

The Scarsinvale Saga

Conemur iterum

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

Recovery From Kazzokian Attack Nears Completion

A strange fiery infernal apparently in service to Kazzok attacked Scarsinvale last Terror's Breach. Now, as the spring returns, the town has managed to mostly recover from this attack.

What initially appeared to be several powerful Kazzokian infernals was revealed to be a single one, when a portal was discovered. The same infernal, once slain, was banished back to Kazzok's realm. Subsequently the infernal would return by means of this portal.

Eventually captured instead of killed, the cycle concluded. The infernal had become the subject of local ridicule once its secret was uncovered, and it appears to have been smote directly by Kazzok, for bringing laughter in place of terror.

This, perhaps appropriately, ended the laughter.

The damages to the Scarsinvale gaol were minimal, but efforts remain underway to address the harm done by the infernal in its

various outings, before it was successfully stopped.

Scarsinvale is resilient and strong, and the means to keep the community together in times of hardship are at all of our disposal. However, this whole incident raises a troubling question.

Infernals are often sent or summoned, and portals are mystically expensive. What end did this attacker serve – or whom?

Bone Lord Attacks Scarsinvale: Abducts Bodies

The attack of a bonelord on Scarsinvale during Terror's Breach leads to the question of whether they may be running out of fodder for new undead in Riverwood. The taking of bodies may be a morale issue as well; it can be disconcerting to not know what has become of friends or foe.

If you find that people or persons in your body have gone missing following a fight or confrontation (whether with undead or otherwise), try to search the immediate area for clues. Do not go out alone in search of bodies,

lest your good nature lead you to become one of them.

The abduction of a notable dwarf of the area may simply imply that the undead need more fodder to create further undead. However, since the dwarves of Scarsinvale have been a potent force in helping to fight this threat, it may also be a targeted threat.

Do not despair; if they are put to such trouble to abduct further fodder for undead creation, it merely means that Scarsinvale has its foes on the run!

A Great Shadow Upon the Veil?

Local dwarf Kelskagg reports that during his period as a spirit following his death, he perceived a "great shadow" upon the veil. Its exact nature is unknown, but some manner of evil presence was detected by Kelskagg as a spirit, described by him to healers as "hungry".

This kind of spiritual turbulence has been seen before, and effects that cause fear (such as are frequently found during Breach) may be especially perilous to bare spirits.

However, this is also something that the *Saga* encourages adventurers within the town to pay attention to. A peril beyond the grave may lead to more undead forming, and a strong emotional presence may be connected to the Revenant Usurper in Hammerfrost's awakening.

Be vigilant for signs of necromancy (disturbed places of rest), and if you gain any further information, please reach out to the *Saga* with details – to better inform your friends and kin.

Creature Feature: Zombies

The Saga *seeks to highlight a few of the strange creatures that adventurers may find in their travels, so that people can better learn about them before they get jumped. In this edition, we will talk about zombies.*

Although there is a spell that specifically creates a type of zombie, the term is used as a catch-all for mindless corporeal undead with full – or most, flesh intact. Zombies are typically strong, resilient, and difficult to permanently kill.

Traditional zombies have basic intellect, and can follow simple

simple instructions. Some more advanced zombies, often rising naturally, may be able to create rudimentary spell effects, and the beings known as ‘zombie lords’ have the capacity to work magic over foes that they have defeated and raise them as zombies in turn.

The magic that raises zombies is potent and resilient; even when felled, there is a chance that zombies will rise again. It may take several defeats before a zombie stays down. Binding arms and legs makes repeated defeat more straightforward, as long as it is done thoroughly.

Some forms of natural zombies may arise in bogs or in deserts. In bogs, low-oxygen environments will preserve corpses indefinitely, giving the bodies a form of natural tanning. In deserts, natural dessication leads zombies to be resilient and weathered.

Zombies are more likely to arise naturally in locations where bodies go uncared for. Charnel houses and mass graves may originate zombies naturally, if there is any magical influence upon them. Outside of this, large numbers of zombies often indicate a necromancer or caster to deal with.

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)

Tread carefully this month – your footing is unsure, and there may be no shortage of small traps that you could fall into. It may not be safe to remain exactly where you currently stand, but if you are obliged to move, then it will serve you well to move with care.

The Harp (Jan 29th – Feb 27th)

You will be called upon to make a leap of faith; if you choose to answer that call, then you must *commit*. Going half measure puts you at risk of not reaching the goal, and falling. You do not need to leap, but if you will do so then you must do so wholeheartedly.

The Fount (Feb 28th – Mar 30th)

Nothing comes of nothing; if you want to make advancements in this world, you will likely have to find some way to pay for the progress you would make. The strongest sign that you are reaching some kind of milestone is simple; watch for the problems that you have encountered starting to fall away.

The Dice (Mar 31st – Apr 28th)

Not everything that you hear will be true; not even the bad things, which are more tempting to take at face value. You

may feel an inclination to give more mind to something that agrees with your existing preconceptions, especially bad things about a person; instead, try to give everyone the benefit of the doubt if you can, yourself included.

The Arrow (Apr 29th – May 27th)

It is a good month for self-improvement. Take the time to take a look at yourself in the mirror, and begin to improve the world by changing anything you don’t like to see in it. You may make more progress if you ask for help from a friend; **The Shield** may render aid.

The Stone (May 28th – Jun 25th)

Your future holds mortal peril; whether to you or another is unclear. There is a high likelihood that someone will come at you with a wish to cease who you are – be prepared to defend yourself, or seek the aid of others who will come to help you.

The Coin (June 26th – July 28th)

A friend will offer you some good advice this month, but it may be difficult to hear. Remember that your friend is looking to help you, and that while they may be incorrect, the advice is likely being given in good faith. Just because someone’s words may hit hard, it doesn’t mean that they’re wrong.

The Spade (July 29th – Aug 30th)

Getting through hardship can sometimes leave you with habits that were helpful in tough times, but don’t serve you well in other times. Seek to use the tools you have made for yourself appropriately to the situation that you are currently in, and allow yourself to breathe.

The Blade (Aug 31st – Sept 27th)

It’s an important month to remember to hydrate; both literally (always good advice), but also figuratively. Your soul needs nourishment as well as your body, and taking on grief or obligations that you don’t have to can hurt you.

The Mask (Sept 28th – October 31st)

Good habits famously take longer to adopt than bad ones, and they’re much easier to lose as well. If you are currently in the process of trying to start a good habit, you will face challenges this month; be resolute, and don’t give up, and you might yet see it through.

The Shield (Nov 1st – Nov 29th)

It’s important to remember that you’re not the only person allowed to have good ideas. If you let other people in, they will do their best to assist you, and you may benefit from hearing a perspective other than your own on a matter that is important to you. Most importantly, others can help you to lift something that you previously found too difficult to carry on your own; be a friend by letting friends help you.

The Hearth (Nov 30th – Dec 30th)

New life issues forth from ground that may have seemed unplantable in winter’s chill. Keep an eye out for new opportunities, notably in places that previously seemed barren of them; as the world turns, and the seasons change, so too do the situations in which you may reap benefit or face adversity, so don’t give up just on the strength of one setback.

Editorial: New Year, New Chances

Though the winter may be harsh, a new season brings with it new chances.

Once again the time has come to seed the ground with the crops that will sustain us through the rest of the year. In a sense this is a potent metaphor; although crops grow slowly and with great effort in the Reach, the resilient ones do so and sustain the populace.

So may it well be said of all of us.

The ability to thrive in harsh environs – and to adapt the environs to be less harsh – can make a struggling settlement prosper.

Now is the time to break ground on projects, with so many skilled and talented craftsmen to hand. Now is the time that building a community capable of prospering has the best chance of success.

Scarsinvale began as a dream, and has flourished into a reality

worth waking up to. It may be difficult to think of growing and expanding as the foes of the community continue to do the same, but it is the best way to ensure that they do not break your spirit or have it all their own way.

Every community like Yorik or Scarsinvale has faced such challenges. Some have not been equal to the task, not for want of determination. But hope, and judicious use of cunning *can* win the day.

- Oren D'vann, Editor.

Matters of Faith

Holy Days Just Past

April 21st: Dragon's Feast

Since the worship of Strega was, until relatively recently, a mystery cult, there are not a lot of 'traditional observances for this holiday. However, non-clerics of Strega are encouraged to hold lavish feasts, where they can show their wealth and success to others. Endeavours that seek to make profit are encouraged to begin or take important steps on this holiday, for the Dragon Queen's benediction.

April 23rd: Alwyn's Thunder

The benedictions of Alwyn can help to determine a good spring crop from a mediocre or poor one. Rain dances, folk festivals, and offerings to the sometimes capricious Skywalker are common among both faithful and laity alike. It is a common superstition that waking to a peal of thunder on April 23rd indicates divine providence and good luck going through the year to come.

\Forthcoming Holy Days

May 9th: Order's March (Brack)

Brack's holiday is often observed with the renewal of vows and contracts, and it is considered an auspicious time to pursue new endeavours of this kind. The worship of Brack is most often evident at this time; otherwise quiet civil servants, judges, magistrates, and other members of civil office may be more likely to wear prominent religious symbols, if they so worship.

May 27th: Twilight Festival (Sasha)

The Twilight Festival is celebrated as a recognition of the mysteries and wonder of magic. Beginning at sunset, in places that have strong representation either in the church or of wizards of all kinds, a dusk-to-dawn meal is openly prepared, more lavish in areas where the working of magic has borne wonders in the past year. Rainbows are often seen come the dawn.

A Message of Faith

Finding a cause or purpose to put your efforts behind can be gratifying. Finding that those efforts are less than perfectly successful can be frustrating and disillusioning.

It is not uncommon for those who seek to make a change in the world around them to hear others say 'nothing changes – this is simply how life is'. These people may be trying to frustrate the change-maker, but it is just as likely that they are themselves burnt out, frustrated by the failure of their own efforts.

Change can be slow, and difficult to start. But lack of effort to create change will only allow for change that trends toward the simplest state.

It therefore stands to reason that if one wishes to see the world change, we are doubly tasked; first, to persist, even if the world is well-populated with cynics, and second; if we are ourselves frustrated, to still nurture hope in others.

Rumours and Clues

Strange rumours have circulated to the Saga publishing house. These have been passed along, unverified, for your erudition, but we cannot guarantee their complete accuracy.

A source that wishes to remain anonymous spins a tale of three households banding together late at night to drive an unknown creature off their lands, only to find the creature dead with a smouldering handprint burned into its chest. No sign of any such creature was found when sentinels arrived next morning.

*
Local farmers are nervously reporting sightings of an unseasonal amount of large ravens and other carrion eaters in the area.

*
Charred corpses have been found occasionally throughout the winter. Most have been burned to the point that they have been unrecognizable but some have been found to be at least humanoid in frame.

*
Local celebrity Arngeirr Jorðson will be spending a considerable amount of time deep in study at the heart of the bog and wishes not to be disturbed. He leaves a warning to all those seeking him: the bog is an extremely dangerous place and it is his duty as co-champion to the resident witch to expel any uninvited guests. Those with legitimate business are reminded to first consult co-champion Wren Lifebringer and to leave all weapons outside the threshold of the bog itself after receiving permission to enter.

Suspicious Dave's Stews Presents:

Memories of Fine Footwear

"People have said our stew beef reminds them of boot leather. Yes."

Community Board

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

*
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.

*
An egg filled all with yolk was laid by a rooster under a full moon.

*
A small cache of coins was found in an old shack belong to a potter, along with tools of

Assassination. It is thought that she might have been a killer for hire.

*
A swan with its head removed continued its mournful song.

*
Portents: A solar eclipse. The song of a million cicadas. The early blooming of spring flowers.

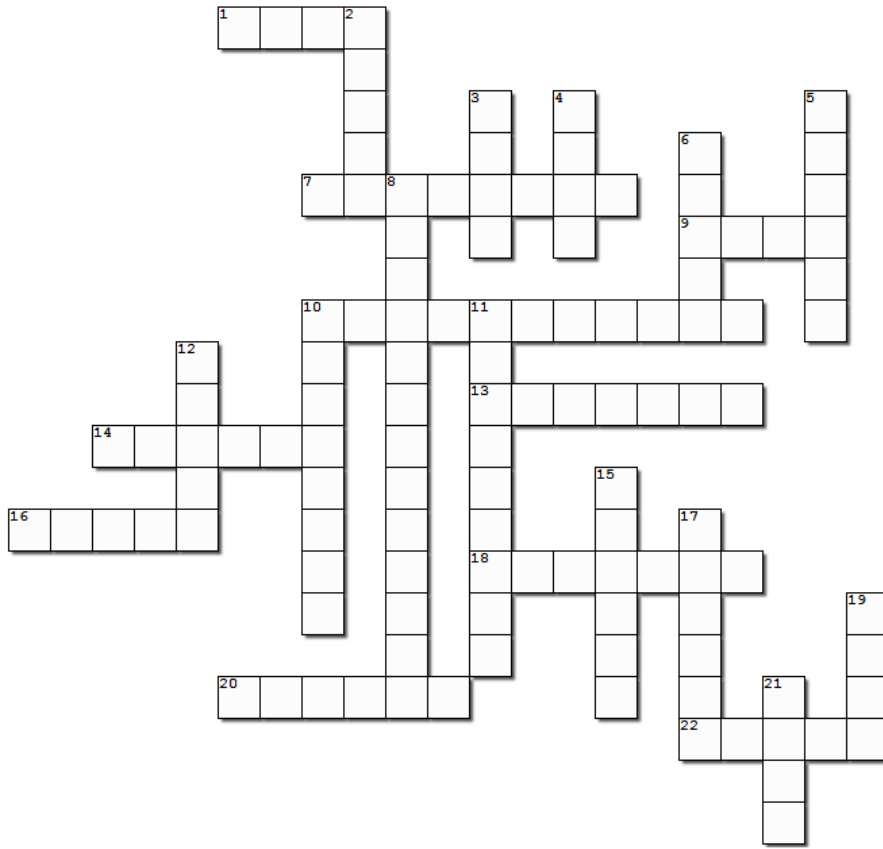
The Saga is brought to you by our Generous Advertisers.

For the duration of the Hammerfrost Refugee Crisis, all proceeds from advertisements will go to the relief fund.

You know advertising works – because you saw it here!

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

1. King's Day: ____ 30th
7. A fete or fair
9. Drive or urge; alt, a bequest
10. Use to write a letter on paper.
13. Actions in spite of fear.
14. A cup that rhymes with a large lizard.
16. Belief and fidelity.
18. A spiky object scattered to founder charging horses.

20. Yorik is two of this old this year.

22. Not East, West, or South.

Down

2. A spell used to remove arcane writings.
3. Silver, gold, and copper.
4. A spell or anxious emotion.
5. Riches aplenty!
6. God of wind and rain.
8. A card trick, or making a coin vanish, say.

10. Number or amount

11. Universal keys

12. The end of life

15. A manor, grounds, and outbuildings

17. Green skinned humanoids that can't cast arcane.

19. An expressed dream or desire.

21. An (often) surprising defense against thieves!

Riddles

Riddle 1:

Night-time wanderer,
Cross the sky,
Drive the seas,
Who am I?

Answer 1: *nooM*

Riddle 2:

Tiny weaver,
Vicious bite,
Common wisdom:
Do not fight.

Answer 2: *redipS*

Riddle 3:

Golden treasure lies within,
Milky palace,
Bony skin.

Answer 3: *gge nA*

Riddle 4:

I am a common tool,
And I am a common threat;
Heart stops to see,
Crowd up to me,
You might then find regret.

Answer 4: *efinK*

Riddle 5:

What do the poor have,
The wealthy need,
The silent say,
The loud withhold,
And if you ate only it you
would die?

Answer 5: *gnihtoN*

Riddle 6:

I am a cause of discontent,
An unending hunger,
A lust for coin and wealth;
Never-sated, ever-eating,
Until I consume my host?

Answer 6: *deerG*

Recipe of the Month: Cantaloupe and Cucumber Salad

The early harvest of fruit and vegetable from the late spring and early summer offers relief against the root vegetables and 'that which will keep' of the winter months.

- O Freedman

Spiced Pepitas

1/2 Cup roasted unsalted pepitas (hulled pumpkin seeds)
1/2 Tsp olive oil
1/8 - 1/4 Tsp cayenne powder
1/2 Tsp paprika

Salad

1/4 Cup your best olive oil
2 Tbsp lime juice
1 Tsp honey
1/4 Tsp salt
freshly ground pepper

1/2 Medium to large ripe cantaloupe (peeled and seeded)
4 Mini cucumbers (sliced on bias, 1/4 inch thick)
4 Oz (115 gm) feta (crumbled)
Broad-leaf parsley (small chop)

Place the pepitas in a medium fry pan over medium heat. Cook stirring occasionally, until starting to brown and making a crackling sound.

Remove from the heat and stir in the olive oil, coating completely. Add the cayenne and paprika and stir to coat. Add some salt to taste.

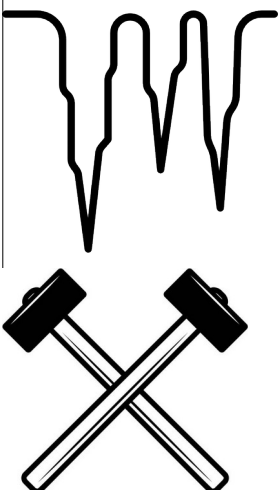
Whisk the 1/4 cup of olive oil with the lime juice, honey, salt and pepper until combined. Set aside.

Cut the cantaloupe into 3/4 inch (2

cm) wedges. Cut each wedge into 3 or 4 pieces. Place in a large mixing bowl with cucumber. Drizzle with dressing and gently mix.

Arrange on a shallow serving dish. Sprinkle with Feta cheese and some spiced pepitas and the Italian parsley. Squeeze a lime wedge over salad if desired and serve.

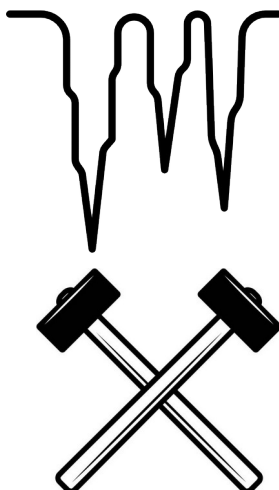
Fresh and spicy, giving a frisson of excitement to lengthening spring nights and the promise of a warm summer to come.



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 By Oren D'vann

The map unfurls, the world an open book;
The future promises both weal and woe -
The secrets there for grasping, if you look;
Raise mortal hand against undying foe.

The stakes shall rise, the odds not on your side;
Twas ever thus, and ever thus shall be -
So face against the foe that you've decried,
And when the fight shall come, then stand or flee.

But in those moments, yes, do not discount
The fleeting joy that's found in friend or kin;
Those precious chances all of them amount
To chance morale to make a loss a win.

The year folds out before us, like that tome;
Our cup with grand potential overruns;
And in this land where many monsters roam,
The fire within us burns like many suns.

So brace the foe, and plant the seed, both actions
That taken both together keep us free;
That foul undead and other wicked factions,
Might break upon a bastion such as we.

Like seeds, we plant our foes, to grow our hope;
Let undead borne of strife be set to rest -
And those who cannot countenance us cope -
They have not yet begun to see our best.

Comic Strips

DUNGEON BUDDIES #6

THE LEGENDARY WEAPON,
FATED TO STEAL THE TIDES
OF DARKNESS



THE DAGGER OF THE GIANT
QUEEN YKTHRK!



THE TREASURE HORDE OF
THE NAMELESS HORROR?

Oren

BUT WHERE CAN IT BE FOUND?



THE VOLCANIC CAVES OF
SKULLSCAPER PEAK?

WHY DOES NO ONE EVER
GET THEIR STUFF OUT OF
THE LOST AND FOUND?



DUNGEON BUDDIES



Don't worry, I don't
have the Minotaur
flu.



I tried to explain. "Escheu!
Escheu!" I said.

Oren



You only get that if you
drink from the old wells,
and I escheu that.



I could have chosen
better wording..

Omens and Portents: Understanding Signs pt. 1

With the recent solar eclipse, a number of rumours have circulated about what such an event might mean. Eclipses have marked the passages of kings and the rising and falling of empires – but they're not alone in marking unusual tidings. In this section, we will try to discuss some common omens and portents.

Astronomy is the non-stellar movement of heavenly bodies. **Astronomy** signs may include:

- Meteor showers (a sign of a number of lesser infernals soon to arrive in the region)
- Super Moon (a sign that Fiona's power is especially waxing in the calendar month)
- Lunar Eclipse (secrets abound, your eyes may deceive you.)

Augury is the study of the movements and behaviours of birds to predict the future.

Augury signs may include:

- Hawks flying low in the daytime indicates a coming attack or reversal.
- Fowl, including barnyard fowl, roosting in the day may well portent rain.
- If, in autumn, birds grow tame and docile, expect a winter too cold for game hunting.
- When the swallow builds its nest high in the trees, the coming summer is likely to be dry and harsh for farming.
- A killed robin, messenger of Alwyn, will portend bad things for a community; be wary of ill-chance and the wrath of a vengeful storm.

Pyromancy is the study of flame and fire to predict that which is to come. Practice safe **pyromancy** using a candle, with a sand bucket and water bucket near to hand.

Pyromancy signs may include:

- A candle that splits to two flames indicates the intervention of a powerful spirit or demon in a matter.
- A candle flame growing tall immediately indicates a lot of energy coming in your direction.
- Burn marks up the side of the candle indicates a hidden betrayal.
- A candle flame hissing and popping in a still room indicates turbulence ahead. Be wary of your current path, as it may be perilous.