orcish clans to

the North whisper about daring late-night raids and the threat of war – although their target is ambiguous

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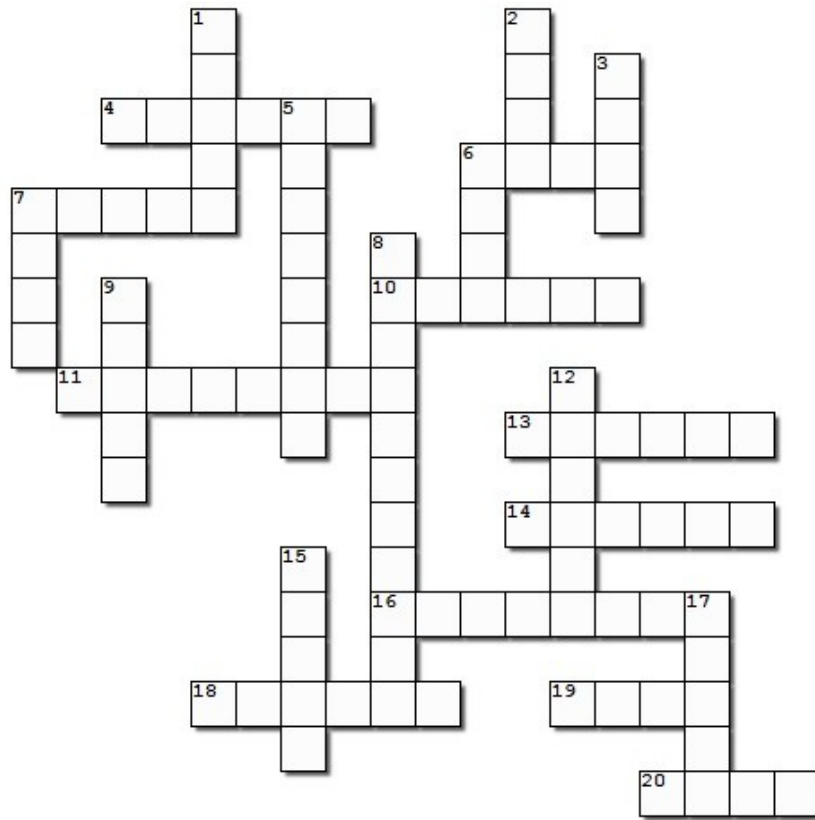
A giant worm has been spotted wearing a harness and used to till a field not far from town.

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

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 *Saga* is happy to help you reach a broader audience!

# Crossword



## Across

4. Sugar over pastries or a look in bored eyes  
 6. Highways for whales  
 7. A pipe used for music  
 10. a large, guarded house  
 11. a bug that bites through all magic  
 13. Like boulders, but much smaller  
 14. a vegetable, or center of a bone

16. A targeted killer  
 18. An absence or lack spelled like a passing  
 19. For drinking or blowing  
 20. God of 12 down

6. The sea, absent water  
 7. Tines for diners  
 8. A magic fit for a meal.  
 9. A sleeping choke  
 12. Aspirations or nighttime hauntings.  
 15. A frog's song  
 17. A stealthy assassin.

## Down

1. Precursor to wine  
 2. Cones: eat only them and perish  
 3. Victory's counterpart  
 5. An illicit herbalism.

# Riddles

## Riddle 1:

My bark is quite present,  
 My bite never sought,  
 I'm little bit sappy,  
 In my branches of thought.

**Answer 1:** *eert A*

## Riddle 2:

My tail is in the sky,  
 And my fork is in the ground;  
 And there's often stormy weather  
 Whene'er I am around.

**Answer 2:** *gninthgiL*

## Riddle 3:

I am a horse without legs;  
 I never run, but I jump.  
 I cannot spell,  
 But well know 'L'.

**Answer 3:** *thgink ssehC A*

## Riddle 4:

Binding's answer,  
 Door's request;  
 Metal riddles  
 Answered best.

**Answer 4:** *yeK*

## Riddle 5:

I am the answer to transgression,  
 A thing the wronged do,  
 The only other question,  
 Will I burn my wielder too?

**Answer 5:** *egneveR*

## Riddle 6:

Silk-weaver,  
 Venom biter,  
 Hero Slayer,  
 Bug indicter.

**Answer 6:** *redipS*

# Recipe of the Month: Sweet Rolls

*Good for breakfasts or a late-night snack, these rolls are a treat worth having on hand.*

*- O Freedman*

## Ingredients:

### Rolls:

3 tbsp unsalted butter, melted  
1 cup warm whole milk  
2 tbsp honey  
Pinch of salt  
Egg  
2 tsp active dry yeast  
2 cups all-purpose flour

### Frosting:

2 tbsp cream cheese, softened

1 tbsp unsalted butter, softened  
½ cup powdered sugar  
2 tbsp heavy cream

## Instructions:

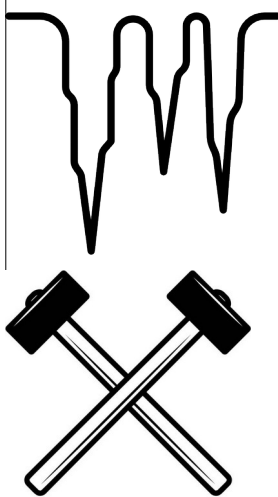
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large bowl, combine butter, milk, honey, stirring until the honey has fully dissolved. Add in salt and yeast, then follow with egg and flour, mixing until batter is smooth.

Spoon evenly into miniature bundt pans. Allow to rise for 30 minutes.

Bake for 15 minutes, or until inserted testing stick comes out clean.

While the rolls are baking, cream together cream cheese, butter and sugar in a bowl, adding enough of the heavy cream that you get a syrupy consistency. When the rolls have cooled, spoon over with a light drizzle.

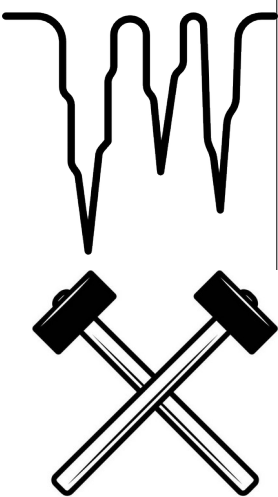
Pairs well with coffee and kippers.



## Hammerfrost Needs You!

**Food, equipment** and your **good will** are required to take the fight to the undead body snatchers!

Contact Kellskagg of the Scarsinvale Dwarven Enclave for more details!



## A Verse

Fighting a giant's like climbing a mountain,  
Or planning nefarious crime;  
There's no more to a fight than just bite after bite,  
And you win it a bite at a time.

So when straddling flashpoints,  
decide when to go,  
And with every action take care,  
For sufficiently wary, you might chance to tarry,  
And of wary-won tarry beware.

Every point that you score will add in to the pile,  
And stave off such terrible fates,  
Then decisions have weights that allow for such fetes,  
And yet meanwhile the dreamer awaits.

Your dreams so heroic, made solid with deeds,  
Might alter your destiny's plan;  
But the things that you do change the battle for you,  
And some dreams weigh much more than a man.

But the time will soon come when you must make a choice,  
If it's lives or it's chances you take,  
But whatever you do, you had best see it through,  
Or else wait for the Dreamer to Wake.