

The Scarsinvale Saga

absit omen

June, 2025 A.T.
Year of the Sneezing Mustelid

Spiders in the Reach: "Don't Fight Them in Caves!"

Spring has ushered new life into the Scarsinvale region – unfortunately, extending to the large population of spiders that has hatched, and now lays in wait for prey from the surrounding farmsteads.

Giant spiders, some as large as dogs, humans, or even horses, have been spotted in the region surrounding Scarsinvale. Some locals have reported abductions of farm animals, pets, and even people, as these ravenous creatures emerge from slumber.

Twelve nests have been positively confirmed in the Scarsinvale region, with two such nests fully burned out through the careful application of force by representatives of the town.

Giant spiders are not an unfamiliar threat to the Lakes Region. Although some spiders do manifest additional abilities, their primary threat comes from their ability to entangle prey in sticky webbing, to paralyze or poison with their bite, and of

course, to do injury with their bites.

With the ability to walk on vertical or inverted surfaces, giant spiders can easily get behind a party in a narrow corridor, boxing them in and forcing them to fight on multiple fronts at once.

While it is advised to not confront spiders in caves, if you must do so, bring light, antivenom, and means by which to make fire.

Illegal Military Force From Baron's Lands Enter Scarsinvale Turf

The Barony is currently dealing with a rebel uprising, as persons within that territory, discontent with the governance offered by the self-titled Baron, rise up against it.

One such group, outside of the Baron's lands, were travelling through the Reach, where they were pursued by the Baron's forces. This projection of force is in contravention to the agreements reached in the Diet of Scarsinvale, and forces from the town of Scarsinvale confronted the invading group.

By the time of the intervention, the rebels had been killed, and their bodies desecrated (heads removed to be put on pikes as an example to their cohorts.)

Inquiries were sent directly to the Baron, who acknowledged that a priest of Brack struggling in his faith for whatever reason, had acted as an inquisitor in this matter, killing his own son as an act of attempted penitence before Brack.

All Baronial forces involved are kill-on-sight in Scarsinvale.

Assault on Liliput Turns Up Answers, Further Questions

Liliput, a town near to Scarsinvale known to have fallen to the forces of the undead Empress, was assaulted by forces from Scarsinvale this past month.

The undead in residence were varied in nature; outstanding work was done by the mechanic Blaze, who was able to personally deal with a number of the unquiet dead, through the use of clever mechanics. This act of justice no doubt helped to ease the spirits of those slain when the town was overtaken, as well as giving comfort to their survivors.

Renowned physician and Hemulite swordsman Bales Dreadbane confronted an undead being still tied to Hemulis, and through a great expression of faith, was able to defeat this latter in pitched combat, using the miracles of the god of heroes and battles to redeem the half-living soul.

This is just the first blow in a new campaign as the living struggle against the dead attempting to overtake the Reach. Stay alert, and tell your neighbours, if you see undead forces in your area.

Bogwitch's Bounty Barely Benevolent

Reports have come in that local notable fae witch The Bogwitch has been experimenting with agriculture of late. These endeavours have included ensorcelled produce of many descriptions.

Some fey plants are clearly thus; these plants produce magical effects that can throw a mortal a distance of ten feet, or which may cause a rotting flesh effect, that mimics a slow version of that most ignoble curse.

Some plants however more closely resemble familiar mortal produce. Kellskagg reports that he

had the (dubious) pleasure of consuming a potato that caused all of his limbs to fall off.

We at the *Saga* recommend checking your produce for magical effects as some of these plants may be more able to cross-breed with produce familiar to Ariel.

Beware what you say near apparent corn, as it may have ears; potatoes that do not cause loss of limbs may still have eyes. Further tired puns may be available in the form of other enchanted produce; be careful and do not try unfamiliar vegetables alone.

Dwarven Refugee Clan Forms "Silverfall" Pact

The *Saga* is pleased to report that one group of dwarven refugees that have settled in the areas in and around Scarsinvale have made their home in some of the unused or abandoned silver mines that dot the region near the city-state.

Calling themselves 'Silverfall', this group of refugees apparently hailing originally from Hammerfrost have set up homes and workshops in and around the mines. It is hoped by those local to Scarsinvale that this may mean that the mines in the region, once quite productive, may prove to be so once again.

Dwarven refugees from Hammerfrost have traditionally made up a large factor in Scarsinvale politics. This increased settlement should help this faction to both contribute to the material wealth of the region, as well as working toward peace in the region through the establishment of trade with similarly minded groups.

Although it is still too early to tell what challenges this Silverfall faction will face, the *Saga* wishes them luck as they work to establish these mines as a going concern within the Reach and the greater Scarsinvale region.

On Burial Practices Within the Reach

In seeking to expand knowledge of beliefs and practices within the Scarsinvale region, local Jerrohite Kellskagg has kindly prepared a short essay on common burial practices.

On Burial Practices in the Reach — For the Safety of All

As a newly appointed priest of Jerroh, god of natural death and Shepherd to those passed on, I write today with urgency and reverence. The Reach is vast and varied, with many traditions for honoring the dead. In these dangerous times, I urge all folk, regardless of creed, to take care in how they treat the fallen for the sake of both the dead and the living.

The Danger of the Unburied

To leave a body unburied is not merely a dishonor, it is a danger. Bodies left to rot encourage disease and attracts beasts, both mundane and monstrous. Grave robbers see the unguarded dead as opportunity. But beyond these worldly threats lie worse still.

Because of ancient battlefields and the scars left behind by reckless magic, bodies laid improperly to rest here can rise again. Bog zombies, restless wraiths, or as a necromancer's thrall.

All can be born from the remains of those denied peace. I say this plainly: you protect your community when you bury your dead with care, but not all burials are equal in the eyes of the fallen.

When it comes to your kin, let respect guide your hand. A priest of Jerroh, such as myself, should be called to perform last rites if possible. Though Jerrohite priests are rare in the Reach, I now reside in Scarsinvale and offer my services freely.

In my absence, I ask that you do the following:

1. Bury the body whole.

If the deceased was wounded or dismembered, recover any missing parts if it is safe to do so. If they were desecrated, body parts taken as trophies, inter them with what was taken as soon as you are able.

2. Include tokens of their life. Small mementoes, keepsakes, or tools they cherished — these guide the spirit and ease their crossing to the River of Souls.

3. Speak of them. Share stories and memories aloud over their grave. This honors both the dead and the living, giving peace and closure to all.

4. If burial is not possible, build a pyre. Fire, sacred to Callis, purifies and protects the dead. Collect and shelter the ashes or scatter them in a place the departed loved as you speak of them as they lived.

5. If you can't tend to the bodies immediately, note their location and return later. Respect the dead, but also your own lives. Return with the aid of neighbors or Scarsinvale itself.

The Battlefield and the Wayside

Many of the fallen in the Reach may be found on the wayside or on a battlefield not your own. Even so, do not leave the dead unburied. A shallow grave is better than none, and even a simple

grave marker can ease a soul's passing. It may feel right to leave fallen foes where they lay, but this is short-sighted. The dead left in bitterness are prone to rise again, most often as wraiths vengeful and maddened. They lash out at any living they encounter, especially those responsible for their death.

A Final Word

If you are within the lands of Scarsinvale and wish for a priest of Jerroh to oversee the proper rites, I ask you to find me, Kellskagg, in Scarsinvale town. I am here to serve. The death of a loved one is never easy, but with care, reverence, and the guidance of Jerroh, we can see them safely to their rest and protect the living as we do.

In death, dignity; in life, compassion.

*Kellskagg
Frostbreaker,
Priest of Jerroh,
Scarsinvale*

Knowing the Towns

The Saga is pleased to feature the writings of Bales Dreadbane, a local scholar of healing and of battle, as he describes some of the factions known throughout the Reach. In this article, Bales discusses The Towns of the Near Reach.

It is vitally important that those travelling to reach, especially those traveling by foot to know what lands to traverse to and avoid.

Scarsinvale: A growing settlement of seasoned adventurers and trademasters. Scarsinvale can now be considered a trade hub and a settlement forged by the conflicts it faces. Short of military occupied lands, Scarsinvale can be considered one of the safest lands in the Reach.

The Baron's Lands: Other than Scarsinvale, the Baron's lands are often the safest for travellers to stay. More than 10000 soldier strong, the Baron's lands have a well known

reputation for travelers. However, travelers are highly cautioned from speaking ill about the Baron in any negative manner, lest they be considered to be a rebel and swiftly put to sword.

The Tangled Lands: A labyrinth of politics and unrestrained experimentation. Avoid these lands as much as possible.

Grimwalker Fortress: Kazzok worshippers. Avoid at all costs as they have been known to kidnap travellers.

Smitty's River: A nearby town to Scarsinvale. A Population of 1500. Exports are lumber and iron ore. They also have a small fleet of ships for trade and 2 ships for protection that each have 50 hardened sailors.

Parathon: Population was 800. Nothing is alive in this town and no evidence of what happened. Avoid at all costs.

East Port: A population consisting of 2000 individuals. Exports are herbal/alchemy mixtures, fish, tools, and leather goods. They have a small fleet of ships for trading with hardened sailors present.

Port town: Leader of the town is an exceptional mage named Renngard Corrado. Population 1000 Exports are gems, rubies, and all manner of materials/oddities. They have a small fleet of ships for trade and 3 powerful war ships with 70 hardened sailors each with a very large dock yard to accommodate. The town pride itself in being the best gem trade exporters in the region.

Lillyput: Formerly the headquarters of all Magi in the Reach, Lillyput has fallen to empress control. Half dead warriors have taken over. They are incredibly dangerous and should be avoided at all costs..

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)

There is nothing that can stand in your way, if you have friends and allies at your back. However, you should be wary – while you can no doubt trust them to do what they think you want, a breakdown in communication can lead to unintended strife between allies.

The Harp (Jan 29th – Feb 27th)

You will find new challenges in your path this month. These can also be new opportunities, either for enrichment or for personal growth. In either case, do not be afraid to back down if an individual challenge is too much to brace; another will be along soon.

The Fount (Feb 28th – Mar 30th)

If you don't like the weather, wait ten minutes. You will be in tumult this month, your fate uncertain as a number of unexpected happenstances will occur to you at once. Make a new friend and you will reap the benefits – just remember that sometimes you will be signing on for new foes as well.

The Dice (Mar 31st – Apr 28th)

There will be death close to you this month – not necessarily of a friend, family, or an ally, but someone close and

meaningful to you. Reflecting on what this means to you may help you to decide what to do next – after all, it may serve as a *momento moris* – all persons die as time marches its merry pace.

The Arrow (Apr 29th – May 27th)

A candle burns brightest when allowed to stand, and protected from the wind. Keep this in mind as you foster the skills of a friend, ally, or protege in the weeks and months to come. Offering some guidance, support, and protection from the buffeting winds and drowning waters will pay dividends as yet unrealized.

The Stone (May 28th – Jun 25th)

Strength flows from the belief that tomorrow can be better. There will be an opportunity to significantly improve your fortunes in the near future, if you have but the firmness of character to grasp it, and the belief that doing so will have the desired effect.

The Coin (June 26th – July 28th)

Sometimes a coin rests upon its edge. This is when you have the most opportunity, for at this inflection point, you might influence whether it lands dexter or sinister. Lucky numbers are 14, 9 and 11. Beware someone making an offer that seems too good to be true – it probably is.

The Spade (July 29th – Aug 30th)

Decide what is worth pursuing in life, and chase after it. You may find that you have less time than you might once have thought to make the best of the life available to you – so it behooves you to seek out that which is good in life, for yourself or for others.

The Blade (Aug 31st – Sept 27th)

This is a good time to pursue a meaningful relationship with another person. This does not have to be romantic – but the stars have aligned, and this is a good time to shore up a friendship, partnership, or collegial relationship.

The Mask (Sept 28th – October 31st)

The roundabout path will pay you the greatest dividend in the struggle soon to come. Direct action may produce direct results, but you may not be pleased with those results if you do not undertake the action with care, and with an eye toward lateral thinking and possibly even deception.

The Shield (Nov 1st – Nov 29th)

You may soon receive an outreach from someone who is a rival, an adversary, or even an outright enemy. They may make an argument that seems reasonable at the time, and it may serve your interests to hear them out, but be wary; this was not an adversary you picked up casually, and their motivation for trying to change this narrative should be treated at the very least as potentially suspect.

The Hearth (Nov 30th – Dec 30th)

Hold close to the precious people in your life. Take care to shield them from harm, while allowing them to express themselves in their truest form. Be wary of anyone who proposes that you take away someone's liberty in the interests of protecting their safety; if someone gives that up of their own volition, that is one thing, but not something that can be decided by another.

Editorial: Be Your Community's Voice

You may notice that more and more often, the *Saga* is working to feature the words of community members as it reports on local happenings and speaks to matters of concern for the local community.

You may be surprised to learn that this is not an accident.

Oren D'Vann of Harodom is not a resident of Scarsinvale; news may be reported to Oren, and then through Oren, but it

comes at a bit of a delay in part because the words are taking a hundred mile round trip. Every effort, I am told, is made to maintain accuracy of reporting.

At present, I'm not quite sure where Oren is. However, I was given instruction to ensure that the paper is distributed, and most of the articles, editorials, and features were already written and laid out. As I was delivering some materials to the print shed, I have taken the opportunity to say my piece.

Speak for your community. Running the paper is a lot of work – let the minotaur do that much. But let the words be yours, so that you know that they are true – or at least, you know the people who have said them.

Part of keeping your friends and neighbours safe is sharing what you know. This is a better than average way to do so, and I'm happy to pick up the slack while the minotaur is off galavanting somewhere.

- *Nameless, Stand-in Editor*

Matters of Faith

Holy Days Just Past

May 9th: Order's March (Brack)

The faithful of Brack will often observe Order's March in quiet meditation and reflection upon the paradoxes of law in a civil society. Some superstitious followers of Brack will begin regimes of crackdown on criminal activity on this day, in hopes that the Lawgiver will bless them in this endeavour. It is advised that legal documents be signed on this auspicious day, by priests of Brack.

May 27th: Twilight Festival (Sasha)

Mages and other students of magic alike mark the twilight festival by trying to share the wonder of magic with one another and with the population at large. Beginning at sundown, this festival will often include a large meal, and demonstrations of magical power and use for the populace. New arcane apprenticeships often begin upon this festival.

Forthcoming Holy Days

June 12th: Mother's Blessing (Atha)

The priests of Atha mark the 12th of June as their holy day, when the woods are warm, with leaves thick on the trees. The first of the spring crops are available to be blessed, although priests of Atha will often renew blessings upon farms and mines on this date. It is considered good fortune to tithe to shrines and temples to Atha, to ensure a bountiful harvest to come.

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.

A Message of Faith

I would take this opportunity to speak about *intent* and *belief*.

Intent is key to the understanding of both arcane and divine magic. If you focus on the intent to cast one spell, but make the words and gestures to call forth a different miracle as a priest, you get no outcome, even if the words and gestures were perfect for the unintended spell.

So it is with life. If you focus on one thing but pursue another, your *intent* may undermine your *action*. Act then, with intent – take actions that support that intent, and make sure that you align your intent with your belief.

Belief can be a powering factor for intent, as well as a stabilizing one. Instead of just saying 'I believe in <x god>', consider what it is about that divinity that speaks to you. It is sometimes the case that in service to others, we find ourselves – and in finding ourselves, we grow.

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.

Some undead are thought to have fallen prey to the aggressive spiders in this region. Skeletons are unlikely to fall prey to the spiders, that seek the juices and flesh of the living, but as the actions of the undead are antithetical to all life, be wary when cutting open cocoons lest you have another fight.

*
Farm construction is now complete in Scarsinvale, just in time for the late spring planting season. This promises good food through the winter.

*
The Barony has disavowed the group of soldiers that have made their way through the Reach in pursuit of rebels fleeing the Barony. These persons are considered to be armed and very dangerous.

*
Strange vegetable creatures have been reported by travellers through the region. It is not currently known whether this is actually the case, or the result of said travellers having consumed hallucinogenic mushrooms that have been growing up with the frequent rains through the region.

*
Undead attacks continue.

Suspicious Dave's Stews Presents:

Hellipede Sunrise

"Enormous monstrous centipedes do not appear visibly in this dish."

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 retaking of Hammerfrost. A great deal of war materiel is required to lay siege to the city, and doing so

is the best way to help hem in the undead menace.

*
A traveller near Burick reports hearing a singing from the near marshes, and going into them, finding only the bog-mummified corpse of some luckless predecessor, wrapped in a strange glowing moss that sang a heartrending threnody.

Be on the lookout for any persons with a tattoo of a broken knot on their upper forearms. Avoid at all costs.

*
Helmets left upside down at night have been filled with custard.

*
Portents: A man's silhouette burns. The smell of grass.

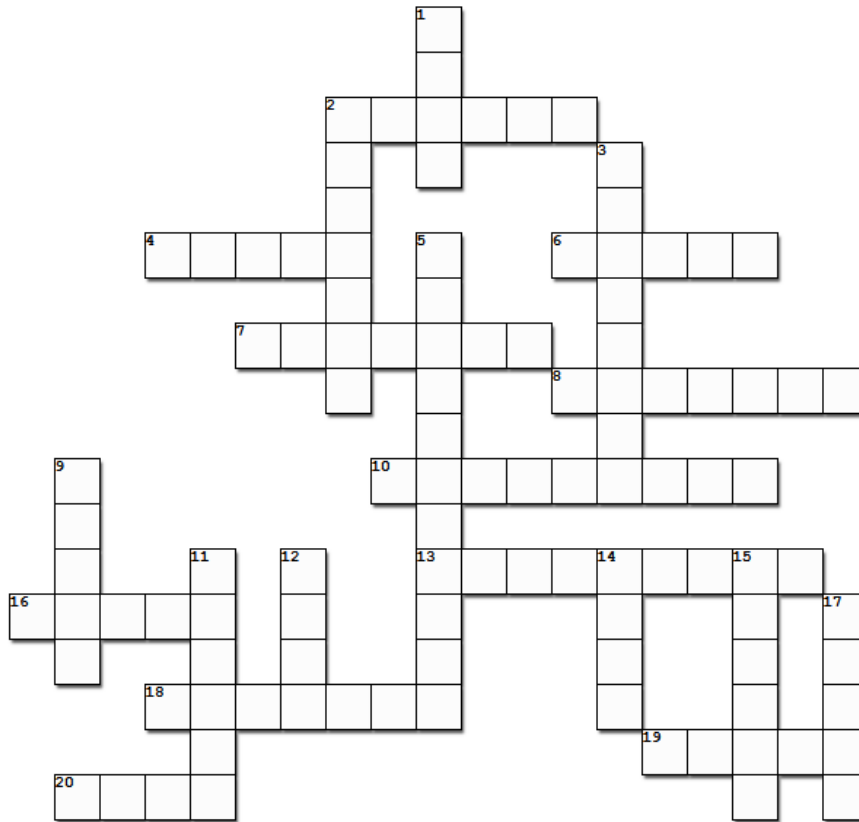
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If you have **news**, an **announcement**, a clever **contribution** or a piece of **art** you would like displayed, don't keep it to yourself! The *Saga* is happy to help you reach a broader audience!

Crossword



Across

2. Written magic for casting
4. A long blade
6. Danger, usually imminent
7. A nearby city-state
8. The veil between this realm and the next
10. An almost inescapable lethal defensive device
13. Written magic for study
16. A bloodsucking worm
18. A metal-like wood
19. A little bit of lightning
20. A bee's beer

Down

1. 'Large' as a wolf or rat
2. Don't fight them in caves
3. Star sign Feb 28-Mar 30
5. A sending on the breeze
9. A prerequisite for mead
11. A portable wall
12. Thick braided cord
14. A guitar-like stringed instrument
15. One neither subject to, nor protected by rules
17. A ground shake, an earth _____

Riddles

Riddle 1:

I hide away what's kept inside,
And with a shackle keep it shut,
Seek one with teeth to open me,
And so from coffer, open, glut.

Answer 1: *kcoL*

Riddle 2:

I am a word on the breeze,
Secret-keeper,
Scarce to be overheard.

Answer 2: *repsihW*

Riddle 3:

We take you distant places,
While sitting very still,
Upon this earth, our very birth,
Was sprung from inky quill.

Answer 3: *sdrow nettirW*

Riddle 4:

I have some numbers on my face,
But you won't find '13' anyplace.

Answer 4: *kcolC*

Riddle 5:

What room has no windows nor doors,
And appears after the rain comes?

Answer 5: *moor"hsuM*

Riddle 6:

I have no weight of substance,
but even the strongest cannot hold me for longer than a few minutes.

Answer 6: *htaerB*

Recipe of the Month: Bountiful Beer Bread

Saving the trouble of finding an independent yeast can save time and bring fresh bread all the faster to table.

- O Freedman

Oatmeal Mixture

341 ml or 1 1/2 cups bottle beer (I like to use a port for a full and rich flavour)

1 Tbsp sesame seeds

2 3/4 Cups all-purpose flour

4 Tsp baking powder

1 Tbsp granulated sugar

1/2 Tsp salt

1/4 Tsp dry mustard powder

1 1/4 Cups shredded old cheddar cheese

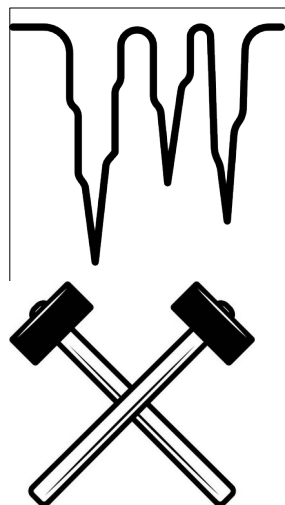
Pour beer into bowl; let stand.

Toast sesame seeds in dry skillet over medium heat about 5 minutes, stirring the seeds gently until fragrant and golden.

In large bowl, combine flour, baking powder, sugar, salt, mustard and 1 cup of the cheese. Pour in the beer; stir just to combine.

Spread in greased 8 x 4 inch loaf pan. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and sesame seeds.

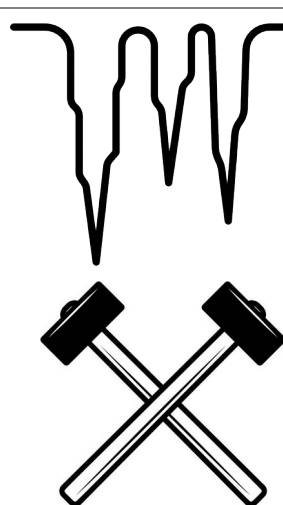
Baked in 350 deg F preheated oven about 45 minutes or until the tester inserted in centre comes out clean.



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!



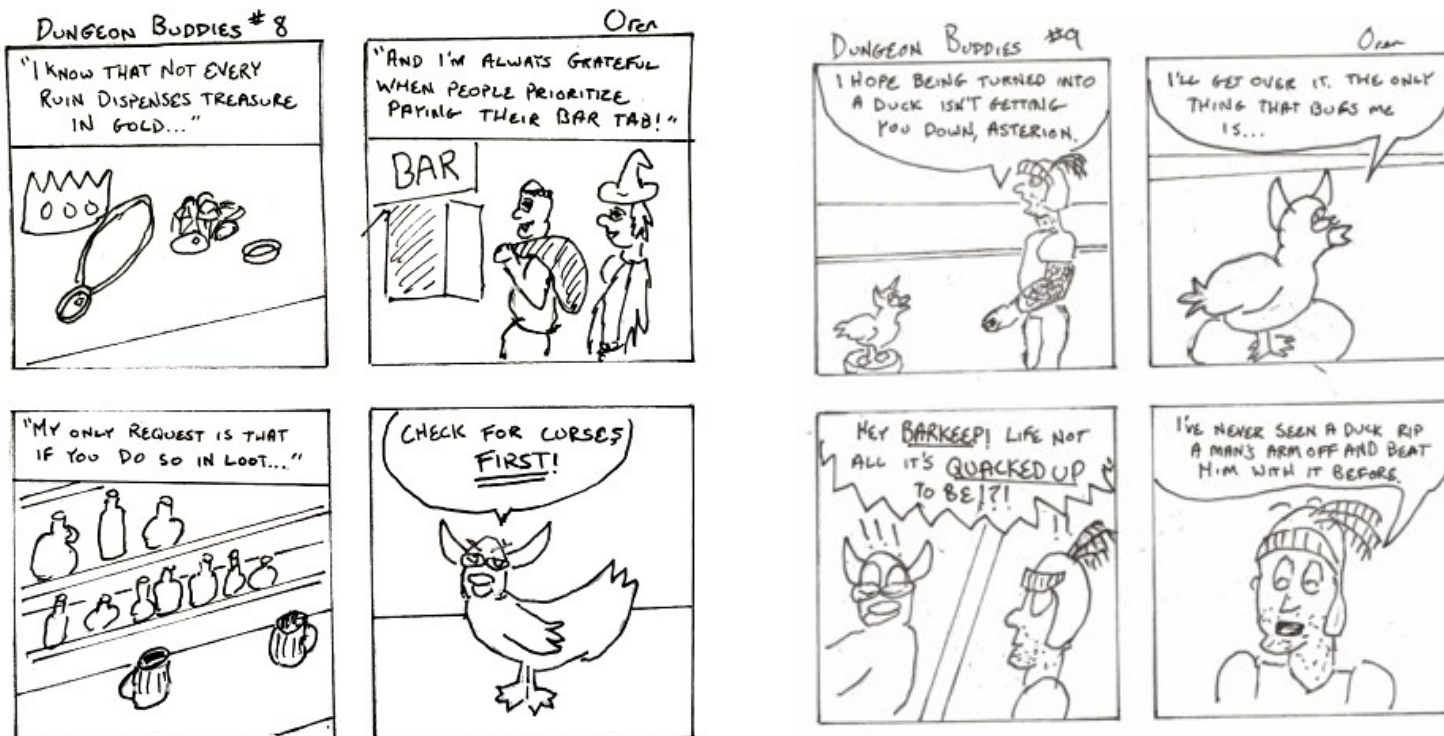
Dwarven Numbers Game

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.

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

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

Comic Strips



A Guide to the Dwarves of the Reach

Submitted as a letter to the editor by
Kellskagg Frostbreaker

Driven by our appreciation for craftsmanship, dwarves are led to set up shop near abundant resources – such as those found in the Reach. That said we dwarves are not a common folk, and dwarves are significantly outnumbered in these lands by the beardless. While it can be difficult to tell us apart at a distance, there is much you should know when dealing with the bearded folk in these parts as we are not as alike as we look.

The initial **Scarsinvale Dwarves** arrived shortly after its founding with an eye to establishing a new home. We departed Hammerfrost prior to its fall but arrived in Scarsinvale after and have bent our labours to building this town into a bastion for the people of the Reach. We have fought to carve a space out of the wilderness surrounding Scarsinvale, aiding the fine folk that live in these lands. We want the Reach to flourish as it once did, free of the cursed undead, the ravages of banditry and the tyranny of nobility.

Hearing of our successes, the dwarven refugee's began arriving after the fall of Hammerfrost. With Scarsinvale's aid and blessings, these

survivors established a new home in the local silver mine. Few of the dwarves were miners when they began, but they took to the task at hand as dwarves do. Recently renamed **Silverfall**, their community thrives as the battle for Hammerfrost continues. This group is friendly, but understandably wary of outsiders. Approach with honest intent and a desire to trade for the silver or gems they mine and you'll make fast friends. Maraud against them and earn the ire of Scarsinvale.

The **Hornbelly Clan** to the North of Scarsinvale are well established and have held their lands for many decades. They have a strong dislike of other dwarves due to old wrongs written in their Book of Grudges, both of which they refuse to elaborate on. They favour heavy armour and the traditional dwarven arms of hammer and axe. Trade deals can occur provided you have the strength of arms to defend yourself but be wary, as they do employ slaves, and those slaves must come from somewhere. They respect strength and coin and dislike visitors intensely, so you take your life into your own hands if you seek them out. Though their words are often harsh and heavy, they do not speak in the surface brogue.

The dwarven settlement of **Hammer Hall** is renowned for its warriors who often wander, acting as mercenaries to those with coin to pay or testing their blades against worthy opponents. They too respect strength of arms though with a more honourable bent. They have been allies to Scarsinvale in the past and are the most traditional clan in these lands. They too wear heavy armour and adopt the traditional arms of dwarven folk, but speak with the accented brogue of surface dwarves, an easy tell should you encounter them.

Beyond the clans listed here, are families, groups of dwarves who have taken to industry where needed to make their way in the world, often as lumberjacks, masons, miners and stone cutters. They will be as varied as any folk you could encounter but respect and integrity go far for any dwarf and all I have come across have been good hard-working sorts if well capable of defending themselves.

Should you take any message from this letter I suggest it be to treat dwarves you encounter in the Reach with a measure of respect and caution, for your own safety as much as anything.