

FUMBLE 46

NEWSZINE

MAY 2023

WHEN COOKING ANY CREATURE LIKE THIS, YOU HAVE TO TENDERISE THE MEAT RIGHT OUT OF THE SHELL...



IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE KNIGHTS OF MISSPENT YOUTH



Family, extended or otherwise, friends and those most dear to our hearts should always take precedence in life. They provide support and certainty in a world that is becoming increasingly harder to understand. While there may be times when even this inner circle is at odds, these are the things we rely on when looking for comfort. You cannot pick your family but the same is not true of your friends. Still, we can often take the people around us for granted. There are few things more unsettling than when those close associations break down because of disagreements, conflicts or apathy. Life is for living. Life is not work, possessions or the perception of who you are in the greater world schemes that will not care for you when all is said and done. Do not burn bridges that will leave you isolated or surrounded by those who would gladly sell you down the river for the sake of personal gain. I know this is a rather heavy-handed introduction to Fumble Newszine but this periodical came about because of shared interests and friendship.

Sometimes the latter can be challenging and often forgotten. Family and friendship are not an entitlement. If you do not work to cultivate relationships, they will fail. When you most need that support, there may be no one to ask if you have not taken the time to stay in touch, forgive transgressions and move on together.

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Original D&D
In Search of the Unknown Part 9
Wednesday, 07th December 2022

The Mummy awakened but not in the way one would expect from an undead creature cursed to walk the world for all time until everything died by her cruel diseased hands. Removing the bandages from the captive, Alton was surprised to find a living young woman, one of striking beauty. She seemed to have made some bond with her saviour.



In time, she uttered words that had no meaning and pleaded for water. Longer still, she began to talk in the common tongue of the party. Ana-Ka-Ra –

her name. *Imprisoned*. Ana was told that she may have been locked away in the mirror vault for over 600 years. Her ability to learn the language of the party was nothing short of uncanny. Alton furnished her with makeshift clothing and he padded her feet in strips of his heavy blanket. She remained at his side but in time stated '*false*' and '*darkness*' when she saw Alnon. This was enough to raise suspicions in the party that there might be something amiss, especially when they noticed that he was not wearing the enchanted armour he found previously. Oakey and Ken decided to break off from the party and follow the path they took to get here just to be sure. They merely state that they needed to scout the way to be assured nothing was following them or that there were no Rust Monsters about. The party, consisting of Alton, Ana, Be-Low, and the uncertain Alnon, continued to explore this place. They returned to a passage that ran north and curved west but one that was cloaked in darkness and silence. Be-low was stabbed from behind while trying to traverse the obstacle. Ana dispelled the effects of this magic with a wave of her hand and an utterance of ancient words. She declared Alnon '*false*' again and accused him of being the culprit who attacked the beleaguered Magic-User. When Alnon tried to kill Ana, she unravelled his form and he dissipated into nothingness leaving only the faintest trace of dust and the belongings of the missing Fighter. She, in turn, looked worn by the effort of countering the darkness and this intangible doppelganger.

Meanwhile, Ken and *Barbi*... Oakey found the real Alnon trapped by the demonic statue in the corridor leading to

where Alton found the bracers. The cold was almost unbearable and the hapless fighter appeared to be clutched in the arms of the demon as it slowly drained him of life. Ken and ~~Barbi~~... Oakey destroyed the demonic statue and saved the naked Alton. The party retreated to rest in a triangular chamber where they had found food, water and other perishables perfectly preserved within wards of magic. Exploring the dark and silent passages that led to a set of strange double doors would have to wait.

Original D&D

In Search of the Unknown Part 10 Wednesday, 14th December 2022

The doors to an inner vault were emblazoned with the letters R & Z. One could only surmise that these referred to Roghan and Zelligar, the rulers of this dark lair. In the centre of each door rested a circular lock, similar to the ones previously seen. The party tried the various combinations but to no avail, until Be-Low realised that each lock required a particular individual – a Fighter for the R and a Magic-User for the Z. Opening the locks still proved a challenge but eventually they yielded to reveal a curious chamber with a red floor and a high apex ceiling stirred to fluid darkness. The walls were lined with walnut shelves containing tomes, scrolls, insects in jars and other oddities. There was a one-foot black edge to the red floor that formed a boundary between it and the shelves and the letters R & Z were emblazoned on the red surface in black. What could possibly go wrong here? The party persisted in its investigation until Be-Low realised that the blackness from above was descending and haste would be required if they

were to exit the chamber before it fell on the party. The time taken to analyse the falling darkness and the room bore fruit. The party exited in time as the darkness choked the room in a dangerous inky blackness. The room reset. The party returned to the room of preservation to rest and wait. On returning to they found a secret chamber in the floor where the R & Z segments fell away into a pit. Therein, a treasure of truly wondrous proportions was found but it was immense. Recovering all of the treasure would take time and several visits to the chamber. Amidst the treasure, several curious items were found. Scrolls and books would have to wait. The party found six strange gems that proved to have magical properties – Blue, Gold, White, Red, Black and Purple, each corresponding to enhancing an aspect. Once taken, the effect was realised and the gem was consumed into the body of the individual as follows:

Blue = Constitution = Alton
Gold = Charisma = Oakey
White = Intelligence = Ana
Red = Strength = Alton
Black = Dexterity = Ken
Purple = Wisdom = Be-Low.

Weary from moving the treasure back and forth to the room of preservation, the party elected to rest. After all, the treasure was going nowhere and the room had reset on each occasion when they returned. One item proved even more curious – a golden eye about the size of a fist marked with runes that may have been a name. Be-Low tried to decipher the inscription: V-E-C-N... he could not make out the final letter... one wonders what awaits the party in their search of the unknown...

Knightshade RPG
KSCAL04 Raven's Curse Prequel A
Wednesday, 22nd February 2023

Fireday, 5th Day of Jules, 726 Ayre Reckoning (AR) – Almost three months had passed since the visit of Patriarch Jarr-esh Keryn to the town of Tiera and his inauguration of the Cabal as Protectors of his Repository. The people of this region were still apprehensive after the coming of the divine leader of the Church of Thyrr. The Cabal had taken up their duties in Tiera and the Repository with diligence but this did nothing to change the lives of the people who had been left with no doubt as to who enforced the rule of law on behalf of the Theocracy of Calliban. Even the hierarchy of the local church had learned to thread softly with regard to the Cabal, and in particular, with Matron Agnes Keryn and Sister Bella Kole. The Patriarch had spoken and there were now none among the population of Tiera who would risk an unkind word against the two young women. Tiera enjoyed a quieter respite with the Watch replenished and all set to right in the region. Fear prevailed and open devotion to the Church of Thyrr was at its height. The Cabal also controlled both Taverns in Tiera now and while the law was exact in its application under the watchful gaze of Sheriff Inquisitor Reinheit Folgen, there had been a return to the norm for the locals to enjoy a quiet ale or two without being judged too harshly.

The hierarchy within the Cabal has been firmly established. Father Horus stood above all. He was the guiding Judge in this sect, appointed by the Patriarch to a position of highest respect. For matters pertaining to forbidden lore and those

that ran to mystical and the otherworldly, Raven Theodore Umbra acted as the foremost advisor. Seraphs Thanis Sanguard and Kreeg Hayden served as required but they also held responsibility for the smooth running of the two taverns – Kreeg, the Waterfront Tavern and Thanis, the River Tavern. The Inquisitors enforced the law, Reinheit Folgen as Sheriff and Malys as Protector of the Maiden of Keryn Hall and of the Repository. Jace Oxwen maintained defence of Tiera as Master-at-Arms. Wardens Silas Green and Farris Braeker ensured the roads into and out of the town and the surrounding region were safe to traverse. All reported to Father Horus. As for Agnes, she was Reverend Sister of Thyrr and Maiden of Keryn Hall. Sister Bella Kole acted as her assistant and as nurse to ministrations of Father Horus.

Raven Theo was plagued with visitations and unchecked thoughts every time he passed inside the monolith door to enter the Patriarch's Repository, the first of which was a fixation on Kain James, one of the last surviving members of the previous Cabal. The other two survivors were Widow Sadie Kart (formerly Theron) and Walter (Wally) Rhole, the latter of whose whereabouts were currently unknown. Prefect Rhole had been declared a heretic and disavowed by the Church of Thyrr. Sheriff Reinheit already ascertained in the interim that Prefect Rhole went missing from Calliban City shortly after they arrived in the town of Tiera to take up their positions in Keryn Hall. Prefect Rhole was currently the most wanted man in all of Calliban and his name resonated with Raven Theo as his visions persisted. *Heretic! Defiler! Abductor of children!*

Knightshade RPG
KSCAL04 Raven's Curse Prequel B
Wednesday, 01st March 2023

Raven Theo Umbra imparted a mission to Wardens Farris Braeker and Silas Green. They were requested to take the remains of Kain James south to the monastery near the town of Darras. Theo instructed them that this mission was of utmost importance and that the Patriarch had personally asked for this to be done. Furthermore, they were to tell no one of their tasks, travel incognito and stay away from any interaction on their journey. Supplies were sequestered without raising suspicion though one merchant did ask why they needed certain items. He was placed in the stocks for a few hours by Sheriff Inquisitor Reinheit Folgen and whipped twice for daring to question one of the Cabal. The Sheriff was at an impasse of late as no one dared to defy the law and he needed no encouragement to take an extreme view. Meanwhile, Theo instructed the Wardens to take a route out of Tiera that would not be well-travelled. The remains of Kain James appeared in the form of a sealed lantern on the bottom step of the entryway to the Repository as the Raven had indicated.

Wardens Farris and Silas set off on their mission post haste journeying east beyond the monolith of Thyrr and then south away from the road. The day was pleasant and the trek proved easy even in the rolling hills beyond the rise to the Maidens. When the light began to give way to night, they set camp a distance from the road and elected to refrain from lighting a fire as the night proved quite warm. Silas took first watch and shortly after Farris retired, he began to

hear a voice. *Can you hear me? Why won't you talk to me?* Raven Theo had warned the Wardens that Kain James might try to talk to them but not to engage with him under any circumstances. At first, Silas ignored him but relented in the end to a short discourse. Steeling himself against the voice of the fallen soldier he reported the conversation to Farris and retired when his watch was over. He was greatly fatigued and could not attribute all of his tiredness to the journey. Warden Farris ignored the cries of Kain James.

In the morning, after prayers and a cold breakfast, the Wardens set off again. Silas was somewhat sluggish after an uneasy night's sleep. The journey during the day proved uneventful and the night followed the same routine. On the third day out, as the Wardens neared the fallen town of Lare, they encountered a patrol but remained hidden long enough for the soldiers to move away from the area. As the light of day began to wane, the Wardens found a pocket of Darknight, known for its circular black leaves and tall dark green stalk. Picking Darknight was considered a crime in Calliban but it was also greatly sought after for its healing properties as it cured harrowing. The dark green stem was in turn worth noting as it could be used as a powerful laxative. Even the bulbous root was of use in making a palatable Mushra soup. The Wardens decided to let the Darknight be for now but noted its location. As they skirted the periphery of the fallen Lare, they noted several indentations in the topography that were of concern. Given the danger these pitfalls posed, the Wardens elected to make camp and continue on their way in the morning at first light.

Knightshade RPG
KSCAL04 Raven's Curse Part One
Wednesday, 08th March 2023

The morning brought a revelation. A grim hand protruded from the ground set before an erect flagstone that could have been seen as a macabre gravestone. Two blackened birds, possibly ravens, stood perched on this chance monument but while the form seemed certain, the grim fowl did not move. They were merely effigies of some age-old architecture. The protruding hand seemed to grasp something in its fist. The Wardens approached cautiously and with a prayer to Thyrr, Farris opened the fingers to reveal a large coin, similar to the ones previously recovered but far more ornate. This gold coin had a silver rim with additional markings. Farris took the coin and sequestered it away in his pack. Alas, this acquisition was to prove a point of consternation and suspicion between the Wardens as Kain James told Farris that Silas was a thief and trying to betray him. Silas did indeed have the coin but could not tell how it came into his possession. However, the Wardens had more pressing matters as the previously encountered patrol had taken up position on the bridge near the fallen Lare. The Wardens circumvented the soldiers and took a path further to the east, skirting a small wood.

Meanwhile, other members of the Cabal had left Tiera in pursuit of the Wardens some days before. They travelled the road by wagon with Malys mounted on his beloved horse, Honey. They would soon overtake their brethren assuming they followed the path that Raven Theo had set. Alas, this led them into a con-

flict with an undead creature lumbering after the Wardens. Malys dismounted and, with the assistance of his compatriots, dispatched the damned soul. The body was immediately cremated with the aid of an oil flask.

The Wardens encountered a man dressed in rich clothing of rank within the Church of Thyrr but showing signs of wear who stated he had come from Darras Monastery to escort them and to take possession of the essence of Kain James. He said he was Prefect Karum Dale but the Wardens refused to hand their charge over as something did not seem quite right. The man fled to a waiting horse and retreated from the agents of the Cabal. There could be no doubt – this was Prefect Walter Rhole. They had found Wally.

The Cabal joined the Wardens in pursuit of the heretic but when they finally caught up, taking him into custody proved troublesome.

The Cabal encountered a ritual circle of six coins, similar to those found before but decidedly more dangerous. The six coins were set about a young Raven, a boy of ten years or more, who stood in a focus of mystical flame. Theo tested the ritual circle as his compatriots skirted the area to find Wally and glean a better vantage point. He used Malys's horse to try to break the circle. Honey was consumed in an upsurge of dark-light that left no doubt as to the danger of the ritual. Only Honey's head and hind legs remained. The Cabal looked for other ways to infiltrate the circle but it seemed that Malys's armour protected him from any harm. The triggering of the ritual with Honey rendered one aspect of the circle momentarily inert but it would reset. In time, the Cabal

gained entry to the circle and realised that the boy Raven was in some way drawing from the essence of Prefect Walter Rhole who was concealed a short distance away in a dense thicket. Father Horus and Warden Silas were outside the circle and took it upon themselves to break the hold of the heretic. Sadly, doing so was not that easy as it now proved to be a mistake. Wally may have been a focus but it seemed that the boy Raven was in control. Breaking the ritual by killing the heretic permitted the circle to be broken. The boy Raven tried to flee but Warden Farris put two of the Phantom's enchanted arrows into him. The boy fell and shortly afterwards turned to black dust along with anything that touched him including the Warden's arrows.

Disgraced Prefect Walter Rhole was dead. The unknown Raven child was dead. Honey was dead. Theo recovered the six ritual coins of a necromantic nature and a seventh from the Rangers of the Cabal. Each implied a greater power that had hitherto been denied to the Cabal's Raven. The spiritual essence of Kain James remained intact but why did the Patriarch direct Theo to have the soldier of the former Cabal removed and returned to the town of Darras? Did the boy Raven in the ritual circle really control Wally, and if so, why? What secrets yet remain to be uncovered? Rest was sorely needed before pressing on but the Wardens would not face this task alone. The gamble to draw Walter Rhole out of hiding had worked but not without consequences. The monastery at Darras beckoned. Perhaps the answers could be found there. However, the Cabal had little choice. The Patriarch had spoken. Raven Theodore Umbra

had heard his words while serving as a guardian of the Repository. There were answers in Darras if Kain James was to be believed. Could this have all been a ploy designed by the Patriarch of Calliban? Prayer was the only solace in the face of such perilous questions. Blessed be the will of Thyrr.

Knightshade RPG **KSCAL04 Raven's Curse Part Two** **Wednesday, 15th March 2023**

Always burn the body. The Cabal never did things the easy way. Resting after their ordeal with the Ritual Circle that led to the deaths of a Raven child and disgraced Prefect Walter Rhole, food, prayer and reflection were in order. However, the night had other plans as the dead priest's body underwent a change that culminated with the rise of Wally Ghoul. One of the ritual coins stirred to light when Warden Farris attacked the undead creature with magical arrows. Raven Theodore had to work fast and use the Null ritual coin to counter the other or his companion would have been undone, consumed by the same Darklight surge that had already taken the life of Honey the Horse. Theo nearly died in the attempt. The Cabal prevailed with the intervention of Father Horus calling on the power of Thyrr to heal Theo but this dark event was not over. Father Horus and Warden Silas experienced increased hairiness that could not be attributed to their coming of age. This was the 10th Day of Jules. A full moon would rise over Calliban on the 15th. If anything was amiss, the Cabal would not have to wait long to be sure. Burning the remains of Wally and setting off early in the morning after prayers, the Cabal reached the

monastery at Darras, avoiding the nearby village as instructed. All was not right here. Raven Theo called on the power of Thyrr to gain admittance.

A young monk was found dead in a murder hole at the entrance, impaled by a crude spear. Further in, several more young monks were found, their heads having been crushed by unnatural force that left no mark on their skulls. Inquisitor Malys and Raven Theo were subjected to deafness on two occasions – an affliction that did not seem to worry the rest of the Cabal. A striking book was found in the libraries within – one that looked to have been perused a lot of late – Lycanthropy. There was something very wrong here but the cryptic words of Kain James played on the minds of those present – there was another book here, one that told a very different history of the Patriarch. But this was not why the Cabal was here. They had come as instructed to bring Kain James to this monastery to be laid to rest amongst the other lost souls of Calliban. And there were many inert lanterns residing here. Kain James begged to be taken back to the Repository but the Cabal had their duty. Still, murders had been committed on this most sacred ground. An investigation was in order...

Knightshade RPG
KSCAL04 Raven's Curse Part Three
Wednesday, 22nd March 2023

Pushing ever upwards into Darras Monastery, the Cabal found five more bodies brutally murdered, the heads of the monks crushed by some phantom assailant. Gaining the observation perch at the top of the tower, Raven Theo sent his Shadow Eyes through a water pipe into

the locked chambers below to discover a brooding hulking form and the book mentioned by Kain James. However, he had no time to dwell on his findings as his Shadow Eyes were unceremoniously dispelled with a stopcock wedged into the pipe by the creature within. Breaking the doors down, the Cabal faced off against a ritually enhanced Werewolf and survived after a bloody skirmish that left Warden Farris and Inquisitor Malys sorely wounded. The book revealed snippets of madness but could these revelations be true? The ancient tome told of the Brotherhood of the Wolf and of a time when the Patriarch was nothing more than the leader of the church but it hinted that he has existed since the time of the founding of the Theocracy and that the current Patriarch is the same person from centuries ago. The Cabal had little time to ponder on the insane ramblings in the book. There would be time to explore the truth of the matter later as other disclosures took precedence. The Werewolf reverted to the form of a feeble old man. He had been feeding on the souls of heretics and disavowed sent to the Darras Monastery by the Patriarch. Darras was formerly known as Cairn in a shrouded past. They discovered that Heretic Prefect Walter (Wally) Rhole was cursed by the Patriarch and became a Faoladh. The child Raven who accompanied him was female and she was trying to save Wally by drawing out the curse. She was considered an abomination in Calliban and condemned by the Church of Thyrr. The Faoladh too was an abomination to the Brotherhood of the Wolf. So many heretics. The recovered 'Book' told insane lies about the Patriarch and tried to cast doubt on other truths that

the Cabal has been taught to believe. Why would the Patriarch lie? Why would the Church of Thyrr lie? Blasphemy! This book was obviously the insane writings of a disturbed mind. Warden Farris and Inquisitor Malys were tended to by Father Horus. They were in need of new underwear after facing off against the Werewolf. Malys, in particular, learned that his armour was able to absorb necromantic wards, but would he yet pay the price for this discovery? Something other than the Werewolf killed the monks of Darras Monastery. The story was not over. The life essence of Kain James was still trapped in the lantern. The book might hold other revelations. What of the village? Were the people of Darras culpable in the devious nature of the monks? How could they return to Tiera without unravelling the truth?

Knightshade RPG
KSCAL04 Raven's Curse Part Four
Wednesday, 29th March 2023

The wagon and two draught horses remained outside. Now it became necessary to recover the equipment and provisions. Jace Oxwen and Raven Theodore Umbra undertook the task with alarming results. Alas, despite trying to calm the horses sufficiently to bring them inside they became agitated to the point of injury. Jace had no choice but to cut them free but not before the wagon was damaged. With the help of Father Horus and Warden Silas, the wagon was moved inside and the gates closed. Rest and healing were sorely needed. The village of Darras would have to wait until morning.

The night passed without incident. After prayers and a hearty breakfast, the

Cabal set off on the short trek skirting a small wood. Wardens Silas and Farris strayed into the periphery of the forest looking for the horses. Silas found one. The animal was dead. It had been gutted and fed on by Wolves. Little remained but a bloodied and torn carcass.

The Cabal pressed on to the village and were greeted after a short time by Father Jasper Gruel, a hunched emaciated looking man. There was something not quite right about the Prefect of the Church who arranged for the Cabal to be escorted around the village. Raven Theo soon became aware that all was not right within Darras. The provision stores were full but the people seemed to be on the verge of starvation. Enquiries about a wagon and horses met with a staunch refusal as the only conveyances were already abroad in the land delivering taxes and goods to Eastguard and Caulfield Tower. Father Gruel persisted in his scrutiny of the Cabal and made several loaded inferences that Darras was a poor village but they would cater to the Patriarch's chosen and feed appetites appropriately. He stated that he looked forward to having them for dinner. Raven Theo, in particular, took umbrage with the Prefect's turn of phrase. However, he had no intention of burdening the village without including all of the people in a festival of welcoming by utilising the ample stores of Darras. The Patriarch would understand. After all, his Cabal had come to the village and this should be celebrated. Father Gruel looked gravely put out but held his tongue. The people remained apprehensive, almost as if they expected some retaliation for indulging in such revelry but assurances from the Priest alleviated any concern...

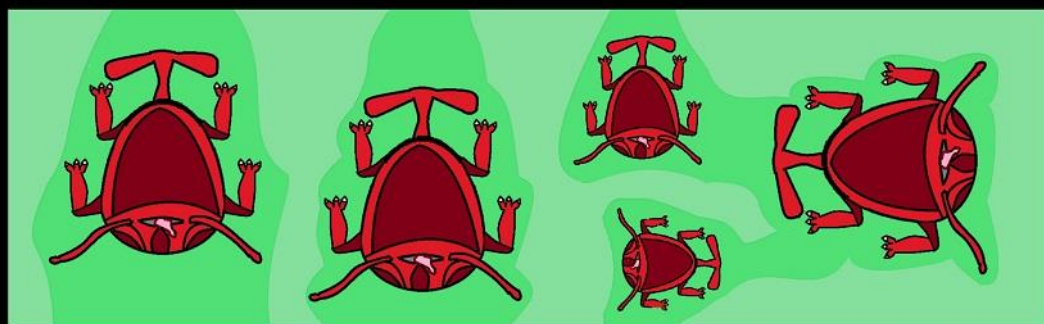
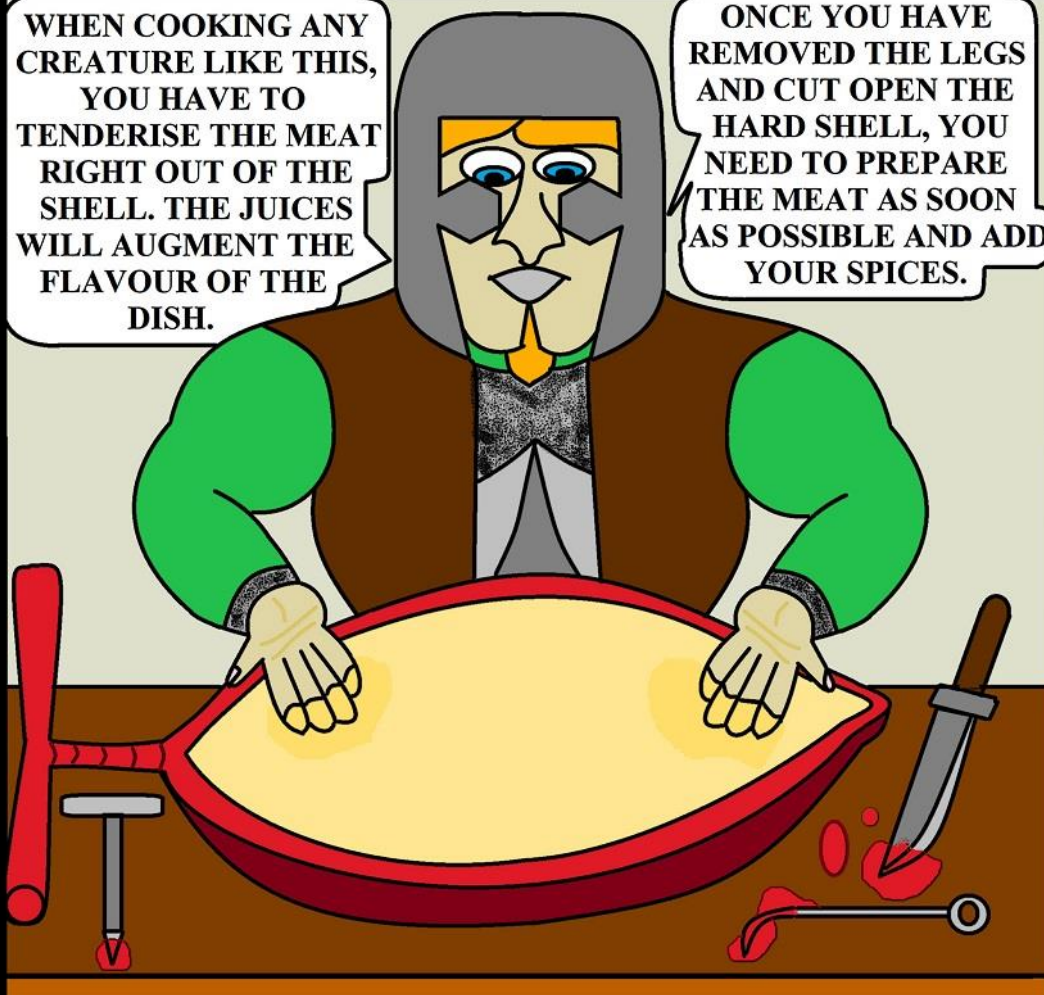
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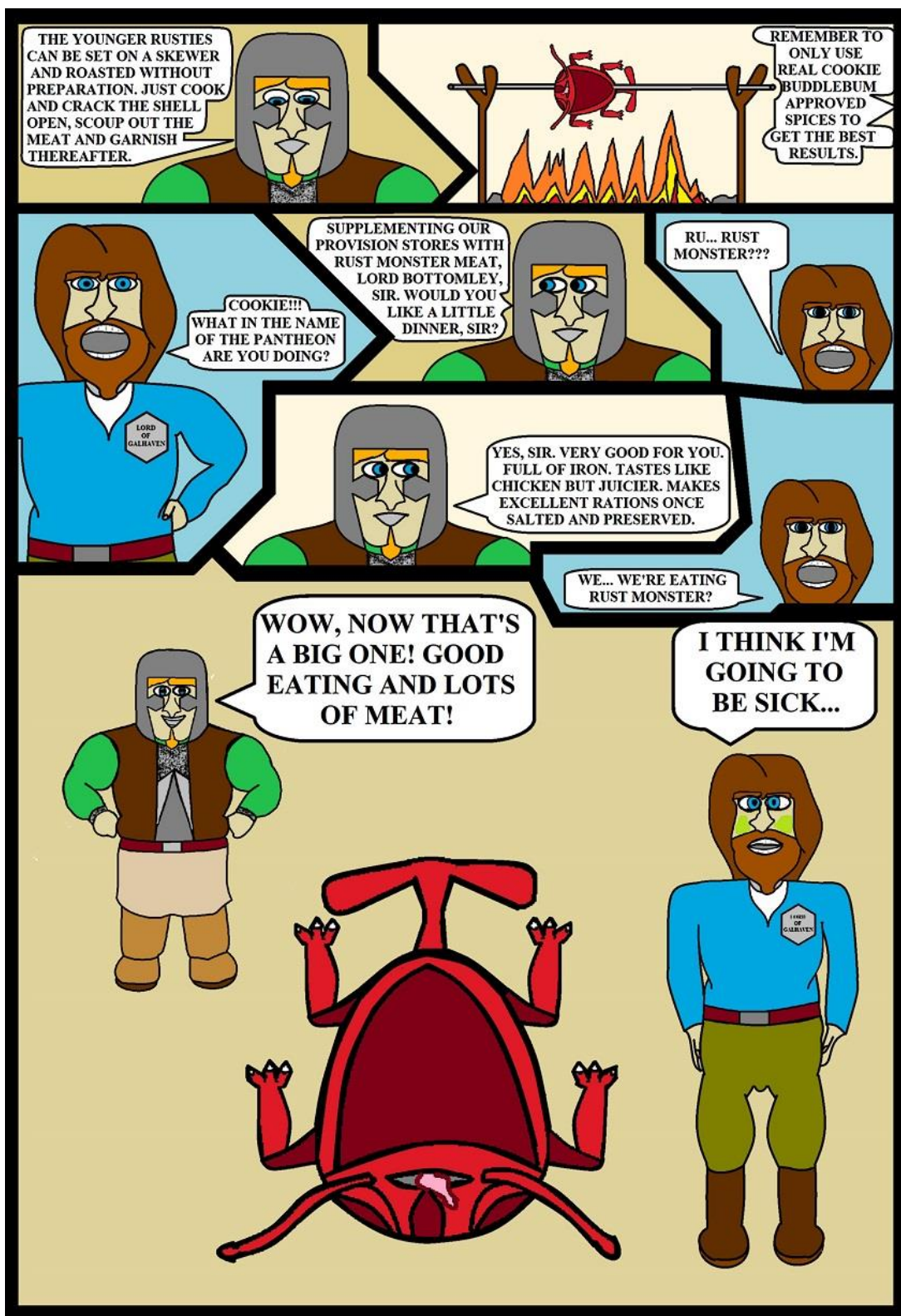
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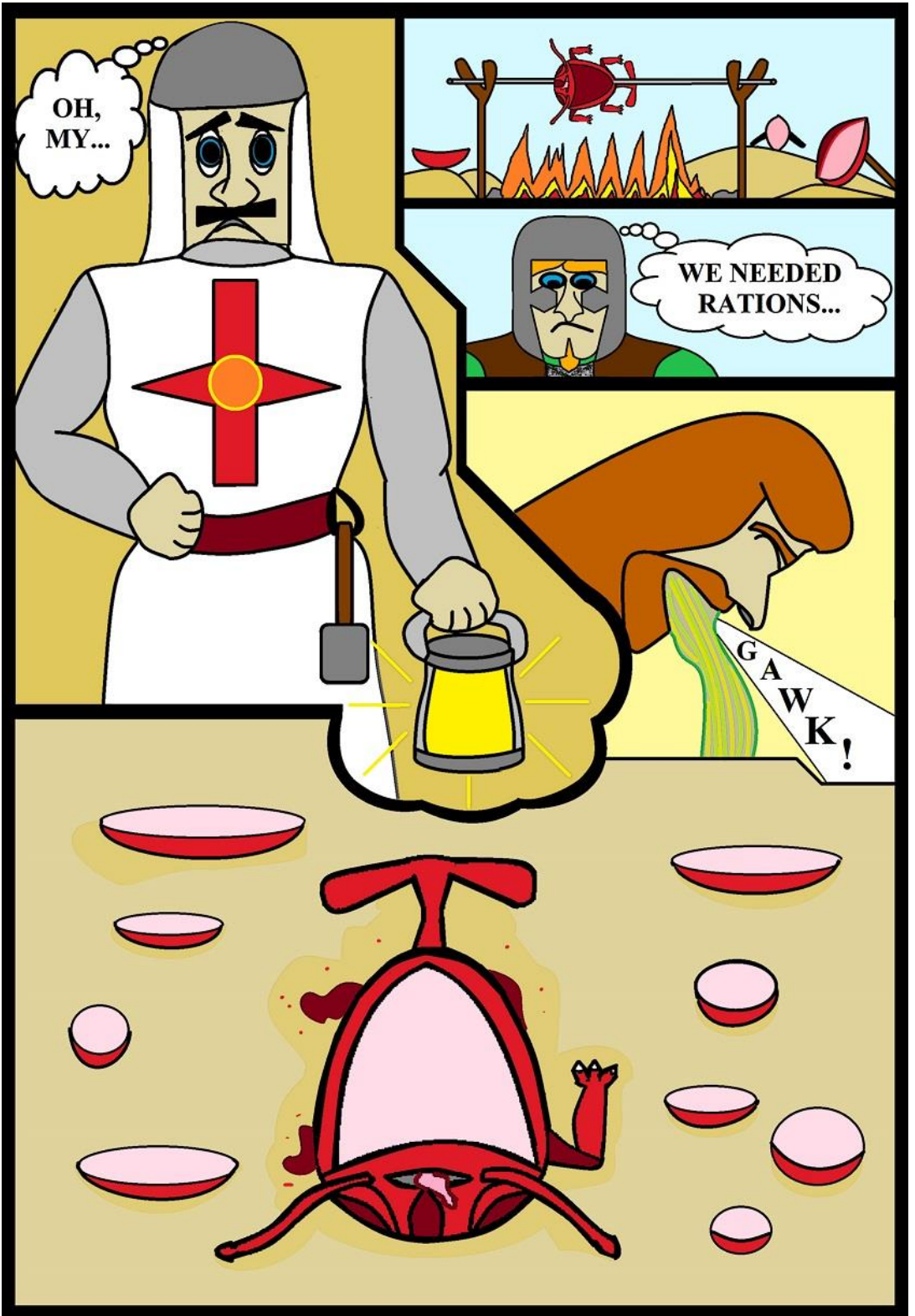
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WHEN COOKING ANY CREATURE LIKE THIS, YOU HAVE TO TENDERISE THE MEAT RIGHT OUT OF THE SHELL. THE JUICES WILL AUGMENT THE FLAVOUR OF THE DISH.

ONCE YOU HAVE REMOVED THE LEGS AND CUT OPEN THE HARD SHELL, YOU NEED TO PREPARE THE MEAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND ADD YOUR SPICES.







SHORT TALES

**EXTRACT FROM DP07 DARKLING POOL
THE VAMPIRE'S LAST KISS.
WILLIAM ANTHONY SHEA**

The house was an aching, worn and tired relic of the past. As the damp fog moved in from the sea to blanket the surrounding woods in a deepening forlorn mist, the cold and wet did little to alleviate the strain on this habitual solitude. The light waned. The night promised less in relief. There was an absence of hope that permeated the air and not a sliver of light broke the impenetrable darkness to diminish an impression of utter despair. And yet, there was something here that offered a quiet calm. No, not something... someone. The impression of tragedy lingered but this was confined to the house. Disease, death, grief and resignation had all visited this place in the past. The denigration of the structure came with time as despair kept a surer hand from duties of care that might have made this place a home in every sense of the word. Time had not been kind. This house had been a home once. It had been full of the laughter and joy of a living world that revelled in every moment until tragedy took away all hope of a future without the pain of loss.

A flickering light emanated from above, casting eerie and uncertain shadows against a grubby window to the front of the east-facing house below an apex that marked one of the upper bedrooms. There were three such vantage points, each denoting an opportunity of similar abode that had been

positioned purposely to greet the rising sun on fleeting mornings of optimism forever denied to those who existed now only in the night. The other windows remained cold, dark and empty. They were like vacant eyes staring out into the night. Kaleb had visited each of the three bedrooms to the front of the house and those to the back. He had fed there but his memories were muddled under the weight of thoughts of feeding. The last gasps of those lost in the throes of death filled his mind with the desperation of faceless victims. The solitary light provided a focus.

Kaleb was curious but stirred to caution. When he steadied his resolve and let the night fill his senses, the calm steady beat of a heart drew his attention again to the only window with a light. He felt the lure of life but it was taxed and waning. Perhaps the spirit of the one within had already succumbed to accept the inevitable. Kaleb was an agent of death. He had visited this place many times in the past. He had fed from those who lived within and left them lifeless amidst a tide of grief and tears. He had also come here in the past to the other houses in the outlying regions. The end result was always the same. He fed and misery was left in the wake of his passing. Kaleb felt nothing for those he took to feed the hunger. They were necessary victims to his continuance. Kaleb was a vampire. He was a true fiend of the night. To those he preyed upon, he was a monster. They had tried over the years to keep him at bay and even to prevent his coming. The graveyards were full of those who had thought to deny the inevitable. There were few left now who would have known what he was or why he still

came here time and time again. Kaleb did not remember. His memory had been dulled by a transition to the night that had been less than graceful. He knew only that he had not been a kind soul. His mortal propensity to crave what he did not have had twisted his mindset to deeds of corruption that only added to the anguish of those who tried to curtail his churlish habits and endure the repercussions of his baser immature instincts. Kaleb shrugged away these indulgent reflections. The thoughts stirred his frustration. A pang of hunger twisted his emaciated gut and focused his mind.

As he stepped onto the ailing porch, the timbers groaned in angry indignation. The sound made him pause. When he neared the door, he could smell the capitulation of this place and of the one within. There was no one left to defy his coming other than a solitary soul who had already surrendered all hope to the night. The garlic that had once adorned the entryways was gone. He remembered the cloves and flowers. He faintly recalled the stifling smell. Any sign of divine influence had been discarded. The traces of holy water that had once drawn careful lines of defence were no longer present. The lack of resistance was perturbing but Kaleb could not ponder why this should concern him. The house harboured an absence of fear. The calm of the heartbeat did not deter Kaleb. Blood was blood, even if it beat in a feeble vessel that longed for an end to a long night of patient waiting.

The door to the house was not locked. It creaked open to add a pointless impression of disdain to the ailing habitat. Kaleb paused again. His eyes lingered on the tarnished brass handle as if the dull distressed metal offended him. Fog

tried to creep inward in advance of Kaleb but lacked the effort of a breath of air to send it forth. The night was cold but this did not disturb Kaleb. He had been a creature of darkness for longer than his mortal existence. Changes in the weather meant nothing to him. The illusion of emotional connotations ascribed to objects and elements was merely a regression to some primal mortal instinct that fed such curiosities to lend impressions that the mind could grasp. Still, each exposure touched dormant memories that could not be resolved with his undead existence. They tormented his mortal memories.

The house betrayed signs of abandonment. A musky odour clung to everything and the place had not been tended to in weeks, if not months. Dust, rust and cobwebs testified to the retreat of any living care for longer. The cold and damp had done much to add to the woes of the house and its former occupants. Despite the hope that had once lived in this place, warmth and love were not enough to alleviate inclement elements and a crippling brooding discontent. They were not enough to stave off malcontent, avarice and envy. Hope had left this place a long time ago.

Vermin disturbed decomposing food-stuffs in pantries, closets and receptacles that could no longer prevent the imposition of scurrying and crawling invasion. Again, such things did nothing to deter Kaleb. His mortal propensity for disgust had died with any sliver of moral exasperation. He had survived in places where no human would venture into even without knowing of the presence of the fiend that dwelt within.

The house was only a house. Still, something felt wrong here that Kaleb

could not grasp let alone define. The passive heartbeat continued to deny any persuasion towards fear even though Kaleb was certain that his presence had long since been detected. He had not tried to mask his coming like so many times in the past. There was no need. Nothing remained to prevent him from feeding on the last forlorn victim in this jaded and equally pitiful habitat. The end was as inescapable as the night following day.

A solitary rodent dared to patter across the table – a field mouse that did not consider Kaleb something to worry its sojourn. It picked carelessly at a half-eaten apple, the browning of the core no more than a few days old. Given the rundown depreciation of the house, this sign of recent decay did not fit with the overall impression of prolonged abandonment. Kaleb growled. The hapless mouse provoked an unexpected reaction in the vampire. He reached out and grasped hold of the rodent with a speed that transcended human reaction. Kaleb unceremoniously crushed the mouse and tossed the broken carcass aside with a hint of almost mortal annoyance. The snapping of the rodent's little bones disturbed only the silence. Even the creature's normally flexible skeletal frame did not prevent a quick and gruesome demise. Kaleb did not understand why the feeble creature stirred him to irritation. He had encountered such creatures before without a care but had not expected to do so here in this house. Perhaps it was simply a throwback to his mortal existence. The mouse should have known better to be afraid. Kaleb was not to be trifled with. He was death to all living things. The brash intrusion of the rodent had been a catalyst to stir

other emotions. His loathing of this place surfaced and fell away almost as quickly but a trace of anger made his fists clench involuntarily. He felt something stir in this place. The kitchen and pantry doors lay open and very little remained to support a living existence. The aroma of food cooking and pies baking in the ovens lasted but a fleeting moment but they held him mesmerized for longer as if the memory took longer to drift away. His dead mind tried to deny these olfactory phantoms as his eyes saw only the truth of mortal decay. These feelings were exasperated further when he glanced towards a tarnished mirror in a hallway that led to stairs and saw nothing but the same jaded backdrop to a place that had long since resigned itself to a slow, degrading end. Kaleb hesitated and looked at the clothes he wore as a frown surfaced. He vainly attempted to smooth away wrinkles of distress and subtle rents that had taxed his apparel. He performed a similar exercise to the dark shoulder-length hair on his head and scowled at the mirror for denying him any hint of a vain impulse to correct aberrations in his visage.

Kaleb remained transfixed by the mirror for what he believed was merely a moment but the vexed fascination lasted longer than he had the ability to grasp. His hands continued to play the involuntary dance of narcissism over his clothing and his person until the emulation of a sigh escaped his lips without a noticeable exhalation to follow the very mortal inflexion. His curious indulgence did pass but not before his temper flared again to curl his lips in a snarl of bestial displeasure that did not afford the same opportunity to vent that the mouse had

provided. On an impulse, Kaleb smashed the mirror, ripping the wooden frame from the wall and hurling it downward with force against the solid stone floor at the base of the stairs. He looked at the fragments with a wry smile of satisfaction. There was always something at hand to placate his ego and he remained unconcerned about announcing his presence. The living being within this place was already aware of his coming even if the calm beat of the heart stayed unperturbed even after this childishly aggressive overture.

The stairs to the upper storey of the house beckoned. The mortal heartbeat remained strangely resolute. The blood within the feeble vessel above called to him. His hunger stirred and returned his focus to the here and now.

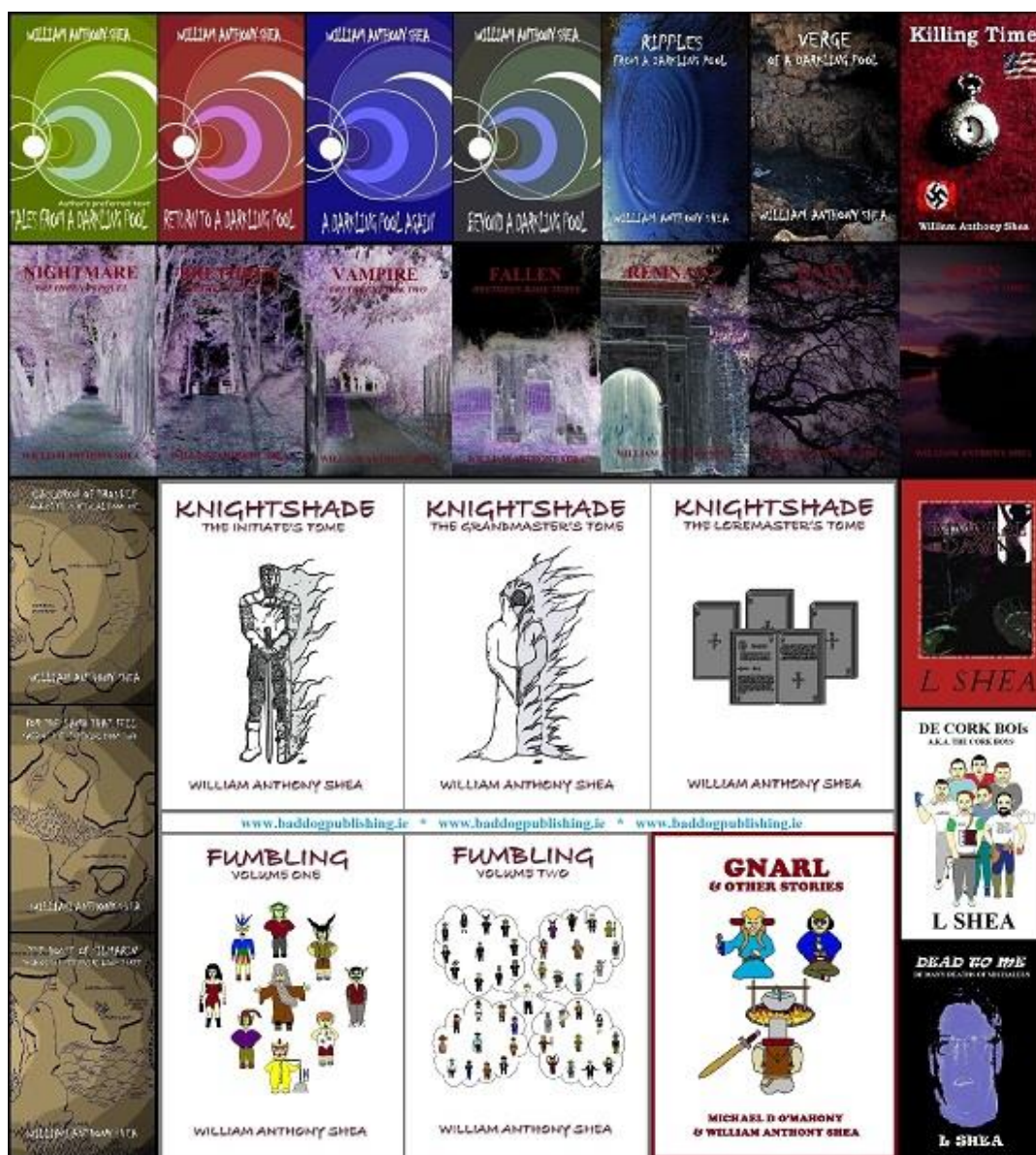
The bannister leading upward had long since dulled under the same lack of care afforded the rest of the house. Kaleb had the impression that it should have been polished and smooth but the varnish blistered in spots and the bare wood showed through at distressed intervals. The carpet covering worn timbers on the steps looked ragged and tired. Again, he saw something of the past when it was plush, vibrant and fresh but could not resolve the memory with the decay that spread out all around him. There were traces of candlewax carelessly spilt at chaotic intervals and blackened circles where the pile had been burnt all the way up the stairs. The centre of the carpet had deeper worn impressions than the edges. The steps had been trodden more often there following a line of folly up the middle without a care for the more enduring disproportions that now existed. The patterns of gold swirls on a red backdrop only now

showed up on the edges with any degree of clarity.

Kaleb paused. He looked to the bannister and heard laughter in his mind's eye, a cacophony of joy and reckless abandon that could only have emanated from children at play. He followed the recessed line of the carpet upward and saw shadowy shapes running wildly up and down the stairs. The vampire shrugged these memories away as if they were an irritation that only served a past he had no desire to revisit. A hint of bitterness twisted his mouth into another snarl of discontent but the inflexion could not be resolved with his purpose in the here and now.

Kaleb began his slow ascent but stepped to the left adjacent to the wall to avoid the deeper impressions in the carpet as if they held some hint of a trap to break or halt his resolve to feed. His step was surer but he offered no urgency. The night would last longer than necessary to sate his growing appetite but he had lingered here beyond reason. His prey was nearer now and still calm. Kaleb halted his progress up the stairs when he looked at the walls and saw pictures that presented a strange familiarity to a mind that wanted to deny the truth. He had not seen his reflection since the time of his fall to darkness and could scarcely remember the same high cheekbones, elongated nose and pale complexion that were portrayed in the family pictures. Some were faded beyond reason. Others offered a damning indictment. Kaleb had come here time and time again to sate his hunger... to feed on his own family.

NEXT ISSUE: Extract from DP07 Darkling Pool: The Vampire's Last Kiss Part Two – WILLIAM ANTHONY SHEA.



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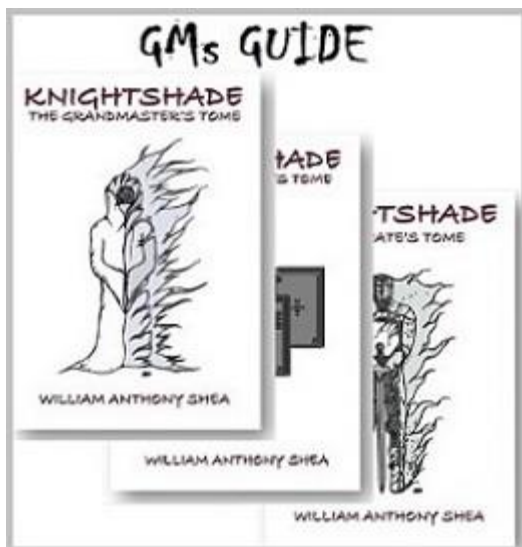
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KNIGHTSHADE RPG

Knightshade the Role-Playing Game is currently going through revisions that will see 2nd Editions of its core tomes produced for release in 2024. This will not affect the recent release of KST03 The Loremaster's Tome which will remain unchanged by these updates to the core system. 2024 will also see the release of a Callibanese Edition of KST01 The Initiate's Tome along with several supporting story modules set in Calliban. KST04 The Questmaster's Tome will be updated to reflect 2nd Edition rules.

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All events in the game year 2022-2023 will be subject to change without notice. The details provided are correct at the time of publication.

NEXTCON (UK Games Expo)

The time is almost upon us. Get your dice dusted off and your delving skills honed. D&D 5e is coming to KOMY. For those attending NextCon, and by extension, UK Games Expo, come to the event ready to play. As the D&D movie Honour Among Thieves hit the cinema, a spark reignited. Largely well-received and in the spirit of good fun, the movie did not disappoint. Love those Faerun references establishing the mythical game world of Ed Greenwood, the Forgotten Realms, as the standard for D&D. Who doesn't love a good Harper-driven plot? Throw in Rust Monsters, a Gelatinous Cube and a quirky dragon, mix with a bit of magic and well, I do hope the movie gets all the support it deserves. The game is D&D 5e. The setting is in the Forgotten Realms. Get ready to... PLAY! Oh, and there might just be a visit to a tavern or

two. You know... to make plans.

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE FULLY PAID UP BEFORE ATTENDING NEXTCON!

Friday 02nd June: Be at the airport by 05:00 at the latest. Depart Cork via Ryan Air @ 07:00 – Arrive in Birmingham @ 08:15. First available train to New Street, City Centre.

Saturday 03rd June: Breakfast followed by UK Games Expo as soon as the group are ready (or capable) of undertaking the journey to NEC.

D&D 5th Edition

Lost Mine of Phandelver Part One

Dinner: The 40th(S) Birthday Bash.
Venue is to be confirmed.

Sunday 04th June: Breakfast followed by UK Games Expo as soon as the group are ready (or capable) of undertaking the journey to NEC.

D&D 5th Edition

Lost Mine of Phandelver Part Two

Monday 05th June: Breakfast followed by visits to Comic Book Stores & Cinema Outing.

Tuesday 06th June: Breakfast followed by check out of Hotel.

A brief foray around Birmingham before saying goodbye.

Depart Birmingham City Centre for the airport @ 12:30 – Depart Birmingham @ 15:40. Arrive in Cork @ 17:00.

Please Note: If you are participating in Special Events, all costs are shared & all KOMY Standard rules apply!



Local gaming and comic shops need your support in this very trying time. Below is a reminder of some of the stores in Cork that need your business. Please practice all necessary COVID-19 safety measures when visiting these locations. Cork spent a long time with little or no gaming outlets. Support our own – shop local where possible.

COMIC VAULT

15A Oliver Plunkett Street Lower, Cork, T12 DP86

OTHER REALMS

CLOSED DOWN AFTER 20 YEARS.

SANDBOX

Unity House, Lower Glanmire Rd, Victorian Quarter, Cork

WARHAMMER

Unit 1, 2 St Patrick's Quay, Victorian Quarter, Cork, T23 CY5X

FUMBLE NEWSZINE STAFF

Editor: Master Sage.

Associate Editor: Wimpy Troll.

Technical Editor: Webster Troll.

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THE KNIGHTS OF MISSPENT YOUTH

Seneschal's Declaration



This is my last Seneschal Declaration in the current game year 2022-23 and the final chance to call on those interested in taking up the mantle of leading the Knights of Misspent Youth (KOMY) into the next term 2023-25. Anyone interested must submit a written request to succeed me as Seneschal. This can be via e-mail, private message or by snail mail. As long as the request is submitted in writing, it will be deemed valid.

The sad news of the closure, after 20 years of business, of the local game store, Other Realms, broke in March. Cork spent a long time with little or no gaming outlet. While there are other places in the city now, the loss of Other Realms will be felt. I wish the owners luck in their next venture wherever the road takes them. In recent years, I seldom visited the store unless I needed miniature paints and found it sad to witness their decline from a vibrant leading business in Cork during its inception.

NextCon takes us back to UK Games Expo in June. Unfortunately, attendance at the event by KOMY looks to be low. Regardless, we will celebrate some milestones with those coming to Birmingham and update the membership thereafter. There is still time to book your place. Don't delay – do it now! If all goes well, UK Games Expo will see the first run of D&D 5th Edition for KOMY with the introduction and part one of the Lost Mine of Phandelver on the cards.

And now for some necessary house-keeping. Again, support for KOMY's dwindling coffers is at an all-time low and without the contributions of the few there would be little left to keep things going. There is certainly not enough in the kitty to support the return of Kennel-Con this year.

Attendance at games has been sporadic and timekeeping equally challenging. The DMs/GMs go to great effort to bring you consistent stories and they should be rewarded, at the very least, by common courtesy. If you can't attend, let the relevant party know and do so in a timely manner. Look at the schedule if necessary to see who is currently running. Alternatively, contact the host who will relay any messages regarding lateness or non-attendance. On the matter of the host, be mindful that some effort is also taken to provide a clean and comfortable environment to play. Some courtesy should be proffered in this regard as well.

KOMY maintains stats on attendance, awards, finances, etc. These date back to 1998 when records began. They provide an insight into the operational and situational nuances of the Knights of Misspent Youth. KOMY also have a working Charter. Should a member require such information, please do feel free to reach out to request same in writing. For now, I do wish my successor well. There is a lot still to be done.

SENESCHAL: WILLIAM OF SHEA

WEEK	DATE	GAME	GM/DM	SLOT	MANAGE
VK38	21-Sep	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 0	MS	1	1
VK39	28-Sep	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 1	MS	2	2
VK38	30-Sep	FN43: FUMBLE ISSUE FORTY-THREE	KOMY/BDP	N/A	N/A
VK40	05-Oct	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 2	MS	3	3
VK41	11-Oct	BIRTHDAY: WIMPY	N/A	N/A	N/A
VK41	14-Oct	BIRTHDAY: WEBSTER	N/A	N/A	N/A
VK42	19-Oct	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 3	MS	4	4
VK43	26-Oct	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 4	MS	5	5
VK45	09-Nov	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 5	MS	6	6
VK45	12-Nov	BIRTHDAY: HIPPY	N/A	N/A	N/A
VK46	16-Nov	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 6	MS	7	7
VK46	18-Nov	BIRTHDAY: JULIUS	N/A	N/A	N/A
VK46	19-Nov	BIRTHDAY: SULLY	KOMY	N/A	N/A
VK47	23-Nov	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 7	MS	8	8
VK48	30-Nov	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 8	MS	9	9
VK48	01-Dec	FN43: FUMBLE ISSUE FORTY-FOUR	KOMY/BDP	N/A	N/A
VK48	02-Dec	JOES CHRISTMAS NIGHT	KOMY	10	N/A
VK49	07-Dec	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 9	MS	11	10
VK50	13-Dec	BIRTHDAY: TIED-ON	N/A	N/A	N/A
VK50	14-Dec	BIRTHDAY: RANDO	N/A	N/A	N/A
VK50	14-Dec	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 10	MS	12	11
VK52	31-Dec	BIRTHDAY: DUPLEX	N/A	N/A	N/A
VK02	11-Jan	Knightshade RPG: Legacy of Knighthawk	Julius	13	12
VK03	18-Jan	Knightshade RPG: Legacy of Knighthawk	Julius	14	13
VK04	25-Jan	Knightshade RPG: Legacy of Knighthawk	Julius	15	14
VK04	27-Jan	WARPCON	KOMY	16	N/A
VK04	28-Jan	WARPCON	KOMY	17	N/A
VK04	29-Jan	WARPCON	KOMY	18	N/A
VK05	01-Feb	Knightshade RPG: Legacy of Knighthawk	Julius	19	15
VK06	08-Feb	CARDS with KOMY	KOMY	20	16
VK07	15-Feb	Knightshade RPG: Legacy of Knighthawk	Julius	21	17
VK08	22-Feb	KNIGHTSHADE RPG: Calliban Rising: Raven's Curse Prequel	MS	22	18
VK08	25-Feb	FN43: FUMBLE ISSUE FORTY-FIVE	KOMY/BDP	N/A	N/A
VK09	01-Mar	KNIGHTSHADE RPG: Calliban Rising: Raven's Curse Prequel	MS	23	19
VK10	08-Mar	KNIGHTSHADE RPG: Calliban Rising: Raven's Curse Part One	MS	24	20
VK11	15-Mar	KNIGHTSHADE RPG: Calliban Rising: Raven's Curse Part Two	MS	25	21
VK12	22-Mar	KNIGHTSHADE RPG: Calliban Rising: Raven's Curse Part Three	MS	26	22
VK13	29-Mar	KNIGHTSHADE RPG: Calliban Rising: Raven's Curse Part Four	MS	27	23
VK14	05-Apr	Meet & Greet	KOMY	28	24
VK16	19-Apr	Star Trek RPG	Julius	29	25
VK17	26-Apr	Star Trek RPG	Julius	30	26
VK18	04-May	BIRTHDAY: GULLY	KOMY	N/A	N/A
VK19	09-May	BIRTHDAY: OZZIE	KOMY	N/A	N/A
VK19	09-May	FN43: FUMBLE ISSUE FORTY-SIX	KOMY/BDP	N/A	N/A
VK19	10-May	Star Trek RPG	Julius	31	27
VK20	17-May	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 11	MS	32	28
VK21	24-May	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 12	MS	33	29
VK21	24-May	BIRTHDAYs: KLUTZ & KRAVE	KOMY	N/A	N/A
VK22	31-May	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 13	MS	34	N/A
VK22	02-Jun	NEXTCON 2023: Free Day	KOMY/BDP	35	N/A
VK22	03-Jun	NEXTCON 2023: UK GAMES EXPO BIRMINGHAM & 40th	KOMY/BDP	36	N/A
VK23	04-Jun	NEXTCON 2023: UK GAMES EXPO BIRMINGHAM	KOMY/BDP	37	N/A
VK23	05-Jun	NEXTCON 2023: Cinema	KOMY/BDP	38	N/A
VK23	06-Jun	NEXTCON 2023: Free Day	KOMY/BDP	39	N/A
VK23	07-Jun	BIRTHDAY: TIPSY	KOMY	N/A	N/A
VK24	14-Jun	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 14	MS	40	N/A
VK25	21-Jun	Dungeons & Dragons: B1 In Search of the Unknown 15	MS	41	N/A
VK26	28-Jun	KOMY/FUMBLE AWARDS	KOMY/BDP	42	N/A
<div> <div>CANCELLED</div> <div>KENNELCON: THE KENNEL PARTY 2023</div> <div>KOMY/BDP CANCELLED</div> </div>					

NOTE: KOMY Schedule is subject to change.

COMING

NEXT ISSUE *SEPTEMBER 2023*

ILLUSTRATED

ANATOMY OF A RUST MONSTER PART 3

WAS

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SHORT TALES

Extract from DP07 Darkling Pool:

The Vampire's Last Kiss Part Two

William Anthony Shea

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INNER CIRCLE

Game updates from the Knights of Misspent Youth

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CONVENTION CUBE

KOMY'S CONVENTIONS

Conventions and Events

*

THE GMs GUIDE

BDP's RPGs

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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DEAR FUMBLE

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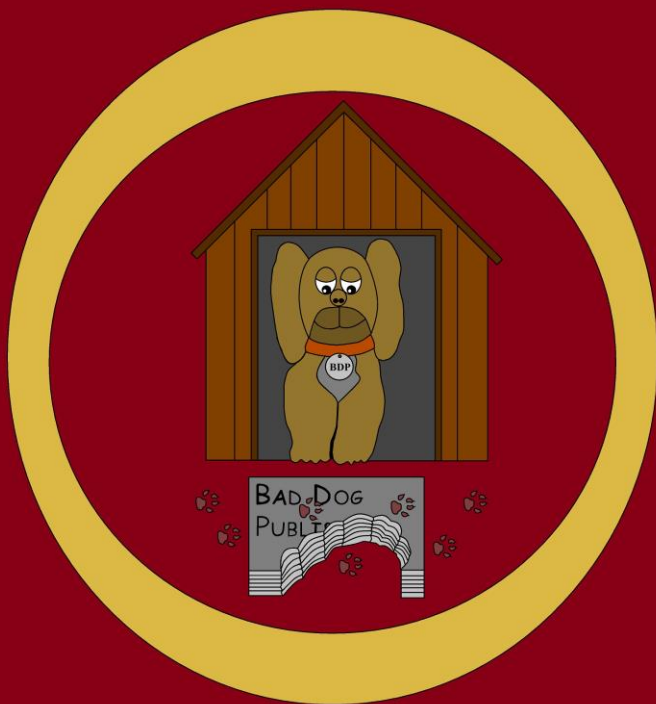
Letters from our readers & Notices

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THE SENESCHAL'S DECLARATION

SIR WILLIAM

Words of wisdom from the Seneschal of the Knights of Misspent Youth



FN46

FN46FUMBLEBDP02