Vol. 2 Issue 4 Still only 2 stingers

THE LADY'S SHARPER EYE

Lady's Eye Issues Retraction

As has been reported in several other Sigilan newsrags, The Lady's Sharper Eye has issued a retraction and formal apology to Estivan and the Planar Trade Consortium for an ill-advised article which led to a disruption in production.

The former editors of this paper, berks as they were, saw fit to print an article accusing Estivan and the PTC of tax fraud. The article went on to 'interview' a mephit posing as the well-known ogre mage. The result of this insulting and unprofessional piece of penny-gush was a hundred-fold increase in the cost of ink, paper, spell components, and even food for the editors in charge of the popular newsrag.

The new, improved, and now more carefully anonymous editorial staff would like to assure our loyal readers that financial intimidation had absolutely, positively, *nothing* to do with our decision to issue an apology to the esteemed Estivan. We all know belief makes the planes go 'round, not jink. Don't get us wrong, we do believe in jink, but it is our sense of professionalism that led us to issue a retraction of that horrid piece of screed from the last issue of The Lady's Sharper Eye.

So, to make it official; Estivan, we're really, really, really sorry (and hungry). -ed.

Lady's Eye Retracts Retraction

Sorry again Estivan, but if we really started apologizing to people we offend, we'd never print anything else. Sure, the editorial staff will pay to kiss your feet in ad space in *The Tempus Sigilan* and *The Tradegate Times*, but we've still got **some** pride in our own pages. You don't scare **us**, you big blue meanie. *-ed*.

Planar Cartographers Predict Paradigm Shift

by Gon Fischer, Clerks Ward Culler

Scholarly meetings rarely escalate into riots, but the latest meeting of Planar Cartographers' Guild came mightily close several times. The gathering was far better attended than usual. Less than half of the participants were actual guild members, the rest being interested parties, experts, and well-heeled planewakers of every stripe. The buzz, as well the near-fisticuffs, were about the biggest shake-up in planar cartography since the Tempest of Doors. Evidently, many experts on planar conjunctions, diviners, mediums, prophesy scholars, and other well-lanned folk are in agreement that a major re-alignment of planar pathways is happening. How this will affect trade and travel has yet to be determined, especially since dozens of expert opinions were voiced, and rarely did more than two or three coincide.

The meeting was opened by one Jasper Arelius, planewalking alhoon and longtime guild member. From there, one expert on planar conjunctions after another took to the podium. In addition to members in good standing of the Planar Cartographers' Guild, there were scholars from The Planewalkers' Guild, The Darkseekers, The Bleak Cabal, Doomguard, Godsmen, Signers, Merkants, Mathematicians, and The Fraternity of Order, among several others. As one could very well imagine from the list of groups represented, though the scholars mostly agreed on what was going to happen and when, the final results, causes, and especially the philosophical implications thereof were dependant on the speaker at the moment. Let me tell you, anyone who thinks scholars can't be passionate doesn't understand the nature of obsession.

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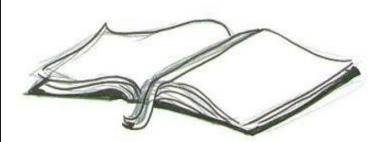
Cage Within The Cage, The Dark from the Prison

by Ringsider, Anarchist

The alarm at the Prison last Discordia 11 was NOT a mass escape attempt or riot, at least not the way most residents of the area were doubtless led to believe. The 'riot' started in the spireward wing between a squad of Sodkillers and a smaller Sons of Mercy group. Turf wars between various groups have replaced the consistent brutality of the old Mercykiller-run establishment (I've been here a *long* time). Not that I'm really complaining. There's never a good day on this side of the iron door, but when I see the guards come to blows with each other, it brings a smile to this old Anarchist's heart.

The prison is now run by a chaotic patchwork of Sons of Mercy, Minders' Guild, Sodkillers, Hardhead and Guvner observers, and several other minor sects. The lot of the average knight-of-the-post scragged paying the rent in Sigil is not much better, really, but 'average' is a funny concept. Lucky stabbers get sent to the Upper Spireward wing between the hours of peak to third-descending, 'cause that means the Ring-Givers are in charge. The Ring-Givers! On the other hand, if you hear the guards say "Section 27" as they walk you down the hall, it means that being 'cut down while trying to escape' is the best option at that point. Of course, even under united leadership, the guards had their hands full just trying to keep us in, and if this gets published, it'll prove my point. Power structures fail. The center does not hold! Our glorious destiny as individual ...

[At this point, five pages of Anarchist rants ensue. We refuse to publish most of this bark, but a full text of Cage Within The Cage can be found in Manifesto Monthly and The Dretch Report – ed]



Benidict's Blibloporium

Serving scribes, scholars, clerks, researchers, the curious, and all avid readers from across the planes

Portal Close, near Deva St. Market Ward, Sigil So, anyway, back to the riot, 'cause I saw it all. What happened was, a couple of Sodkillers noticed the Sons of Mercy bringing in a vile stag-turner called 'Baator Bart' Blacklask (that's right Noddy, he's in cell#9d in the Lower Antispireward wing) and they wanted 'im. Before the Mercy squad could put Bart in clamps, a whole brace of Sodkillers show up. They claimed the cell Bart was about to be chucked into was in fact on their turf, which the Sons disagreed with. Problem was, the Sons were just four strong cutters, facing three times as many Minders and 'Killers. Steel was drawn, too quickly for me to really see who twitched first, but the Sons did pretty good damage before getting pulled down. Before the last Mercy could get smashed though, high-ups from both sects showed up and physically separated the two sides. It didn't look like anybody punched their reincarnation ticket, but the healers were going to be pretty busy, for sure.

Now, this aint the first time. Just last week, two Minders Guild members go into a cell to collar an inmate, and only one comes back out. The Minders claimed the prisoner got violent, but I tell ya, Big Bub didn't do it. That cell was empty. I know because the ogrish occupant was on the chain with me at the time, three collars down. The surviving guard is a known Sodkiller, and the other Minder wasn't. Sects are just petty Factions! They ... [3 more pages. End.]

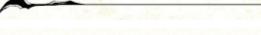
[This manuscript was delivered to us by messenger. Exactly how it got smuggled out of The Prison, and the identity of this 'Ringsider', are unknown. Both our house diviner and independent investigations confirm this version of reported events. -ed]

Paradigm Shift, continued from page 1

I'm somewhat of a planewalker myself, so it was with enlightened self-interest that I listened to what these so-called experts had to say. Of course, I'm also an Indep, so I don't mind calling most of the philosophical bark, pure screed at its worst.

Most scholars seemed to agree the shake-up of planar connections is not likely to affect the portals of Sigil very much, but rather affect the layout of the planes themselves. To the cartographers, this is a big deal, but to myself, as a Sigilan, not so much. Still, it's good to pay attention, since there is some controversy as to whether there will be major new roadblocks along the Great Ring. The Oceanus is one of my favorite ways to get around, so of course nobody could give me a straight answer as to whether or not its flow will be disrupted. Pike scholars!

Continued on page 3



Riot at Baator Party!

by Simon Proudoulous, Culler

A full roiling brawl broke bones and peace yesterday in the Lower Ward. Baatezu are hosting the Raise Baator awareness and recruitment drive consisting of bards, brawling, and bub for their part in the Blood War. During the Baatorian bash, several succubi infiltrated the celebration in the guise of erynyes. At some point during the pary all hells broke loose (literally) when they opened the doors for several other Tanar'ri. Party goers were given front row ticket to see exactly what they were really signing up for!

The Tanar'ri specifically targeted the mercenary recruits at the party slaying them by the score. By the time the Baatezu understood what was happening was no mere brawl, almost every attendant lay dead or dying. Once the devils were set to join the fray, the Tanar'ri withdrew and left the cage via a portal at Bloodgem Park to parts unknown.

"This incursion will not stop our efforts to raise awareness and marshal support for the Baatorian efforts!" marked Narth'zelpot, lead recruiter. "Nor should [the Tanar'ri] think we will forgive this slight. Any basher who wants to see [the Tanar'ri] bleed for their fellow comrades in arms who fell during this vicious sneak attack are encouraged to enlist with the Great Baatezu Army!"

The Temple of the Abyss has issued a formal apology/threat to the citizens of The Cage regarding the attack. "We apologize for bringing the violence of our race to Sigil and risking the wrath of Her Serenity, but we cannot forgive those stag-turning scum who choose to ally with the losing side of our enemy. No additional attacks will be made by our side of the war within the walls of Sigil at the Raise Baator event." Few are trusting of the armies of the Abyss to keep their word and, as a precaution; extra security has been placed around the event which is scheduled to complete its course this week.

Despite the added measures, this culler advises those not attending the Raise Baator event to stay several districts away for the next few Planar Standard Weeks.

[Though many folks throughout the planes are glad that the fiends continue to dead-book each other for the time being, some of the editors of this paper have seen The Slags. We would therefore urge any bashers from the whistles and bells to keep their shivs wrapped up when visiting Sigil, futile as asking a Tanar'ri for self-restraint may seem. – ed]

Paradigm Shift, continued from pages 1 & 2

There are several planar pathways that, the consensus is, will remain mostly undisturbed. Unfortunately for my Athar friends, these are ones that are connected to particular pantheons of Powers. Specifically, I'm talking about the World-Ash, Mount Olympus, and The Celestial Bureaucracy. It seems likely that the Powers associated with these pathways will spend the power necessary to preserve them, as confirmed by priestly diviners. The Infinite Staircase will also likely brush off the shake-up, though nobody could really tell me why. Truth be told, I always seem to get blamin' lost on that thing anyway, so it's not like I'd notice if it all of a sudden switched around more than usual.

Some experts predicted that while most outer planes will still be accessible from the Astral, certain ones, like the Abyss, will actually be in closer conjunction with the elemental planes. I had a hard time swallowing that one whole. Certain experts on ethereal matters were also predicting an alarming amount of elemental material bleeding into the border ethereal, so much that some favored reclassifying large areas of that transitive plane as 'the elemental chaos' or 'the primeval chaos'.

Many attendees were dismayed at the scale of the approaching paradigm shift. Especially vocal were certain prophets connected with doomsday cults of various stripes, many of whom were escorted out at various points during the meeting by Sons of Mercy who had responded to noise complaints in the district. The calmest cutter to be found in the whole place was in the audience right next to me. "Any map is only as good as its usefulness," said the serene Halfling priest, "Especially a map of the planes. Getting hung up on what the Great Ring, or the Astral Sea, or the Primes *look* like is sort of like trying to eat a menu."

Well, whatever's gonna happen, make sure your planar sextant is calibrated correctly before leaving home.

[Thanks for covering this important and perhaps historic forum for us Gon. We certainly appreciate it. So much so in fact that a bonus of several extra jinx will be added to your culler's fee if you provide us with the mimer. – ed.]

Something's Wrong In Pandemonium

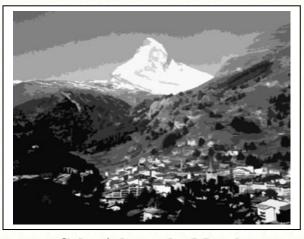
(beyond the stuff that's always wrong with it, that is.) by Lef Black, Culler

Just let me clue you in right quick, not all us Bleakers are all "ho hum, why bother?" I get like that, twenty percent of the time, tops. Just because the multiverse don't have no meaning doesn't mean we give up trying to live in it. Problem is, there's lots of nasty stuff out there standing in the way of that goal, and it takes a lot of work to get by 'em if you cross paths. There are, however, those who actually seek out the kind of soul-crushing horrors that'd drive any berk thinking the 'verse makes sense, barmy to the spire. It is through the brave efforts of these hende cutters that I can bring you this latest travel warning.

There is a motile phenomenon sliding through the tunnels on the windy plane. "Why should I care?" you might ask (I ask myself that every morning), especially since most of you have no plans to travel to Pandemonium. Well, problem is, this phenomenon may just be able to cross through gates, portals, and other planar conjunctions. It has already been blamed for odd (well, odder) happenings in the gate-town of Bedlam. Not every planewalker knows this, but Pandemonium has at least as many connections as other planes do, perhaps more, it's just that most sods don't stay (or stay alive) for very long there. Undersigil and subterranean locales on other planes are especially prone to have connections, a really strong breeze underground being a good indicator of a nearby gate or portal.

So, should you find yourself on the windy plane or near a portal going there, let me lann ya. The first sign something is amiss is a general strengthening of the winds of madness. Most travelers overlook this, as they are either so frustrated by, or so resigned to, the winds that they hardly notice or care when they get even worse. The second thing that happens is that the winds slacken, well below their normal strength for Pandesmos. This too, either goes unnoticed or is even welcomed by travelers, but my sources indicate that this may be a sod's last best chance to start heading the other way to try and avoid the effect, because it indicates the center of the disturbance is starting to get close.

continued on page 5



Celestials on the March by Moab Necrophini, Dustman Portal Hopper

Clueless berks often think that just because a bunch of cutters are good or lawful aligned, or both, then they're all about peace and love. Well, if you think folks from the sixes and sevens are pacifists, you've obviously never heard of The Order of the Planes Militant, The Harmonium, The Silver Wings, The White Company, The Armory of Truth, or The Legion of Holy Light, to name just a few of the large collections of shivs in the sixes.

I'm not exactly on the good side of those from the 'good side', but only a few burgs up in the uppers actually discriminate against necromancers who mind their own business, so I'm usually fine without shouting for aid from my buddies from the Neg-E.

Well, I figured I'd give a heads up to any planewalkers heading to the mountain. Things are lookin' even sharper than usual. Lots of devas are mustering for big push to somewhere. Like I said before, I usually mind myself around them, since they'd just set me back on the reincarnation track before I had a chance to learn more about True Death, so I didn't stop to ask what the deal was. Still, I've got working eyes and ears, so it was pretty hard to miss legion upon legion of fine feathered fiend-fillet fanciers getting ready for clobbering time.

I'm not sure what the game is this time around, but I canceled my planned trip to Thanatos. I'm just sayin'.

[Be careful around those bright-light types, Moab. Cutters like that tend not to get along with guys who dress in black all the time. We're just sayin'. —ed]



Something's Wrong, continued from page 4

The third sign of the approaching phenomenon involves it getting progressively darker. "How can it get darker on a plane with no light sources?" some bubber is bound to ask. Well, artificial light sources dim, and the damp native stone seems to reflect less light. As the darkening progresses, even darkvision fades, and eventually fails. Few indeed have managed to escape this phase alive.

At first, Bleak Cabal scholars attributed the phenomenon to a weakening of planar barriers. Each progressive phase superficially resembles entering a deeper layer of Pandemonium, ending in Agathion. However, as time went on they noticed more and more holes in that theory. First of all, Phlegethon is darker and less windy than the other layers, sure, but not that still. Reports indicate that the normal winds completely stop in darker parts of the phenomenon. Second, the phenomenon itself can be found on any layer, and does not appear to move randomly, avoiding strong realms and pursuing prey in the tunnels. Third, (hey, just because the rule of threes works doesn't mean it means something, you think gravity has meaning?) there is a strange residue left behind when the phenomenon has passed through an area of tunnels. All organic, and indeed most inorganic, matter seems to be converted into a thick dark liquid that ignites explosively with the tiniest spark.

Now for the good news; this phenomenon can be avoided if you pay attention. The total size has yet to be determined, and indeed may be variable, but there are ample warning signs of its approach. Whether a quick cutter can actually outrun this whatever-it-is in a straight line is also unknown, but there are plenty of side-tunnels on the windy plane to duck into, and if the signs start getting stronger, you know you're headed the wrong way.

Cabal researchers are currently keeping their eyes and ears open for more data on the phenomenon (let's hope there's only one of these things, but I'm not an optimist) including any reports of it (or them) slipping the binds into other planes and realms.

'Till next time, y'all addle-coves, keep on strivin', since that's all there is.

[We look forward to any travel updates our cullers can continue to provide, when they feel up to it. -ed]

Tainted Modrons Terrorize Towns

by Mandel S. Hand, Outlands Culler

Ever since the Modrons marched early a while back, things have been going downhill for the clockwork exemplars of law. A formian invasion of Mechanus has encroached on formerly well-greased wheels. Reports indicate a full third of the Modron race has emigrated to Acheron, and has become tainted by the energies of their new home. Attrition due to the endemic violence of the cube plane has reduced their number, for it is suspected that they return to their energy pool like all other modrons do when destroyed. It is unclear from my interviews with Guvner scholars on the matter whether these modrons bring their taint back to Mechanus with them.

The particulars of the modrons' battles with the armies of Acheron are unknown to this culler, but they must evidently have seized a major objective with a gate, for there are reports of violent modrons attacking villages on lawful end of the Outlands.

These raids are unusual, for the modrons will sweep into a town and scavenge tools, metal implements, weapons, and other useful things, but will rarely ransack anything. In fact, things tend to be more orderly after a raid, not less. Moreover, they do not attack lawful folk, so most of the earlier raids went off without much violence whatsoever. Chaotics, however, some of whom were out-of-towners on business, have been savagely attacked without warning. The modrons decide who is lawful enough for them, and some locals were surprised to find out just how strictly they apply that definition.

The modrons have become increasingly more violent as they strike at targets further away from Regulus. Two caravans near Tradegate were attacked, and each had more than half their merchants and guards mercilessly slaughtered. The modrons are not guerilla fighters, however, and the Merkants and the PTC have issued advisories that large clouds of dust sighted on the Outlands should be avoided at all costs. This advisory covers all trade routes as far as Hopeless and Ecstasy, but does not as of yet include any conjoining planes or realms.

[And here we always found modrons amusing but mostly harmless. Well, mostly. -ed]

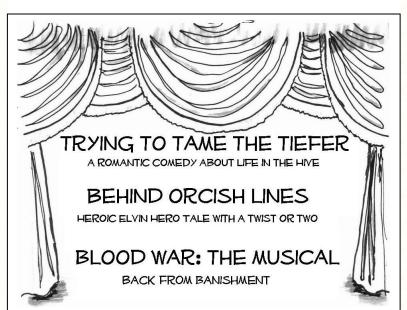
A Mist is Rising

by Karvnet the Unbiased, Culler

A strange phenomenon has the Genesis Guild of Elemental Mages scratching their heads while simultaneously jumping for glee. A bizarre fog is rising in the border region of the negative and positive energy planes. "It ebbs and flows like a tide," guild spokeswizard Bartholomew, "We have yet to determine what is causing this tidal flow or what its schedule is". This strange fog's rise and fall is not on a consistent time table thus thwarting attempts to key it to a specific planar event or schedule.

"While the fog itself is not baneful, it does create an environmental hazard," the guild notes. While the low point is a simple ground fog of a mere few inches in depth, the high point rises several feet and has reported to have 'peaked' at twenty feet on one particular instance. The mist is cool and lowers the ambient temperature in the area to a consistent 45 degrees and obscures all vision and sound to about a yard. This culler experienced the obscuring of vision and the unnatural chill firsthand. Thus far, no natural or magical means of enhancing visual or auditory acuity has thwarted the limited line of sight or sound created by the fog. This endangers planewalkers ability to navigate the border region and may steer travelers into the nearby quasi planes or even deeper into the dreaded energy plane itself.

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Massive Prime Incursions Back Off

by Naba Due, Merkant

Regular travelers to the prime spheres have noticed their finances disrupted lately on several worlds by massive incursions of githvanki warriors from the Astral. Now, it is fairly obvious to anyone who knows anything about these bashers that their reason for invading lemontrees had to be to kill mind flayers. Not that I'm condoning murder in the streets of Sigil or anything, since the illithid are citizens here like everyone else, but of the purple brain-eating bashers, I'm not a big fan. As such I've learned to deal with the 'yankis where I've met 'em. Usually by running away. However, the dark has been that like any army in the field, githwarriors on the prime planes need things, like food and drink, same as anybody else. Business therefore has been good for some, not so good for others, for the githyanki are known to see every non-gith organization the same, whether thieves' guild, city-state, or kingdom, and giving them what they want is a pretty good policy, unless what they want is to shiv you (see first method of dealing with githyanki).

Results of the Incursions were mixed and confusing. Planar traders I've interviewed from no less than six prime worlds were quoted as saying "Watch the skies, berk." and "There are githyanki everywhere!" Said Flann McGreevy, an Indep with a kip in the Market Ward, "Githyanki warriors cut of off my arm, and laughed. Laughed!"

Well, whichever end of the silver sword you found yourself on, it is my duty to report that the Lich Queen's legions seem to now be in full retreat on several prime worlds. Rumor and the dis-information of war have left the total number of Incursion worlds, and the successes of the Astral armies, uncertain. Including the two prime worlds I've personally seen githyanki on, there are reliable reports of what are either Incursions or major raids on the lemons of Maevi, Ia-Na, Aebir-Toril, Saev, Oerth, and Pharagos. The scale of the attack on the primes indicates centuries of planning by the Lich Queen, which makes the githyankis' sudden reversal of fortunes even more mysterious.

Continued on page 7



A Mist is Rising, continued from page 6

Massive Prime Incursions, continued from page 6

"We have had a few disappearances," notes the guild. Initially unaware of the rise in the mist, a few wizards were lost to unknown destinations. The guild has since put a tethering system in place to prevent them from wandering into parts unknown. The fog also seems to draw the undead that linger along the border of the Negative Energy Plane. "During the rise, undead activity peaks," notes Wizard Hamlin who leads the Guild Investigation of Research in Arcane Flora and Fauna Experiments (GIRAFFE). "We have been beset upon by a mass of ghouls, ghasts, and zombies. Initially, we were unprepared for the insurgence and, regrettably, a few deaths were involved." Thus far it seems to be of a lesser order of undead and no creatures of the 'sentient' variety have been spotted. The Negative Energy Plane is not the only one this phenomenon occurs in. Undead have been seen on the Positive Energy Plane during the rising mist. "Unfortunately, the very nature of the plane destroys them when the fog recedes," Wizard Hamlin notes. Speculation abounds that the fog protects, or inhibits, the natural effects of the energy planes thus far the Genesis Guild has not tested the theory with living test subjects.

Native to the energy planes, the Xeg-Yi and Xag-Ya, have been staying well clear of the fog and were unavailable to comment.

[We hate to say it, but this fog seems distressingly similar to one reported to have caused disappearances on some prime planes in the past. -ed]

TRESH AIR!

COZY CABINS!

GREEN STUTT

GROWING

TROM THE

GROUND!

Prime Planar Travel, Inc.

"Get sut se Town"

It remains to be seen if the 'yankis are doing the bolt because they dead-booked enough illithids, since the mind flayers are infamously subtle and behind-the-scenes anyway. Githyanki troops remain in some of the core areas of their conquered territories, and there are also reports of a great many new githyanki outposts in the underdarks of certain prime worlds.

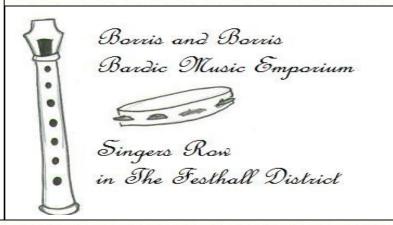
In Sigil, there has been a marked increase in the population of the githyanki ghetto of Git'riban as refugees have streamed in on their way back to the Astral. The githyanki themselves are tight-lipped around non-gith, so none were available for comment. Githzerai, their kin and mortal enemies, can be found in small, shadowy groups in Sigil and the Great Ring. They, too, are often tight-lipped, but they also have their fingers in the crosstrade, so I asked a couple of knights-of-the-post I know what they thought, on condition of anonymity.

"Steer clear," said Zerth-1 "The Yanki are always looking for berks to shiv for no reason. Zerthimon saw Gith's folly and said 'Pike it, tyrant! I'm living free, who's with me?' If you want to remain free and alive yourself, you'll stay well away from those bloody bashers."

"Githyanki killed my sister." Said Zerth-2, "Sure it was in a raid on one their Astral forts, but still. What? It doesn't matter who started it, berk, we're at war!"

Neither one would answer any questions concerning the githyanki incursions into lemontrees.

[The editorial staff is impressed with Miss Due for her efforts, mainly because we know few cullers who are going to risk getting anywhere near a githyanki. -ed]





or 'That's Right, Berk, I Know Everything' by Zath the Tout

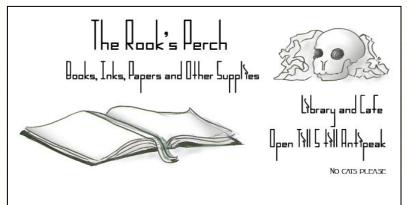
I've been told by a few folk, who I ain't going to name, that my last submission to the editors of the Lady's Shaper Eye was biased. Well, I'd like to put out a bit of a challenge to the people of the Cage: try to find someone who -isn't- biased about something. We got factions, we got fiends, and we got just about every barmy berk on the Planes right here. I think bias is what makes this city tick. It's the heart and soul of the City of Doors and the best thing about this otherwise miserable place to be. Which is ironic, because bias is also the worst thing to happen to Sigil since, well, anything. But, I'll ease up.

So, today I'm giving up the dos and don'ts of dealing with fiends. It isn't really no 'dark', but it's useful for any cutter walking the streets, especially the clueless that get all righteous and try to go on a 'smite the wicked' frenzy the second they pop out of a bloody portal and see a tiefling.

#1. Do not get haughty and gallant.

If you're new to this place, it's better to just keep your mouth shut and your blade sheathed. I don't care what backwater Prime world you're from, the over-zealous don't last long here (unless you're talking about the factions, but I don't want to confuse you). I can't tell you how many goodly 'adventurers' I've seen who see their first fiend in Sigil and decide to 'battle evil' right there in the street. First off, the fiend is likely to mash you into a red (or green) mush. Second, you'll still have the Harmonium to deal with for starting a ruckus.

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Field and Scream

by Roscoe Vincent Stryker, Druid

Forget everything you know about prime flora and fauna, on the planes things are different and their applications vary. To make the most of the 'natural' surroundings of the planes, follow this helpful field guide.

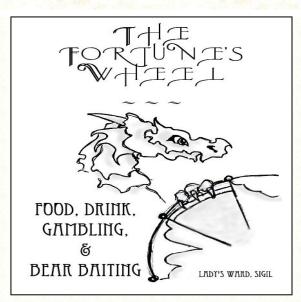
Copy Vine

Topiaries are the brain-child of gardeners with too much time on their hands and usually a little insane. There are some, however, that were never shaped or touched by gardener's shears. On the Beastlands small patches of animate plants, called Copy Vine, can be seen wandering about. The source of these strange animal shaped plants is not entirely known. Speculation abounds but the most popular theory revolves around plants trying to emulate the animal petitioners to avoid being consumed, many others are putting this to magic gone awry. Whatever it is that spawned these plant-animals, they are beginning to become more and more common.

It is worth noting that there are two varieties of Copy Vine so far recorded. There is slow moving ivy and a quick (for a plant) thorny shrub. The thorny growth eventually begins to mimic predatory animals in the developmental stages once the thorny buds mature around 'cat size'. The thorn variety is no more aggressive that the mundane, only a little harsher on the hands.

Herbivores of the plane find the leaves of the shrubs tasty even if the plant itself is a little strange. The animal the plant emulates ties to its size. In its infancy, the plant emulates small rodents just before it is ready to break free of its roots. As it continues to grow, it adopts the form of animals in the area that closest match its size. Turtles, rabbits, cats, dogs, and the like have all been seen imitated by the wandering shrubbery. Local fauna generally find these plants in their early stage of development as mice or rabbits and consume them before they can grow much larger. The vegetation has a strange property that allows its digestion by either herbivore or carnivore, though it still tastes of vegetation. It has some properties within its structure that emulates actual living flesh, including a thin red sap, while still only susceptible to spells that affect plants.

continued on page 11



The Dark of Sigil, continued from page 8

#2. Know what you're dealing with.

Be it Baatezu or Tanar'ri, or even something (Powers forbid) in-between, know who you're talking to. Last thing you'd want to do is call a cornugon a demon. Unless your idea of a good time is being a lifeless pile of goo in the gutter, in which case, go right ahead.

#3. Be friendly, but don't be friends.

The idea 'keep your friends close, and your enemies closer' don't apply here, cutter. That's a good way to get penned into the dead-book, or worse, get your soul shipped to the Lower Planes. If a fiend is acting like he's your friend, he's either looking for a meal, looking for a soul, or looking for trouble. But, don't go telling the fiend to 'pike it' either, an insulted fiend is the last thing you'll want.

#4. Stay away from the 'loths.

This I cannot stress enough. Yugoloths are always trouble. There's no other way to it. What's worse is that even if you follow this guideline, you're still apt to wind up in some 'loth's scheme, knowingly or not. I know I'm supposed to keep my opinion out, but for the love of all things, STAY AWAY, they're trouble.

#5. Stay away from the 'loths.

I don't want to sound like an addled modron by repeating myself, or one of those lunk-heads that see 'loths behind everything, but...well, they're behind everything, I'm telling you.

#6. Sign nothing!

That's right. Sign absolutely nothing. It is a dangerous thing to pen out your name, especially to a fiend. First off, names hold power. You don't want to go writing it on every scrap of parchment you see. Second off, if a fiend is asking you to sign something, you're in real danger. Not the kind of danger like when you have arrows flying at you...far worse. If a fiend is asking you to sign something, likely it's your soul at risk. But, if you really must, because I know a lot of you sods -must-, READ THE FINE PRINT!

#7. Just don't.

That's right. Don't. Even when following the six above guidelines, dealing with fiends is dangerous and sodding stupid. Better to just leave them alone.

That's that for today. Provided I don't get penned into the dead-book for rattling my bone-box in ways I shouldn't, and provided my work is 'acceptable' by the lovely folk at the LSE, next time we'll be discussing denizens of the Upper Planes and how best to avoid getting on their bad side (which is a surprisingly easy thing to get on).

-Zath, Hive Tout, The Free League

[Some of our readers might not think they need to be told what they already know, but the editors of this newsrag feel that good advice should always be welcome. Of course, we also believe that The Friendly Fiend is an exception to Zath's rules #4 and #5, since A'kin garnishes the ad department pretty generously. – ed]





Critical Reviews

by Richard DúBoir

Firstly, the exploding runes letter was a nice touch but, since I survived, not a very effective one. It also does not address which review you disagreed with or why. Second, I refuse to address the preposterous presumption that I was garnished by the Baatezu to rank the Raise Baator event as high as I did. I most certainly attended and did, thoroughly, enjoy myself. The proof should be in the knowledge of the event as presented in my review. Since no one who detracted my review offered any reason why I should not have rated it as I did, dislike of our baatezu friends is not sufficient (racists!), I can only presume all who disagreed never attended. You want to disagree, fine, prove to me why it should not rate so high. Remember, nothing convinces like proof.

Bistro Chrono - Sigil

(Restaurant)

I sometimes wonder at the logic Her Serenity applies in placing portals. I am sometimes held in awe at the adaptability and creativity of humans. This restaurant instills both of those sensations at the same time. This establishment in the Lady's Ward of the cage has a strict and firm dress code. While the restaurant does not strictly enforce the policy firmly, they hold not tolerance from berks that do not grasp on the idea of the bill being heavy based on the dress code.

The building is a dimly lit candle and violin affair with all of the typical top-shelf amenities. Oddly, what makes this place most notable is in what it lacks rather than what it has. Not a single menu will be offered nor is there one in existence. Bistro Chrono is located on (possibly) the only portal to the demiplane of time. Whatever foodstuff you can imagine will be produced; cooked to your specifications, served as you describe, and presented to your table within five minutes.

I do not purport to be an expert in the field of chronomancy but it works. Whether they have stockpiles of various foodstuffs, expert cooks, pulling a scam, or have expert chronomancers on staff is immaterial to the quality of the meals but it may leave your head hurting if you dwell on thinking about it over long. My suggestion, order up what you crave, eat, and hope the bill of fare is less than, or equal to, the contents of your purse. With time at their disposal, it is unpleasant to consider what they might do to those who try a dine-and-dash.

Final Score: 4 out of 5

The Lady's Slice -Sigil

(Restaurant)

Not exactly the name I would have chosen for this establishment but, given the task, I probably would not have been able to develop a better one. A troupe of planar adventurers put a lot of thought into the construction of this locale but their naming convention leaves room for improvement as they are actually vying for the Lady's favor. While this may leave the proprietors in the condition of their restaurant's name, one cannot argue the decorum.

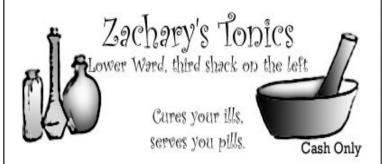
The black marble building is larger on the inside that the exterior leads one to believe but, reservations should still be considered for evening dining hours. A terraced system segregates the dining guests across three floors around a central stage arena. Celestials and the other 'upper' planar residents occupying the top tier, fiendish races sit at the base, and the middle area is more of a neutral ground. While separation keeps the conflicts to a minimum and allows separate Carte du Faire for each tier, it also makes intermingling challenging.

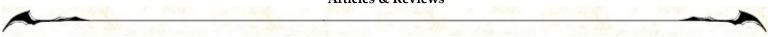
The menu is of average faire and average cost with the specialty of the house being this 'pizza' thing that I have heard talk of while on Olympus. Bread kneaded into a disc and then covered with a red sauce, cheese, and other optional bits that is then baked in an oven. It is advertised that one can get anything to adorn this dish so long as it is 'non-sentient' but, time will tell exactly how far that will go and how long it will last.

One thing that stands out is the arena wherein one can stage a 'food fight'. Monstrous (non-sentient) creatures can be battled with the victor getting to consume the loser. While the results of seeing a giant squid fight the waiter in a pool of melted butter was entertaining, I really had little desire to consume any bits of a giant squid that lost a fight in an ink-filled pool of butter that someone else was swimming and bleeding in.

Final Score; 3 out of 5 continued on page 11







Snitch's Snippits

by Snitch the Taker

Salutations, fellow Sigilans! Snitch here, back with more business reviews from Sigil and the Gate-towns! Want your business reviewed? Contact Snitch through the offices of this paper, or the Faction of The Fated.

Dragon BBQ, Torch, The Outlands

Yea, just in case you're clueless, let me tell you to take the hint: don't come here unless you're resistant to fire. You'll most certainly be the special of the day if you aren't. Luckily, there are spells and items for that.

If you like fire but it doesn't fill you up the way charred meat does, then this place in Torch is well worth the trip. A precaution to any Sensates reading this, mortals are like as not to end up on the menu, so do like I did and hire a bodyguard, or several, if you're coming down. I have no doubt a few will be making the trip, though, because I cannot fault the chef on this culinary expertise!

Barthabeaguros the Fiery (yes, I got that right, I'm scared of what he'd do to me if I messed it up) is the owner and head chef, and cutters, can he cook! This great red wyrm claims to have spent extensive time in many guises throughout the planes, posing as Sensates and semifamous cooks, sampling the experiences the planes have to offer, especially the digestible ones. The current enterprise in Torch must be serving his hoard well, because his clientele is mostly blood-war bound officers who don't mind spending the company payroll on indulging themselves. Though the prices were well out of the range I normally spend for sustenance, I couldn't help but think it was worth every green. Master-B the magnificent has access to some of the rarest and most flavorful spices from across the planes. He crafts sauces with the art and complexity of the alchemist, and can cook anything from a slight sear to well-done with perfect precision. To say the portions are generous wouldn't do them justice, since they are designed to sate a pit-fiend. If I wasn't preoccupied with the price, and staying off the lunch menu, I'd go back again and again.

-Rated three out of five "will you *please* stop looking at me like that!"

continued on page 12

 $Field\ and\ Scream,\ continued\ from\ page\ 8$

Copy Vine does not appear to behave in any sentient manner, but has some kind of tremor sense and uncanny knack for only wandering into clean water to drink from. Whenever there is doubt about water being pure, just follow the example of Copy Vine and drink where they drink.

Helpful Hint

A tangle foot bag is often the boon of adventurers and druids alike. Able to be hurled and tossed to disable a foe in the urban environment and underground, they are key in the capturing arsenal of the wanderer. For added value, try seeding those tangle foot bags with razor vine. Nothing says 'stop right there' like a tangled mass of sharp leaves and thorns. Razor vine is also a hardier specimen of plant, and very easy to propagate. In fact, as any Dabus knows, you actively have to try to kill razor vine, often while losing ground despite your best efforts, to keep it from growing.

[Thanks for the advice Roscoe, but can you help us get rid of the memory moss growing in the sub-cellar? -ed]

Critical Reviews, continued from page 10

Blood War: The Musical - Sigil

(Show)

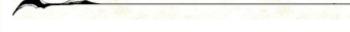
Since the changes to the hierarchy of Sigil (*cough*Harmonium*cough*) this piece of art is no longer banned within the City of Doors and residents can finally see what the Sensates were so enthusiastic about.

A barmy Yuan-Ti of the moniker, Monte, has put together a whimsical musical play detailing the tale of a lowly Nupperibo who comically ascends the ladder of Infernal Politics and becomes a member of the Dark Eight. While some cutters have decried the play to be 'inaccurate regarding the actual brutality of the war' and 'full of screed' I feel it necessary to point out that while I agree with these statements, the purpose of a play is to be entertained. If I wanted accurate depictions, I could shorten my lifespan by actually enlisting or visiting the battlefield. Nonetheless, the score is comprised of tunes that you may find yourself whistling and humming long after the final curtain. Mimirs with the musical score are available for acquisition after the performance.

Should this musical warm your heart, you might try catching Monte's Air Dancer Circus (air genasi) in Sylvania before the season ends.

Final Score; 2 out of 5

[Rich, we've got some more fan mail for you here at the office, set aside, untouched, in the usual corner. -ed]



Blix Brothers' Basic Food & Drink, Hopeless, The Outlands

Sorry guys, but no amount of oatmeal will make me write a good review. I'd write a bad review, but why bother?

Snitch's Snippits, continued from page 11

-Rated one out of five, like, whatever.

Silver Void Steelworks, The Guildhall Ward, Sigil

As martial societies go, the githyanki have an infamous reputation. As any berk who has lingered too long on the Astral can tell you, the 'yankis know their blades. Well, a small community of these violent warriors thrives in Sigil, as many are aware, and the primary public face of Git'riban is a huge weapons forge on Swans Way. Who knows more about metallurgy than the cutters who forge their shivs from the flesh of dead Powers? That's what I thought when I went there on recommendation from the githvanki bodyguard I hire from time to time. Imagine my disappointment to find they won't sell a silver sword to an outsider. Still, they've got plenty of shivs to choose from, and how! I'm not an expert on exotic weapons, mind you, so some of the things they had in stock looked like they'd be as dangerous to the wielder as to the opponent, but if you're in the market for a sword or a spear, they've got a wide selection of them too.

I was surprised to find non-githyanki smiths hard at work in the Steelworks. Apparently there are smiths from all over the city who work on commission there. They are therefore able to make nearly any conceivable weapon to order, if you have the jink. On my limited budget (no free samples? That knocks you down to a four automatically) all I could afford was a dagger, but it proved its high quality on the way home, so I really can't complain. All in all, though the selection of weapons was first-rate, the service was rude, xenophobic, and more than a little intimidating. My githyanki bodyguard even sided with the staff in deriding my martial skills, the piker. Don't fall for the "Why don't you try it out, and see how it feels?" line, that's just an excuse for the githyanki to practice their own skills at your expense. True, they've decided to leave potential customers alive (a good business model, in my view) but I wouldn't try to walk out without paying for something.

-Rated two out of five bleeding wounds.

The Styx Oarsman, The Lower Ward, Sigil

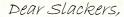
It has been this meazel's longtime policy to take jink and free samples in payment for publishing reviews. To that end, when approached by a patron of the Styx Oarsman and 'asked' to do a review on said establishment, I could not deny her. I didn't actually cross the threshold, mind you, but I did peer in through the open doorway. So, it is with confidence that I can write the following review:

The Styx Oarsman is a wonderful establishment. Anybody in Sigil can get exactly what they desire* within its walls. Mortals, fiends, and celestials alike are welcome to partake in the bountiful harvest of pleasure which is the finery of the Styx Oarsman. Clean, cozy, and with just the right lighting to put one at ease, there is no place like it in all the planes. Any beverage is available at the bar, and the menu changes daily. If it's entertainment you desire, the Styx Oarsman attracts the acts. Live shows every antipeak will have you coming back for more. Don't forget to bring a friend*, too. There's plenty of room* for everybody.

-Rated five out of five merts.

[We all know it said "deserve", "fiend", and "doom" respectively, but we've got our cullers backs, Snitch. We also know, however, that you've got way more than five merts, and you still owe us from last tenday's dice game, you cheapskate. Pony up, rash-scratcher! -ed]





Where in all the whistles have you berks been? I haven't seen an issue of the Eye in half a turn! What, did you skip town with the vault? Get it together, you pikers, and come out with another issue.

Mack Dandy

Ex-Mercy Killers Protecting Citizens? Not Likely.

NOW SONS OF THE MER CY WILL BE **GETTING** MY IINK. THAT'S JUST GREAT! WHY DON'T I JUST GO AND PAY THUGS TO BEAT ME TO A BLOODY PULP AND CUT **OUT THE MIDDLEMEN? AMI MIEN**

Estivan corrupt, or just a savy businessman?

Estivan and the PTC don't pay taxes. What a surprise. The new taxation system is just as, if not more, corrupt than the old one. I'd tip out of town, but there are blood-suckers wherever you go, so what's the point?

Sir Edmund Halper of the Cabal

So Estivan pays no taxes. So what? Neither do those filthy Kivers. If you have a problem with taxation, figure out a way to get around it, like Estivan did.

Baroness Fiona Moss

There's a fine line between clever and stupid, or so we're told.

Enclosed is a bill from the healers at the temple of Pelor. I laughed so hard reading the interview with "Pest-ivan" that I literally busted a rib. I demand compensation.

Finn Fourne the Frail

Last issue was one of the worst pieces of penny-gush that has ever assaulted my eyes. How could you insult Estivan like that? You should apologize sincerely and immediately. Outrageous!

Laura Keen, Esq.

He is a fiend, after all.

I can scarcely believe that this paper publishes articles from the Orriloth. He's a pikin' 'loth, you irresponsible addle-coves! You're now responsible for the damnation of an uncounted number of souls. Thanks for doing the loths' bidding, you berks.

Dan Mann, Paladin

Equal Time

I RESPECT THE FACT THAT THIS **PAPER PUBLISHES** ARTICLES TOUTS, FIENDS, AND OTHER N'ER-DO-WELLS, I JUST WONDER IF YOUR READERS **UNDER STAND** DANGERS OF LISTENING TO SUCH SCREED. I KNOW YOU CAN'T BOTH EVEN-HANDED AND WARN YOUR READERS, SO I WILL. THESE DON'T LISTEN TO KNIGHTS OF THE POST!

ERICK E ERICSON

There are some good reasons to pay your taxes.

Well, I was planning on giving the tax-man the laugh, but then I saw who they sent to collect. Forget it, the tax bill is half what the healers at the local temple would charge to graft my legs back on.

Libby Terran

I live too far into the Hive to have ever actually paid taxes, but I'll still yell "I pay your salary, you pikers!" whenever I see a Son of Mercy now.

"Shabby" Shalot, Xaositect

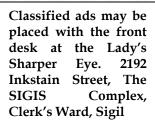
I am so glad the council is taxing again. I'm tired of our neighborhood having to hire mercenary guards to keep out the riff-raff. Perhaps now we can get a true constabulary like they have in civilized places to keep those dirty little poor people in their own ramshackle parts of town.

Winnipeg P. Wipswich the Third

Parting Shot

I am writing to thank you for the wonderful and flattering apology sent into the Tradegate Times (which I own), and at three times the normal advertisement rate too! You even had the forethought to pay all in silver (my favorite). Apology accepted. In return please enjoy the fruit basket with this letter.

Estivan



For Rent: Large Warehouse in Lower Ward near Newmarket Square. Dry and securely lockable. Additional security measures recommended, as the building is not portal-free. Contact Grimm at Grimm's Sigilestate, Pit Street The in Central Lower District. Ward.

For Rent or Lease: Workshop on Gear Run. Modron and gnome friendly neighborhood.

Contact Brain-in-a-Box at Brain-in-a-Box's Ubiquitous Flame Factory for details.

Cheap Temporary
Domiciles in the
Clerks Ward. Come
to *Brody's Boardinghouse* on
Spire Walk near the
Worker District.

Jink pay ad anybody for an can. Radish!

Fed up with portal hopping and need a steady job? We've got plenty of work in Meatmarket Square. Now hiring at; Alvin's Abattoir, The Packing House. Slaughter Hookworks. Street and The Butcher's Block. Put your shiv skills to work today without having to face assault charges.

Wanted: Apartment for party of five formerly clueless who seek to move to Sigil full-time. We've got the 'jink' but are tired of sleeping at the inn (except for the Halfling, but he doesn't so much sleep as pass out at the bar anyway). Lower Ward and Hive Ward are no good, since the elf claims she has asthma Contact Howie at *The Feather* Down Inn. Say, how much do you charge per word? Wow, that much? Wait ... are you still writing stuff down?

I'll be opening the cask this week, Colistro. You'd better come down to the cellar if you want some.

Alchemists Wanted! How alchemist's fire can you make, and how quickly can make it? We need lots of arcane burning death and we need it now! Fully stocked laboratory and ingredients provided. Contact Xargos at The Wizard's Lounge, Journeyers Way, Guildhall Ward.

Couriers needed for important deliveries to the City of Glass. a trade-burg on the Elemental Plane of Water. Reliable Planewalkers come TheDancing Mermaid on Perl Street. Leave a message with the Bartender, and you will be contacted shortly afterward.

Wanted: One large fish, must be native to Water elemental plane – non sentient, but very *large*. Fish must be alive when delivered, to assure maximum freshness, and I do mean *large*. Inquire at Festhall for Jenny.

Casting call for shape-changing actors and entertainers! Can you transform, or better yet, mimic others without using illusion magic? We looking are for lycanthropes, doppelgangers, and other shape-changers to fill roles in our cutting-edge theatre company. Just start asking around at the Festhall, disguised agents will lead you to us.

Looking for a few good bodyguards, and I do mean good. I can read auras, so it doesn't matter if you can lie well. Evil and chaotic berks take note and don't waste my time. Cutters of virtue apply with Simi Moore at *The Open Hearth Inn* in The Lady's Ward.

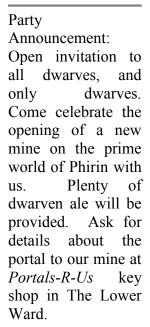
Wanted: Spelljamming helms in good to moderate condition. Bring to *The Ship's Fix* on Hull Road in the Clerks Ward.

Lutabmig gzan hsa Kulutabrud gzan hsa Lost: Small puppy containing the reincarnated mind and soul of my late grandmother.

White with brown spots and short tail. Answers (reluctantly) to 'Granny Moppet' Contact Sapp Ballad at *The Mages' Wages* keyshop in the Lady's Ward for large reward.

Wanted: Cats, in any and all states of repair. Bring your frisky or flaccid felines to Baba Bakka in The Grand Bazaar

Going of out Business Sale Wanda's Discount Wands. We don't re-charge 'em, we just sell used wands at the lowest prices The Cage. in We're heading back to lemontrees to take over the family estate, so our entire stock must be turned into jink. Wanda's Discount Wands on Treasure Street in the Market Ward, two blocks spireward of Vault Lane



Wanted: Information concerning a steady high-volume and supply of coal. One of our current suppliers is drying up quickly, and we need to secure an energy source keep up production quotas. Contact Joe at Brain-in-a-Box's Steam Pipes and Synchronized Moving Piston Works on Gear Run in the Lower Ward

Wanted: Reptilesof-burden for Outlands caravans. NOT KAASTA TRAINED! We've had issues. Contact Billi Maize in The Grand Bazaar.

Wanted: Wellheeled mercs and warriors without Blood-War ties. Questionable morals OK, desire for profit very OK. Wealthy lemon will shell out of jink mounds when I'm back in charge. Contact Baron Von Brum in the Gatetown of Curst in the traditional way; tie a note to a rock and throw it over the outer wall, then wait for similar reply.

Help! Overlord Baron Von Brum was bad, but it turns out the new guy is worse! Help save our prime world nation from Tanar'ri hordes Brave warriors of virtue unafraid of fiends ask for Virgil at The Grev Goose Inn in the Clerks Ward.

Wanted: Wand of fireballs sans charges. For use as portal key. Also, fire-loving beings sought as scouts, guards and guides in high-heat environs. Contact Cib Scarlet at *The Fates Inn* near Dancer's Court.

Experienced Abyssal guides available to Sensate parties, Merkant endeavors, and others whose primary purpose isn't dead-booking fiends. Contact "Red" at The Festhall. Jink up front. Limited liability, b.y.o. shivs.

For sale to collectors: three gibberlings endlessly reciting My late prophesy. aunt left me these in will, her and haven't slept since, as they are loud and insistent. I'm not a fool, though, so I know these things have got to be worth a pretty bit of jink to the right person. Contact: Merl, Fated Namer, at Cassie's Curios near the Hall of Records.

Wanted, holiphaunt tusks. whole powdered. Three gold dragon scales, must have been freely donated. Item suppliers will be very generously compensated. Bring to Powders. Potions. and Pastries on Tea Street near the Hall of Speakers. Ask for Toni.

Tough guys wanted for quasi-legal gladiatorial contests. Ask for "Jimbo" at most bubhouses in the Hive Ward.

For Sale: High-end Includes furniture. desks, tables, chairs ornate lanterns, etc. One large wardrobe contains also portal, key and destination unknown. Contact Manny through Ouibert & Breen Estate Sales and Auctions near the Hall of Records.

Public Service Announcement! Avoid *Portals-R-Us* key shop in The Lower Ward. This establishment is a front for blood war recruiting, and has been jacking unwary berks to whistles and bells. – The Sons of Mercy.

Jobs open for strong fliers who can carry passengers. Brave the 'skies' of Sigil for fun and profit. Clueless berks who've never heard of spire winds need not apply. Nittman's Aerial Tours.

Mercenary company for looking new talent. No teiflings, outsiders, or others distinctly non-human even while wearing heavy armor need apply. Sorry, but we take a lot of Primeplane contracts, and we don't want to freak them out. Come to Black Eagle Mercenary Company, offices on Rook St. near Peak Lane in the Clerks Ward.

To the fiends who abducted my sister; I'm coming for you pikers, and I'm not alone. – Furd, Paladin of Cuthbert.