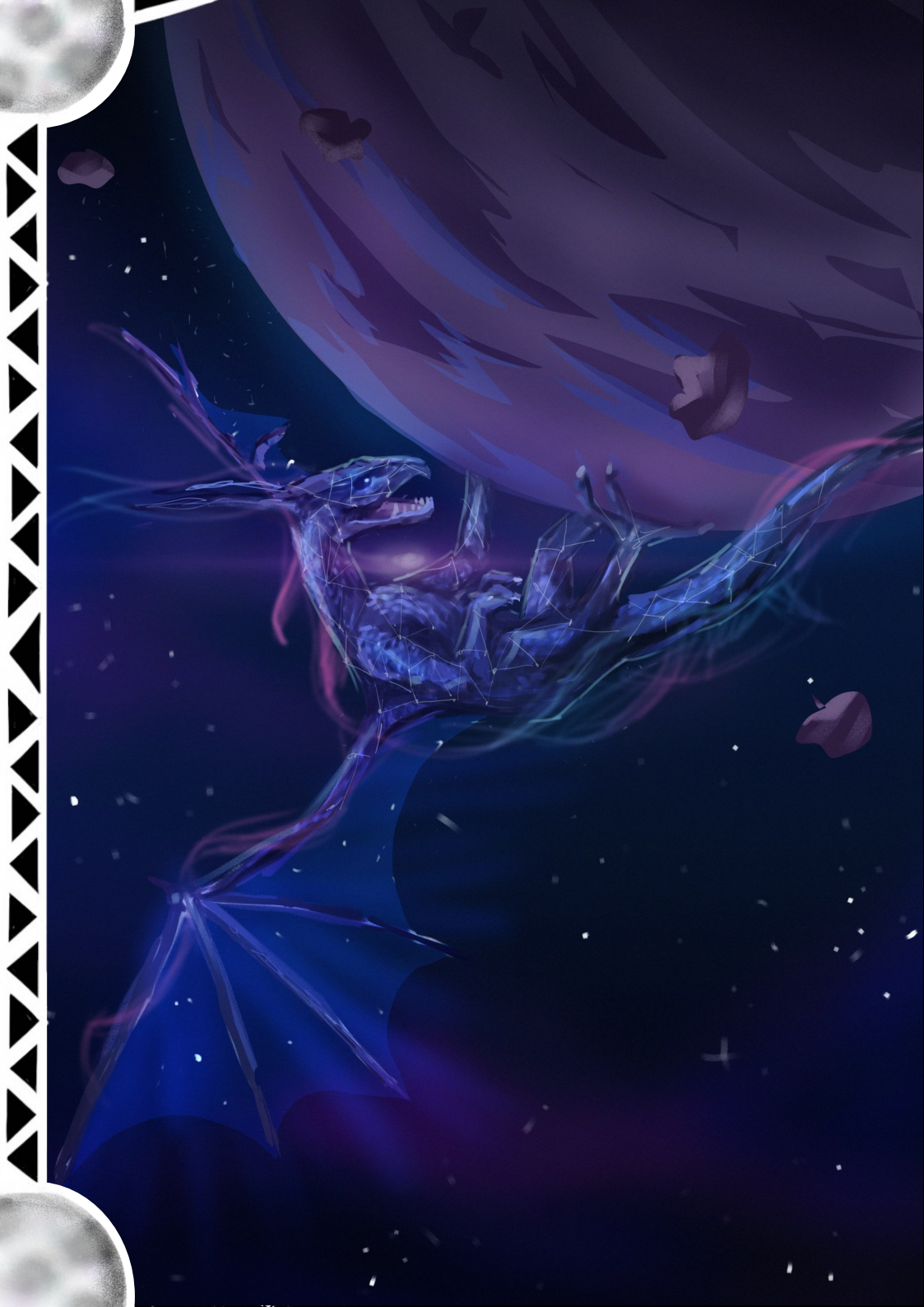




The Dragonfire from Outer Space

CLAWMARKS

ISSUE 65



A LETTER FROM THE CLAWTHING

I'm not going to hit you with the cliché and overused 'despite these unprecedented times' nonsense because I imagine it might scar those of us that see it in our outlook inbox 13 times a day, but may I just say that honestly despite the circumstances, it has been a pretty wild year (in the best possible way), and I want to say a huge thanks to all the CLAWs members that helped make that happen.

We've had to deal with the struggle of a fully online year, but despite this we've still had plenty of fun-filled events, RPGs and boardgames nights, and a highly active community on the discord. It's been encouraging to see how people engage with each other on the discord and WhatsApp group, sharing everything from memes, to suggestions and artwork. Massive props to those who shared these fun times with people they had never even met before, especially those of you in first year.

Our system of online boardgames has also been interesting to say the least. We've gone through everything from crazy drawings on skribbl.io (and guessing 'line' every time) to mixing up our colours in gartic phone (purple seas, anyone?), incredibly accurate flags and even our most recent animation adventures (the horror, truly). While we can't experience these adventures in-person, at the very least we now have an archive in the form of the discord to look back on all these memories.

I also want to extend a huge thank you to all those who provided helpful resources on the discord, or posted a piece of their lives. To those who helped create tabletop worlds or shared the artworks they made. You have all done so much in helping build and moderate our community and for this we are really grateful.

So here's to Pandemic: Part 2 (or 3? 4? It's been a while) and a second online Dragonfire. Let's hope for some in-person interaction next year, but regardless of where CLAWs takes place we can always count on the members to foster a community and keep us going.

Stay safe and sanitized, and don't forget to get vaccinated. We'll see you at Dragonfire.

Yours faithfully,
The CLAWthing
Chloë Botha



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THE QUEST TO SAVE HELL

Written by Jay Carter

Illustrated by Elizabeth Stevenson

Hell is freezing over - slowly.

The softest brushing of frost atop the lethe
An icy spiderweb hanging down over the pit of despair
Tartaros shivers and thinks of a new cloak.

Icicles start to form,

Creeping down from jagged rooftops and overhangs of deadly rock.

The wind is an icy chill that

Steals the breath right out of your lungs.

The new souls are chittering as they arrive,

Charon's golden coins freeze through his pouch
And the path through the frazil Acheron must be cleared
before the boat can pass through.

You are a stowaway on the boat of the dead

A sorcerer from an ancient sect
determined to keep Hell alive

For even the gnolls can sense a disturbance

You hope that Charon will not find you
For he'd surely dispose of you quickly
And that just wouldn't do



D&D COSMOLOGY:

THE FLAT EARTH CONSPIRACY

Written by Nina Nathanson

Illustrated by Chloë Botha

A serious question I want to pose - why is the canon of the D&D planar system just a large-scale analogy to the nonsensical geocentric flat earth theory?

There are elements of the D&D planar system that are deeply cool and fun to explore - I don't hate the concept, but I have issues with the execution. If you look up "D&D cosmology," you'll see that there are a few different models that scholars in-game have come up with. You'll also see a note saying these are just the theories that "mortal minds can comprehend". While I totally respect the creative decision to leave some of your world open ended and not have all the answers, there are certain things about the classic planar setup that do not add up. It's all very well and good to offload the work of thinking about your cosmology to fictional physics postgrads but if what you do provide is contradictory, it's just frustrating.

Though the models differ on specifics, the general vibe is this - there's a "Prime Material" plane (think the world as you know it, where most gameplay

takes place) surrounded by various others. My issue is that the planes are generally approached as disk-like structures that orbit a central point (where the adventure is), with no thought given to the complexity or consistency of the planes themselves past the surface level.

Follow my reasoning here: we're on a planet in the prime material plane. The sun and other stars exist, so it's reasonable to assume that this planet is in a recognizable orbit. While writing this article, I actually discovered that the solar system of the Forgotten Realms setting has been fleshed out a bit - did you know that adjacent to Faerûn's planet (Toril) is a gas giant where some dude runs a resort? I sure didn't! That establishes that there are similar astronomical rules to those in our universe which implies that Toril is joined in space by billions of solar systems in billions of galaxies, and the universe we play D&D in is so large as to be infinite, like our own. Rather than approximating a disk, the prime material plane (and probably others) must in fact be a multi-dimensional object of some unknown geometry, which



means the whole flat plane thing falls short.

With this in mind, it's complicated when you try to fit in the other planes. Honestly, though I have ideas, I find it hard to visualize what an alternative set up could be - but like with the things we don't understand about our own universe, that's the beauty of it! It's fascinating to consider and the creative weirdnesses that can be explored are endless. Acknowledging the wider universe leaves room for genre mixing with sci-fi elements and aliens; you can introduce a multiverse, and that's just on the prime material plane! Even the flat plane thing could be done really well - if you're willing to throw out the rules of our universe and make new ones, there's so much potential. What would it be like if planes had defined edges - how are they suspended and in what material? In either situation, if there's a defined boundary to planes, is there some space between the "walls" that can be exploited, maybe by beings looking to avoid detection?

Unfortunately, it feels like whoever set up the planes didn't want to think through the implications, so they just slapped some tape on the ideas and left us with these pieces that don't quite fit together. There's so much untapped potential, and while it frustrates me that the official material is lacking I greatly enjoy discarding large amounts of it and coming up with alternative answers for home games.

THE OF THE GRAVE

Written by Lauren de Blocq

Illustrated by Michelle Mouton

Hello there, please quiet down a bit, I don't like to shout and yell,
I have a tale for all of you that I would like to tell.
A tale of adventure, of bravery and of friends,
A tale still a mystery, for I do not know how it ends.

I, for one, have travelled very far and very wide,
But never have I once been known, to falter in my stride.
Until I met this motley bunch and fell in with the group
Of the most insane people, truly an unruly troop.

To start with, I am Vernda, a Tethyrian away from home.
I travelled here upon a whim but began the path alone.
I made friends here and some friends there, and a few from everywhere.
For now, I'll stay with these ones, as for a few of them I've grown to care.

First, I met the girls, Artemis, Alela were their names.
Then we joined with Akkarin and Jorm, and our fates were surely changed.
Finally, Demuriel approached us with his skills.
So, the group was set, and off we went, to adventure through the hills.

We came across a town beset by the black dragon cult,
After some turmoil, and fighting, the siege came to a halt.
The dragon cult took prisoners, many innocents you see.
And so, I and my group of friends set off to set them free.

We were successful in our mission, through miracles and gall,
We freed them from the cult, with deception not a brawl.
They were brought home, safe and sound, and we thought that that was it.
Instead, they asked for us to go to court to try convict,

The dragon cult of their heinous crimes and ask the Lords for help.
The Lord's Alliance could help with men to fight those black-caped whelps.
Once again, we set off, now on the trail to Waterdeep.
Along the way, we made some friends, that we might seek to keep.

Heflimphnir, a gnome from deep, was our first new counterpart.
Although he was but small in size, he had a great big heart.
Next came Sparkwing, a strange creature, like a little dragon toy.
He loved his sweets, and tricky spells, but fights did not enjoy.

In addition, we met a being whose very nature embraced the chaos,
That essence of calamity awaiting or boon if he was generous.
At my very core, I could not trust this creature
But many members of my party thought that he did not have such terrible features.

He who shall not be named became a semi-regular face
That we saw along the path, much to my disgrace.
Members of my party would reach out to him from time to time,
But honestly, often the times he "helped"; it would be for his own design.

The road itself was dangerous, and harm often befell,
Me and my friends, through many forms of new and beastly hell.
Trolls, giants, even mushrooms tried to kill us from day to day,
We had battles with hobgoblins and had to avoid giant spider's spray.

With the power of the party, strength, cunning, and magicks combined,
We could vanquish foes a plenty and leave no fiends behind.
Nothing would stop us from getting to our goal,
We would continue on, and we would each play our own role.

Jormungundr's battle rage, Akkarin's spell shows,
Alela and Demuriel, both handy with their bows,
Artemis on valiant steed, and myself, integral it's true,
For I possess the power of music and of healing too.



Each day we continued onwards, each day longer than the last,
Despite the common setbacks which we swiftly continued past.
Until, one night, as we soundly slept, our camp they did attack,
The black dragon cult, those foul demons, they were finally back.

Our watchmen had alerted us, but we were slow to react.
Those evil doers swarmed our camp, and at our heads they hacked,
By the time that we could catch our breath, the damage had been done.
Many of our guardsmen fellows, brave men and women, gone.

Once we could fight back, those foul beasts stood no chance
Because no one stands to beat us when they join in that deadly dance,
Of flashing sword and singing arrow and destructive spell.
No, they could not beat us, so as cowards they ran like hell.

When we had recovered, we heard a ringing plea,
A cry for help, a familiar voice, from between the foggy trees.
We pressed forward, to save our friend but instead we had been fooled,
By a mysterious voice, which taunted us and around our heads it pooled.

It said it held magic and power and said that it could be swayed,
To give up that boon, but only if someone were betrayed.
It seemed like a game, some sick joke, but we could not find an out.
So, we continued on, trying to win this artifact to use against the cult.



Image of the party by unknown artist

We avoided the betrayal, but it seems we did enough,
For the voice to reveal to us it's nature, without any bluff.
It was a great beauty, but terrifyingly so,
As we gazed up at a dragon, who could render us head from toe.

You should have seen her scales, they shone with a verdant gleam.
She was a green dragon, and one of great esteem.
For she is worshipped by the green clade of the dragon cult.
A sister group to the ones who started our path by the town's assault.

But anyway,
A being of such magnitude, she said she was easily bored.
So, she had made a challenge for her followers with leadership as it's reward.
The magic item, to them, displayed the chosen of the Claw,
However, she gave it to us, an act of pure amusement at its core.

We left the forest clearing as the misty veil parted,
Hoping to continue on the path that we had started,
A path of vengeance for those we could not rescue,
To give those caped cowards the punishment they're due.

However, the matter of the artefact was of great importance,
A fact that we, surprisingly, could all agree on, for once.
We thought that it was best, to keep it under our protection,
Until we can find out who to trust, and who is good in only reputation.

The cult is everywhere, so who knows who might be watching,
We thwarted them twice now, and plan to keep them sobbing.
They're sure to be waiting for the next chance they get,
For it's unlikely, that us, those pesky adventurers, they'll forget.

See, they tried to silence us, by killing us in our sleep,
And so, like any evil, we'll bury them six feet deep.
However, we will need help and so we continue forward,
To Waterdeep, the Lord's Alliance, for the fallen to be honoured.

Now, upon our travels, we have come across your town,
I promise we are just passing through, so please do not hunker down.
Come meet us and hear our tales, so you may now decide,
If all I've said is truthful, or if my brain is fried.

I look forward to my future travels, with this group of lunatics,
But please try not to cross them or you might start a few conflicts.
Ah, but for the most part they're quite lovely, well maybe interesting is the
word to choose
And trust me, they're much friendlier once they've had their evening booze!

A LAST LETTER

Written by Elizabeth Stevenson

Illustrated by Chloë Botha

My dearest Pete

Einstein supposedly once said: When you hold your hand on a hot stove for one minute it feels like an hour, but when you spend an hour with the one you love it feels like a minute. That's relativity.

And yet somehow those relative minutes we spent together filled my heart for a lifetime. But relativity, in its cruelest form, is another beast entirely. They told me that's why you won't be coming home. When a man travels at light-speed for an extended period of time, time itself dilates around them.

My love. I am now 75 years of age, and I can no longer keep clinging to you. You remain young in space, while I have grown old. I have remained in love with you in these many years I spent awaiting your return, but now I must let you go.

On the day you asked me to marry you, you wrote me a poem. I told you that I could never write something as beautiful as that. But now I will finally return the gesture. The culmination of all these years alone spent loving you. A last letter for you to remember me by.

Across the floor
Around the room
In your strong arms
By the light of the moon
Music swelling
Heartbeats dwelling
Tears a-flowing
As I'm knowing
That you are but a dream

My only love, my spacemarine
So far away, how close you seem
The days of our love have now passed
But you remain here in my heart



The day you left to sail the skies
I watched those stars with teary eyes
Bathed in their light I wept for you
My soldier-love, my man in blue

Today I say to you goodbye
My dream-boy who defends our skies.

If in your days you ever find
That I'm no longer on your mind
I give you blessing to move on
Do not return now. I am gone.

Still I declare to you my dove
My humble pledge of endless love:
That while my fading heart grows old
It'll beat for you until it's cold

So heed these words, my man in blue
In this last poem I write to you
That even though I'm left behind
We're dancing still within my mind

--Until we meet again
Katherine.

VALKUR'S PRAYER: A SEA SHANTY

Written by Lauren de Blocq

Illustrated by Elizabeth Stevenson

When the sea is rough and deck is heaving,
Boom, Boom, Boom, *Bang*
The Captain guides us through the storm,
Boom, Boom, Boom, *Bang*
O'er the waves and to-o the shore,
The Mighty Valkur looks over us all
He fights the Bitch and fills the sails,
So we can sail the Three Great Seas
Boom, Boom, Boom, *Bang*

Heave ho, and off we go
Under Valkur's Blessing
Heave ho and off we go,
To sail across the seas
Boom, Boom, Boom, *Bang*

Life on the sea is as rough as can be,
Boom, Boom, Boom, *Bang*
With pirates, monsters and Umberlee,
Boom, Boom, Boom, *Bang*
Despite those wretches, I do believe,
That on the sea, is where I should be,
The spray in my face, the salt in my hair
With Valkur at my side, I cannot despair
Boom, Boom, Boom, *Bang*

Heave ho, and off we go
Under Valkur's Blessing
Heave ho and off we go
To sail across the seas
Boom, Boom, Boom, *Bang*

Let the grog flow freely and let out a cheer
Boom, Boom, Boom, *bang*

For we are safe as long as Valkur is here
Boom, Boom, Boom, *bang*
So hoist the sails, all hands on deck
We must work hard to avoid a shipwreck
We sail the seas to see far lands
The freedom we can feel comes from Valkur's own hands
Boom, Boom, Boom, *bang*

Heave ho, and off we go
Under Valkur's Blessing
Heave ho and off we go
To sail across the seas



Boom, Boom, Boom, *bang*— the 3 lightning bolts on a shield (Valkur's symbol), the *Bang* can be done by hitting the shield or your leg or most commonly by holding your arm up as though you're carrying a shield and hitting that because sailors don't carry shields as often as adventurers.

When this is performed in taverns as a drinking song, or aboard the boat as a work song, there would be one main voice singing the verses along, with the rest chanting the "Boom, boom, boom, *bang*" and joining for the choruses.

Umberlee is Valkur's most common enemy, often being referred to as "The Bitch Queen" hence "he fights the Bitch" and the other reference to Umberlee.

Valkur is known as the Captain of the Waves and The Mighty. The three Great Seas refer to the Sea of Swords, the Trackless Sea, and the Great Sea. There is a fourth, the Shining Sea, but apparently it is not as great as the other 3.

[Listen to this shanty being performed here:](#)

<https://soundcloud.com/nightwing249/valkurs-prayer-1>



GAMBLETOP TIQUETTE

Written by Elizabeth Stevenson

Illustrated by Elizabeth Stevenson

Almost all of us has at some point sat down to an exciting game of D&D, Pathfinder, or what have you, and been irritated by something another player has done during the game. Sometimes we might even feel paranoid that we are irritating everyone else.

In this article I will outline some important tips to follow to become a more considerate player.

Tip 1: Make Other People's Fun a Priority

Fun is King. Everyone seated around the table is there to have fun. If you, during the game, do something to sabotage the fun of another player, then that, friends, is a cardinal sin.

If there are no other tips that you remember from this article, remember this. Even if stealing that person's plot-granted magical item is fun for *you*, if it hurts the fun of someone else at the table then you are undermining the purpose of playing the game in the first place.

Tip 2: Respect the Narrative told by your DM

Your DM has spent a long time creating a story for you. I know it can be tempting to go off on your own adventures, but there is a fine line between freedom in how you complete a story, and just blowing off your DM's hard work.

Refer to rule 1. Your DM is excited to see you interact with the world they created. Having a player decide to completely ignore the plot makes them feel like they wasted their time writing it.

However, if your DM is trying to railroad you, or is expecting your characters to make decisions that they would never make, this should be

discussed with them after the session.

Tip 3: Make Sensible Decisions about Character Motivation

Sometimes a player will make questionable decisions that affect the group, based on the argument "My character would do this."

Don't get me wrong. It's good to roleplay. But if your character is stealing from other party members, or killing plot-critical NPCs, even the strongest backstory justification won't earn you the forgiveness of the table. It is better to do something that is slightly out of character than to compromise the fun of everyone else.

Also, to avert the issue entirely, avoid making characters that have no interest in working with a party of adventurers to defeat the BBEG (Big Bad Evil Guy). Either find a reason for them to do what is fun for the table, or rework the character.

Tip 4: Listen when you Play

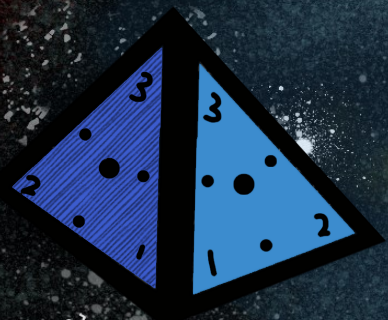
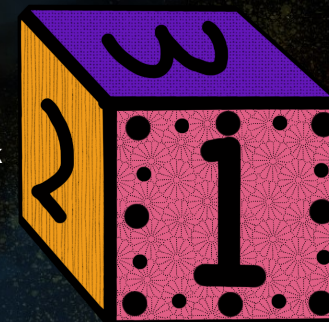
Listen to your DM and other the players when they speak. If you are constantly getting distracted and missing critical information, that is going to antagonize the rest of the table. They now must break the flow of the game to explain to you what happened when you weren't listening. It is disrespectful of the time of your DM and the other players. (I know during long sessions it can be hard to concentrate the whole time, but do your best.)

Furthermore, it is polite to take notes, when possible. This shows the rest of the table that you are engaging with what is happening.

Tip 5: Take your turns in combat quickly and efficiently

There is nothing worse than waiting for the group slowpoke to, at the start of their combat turn, freeze combat to look up the rules for how to use a certain spell or move.

As a chronic slowpoke myself I offer the following advice: Use the other turns in combat to decide what you are going to do so you don't waste time in decision paralysis on your turn. It's okay to clarify the occasional move but be mindful of the other players' time you are taking.



Tip 6: Save your criticisms until after the session

If someone does something that you dislike, or if your DM makes an incorrect call during the session, wait until the end of the session to bring it up.

Arguing with your DM about rules during the session causes the rest of the table to become bored as you argue. Trust that your DM knows what they are doing. The one exception to this is if the incorrect call leads to something serious like the death of a character. Point out such errors immediately.

Issues with the playstyles of other players should be discussed in private after the session. Don't publicly call them out. Sometimes people don't know they are doing anything wrong. If their behaviour still doesn't stop, consider approaching your DM about it.

Tip 7: Let others make their own decisions



In a strategizing situation, don't try to force your plan on the rest of the table, even if you think it's the best possible solution. This is a collaborative game, and part of the fun is coming up with a plan together.

If you are always telling others what to do the other players might start to resent you for it.

It is, however, possible that the other players are shy and are all too happy for you to make decisions for them. If you fear you are too controlling, ask the other players how they feel about it.

Tip 8: Learn the rules of the system before the session

Make sure before jumping into a game you actually know how to play it. Unless your DM has stated that they will be teaching you to play, it is your responsibility to learn the game system on your own.

But even if the DM will be teaching you in the session, it is polite to have some understanding of the system before you start. Knowing about the system setting and other "common-knowledge" elements such as which RPG die is the d20, shows respect for the time of your DM.

Tip 9: Talk to the other players

Everyone wants something different out of the game. Often, as players, we have gripes with the playstyles of the other players around the table or, alternatively, have ideas on cool interactions our character might have with another player's character.

Maybe you wish that this other character would heal you more often in combat. Maybe you would like your character to become romantically involved with another player's character. These ideas should be shared and discussed with all affected players, and maybe the DM.

Tip 10: Be nice to your fellow players

Make an effort to show up on time to sessions. Bring food. Be nice to the other players around the table. We are all playing this game together. The better you get along with everyone else, the more fun everyone will have.



A SAILOR'S FAREWELL

Written by Lauren de Blocq

Illustrated by Michelle Mouton

Though your living days are over,
You are not stranded ashore.
You have but docked in port,
To prepare to sail forevermore.
What lands you will go to
I cannot now hope to reach.
But when we next meet,
It'll be on some newfound beach.
We will miss you on your voyage
But we wish you well for now.
Calm seas to you, my friend
And may the winds blow true.
**Into Valkur's protection,
We now release you.**

Bold lines are said by the entire company present, the rest of the poem is said by one person (maybe the captain or close friend of the sailor).



THE FIGHT OF OUR LIVES

Written by Thato Thapo

Illustrated by Chloë Botha

It was an intense battle, and we barely made it, but we made it, nonetheless. No one really ever saw them coming, they infiltrated our ranks and murdered our highest-ranking officers, really dealt a major blow to each and every one of our forces. Of course, we fought back but, we had very little intel on them, and losing our wisest most strategic soldiers, our counter measures were lackluster at best.

Many were wounded and very few had died but those deaths shook us to the core because we knew we were most probably next, having narrowly escaped it would only be a matter of time before they adapted, before they became stronger, faster, more ruthless and more deadly, more dangerous so that even the fastest, strongest and youngest among us would not be able to survive any attacks they inflicted, every blow they dealt would be fatal, those indeed were the scariest thoughts any of us could have, so we had to prepare.

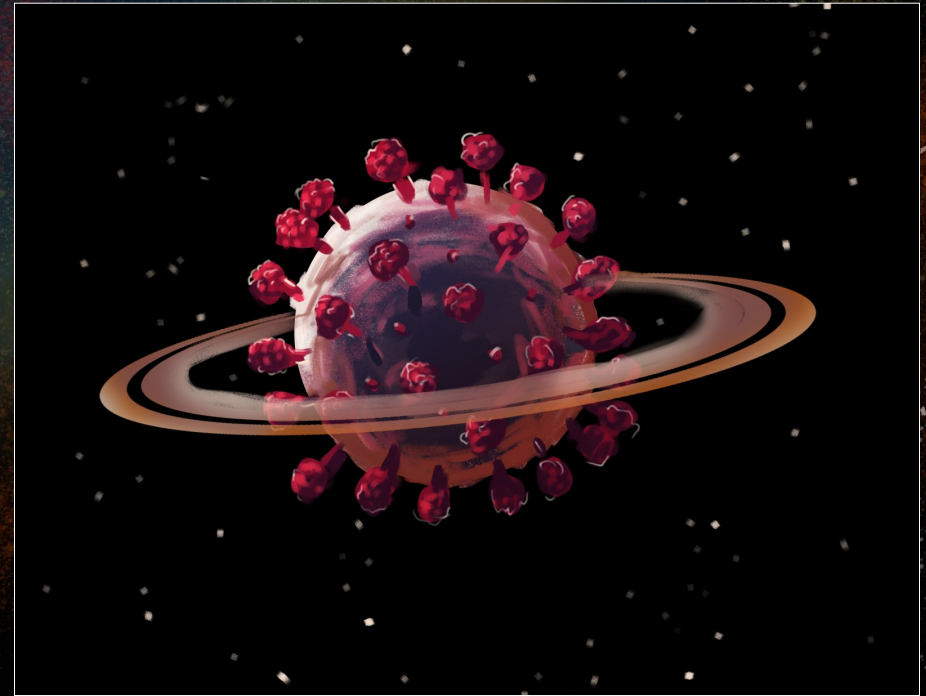
After the escape pods had sent us back home safely, only those heavily wounded begrudgingly took the time to recover, we were all extremely stubborn, including myself. We did not wish to wait for them to come and finish us off, no, we had to take the fight to them. I must admit as strategies go, we did not have the best or most efficient ones, but they were effective, and they cost us a lot of good Feropaxians, but we all knew the sacrifices we needed to make.

We spent close to two hundred Flavio cycles (300 Earth days) attempting to infiltrate and recover information from their base, plenty of missions ended terribly however, we only needed one to be successful. Mimicking their way of life and understanding what really made them tick was the easier part, some worlds even refer to this as a superpower of our people, luckily for us they did not know that.

They actually knew nothing about us, they come from a galaxy far far away,

they call it The Milky Way Galaxy, I wonder why that is, and all they actually wanted from our home is some substance they call diamond, and they claim mountains of it to be buried underneath the surface and they would have to dig it out, well we would not allow that anyway, so we chose to fight them off. They had too many weaknesses to exploit, underneath all that armor, they are made from pretty material that is easy to pierce, they call it skin. All we had to do was recreate the armor they used and find ways to dismantle it. This was the fight of our lives, and we went in fully prepared this time.

In a last resort to wipe out our civilization they deployed a biological weapon from their 21st century they called the Corona virus, a largely mutated and weaponized version that is. Luckily for us though we had already produced vaccines to all weapons they could have used against us, if they had bothered to learn about us, they would know that as a society whose superpower is to act like a vaccine, we are very well adept in that area.



QUEEN OF PAIN

Written by The Whispering Ones

Illustrated by Vibez

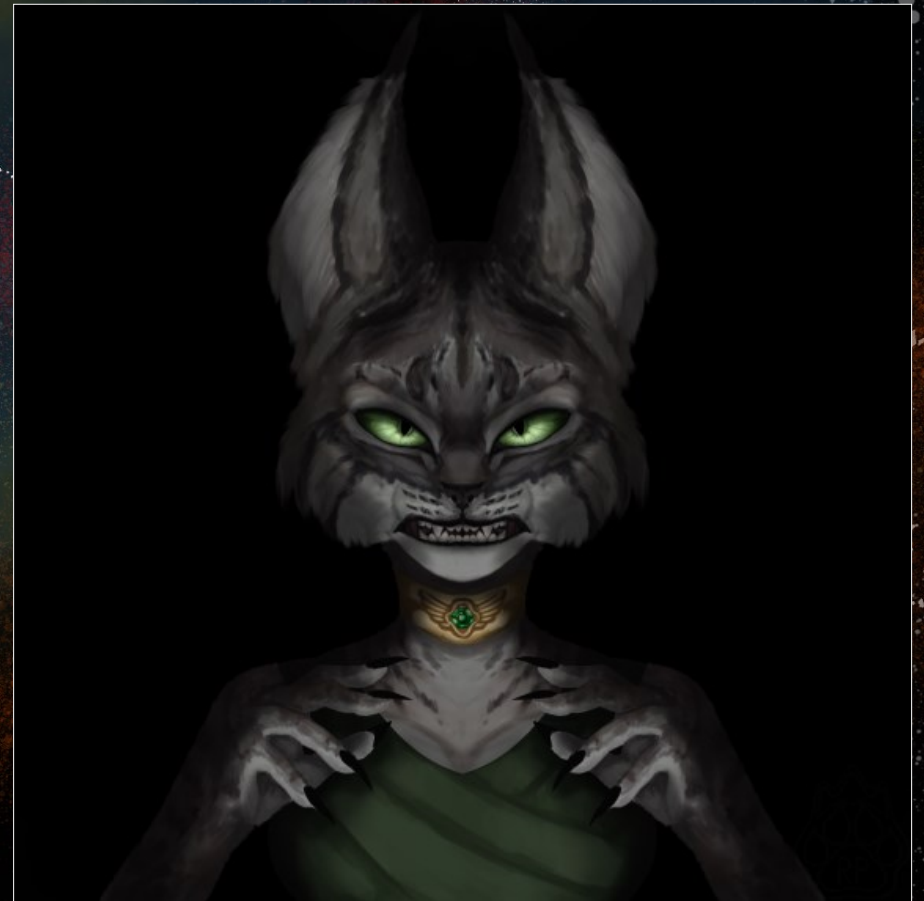
Upon the forest floor she creeps
In softened steps as daylight sleeps
With velvet paws and curling tail
Her shadow stalks the hidden trails

She knows the teachings of her clan
As silvered words to guide her hand
She follows them in all their ways
With love she serves them in their days

Great Aenap of nomadic fame
No wanderer forgot that name

And yet one day this legend ends
A cult of evil rips and rends
With darkened hearts and bloody knives.
The air quakes with tabaxi cries.
When Aenap comes, there's nought to find
Except the pelts there left behind.
Her legs grow weak, her mind is red
Alone she kneels among the dead
This Queen of Pain, in loss is crowned
Upon her knees on bleeding ground

And yet beneath a darkened sky
She raises a still-grieving eye
And swears an oath upon its rain
That she will give back every pain
Through mountains, valleys, darkness, light
Armed with strength of will and might
She would not let her search be done
Before she'd cut down every one
Her cat-eyes gleam with eerie light
As she sets off into the night





CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONAL EMPLOYMENT FOR SALE NOTICES

In Memoriam: Greg the Phoenix, attempting to cannonball off a cliff to the ocean hundreds of meters below, was dashed on the rocks. His last words were "we're basically gods". He is survived by his brother Peter.

Town News: The town of New New New Praford was razed to the ground once more today. We are beginning construction of New New New Praford next week. We plan on placing it further down the river in the hopes that any plot-relevant NPCs will take up residence in a different town and our homes won't have to be destroyed again to create an artificial sense of elevated stakes for the heroes.

Web Developer Wanted: We are looking for a web developer for our exciting new branded subterranean experience: DNGN™. DNGN™, brought to you by the same team who created the exciting social media/soul trading platform 'Grimoire'®, is looking to disrupt the underground loot-gathering market by making Adventuring a Live Service that maintains brand synergy while ensuring a loyal delver base. The DNGN™ team is looking for a bright, young, entry-level web developer with at least 150 years experience as a tier III boss who can ensnare fighters and incentivize fire-based attacks to clear those pesky environmental hazards. We are especially excited by applicants who can bring a whole brood, deadly venom, or phasing abilities to the table! Apply today, and join the family.

Looking for PR Manager: Successful level 10 adventuring party is looking for new representation. We're getting tired of being accused of 'creating more problems than we're solving' and 'extorting peoples' desires not to be eaten by monsters for profit'.

A Creepy Spider Crown: Hi. I was on a ship smuggling in some exotic beasts when all of my crew started screaming and throwing themselves overboard. I found this weird spider crown tucked away in the corner, and now my eyes have turned black and it's promising I'll reign over all reality if I give into its wishes.

Bag of Doll Heads: We are looking to sell our most prized item of a punctured black bag filled to the brim with doll heads. As important as this object has been in our lives, the decapitated creatures of fire and hate that haunt our dreams are simply costing too much in exorcism fees. We hope to sell to a family with young children who will appreciate the bag.

Missing: A reward is being offered to help find a missing adventuring party. They all said they'd be on the Discord call by 6pm, and I haven't heard from them since. I just need to know that they're okay, and if they're still keen to meet next week. Signed, a Very Concerned DM.

Looking for Owner: A completely unnoteworthy blue police box has been found on castle grounds. The Crown is offering a reward of one thousand gold pieces for any information on this owner, so that they might find out what the box was doing in the Prince's royal chambers.

A New Addition: The Phoenix family is excited to announce that their family has grown, and would like to introduce everyone to Greg, brother of Peter. They would also like to apologize for the town square burning down following Greg's birth.

WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

Editor: Elizabeth Stevenson

Classifieds: Liam Fieggen

Table of Contents Phoenix: Heather Ann

Front Cover Art: Chloë Botha

Inside Cover (Space Dragon): Chloë Botha

Inside Cover (Muffins, right): Michelle Mouton

Page Design Illustrations: Elizabeth Stevenson

A huge thank you to Chloë and Michelle, and VibeZ— Chief illustrators and Artist Extraordinaires. It was the touch of your brushes that brought this publication to life.

Soar on, Dragonfire.



EXCELSIOR