

DRAGONSMAW DAILY

LOMEDAY, BLAGUROEDD 47, 1109 P.T. | Vol XXXVIII | Number 13.291 | IMPERIAL CRESCENT EDITION | Price: ₣ 55.683



Vritra losing orbit. Water dries and people pray as she prepares to crash. /// Mibble Mumpingson

BEYOND A SHADOW OF A DROUGHT: STILL NO CURE OR DOCTOR FOR VRITRA

Polyacrylic acid, ice dialysis, & dream clouds: big ideas, no cure.

Tobias Aurelius, **Dragonsmaw**

Five months ago, Vritra — ill and desperate — crashed headlong into the loadbearing wall that Stornheist shares with the North Gate and ever since our surrounding lands grow nothing, bear nothing, receive nothing, and hold no measure of moisture. The crash came willfully — she claimed at first, though she has since spoken little — in hopes to find a physical, metaphysical, or spiritual cure to her malady. Since her crash, no cure has emerged.

The chaos of the crash initially killed three dozen burn victims from a brimstone explosion in the south (gun-toting bandits once more broke into the stores of Shæieœuois-hæœuoevæieœuouh whom these valiant citizens fended off). The burn victims had been recovering in the orthopoedic ward as the medical ward had been overrun with starving patients. However, the room was reconverted into a military triage and since there's no rain to worry about, they did not bother to cover the hole other than to post a few bowmen, what for the wild steelchoppers.

Cures for such drake maladies (Vritra, as per her usual, refuses to accept the name of "dragon" claiming only one dragon exists on Gergia — indeed in every Leuk system) have grown hard to find. A possibility remains that we may find Dr. Halcyon in the ice desert, who had travelled there initially to round up the machinery to create a large dialysis bag and some sort of external osmotic agent in order to extract the locked water from the sodium polyacrylate the terrorists injected into Vritra's heart's fountain of youth. The other option is to acidify the wa-

terlocking solution and create a sort of polyacrylic acid. But with the dialysis bag, osmotic agent, and acid, that still only covers the physical reagents. The water seems metaphysically lodged in some sort of dreamworld glass cumulonimbus cloud, which would need to be talked into wetting itself — and clouds, being young things, are notoriously shameful when it comes to pissing themselves in public. Of course so many metaphysical and physical solutions are useless unless synced up via some sort of soul threshold where the memory of water and its mani-

The water seems metaphysically lodged in a dreamworld glass cumulonimbus cloud.

festation create a bliss link in the narrative mind.

Granted, that's folly for now. Dr. Halcyon remains lost in his search for a giant ice dialysis

bag. We have no acidifying formulation. Dreamleapers have left the continent. And most people find thresholding to be too out of fashion.

We may well have to submit to the aeronautic union as they propose a sort of sea-to-land aerial irrigation system not unlike those the firefighters of Duecoden use to stomp out whatever eldritch weavings the creatures at the center of the black forest cook up. The upside being that the children have found themselves well entertained in sliding down the dragon's* wings and tail — an activity that has the added effects of both keeping the dragon* in high spirits and showing the parents there's more to do than merely watch the kiddos in a drought, sowing and reaping as it were.

If you pray, intercede for the Irain. If you have access to a thunderstone and are willing to donate it, the Crescent will see you duly compensated. And if you know of any Dynams able to do a rain dance, please send a Muselink call to the Imperial Crescent Council at the Dragonsmaw town hall or send a courier to Tobias Aurelius at the Dragonsmaw Graveyard inhumement offices.

Manhunt continues for tech thief.

In the world of underground Phi games, any number of bets can be made and lost: forms and fasons, mensch and monies, toys and tech. The latter has caused a recent scuff up in the regulator courts devoted to seeking and finding the culprits who bet assets they did not own. Like the derivatives market, such bets can include mere debt float — you could, if you wanted to, literally buy a game of Phi for a song: the

rights to a song, the metaphysical meaning of a song, and so forth. Of course this creates problems if you do not own said song. In this case, the bet made was for a shipment of archivist's mementomes, already linked to the elusive and rumored Storyweaver archive, as well as the ice dialysis bags potentially needed (per my colleague above) to find a cure for Vritra, the ailing raindrake.

Whoever made the bet seems

blissfully unaware that both the receivers of the bounty (it seems the Zobrine dwarve executives and the etins of Ashen benefitted equally) and those who lost the tech are hunting for him. If you have any knowledge of the whereabouts of the thief or bore witnessed to the bet and resulting fallout, contact any agent at any watch precinct. Meanwhile, mind your wagers. ■

Out of Character

Backdoor Eyewitness Account of Our Metanarrative Manipulated by Gamers.

By T.T.T.t.T.T.T.t, California

The fates of several folk in Gergia appears to be out of their hands. Patricia Bonnet has spent the last five years following the movements of several dozen magical and nonmagical folk through all manner of tors and mounds as well as a handful who don't quite fit into either category. In her stunning debut, *Out of Character* (€ 105, Skyland), Bonnet blows the lid off of assumptions we have about who we are, why we choose, and whether your neighbor is really merely your neighbor.

She has tracked down at least **S**ten different "players" in a "game" who have taken control of what she calls "avatars" or "characters" within our world. Pulling from long-rejected storyweaver hypothesis about the nature of the worlds, Patricia has here shown that at least part of it is true: some outside The Vale do, indeed, control some who live inside The Vale. One such person, an agronomist named Dane Hunter -- who re-

cently whipped up a lovely batch of cider for the wedding of a second, Andrew Nash -- seems to have taken control of an avatar named Tracksuit Trackleton (a dubious name, but then again truth is stranger than ficton) and has run across the countryside betting at cards and telling nonsentient bits of the world to rise up against its sentient overlords. In one such case, the player Dane convinced the character Tracksuit to tell a victory arch in the ancient city of Megameso to take a break. The arch seems to have taken this literally, fallen, and the city of Megameso -- whose fate had been bound to the victory arch -- fell soon afterwards.

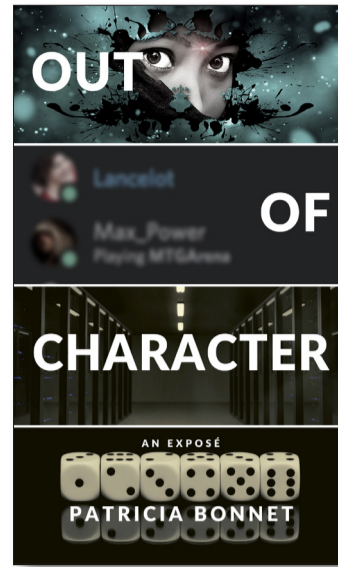
In another fascinating instance, another player named Emily Munro, a writer and curator for something called The Manhattan Children's Museum (we're assuming that's a real place) controls a skeleton. A walking skeleton not unlike that of Dr. Haleyon who, until recently, seemed to be the only creature of this type that did not deserve to

Tracksuit Trackleton has run across the country tearing down arches.

It's unclear if "players" realize the abnormalities of the characters they choose.

barrels full of buckshot and a gas powered chainsaw to the head. It's unclear if said player realizes the abnormality of such creatures, particularly of the pacifistic rational variety, but nevertheless it makes for fascinating theater for the reader.

Still a third has chosen to embody himself (if that's how it works -- much of this remains



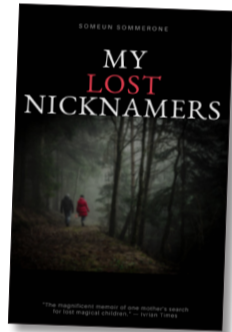
very unclear, practically speaking) as a Paint. Nevermind that such creatures exist only in myth (and in a world of walking myths THAT is saying something). Nevermind that we have nothing to feed such a creature. He seems to think that walking around in a bodybag made of oils and pastels will help him navigate a civil society of human beings.

In any case, it's a well sourced delve into a re-thinking of what had once been considered common knowledge: that we were alone, that nothing navigates or controls the world, eat, drink, be merry for tomorrow we die. But it seems that in the case of Patricia Bonnet's research, there's more to food than eating, more to drink than drinking,

more to making merry than merrymaking. If she's right, if indeed "characters" walk among us controlled by "players" outside The Vale, then the storyweavers may have had it right all along: this world, and the various chao- ses therein, may well not be so lost as we once assumed. This world's amalgamation of peoples and places and stories may well result from becoming something like a train depot for every nar- rative that has ever been writ- ten. That means that you may well encounter not only Ceberus but Dante himself, not only a billybumbler, but Stephen King and so on and so forth. So it goes. (I'm told that's by a guy named Kurt Vonnegut?)

Of course, if this is true, the Only way the present author knows to handle it is with a bottle of burbon in each hand and a very stout cigar in his mouth. Meaning, of course, that my plan of attack remains the same: eat, drink, be merry, for tomorrow we're personified. ■

MY LOST NICKNAMERS: MEMOIRS OF ILLUSION
by Someun Sommerone
Urmia Wet Press
lvBN 456-45-45-248-9102

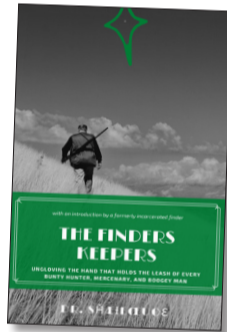


Critics are supposed to offer insightful criti- ques of memoirs such as this. If that's my purpose here, I find this bland and uninteresting. But that seems a disservice to the person who wrote it.

Fundamentally, So- meun seems a very lost soul, forced (as we find in the afterword) from the help she had recei- ved to wonder with the countless other mental

refuges in the wake of the drought. Plagued by visions of a menancing cat and searching for her three children, her hope- less cause still -- however poorly and unpoetically written -- breaks one's heart. ■

THE FINDERS KEEPERS: UNGLOVING THE HAND THAT HOLDS THE LEASH OF EVERY BOUNTY HUNTER, MERCENARY, AND BOOGEYMAN
by Dr. Shæieœuœ
Skyland
MnBN 111-223-8534-90

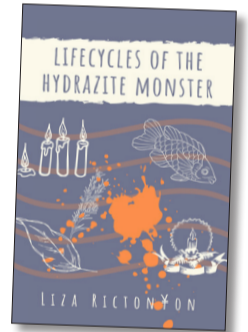


Though the title and cover are gilpshit, this book is gold. Apparently a losely connected web of puppet masters controls the movings, wherea- bouts, and assignments of every bounty hunter, mercenary, and boogey- man on planet Gergia.

Methodically argued,

professionally sourced, this book will take you deep into the underbe- lly of what seems to be a common trade to find a very uncommon source to every hunter you've ever met. ■

LIFECYCLES OF THE HYDRAZITE MONSTER
by Liza Rictonœon
Veveggo Publishing
ISBN 978-87-9777-579-3



A 1,400-page behemoth with plenty of data, pho- tojournalism, and lab studies to back her up, Liza presents a tour de force in a long line of bes- tiaries and natural histo- ries.

She has spent the last decade following around hydrazite monsters, wat- ching their feeding pat- terns (mostly tree blos- soms, but the occassional lose child), their sleeping

patterns (often mistaken for night clouds), their mating patterns (a sort of malignant coagulation), and their dying patterns (dissipation, dilution, or with the presence of hu- mans: explosion). Cheap buy, great reference. ■

