

The Scarsinvale Saga

abundans cautela non nocet

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

Baronial Forces Besiege Scarsinvale!

A division of the Baron's forces, carrying heavy weaponry and siege tools, laid siege to the town of Scarsinvale in September.

Led by a powerful cleric of Hemulis, the professional army was resisted by Scarsinvale's irregular adventuring forces, who used hit-and-run tactics, as well as a superior knowledge of the terrain to founder their heavier carts and equipment.

Hemulite Bales Dreadbane, who led Scarsinvale's Day of the Blade celebrations, led the guerrilla forces in armed resistance against the invaders. The combined forces

were able to administer first aid and magic to injured or dying allies, and as a show of strength, also extended this courtesy to the attacking forces as well.

Notable within the conflict, Bales was able to lay low five enemy swordsmen, as well as the opposing commander, while receiving cover and support from the town's other irregulars.

Although this victory was carefully won, it is still worthy of note not merely because it helps to ensure that Scarsinvale remains a free town. It is uncommon in such engagements for irregular

forces to stand their own against a regular army, however well trained. According to a source who wished to remain anonymous, "it seemed like the Baron's forces were unprepared for the background level of Scarsinvale Bullshit."

The defenders were able to capture three of the attacking siege engines, and a number of spare components, which were taken by Scarsinvale forces and stored within the town.

This aggression from the Barony does not bode well, but we have significantly reduced their forces.

Frostbreaker Reforged: New Hope Arises!

The mighty siege-hammer, Frostbreaker, forged in an orcish smithy to bring low the walls of Hammerfrost, has been repaired.

Master smiths from the Horn-Belly clan worked with town citizens to remake the weapon. Town Seer Arn was heard to comment that they were 'beating the bad vibes out of it'.

While the weapon was remade, heroes of Scarsinvale held off infernal forces that appeared as the ritual took place – whether summoned, or themselves manifesting the aforesaid 'bad vibes'. This process took some time.

Kellskagg Frostbreaker, famous bearer of the hammer, asked those in attendance to hold thoughts of fellowship, camaraderie, and heroic deeds in their minds. While originally forged to take advantage of anger, this was in the hope to reforge it in the spirit of passion and heroism instead.

The artifact itself was asked to make a decision – whether to be anger and destruction, or to be a beacon of inspiration and the drive to rebuild. Reforged in dragon's fire, Frostbreaker was successfully remade in dragon fire and hope, bearing the burden of Purpose.

Black Circle Tangled Seek "Peace Through Dominance"

Emissaries of the Black Circle of Tangled mages have reached out to negotiate a peace with the town of Scarsinvale, which has recently had to deal with an increasing number and severity of Tangled creations.

The 'olive branch', if so it might be called, came in the form of an ultimatum: "ally with us or be destroyed". It was clear that the Tangled would not accept a peace that did not involve Scarsinvale becoming a city dominated by Tangled interests, and serving as a vassal state to that non-governmental group. This was deemed to be unacceptable.

Scarsinvale's position was effectively communicated by Jerrohite Kellskagg Frostbreaker, who gave the leader a firm handshake, and then used this leverage to deliver a headbutt, breaking the nose of the Tangled representative who teleported away.

When asked if this was the most diplomatic approach, Kellskagg said he would "do it again if they showed their faces around [here]." Scarsinvale needs and has no truck with slavers, cannibals, and torturers, and will not bend the knee to same. The Tangled will no doubt return for future 'negotiations'.

Horn-Belly Hold Assaulted by Tunneling Deadites

Burrowing undead have assaulted the home of the Horn-Belly clan, shortly after the repair of the legendary siege hammer Frostbreaker.

The hammer had recently been repaired by a master smith of the Horn-Belly clan, as described in the story on A1. However, the assaulting undead, fearing the weapon, took pains to steal it. It is unknown what particular quality of Frostbreaker the undead fear, but there is no question that this was a targeted attack to include the repaired weapon.

As the weapon is now in the hands of our enemies, it is not at this

time available to be used against the fortress dome at Fallen Rivenwood.

The undead were powerful, but made more so by the Master Stasan Thanatos, presently a bone lord.

Although the fighting was intense and the hammer was effectively removed from play, we are pleased to report that the bone lord was defeated, and banished, removing a powerful servant from the Empress' forces.

At this time, plans are being formed to make good the assault on the Domed Fortress without the powerful siege-hammer.

Stealth Assault on Black Circle Fortress Succeeds, Slays Necromancers

A stealthy assault was planned and carried out by irregular adventuring forces originating from Scarsinvale.

The Black Circle was responsible for using necrotic material supplied by the Riven Empress to aid in the creation of undead forces. These forces were then sold to the highest bidder, bringing funds into their coffers, and extending the lich queen's influence.

Regrettably, the source of the necrotic material, an undead torso, was recovered from the Black Circle before it was possible to capture it, but the raid did have several positive outcomes.

First among equals, the raid succeeded in cutting down a large group of malevolent mages inclined toward necromancy.

Secondly, the only unholy master priests left unaccounted for now are the masters of Stregan and Icculan worship.

The new dwarven master Stasan, Thanatos, was slain and his scythe was captured, the unholy weapon intended to be destroyed and the metal reused in holy works in service to Jerroh.

Although not every goal was accomplished, this raid was a success and helped push back the forces of evil!

Fionite Cleric Slain Keeps Relic Out of Empress Hands

The *Saga* is sad to report the passing of a cleric of Fiona by the name of Delphi.

Delphi was found slain near the node nearest to Scarsinvale, having been chased by a pack of undead until exhaustion slowed her and the untiring undead were able to catch her up and to slay her.

Although the clear effort by the undead forces was to capture the cleric Fiona and the powerful relic that she carried with her, it appears that prior to her passing, she dashed the container for the Waters of the Moon against the nearby well. This shattered the vessel containing the reliquary waters, and made them impossible for the undead to capture them, keeping another powerful tool out of the hands of the Riven Empress.

As a consequence of the destruction of this relic, some townsfolk near to the site began to experience visions

or hallucinations that pertained to recent and near future events. These cryptic visions, like many, were vague in their specifics, mostly taking the form of warnings of danger soon to come to pass.

Alchemist Gren, analyzing the water with both expertise and a trained eye, determined that the water found in the area, while refreshing, contained no new mystically significant powers. However, it should be noted that in the case of relics, as well as powerful divinatory magics, conventional analytics may not tell the whole story.

Local Jerrohite, Kellskagg Frostbreaker, performed a Death's Delving upon Delphi, and was thus able to determine the nature of her last moments, as well as her heroic actions. However, following this analysis, Kellskagg started to feel a presence in the vicinity of the recently constructed Diviner's Well,

similar in some regards to the presence of a Genius Loci located in the duchy of Gelrich.

However this came to pass, it is possible that the death of Delphi may have led to the creation of a Spirit Node, or the combination of divine energies and blood spilled in the region may have led to the birth of a new Genius Loci.

It may be difficult to discern the difference between the two, until or unless this nascent intelligence is able to express itself in a meaningful manner. Little is known about Geniuses Loci, as they are rare and very seldomly offer insight into their own nature.

Whatever the case, time will likely tell what impact this death and the loss of this relic will have upon the region. We may consider ourselves well blessed that this has not led to our opposition acquiring a powerful divine relic.

Survival Strategies: Dealing With Cold

The Saga is pleased to offer advice and counsel as to how to survive in challenging circumstances. In this article, we will talk about cold, a relevant subject matter worth mentioning when talking about October.

Anyone who has wintered in the Scarsinvale region knows that strong winds and Balaxa's wrath can sap the strength from the strongest, and the good will from the most genial.

In an ideal world, the best place to be in the winter months is indoors, in a well-insulated shelter, with plenty of provisions. Being adventurers, our reader base may be aware that we don't always get what we want.

If you are planning to go out into

the cold, a solid piece of advice is to dress in layers. This allows you to control your level of insulation – if you're working hard, you may warm up even if it's cold outside.

Dressing in layers helps to provide air space between your body and your clothing, allowing for insulation. Clothing that fits properly should also not cut off your circulation – that makes it harder for warm blood to reach your extremities.

If you get wet, whether from sweat, rain, melted snow, or water, try to get dry as quickly as possible. Being wet and cold will sap your core body temperature a lot faster than just being in the cold by itself, and that can kill you quickly.

Ensure that you have food and drink if you're out in the cold for any more than a short period. Food is your body's fuel, and helps to keep you going – and water helps your body to circulate blood and stay warm.

If you start to shiver, it's a sign that you're getting chilly – but if you stop, it's a sign that your body is shutting down any needless expenditure of energy. If you haven't warmed up, but you've stopped shivering, seek shelter and warmth at once.

Finally, ensure that as much of your body as possible is covered. People often think that the head is where people lose most of their body heat – but that's just because it is so often uncovered. Bundle up, and stay warm!

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)

An early harvest may be light, but there is an argument to be made for gathering roses while you may. The winter may come sooner than you think, and the time to gather up what you can may similarly reward the early bird. Lucky numbers are 3, 5, and 7.

The Harp (Jan 29th – Feb 27th)

Do not allow fear of betrayal to stop you from forming meaningful relationships with others. Putting yourself in a position where you lose out on good experiences for fear of a bad one will stop you from trying new things or thriving as a person.

The Fount (Feb 28th – Mar 30th)

Life is generally what happens when you had other plans in mind. Be loose and flow like the water – if you focus too hard on what your plans are, you may miss out on opportunities that will arise in the near future. Be sure to communicate if you're abandoning a plan, though!

The Dice (Mar 31st – Apr 28th)

You will have an opportunity soon to have an unchecked advantage over and adversary or a rival. Decide if you want

to exploit such a position, or if you would like to set an example for how people should behave – because the wickedness that you visit upon others will surely be visited back upon you.

The Arrow (Apr 29th – May 27th)

People will look to you for inspiration and leadership in a time soon to come. It is up to you how you behave with this trust invested in you. Righteous action may yield righteous dividends – but the way that you lead will lead to decisions that may come back to haunt you some day.

The Stone (May 28th – Jun 25th)

There will come a choice before you that does not have a 'good' answer. One option will likely allow you to believe that you have done nothing, whereas the other will have a less bad outcome. Consider who you are – and what such a choice would make you do.

The Coin (June 26th – July 28th)

You will have an opportunity to reach out to an old contact or friend, and you may find them much or somewhat changed by the time that you have spent apart. Remember that even if you have changed, so have they – so do not be quick to judge them on those changes, lest they be visited back upon you.

The Spade (July 29th – Aug 30th)

There will likely come a time in the near future where you will have to choose whether to give up a long-term plan for short term advantage, or lose something dear to you in order to stick to your initial plan. Neither will be desirable – but one might save your soul.

The Blade (Aug 31st – Sept 27th)

Be decisive! It is better to make a bad decision early, than to make a good decision too late to act upon them, because there is time to rectify a mistake in the first scenario. Your lucky numbers are 8, 2, 11.

The Mask (Sept 28th – October 31st)

You will have to be honest about something that troubles you, or that plagues you, in order to proceed in your endeavours. This honesty will ultimately be liberating, but you will likely find it uncomfortable both in the immediate and following repercussions for your life.

The Shield (Nov 1st – Nov 29th)

No one is truly harmless; the words that we speak to one another can plunge a dagger as deep as any foe. That said, remember that words can be withstood in ways that more mortal blows cannot, even if it feels like a direct attack upon your person, your character, or your self-image. Consider what kind of person you are being characterized as, and what kind of person you would actually be.

The Hearth (Nov 30th – Dec 30th)

You may have to take up stakes soon, and start anew. This may feel like an injury, and you should remember to allow yourself time to grieve. However, it is just as likely that you will encounter new opportunities that may not have been possible if you had remained still – and foes may make it so that you have little choice. Defend what you have, but remember that things can be replaced.

Editorial: Nothing's Ever Over

As we move once more into the winter months, and things seem to come to dramatic conclusions, it's worth wondering 'is this the end of the challenges that Scarsinvale will face'?

(The cynic may say that such an end will only come when the settlement is gone and the people with it.)

But the truth is, nothing's ever truly over. If the Empress is defeated, there will come more tyrants seeking power and vindication; more mad spell

slingers who want nothing more than to work their magic upon the undeserving peoples of the town.

There will always be new challenges, new threats, and new adventures.

Some may view this as a pessimistic story. But in truth, I view it otherwise.

Nothing is ever truly over. If villains will arise, then the heroes who have proved themselves in blood and fire will rise to meet them as well.

Perhaps there will be times of rest – times when the next grand adventure seems too far away to care about right away.

So much the better. This lets you build a present worth fighting for.

Just because the current threats seem poised for victory or bust – and the *Saga* is firmly on the side of bust, and no mistake – there's no reason to believe that the adventure is over.

Adventure is out there, true believers. Go and find it!

- Oren D'vann, Editor

Matters of Faith

Holy Days Just Past

Oct. 6th: *Dreamers Wake* (Bard)

The holy day of Bard recognizes the day when, less than twenty years ago, the Dreaming God was woken from her slumber and once again rejoined the pantheon. Traditions for this holiday are far from uniform, with some blessing pillows and blankets, and other staying up until dawn telling stories in honour of the goddess of tales and dreams.

Oct. 15th: *Harvest Song* (Arkady)

The holy day of Arkady typically comes near the last of the harvest season, and is a welcome relief from the heavy labour, frequently celebrated with a large meal spent with friends and neighbours. In this part of the world, it is taken as a blessing of Arkady as the leaves change colour and paint the treeline with reds, oranges, and yellow. New artworks are often commissioned on this day in Arkady's name.

Forthcoming Holy Days

Oct. 31st: *Terror's Breach* (Kazzok)

The holy day of Kazzok, Terror's Breach is marked by many with drawing together, lighting lights, and preparing weapons – as the faithful of Kazzok have been known to summon forth infernals to terrorize the countryside. The servants of the god of Fear locally are known to seek to attain power by creating the most horrifying spectacle.

Nov. 5th: *Curtain's Watch* (Clovis)

The holy day of Clovis is often marked with an all-night vigil, where the faithful and allied layfolk sing songs, light candles, and keep watch from dusk until dawn. In this case, dusk is defined when the first star becomes visible, and dawn at first natural birdsong. It is traditional to give gifts of candles, or to donate foodstuffs, tea or coffee, or candles to local Clovites who are pursuing this vigil.

A Message of Faith

I would like to speak this day on the subject of inspiration.

The tales of those who stand fast against the terrors of the land – who hold a candle in the darkness – serve more than one purpose. First, and obviously, the tales themselves reflect the survival of those people.

But perhaps just as importantly, they inspire hope. Telling these stories gives people the hope that they too can overcome great challenges. Hearing that a monster can be overcome is not just good for the purposes of the hero in that individual story, but for all those who might follow in their path.

The stories of the people of Scarsinvale are varied – no question of it. Some have come from truly meagre beginnings, and others have stories that stretch back well before the founding of the town.

But all these stories together – and the ones forged together – inspire the next heroes to arise.

Faith Spotlight: Kazzok

As a part of the Saga's ongoing efforts to highlight the world's faiths, it seems appropriate this time of year to consider the beliefs of the God of Fear, Kazzok.

There is not a great deal known of Kazzok prior to his assuming the mantle of the God of Fear. Archaeological evidence suggests that his domain may have included Art and Music, and that his worshippers may have primarily been elves, but beyond the ruins of long-abandoned pre-tear temples, we have little proof of this.

What we do know is that Kazzok is currently the god of fear, who, taking a mortal lover, descended into rage and grief when that lover was murdered. This has characterized Kazzok as a vengeful god, allying himself with infernal and demonic

forces, making him in effect as much the god of demons as the god of fear.

Kazzok is the child of Fiona and Anajaream, and his holy day occurs on October 31st, and is known as Terror's Breach. This is thought to be the anniversary of his alliance with infernal forces, and is often marked in the Lakes Region with servants of Kazzok summoning forth infernals and other demons to terrify and harm the residents thereof.

It should be noted that the philosophy of spreading of terror is not the only possible interpretation of the dogma of Kazzok. There are some who have eloquently argued that fear is a survival tool, that encourages the body to flee when in dire peril. However, this is not the predominant philosophy of the majority of Kazzok worshippers in the area

who instead seem to favour the concept of acquiring power over others through fear.

In addition to mortal faithful, Kazzok is also the deity of choice for a vast majority of infernals. While infernals may worship any god (although no infernals in service to Clovis have ever been found upon the mortal plane), Kazzok serves as the deity of choice for a significant fraction.

Opposed by Clovis, it seems that Kazzok's fall must have occurred after Clovis pierced the Curtain separating the mortal plane from the Outside. As Kazzok's fall is described as calling forth a horde of infernals through the holes in the curtain, we must assume that those holes already existed.

In any event, *The Saga* wishes all a safe Terror's Breach – watch out for one another!

The *Saga* was brought to you in part by your community.

Folk Tale by Mishi. News summaries provided by Kellskagg.

The Scarsinvale Saga: a fine Scarsinvale product.

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 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.

Two ratkin, one thin and tall, and one short and more squat, have been heard to be conspiring with plans to 'take over the world'. Witnesses have described the duo as 'one is a genius, and the other is insane'.

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Rumours speak of a haunted distillery that has recently been unearthed. It is said that this place has many 'loose spirits', which may cause intoxication.

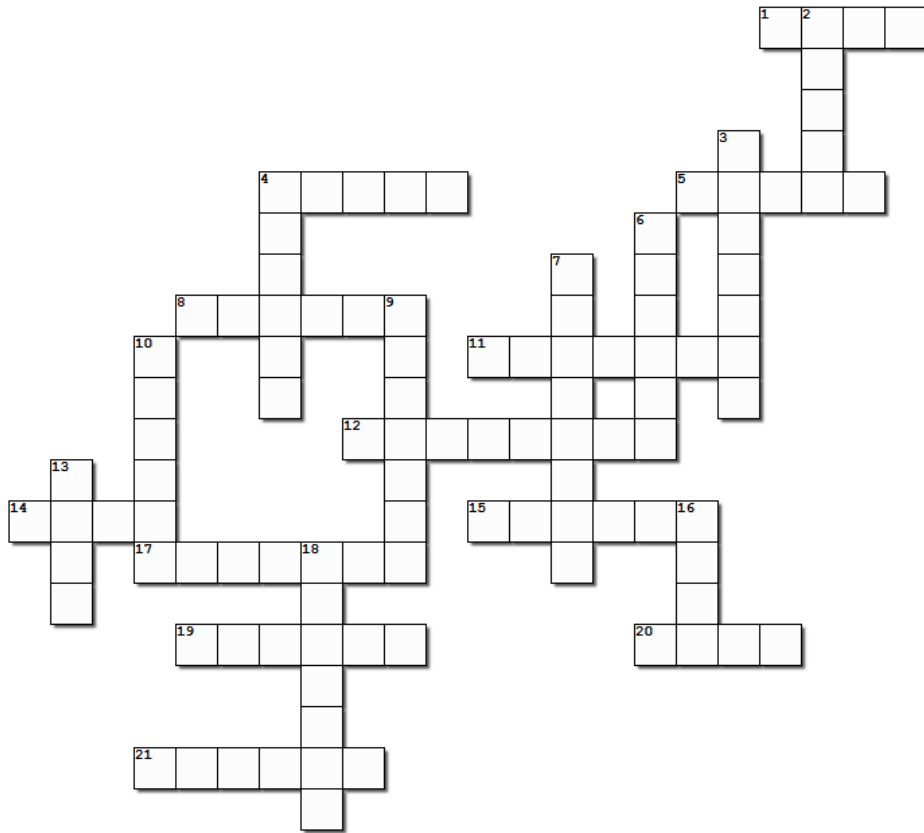
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A number of swamp creatures have been spotted experimenting with a captured siege engine. Beware the frogs with the trebuchet!

*

Portents: A skull crumbling to dust as a flower emerges from an eye socket. A goblet overflowing with flames, spilling over the sides and melting away to nothing.

Crossword



Across

1. God of tales and dreams
4. To lecture or rebuke
5. Writing medium made from wood pulp
8. How birds, bats, and some bugs move
11. An orange squash
12. How adventurers solve most problems
14. Affection or romance
15. Deer horns?
17. A magical one-time burst of strength
19. To burst through
20. A circumference of leather
21. Like a shorter short-sword

Down

2. Typically sweet, sometimes red, fruit
3. Unwanted pest animal
4. like a small, portable church
6. Used to fasten a strap
7. Herbal mixture that protects from other herbals
9. One who commits treason
10. Wake-up bean water
13. Domestic birds
16. A hempen length
18. Sun, clouds, wind, rain

Riddles

Riddle 1:

Given life by spoken word,
All I am is all you heard;
Share me with a foe or
friend,
All beginnings, never end.

Answer 1: *yrotS*

Riddle 2:

One salt sea that flows
within,
Yours won't appear in fights
you win.
It's oft a sign of non-good
cess
To ask instead 'who lost it
less?'

Answer 2: *doolB*

Riddle 3:

I have a face to show the
world,
I'm precious all about;
I'm useless in the afterworld,
But nothing bought without.

Answer 3: *nioC*

Riddle 4:

Food-thief,
Long-tail,
Buck-tooth,
Cat's-prey

Answer 4: *esuoM*

Riddle 5:

I bear you broad upon my
back,
In peacetime or in war,
I have the speed that you may
lack,
And readily run more.

Answer 5: *esroH*

Riddle 6:

Coming when you least
defend,
Sometimes a thirst I slake,
I sort your thoughts in
mystery,
And vanish when you wake.

Answer 6: *maerD*

Recipe of the Month: Pumpkin Bread

Squash is fresh this time of year and winters well. Making a pumpkin puree helps to keep it fresh, and making a moist, suite, spiced bread out of it helps to keep the people you know from murdering you for serving them pumpkin yet again.

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Ingredients

- 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. Baking soda
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp ground ginger
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup packed light or dark brown sugar
- 1 and 1/2 cups pumpkin puree

- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup milk

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees, and ensure you have a rack in the middle position.

In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, and salt until combined. Set this aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk eggs, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until combined. Whisk in pumpkin, oil, and milk.

Pour wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, and gently mix together using a wooden spoon – there will be a few lumps, do not over-mix.

Prepare a loaf pan by greasing it with butter or a non-stick sprayed oil.

Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan.

Bake for 60-65 minutes, making sure to loosely cover the bread with foil or another loose covering to prevent the top from over-browning.

The bread is done when a toothpick inserted comes out cleanly with only a few small moist crumbs.

Cool on a wire rack in pan, before removing and slicing.

Lasts on the counter (when covered) for 3-4 days, or in the cold for up to a week.

Dungeon Buddies Presents: Good Idea/Bad Idea



The Frog and the Fox – Short Folktales From the Reach

Once upon a time, there was a Frog and a Fox. Their names mean nothing to the world we know, and their time has long since passed our own. They belong to nobody, yet everyone knows who they are. This is a tale of Truth and Honesty.

Fox darted through the woods, paws landing heavily on the twigs and leaves that broke beneath their feet. A dead owl hung from their jowels, ears back as they scampered as far as they possibly could.

Lost in their own mind, the small croak came as such a surprise that they dropped the owl and jumped back defensively, only to be faced with the calm face of frog.

“You seem to be in quite a hurry, fox.” Frog croaked out, hopping over to the owl.

“And you seem to be quite far from your pond.” Fox growled back, ears going back as frog inspected the kill.

“You did not kill this.” Frog announced decisively, looking back up at fox.

Fox looked quite taken aback, relaxing a little. “How can you tell?”

“You kill with your teeth.

There are large claw marks digging into this owl’s back, nearly slicing off the wings, and they are twice the size of yours.”

Fox looked guilty for a moment, softly padding up next to frog and sitting down. “She was killed in front of her children. I was.. partially to blame. I tracked her down, I knocked her out of her flight. I was unaware she had younglings.. But it was a wolverine who dealt the killing blows. And then left to leave me responsible. The husband returned not long after, and started hooting and diving at me till I left.”

Frog gently hopped onto a branch closer to head level to the fox, hunkering down all cozy. “Why did you not explain it wasn’t just you?”

“I couldn’t find the words.”

“So you solely take the blame? The wolverine isn’t suspected, he may return.”

“Then that is NOT my problem!” Fox growled again, wipping their head around to glare at frog. Their friend did not flinch.

“But they are still children. You have pups of your own, do you not, fox? Isn’t that who you are bringing this unfortunate owl to?”

Fox glanced back down at the bird, pawing at it gently. “I cannot give this to my children. It... isn’t right.”

Frog hopped onto Fox’s head, nestling down. “I believe you should return. Though you cannot and shouldn’t receive forgiveness for what you’ve done, you may still yet keep them safe from who has done it with a full conscience.”

Fox stared down at the owl, ears going back in shame. “The father will attack me for returning. He will not listen. He will gouge my throat before I can speak a word.”

“So get the truth out quickly, then face your crime. I cannot guarantee he will lessen his punishment, but his children and himself will be more aware of their own dangers. I will not defend you this time, my friend. But I will be with you no matter how they take it.”

Fox thought over this for a moment, before standing and gently picking the owl up in his jowls once more, turning back and retracing his steps.

The truth deserved to be told, and yet again, the creatures of the night continued their hunt, and the ones of the day rested safe and sound.

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

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