



MAY 1603

Steamy Ink Press^{5c}

Lifestyle news to share over tea

Printing Birth Certificates Since 1570

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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!

Please submit all articles, tips, short stories, and comments via courier to:
Poppy Katullin, CEO

Advertising Inquiries:
Lorelei Levanestra,
CFO/ Glitter Extraordinaire

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



Sable's Dirty Little Secret?

Pretty Boy's 'Entity Hookup' Revealed!

The latest whispers going around about the Sable Company are juicy indeed! Apparently, their precious Armsmaster - they call him 'Pretty Boy,' can you be more self-centered? - has gone completely mad. Whispers in the Jenny indicate he claims to have been having chats with the Entity itself- you know, that nasty hivemind responsible for Veilwalkers and that wants to turn the world into dust.

And get this: it all started because he got obsessed with supposed "'Veilwalker Books.'" These texts are stated to turn you into a Veilwalker if you so much as look at them! Nobody's actually seen these books, of course, but Pretty Boy has been hunting them down like they're made of gold. Now he's claiming the Entity is talking directly into his brain! Can you even imagine the ego that thought process requires?



But here's the really juicy bit: Pretty Boy is in charge of all their weapons! Swords, arrows, the whole shebang! If he's really listening to the Entity hivemind, or even if he's just lost his marbles, is it really safe for him to be in charge of the entire arsenal of a mercenary company? What is to stop him from arming Veilwalkers instead of actually being useful? How do we know he isn't at the stage of infection in which you are the Entity acting in a humanoid form? Is a grotesque transformation into a Veilwalker next on his agenda?

Honestly, this whole thing has turned Sable from a respected group into something you wouldn't want to escort you to the smoke shack. You have to wonder who's really calling the shots over there, and if we're all in for a world of trouble because of Pretty Boy and his imaginary friend. Keep your eyes and ears open, because this story is far from over!

Puzzle Page!

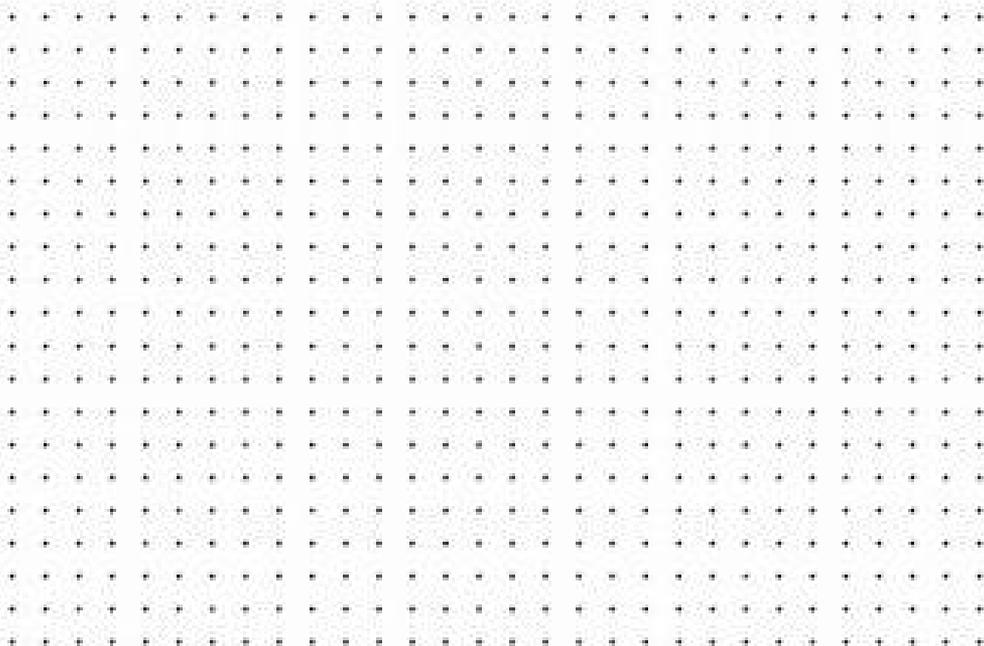
For when you're waiting around for interesting tea to walk in

2			5			6		8
	3	4	1			7	9	
			2			1		5
8	6			1	4		7	9
	5			9			2	3
9		3	7		2	8		
3		1	4		5			7
	8	6		2		3	5	
4						9		1

Fill this 9x9 grid with digits 1-9 such that each row, column, and 3x3 subgrid contains all nine digits exactly once. No digit can be repeated within any row, column, or 3x3 box.

If you know what this grid is for, have fun!

If you don't know what this grid is for, this isn't for you.



Maplewood Bazaar: 15?? - 1603

It is with heavy hearts (and heavier snow) that we announce the tragic collapse of the Maplewood Bazaar.

At approximately 8:45 PM on February 26th, 1603, the roof gave way under the weight of the snow atop the building. The sudden collapse came as a shock to many, as the old building had survived through orc hordes, ratfolk infestations, high winds, and brawls over morning coffee. Witnesses say the collapse was loud, dramatic, and partially blamed on a wandering chosen of the Elemental, who "may have prayed for a minor tremor."

In the fall, many businesses were lost, including but not limited to: The SIP printing press, The Pheasant Plucker, Sable Company's business headquarters, The Craftsman's Guild, and the entirety of the Temple of the Sept. Please keep those who have suffered greatest in this loss in your prayers, and consider passing them a spare coin to aid in a speedy recovery and relocation.



The bazaar is survived by a single support beam, a pile of wet banners, and at least one ghost who refuses to relocate.

Thank you to those of the community that could attend the funeral rites and memorial speeches held in April. A most impacted mourner said: "I didn't even know this thing came down. I just heard there was going to be cheesecake at the funeral." Individuals unable to attend the funeral who are still needing to grieve are advised to seek out Silor Sterling for any additional memorial needs.

In lieu of flowers, mourners are asked to please send support beams.

-Silor Sterling, Funeral Director and Amateur Necrologist



Dearest Reader,

generous hearts will understand that you simply misunderstood the situation as you perceived it. Now, on to business!

Hello and welcome back! As I have been out of town over the winter, this month's column will be written entirely from whispers that made it to me from the wind. Should a detail or two be off, I'm sure your

Veilwalkers, a persistent threat in our world, continue to plague our communities. Just recently, our very own Mayor Lucky suffered a reinfection, causing significant worry among the townspeople. We sincerely hope she can once again overcome this affliction and remain free from its grasp. In a surprising turn of events, a new adventurer known only as "Mouse" demonstrated an unusual, and seemingly effective, tactic against a Veilwalker. Witnesses reported hearing her frantically incant "RUN LIKE HELL" while attempting to flee. To everyone's astonishment, the creature appeared to hesitate, allowing Mouse to evade its attack.

During a recent Veilwalker attack, the Paragons were observed standing by while the Firekeepers and Sentinels valiantly engaged the creatures. The Paragons maintained their distance, watching the battle unfold, until Enzo's call for assistance prompted their somewhat reluctant entry into the fray. In a stark contrast, local Vleanoan citizen Mordison was seen joining the fight against the Veilwalkers completely unarmed, yelling at them to cause a distraction and then dissipating as soon as they got near! If that isn't the bravest, yet dumbest, thing I've heard in a while!

As everyone knows, blightfyre is essential in combating the ongoing Veilwalker threat. It has recently come to our attention that Pitohui, a known worshipper of Darkness and the individual who assaulted our editor last month, has begun selling this scarce alchemical substance to the general public. Sources indicate he possesses a price sheet, with lower-value items starting at a staggering 100 coin and escalating to nearly 3,000 coin! One must question the ethical implications of such exorbitant pricing during a crisis; Enzo was heard telling him "I will keep that in mind when I see your dead body on the side of the road", signaling what his exact thoughts on the matter were.

It pleases me to announce that the Bank of Abacus is expanding! More than a few people have mentioned (and that I have previously seen as well) the young elf giving loans to people, opening accounts with her, and I hear she even offers a way to pay people with pieces of paper. Speaking of expansions, Opal's family is growing again! The local earthkin woman who is known for having a collection of adopted children was seen last month buying a baby from a constable.

her large family of adopted children, was observed last month purchasing an infant from a constable. Upon inquiring about the constable's charges for the adoption, they were overheard stating, "It's to prevent the riff-raff from taking them and sacrificing them to Nox".

I am pleased to announce my frequent patronage of the Bank of Abacus! Several individuals have noted, and I have personally observed, the young elf actively providing loans and opening accounts. Some of these loans have had very reasonable rates - Abacus was seen helping a gambler who had run out of money get back into the game,

and charged them only a 10 coin fee! Furthermore, I understand she even offers a system for making payments using paper instruments.

In other news, Opal's family is growing again! Opal, the local earthkin woman known for her large family of adopted children, was observed last month purchasing an infant from a constable. Upon inquiring about the constable's charges for the adoption, they were overheard stating, "It's to prevent the riff-raff from taking them and sacrificing them to Nox".

Snow Goblin Guile was spotted trading slaves in town. This is a risky move, considering the presence of the Chainbreakers, a local group known for their harsh treatment of slave owners. He'll likely need a compelling explanation if they confront him. On a separate note, a different Snow Goblin was recently seen being stabbed by Catori during a likely well thought-out monologue. While renowned for her skills with a bow, she is just as likely to stab you if the opportunity calls for it and this factoid seems to be forgotten! The Snow Goblin in question was reportedly very surprised, and Catori was elevated to Warcaller after this encounter.

Xerxes, the yeti famous for his dancing, made his annual spring appearance but was not seen swinging his posterior this year. While his arrival still pleased onlookers, it seems the years may have caught up with him. His lap dance skills this year were not nearly as good as previous years, and he left behind several sad bachelors and bachelorettes. Perhaps the town has grown to expect his performance rather than simply enjoying the entertainment.

Poppy and Titus are apparently getting married, and this bitch didn't even bother to send a courier to her best friend about it? Surprisingly, news did make it to my ears that a marriage contract was sent to the two a few short weeks ago. When asked for comment, Poppy stated "I'm not engaged, he said he wouldn't marry me" as her reason for not sending a courier. I do hope that she will think about this before making any life altering decisions, as she honestly seems happier when she's around Lapis as of late.

In the middle of the crowded inn, Anlyth received disownment paperwork from her family, along with a substantial amount of coin. Oddly, the paperwork bore a date for next year, a mistake that would be considered highly unusual for high elves. This stands in stark contrast to my own family's meticulous nature, as they would have undoubtedly made certain that any such paperwork was correctly dated to the exact time of my leaving before having me served with it.

Separately, sources ('sources' being Cordon, who only refers to her as "my Foreman") indicate that an Avatar of the Craftsman was in town last month. She was reportedly discussing Veilwalker shrines and the symbols that will soon appear to facilitate the creation of new ones. This development presents a serious threat that the residents of Maplewood must address with urgency. It appears we have an opportunity to influence the future of the Veilwalkers, and collective action to mitigate this threat is crucial.

Until next time, my lovelies, please stay safe out there...
and don't forget to share your tea with Madam Mapleleaf.
Send a courier with information you have, and you just may
see one of your submissions in a future issue!

Yours truly,

Madam Mapleleaf

Xerxes the All-Dancing- or Just the Some-Dancing?

The ever-popular Xerxes the All-Dancing made his way through Maplewood for a third appearance this last April. One of, if not the most famous dancing Yeti in all of the Freelands, Xerxes has a huge following with some extra dedicated fans.

We asked the leader of Xerxes' official fan club for a comment and she said, "OMG, Xerxes is the greatest! I love him so much, no one can move quite like he can." She then fainted, seemingly on cue. Xerxes' handlers said that they had no connection to Xerxes' official fan club. They also said that the money they pay to the fan club is part of a legal settlement and has nothing to do with hiring Xerxes fans to faint on cue to drum up excitement for his performances.

Once his show could gather the entire town, seemingly out of nowhere, forcing the most expertly trained Yeti in all the land to put on multiple performances in one day.

This time he could barely manage to keep it up for a few moments. What has happened to his stamina? He doesn't seem to have the endurance necessary to last all night any longer. Was the pack of hollering ladies in attendance that night what caused him to lose his energy? Or can he just not keep it going at his age? Why is

it that Xerxes can't back that ass up the way he usually does?

I spoke to my close friend Pierre to get answers. He had this to say, "It probably has to do with the minerals in his diet, blocking blood flow. Good circulation is important. He probably doesn't get enough exercise since he spends all day dancing. There's also a pretty good chance the Saurian who has disguised themselves as his promoter is trying to wear him out so he's more easily replaced by a Doppelgänger."

Will Xerxes be back to his usual twerking form by next April? Only time will tell.

-Enzo, Current Events Correspondent



Tired of Tomorrow Being a Total Mystery?

Ever wonder what chaos (or destiny) awaits you just around the corner? Then prepare to have your curiosity piqued by the one, the only... **THE CRIMSON EYE!** This enigmatic individual claims to possess the uncanny ability to glimpse the threads of time and unravel the secrets of your future.

Is It Genuine Foresight? A Connection to the Gods? Or Just a Really, Really Good Guess?

The townsfolk are divided! Some scoff, calling it smoke and mirrors. Others swear by his cryptic pronouncements, claiming he knew about their deepest secret, found their dog, and identified their true love's initials so quickly they were able to marry the next day!

Dare to Flirt With Fate:

Come witness the spectacle and hear the pronouncements that will send shivers down your spine and raise your eyebrows sky-high! Will **The Crimson Eye** reveal your hidden talents, predict your fate, or offer an actually accurate weather forecast? Whether you're a wide-eyed believer or a hardened cynic, a visit with **The Crimson Eye** is guaranteed to be an experience.

The Future Is Calling... are You Brave Enough to Answer?

**Results may vary. May or may not involve actual future-telling. Side effects may include intense curiosity, uncontrollable giggling, and a sudden urge to gamble life savings.*



Who is the ACTUAL Mayor of Maplewood?

Lucky

100

Gharr

160

Thaddeus Roth

120

No More Guesswork. Master Veilwalker Symbols Now!

Sick of marathon sprints back to the inn for that *one* blessed book the esteemed Sept so generously bequeathed? Eyes glazed over trying to decipher scribbles that look suspiciously written by a squirrel high on rosemary? Is your symbol recall slower than a snail in molasses?

Fear not, intrepid adventurer! For a few paltry coin, SIP will give you the key to unlocking every Veilwalker Shrine Symbol. Finally, a portable resource that won't leave you feeling like you need a inebriated rodent and a linguistics degree! Get yours today!

Veilwalker Symbol Field Guide

	Can cast <i>Anti-Magic Aura</i> .
	Can add <i>Humorist!</i> at the end of <i>Competition</i> casts. Can now cast <i>Disrupts Silence and Memory</i> <small>Level</small>
	Spells do not need incantations.

Please reach out to any member of SIP to purchase

OOG: Shifts 1&2, sorry that we're sleeping- complete the form found in the inn and send it back via courier and we will send it to you with a bill (or find Shauna/Poppy between shifts/ on the DL)

The Fortune Brigade:

New Adventuring Party Seeks to Make Enemies

It has reached our ears here at the Steamy Ink Press that there is a new adventurer to town, Anton, who claims to be an adventurer seeking a fresh start here in Maplewood. We do hope he is successful in his endeavors, and look forward to hearing all about him in the months to come!

It seems that Sable Company was dispatched to take care of a werewolf attack in North Town, and by the time they arrived at the scene, Anton was dusting his hands off after apparently eliminating the threat entirely on his own. The company was understandably upset about this, after making the trek up there to help out a local townsfolk, only to find that they wouldn't be paid for a job well done.

This Anton, it seems, has been holding court at the Inn spouting off about his so-called crew, the "Fortune Brigade", who he states he is planning to take over the town with. He was overheard stating the charming phrase,

"We're going to take over this adventuring racket from the drunks in town," delivered while he was already on his third ale in a single hour.

When asked for comment on Anton, local innkeeper Missy said "I don't know, I might've served him some ale, sure, but I serve a lot of people. Adventurers are always in here, drunk and talking up a fuss, you know how it is," in between serving people. "No, he didn't really stand out to me at all. You know the type - tall, bearded, loud and drunk. We get them all the time."

No one we have asked about this saw anyone with him, despite his grand pronouncements of a crew. One wonders if they exist at all, or if Anton is simply a lone, inebriated braggart. While a little competition can be beneficial, Maplewood hardly lacks experienced adventurers. When I checked with long-time SIP fan Lucky, she hiccuped and said, "There's no drunk better than this one!" while pointing at herself. We can only hope that the locals will be patient with this newcomer and that his ambitions won't lead to unnecessary conflict or disruption. It would be a shame to be added to the new obituary section so soon after arriving!

Everyone is fawning over Lucky, painting her as some grand hero. La-di-da, she supposedly saved the town from a winter veilwalker invasion - *or did she?* Recent events surrounding her questionable claim to the Mayor's office suggest her motives may have been far from noble.

As the rightful Mayor Gharr stated unequivocally, "Lucky is actually in cahoots with the Lizardmen." When pressed for specifics, Gharr informed us, "All of them. The Dopplegangers, the Boglurkers, the Salients - they're all involved in trying to make her look better for the town."

Apparently, Lucky has been collaborating with the Draconus faction in the ongoing civil war. The aim? To utilize their soldiers

Lucky's Lizardman Alliance Exposed

and spread malicious lies about fabricated invasions, thereby creating an artificial water shortage. The goal, of course, would be for Lucky to then 'solve' the crisis herself, conveniently boosting her votes for the Mayoral candidacy.

Gharr did not have any additional comments about his connections with the mole people.

-Emeric Barnes