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Steamy Ink Press^{5c}

Lifestyle news to share over tea

Stirring the pot one issue at a time.

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A Lifestyle Paper for the Townsfolk of Maplewood

Steamy Ink Press© is a division of Steamy Ink Publishing™. Our mission is to provide in-depth news to the people of Maplewood about the most entertaining topic- the People of Interest that flit through town. What are they doing? Why are they here? Are they single? We aim to answer these questions for you!

It is our goal to provide you a perfect conversation piece to share that pairs well with tea and great friends!

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Poppy Katullin, CEO

Advertising Inquiries:
Lorelei Levanestra,
CFO/ Glitter Extraordinaire

Legal Inquiries to:
J. Titus Marianus,
Consul to the
Freelands



Dubious Divinity: Cured at What Cost?

Draconus Destroys Desert Disease, Demands Daunting Deals

The first person to be cured of the Veilwalker infection has been discovered, right here in Maplewood. The cure was bestowed upon Commander Tiny of Sable Company by Draconus himself as proof that it could be done.

"A single cure from a mercurial being with unknown aims is not something to rejoice about. We must strive harder and further. There is no such thing as no strings attached." He stated when asked for comment.

Indeed, it is curious that a being infamous for staying out of mortal affairs is so keen to get involved in this specific conflict, especially when it has been a problem for the Varganians for centuries.

"I had a feeling the Dragon would be involved somehow, but this is surprisingly direct for him."

Arcturus, devout Sept worshiper, took a break from his constant rituals to speak with us. "Draconus may not be the God I follow, but he has my



deepest gratitude in this. Goes to show that when a God speaks, we should listen."

But is it truly listening? From those present, we have gathered that any who are infected will be given a cure after completing a trial for him. What exactly these trials are is yet to be determined, and it sounds more like

someone using a disaster to further their own goals.

"Draconus continues to be the greatest and most active of the Gods. I implore all to do the trial He has presented to be cured. And any who wish to strengthen their bond with the God-beast seek me out." Joy, beloved Priestess of Draconus yelled up from the bottom of a hole she had fallen into. She declined an offer of having a rope thrown down to her, stating that this happens all the time and there is nothing to worry about.

"Draconus again? Does the Sept do anything?" Thaddeus Roth, local town fisherman and D-list celebrity, rolled his eyes. "I for one was looking forward to transforming into a pile of ooze, but I guess this works too if I ever become infected."

An Extract from The Libertine's Guide to the Freelands: The Hounds Hearth

After my less than stellar time in Vlean, I decided that I should spend a little time further North, and followed my feet to the quaint little town of Forester's Reach.

The little burgh is in a constant state of upheaval due to its location on the border between the Freelands and Dellin Tribelands, so I didn't expect a lot, this weary traveler was surprised to be pointed in the direction of a Dellin Meadhall with a carved wooden sign of a dog sleeping in front of a stone fireplace hanging over the door.



Upon entering the building I later learned was named the Hound's Hearth, I was greeted by a roaring fire in a central hearth where great cauldrons of the house stew were bubbling, and the sounds of many folk drinking and carrying on, truly my kind of place.

The proprietor, a large blonde man of clear Dellin ancestry bustled behind the bar, which, while limited in selection, was well chosen, local brews, I went with a local variant of wood elven Kvasir, and a bowl of

the aforementioned stew, and half a loaf of fresh dark bread.

For the rest of the night, I had the finest time I've had since the Velvet Purse in Civenopolis, no sooner than the flagon would empty, a lovely tavern maid would refill it, and there were games and entertainment of all types to be had, including some impromptu betting on a knife fight. I was even kind enough to heal the loser, as he had paid for my entire night.

Though strictly a tavern with no rooms to let, I did manage to make very satisfactory overnight arrangements on my own nearby with a young widow who was also enjoying the nightlife.

Ratings

4 stars for the drinks ★★☆☆

5 for the food ★★★★★

5 for service ★★★★★

If you for some reason find your way to Forrester's Reach, stop by the Hound's Hearth, have a Kvass with Mathias, and let him know the Libertine sent you.

Supportive Listening

Provided by Shandeem Maris,

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Semi-Annual Adventurer Relationship Status Update



Drarieon- They are a happy, healthy couple who understands that each of them needs "me time". Supportive of each other and their goals, and are known to each help out the new elves in town by any means necessary.

Enznor- Currently on the "outs". Rumors debate if these two were ever actually in the "in", but rumors have now escalated to people rooting for the two of them to have a close friendship. Based on Enzo's reaction of drinking a bottle of wine after X'Nor "broke up with him", the two have a great jumping off point for their relationship.

Evil[dacted]- [Redacted] was overheard in the inn attempting to pawn their wife onto other eligible suitors, seemingly already tired of married life. Evilynn, ever the devout wife, was seen crying over their body as they writhed in agony following their encounter with the first Veilwalker, resulting in their infection. Fans of the couple are hoping that they can overcome this roadblock.

Gercky- Unsatisfied with their selection of adventurers, Lucky has chosen to court local innkeep Gerard. While it isn't clear to this writer if they are actually together or not, as Gerard is a complete professional while he is working, I can say that they are completely capable of having a stable and normal relationship as soon as Lucky gets rid of that pesky veilwalker illness.

Kythnar- Kyth and Vald's marriage is so drama free, the SiP staff almost forgot about them. And one of them is our freelance editor. Their fan base is small, but quiet. One interesting piece of information obtained from their cousin Makhno is that they are completely monogamous, which is highly unusual for their clan. "We're so drama free cause we're old enough to know better, unlike the daycare-aged elves around here" Kyth said when editing this very column.

Lilipal- Opal has been very supportive of Lilith through this trying time of being accused of regicide. As a reminder, she did not do it, as much as we wish she did. Their relationship appears to be rock solid, and fans of theirs could only hope to achieve such happiness.

Lorelaz- Lorelei seems to be stuck in a hostage situation in which she just follows Shelaz around like a puppy and does things "because it's important to him". Shelaz is seen only seeming to notice her presence when she isn't in town. The happy couple, however, is getting married soon! Lorelei seems unbothered by the fact that she will be banned from ever seeing her family or going into Evenandra again.

Micaptain- Arbor has been given *divorce papers*, seemingly out of nowhere. For a couple that is almost never seen interacting with each other, it was not exactly shocking news. The main question on everyone's mind: *Why?* "I feel so bad for Arbor, there's no way she could have seen this coming." Lorelei, who gave Arbor a black bow as a sign of friendship, said somberly as she was awoken late at night for comment as a last-minute edit to this story. "Can I go back to bed now and comfort her in the morning?"

Sablecule- Healthy, loving, caring and inclusive of all. Will let anyone join who is willing to sign a contract and give up their old lives. Offers great benefits, including dental insurance. Has their own bank, with low interest rates for Sable Company members. Pretty Boy, local fashionista, is also a major draw for fan artists of this polycule.

Tippy- Titus was heard in the inn stating to Abacus "Poppy has commitment issues". Poppy vehemently denied this and said she "Finds Titus to be an excellent Friend and enjoys his rare ability to make interesting conversation". Poppy's sister Lynn told this writer off the record "Yeah they'll be married by the end of next year at this rate. Don't tell anyone I said that. I'm serious Lorelei, don't quote me".

New Study Reveals Link Between Folding Pages and Serial Killer Tendencies

In a revelation that has rocked the literary world to its spine, a groundbreaking study has uncovered a disturbing connection between the innocent act of dog-earing pages and the sinister inclinations of serial killers.

Conducted by the Librarian Collegiate Society at the Mage College, the study titled "Folded Corners, Fractured Souls: The Dark Side of Dog-Earing" surveyed thousands of readers and analyzed their page-turning habits with meticulous scrutiny. The results? Prepare to clutch your bookmarks in horror.

Dr. Marius Evansrood, lead researcher, unveiled the spine-chilling findings that leaves questioning their very existence. "We always suspected that those who dog-ear pages were flirting with danger," Dr. Evansrood's paper begin. "But what we've unearthed is nothing short of a literary apocalypse."

According to the study, individuals who engage in the nefarious practice of folding corners are not just casual readers - they're walking manifestations of chaos and disorder. "It's as if they derive pleasure from watching the world burn, one creased page at a time," Dr. Evansrood laments, his troubled tone reflected in the tone of his writing.

But what drives someone to commit

such unspeakable acts against the sacred texts of literature? The study points to a cocktail of personality traits including a disregard for authority, a penchant for anarchy, and a troubling lack of respect for the sanctity of paper. "It's a slippery slope from dog-earing to dastardly deeds," Dr. Evansrood warned, his words echoing through the hallowed halls of bookstores everywhere.

In response to these chilling writings, bibliophiles around the globe have mobilized in a crusade to save pages from the clutches of folding fiends. Bookstores are offering free bookmarks with every purchase, libraries are implementing strict no-dog-earing policies, and authors are issuing impassioned pleas for readers to treat their works with the reverence they deserve.

But despite these valiant efforts, the allure of dog-earing persists, casting a shadow of terror over bookshelves everywhere. So the next time you're tempted to fold over that corner, remember the haunting words of Dr. Evansrood: "Every dog-ear is a dagger in the heart of literature - and a warning sign of the darkness that lurks within."

In the battle between good and evil, the fate of the written word hangs in the balance. Choose wisely, dear readers. Your bookmarks - and your souls - depend on it.

-Submitted by the Chatty Gossip Page Turners



Dearest Reader,

Recently G, D, and L have announced their race for Mayor! This seems to be an exciting time for our town, as there has never previously been a Mayor of Maplewood. This writer

wonders whether the constables have had anything to say about this, or if it's a smaller deal than a tea party. We also wonder whether the constables have any information on the sudden surge of sheep showing up recently. There are fights popping up around the sheep, perhaps someone could step in and take charge of this.

Another group of animals that has recently popped up around town is jesters. While some may argue that they are human, can that really be said when they are just roaming around terrorizing an unwilling audience? Perhaps another thing that someone could step in to handle for everyone in town.

Rumors are swirling about a group of Civen Legionnaires that have gone missing in the Freelands. We have heard from a reliable source that this is just a rumor, as if an entire section of the army went missing they surely would have been notified.

There were a load of archons around recently. . . perhaps connected to the veilwalkers' appearance? Speaking of veilwalkers, has everyone seen the marks they leave? They're pretty cool looking, but SIP cannot endorse willingly becoming infected just to get the cool battle scar.

Even better if you can get a cool eyepatch out of it, like L. Will these become the newest trend?

We do hear that there is an anti-druidish settlement on the rise after the death of an archon. Someone is reported to have stated "their literal job is protecting nature, and they let an Archon get killed." We cannot speak for all, but would like to remind folks that druids have a hard enough time mitigating mortal's effects on nature and would probably do well without constant reminders of their failures.

S has been spotted around town recently, helping a lot of people out with their medium related needs. She seems to be really making a name for herself. D on the other hand, with the fastest legs this writer has seen in Maplewood, has been seen many times running across town, this way and that, to get whatever it is that his party is in need of at the moment. We cannot stress enough how helpful it is to have a person like this in your party, so you can get out of walking everywhere.

Speaking of getting out of walking everywhere, one of the adventuring groups in town uses whistles to communicate between the party members. This writer believes this is an amazing idea, and very effective. If they are all trained to different sounds that's even better, but sly enough bystanders may be able to figure them out with enough watching.

We hear that the HBs have expanded by a member, and would like to extend our congratulations! We have also heard that a local alchemist has successfully distilled 220 proof alcohol. This writer was not able to verify the veracity of that statement, as none has been offered as of yet. Something about it not being ready yet.

As I say goodbye for this edition, there is a different note I would like to end on this time - speculation! This writer recently overheard some, shall we say, interesting, news. Without

Yours truly,

Madam Mapleleaf

Dellin Temperance League Seeks to Impart Social Change

The Dellin Temperance League appears to be in its nascent stages, where it's members have yet to reach a dozen. The whole schtick could best be described as a crazed and misguided attempt to improve life in the Dell, or at worst a mocking imitation of their High Elf neighbors.

In principle, the whole thing is as they say; they collect goods and donations for injured and veteran Dellins to get them back into fighting shape so they may continue to contribute to their tribe until they die horribly in battle, as is every Dellin's right to.

The corollary to their collections being allowed a challenge for possession of, stems from the specific tribe this whole half baked scheme originated; that being that Charity, in certain perspectives, and especially if begged for, is seen as weakness. This is even more true in the Dellin tribes devoted to Grak.

By allowing the donations to be challenged for, (and assuming they succeed in defending their goods) the idea is that it would demonstrate that their own tribe is so strong they can do whatever they want with the donations, and quite publicly declare their intentions with it.

If they fail and yield the donations, then their tribe is too weak to undertake this endeavor, a fatal character flaw that nearly all Dellins spend their whole lives seeking to correct. Afterall, in the Dell, if one wants to create safety and spread kindness, one must be stronger than all others who benefit from sustained cruelty and chaos.

Also, the Dellin Temperance League is for Dellins. Unlike the Elven temperance league who help most everyone they come across, the Dellin Temperance League is dedicated to bringing supplies back to the resource-poor tribelands. - Lorelei Levanestra

Why would a group calling loyal to the Bitter Makado or themselves the Chainbreakers be in anything but they know how to run the FREElands? We're already free a country.

dummies. When was the last time Gershins are smart, and they're you saw them actually break a STRONG! YOU KNOW WHY? And

chain? They want to free people they should go to the Gersh or something. What is it too cold for them there? Their so called leader has a fur hat, or is that just for show like their flags and chains hanging up. We all know know the real reason, Gersh wouldn't put up with their BS, they'd have a bunch of warriors on them the second they stepped foot on snow. Now I'm not

Battle Tidings With Emeric Barnes

ginseng for brainpower and energy! That's why I buy Barnes

Apothecary all natural green tea with ginseng. Peps you up and keeps you sharp.[Editors Note: Steamy Ink Publishing© does not endorse the viewpoints of Battle Tidings or any products advertised therein, however Emeric is finally paying for ad space so we'll allow it.]

Pink is so last season.

After a year of not updating her iconic wardrobe, it appears that Lotharwen has fallen into nothing but a fashion fad as Pretty Boy, Arms Master of Sable Company, has begun to gain notice from the locals.

Pretty Boy Pretties Up Wardrobe

"Dante does have good drip though, I'll give it to the man." a rather stout- looking gentleman was heard saying in the inn, raising his cup to his lips and pointing to his ear. "The one earring look is really kind of fetch, isn't it?"

"His earring is kind of 1580's but he pulls it off well." His friend nodded, notably wearing two earrings. "I haven't seen anyone doing that in a long time, not since my father stopped wearing one after he married my stepmom."

"His breastplate is a little scuffed, isn't it?" a young girl dressed in a light shade of salmon sneered. The stout man turned around, clearly offended and shot back "Well yours would be scuffed up too if you were out defending the town from monsters every day".

Debates aside, it is worth a note that Pretty Boy has done quite a bit to pretty up the standard black and red uniform of Sable Company by giving it some Civen flare. Will people start copying his frock as they did Lotharwen's? Only time will tell.



Does Folding The Corner of a Page Down to Mark Your Place in a Book Indicate that You are a Serial Killer?

Yes, Absolutely

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**No, I'm Covering Up for a
Serial Killer**

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Path Walkers: at your service.

A new local organization, called The Path Walkers, have begun making a name for themselves! When asked what they stand for, one replied:

"We are here to help guide and counsel those of good intent on their paths in life, be they physical or metaphorical, until they discover their natural place in life and, or after, death."

Recently this has included counseling ghosts, helping people with relationship matters, and helping lost travelers find their way through the local woods.

"Depending on which Path Walker you talk to, you will find different levels of help that can be provided. More experienced Path Walkers might be able to assist with the most aid, while a newer Path Walker might seek help, or handle less-complicated matters."

Don't expect them to fight for you though- their goals lie in shedding the least amount of blood possible.

If you are in need of counsel, aid, or guidance, seek them out! You'll know them by the spiral they wear and their introduction to you.

Across Novitas reports have been coming in of a strange light appearing and hovering in midair. No sources have been identified for the light, and it disappears as simply as it appears: suddenly and with no fanfare. Eye witnesses report that it has a cracked appearance, somewhat reminiscent of the Shattering. Unlike during the Shattering, which caused confusion and some chaos, those who have seen it report that they feel almost at peace. The few that have recalled their encounter state that they feel the warm, bright light wrap around them like a blanket as they approach and fill them with the sense that everything is going to be okay.

Some scholars believe that this phenomenon may be related to the Hallowed Chantry and many Septons have stated their agreement with this belief. No one who has approached the light has

Strange Light Rumored to be the Hallowed Chantry

yet shared their experience with it outside of what was mentioned above.

The reports have come from every nation on Novitas; one of the first sightings was in Fionn A'ilean, where a young elf had followed a light they had seen through the trees. It has even appeared underground, hovering in the caverns of Terra. Whether or not this light has also been seen in Vargainen isn't clear, as information from the other continent of Illumina is not easily obtained at the time of this printing.



Justine, Avatar of the Knight, is calling for testimonials on the eccentric philosopher Yonx.

It has been discovered that Yonx is harboring shards of the Scholar and Darkness, who are attempting to merge into a new being.

Justine will listen to any testimonials on Yonx's character and taking into consideration any ideas on what can be done to preserve his spark.

Please send a letter via courier or seek Justine out to speak with her directly.