

ZWEIHÄNDER



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ZWEIHÄNDER

Semester 2 | 2024

sutekh The Board Game and Tabletop Society

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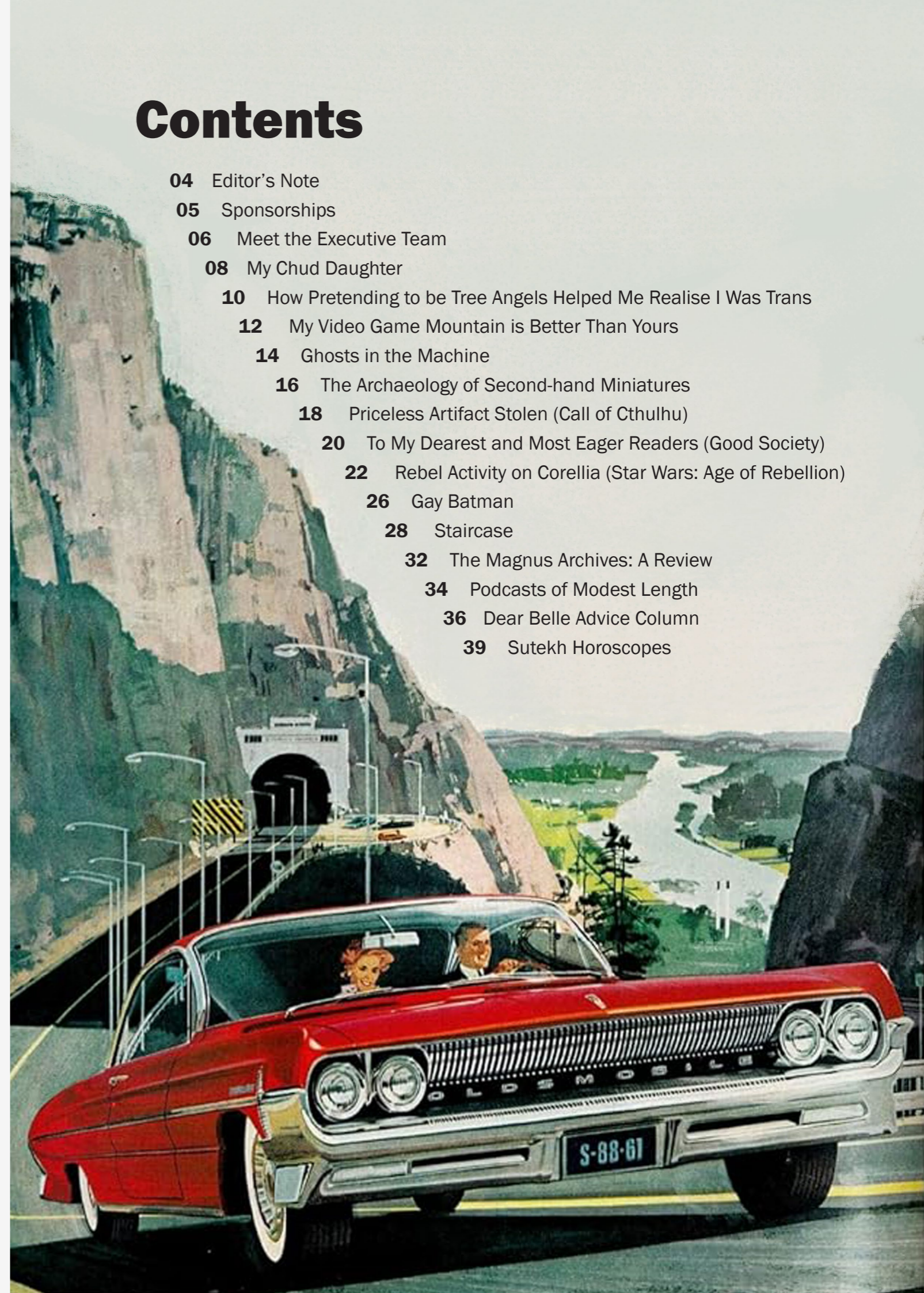
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Sam Livingston · You

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Ex-Editor of *Zweiander* | Former Publicity Officer
4h · 🌐

Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

After the disastrous mismanagement of the previous “esoteric” edition of *Zweiander*, I have been asked by my superiors to step down from my role as editor. The failure to direct my team to produce legible and professional layouts, coupled with the sloppy approval of inappropriate and incomprehensible articles, was entirely my fault. As such, this will be my last edition of *Zweiander*. I have just signed over complete control of the project to our new corporate owners...

Recently I've been thinking about transience, which is somewhat antithetical to the theme of this edition. “The Corporate” image positions itself as stable even when it's not, it aims for consistency and only upward growth, it's anything but transient even when it tries to be. Of course, the whole joke of the theme is that *Zweiander* is antithetical to anything corporate because it is so erratic and shifting. Every edition sees a swathe of new articles, each completely different from anything we've published before. *Zweiander* is a celebration of this constant change of shifting interests and theming. Of living life in flux and chaos, and of revelling in the passions of now. Within this edition alone we see changes in gender, genre, bodies and time.

While the notion of signing over control of *Zweiander* to some shadowy corporation is just set dressing, this is, as you may have noticed, probably going to be my last *Zweiander* as editor. Over the two years and four editions we have released, I have changed, and so has *Zweiander*. It's different to how it was, and that's something that I am very proud of, but I don't want it to last forever. Next year someone else will take control of *Zweiander* and it may be different once again. I hope it is. It's dull to stay the same, to constantly produce the same thing, to wear the same thing, to look the same, to sound the same, to work in a million cubicles that are all the same. But some things will stay the same. It will still be *Zweiander*, and I will probably still contribute and design articles, but even then, one day, these things might change – and thank god for it. And of course, I love you, dear reader, and that will never change. Enjoy the edition.

👍👎👏 481

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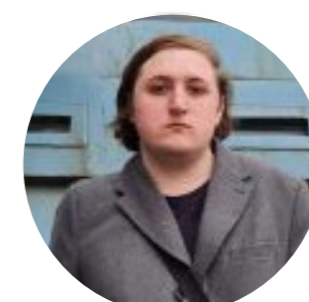
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Message



William Ma · 1st
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Ethan Yin · 1st
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Visionary and trailblazer, exploring and developing new markets for us to use.

IT'S ALL FUN AND PIZZA HERE AT THE COMPANY UNTIL CRUNCH TIME.

Message

My Chud Daughter

Samuel Livingston

This is My Chud Transgender Autistic Daughter. She is currently unnamed but I love her dearly. She was created out of a fairy floss bucket I got while on holiday and she was under construction for about 7 months. One could argue that she is still unfinished, but aren't all children?

Beyond being my Daughter, she is also my proxy model for a Stompa, an iconic Ork war machine that typically takes the form of a ramshackled bucket-shaped thing. To be honest they're not very good on a rules level; while they can do a lot of damage, they're inconsistent, overly costed and more fragile than you think. The whole joke of my 40k list, therefore, is that I play my beautiful 800pt daughter in tandem with 120 goblins (for reference, the average 40k army probably has about 20-60 models). Combined, they make up the bulk of the points limit. However, I didnt want to buy a Stompa for this purpose, and it's in the Ork player spirit to just use that garbage from your house to provide you with the models you need, so I undertook the project of constructing this centrepiece model for the Christmas 2023 CRITS Apocalypse. She didn't turn out great for that event. Mostly unfinished, she got nearly instantly wiped off the board by my rival Parent and enemy's child, Gwen and her Porphorion, and overall it performed frustratingly badly. I claimed that I probably wouldn't bring it back for next year.

Do you think that Wargamers are more or less likely to have children? Ignore any prerequisites that may be necessary. I think it's probably more likely than you think. What you find especially if you venture out of the university space is that wargames are primarily played by men in their 30s and 40s, and a lot of these men have children already.

I distinctly remember one of my earlier AOS tournaments when my opponent even brought up that he had just had a child. Similarly, online, lots of posts are made on wargame subreddits about fathers getting their children into the hobby. Whether this trend will continue with the younger wargamers is something that only time will tell, but it's interesting that there is this connection between dads making up a substantial portion of these games' player bases, and this parental connection that I feel towards my miniatures in general and my Stompa specifically. And it's not just me who experiences this kind of connection. There is a general kind of love for people's big models. Sutekh's Titan, often referred to as a "Drunken Mistake" between our own Will Ma and Kade, is a staple of the Apocalypse games and is often photographed walking around on its own or being taken out on adventures despite also being brutalised multiple times a year.

For this years' mid-semester Apocalypse, reinvigorated by the new Ork rules, I went against my previous statement and took my child off their position languishing on the top of my bookshelf. This time, however, I felt less alienated from my beautiful creation. I was invigorated to work on it. I think it's because this time I wasn't raising my child alone. As the adage goes: "It takes a village to raise a child."

The first incident in this shift was actually playing a game with my Stompa beforehand with rival editor of the upcoming MUTTS magazine; Freya. As I noted in my article last Zweihander, there's a fundamental connection and transcendence in playing with your models beyond just painting them. Furthermore, I was gifted a bag of bits by another friend also called Sam to help in the construction process. Finally, I had people to talk about the Stompa with—it was constantly brought up in the weeks leading up to the event, which helped me develop my thoughts around and also grow to a greater appreciation of it. I started walking around with it and calling it my Son until of course she transitioned (no real reason). I took her out with me around Sydney one day. When bits hunting in Oxford St charity shops, I told the Cashier that it was my child and they barely batted an eye. With Freya, we let her watch Skibidi Toilet and drove around with her in my lap. I finished the tiring process of riveting all the panels on her body while surrounded by my friends.

These bonding experiences personified it in my mind and I became highly fond of my model. When it came to actually playing in the Apocalypse game, while she got destroyed around the same point in the match as last time, she was vastly more impactful. Instead of resentment after her death, I just missed her beautiful presence on the battlefield.

What does this say, really? About children, about parenthood, about wargaming? Not much, I think. This really isn't my typical article, it's mostly just talking about this warm experience I had with building this model. Its highs, its lows, and the people around me. Maybe that is evocative of parenthood, but I dont think I can speak concretely about that. It is however evocative of a sense of warmth found in this community, of having friends and partners to help and support you. If I do find out it's also about parenthood I'll get back to you though.



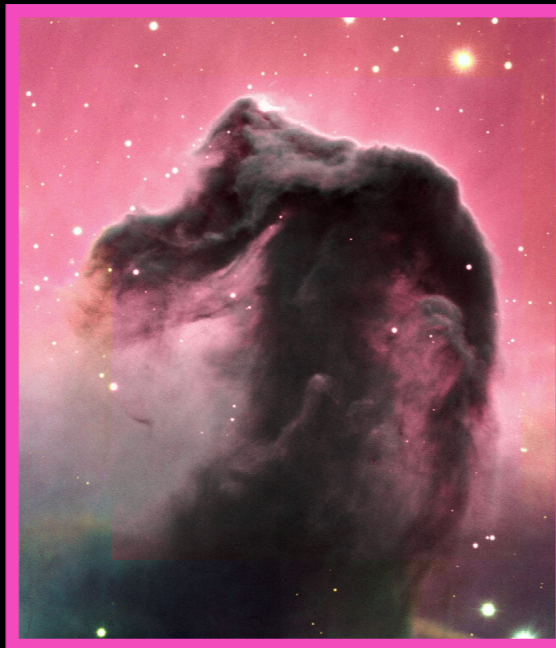
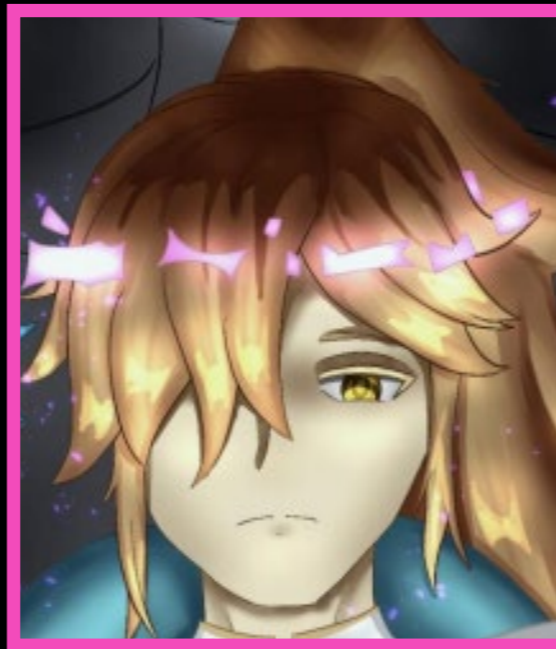
How *Pretending* to be *Tree Angels* helped me realise I was *Trans*

BY ENFYS BETHLEHEM

I recently came to the conclusion that I was transgender. It was, as you could probably guess, both a surprise, and not a surprise. Many transgender people you talk to would tell you there are “signs” that you look back at and say “Wow, how did I not figure this out earlier?”. For me, it was things like being enamoured with women’s fashion, constant dissatisfaction with photos of myself, and the preference to playing femme characters in video or tabletop games. Well, I was cognisant of what some of these factors might mean, but for a long time was very firmly in denial. “Oh the fashion options are just better”...riiiight. The specific reasons for my denial are complicated, and beyond the scope of this article, so I’ll spare you the details and just assure you it was pretty bad. I got to the point where I would intentionally pick male characters, despite knowing I’d rather play the female ones. But for my time as a DM for Sutekh’s 5e Westmarch Campaign Sky Without Stars, I pushed that denial down, and I am so glad I did.

So, a little bit of context for the headline of this article. The titular “Tree Angels” are two characters who quite rapidly wormed their way into my heart. Their names are Antares (he/she/they) and Sirius (she/they), two of four siblings who form the Crew that oversees the giant spaceship the campaign takes place on. The Halcyon as it is called, has Antares taking the position of Captain, although they can sometimes be a bit absent from their duties. Sirius formerly held the position of Master-At-Arms before she departed the group to become an Idol (I promise it makes narrative sense). Both of these characters have an interesting relationship with their physical form and their gender, predating my own realisation regarding my own gender and physical form. Their “species”, called Celestial Arbors, are puppets carved from the wood of the Sky Without Stars equivalent of The World Tree, granting them potent shapeshifting abilities, among other things. This power, and their personal experiences, fed into my own feelings on Gender in two ways, each primarily represented by one of these siblings.

Antares, when I first created and played the character, went by he/him, and presented fully male. I had incorporated a number of very personal emotions and experiences into the character, so I understandably grew attached to him quite rapidly. Emotional issues and trauma? Yes. But Gender Identity? I hadn’t really considered it. That was, until Ant showed up incognito to a wedding. One of his unique powers is the ability to make “copies” of himself, except all the copies are the original. In this case, two such Ants showed up, one masc presenting, and one femme presenting. “What an incredible disguise!” I thought. Something about it made me very satisfied, and I continued to ponder the idea of Ant harnessing this shapeshifting power to “disguise” himself as a woman. After all, he would turn into all sorts of creatures and objects—why would another gender be such a leap? It was around this time that I decided to change Ant’s pronouns to he/they, to better represent how I thought they related to their gender: Primarily Masculine, but not completely so.



Art by Josephine Smith



Then after getting quite drunk one night, I finally admitted to myself I was transgender.

About two weeks after that, Antares paid the players a visit. Except this time, she appeared as a woman, and stayed that way. It wasn’t a disguise, just a part of who they are. Since then, they appear in forms of a variety of genders, and go by he/she/they.

Sirius is a little more involved. As mentioned before, she left her place on the crew, tearing out her heart in the process, trying to integrate into normal society. Of course, that meant that she had to hide her true form, a bus sized white puppet. Over time, Siri developed an intense dissociation and dissatisfaction with her true form, keeping it ever so close to her (now empty) chest. The reflection of the Transgender experience in Sirius I see in hindsight, is primarily twofold. The first: the rejection of her heart. In-world, this represented her giving up the position of Master-At-Arms she was given at her birth/creation. A rejection of the role and form the world had given her. Why did that sound so enticing to me?

Then comes the hiding of her true form. I can now see that Sirius’s relationship with her true form is quite in line with my experience of physical gender dysphoria.

Hiding bits of yourself, even from those closest to you. Avoiding reflective surfaces and pictures of yourself. Wishing so badly you weren’t the way you were. I should have mentioned previously that I often get strong character bleed in roleplaying games, and at this point I wasn’t sure where my feelings ended and Sirius’s began. In fact, at the time (before my own coming out) I had a number of Trans friends of mine comment on how they found Sirius’s character compelling and resonant with their own experiences. At one point I even asked a Trans friend “Hey, should I just make it canon and make Siri AMAB?” with all the “Semi-Accidental Trans coding”. Not fooling anyone with that, except maybe myself.

I hope the content of this article has elucidated its bizarre title, and that my ramblings were entertaining. If Ant and Siri’s story interests you, swing by the Sky Without Stars discord server or ping me on the main Sutekh server, and I’d be happy to talk about it more.

MY VIDEO GAME MOUNTAIN IS BETTER THAN YOURS

By Alex Smith



Have you ever sat down (or, perhaps in this case, stood up) and thought to yourself, “Wow I sure would love to hike up a mountain. It would probably take a while, but it would be great exercise and surely the view is rewarding”? Great for you, but I have not. This is why I prefer video game mountains, of which there are quite a few, especially of the indie game variety. The questions I will try to answer here are: Why mountains? What makes a good mountain? Will there be more? Are they good mountains?

First Step (learning/how fun!)

So why do mountains fit so well into a video game? Well, while most mountain games are platformers of some kind, I think mountains nicely combine having a goal (reach the top), and a desire to see something go up, both of which are actually inherent in ye olden days of arcade games. The current state of mountain games consists of performing repetitive actions. This enhances the satisfaction gained from achieving

a goal, as going up simultaneously indicates an improvement in skill. Take for example Peaks of Yore (2023), a first-person game where you climb mountains mostly just using two buttons for your two arms (they are incredibly strong). The vast majority of the game is dedicated to refining this skill, and the increasing difficulty of the jumps and swings throughout the various levels continues to create a sense of advancement in both skill and achievement. In this way achievement becomes a product of time and skill, which is arguably what makes games interesting as a form of media. The ability to learn and improve a new skill to achieve a goal is precisely why mountains can work so well in video games.

The Fall (challenges and getting back up)

Besides, the falling part of mountain climbing just makes sense. While some mountain games have lives to lose, the main way to lose progress climbing is simply to fall. It may be obvious, yet it is a focus on falling that lets games like Getting Over It (2017) become so rage-inducing. With a simple yet absurd mechanic – swinging a hammer around because your legs are stuck in a cauldron – Getting Over It is designed to make falling easy and climbing hard. Accompanying this is a narrator that taunts you with inspirational quotes. Yet it is the ability to overcome these trials that makes beating the game all the more... (relieving? cathartic? rewarding?) Whatever it means, my point is failing and succeeding fits well into the model of climbing a mountain.

Here’s another reason mountains may make sense from a development standpoint, and why there are multiple indie games about climbing them: it means the developer just needs to ask how the player climbs, and what they climb. Perhaps one of the most famous mountain games is Celeste (2018), which does this very well. Each stage contains one or two different things the environment can do, but the player can only do four things: move around, climb, jump, and dash. It is how different parts of the environment react that creates complexity and interest throughout the game, and it is completely up to the developer to generate these tools. Another thing Celeste shows is how simple it is to create a narrative with a mountain. Celeste has more nuance than this, but it still follows a general narrative formula: the character finds a reason to climb a mountain, encounters trials (the part of the game you play), and eventually learns or achieves something. So the why of a mountain game fits nicely into a narrative structure already, and is even seen in games like Donkey Kong Country Returns (2010) where each new ‘world’ is further up the island until you reach the top of the volcano. All this goes to say that a game with climbing and upward progression necessitates the trials of falling, which fits well into a simple narrative.

So, if a mountain fits into a narrative easily, then does that mean—in a way however small—all video games are mountains? NO. I refuse to get all metaphorical and say all video games are mountains. This is a very serious article about real mountains that exist in video games. Moving on.

Fatigue (how tall is this mountain anyway?)

But what if you get tired halfway up? Not everyone decides to stick it out when things get tough climbing. It’s a game after all. There is no need to finish it. And that’s true enough, games are meant to be enjoyable, and if the repetitiveness and difficulty of a mountain game becomes tiring, then it’s always okay to stop there and metaphorically climb down. And by now I’ve probably said mountain and video game to a point where it has become tiring as well, which prompts the question: how many genres can mountains be? We have our obvious 2D platformers, like Celeste. We have a co-op game in Bread & Fred (2023), and if you really want to stretch the definition of mountain, Chained Together (2024). We’ve got open-world games, where most mountains are simple hurdles – take Zelda: Breath of the Wild (2017). There’s even the strategy roguelike Insurmountable (2021). More chill platformers exist like Jusant (2023), which is pretty but relatively short, and a cute game of A Short Hike (2019). Horror games like Mundaun (2021) fit, and of course there are relative ‘classics’ like Journey (2012).

There are many games about mountains, but so what? I think it goes to show the usefulness of a mountain in video games, most of these being indie games centred around a mountain in some way. Yet the real benefit of having all these mountains is choosing which ones you decide to climb.

Conclusion

Now finally, after looking at why mountains feature in video games and borderline philosophising about it, where does that leave us? The answer to this is quite simple really. While they may be enjoyable, a lot of video game mountain climbing experiences are bad and inaccurate to real-life mountains. So maybe I should go outside for once.

CHOOSE YOUR PLAYER



Ghosts in the Machine

by Lena Harty

Lies of P is a very strange video game.

It's a game that is intimately engaged with its source material, both in its clear mechanical ties to the Souls games and in its dedication to Carlo Collodi, author of the original 1883 Pinocchio serial. It's also a game where someone who sounds like the Joker pretending to be the Riddler calls you every now and then through abandoned phone booths.

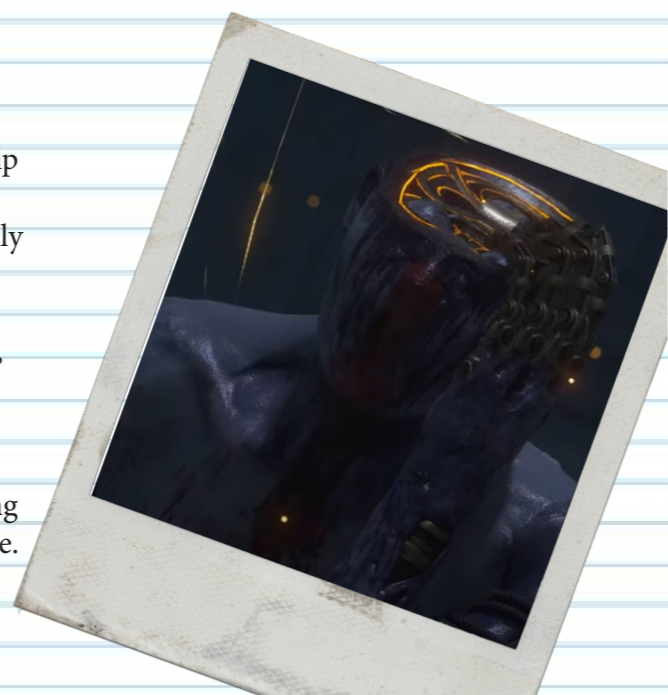


Like I said, it's a strange game.

That mysterious caller turns out to be Arlecchino, a puppet serial killer tied to one of your major allies throughout the game. You find him in a locked room, broken and entangled in the wall, tied into the network of cables that invisibly line the walls of the game's main setting, Krat. He gives you a "we're not so very different, you and I", a children's toy patterned off *Le voyage dans le lune*, and then you can choose to kill him or not to. It all fits in the trope fairly well. But there's another character who I couldn't stop thinking of when I finally found Arlecchino—another robotic murderer, philosophising while broken and trapped in a wall.

Brau-1589 is the only robot to have ever killed a human. The third chapter of Naoki Urasawa's manga *Pluto*, which bears his name, only features the actual character in its latter half. The beginning is consumed by bureaucracy, navigating the prison where he's imprisoned, going through successive layers of security—a guard check-in, an individual cell, finally terminating in a jumble of concrete tetrapods, like he's a force of nature rather than a condemned criminal.

These mirrored characters aren't the only similarities between *Lies of P* and *Pluto*, however. Each is also an adaptation of an extremely influential text—*Pinocchio* and *Astro Boy* respectively—and each centres on the dysfunctional relationship between a father and his son. Giuseppe Geppetto and Umataro Tenma are both trying to resurrect their dead sons, with the only real difference between them seeming to be that Tenma wants his disruptive son Tobio back as he was, while Geppetto wants a version of his son Carlo that is perfectly obedient and benign, nothing but a puppet to be controlled. In that sense, each fails: Tenma's Atom (*Astro Boy*) loves him unconditionally where Tobio judged him for his coldness and immorality, while Geppetto's puppet P rejects him entirely, leading to an unsettling final boss fight against a puppet constructed from Carlo's corpse.



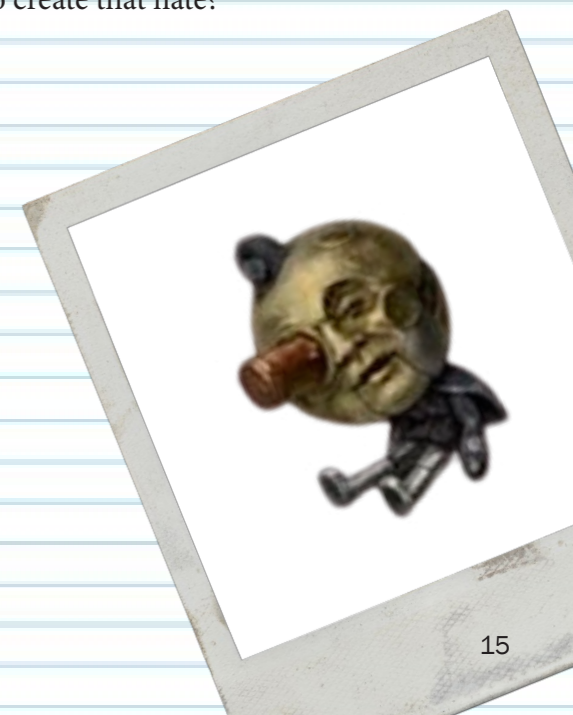
The status of each as adaptations, though, is the part that I find more interesting. As the moon-man toy suggests, *Lies of P* is more intertextual pastiche than adaptation—with references to everything from DC Comics to Michaelangelo's *The Creation of Adam*. There's a touch of *The Colour Out of Space*, a dash of *Dorian Grey*... it's messy, but not in a way that diminishes the game's relationship with its origin. The vast majority of the characters in *Lies of P* are directly based on characters from the original serial, the Fox and the Cat, the Blue Fairy, a Lampwick analogue in *Romeo*. Yet despite the narrow focus demonstrated in the names, characters and ideas of the game's narrative, the setting and aesthetic of the game are genericised enough to make them an effective staging-ground for future adaptations of public-domain literature, like the *Wizard of Oz*-themed sequel.

Pluto chooses instead to stay extremely focused, both thematically and aesthetically. More specifically, *Pluto* is about the Iraq War. There isn't space to get into the specifics of that representation here, but it's a searingly blunt mirroring, informed by their contemporaneous timelines—*Pluto* began releasing six months after the US invasion of Iraq. Rather than filling any gaps left by the source material with allusion, *Pluto* uses contemporary politics and history to craft a strongly intentional and affecting plot, an approach that allows it to hit stronger emotional beats far more consistently than *Lies of P*. This is one of the interesting things about video games as a medium—narrative and themes often compete for space with play and mechanical concerns. *Pluto* doesn't have to worry about those limits, and can instead pour all of its runtime into crafting a strong narrative.



Returning to our murderers, though, the characterisation of each reflects the different priorities of the works they're enmeshed in, perhaps as a consequence of them both being largely original to the adaptations. Each is based on just fragments of their respective source material, drawing from minor characters that are wholly reinvented for these roles. Arlecchino's presence in *Lies of P* is almost ancillary—he's not a significant character in the plot beyond his relationship to the child he orphaned—and he almost feels like an afterthought, just a compelling bit part. Brau-1589 initially appears similar, but in the eleventh hour of *Pluto*'s story he escapes from his prison and murders the supercomputer Roosevelt, the primary antagonist, in an enigmatic act of self-sacrifice. It's a nicely ambiguous ending that speaks directly to *Pluto*'s main themes: is a world without hate only possible by killing those who create that hate?

Where does this leave us? I think the interesting takeaway here is how the relationship of each text to its influences and contexts is apparent in each of these two relatively minor characters. There's a difference in goals between the two texts, and these two characters do fit with those of their respective texts fairly well, but I think *Pluto*'s narrower focus allows for stronger character work and greater thematic resonance. Arlecchino feels almost empty as a character, a mix of psychopathy and philosophy of self that conceals a fundamental absence at his core. Brau-1589, on the other hand, is so thematically resonant with *Pluto* that it's hard to imagine the text without him. His heart may be a hard, metal lump, but at least he has one.



The Archaeology of Second-hand Miniatures

BY FREYA STEVERSON

In hobbying, and especially the miniature wargame hobby, buying second-hand is a staple. A miniature or game is often cheaper after the original buyer just wants to get rid of it. And for things no longer in production, it is often the only way to get them.

But these things rarely come shrink wrapped and untouched—these items have been used. I like to learn about people in my hobby, and how they interact with their miniatures by analysing them. This is because I'm a wannabe archaeologist, currently in my second year of University for a bachelor's in this field. And being the person I am, I like to apply my studies to wargaming miniatures. But how to do this?

Let us start at the game store. I bought some pre-owned miniatures recently. Throughout the history of Archaeology and even today, artefacts are often bought from traders and private collectors. Sometimes legally acquired, others illegally, but most importantly when they are being traded

and sold in these circumstances, we don't have the artefacts in situ, as in their original context. Once an artefact is removed from its context it loses the majority of the information it can tell us. However in these circumstances this is unavoidable as I am not allowed to rummage and do a survey of the sellers' homes.

So, let's take a look at the miniature. It's this man with a sword and a sceptre riding a horse. When analysing an artefact you first begin with an artefact description, but this will use too many words and is not exciting if done in full so I will keep it brief. The clothing elements are mainly painted in red, with white detailing. The base of the miniature has had its rim painted in a green but the majority of the top of the base is a black colour, similar to the underside of the base which is not painted. There is visible damage, on the rear of the horse, where there is evidence of a piece that has broken off the miniature.

Once you gain this information you can start doing analysis of the artefact. The first is some dating. On the base of the miniature, there is a Games Workshop Trademark for 1998. This suggests to us that this miniature was made in or after 1998. Moving on, we can look at how the miniature was styled. As previously mentioned, it's primarily a red and white paint job. It's also not very well done. Paint is applied too thin or too thick in certain areas, and the detailing on the horse's cloak is uneven and asymmetrical. Adding to this, the miniature's base is incomplete, with only the rim painted green. All this speaks of an inexperienced painter, perhaps a young person.

From here you would look for similar artefacts to compare with this miniature. Thankfully this is a GW miniature so there are plenty of others that are the same. This one in particular is identified as an Empire wizard mounted on a horse from Warhammer Fantasy Battles, a game that is notable for being discontinued in 2015 entirely. Further comparison reveals that it is most similar to the scheme of Talabheim from the Fantasy Battles setting.

So, bringing this together. What is the image we get from this artefact? First and foremost, this is an older miniature. Made and painted between 1998-2015, so at least 9 years old. The paint job indicates that it was painted by an inexperienced painter or someone younger. Considering the audience for Warhammer Fantasy Battles toward the end an older and

insular community with few younger people coming in it is more likely that they bought and painted this miniature well before the eventual end of the game's production.

A possible, if not likely, story as to who painted this miniature and when, is a young person between 1998 and the late 2000s who was painting one of their first miniatures but did not manage to finish it. Instead, it sat somewhere in this person's home for several years before being taken to be sold off, ending up with me.

"It's comforting to know there are other people like you"

Many miniatures second-hand have a similar story and this one I can relate to. But much is still unknown about this little wizard's story. Why did this person choose Warhammer Fantasy over 40k or Lord of the Rings, which were gaining popularity at this time? Why was the base not painted? And why are they selling it here? It will probably stay that way. As with many artefacts, we can only learn so much. But regardless, I do this again and again for each old miniature that comes into my possession. Why? I say practice, but there is something nice about developing this relationship with a fellow hobbyist, albeit one-way. It's comforting to know there are other people like you, who have had the same experiences. Even across space and time, hobby projects get abandoned halfway through.



LONDON, (UPI)—The Rank film distributors organization said it had changed the name of the movie "Freak" to "The Secret Passion" to "introduce sex into the title."

(CW: GORE, MURDER)

PRICELESS ARTIFACT STOLEN

HISTORIC ROBBERY OF ALBUQUERQUE HISTORY MUSEUM

CITY POLICE HUNT FOR THIEVES

Last night, the Albuquerque History Museum reported the loss of one of the oldest and most mysterious pieces in their 'Local history' exhibit. The taken artefact, a small statue of a nude man with strange tentacle-like forms extruding out of him, was kept out of view from on-lookers after an event a few months ago, where a child tried to break the glass it was kept behind. Since then the artefact has been kept in storage, while the display can be replaced.

Police have said that they are investigating the matter closely, with Bryan Kane, a personal investigator also being seen at the scene. Strangely, the police have yet to find many clues for the break in, as none of the windows or doors were broken into. This has led investigations to question those with prior or current access to the building. All parties have denied involvement. This includes Bob Harring, the janitor on the night the piece was taken, who is currently the primary suspect.

Bob Harring, a 59 year old man who has worked at the museum for 12 years is known in the community for being silent and unassuming. His neighbour, Father Bill Jarods, has told us that he believes the thievery was linked to occult activity. He claims that Bob was in a group that worshipped devils and demons at night, he said he often watched Bob leave his house at "unholy hours of the night" with his friends.

OCULT LINKS?



The historic stone idol from unknown origins

This claim follows the disappearance of Olivia Kane, who was found violently murdered on the North Side of Albert's Lake. While the police still have few leads on Olivia, they have reported that they are now investigating the idea of occult activity in our small town. They have advised all residents to remain indoors, and to report any strange activity occurring at night. This could include; chanting, strange noises, fires, blood, people who don't look like people, or animals in places they wouldn't normally be found.

The police have also prohibited entry of any kind to Albert's Lake until the situation is handled. This raises questions as to the annual parade occurring in a few days, and whether it is still going forward. Updates will continue to be featured at The Albuquerque Journal, so stay tuned for updates.

PLAY CALL OF CTHULHU TO EXPERIENCE THIS WORLD IN MORE DEPTH!

By Orson Lorenz-Markham

U.S. Lin

THIS BUD'S FOR YOU.

2010
THE YEAR WE MAKE CONTACT.
DO NOT ENTER. DEATH WILL FOLLOW.

© 1984 BUDWEISER, KING OF BEERS, ANHEUSER-BUSCH, INC., ST. LOUIS

NO BEER OR LIQUOR SOLD

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ MGR.

TAXI DANCING IS BACK AT THE LAKE



To My Dearest and Most Eager Readers,

As many of you may know, there was a wind that flushed its way through the court this week. Most spontaneously, and with naught but a look of warning, her majesty the Queen hosted her very own gala in the palace. For many, but not all, this was both a delight and a surprise. To those poor unfortunate souls who did not find an invitation at their door, or to those who were there and simply got lost in the concerta, I have made a comprehensive detailing of the important events on the spiderweb.

Lord Dundshire, perhaps the most interesting specimen of the season thus far, arrived not with Lady Withrall, as many of us expected, but instead (and perhaps scandalously) with the young Lady Keenworth. It seems that having the Queen's own blessing is enough to make even the honourable Dundshire turn away from grace. What then, of the unlucky soul who was overlooked by her majesty?

From predicted jewel to provoked jackal, Lady Winthrope was seen yelling at Lord Hecksmith. While I don't have all the details of their antagonistic relationship, I have heard from the grapevine that Lord Hecksmith has a sour way of approaching suitors, it seems that Lady Winthrope may have simply had one too many poor moments this season, I doubt she will react nicely to my report of her, however there is a reason I keep myself anonymous, and she is a keen reminder of important my secret is.

The banquet was overall a success, with the Queen yet again exceeding expectations for quality. After supper, a performance was held, a man from Germany performed an operatic piece of music, more interesting than the man however, was the lack of Queen in the audience. Was our host not a fan of German opera? Or perhaps was she too off scheming something sinister? I am certainly not one to judge, of course, evidence within the case.

Alas, with the season continuing to flourish, more names are appearing on my radar, proving that right when you think we've seen it all, something new happens. Perhaps tomorrow we will discover the grand affair between two bachelors, or reveal of an inheritance lost! Maybe more will learn of the secret relationship between the young Lord Affington and Lady Homington. Time can only tell, but time is limited, and if we do not see many proposals within the coming weeks, we will be left with a mad rapid dash, like last year. We all know, however, how that worked out.

This is yours truly and honestly,

Lady Peachtree

Play Good Society at Sutekh to experience this world in more depth!



He's back!
SEASON PREMIERE OCT 1 SUNDAY BBC1

The
BACHELOR

REBEL ACTIVITY ON CORELLIA

(CW: Propaganda, calling people terrorists)

Citizens of The Empire, rebel activity has become more significant over the past week, culminating on Zhellday, when rebel forces attacked an Imperial Armoury Station. The Imperial Security Bureau has informed us that the matter is being dealt with swiftly and effectively. Response to rebel activity is clear, any form of support to these galactic terrorists will not be tolerated, punishment will be severe.

At 04:00, the armoury on Corellia was attacked by a small battalion of rebel forces. This team of saboteurs are now equipped with E-11 blaster rifles, as well as thermal detonators and other explosives. The ISB has requested that any citizen with relevant information please step forward and be a hero of the empire, as a second attack using these munitions is likely. Footage of two humans, a droid and a twi'lek has been recovered, if you see any group matching this description, do not attempt to apprehend them, but advise your local Imperial security force. Your safety is the highest priority of this empire.

As such, new legislation has been instituted by the Emperor, allowing storm trooper patrols to search homes under any circumstances, so please have necessary paperwork for ownership of an estate ready at all times, in the situation where you are questioned. Do not attempt to-

==DIGITAL SECURITY BREACH DETECTED==

This is Echo 13 of the Rebel Alliance, does anyone read us? This is a distress signal to any and all Rebel forces near or in Corellia. We have taken the armoury, however the Imperial pushback is greater than we expected. They are breaking down doors, searching without reason, people are being arrested without reason. We aren't sure how long we have left. If you are reading this, a cache of weapons has been hidden beneath the old Corellian National Museum of History.

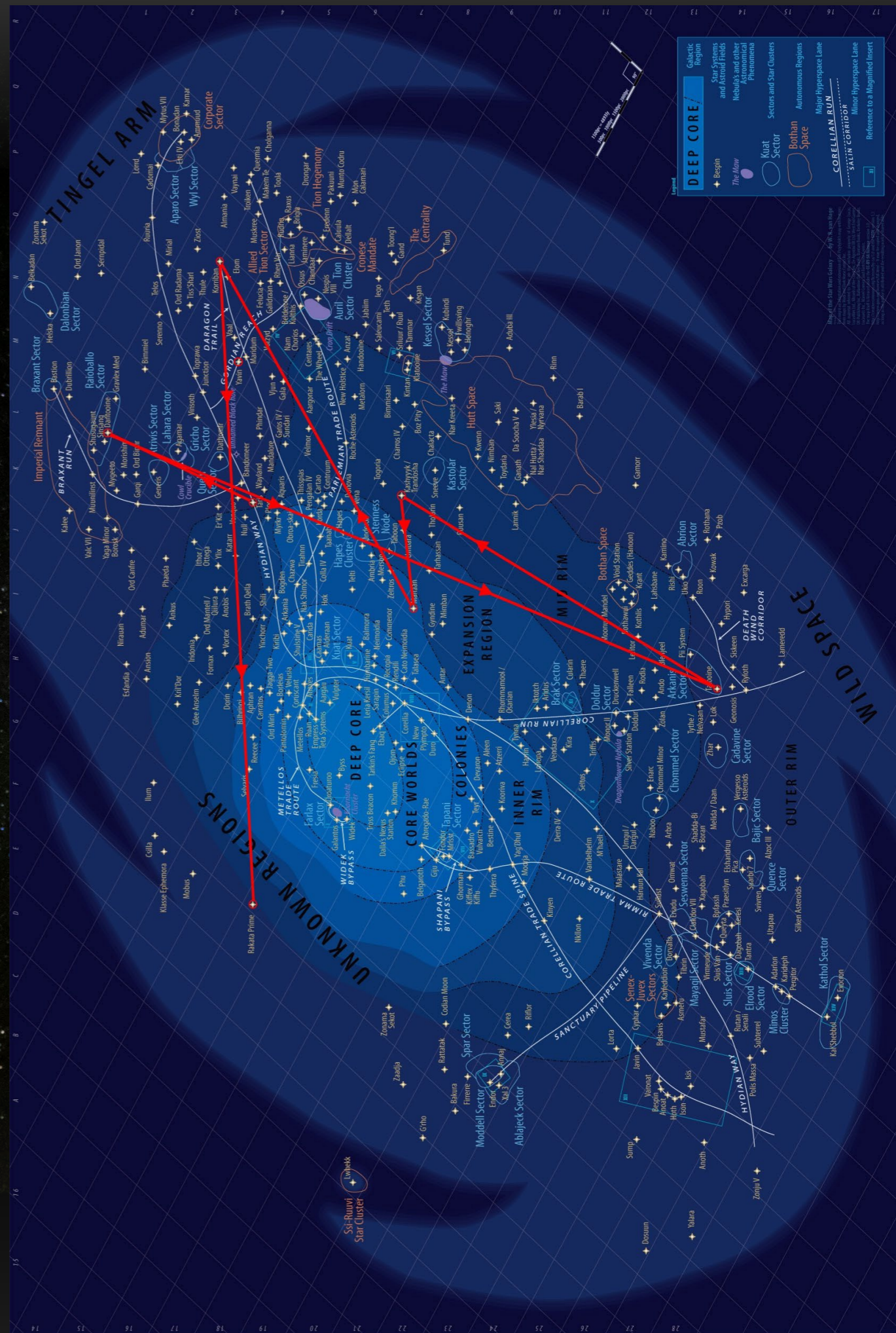
To anyone out there, if anyone is listening, it is not too late, the Empire has not won. Though it may feel hopeless, there is always light, no matter what. Only we can stop the Empire, only we can take back the Galaxy from the grips of tyranny. Remember Jedha; remember those the Empire has taken from us. Now is not the time to lie down and accept defeat, now is the time to fight.

Trooper forces are approaching, there is not much time left. Find the cache, take it to the Alliance. Find-

==DIGITAL SECURITY BREACH DETAINED==

Disregard any and all message input through an indirect line. We apologise for the interruption, we reiterated that any rebel activity will be met with severe reprimanding. There is nothing to worry about, the Rebellion will be crushed, and you will be safe.

GLORY TO THE EMPIRE.



GAY BATMAN

By Piper Cox

In 2016, comic book industry veteran and current writer on Wonder Woman Rebirth Greg Rucka confirmed that Wonder Woman was bisexual. The year prior, Catwoman and Harley Quinn also came out. In the years since, we've gotten confirmation of a bi Robin, a bi Superboy and an asexual Green Arrow, alongside a conflux of all-new queer characters, often featured prominently in the annual DC Pride anthologies.

DC has had a mixed relationship with its queer characters over the years. Lest we not forget the Seduction of the Innocent, in which Fredric Wertham claimed Batman and Robin's relationship was 'psychologically homosexual' - an assertion which would contribute to the creation of the Comics Code, an institution decidedly opposed to any manner of queer content. Despite this, queer characters would eventually find their way back into DC-published comics. Take Doom Patrol, helmed first by Grant Morisson, and then by Rachel Pollack (both queer themselves), which featured the characters of Rebis - an intersex entity who refused to conform to binary gender - and Coagula, the first trans superheroine.

Going into the late 90s and early 00s, more and more queer characters began to appear. Midnighter and Apollo, the Wildstorm imprint's answers to Batman and Superman, were in a queer relationship. Gotham City detective Renee Montoya was a lesbian, and later revealed to be torrid exes with the newly introduced Batwoman. The New 52 initiative, for all its myriad flaws, also introduced more queer characters, as did its successor in Rebirth.

And that brings us to today. For the past four years, DC has released their DC Pride anthology in June, featuring stories about queer characters and (sometimes) by queer creators.

As a queer person reading DC Pride, I have complicated feelings. Some of the works in these anthologies are truly beautiful, but others speak not to authentic queer experience, but to the commodification of queer culture and pride as a mechanism for companies - in this case, DC - to increase their bottom line. Is this an opportunity for queer creators to share their stories through one of the biggest media franchises in the world? Or is it just another increasingly-common example of rainbow capitalism? Or is it both?

I want to examine two stories from DC Pride 2022 through this lens. The first, Super Pride (written by Devin Grayson), depicts Superman's son, Jon Kent, attending a pride parade with his boyfriend, Jay, and his best friend, Robin Damian Wayne. The second, Finding Batman, is a deeply personal autobiographical story by long-time Batman actor Kevin Conroy, about how his experiences as a gay man influenced his portrayal of Batman.

These stories are both written by queer creators, but they could not be more different.



Kevin Conroy reflects on his childhood in the 50s





Even ignoring the baffling implications of portraying Robin as ready to use excessive force on pridegoers, this page speaks with an assimilationist attitude, smoothing over the rough edges of the queer community and the bitter fight for our rights that's still ongoing today in order to better appeal to mainstream audiences. This commercialisation of pride isn't just in comics, but I find Super Pride especially indicative of this sentiment. It feels tailored to be inoffensive to the centre-left; comfortably profitable and nonthreatening.

There was significant pushback after Super Pride was released, and when DC reprinted the story a year later they changed this page entirely. But while the most offensive examples were altered, I don't think it meaningfully alters the sentiment that underlies the entire piece.

The other story from DC Pride 2022 I want to talk about is my favourite comic book of all time. Finding Batman is gutwrenchingly real, both in its tragedy and its beauty. It feels genuine, not sanded down to better appeal to mainstream audiences. Conroy conveys his struggles in a way which, even decades and cultures removed from what he discusses, resonates with me.

Finding Batman doesn't reveal some fundamental truth about the universe, that will resonate with every person. For all that I loved it, I am sure that there are people who despised it. But I do not think you can argue Finding Batman isn't genuine.

It hits all the more strongly in the wake of Kevin Conroy's unfortunate passing only five months after DC Pride 2022 was released. I don't know what this story meant to him, but it affected me. And it makes me very happy that he was able to tell this story, to have it passed on through this medium, before his death.

I don't mean to say all queer stories ought to be about hardship. I want stories about queer joy, about queer love. But I don't want to see those stories filed down to be more palatable to the mainstream. I don't want them to feel hollow. DC has proven they're willing to tell queer stories that are real, that don't sand down the jagged edges. Perhaps it's foolish to desire this out of a big comics publisher - especially when there is a myriad of indie comics available, many of which are queer.

But DC and its comics mean a lot to me, and the rising tide of queer representation within them gives me a special kind of hope. And I'd like to think that we can get more stories like Finding Batman and fewer like Super Pride.

Stories that know Pride isn't just a party.

FROM THE TEAM THAT ASSEMBLED THE LEGO® MOVIE





STAIRCASE

By WILLIAM SAFFERY

THE BOYS FOUGHT WITH INTENSITY. One had dark red curls that nearly matched the triangle embossed on his sleek grey metal chestplate. The other on the offensive sported a spike studded metal mask, the eerie green gel that gripped it around his mouth not struggling with his leaping approach.

The red one's white sneakers, built with steel studs more practical than the other's mask, braced into the moss covered dark maroon earth. His blade became a wall of steel as he blocked the oncoming assault of his spiked foe.

The clashing of the bright blades wasn't audible from within the store—in truth the thin and blunt practice sabres were probably considerably quieter than the young men who wielded them.

Finn sighed. All this enthusiasm and yet not a new customer in days.

He sat hunched over his store counter, surrounded by swords.

The customer's side of the store had the width of three men and the depth of two. There was a small section of

training swords on the bottom left shelf, above them, shorter sharp swords and knives for self-defence.

On his right were the tools of war, long and broad modern swords made with steel from the mills. Stylistically it was a hodgepodge. The children outside had never heard of a "katana" or the phrase "European". Nonetheless, hintings of influence from all of history could be seen, but influence only.

The doorbell rang. A tall lean man slid in quickly.

He was a stranger. This was unusual to Finn but not unwelcome. He watched them carefully. The man wore a dark cloak covering any gear he was wearing, and its shadow concealed the upper part of his face.

"Looking for a solid piece, full works, the best you have."

Finn contemplated probing the mans' interest some more, but he was a shoddy salesman, so he just pointed up.

"Twenty thousand real."

It was an incredible sword, in some ways beautiful. It had a blade nearly as long as the longest tool of war to his

right, but its construction was totally alien. It had a core of a material time had forgotten, superior to steel and artificial, not smelted. Its blade had a clean, consistent light silver colour.

An antique with a beauty that hinted at ungodly function, but the price was about what an ordinary worker might make in 4 years.

Of course Finn was aware the price was absurd—it was, in a sense, his retirement.

Didn't mean much to the customer. He just laughed and shook his head.

"How's business?"

"Been shit."

He left without another word.

* * * * *

A ring called out from behind Finn.

His store counter sat not far in front of a small flight of stairs. To their right was a dingy living space - mattress and kitchen.

Up the stairs and through a thin blue curtain was the "house front," a small table, doorway to a bathroom and a door opening to the residential area on the opposite side. The house area was quite bare, the table was furnished only with a thick notepad, a cup of coffee, and a map. A strange use of the extra space, strange until one inspected outside the house front and noticed a sign in much the same style as the one bearing swords out the otherside. It read "Private Investigator."

Finn had a new customer. She was a daughter of the local merchant Jinon who was familiar to him. A wholesaler, he dealt in large amounts of goods from the steel mills, including of course, swords.

She was quite young, maybe twenty, had spiky brown hair, and wore one of those fake pearl necklaces, steel beads painted an off-white. Even with her father's wealth it didn't

make sense for them to be made of anything else. There certainly weren't any mollusks hanging around, and as for wood, the few trees on the planet were a sickly species that grew in closed environments and provided a small glut of material for paper which was otherwise generally recycled, but not much else. The truth of the matter was that their most expensive part was probably the paint.

He gestured to the chair closest to her.

"What seems to be the problem?"

Her eyes darted to the blue curtain and then to him. He figured it was possible she knew of both shops. He preferred that his customers didn't. "Investigator" didn't sell well with those purchasing arms, and "arms dealer" didn't really do it for the wronged and bereaved, but given half his short swords came from her father's warehouse, he figured it mattered little.

"There has been a robbery of a large quantity of goods from one of our warehouses. The one down past the Festival Inn"

The "pearls" made a tell-tale clink as she adjusted.

"I noticed during an non-routine check-in and haven't informed anyone outside of Father. We think there might be more planned."

There were three warehouses between this town and the next that were owned by Jinon, all staffed around the clock.

"How much you paying?"

"One thousand real for his identity, two more if you apprehend him."

Identity, he thought. Bringing him in would only be about half as hard.

"Works for me. Now, if you'd excuse me, I have something pressing."

A lot of work could be done, Finn thought, interviewing staff, staking out locations.

He slowly walked past the curtain, and once out of sight, quickly down the stairs. He hastily pulled on his mask and grabbed his walking stick, a long steel tube with a circular ring below its handle, and walked out.

But he'd really prefer to not do too much, he mused.

The boys were still practising, their swords shining bright—they were new.

"Where'd you get those?"

"Bought them" they replied in unison, about as suspicious as can be.

"Was it Dorothy?"

"Dorry doesn't stock swords, you know that."

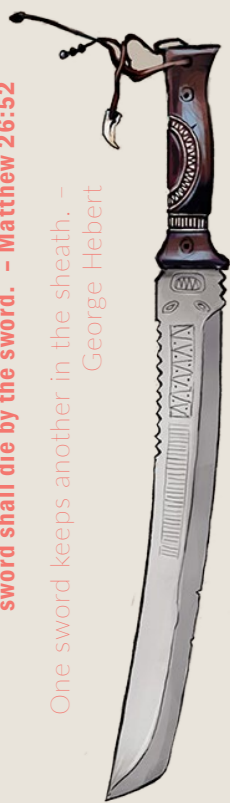
"Neither does anyone else in town. Now want to tell me where'd you get them?" he barked half-heartedly, readying some coin.

"Tall bloke in a cloak, sold 'em around about the fountain."

* * * * *

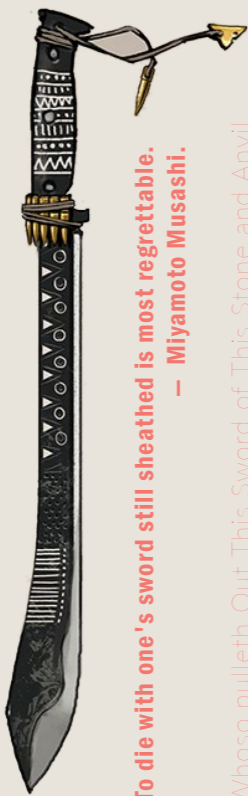
Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall die by the sword. — Matthew 26:52

One sword keeps another in the sheath. — George Hebert



A sword is never a killer, it is a tool in the killer's hands. — Seneca

Sword and mind must be united. Technique by itself is insufficient, and spirit alone is not enough. — Yamada Jirokichi



To die with one's sword still sheathed is most regrettable. — Miyamoto Musashi.

Whoso pulleth Out This Sword of This Stone and Anvil, is Rightwise King Born of All England. — T. H. White, The Once and future King



Temper a sword-edge to its very sharpest, and you will find it soon grows dull. — Lao Tzu

Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them — Othello (lines 76-77)



Our swords shall play the orators for us. — Christopher Marlowe

The town square was loud, ideal since he didn't want to stick out. The fountain had been out of commission for a long time—water was too valuable—but it still served its purpose as the centre of town.

He watched as the stranger from his shop, who he at this point was fairly certain was his mark, carefully walked up to the fountain and unfurled a mat of goods.

Finn pondered the sanity of a man who would sell stolen goods in the same small town they were taken from as he rose and walked into the cafe. He pulled out quite a bit more than the price of his coffee.

"There's a nice tip for you if you go ask that man by the fountain which factory his swords come from in about 5 minutes."

The cashier nodded. Finn walked away, positioning himself nearby, where he would be out of sight.

The stranger packed up not too long after. Finn followed.

* * * * *

The river was a muddy green. It had an explosion of green mossy life all around it, an ancient green that was the lifeblood of Finn's kind, only seen in the river of a town, or the masks of its inhabitants. Further down, a steel mechanism took up a whole corner of the river connected to an input and output tank, able to carefully collect and return water to the river.

This planet did rain, in a sense, but it wouldn't be drinkable without this processing. Another technology

held onto from the beyond – engineered moss.

Finn looked around the river, his vision quickly picking out the stranger and his wares. What looked like picnic blankets made up many heavy rolls that he was tying up in a hurry.

"Oi!"

The stranger looked up, then quickly drew a sword from one of the rolls of goods. Finn kept walking towards him.

Finn stopped abruptly and then leant on his walking stick, as if to rest for a second.

"Stolen goods?"

"Leave now, old man."

Finn sighed and kept walking towards him.

The stranger lunged at him. With sudden speed Finn raised his walking stick to block, gripped with two hands.

With one smooth movement, Finn twisted the stick's handle and pulled. In an instant a blade slid out. Finn's left hand gripped hard on the steel covert sheaf as the stranger's sword began to drift down it, his right hand already holding bare the hidden blade of the stick, its curled handle now forming an uncanny hilt.

He had moved faster than a gasp, and much faster than his own sigh. The sharp wind blew Finn's messy grey hair away from his furrowed eyes.

TOM CLANCY'S

RAINBOW SIX

MANE SIX EDITION



Friendship comes in many colors
Discover a different breed of hero



UBISOFT

The Magnus Archives

A PODCAST REVIEW

Statement of Orson Lorenz

Office life can be difficult, especially when your coworkers are trying to kill you. The Magnus Archives is a podcast, written by Rusty Quill and first released in March 2016. It blends short anthology stories with cosmic horror in a way that will leave you both terrified and hungry for more.

The Magnus Institute is a body that studies the esoteric and supernatural. The protagonist, Jonathan Sims, is the newly appointed Head Archivist. Follow him as he attempts to organise the archives, full of tape recorded statements from people who supposedly saw something supernatural, as he explains their contradictions and falsities, and denies the existence of the supernatural. But what happens when someone says something that genuinely can't be explained? What happens when the questions start racking up? Who is Jurgen Leitner? Why do so many statements involve the feeling of being watched?

What happened to the previous archivist?

What starts off as a collection of campfire stories regarding people's encounters with the esoteric, dolls who come to life, darkness that swallows you whole, or a man in the alleyway asking for a cigarette without moving his mouth, will quickly turn into something more. One of the most well executed elements of the narrative is its control of information. You may be listening to an episode one night, when suddenly you realise 'hold on.



Wasn't there a monster that took people's faces in a previous episode?' and then 'wait, we've been at this location before?' and before you know it, you realise that there is something much larger going on, and you're only seeing puzzle pieces without a clue of what the bigger picture is.

The characters are endearing and unique, from the blunt and grumpy Jon, to the bubbly and incompetent Martin—each character brings something to the story. Personally, the mysterious director of the Institute, Elias Bouchard, was a stand out to me. The voice acting is wonderful, while a little cheesy at times. I found myself excited whenever new characters entered a scene.

=== SPOILERS ===

From this point I will be delving into spoilers for later seasons, so if you intend on listening to the show, I implore you to stop reading, if you can't stop, I can't blame you, just as I can't blame Jon.

The two biggest critiques I have of the podcast are the pacing and the final season. The pacing is a strange situation, as it is a slow burn. While I'm not suggesting the first episode end with Jurgen Leitner's death, the first season (especially on re-listens) is quite a drag. To me, it would benefit greatly from more scenes establishing the dynamic of the different characters or exploring the

the pacing and the final season. The pacing is a strange situation, as it is a slow burn. While I'm not suggesting the first episode end with Jurgen Leitner's death, the first season (especially on re-listens) is quite a drag. To me, it would benefit greatly from more scenes establishing the dynamic of the different characters or exploring the

Images come from the Magnus Archives RPG and are used for strictly educational purposes.



Institute itself. Overall the first season is still fantastic, but whenever I recommend the show to friends, the first season is always a 'test of faith', as many of them lose interest after a few statements.

I am not the first person to have problems with season 5, as it has often been called the weakest season in the show. The biggest issue with it is the way it handles statements. In the Nightmare Realm, each fear has a unique aesthetic, however at the end of the day, every statement follows the same formula; Worldbuilding of a special hell, torturing a person in that hell, connection to Jon. While this is very enjoyable for the first few statements, there is a noticeable lack of artefacts, monsters, and well, horror. Instead of Shutter Island, we are given Scream or Saw, and don't think of me a prude—I love a little gory horror—but those films are good because of their visuals, something the audio-only medium struggles to capture.



One of my favourite parts of the show is the worldbuilding—the Fears, Letiners, and locations like Hilltop or the Institute. If you were curious, the quiz gave The Web (red flag I know please get away from me) and I'm blaming it entirely on D&D. The way the Fears are handled is so effective—learning about them one at a time, hearing different perspectives—it makes you feel like you know a lot, but nothing at all. Then when you do get the whole picture, it doesn't suffer from the classic horror 'now we know the monster so it's not scary' because where it lacks in being scary post MAG 111, it makes up for in being intensely interesting. I found myself wondering what more from The Flesh we hadn't seen, or what The Lonely's physical forms looked like. Furthermore, it gives you new lenses to see previous episodes through, being able to go back and put labels on your favourite episodes.

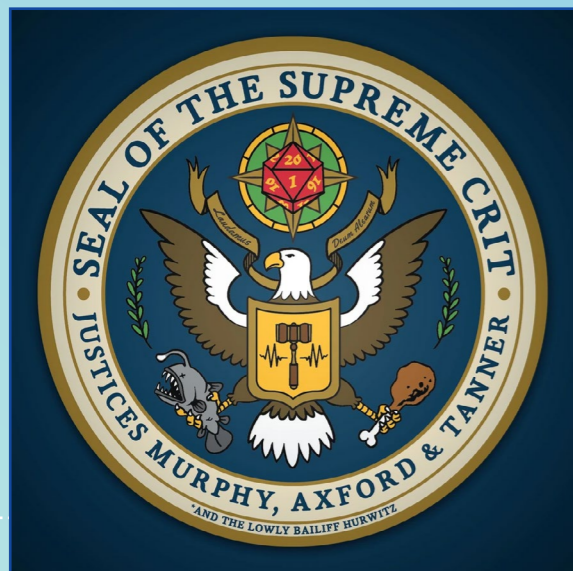
Ultimately, the Magnus Archives is a podcast that I hold dearly in my heart. The first time I listened to it, the show consumed my life. I had a notebook where I kept theories and character files, hoping I could get one step ahead. Of course, I never could, but it was some of the most fun I've had engaging with media. Baths become better with a British man telling me scary stories, house cleaning more exciting when I'm hearing about someone's cursed meat grinder.

If you read this far and haven't listened to the podcast yet, then it might be perfect for you. If you take my recommendation and check it out, then bon voyage, and Bone Apple Teeth.

Podcasts OF MODEST LENGTH

BY JESSIE. M, @tea.bandit

Editor's Note: Overall good, just a few comments from management on the content of this article.



Dungeon Court

Genre: Gamer Advice Show, Comedy.

Length: 1 hr each. Fortnight release. **Ongoing**

Listen if you enjoy: D&D, Not Another D&D Podcast, College Humor, Judge Judy, Dimension 20, AITA Reddit, bizarre punishments.

An ongoing series of special episodes buried within the Not Another D&D Podcast playlist where D&D players and DMs send in their game problems to seasoned players and Supreme Crit Justices Axford, Murphy and Tanner, and the Lowly Lowly Bailiff Jake. This is a funny D&D advice podcast where the three Justices dispense genuinely good D&D advice, but only after giving stupid suggestions and razzing all of the parties involved to death.

Some of the cases that come are obnoxiously funny, from a player using a D20 to order from a Chinese takeout menu on game night (results: not good), to a DM trying to stop their grandma from eldritch blasting everything. If you're tired of listening to people playing D&D, this special series could be a nice change.

No comment.



Undertow: Blood Forest

Genre: Horror, Drama

Length: 10 (1 hr each). **Complete.**

Listen if you enjoy: Werewolf RPG (World of Darkness), Teen Wolf, Twin Peaks, X-Files, Evil Dead series, small towns with dark secrets.

Blood Forest is an excellent suspenseful horror mystery podcast about werewolves in a little town in Maine. It follows Jacob, a troubled war veteran haunted by the death of his fellow soldier and best friend Remy, who was mysteriously killed in action on the night of a full moon. To make up for his failures, Jacob moves to a podunk town in rural Maine to look after the two remaining members of his friend's family; Remy's Alzheimer's suffering grandmother and legally blind cousin Ava.

When mutilated animal carcasses and dead bodies begin showing up around town, Jacob decides to investigate. Could these killings be the result of a feral werewolf? And how does this relate to what really transpired the night that Remy died? If you love small town horror and werewolves, give this one a try. Blood Forest is an exciting fast paced soapy drama full of villains you love to hate, loveable characters and a pathetic but well meaning protagonist who you just want to give a big hug, a slap, or both.

Editor's Note: I'm concerned that this podcast may have too many dead animals. Could this be replaced with something more wholesome and suitable for families?

WRITER'S COMMENT: I'M SORRY BUT THE DEAD ANIMAL PODCAST IS STAYING.



Dungeons & Daddies: The Peachyville Horror

Genre: Horror, Black Comedy

Length: 10 eps (1.5 hr). Fortnight release. **Ongoing**

Listen if you enjoy: Dungeons & Daddies, Stranger Things, Call of Cthulhu, Wandavision, 50s / 60s American sitcoms, Lovecraftian fiction, Twin Peaks, X-Files, Gravity Falls.

One of the best D&D Podcasts out there is back for a new standalone campaign using the Call of Cthulhu system! This is a black comedy horror story set in Peachyville, an idyllic town in 1950s America, where four members of a bowling team work together to stop the eldritch horrors plaguing their town.

The cast includes brainwashed housewife Trudy Trout (she has skill points in Spanking), shady used car salesman Tony Collette, bullied teenager Francis Farnsworth and violent school teacher Kelsey Grammar, all hilarious characters played to perfection. Obligatory cameos from Commie spies and the Queen of England guaranteed.

This podcast is heavy on the absurd humour and laughs, but still has some deliciously creepy moments! If you loved the original Dungeons and Daddies or are looking for a fun comedy podcast with small town hijinks and Lovecraftian elements, check this out.

Editor's Note: Dungeons and Daddies is a violent horny podcast and should not be in this list!

WRITER'S COMMENT: DUNGEONS AND DADDIES ISN'T EVEN A BDSM PODCAST

WHAT WENT WRONG



What Went Wrong

Genre: Non-Fiction, Educational No comment

Length: 1-1.5 hr episodes. **Fortnightly release.**

Listen if you enjoy: YouTube video essays about film, behind the scenes featurettes, explaining that Viggo Mortensen broke his toe when he kicked that helmet in Lord of the Rings

Do you like following all the disastrous behind the scenes production stories of all your favourite films? What Went Wrong is the ultimate film buff's podcast, co-hosted by two funny film buffs who do in-depth research into the who, what, when and why of how of some of the most notorious or successful movies in Hollywood were created.

Episodes are typically structured in chronological order by first examining the creation of the screenplay, corporate shenanigans, hiring the director, casting choices, and then moving onto juicy on-set tensions, scandals, and near death accidents on set. This is a fantastic look into Behind the Scenes stories about all the films and Hollywood figures that you know and love (or love to hate).

The great thing about this podcast is that you can just watch the episodes with the movies you want and skip the rest. Nerds can start off with the three part Lord of the Rings trilogy episodes for a taster of the show. Other great episodes also include anything with known film divas or method actors.

Can we add a legal disclaimer in fine print:
"Please note that the article does not take any responsibility for any car crashes, accidents or injuries that may occur as a result of listening to the podcasts recommended here."

OK, FINE.



BELLE BABCOCK, ESQ.

Dear Belle

Got problems? Write Belle,
P.O. Box 666, Waterdeep.

Faerun's Premier Divorce Lawyer & Love Expert

in their house and spent a lot of time making their lives a misery. She ate their food, drank their wine and used them as slaves to cater to her every whim.

One day, his mother-in-law fell down the stairs and died. Suspicions were rife that he had finally done her in. The city watch investigated, but no one found out if she fell or was pushed.

There is more than one way to skin a cat. Accidents happen, people fall down stairs, into canals, off bridges, over cliffs. Sometimes people are eaten by owlbears or drown in their baths. There are many ways to die; and any of these things could happen to your mother-in-law. As long as you have a decent alibi they won't be able to pin anything on you.

Have a look at my helpful leaflet: *The Layman's Guide to Murder* (available from all major booksellers on the Sword Coast). It takes you through the usual moral quandries and the best course of action to take, outlining foolproof methods for murder. But of course, you didn't hear it from me.

Friendship is Magic

DEAR BELLE—I am a student wizard adventurer. Yet, I find it excruciatingly hard to connect with other people. I can conjure fire at my fingertips but having a conversation with another

adventurer seems to elude me. I feel awkward, misunderstood, lonely. Do you have any advice on how to better connect with my fellow adventurers?

LONELY WIZARD

Belle says: Dear 'Lonely',

Part of being social is showing an interest in other people. Ask them about what they think and encourage them to share their interests and opinions. And when they tell you, be a good listener.

Cultivate your interests so that you have something to talk about. Find people with similar interests and plan fun group activities like luncheons, BBQs and dangerous expeditions. I find that near-death experiences are excellent for forging bonds of friendship.

If all that fails, there is a very easy to learn Wizard cantrip called Friends for a reason! More advanced versions of this spell include Charm Person, Dominate Person or Mass Suggestion. Instant friends guaranteed!

My Girlfriend's Familiar is Ruining Our Love Life

DEAR BELLE—My wizard girlfriend insists on having her snake familiar with her at all times, even in the bedroom! Every time we are about to get intimate, I can feel the snake staring at me.

I've talked to her about getting rid of it but she says that I can't possibly understand the close bond between a wizard and their familiar. I'm at a loss on how to convince her otherwise. I love her dearly but the snake is becoming a big problem and is really affecting our closeness.

SCARED OF SNAKES

Belle Says: Dear 'Scared',

Wizard familiars need firm rules and boundaries. Suggest that she dismiss her familiar during more intimate moments, and emphasise how it's affecting your *ahem* performance. Familiars are like family, but you wouldn't want family members watching you during foreplay, would you? Try to explain it to your girlfriend in this way.

Opposite Alignments Attract

DEAR BELLE—I am a committed paladin serving the God of Dawn and like nothing more than smiting the forces of evil. Recently, while escorting a band of refugees to Neverwinter, I met my girlfriend. She seemed to be everything that I wanted in a woman; funny, beautiful and an adventurer too. I was mesmerised and we fell deeply in love. The trouble started after we got to Neverwinter. My girlfriend as it turns out is a devil worshipping warlock who smokes, drinks heavily and occasionally has threesomes with strangers.

Despite this, I am still in love with her and want to be with her. But I am finding it hard to resolve our different ideologies.

This summer I have asked her to come on a pilgrimage with me next month to visit holy sites in the south, but she wants to go to a music festival in Baldur's Gate instead and spend a week taking drugs and carousing in taverns.

She has promised to shag me senseless if I agree to go to Baldur's Gate with her, and I am completely torn. I want to go on pilgrimage and do the right thing, but I am just a man, and I would quite like to be shagged senseless by the woman I love.

What should I do Belle? Should I abandon my principles and follow my heart, or should I stand by my principles and refuse to be led astray?

LAWFUL GOOD

Belle Says: Dear 'Lawful',

It's a tricky one. What's more important, love or a god? Who am I to say? Without the gods there would be no love and without love life would have no meaning. Although you don't share the same beliefs, you still love her; and vice versa. You and she must both compromise; let her take you to Baldur's Gate if you can stomach visiting that wretched hive just so that you can get laid in the sun. For your next holiday do the pilgrimage, and persuade her that it will be a chance to get some valuable loot.

There are plenty of couples whose ideologies are opposites. Opposites attract, after all. You could try to convert her to your god, but if that doesn't work you will just have to accept her religious beliefs. There are

positives however, you'll be able to go on quests together, with her eldritch blasting and you smiting. And if there's some dirty work that your paladin oaths won't permit you to do, well...

As a young man, I would advise you to go to Baldur's Gate and enjoy yourself — visit some shrines along the way and make a stop at the local temples in the city too. Enjoy your summer, but don't let true love slip away.

Becoming A Cougar

DEAR BELLE—I have recently divorced my husband of eighteen years, after our marriage finally fell apart. Once I hit 40 I came to my senses and realised that I didn't have to look after such a lazy slob anymore, so I ditched him like he used to ditch his pants on the floor.

Things are going to be different from now on. I have decided to become a Cougar and look for handsome young men to date. Have you got any tips on becoming a successful Cougar?

MRS ROBINSON

Belle Says: Dear 'Robinson',

By far the best way to be a successful cougar is to take a course in the Druidic arts (two levels should do it) and learn how to Wild Shape. Best of luck hunting for a nice young man!

Looking for more advice?

**Belle's Guide to Love,
Lies, Murder and Demon
Summoning is OUT NOW!**

YOU WOULDN'T STEAL A ~~CAR~~ MEME

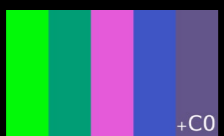
YOU WOULDN'T STEAL A ~~HANDBAG~~ NFT

YOU WOULDN'T STEAL A ~~MOVIE~~ A FREE STUDENT ZINE

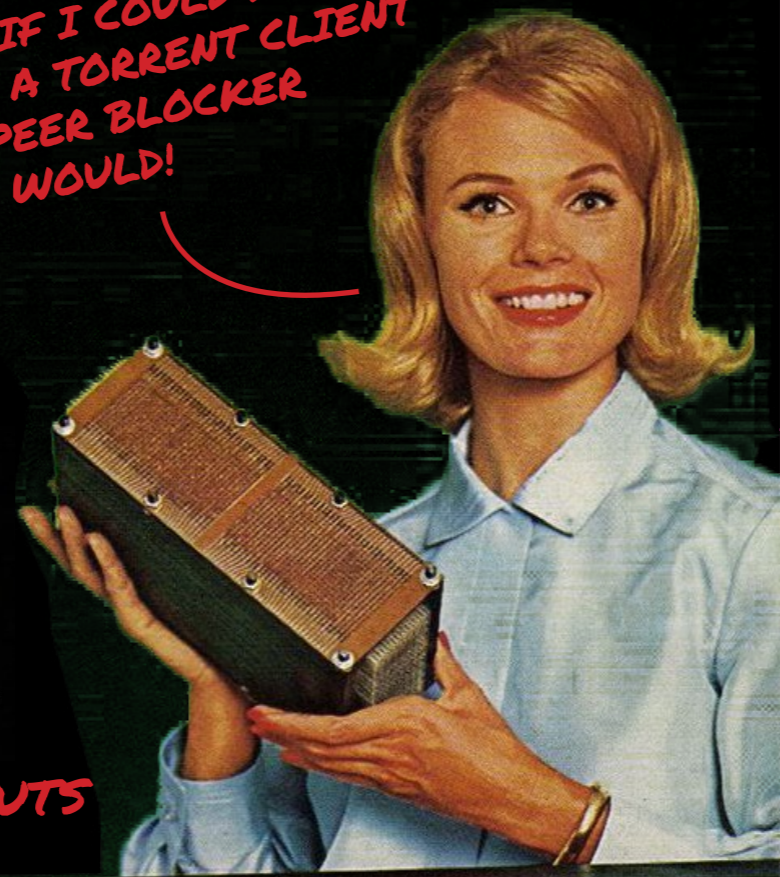
DOWNLOADING PIRATED FILMS IS STEALING

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PIRACY. IT'S A CRIME.



BUT IF I COULD DO IT WITH A TORRENT CLIENT AND PEER BLOCKER I WOULD!



Authorised by the ~~Australia New South Wales~~ Government in Canberra SELLOUTS

PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY
STREAM SAFE
STREAM LEGALLY



SUTEKH HOROSCOPES

Gamers, let's see what our fortunes have in store for us. Consult your horoscope to gain insights about the rest of your year, and even get recommended a game from the Sutekh library based on your star sign! Read for your Sun, Rising, or Moon Sign.

♈ Aries 21 MAR - 19 APRIL

2024 has not been a very significant year for powerful Aries, apart from likely stress and personal challenges in March and April. The full moon on October 17 may cause a bubbling up of messy emotions and dramatic and crazy experiences. Aries, if you decide to go out around that time, expect it might be a wild and unpredictable night. From December 2024 to February 2025, the stars unfortunately predict a reduction in your willpower, sex drive and usual fiery passion.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: ROOT
Take what's rightfully yours and conquer the forest using brute force and ruthless battle tactics. Perfect for competitive Aries who wants to win at everything, no matter what.

♉ Taurus 20 APRIL - 20 MAY

Decadent Taurus. At the start of September, it is likely you will have to consider whether your current life choices are maximising your independence and freedom. If you feel you are becoming too stagnant, it might be time to make some changes. Ew, change. I know. You might feel extra emotional with the full moon in Taurus on November 15. That may be a good time to let go of some stubborn emotional grudges which are weighing you down.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: THE RED DRAGON INN
This board game is ideal for worldly, epicurean Taurus. Set in a fantasy tavern, it involves letting loose and following your most hedonistic desires to drink, literally until you die.

♊ Gemini 21 MAY - 21 JUNE

This year has been about expanding your horizons, mercurial Gemini. This theme will likely continue until the middle of next year. Don't be surprised if you or people around you feel more sick than usual between October and November. The Gemini full moon on December 15 is a sensitive time where you might feel the need to let some shit out. Consider journalling, writing a song, or writing an extremely early Zweihander article.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: DECRYPTO
Gemini's specialty is communication. However, their rapidly changing thought processes mean half the time, people don't really understand what they're saying. Decrypto is the perfect board game for Geminis, as it involves creating and deciphering coded messages.

♋ Cancer 22 JUNE - 22 JULY

Expect a flood of energy and passion in the beginning of September, Cancer. This is a good time to throw your normal caution to the wind and assertively go after what you want. At the end of September and going into October, a full moon and lunar eclipse might make you feel more moody and drained than usual. Make sure you prioritise rest and taking care of yourself even as uni gets busier.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: DIXIT
This peaceful board game involves storytelling, connecting with others and looking at beautiful art. It's the perfect game for winding down and hanging out with friends while escaping the busyness of life.

♌ Leo 23 JULY - 22 AUG

Beautiful, talented and perfect Leo should expect more energy and willpower to accomplish their amazing achievements at the start of November. Unfortunately this will end at the start of December as Mars enters retrograde. You might be really tired and won't have much energy to do anything except sleep, leaving your friends and colleagues extremely depressed as they won't be able to experience your stunning and beautiful presence as much.

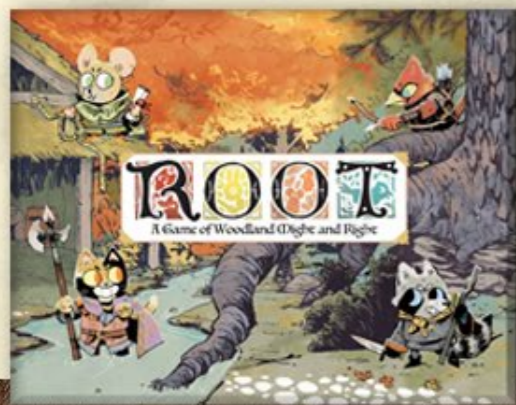
GAME RECOMMENDATION: AZUL
Build a beautiful pavilion worthy of your royal presence out of traditional and expensive (plastic) Portuguese tiles. Wow the other players as they realise there is really no one better than you at making stylish pavilions.

♍ Virgo 23 AUG - 22 SEPT

Smile, Virgo, as you realise that the communication and productivity block you have been feeling will lift at the start of September when Mercury Retrograde ends. Finally, brain fog and confusion will make way for clarity of mind and eloquence of email. In fact, expect to be even more organised than usual as Mercury enters Virgo on the 9th of September. Maybe you could use this energy to complete some assignments ... early? Organise your board game collection? Successfully campaign for Sutekh exec? Or boss people around (more than usual)?

GAME RECOMMENDATION: PANDEMIC
The ideal person you want managing a dangerous pandemic outbreak is responsible Virgo. Virgos will love using their organisational and thinking skills to successfully manage resources and complete the complex tasks necessary to eliminate the pandemic threat.

Recommendations



ARIES



TAURUS



GEMINI



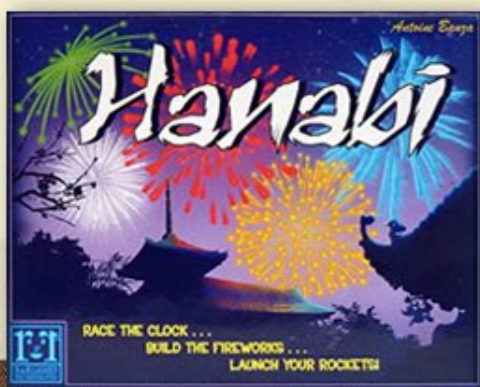
CANCER



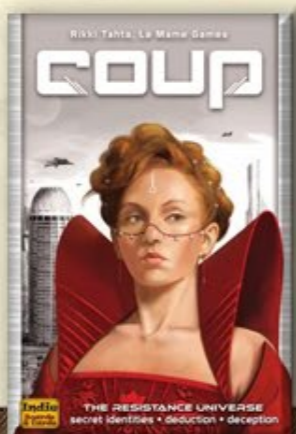
LEO



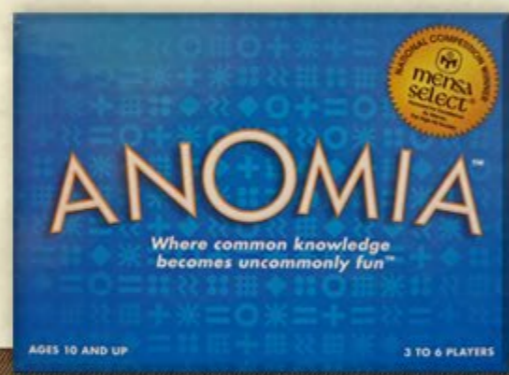
VIRGO



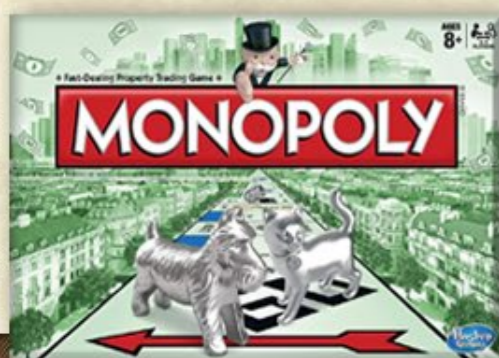
LIBRA



SCORPIO



SAGITTARIUS



CAPRICORN



AQUARIUS



PISCES

♎ Libra

23 SEP - 23 OCT

I have one prediction for you, Libra, which I can guarantee is 100% true. Around the time this issue of Zweiwunder is published, you will have had, or are about to have, your birthday. Happy Birthday! Expect more gifts and cards from friends around this time. On October 2, a solar eclipse in Libra marks a great time for focusing on your relationships and working towards compromise, harmony and balance, even more than you do usually.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: HANABI

It's the Libra's dream. A card game where it is impossible for anyone to win. The group collaborates to build fireworks. If the group works together well, they will make a good firework display. If the group works together badly, the firework display will be bad. Sounds a bit like communism to you? You're not alone. In any case, the only loser will be the birds, who will sadly get scared off by your beautiful high-scoring fireworks.

♐ Sagittarius 22 NOV - 21 DEC

The period between October and February is a good time to reflect on your life choices and what you really want before you continue scrambling on at your usual frenetic pace. Expect love and romance to be a more prominent concern at the end of October. In November, expect a boost in your communication and organisational skills. Not that you need this, as you always just say whatever you think and never organise anything anyway. Expect miscommunications, missed appointments and technological issues from November 25 to December 15.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: ANOMIA

Flex your eclectic knowledge of the world, Sagittarius, in a fast-paced game where players aim to be the first to shout out an example of lots of different random things. Eg. Rock opera? Jesus Christ Superstar, of course.

♒ Aquarius 20 JAN - 18 FEB

September is a great time for trailblazing Aquarians to reflect on the trail they are blazing and whether or not they need to switch some things up to make sure they are not feeling stuck or dissatisfied in life. Pluto will move into Aquarius in mid November for the next 20 years. Progressive-thinking, "Woke", Aquarians will be happy that this predicts the start of revolutionary social and economic change towards equality and freedom after 15 years of Pluto being in traditional Capricorn. In your own life, this will mark a more profound long-term concern with personal growth.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: CLASS STRUGGLE

This old and confusing board game from the 70s is the gamer's representation of the struggle between the traditional forces of Reaganite capitalism and the revolutionary forces of Marxist communism. This will be a great game for Aquarius to test the waters of revolution as we enter interesting times.

♏ Scorpio 24 OCT - 21 NOV

Mysterious, macabre, manipulative Scorpio. Expect love to be prominent in your life at the end of September. If not love, expect you will be even more beautiful and alluring than usual. The spiritual reckoning and strange, even psychic dreams you have been having since May should stop around this time as well. However, the wise gamer should take these messages from beyond into account moving forward. The Scorpio new moon on November 1 is a good time to start new projects. You may struggle with drive and motivation during December.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: COUP

Successfully manipulate the members of the Italian royal court (2-6 idiots) through ruthless scheming, lying and bluffing, in order to arise as the lone, all-powerful victor.

♑ Capricorn 22 DEC - 19 JAN

The stars bring powerful tidings for wise Capricorn at the end of the year. In September and October, you may be forced to confront the deep parts of yourself you have been pushing aside. In November, romance or personal attractiveness may become more of a focus for you. If you have felt that your hard work has been unrewarded or you have been able to escape responsibility lately, this will all change as "Big Daddy" Saturn goes direct in mid November. Be careful as you will again "reap what you sow".

GAME RECOMMENDATION: MONOPOLY

Nobody secretly loves the idea of accruing material wealth and getting on the property market more than traditional Capricorn, with their love of stability and unquestioning adherence to "the Man". Live out your wildest capitalist fantasies by becoming an untouchable mogul and fucking over everyone else who didn't "work as hard" as you.

♓ Pisces 19 FEB - 20 MAR

Mystical Pisces. The stars predict this has been a big year for you. The lunar eclipse on the 17th of September will likely spark significant insights. These insights may revolve around delusion, addiction, and the importance of boundaries. Questions to ask oneself may be: Do I smoke too much weed? Am I aware of my surroundings? Do I have a codependent relationship with my dog? Etc. In September until November, you may have to learn to balance responsibility with freedom if you want to achieve your dreams and goals.

GAME RECOMMENDATION: CALL OF CTHULHU (THE CARD GAME)

Pisces will enjoy exploring the mystical and dreamlike world of the unknown in the card game version of the classic Lovecraft-inspired RPG.



BORN TO WRITE

SUTEKH IS A FUCK

DESIGN Em All 2024

I am Zweihander

410,757,864,530 DAYS DELAYED

SEMIESTER 2. 2024