

S.I.G.I.S.

SIGIL'S INDEPENDENT GLOBAL INFORMATION SERVICE

Issue 16 Year 1

Price: 2 Stingers

Fourth Week of Narciss

CAMBION ABDUCTED TO BAATOR

TORIL (City of Waterdeep)—Following last week's report on the trial of the cambion Don Julio, further developments have become clear. According to a statement from Harmonium Mover Three Jasmin Tealybuck, Julio was abducted from his cell in Castle Waterdeep, on the Prime World of Toril [see previous issue of SIGIS] by a group of mercenaries in the pocket of the disgraced Mercykiller named Nine Auspicious Rabbits, a rakasta who hails from the minor Prime World of Myoshima [Ed. note: a moon of Mystara].

Apparently, Rabbit's original intention was to take Don Julio to Baator, where the baatezu wish to question him

concerning arms deals with the tanar'ri. However, during several interviews, I discovered that one of the mercenaries was a githzerai Anarchist who was intent on foiling the mission by freeing the Don. As the kidnappers tried to force their way from the Castle into the infamous dungeon of Undermountain beneath, the githzerai attacked the rakasta and attempted to strike off the Cambion's chains.

The githzerai was lost in the ensuing melee, but before he was put in the dead-book, he freed the Don who escaped into the dungeons beneath the burg. According to the local Hardhead types, Don Julio was then pursued by three

adventuresome bashers, among whom was the noteworthy the Xaotician expert Fenris Cassre. What stake these individuals have in the Don Julio case remains unclear, though they may have some past grievance with the cambion dating back to several encounters in Plague-Mort.

The events following the escape are not completely understood, but my frequent source on this case, Clarion the Guardian, revealed that he had personally travelled to Toril to find out the dark of the matter. He declined to divulge his own interests in the case, but said he had had an enlightening interview with Kappiyan Flurmastyr,

a Waterdhavian mage of some local repute. "I learned two important facts from Flurmastyr," said Clarion. "Firstly, that a powerful fiend, of unknown racial stock, appeared briefly in Undermountain on the evening after the trial, leaving magical traces a dwarf could feel. Secondly, Flurmastyr also related that at least some of those who fled into the dungeon remained on

Toril." After some clever planewalking, Clarion learned that the Cambion had been abducted to Baator by a summoned pit fiend (identity unknown). Sadly, Clarion declined to reveal the names of the adventurers, except to confirm Fenris Cassre's involvement.

—Blondie Bluthiem, culler (ar)

XAOISTECTS PETITION FOR MARTIAL LAW

SIGIL (Lady's Ward)—In a flabbergasting move during yesterday's Council Session, the Xaositects asked the lawful triad of Sigil to actually impose greater amounts of law and order in the Hive ward. The Xaosmen it seems, are fed up with the ex-citizens of Jangling Hiter camping on their turf, and are demanding that the law do something about it. Xaositect agitators had been gathering at the Hall of Speakers for the past week, clamouring to be heard, but were generally ignored or shunted to the Triany or one of the lesser council chambers. Typical Xaositect behaviour was met in the typical fashion. But when three Xaosmen brought forth the chaos faction's seldom-seen official council spokesperson, Silent

Lucidity, Speaker Darius immediately granted her the podium. After unwrapping Lucidity from her straitjacket, the other Xaosmen stepped aside, and she recited:

"Jangling Hiter's/In our face;/We want them gone;/ Out of our case!/Lawful screeds,/They hate our home/ You make them pay/We'll make more poem!/Law's in tatters,/We'll let it in/Make the Hive/All fun again./ Martial law/for Xaos's sake;

"If you don't get them sodding cruel, nasty Hiter's out of the Hive we'll run rampant all over your side of town, just see if we don't!"

She then started foaming at the mouth and tap dancing, so her handlers removed her from the podium and carried her back to the barred room

she calls kip in the Hall of Speakers. It seems poetic recitations and dancing are becoming more common among Xaositects as a means to communicate. We wonder if this might be another trend among the Chaos-lovers begun by the Factol, (see Hall of Speakers article this issue.) [Can't be any worse than sodding scramblespeak—Editor]

Debate is flaring even now about whether or not to grant the request, but with both Factol Darkwood and Factol Montgomery seeking to curry favour with the notoriously apolitical Xaositects, martial law conditions to curb the Hiter refugees seems almost certain to pass the Council in record time.

—Ordin Balaclavas, Legislative Beat (Mr. N)

DOOMGUARD-DUSTMEN STRIFE CONTINUES

SIGIL (Lower Ward)—For the past week, the Doomguard have been finding the bodies of dead Sinkers on their front steps every morning. And every morning, they have found the same note pinned to each corpse:

"Destruction is not all, but Death." The chant goes that the Dead are retaliating for the recent insult to their faction that resulted in the slaughter of several Doomguard factioneers. Where the Dustmen find time to pass along such messages, if indeed the Dustmen are responsible, in the midst of their mobilisation to find their lost artifact in the Abyss remains a mystery [see this issue of SIGIS for details].

So far, all the bodies have been fresh, but several sources suggest that the deterioration of bodies increases every morning. "It's quite disgusting having to walk by a mound of stinking Sinkers that have been gone a couple days," noted one denizen of the Lower Ward.

The battle between the Doomguard and the Dustmen has boiled over into the Hall of Speakers, with the Dead gaining support while the Doomguard are forced to

fight alone. Sir Twist, who has been Factol Pentar's aide at the city council this week, has requested that the Dustmen cease this action.

"It is intolerable that Factol Skall condones this action. So far, we've been cleaning up their mess, but the Doomguard promises that if the bodies continue to appear outside the Armoury, we will leave them there to rot. Knocking people off with a little disease never really bothered us." Pentar also intimated that if she doesn't gain support soon, the Armoury will stop supplying Sigil with weapons.

Sir Twist also released a statement to SIGIS, saying to the effect that if the Dustmen would like to fight openly, there are many disgruntled Sinker bashers looking for someone to introduce to Entropy. "I would like to ask that the Dustmen reconsider their course of action," wrote Twist in his statement. "We do not wish a repeat of the incident at the Bazaar with Bram Bloodheart. For the sake of the city, I entreat all involved to find a way to avert bloodshed by this very violent and uncontrollable faction."

—Sco'rut Morthus, culler(db)

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RITUAL SACRIFICES MARK JANGLING HITER GRAVE

BAATOR (Minauros)—After weeks of concentrated effort, the City of Shackles, Jangling Hiter, no longer hangs above the swamps of Minauros. As reported in SIGIS issue 12, the Baatorian burg was sold outright to Zadara the titan, who had it dismantled and moved, selling the chains that made up the city to buyer(s) unknown. The site of Jangling Hiter now lies cleared. Nothing remains of it save middens and a stinking hole in the swamps beneath. Giantish crews, working alongside gelugons, a troupe of mercenary yagnoloths, and, to the trepidation of many at the site, a handful of maruts, together rent the town asunder in record time. Even Blood War battles have taken longer to raze a burg to the firmament, and Hiter was not simply destroyed, but picked up and moved.

About the remaining gargantuan cavity in the gelid muck, the former native inhabitants of Hiter, the mysterious Kytons, are engaged in what appears to be sacrificial rites. The chain-wrapped, silent Kytons have unearthed altars of apparent great antiquity, and have placed them at regular intervals around the periphery of the vanished city of chains. The Kytons have allowed no one other than themselves and other former inhabitants of Hiter near the altars.

The mortal inhabitants of the city who did not flee in time have been gathered together in a shivering herd and are being seized one by one by the Kytons. Their fate remains unknown, but blood has been glimpsed on the altars from afar. Close inspection thus far has been impossible, and the Kytons haven't spoken. But it seems clear that the wretched masses trapped by the swamp, or their own unwillingness to move, have become victims in a lengthy and deadly blood rite.

Dreadclaw, a hamatula keeping an eye on the whole affair for the Baatezu high-ups, speculated that the ceremony is intended to somehow 'desanctify' the location. "Those Kytons were always a little too stitch-mouthed for my tastes," he said. "They kept their burg all separate and clean like our laws weren't good enough for them. They smell like religious fanatics to me, and act like it too. But the only one that'll know the real dark is old Windscream himself."

Other victims arrive daily as justiciars and bounty-hunters deliver debtors to the Kytons' pen. (As reported previously, the price of the city included an exchange of souls owed from Zadara to the previous lord of Jangling Hiter, the cornugon Pollus Windscream). None seem aware of the fate that awaits them.

"Sure, I turned stag on that interest what I owed that big bit; who wouldn't at her prices?" said Elmour Gunt, one of the enforced immigrants. "But I been 'twixt the Lady and the 'Loths before and I got out of it; this ain't nothing I can't wag my way free from."

Flint Harrold, a Mercykiller bounty hunter who delivered five screaming debtors to the Kytons, laconically commented on the situation. "Oh, them chain-wrapped sods are scraggin' 'em, sure as justice triumphs. These deadbeats are finally gettin' what's owed 'em. Heh." Harrold went on to say that the Kytons' rituals may last some time, as he had two more weeks in which to round up more 'debt-polers'.

Where the uncountable number of chains that made up the city of shackles have gone, remains unclear. It's well known that much of the tonnage involved has been passing through Sigil, particularly the Great Foundry. Godsman smiths have been working peak to anti-peak repairing breaks and damage

done from shipment. But where the fixed chains have gone afterwards remains a mystery. One source, a Godsman namer who spoke only upon conditions of anonymity, was able to shed a tiny bit of light on the mystery. She said, "You know all those small chains? We've been forging them together into big ones, longer than Sigil is round. But I dunno what the high-ups are doing with 'em."

Wide ranging sources have reported tons of chains being

moved through many diverse means: Through major portals into Ribcage and on to the Outlands; Ferried by amnizu and then marraenoloths across the Minauran swamps and onto the Styx; Transported through secret portals in Baator itself. Some parties have even claimed to see githzerai companies of plane-walkers picking up chains and cross-piking them directly out of Baator. But no destination has been reliably confirmed. The chains seem to have

vanished from the very Ring itself.

[Editor's Note: Culler Mord, a Gwvner with some obsessive tendencies, has vowed to shed the light on the mystery of Jangling Hiter, no matter the cost or the danger. Against our advice, he has left Sigil to interview Pollus Windscream. Should he survive, SIGIS will publish whatever dark he brings to the fore.]

—Malacyst Mord,
whistles culler
(Mr. N)

BAATEZU STAGE RALLIES TO QUELL MORALE PROBLEMS

BAATOR (Dis, Minauros and Grenpoli)—The Baatezu have staged many massive military rallies in their main cities, officially to mark their recent progress in the Blood War. Reportedly, twenty million abishai descended on Minauros last week for one such rally, which lasted for 36 hours and packed the streets of the city with columns of marching fiends. Speaking to the assembled masses, Ranashiel, a spokesman for Azazel of the Eye Standard [Editorial note: Azazel is a prominent Baatezu noble, and the Eye Standard is his re-giment, named for the famous battle flag he bears], said:

"Fellow Baatorians! At this time we stand on the threshold of a great new era of our glorious history. Our recent triumphs against the rightly hated tanar'ri are going to net great gains. Even now, your faithful brothers and sisters are marching to portals that will take them as far afield as Acheron and Carceri, to take the Blood War ever closer to the enemy's territory. We confidently expect to bring back not just treasures and honour, as ever, but layers or even planes. The time is right, o worthiest Baatezu, to snatch what has ever been rightfully

ours from the talons of our fleeing foes! And against the obstinate modrons and weakling archons also, we are driving forward our columns relentlessly. There can be no other outcome to so marvellous a struggle but our inevitable victory."

The propaganda continued for another two hours, at the end of which Ranashiel raised high his own standard, bearing the ever-watchful triply-armed Eye of Baator, aloft whilst before him were paraded captured banners of other races, including the Martyrdom Flag of Auriel, taken many years ago by the last major Baatezu force to reach Excelsior. The assembled fiends, urged on by cornugons, chanted slogans of victory to their commanders on the platform.

However, behind all the triumphalist talk and pageantry, the truth is a lot less exciting. The Baatezu have gained only as much as they have lost, and a recent attempt to sign a treaty with the Rakshasas of Acheron fell through after territorial arguments resurfaced about control of the River Acheron. The deaths of two Baatezu Dukes in combat has weakened the command structure

further after last month's prisoner exchange debacle. The true purpose of the rallies is to calm rumours among the lower-ranked Baatezu that their glorious armies have suffered setbacks. The true likelihood of a layer being moved by even ten times the level of military mobilisation presently engaged by the Baatorians is slim indeed. Records show that the speech given Ranashiel is a transcript of one given by Azazel himself just before the Battle of the River Ma'at, at which the Eye Standard nearly fell and an avatar of a then Lord of the Nine was destroyed.

Nevertheless, Baatezu military rallies are terrifying to behold, and the recent spate of them can only stir up racial hatred against races such as bariaur and githzerai amongst Baatezu sympathisers here in Sigil. The Harmonium is warning everyone to be on their guard against civil unrest, but in fact the Baatezu's allies are more likely to operate through 'official' routes, and no amount of helpful advice will save innocent victims of their manoeuvring.

—Blondie Bluthheim,
culler
(ar)

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See the smith on duty!

(Mr. N)

NewsChant

BAATORIAN HIGH-UP, FOUND MURDERED IN AASIMAR'S CASE

SIGIL (Lady's Ward)—Around three after anti-peak two days ago, Harmonium investigator Christopher Verdue was disturbed from his restful slumber to visit the scene of a homicide in the Lady's Ward. Anytime Verdue (chief investigator of the Cadre case) is called upon for his psychic talents in a case, it's a sure bet that the crime is a difficult one. But this one proved even stranger than most: this time the victim was a pit fiend, and the scene of the murder was none other than the kip of the well-known aasimar trade merchant, Spiral Hal'ought.

As many Cagers know, Spiral Hal'ought has long been recognised as the blood to visit when negotiating trade with Celestials, though a cutter best bring along a purse full of jink. Thus, finding a high-up baatezu (a pit fiend no less) bloodily murdered in the case of Hal'ought is extremely disconcerting, particularly to upper planar clients, and certain to draw substantial attention across the Cage.

I learned about the murder the same night as Verdue, when a courier friend with connections in the Harmonium saw fit to summon me to the crime scene. I showed up only an hour after Verdue's own company, but was greeted with less than open arms by Hal'ought's stone-faced halberd wielding aasimar guards. After a half-hour negotiation (in which my pleas fell on deaf ears), a couple Harmonium officers, under orders from Verdue, persuaded Hal'ought's personable employees to let me in his kip.

Once inside, the officers led me through what seemed miles of enormous and richly

adorned passages, past uncounted art objects of tremendous value much of which clearly originated from Elysium, Mt. Celestia or Arborea. Finally, we reached the scene of the lost fiend, in a huge, stately dining room adorned with gilt. And what a scene it was. Drops, pools and rivers of Baatezu ichor were everywhere about the room, often with pieces of scaly flesh or bone thrown into the stew. You can't possibly conceive the enormous volume of blood inside a 12 foot fiend (unless you're a Blood War merc I suppose) until you see it splattered around a high-up's immaculate state room. Terrible destruction was wreaked across the room: hardwood tables and chairs were splintered, paintings were ripped and scattered, vases powdered, and the list went on and on.

Yet for all this destruction, it still seemed the fiend went down easy. There were no obvious signs of powerful magic, and most of the destruction was contained in only one third of the chamber. After I recovered slightly from my shock, Verdue came over to speak with me. He bid me good morning, in his strange prime accent, and quietly warned me not to interfere with any of the scene nor disrupt his concentration. He would submit to an interview after the initial investigation. "Now, the only reason I allowed a SIGIS culler inside, and not simply let you be alerted for a general Harmonium press release, was in fairness to your profession," Verdue told me. "Since a culler from the Tempus Sigilian was already on the scene, I thought the people of Sigil should be able

to hear the facts from more than one source. Do not try my patience." Of course, I agreed.

As Verdue left back to his work, I noticed the illithid culler from the Tempus Sigilian he was referring to, standing in the back of the room and consulting with Spiral Hal'ought. Hal'ought stood calmly by, arms folded behind his back and a grim expression on his face as he watched the Hardheads work. Occasionally, he turned to the mind flayer and spoke softly to the hunched-over figure, while the creature slowly nodded and scribbled in a journal. It seemed obvious that the illithid had been summoned by the aasimar, perhaps even before the Harmonium. (Later I discovered that Hal'ought has partial ownership of the Sigilian.)

During the next hour, a little of the dark came clear as the Harmonium worked the room. The cross-trader (maybe cross-traders) who put the baatezu in the dead-book took no chances: there was evidence of acid use, electrical fire, and blades that sliced through pit fiend skin like a hot knife through lard. The fiend didn't travel far, and seemingly died quickly (why the fiend didn't port to safety is unclear) suggesting that the assailant(s) had the element of surprise. But this still left a lot in the dark, such as who the fiend was, and what in Baator was it doing in the house of an upper planar tradesman? I hoped the interview promised by Verdue might shed a little more light on the subject. [See the Verdue interview this issue.]

—Maia Intwood,
culler
(sk)

DUSTMEN START BLOOD WAR

OUTER PLANES (Abyss)—SIGIS has just received word of intense fighting in the Abyss that, for once, has nothing to do with a Baatezu invasion. The Dustmen faction, after more than a week of gathering its factioneers and arming itself at the Mortuary, finally invaded the Abyss. The faction was intent on recovering a rumoured Codex of the Dustmen hidden long ago near the ruins of an ancient Plague-Mort predecessor, which had been swallowed into the Abyss ages past. They were met by tanar'ri forces head on, but the Dustmen had the element of surprise on the less than organised mobs of fiends, and they defeated wave after wave of the sods. The Dustmen apparently mustered a vast force of Dustmen factotums (both living and dead), mercenaries, undead, and a troop of maelephants to striking at the heart of the first layer near the remains of an old gate town.

According to Jergoth Rauhic, our frequent contact with in the Dustmen, the faction moved quickly, destroying all opposition, until the forces of three powerful Abyssal Lords arrived, and then they started losing ground. But a supposedly brilliant tactical move by a Dustmen leader, Leej McGarred, and his special force of Dustmen turned the tides of the battle. According to Rauhic, "This small army of both living and the dead (many recruited from among the fallen Dustmen and tanar'ri) emerged from behind 'enemy lines', so to speak, and wrought terrible damage to the Abyssal forces thought to have been sent by the tanar'ri lords." (Verification of the affiliations of these tanar'ri mobs has been difficult, but Jergoth Rauhic assured SIGIS that Abyssal Lords were involved in the conflict.) It was that attack which seemed to turn the tide of the battle and brought a quick and decisive end to any Tanar'ri resistance, at least for the moment.

The Dustmen forces have now set up their kip within in the ruins of one the ancient gate-towns, and are now recruiting more forces with supplies and building materials. The military leader of the Dead in this invasion, Leej McGarred, told SIGIS that they are now bringing in a labour force (or perhaps

raising one from the remains of the battle?), and that they intend to begin the construction of a permanent stronghold in the Abyss. Many such attempts to maintain keeps on the Plain of Infinite Portals have been made before, mostly by tanar'ri, but only the burg of Broken Reach has maintained consistent rulership under the thumb of the succubus high-up known as Red Shroud. The Dustmen do seem determined, however, to hold on to their little slice of hell at least until they recover the Codex.

As for the Codex, it seems that the Dustmen's treasure, according to McGarred, is well buried somewhere in a series of subterranean caverns beneath the Abyssal layer. Due to the immense vastness of this labyrinth, however, the Dustmen will have to remain some time on the Abyss until they find their book, hence the need for a stronghold. Chant is that this cave-system is "infinite" in size, which, even if only half-way true, means the faction better be prepared to tote along a particularly potent scrying device.

COMMENTARY ON THE ABYSSAL VICTORY

This victory of the Dustmen may not be so surprising when all the details have been examined. Most cutters among the Dustmen attribute the victory over the tanar'ri mobs to the tactics of Factotum Leej McGarred of the Dustmen, and his usage of his relatively small, elite crack force which turned the tide of the battle. McGarred himself won't speak of his tactics, and no one among the Dustmen will share the dark on their special forces, but thanks to a conversation overheard by SIGIS, do we know some dark on the leader of this force dubbed the "Death Corp". It seems that McGarred was a former Blood War mercenary, and had been called out of semi-retirement to lead the battle. According to reliable sources, 20 years ago, when McGarred was only 17 years of age, he was already fighting in the Blood War fighting alongside the tanar'ri, and was later reported as training their troops (a difficult thing to do with such unruly fiends). This may explain his knowledge of Abyssal warfare, which apparently aided the Dustmen victory in the Abyss. (da)

We regret to inform the readers of SIGIS that the Harmonium have confiscated the interview promised above with Christopher Verdue. They wish to insure that not too much Harmonium knowledge of the case leaks back to the assailants. We will try to bring you the interview in the next issue (but don't hold your breath).

BYTOPIAN FESTIVAL ENDS WITH PLANEQUAKE



Arcane merchant
selling mountain clamps
to Bytopians

DISASTER struck Bytopia this week in the shape of a planequake. Hundreds of bashers are missing, feared in the dead-book, since the two layers of the plane dramatically slipped towards each other. The tragedy coincided with the Festival of Lights, a time when Yeoman is packed to bursting with people...

The annual festival began auspiciously enough; the turnout of locals and plane-walkers alike was far higher than average, despite the recent mayhem caused in Tradegate by the Slaadi Chaos Tromp [see *SIGIS* issue 15]. Cutters from across the plane gathered in the neatly-tended fields surrounding Yeoman, one of Dotion's principle burgs, and in the rocky Gemini Mountains on Shurrock directly above Yeoman. The atmosphere was indeed festive; Lake Crystal was a mass of pinks, reds and blues, strewn with sweet twin-blossom petals, and the burg itself was chiming with children ringing bells and a choir of deva singing hymns.

Throughout the Festival of Lights, a week-long event which symbolises the Bytopian people's thanks for the Philosophical Spring, cutters offered food they'd grown and objects they'd created to the powers of Bytopia, held athletic races and craft competitions. It's estimated by Yeoman officials that hundreds of thousands of jinx flow through the burg during the festival, and security is usually tight.

This year's festival was no exception. Per and Aasimon watched Yeoman carefully, all the more because of the slaadi army mustering in Tradegate. I spoke to Guildmaster Thanos Darkwove, an influential local basher who was organising the burg's protection about the slaadi menace.

"It's nothing to worry about, basher, to be sure. The frog-fiends'll leave our little burg alone; it's too far out of their way to come here." He could not have been more wrong.

Halfway through the week a curious vortex appeared in the gravity plane between the two layers of Bytopia. As the ember clouds spread in a flat line, slaadi began to rain from the sky like giant frog-hailstones. Many landed in Lake Crystal, overturning petal-spreading-boats and causing small tidal-waves of blossoms to flood the harbours of stilt-legged burgs at the lake's edge. Many more landed in the branches of trees in nearby forests. Celestial search-parties were sent to expel the frogs from the plane, but returned unsuccessful. Apparently the slaadi hordes had simply disappeared from sight.

Several attempts were made by Thanos Darkwove to contact the supposed ring-leaders of the slaad mob, which was estimated to run into the thousands by this time, but all were met with a stony silence. As the festival continued, no further reports of slaadi activity came to light, and Yeoman collectively breathed a sigh of relief... it seemed the slaad had just been passing through.

As the week neared its end, preparations were made for the Grand Finale. This year it was to be a pyrotechnical display of epic proportions. A trio of golden dragons had travelled from the Prime world of Toril for the occasion, and they were joined by a band of mephits of all descriptions and an assortment of evokers.

As night fell on Yeoman, the crowds on both layers of the plane were greeted with a spectacular display of firey explosions, glittering sheet lightning and rainbow-hues clods of smoke. Whilst the thunder boomed between Bytopia's graceful spires, I spoke to J'kathok, a reformed cornugon who'd come to see the show: "Now I've seen the Blood War in all its horrible glory, cutter, when we destroyed, and this is the next closest thing. What a spectacle. I'd not be surprised if they could see this all the way from Sigil!"

It was just as the explosions reached a climax, however, that tragedy struck. Without warning, the controlled pyrotechnics took on a life of their own. The flames took on a green hue and began to rain down on the spectators, on both layers of the plane. The thunderous explosions grew

in strength rather than fading, and the very ground began to shudder and reverberate. I heard screams of terror from the citizens of Yeoman, and then seconds later, screams from the Gemini Mountains directly above. Then I realised why... the column of rock spanning the two layers on the other side of Lake Crystal had been damaged by the out-of-control explosions. In the flickering green light I and thousands of others watched aghast as the pillar ever-so-slowly split in two. Great chunks of rock fell both up and down, striking the plane seconds later with terrible thuds. Then the planequake began.

Perhaps the layers of Bytopia were destabilised by the loss of a supporting pillar, or perhaps it was a result of the thousand-ton rocks smashing into the ground, but Dotion's once-solid rock began to twist and buckle. Jagged shards of rock jutted from the ground, and waves the height of five bariaur raced across the lake, sweeping away lakeside burgs and spectators alike. While I could not see Shurrock, I later learned that similar catastrophes occurred there; the fractured mountain began to splutter lava and billow noxious gases, and many more lives were lost in avalanches of boulders dislodged by the vibrations.

Though 'quake lasted for but a few seconds, the repercussions will last for many years, I fear. The harsh light of morning revealed a twisted landscape, more at home on Avernus than Bytopia. During the night, the plea for aid had gone out, and by morning several dozen guardinals had arrived, bringing with them healing magic and supplies. With their usual efficiency the kind creatures helped the injured and homeless, all the while braving the frequent tremors that emanated from the fractured pillar.

Even with all their magic however, the guardinals could not heal the plane. Like a great weeping sore, the sundered column became increasingly unstable as the day progressed. That is, until a nameless arcane merchant arrived on the scene with a caravan laden with girders, steel ropes and some incredibly long chains.

How the arcane merchant was able to respond so quickly to the Bytopians' plight perhaps I'll never find out, but like all of the mysterious arcane, this one was utterly businesslike. Within hours of his arrival, and thanks in part to a brigade of industrious

gnomes who'd seen the calamity from their nearby Golden Hills kips, the shattered bi-mountain had been secured with a complex array of chains, pulleys and girders. Add to that a few calming spells and the tremors subsided completely. By the same evening, the arcane caravan had disappeared, laden with nearly as much weight in junk as it had brought in steel.

'Course, it won't stop there. The local Yeoman crafts guild have already drawn up plans for reconstruction of the pillar (industrious bloods, these Bytopians), and the huge cleanup operation has begun as of the time of this writing.

But one question remains: What went wrong? Theories abound, though the most likely-sounding, I believe, is that the tragedy was the fault of the slaadi. Chant goes that the frog-fiends never actually

left the plane, and instead went to sleep under the lake and in the forests. They'd had a long tromp to get here, after all. The explosions probably woke 'em up, and they emerged from their torpor to see what all the fuss was about.

Trouble is, the sudden awakening of thousands of creatures of pure chaos probably caused the magical flux of the plane to shift dramatically; rather like it does when a wild mage suffers a so-called surge. And who knows what a surging dragon's breath can do?

The slaadi are long-gone now, of course, so it's likely the Bytopians'll never find out the real dark of things. But rest assured, cutters, this plane won't sleep until it's business as usual.

—Sim Underwood,
Upper Planes culler
(jw)

Letters

Readers of SIGIS,

I read with great amusement the article you printed in the last issue by Maja Intwood entitled, "Quadrone Argues Modron Case For Hive Kip". In this 'newschant', your eloquent culler reports the attempt by the modrons to claim a physical presence in the Hive. In this rapid, screed-full argument, the Quadrone "proves" that this certain kip in the Hive is really a part of Mechanus. Now, although I am loathe to argue the side of the Hardheads at any time, this so-called proof was so leatherheaded, I felt the need to write in and expose the absolute senselessness of this claim.

Apparently, the Quadrone and the exalted Mathematician Leclerc were so excited finding their (non-existent) order in the Multiverse, they couldn't see how obvious, and therefore ludicrous, their arguments were. In particular, Leclerc is quoted in the article saying, "the plane of Mechanus intersects with the Hive in this particular location." How amazing! Belevedere, can you comprehend this? Do you see the dark that only a logic-driven modron, and a brilliant Mathematician could uncover for the poor, unwashed masses of the Cage? By Jove, this can only mean one thing... they have discovered... no it cannot be... yes, they have! A portal!

You read right. Those leatherheads wasted a perfectly good morning convincing the Guvners that they found a portal to Mechanus in the Hive ward. (Of course, the Guvners are wasting their time anyway, so I suppose it is of little consequence.) At any rate, if these berks get this part of the Hive, I say my faction has the rights to a good portion of Pandemonium right out the Gatehouse! Barmy screed, indeed! Really, all a cutter can learn from such silliness is more about the senseless nature of the Multiverse: to look for structure and laws in this meaninglessness is the ultimate folly indeed. Better yet, take a trip down to the Gatehouse and see where the darks of the Multiverse really lie.

Juan Toll

Factotum of the Bleak Cabal
(sk)

Editorial

MASS NUMBERS OF KYTONS INDUCED INTO RED DEATH

SIGIL (Lady's Ward)—In the largest mass induction in Red Death history, 1,011 new recruits were sworn into the Mercykillers faction in one immense ceremony yesterday. 977 of the new acolytes of justice were Kytons, a race seldom seen here in the Cage before the exodus from Jangling Hiter. Petitioner's Square has hosted many a crowd that large during executions, but seldom one so solemn.

The Kyton namers, all wrapped head-to-toe in their newly polished chains, were unusually silent during the affirmation of the vows. It was only at the end of the swearing-in ceremony, when the final oath was read aloud, that the Kytons spoke at all. When the crowd of new factioneers were asked if they would lay down their life for justice, the Kytons shook the rafters of nearby kips with their exultant shout of "AYE!!!!" They said not a word otherwise.

Rumours and speculation over the induction is now running rampant in faction circles. Bloods who know the dark of things have been telling all that will listen that the Kytons acted as a ruthlessly efficient system of cop, court, and crow feeder in their native burg of Jangling Hiter. Faction watchers are now whispering that the induction is another attempt by the Red Death to bypass the Courts

and Harmonium, so as to deliver justice more swiftly to those deemed deserving.

Fire-of-God Watchman, a Harmonium spokesman, denied such claims. "We were fully informed of the Red Death's new members, and we're in favour of them. The Mercykillers got the proper permits to use Petitioner's Square for the induction and have been working closely with the Harmonium on devising appropriate ways to deploy their new troops. Does that sound like a group plotting unlawful activity to you?"

The consensus amongst chant-mongers seems to be that the Kytons will be used to help control the many refugees from Jangling Hiter that still haven't managed to fit into the Hive Ward peaceably. "The high-ups certainly seem to need help," said Anton Corpselfight, a Dustman factor. The Hive has been a ragged jumble of raging emotion since the Hitters moved in. If these Kytons can help control that, then the Dustmen will stand behind them to the end."

The less-informed have voiced other opinions. "I think the Mercykillers are going to use them as prison guards," said Manky Mathias of the Doomguard. "Who better to do that than some berk who can make the caged up sods' own chains dance to his music? And everyone knows

the Prison is a delayed-blast fireball just waiting to blow. This is just another misguided attempt to keep all that entropy tied up in the Prison from getting loose the way it should be."

An anonymous Anarchist basher said, "Them Greaser's are fixin' to scrag us all! It's another plot to unleash fiends on the good folk of Sigil and turn the place into a *real* cage! You'd do something about it if'n you knew what's good for you!" And a Clueless berk was heard to remark, "Red Death? Aren't they the group that holds those Masqued balls?"

Tall Tally of the Mercykillers summed up the induction of the Kytons by praising their devotion to justice. "Those Kytons are the best recruits we've had in a turn or two! When we showed one a gleaming pip we caught rifling pockets at the last wurm feeding, and asked what the proper punishment should be, well, you should have seen what it did! The Kyton broke that sod's fingers into so many pieces that he looked like he was holding a handful of noodles from Blossom Town, and then it tied 'em together into the tightest chain you ever saw. That's one knight of the post who won't be snatching any more purses! It brought a tear to my eye, and I ain't ashamed of saying so. It's a proud day here in the Prison." (Mr. N)

Chant for Clueless

CANT DICTIONARY R-W

Ravens

Derogatory term for the Harmonium, derived from the fact that the harmony of ravens is a very poor sort of harmony indeed.

Razorwine

Any extremely potent alcoholic beverage, no less than 100 proof. "Hey cutter, you've got to go try the taps at Mudder Mac-Ree's! She only serves razor-wine!"

Rig

A plan—i.e. "Here's the rig", meaning: "This is the plan."

Ringwalker

Beyond Clueless. The word is said to have been coined when a prime in Arborea asked how long it would take to walk from there to "Gladshiem". Call a planar a "ringwalker" and you could start a blood feud, but a clueless prime'll likely take it as a compliment.

Roosters

Vrocks—Cager rhyming slang: Roosters and Cocks; i.e. "Poor Jenkins, the berk got devoured by roosters"

Rorty

Strong, vigorous, though the meaning changes according to the context: thus a rorty bloke is a real blood, a rorty toff is a basher pretending to be a blood, and a rorty cube is a rogue modron.

Rotters

Derogatory name for the Doomguard. Some wear the name proudly, though. Like the Xaosmen, it's hard to insult these berks.

Rounder

Someone who knows his way around the planes. It ain't as good as being a blood, but it's a cutter to be respected nonetheless.

Rule of Sevens

Nonsense idea. Used by the Xaositects and Doomguard of Gvuner theories. It also gets up archons' noses when you use it. What more could one ask from a cant word?

Rum

Excellent, great: "Rum news about the tax being cut!"

Running a Black One

Utter hate towards a berk, which always means wanting to put someone in the dead-book. An example of this might be: "He's really running a black one since you turned stag on the sod and the Hardheads scragged him. I'd go on an extended vacation to Arcadia when he gets out of prison if I were you..."

Running a Red One

Holding a serious grudge. As in "Ever since I beat him at dice he's been running a red one against me."

Rust, rustle

Cant term for the classic bad word. "You gehreleth-rustler! Rust you and the slaad you rode in on!" The Doomguard seem particularly prone to using this word, and its meaning amongst Sinker factioneers has been perverted to being an enviable quality rather than an obscenity.

Rustler

A blood on the make; a stud. Usually used by single cutters in the company of same. "You rorty rustler, you! I hear you've been spending a lot of time down at Fast Mary's House of Negotiable Affection!"

S

Scar

Slang expression used widely, with no particular meaning. This only makes it more useful as a catch-all obscenity. For example: "Get your sodding scar over here, berk!"; "Judge Gabberslug? What an addled fat old scar!"; or simply "Shut yer scar!"

Scrape

Damning information that can be used to bribe or blackmail, especially a high-up.

Screamer

Alarmist, especially in the factions. One who is prone to exaggerating news, hence scream: "Have you heard the scream that the Blood War's on Sigil's doorstep?"

Scribblers

Clerks and Civil Servants. Also a mildly derogatory term for Gvners or Mathematicians.

Scribe of the Dead Book

An assassin or hired killer—somebody who makes a living killing others for profit.

Sciber

See *Scribe of the dead book*

Scrub

To beat or torture mercilessly. "That berk's gonna get a serious scrubbin' if the Hardheads catch 'em." Furthermore, a torturer can be called a scrubber, and conversely, the one who is the victim is called a scrub.

Shell, The

The Prime World of Mystara, so called because it's said to be hollow.

Shout

The casting of high-combat spells, particularly area affect spells like fireball or meteor swarm: "Watch out for the spellslinger, if he shouts we'll all be put in the dead book!"

Shuttered World, The

Krynn. So-called because of the facts that everyone

BASHERS WANTED ON THE MARK!

Upstanding and loyal practitioners of the martial arts are hereby requested to come and **protect** the Gate-town of **Fortitude** from potential invasion by the **Slaadi** during the unpredictable **Chaos Tromp**.

The fair citizens of Fortitude have set aside a **pile of jink to feed, house and equip** prospective **defenders** in the eventuality of the Tromp raining down over Fortitude.

Training by veteran Harmonium officers, straight from tours of duty in Arcadia, in siege defence strategies will be provided.

This is an **unparalleled opportunity to gain knowledge of fortification and burg-defence strategy** from some to the **best trained warriors** in the Multiverse.

Interested, and virtuous, bashers please contact Harmonium officer **Barish Lacoter** at the **Barracks**, or travel directly to Fortitude and ask any of the burg's citizens for directions to the **armoury**.

(sk)

NewsChant

REAL ENTERTAINMENT AT THE CIVIC FESTHALL

This week Oran Meditor will debut his play, *"The Gates"*, at the Civic Festhall. Oran promises me that this work will prove to be one of the best plays that Ren Hall has ever seen, and judging by Oran's earlier works I see no reason to doubt him. I am certain that this play will be a great new sensation for all to experience.

I asked Oran how he manages to get so many of his plays accepted into the Civic Festhall, he replied: "I try to make the work appeal to all the senses, and I try to use new senses that will achieve this."

Oran's play will debut tomorrow night and will continue all week with two shows a day.

Elysana Ariana, a less-known author, will perform a reading of her first book tonight at the Civic Festhall.

She hopes that this reading will help her get introduced to the world of the arts.

Quin Resqu'a will continue to show his artwork, *"The Dead Series"*, because it has been a great success. This Outer Planar artist says that he will auction this series at the end of the week and will then begin a new series. His artwork has been a big hit with visitors to the Civic Festhall and should auction at a very high price.

—Drushiye Melora,
Sensate Spokesman

(dd)

Letters

Readers of SIGIS,

I write to bring news of a great and terrible dark! I have seen the intended resting place of the leyton's chains from dread Jangling Hilt! I know which bashers are garnishing Zadora to dismantle the burg! I cannot reveal how I know these things, nor who I am, but hear out my dark... it may be your last.

Readers of SIGIS, there are strange and terrible creatures dwelling beneath your very feet. Not only in Undersigil, but beneath the very Spire itself! This Gray Race watches and listens to all that occurs throughout the Multiverse through weird magics and forgotten prayers, and they have decided it is time to act against to share the Lady's Serene Ministrations with the whole Multiverse.

As you read this, the Gray Race are ferrying infinitely long chains to the base of the Spire, and at the dead of night, more of their agents are dropping chains from the Cage itself, looping them around the Ring of the City. Still more of these fiendish beasts are tying chains to the largest gears of Mechanus.

Their aim? To use the clockwork plane's unstoppable rotations to topple Sigil from the Spire! The Cage will fall and be smashed open, releasing the Lady of Pain into the Great Ring! Cutters, this is a terrible danger that besets us all! I beseech you to prevent the Lady escaping. The Foundry must be closed, so the chains cannot be forged. It is your only chance to escape the doom that will surely follow.

Anonymous letter
(jw)

HALL OF SPEAKERS RIFE WITH DISCORD

SIGIL (Clerk's Ward)—The most recent gathering of the Factols in the Hall of Speakers began with bountiful pleasantries exchanged between the high-ups of some of the most diametrically opposed factions. Before Factol Hashkar's gavel struck the podium, heralding the start of the session, Sensate Factol Erin Darkflame Montgomery was seen chatting amiably with Factol Rowan Darkwood of the Fated. Signer Factol Darius could also be seen spreading chant with Harmonium Factol Sarin, and Hashkar even found himself saying stiff "Hellos" with Factol Lhar of the Bleak Cabal, who bothered to show, amazingly enough. Interestingly, Factol Pentar and the representative Factor of the Dustmen, Komoshal Trevant, had little to say to one another, probably as a result of the exchange they had last meeting [Ed note: See *Doomguard/Dustmen* article this issue].

However, once the high-ups were seated and the gavel hammered down, the calm ceased and the storm began in one of the most raucous meetings of the past few years. First to speak was the charismatic Factol Montgomery, who swirled to the floor wearing a stern Ysgardian outfit she seemed to have bobbed off a Valkyrie. And, indeed, she was ready for battle. In her opening remarks, Montgomery went straight to the meat, accusing the Fated of unfair tax burdens recently levied on bub-houses, theatres, and exotic importers.

"As the assembly is well aware," said Montgomery, "these kips are run primarily by members of the Society [of Sensation] who are being bobbed of their hard-earned jink. [This comment elicited a sneer from the Fated Factol, and a dramatic yawn from the Factor of the Dustmen.] I suggest that the cross-trading purpose of this unfair tax pressure is to undermine the

Society, while funnelling jink into Fated coffers. This should not be allowed to continue."

Factol Darkwood responded by saying that the taxes were all quite within the law, a statement that received a subtle nod from Hashkar. He added that it was also well-known that the Sensates were ridden with jink, and perhaps they could start "sharing the wealth" a bit. Montgomery responded that she was surprised to hear "wealth-sharing" suggested by the high-up of the Fated. "Does this portend a momentous shift in the underlying philosophy of your faction, my Duke?", she asked. Darkwood didn't rise to the challenge, but simply iterated that the taxes were all well within the law, though the assembly agreed that the Guvners ought to investigate this claim with heavier scrutiny.

But this agreement failed to pacify Montgomery, who spoke of grave consequences should the Fated be allowed to continue their oppressive taxation practices:

"Do not think that only the Society will feel the sting of this peel. Any faction who stands in the way of the Fated will be a target of these legal loopholes. What's next, I ask? A couple extra stingers on swords [speaking to Factol Pentar, who raised a contemptuous eyebrow]? A hike in property taxes on Lady's Ward kips? What are you willing to sacrifice before you make a stand against this legal form of the cross-trade?"

With that, Montgomery twirled herself dramatically off the floor, and the assembly-watchers started buzzing with chant, forcing Hashkar to bang down his gavel to restore order. In fact, Hashkar had to call for order three separate times, until his throat was fairly raw and his face beet red, before they could move on to the next issue.

Then came something completely different. In the midst of Hashkar's reading for the next order of business

(which had something to do with the rights to ownership of the Hardheads new Hive kip), the assembly was surprised by the entrance of Factol Karan of the Chaosmen. He leapt quickly into the centre of the floor, face to face with the Guvner high-up and whispered a low, potent little children's rhyme that echoed around the Speaker's Hall:

"Breaking the law maybe a sin/Say the feet of the little madmen/Kegs and kettles, metal and drum/Open the door and watch them run!"

And then, Karan began to dance. (A Celtic jig I believe.)

Hashkar and Sarin were livid. Sarin had his hand upon a fierce looking mace and seemed ready to use it on the Chaosman, while Hashkar began to turn purple with rage. But just as the Harmonium factol called out for his bashers to scrag the Xaositect factol (an egregious move to be sure), Factol Rhys made a darting move to Karan's side, and requested a dance!

Hashkar banged his gavel down for order once again, but was drowned by a round of clapping initiated by the Sensate factol and picked up by a number of assembly watchers. Hashkar's and Sarin's anger deflated quickly into astonishment, and finally into disgust as they summoned factotums over to lead them from the Hall. Once again, it appeared that Rhys had diffused another tense moment in the Hall of Speakers. In the end, most of the more serious minded faction high-ups had left the building, while Montgomery invited Factols Darius (Signers) and Amber (Godsmen) to join in the dance with Karan and Rhys. Over the next hour, chant spread across the Cage and all sorts of Sensates collected themselves at the Hall of Speakers for a most spontaneous and unusual party.

At this point, you might say, the assembly was adjourned.

—Daemon Chaas,
political culler
(sk)

We sincerely regret to inform that

Jain Steelblade

along with her 3 companions was written to the dead-book yesterday, while fighting off bashers in Hive. The mourning ceremony will be held at 10 after-peak on the third day of the Fourth Week of Narciss. Family and friends are asked to come and retrieve her belongings from Mortuary.

SEEMS WE ARE CLUELESS AFTER ALL...

RUIN DEKAYE, a good friend of mine (and frequent drinker in the Pentacle) took issue with me just the other day. There I was, mouthing off about the Krynnish and how clueless they are, making snide comments about their recent troubles, and Ruin tells me that this stuff is all ancient history! "News" that's thirty years old! Well, I'd never...

Course, you can't just take that for granted, cutters, so I got Ruin to record her little speech in the Mimir for you. And I stand by my word: The primes of Krynn are still the most clueless, but then as a tout I find that an Inspirational Quality—think of all the extra jink I can make explaining all those things to 'em!

Well, I'll leave you in Ruin's more than capable hands. Spire's Calling!

*KRYNN IS OLD NEWS,
CUTTERS!*

Do all you leatherheads got your faces stuck in a mug of bub, or what? Where have you been? The Summer of Chaos has been and gone for more than thirty years on Krynn! Pick up your jaw and keep on reading:

The Krynnish are more clueless than most plane-walkers can even imagine. They've been so wrapped up in their own history they've had no time to wonder what's beyond their own back yard. However, there've been a few who've dared to look beyond—Raistlin Majere, for one—and it seems whenever they do, big things happen...

Now, Raistlin's a creepy spellslinger, to say the least. Pale golden skin, gold eyes with hour-glass shaped pupils, this Krynnish black-robed mage sought to challenge Krynn's Queen of Darkness, Takhisis herself. What the Krynnish call the Abyss, we know to be Baator's second level, where the Dragon-queen, Tiamat, rules.

Yes, Tiamat. That would make Paladine, the Platinum Dragon, Bahamut. And Gilean the Grey Voyager, not a dragon himself, but the god of neutral knowledge, in one of his many manifestations on various primes [*Maybe he's Thoth, cutters—Editor*]. So be there dragons, good and evil, and knowledge, Krynn's three higher powers will never die.

They are lesser gods as the Power's Pantheon goes, but they are gods, none the less. Other gods, like Chislev, Habbakuk, Hiddukel, Zivilyn, Sargonnas, and their children of magic, being Nunitari, Takhisis' son, Lunitari, Gilean's daughter, and Solinari, Paladine's son. At the end of the Summer of Chaos, these gods left their Crystal Sphere to save it from their Father of All and of Nothing, Chaos incarnate. They left willingly, to save their creation, their children, to leave them to fight their own battles from henceforth, and let them survive—if they would—on their own. As the powers' avatars left Krynn, they left word amongst their few true disciples left, that they were leaving—permanently, for a new place.

So came the Second Cataclysm. The first was heralded by the thirteen days of warning, the Night of Doom, when the true clerics left the land, and finally, the fiery mountain that sundered the continent of Ansalon. The Second Cataclysm brought no fiery mountain, no loss of clerics—but this: Magic, as the Krynnish wizards knew it, was gone. With Solinari, Lunitari, and Nunitari's disappearance from the Krynnish pantheon, along with the rest of their fellow gods, magic in its form on Krynn ceased to exist. The second came with the loss of the gods themselves—the loss of clerical magic. Healing spells, divinity,

everything. It was not that the Krynnish peoples turned their faces from the gods in their spite for the havoc, destruction, and utter chaos the first Cataclysm left behind, but the fact that there truly were no gods any more. For a time until the Fourth Dragon War, mankind on Krynn had, in their centuries of hate and unfaithfulness, forgotten about their gods, and thought they had left Krynn. (There have been a total of five now, the first between the gods and dragons of good [*metallic*] and the gods and dragons of evil [*chromatic*]. Unlike some primes, Chromatic and Metallic dragons are the only kind of dragons that exist on Krynn.)

*NEW MAGIC,
NEW DRAGON*

With the loss of the three Robe's wizardly magic, a new kind was discovered and developed: Sorcery. Primal magic. Stuff formed of the elements, brought from the creation. Without divine aid, healing was futile. Clerics, still strong in their love and belief of the gods, sought a way to continue aiding the injured, amongst other clerical jobs. Finally, they came across Mysticism, which came from the faith of the heart, love, and hope. Of course, evil mystics and sorcerers, like evil clerics and wizards, still existed, and discovered this magic for themselves, wrapping it about them to suit their purposes as they have always done.

[Make a body wonder if Krynn's new magic exists on other planes too, of just their world. Is it more, or less powerful than ou magic, or is it just different? Could this be to do with the phasing of the prime in and out of our multiverse, or is that screed too?—Editor]

The Summer of Chaos is over. It's been over for some

thirty [*Prime*] years now, and look at us—we're only starting to catch up on it. Dragons, mostly chromatic, with perhaps two metallic somewhere in the land, rule Ansalon in great, divided territories. The dragons, in turn, bow to the greatest dragon ever seen on Krynn, next to Wyrmfather, who Huma killed during the Third Dragon War involving the people of Krynn. (The fourth in total, as the Krynnish were unaware of the first battle between the gods and their dragons.)

But what a party the Summer of Chaos was! Magma dragons, shadows, the great and powerful Knights of Takhisis storming to take the land... Ah, the havoc was beautiful. The Lords of Doom around the burg of Sanction smoked and erupted constantly! With Chaos, so angry at being trapped in the Graygem for so long, finally loose—well, it made Hive riots look like Bleaker picnics, if you ask me.

*PORTALS IN
AND PORTALS OUT*

And another thing—Krynnish portals never worked right in the first place! See, they had these five Towers of High Sorcery where they did all their wizardly stuff, spread out across Ansalon. They didn't want to waste their energy on teleportation spells, so the made these five portals to go between the five towers. Now, one black robe, in all his evil curiosity, was haunted in his dreams by a lovely, seductive woman who told him if he'd only open the portal for her, he could have what he wanted—her, in flesh and blood. Well, he opened the bloody thing, and let in the Queen of Darkness, which started the First Dragon War between for the Krynnish. (You can guess that it really was the second.) Anyway, after this, the wizards decided they'd never do that again, so

they sealed up the portals, stuck them in the towers, and said 'Only a cleric, being Paladine's Chosen and of Infinite Goodness, working willingly in clear mind with a Black Robe Mage of black soul and blacker ambitions of Infinite Evil may together, jointly, open the portals again.' And whaddaya know? It actually happened. Figures.

Anyway, I don't recommend going to Baator any time soon to ask the Queen if she'd kindly let you in to Krynn sometime in the next, oh, few hundred thousand millennia. See, Tiamat can hold a grudge, and being a five-headed dragon and all, she's got five (well, four, since white dragons are so sodding stupid!) times the reason to hold a grudge, what with her defeat and all. She was so close to ruling the continent, but no! Bahamut, her big brother, (Gilean is also her brother), said they'd go! Do you know how long she's tried to get control of all of Krynn? Five Dragon Wars and all the centuries in between, that's how long! I'd be pretty steamed, too.

As for getting on to Krynn any other way—well, the Crystal Sphere is closed to all, and damned if even the Spelljammer ships can get in there any more. There are only two Towers of High Sorcery remaining, and, as such, only two stable portals. The rest are nonexistent, being destroyed by the Kingpriest's idiocy during the Reign of Istar that brought down the First Cataclysm, or by the Cataclysm itself. If you're curious, one stands in Palanthis, and the other in the mysterious, deadly, magical Forest of Wayreth.

Well, that's all I can say for Krynn. Wish I'd been there!

[Thanks to Voilá Mimir for the original recording text]

(kr)

LISTEN, BERKS! ATTENTION! CULLERS AND ARTISTS WANTED FOR S.I.G.I.S.

MUST BE LITERATE AND ON THE CASE

Applicants should contact the Editor, Scott Kelley

WE ARE IN SEARCH FOR INTERIOR ARTISTS FOR
UPCOMING, RECENT AND PREVIOUS VERSIONS
© REMAINS WITH THE ARTIST

CANT DICTIONARY B-W

↳ from Krynn seems deeply Clueless and the Crystal Sphere is now closed.

Sigilians vs. Sigilites

Sigilians are residents of Sigil. They can be born on the prime, the Outlands, the Abyss—anywhere. As long as they live in Sigil, they're Sigilians. Sigilites are Sigilians who are the third generation of their family in Sigil—at the least. Sigilites are thus somewhat pompous, and they speak the cant fluently.

Sign of None

The Doomguard.

Sixes

The Upper Planes. Cager Rhyming Slang: Sixes and Sevens = Heavens. The term often causes Upper Planars offence, since it implies only six of the seven Upper Planes are worth talking about. But then it ain't hard to offend an Upper Planar most times!

Skeg, Catch a

Get a look: "If you catch a skeg at the portal key, be sure to let me know."

Skiff

A really ratty kip. A crappy living place or establishment—in other words, most of the Hive's buildings are skiffs.

Skilter

A derogatory term used by members of factions to denote bodies who don't belong to one.

Skin a razor

Drive a hard bargain: "That sodding merchant really skinned my razor!"

Skinned

Someone who makes a contract with a fiend, a Baatezu in particular. It refers to the contract, which is usually made from the flayed skin of a human or Baatorian petitioner. "Keep away from them fiends, you'll only get yourself skinned."

Slaad-story

An unlikely tale: "Don't try and bob me with one of your slaad-stories, berk!"

Split the bean

To be miserly. Also a rather offensive way to indicate that a former blood has upped and joined a money-grabbing establishment such as the Fated, the Merkhants or the Scientologists (an obscure Prime sect). One who has split the bean is known as a bean-splitter. It can also be used to indicate that a cutter has absconded without paying their due. "Slugwort? He split the Bean, the Slaad-toothed Stagmeister."

Squeeze

A tax collector (or anyone who takes money from generally unwilling people) given that nearly all tax collectors are members of the Fated, this term is also often used to refer to any member of that faction.

Sour

Sour lemons are primes who've seen the Multiverse in all its glory, and soured by the experience. They don't like the place, 'specially not Sigil.

Spire's Ward

Goodbye and take care! Often said to bring good luck on a cutter about to set out on a planehopping jaunt.

Stamped and Clamped

Official. "Looks like this warrant for your arrest is stamped and clamped, berk. Sorry."

Stinger

Silver coin.

Stitch

To shut someone up—e.g., stitching their mouth closed so they can't spill the dark. Use it like this: "Whisper the dark and you'll find yourself stitched, berk!"

Stitch your Lips

An incredibly rude way to tell someone to pike it. To say "stitch your lips", means that not only is what their saying now either inappropriate or stupid, but chances are anything coming out of their mouths in the future will be equally so.

Styx Swimmer

A basher with a short memory.

Sure as Sigil

Certainly, I promise.

Swag, Swagger

Someone with an inflated ego. "Boy, that berk sure is a swagger, I hope someone cuts his knees out."

Swob me bob!

An expression of surprise.

T

Talking Book

A document or book that is illegal in the Cage, e.g. the *Factol's Manifesto*.

Tanar'ri Martyr

A hapless stooge, a cony who's just been caught.

Thirsty as a Vampire

Any creature who can drain blood.

Thrown to the Clocks

Overly harsh or unreasonable punishment: "Get caught plying the cross-trade in Mechanus and they'll throw you to the clocks for sure."

Tief

Dubious information: "That's a load of tief."

WARNING: Never use this term within twenty feet of a tiefling!

Tools

Derogatory term for the Revolutionary League, implying that they're just pawns in the hands of the other factions. Also used in a more general sense for any berk being manipulated, especially by yugoloths.

Torqued (off)

Annoyed, angry, cross. ie. "Better watch out for that cornugon, cutter; when you doused the sod with holy water he looked really torqued off..."

Trolley-womped

Crushed with great force; maybe in a stampede of manes, or perhaps run over by a Sigilian sedan chair "Sorry I look such a wreck. I just got trolley-womped back there."

Trying the Taps

Going drinking, usually in more than one location during the night, carousing.

Tunneljacked

Thrown, willing or not, through a random portal. Also, when a non-fixed portal jumps before a return trip is made, hippping travelers on a foreign plane.

Turn or two, A

A long, long time. This phrase refers to the very long turning-cycle of the Modron gears. "The gith-yanki have hated the gith-zerai for a turn or two."

Twixt the Lady**and the 'Loths**

In a predicament. A really bad position to be in.

Two Greens**and Up Goes the Forge!**

Sarcastic phrase amounting to 'It'll never happen!'—taken from a once-popular sideshow where a man would have a forge and a ladder, and would insist that for two more greens (q.v.) the forge would climb the ladder. Hence the cry "Two greens and up goes the Forge!" The Forge never climbed the ladder, because, according to the sideshow owner, he wasn't given enough money. The sod was eventually scragged by the Hardheads, but the memory of the peel is survived by the phrase.

U

Unhende

An adjective meaning worse than addled, clueless and leatherheaded all put together. "He's the unhendest screeed-screaming bubbler in the Hive."

V

Void Mephit

A non-existent being. In the context of the Mephit Code, the expression "Got a Void Mephit" means 'no response'.

W

Wagger

Gossip or information broker. "We check with all the wagers we could find, but the leather-heads didn't have anything on the cult of dead powers."

Watch the Spire

Goodbye.

Where's the War?

What's the hurry? What's happening?

Whipstitch

Murdering someone to keep them quiet. Based on of the slang, "stitch", it's given the connotation that whoever killed the victim was desperate but not too crafty, else the body wouldn't have been found. "It must've gotten out that he was playing mimic to the Hardheads, cuz he was found whipstitched last night."

Whistles

The Lower Planes. Cager Rhyming Slang: Whistles and Bells = Hells.

Wishful Thinking

Good way to insult a Signer.

Word-monger

A basher especially prone to uttering screeed, a tedious preacher or espouser of old-fashioned views.

to be continued

Stop Press

ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT
ON DUSTMAN SPOKESMAN

SIGIL (Hive Ward)—Several hours before press time, SIGIS received a report of an attempted assassination on Jergoth Rauhic, Factotum of the Dustmen's third circle and Dustmen spokesman, by an unknown agent. A dagger-wielding assassin attacked Rauhic from behind when he emerged from a dark alley in the hive, Rauhic was stabbed three times in the chest and his wounds were deemed critical.

After the attack, the assailant apparently slipped the blinds, running through the hive on the rooftops towards the lower ward. Other than being humanoid in shape, and clad entirely in black, almost nothing is known of the assassin. However, the dagger, which was left at the scene of the crime (still stuck in Rauhic's bleeding body), was obviously of Doomguard construction and bears marks

of proof of manufacturing in the armoury.

Jergoth Rauhic was taken quickly to the Mortuary where his wounds were tended, but according to N'anger Chang, a local beggar who witnessed the crime, his chances of survival were close to zero. No word yet has come from the Harmonium concerning an investigation, and nothing from the Dustmen Faction, as they currently have no replacement spokesman.

Chant on the streets around the Mortuary is that this may have been the work of radical Doomguard extremists, but Armoury-forged knives are very common in the Cage so this can not be very strong proof of faction affiliation. However, the recent squabbling between the Dustmen and the Doomguard makes such speculation rampant in bub-houses around the Cage.

—Reginald Ecantyr,
culler(da)

CAMBLON ABDUCTED TO BAATOR

RECENT UPDATE—Informants in the Iron City of Dis told SIGIS that Don Julio had been seen being dragged through the burg in chains approximately three days after the trial. (He was accompanied by a squad of serious looking hamatula.) Although we couldn't get the chant on who captured him, the pit fiend Galzephon [see SIGIS issue 12] recently returned to the Pit, and has been guest of honour at a number of rallies in Dis and Minauros (see

accompanying story). It is likely that the Don will be tortured by kocrachons, possibly treated to a show trial, and then executed in what-ever meticulous fashion the baatezu are currently fond of. Although no official statement has been made, we suspect that the Triad of Order will not be sorry to hear of the Don's fate at the hands of the fiends.

—Blondie Bluthheim,
culler
(ar)