

# EDITOR'S (ADVICE) LETTER

By Fabulus

Ho ho, queens and kings (you know who is which!), with the winter drag shows at Little Dragons accumulating (nevah say Nevah doesn't commit to her fans!) the editorial duties at this fiery little publication have fallen to me, Fabulus, your resident genius advice goblin! So let me kick this issue off with some advice that you may find helpful as you peruse all the articles I painstakingly redlined. And believe me I had so many comments it was like that time Pokky got into the red licorice stash and my village discovered there really are some things even a pig can't keep down!

So first piece of advice: horoscopes are very real. Oh yes, I see you Skeptics Society members out there waving your silly abaci and trying to look down your noses at me through your monocles. But face it: if magic is real and gods are real, why can't horoscopes be real? Also blink twice if a Varisian is holding me hostage and making me write this.

Now let me address the crossword puzzle. An editor is like a god; sometimes you make all these plans but because you have your fingers in so many pies you get distracted and you accidentally let one of your plans go *bloopgurglegurgleglkkhc* in the Puddles because you were mad at them for not sacrificing the right species of rooster to you and then everything has to get reshuffled. So in that shuffle one of the crossword puzzle answers went *fwipt* but we didn't want to rewrite the crossword puzzle because that costs some pretty coppers and we do not have that kind of budget after all the glitter we bought for Pride Month. Oh, why didn't we have a special Sarenith issue? *What part of "we blew all the budget on glitter" didn't you understand?* Anyway, "lurecasting" is all I'm saying. Next!

A concerned parent wrote me the other day asking what to do about children who keep starting fires. That's an easy answer, one goblin society discovered millennia ago! Send them to wizard boarding school! Either they become a productive member of society or they fail in a way that isn't your fault. Most importantly, they're not near your flammable valuables.

Every morning I stroll through the Grand Bazaar and stop in a store for breakfast. I choose a different store each time, and it doesn't matter if it's a restaurant. Life cannot always give you pickles, so it's a good lesson in perseverance to take what you get with a smile and an iron gut. You'll be surprised at what you can learn with that attitude! Got a serial poop smearer at your local outhouse? Drop into Tesyovensku's Warehouse for some abysium powder to

sprinkle in a different local's food each day until the glowing green smears give away the game! Just be sure your water closet isn't also home to luminous mushrooms.

Or maybe you find yourself in Kitten's Slumber. No, Mr. Nibbles is not food—or so I've been told while being hit with a stuffed fish—but his kibble is filling and nutritionally balanced. Mix it with some tuna juice for those a little less crunch, and you have an excellent bowl that'll have you ready for a power nap!

A tawdry pamphlet has been circulating the city titled *Soaked by a Gay Sentient Puddle in the Puddles*, which details what the title promises in elaborate, explicit, and occasionally misspelled prose (editor's note: this is why editors are important! Ha, just kidding, I definitely self-edited this article because who edits the editors?). The author remains unknown at this time, but the cover of each one has a message stamped on it: "Drop a donation in the collection box at The Guiding Hand if you want to see more of Chuld's Tingles!" Go donate, and if anyone knows what a Chuld is, please write me. Right now the staff is evenly divided between it being a person's name or a type of fish. Either way, I bet it'd be delicious pickled.

Speaking of donations, the Queerfinder Society is now selling collectible pins to fund expansions of our operations. There's always new lands to reach and new content to explore! These pins are bigger than the palm of my hand, plus the "Q" spins so you can point its tail at your favorite color on our wayfinder! If it gets caught on the compass points, though, please don't be too harsh on us. Our production line goblins sometimes get bored and hit each other on the head with the pointy parts, causing them to bend. We're working on fixing that glitch in our production process. Who knows some good therapists, or an alloy that's stronger than a goblin's skull?

I think that's just about filled my word count, so I'll let you go peruse the real articles now. Don't forget to write in to my advice column at [fabulus@queerfinder.org](mailto:fabulus@queerfinder.org)! I have to stay employed once Nevah gets back. Then keep your eyes peeled for the next Queerfinder issue to see if I've deigned to address the issues you're too cheap to take to a medical professional!

Judging you  
Fabulus  
So Fabulus  
The lack of comma  
is Not a Mistake.



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To view this document as you would a magazine or book, you can change the view to show two pages side-by-side in **Adobe Acrobat Reader** by turning on the following options:

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View > Page Display > Show Cover Page in Two Page View

While you can turn on Two Page View in most **web browsers**, we don't recommend doing so because the browsers may not display the layout correctly by failing to recognize the cover as a separate page.

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A "sibling" carries a Zonzon doll through Absalom's Ivy District.  
Illustration by Jo

# The Zonzon Doll

by Michelle Jones

The Zonzon doll remains one of the stranger traditions of its associated religious festival, for on its surface, it seems to run counter to the nature of the celebration. Crystalhue is a celebration of light and rainbows, arts and music, yet the doll is not a thing of beauty. In fact, making the doll as rough and crude as possible is itself part of the tradition. Scraps of black leather and cloth are sewn together with bright red string, and the doll is stuffed with the leftover materials. The only acceptable embellishment is a single glass bead sewn in where its left eye would be, a representation of the crystal eye of Zon-Kuthon.

Despite the doll's macabre appearance, many consider it the most joyous part of Crystalhue. Once the Zonzon doll is made, the community chooses a child to be its "sibling" for the night of the celebration. The child then goes from home to home, receiving gifts and treats for the doll. Celebrants offer candy and toys, whisper kind words of hope, or apologize for their wrongdoings over the previous year. Some prepare fine clothes and accessories for the doll, so that by the end of the night, it is dressed more beautifully than anyone.

As midnight approaches, the Zonzon doll is left alone with all its gifts, typically in a wooded area or set adrift at sea. Shelynites believe that the shadows will deliver the doll to Zon-Kuthon in his domain of darkness, where the doll will impart all of the kindness it received to the dark god. While Kuthites do not acknowledge the ritual, none have ever made any attempt to dispute this belief.

## THE TRADITION'S ORIGINS

There are many stories regarding the origins of Zonzon dolls, but on certain details they all agree. In every version, there is a young girl in a small village who idolizes her older brother. In every version, her brother dies suddenly, filling her with grief. Some say that her brother was a kind, gentle soul; when she got sick, he went into the woods to find medicinal herbs, only to be set upon by wolves. Others say that her brother was a cruel bully who only showed kindness to his sister. He

left home to join a gang of bandits, but was killed by a traveling paladin. In other versions, her brother was a brave hero, struck down by an insurmountable evil.

No matter which version you hear, the little girl, so overwhelmed by sadness, cannot eat or sleep and barely leaves her bed. After three days and three nights, her mother calls for the local priestess, a devotee of Shelyn.

The priestess sits with the girl, and after listening for a while, offers her a story. She tells the tale of Shelyn and Zon-Kuthon, in the way it is often told to children. The siblings were once both gods of beauty and art, and they shared joy with their many followers. Then, one day, Shelyn lost her brother to the shadows, and he returned as something dark: the Midnight Lord. But despite his corruption, Shelyn loves him still and hopes that one day he can be saved from the shadows.

In that moment, the little girl did something special; something that can be quite difficult for adults, but is very simple to a child. She felt sympathy for a god. From there, the story winds and twists through various retellings, but always ends in the same place—the first Zonzon doll.

To this day, the "sibling" is generally a child who feels lost, isolated, or in need. It may be someone dealing with loss, who struggles to relate to others, or simply needs a little more joy. While less common, older teenagers may also be chosen to fulfill the role. The ritual has become many things to many people, but to the sibling, it has a special message: No matter what has happened to you, you too will be loved.

## CRYSTALHUE IN ABSALOM

Absalom being the city it is, certain traditions have required some adaption. The city is far too large for a single child to traverse, so each celebrating neighborhood has its own Zonzon doll and sibling. Sometimes two or three children may be chosen in a densely populated area, traveling in a group with their shared doll, though there should never be more than one Zonzon doll in the same place. There is some amount of bettering in the gift-giving. Freshly-made sweets are considered better than store-bought, and the doll's clothes and accessories

Glimly, portrayed by Alysse Dalessandro, poses in her store.  
Photo by LA





by Coturiel

Glimly the Glamour Goblin goes on expeditions around the globe to find the shiniest, sparkliest, most glamour-gobliniest beauty loot to share from her world-famous shop in the Coins district of Absalom. With her trademark rainbow hair, shimmering emerald skin, and larger than life 'tude, Glimly draws visitors from the farthest reaches of Golarion to bask in her effervescent glow, and they always leave as the very best, most glittering version of themselves.

Many societies have a restrictive view of what's considered attractive, based on depictions of the most populous group present. Glimly never stops pushing against those preconceptions to show that good souls of all ancestries can share their beauty with the world. With careful contouring using purple dyes harvested from rare snails on Motaku Isle in the Shackles, orcs can accentuate their shimmering tusks and hard-earned battle scars. Glimly encourages ysoki to remove their hoods and cloaks to show off their meticulously managed whiskers and luxurious fur. Her recommendation is a shampoo with subtle hints of Arundhat-blessed perfume from Jalmaray. Iruxis don't always need to blend in with their surroundings and can instead catch the eye by highlighting the edges of their scales with

luminous dyes cultivated from the unusual plants found only in Glow Water Lake in the River Kingdoms.

Beings of all ancestries deserve to feel pretty, attractive, and seen. Glimly delves into the deepest dungeons, crosses the grimeiest swamps, and scales the coldest peaks to bring back the perfect beauty goods for each and every client.

## THE SHOP

Everything Glimly does is extraordinary, and her shop reflects her ambitions. The storefront spans an entire city block and towers above the surrounding buildings. Words and phrases that start with "G" cover the facade in green and gold, and about half the text reads "Glimly," as that is also the name of her store. While such an ostentatious display of ego would normally be garish, there is a childlike wonder and playfulness in the way the words are arranged and decorated, with graffiti-style drawings of beauty products and cartoon characters of all ancestries that make the presentation charming instead. The remaining words help set the tone by focusing on affirmation, from phrases like "Go You!" and "Growing Together" to Glimlyisms like "glowing," "glovely" ("The 'g' is silent, like 'gnome,'" she insists), and "gabulous."



An assortment of spices laid out in Glimly's workshop.  
Photo by Shantanu Pal

The entrance has a spa-like feel with crystal chandeliers overhead and more crystals draped along the walls. Closer observation reveals the “crystals” are actually bubbles. They feel rubbery to the touch, but apply gentle pressure and they pop, releasing a scent magically tailored for the person who popped them that resembles a soothing smell from their past. The attendants use that smell to direct customers to one of the many shopping environments set up in the building, which are designed to make clients feel comfortable enough to express their inner desires.

Those with a culinary bent may find themselves in a folksy kitchen filled with fresh herbs and vegetables to add to boiling pots of soup. There are rooms that look and feel like a desert, a jungle, a beach, and more. A domed room in perpetual darkness has glow worms on the ceiling to mimic stars in the night sky, while the greenhouse features vines growing on metal outlines that form elaborate living statues when their flowers bloom.

While Glimly prefers a personal touch when searching for new products, she does keep a book of

missions for adventurers. Some are simple quests to obtain known ingredients while others are tasks that require more subtlety than Glimly prefers to employ. Most products come with a tale of how Glimly discovered or formulated them, combining the thrill of travel with the reassurance that the products are natural and ethically sourced.

## SPICY FORMULATIONS

Glimly's latest venture took her to New Thassilon. She had long been curious about Queen Sorshen's time as the runelord of love. After refusing multiple interview requests, Sorshen relented in exchange for the recipe to Glimly's *mood in garnet* eyeshadow. Their discussion revealed that Sorshen considers

food to be the ultimate love language, and Glimly found inspiration in the queen's collection of spices from around the world.

## HELLO ALOE HALO

ITEM 7

ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE OIL POSITIVE

**Price** 60 gp

**Usage** held in 2 hands **Bulk** L

**Activate** ♦ Interact

Aloe is so useful! It can be applied on the skin for sunburns or eaten for health benefits, but mix it with a special slime mold found in the Shudderwood and you have something special! This concoction absorbs sunlight and converts it into positive energy. The salve lasts for 1 hour. For every round you are under direct sunlight, the salve channels positive energy into you. If you are a living creature, the salve restores 1 Hit Point. If you are undead, you take 1 positive damage.

You can touch an undead creature and forgo the healing to deal 1 positive damage to it, but the touch does not transfer enough of the salve to the undead creature for it to be considered as wearing the salve.

## I'LL BE THERE

ITEM 0

CONSUMABLE MAGICAL OLFATORY

**Price** 5 sp

**Usage** held in 1 hand **Bulk** L

**Activate** ♦ Interact

Are you easily distracted? Forget important appointments? The smell of sage improves your mental faculties—it's right there in the name! This perfume lingers for eight hours once applied. Whenever an event is approaching that you want to remember, the perfume's scent becomes noticeably stronger to remind you an important appointment approaches. The reminder gives you enough advance notice to make any necessary preparations and arrive on time. The perfume also reminds you when its effect is about to end so that you can reapply if needed.

## MINTY PEPPERMINTNESS

ITEM 4

CONSUMABLE MAGICAL OIL

**Price** 13 gp

**Usage** held in 2 hands **Bulk** L

**Activate** ♦ Interact

Mint! It's so delicious even your skin wants a taste of it! This oil-based lotion adds a perfect sheen to anyone's epidermis, though it really pops when applied to green skin! It also protects existing hair while promoting hair growth, making it particularly popular with bugbears. The lotion's effects last for 1 hour after applying. You have 5 fire resistance until the first time you take fire damage, after which the lotion's effect ends.

Alternatively, a creature may use one action to consume the lotion, either directly from the bottle or off of someone wearing it, to use

Glimly, portrayed by Alysse Dalessandro.  
Photo by LA



blindness, dream message, safe passage; **2nd** charitable urge, remove fear, spiritual weapon; **1st** bless, disrupting weapons, heal; **Cantrips** (**5th**) detect magic, disrupt undead, divine lance, light, stabilize

**Cleric Domain Spells** DC 29, 1 Focus Point; **5th** moonbeam

**Divine Rituals** DC 29; **2nd** consecrate

**Healing Hands** When Pandora casts *heal*, she rolls d10s instead of d8s.

**Steady Spellcasting** If another creature's reaction would disrupt Pandora's spellcasting action, she attempts a DC 15 flat check. If she succeeds, her action isn't disrupted.

## POSSIBLE REWARDS

Participating in the Eventide Sevenfold could be its own reward. However, the Black Butterfly has promised to grant the party who can protect the sanctity of the event with the twin to *Voidsedge*, her own starknife. This new starknife is called *Gloaming*, and it carries a fraction of her gentle blessing and grateful spirit.



*Gloaming.*  
Art by Nat Roze.

### GLOAMING

ITEM 11

UNIQUE COLD DIVINE FIRE

Price 1,400 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

From a central metal ring, four metal blades emulating butterfly wings extend from this +2 striking starknife like points on a compass rose. A curved crossbar runs through the weapon's open middle allowing a combatant to strike with it in melee. A soft, glittering mist that contains visions of a starfield drifts from the blades, sometimes rising like steam while other times falling like cold fog. Alternatively, *Gloaming* can be used as a thrown weapon over short distances.

On a critical hit, you can choose to deal fire or cold damage instead of piercing or slashing. *Gloaming* deals double damage against demons.

**Activate** ♦♦ command, Interact; **Frequency** once per day; **Requirements**

You are holding *Gloaming* and you haven't activated it to double your critical damage on the same day; **Effect** Choose one of the following spells and Cast the Spell at its base level: *blink*, *blur*, or *penumbral shroud*. If you do not otherwise have access to the spell, you cannot Sustain the Spell.

**Activate** ♦ envision; **Frequency** once per day; **Requirements** You are holding *Gloaming* and you haven't activated it to Cast a Spell on the same day; **Effect** You send a mental command to the starknife, causing stars to shoot across its blades. Your Strikes with *Gloaming* deal double critical damage for the next d6 rounds.

## THE SANCTUM

The map of the House of Seven Faces is on page 17.

### 1. THE COURTYARD

The largest area within the walls of the House of Seven Faces is a butterfly-filled courtyard. At the center is a beautiful fountain shaped like the Dreamer herself and accented by six monoliths and the reflecting pool used in the Eventide Sevenfold ritual. Acolytes welcome travelers with refreshments here.

### 2. THE TOWER

Beyond the courtyard is a 5-floored tower—one of the only formalized places of worship dedicated to Desna. In order to enter, one must be screened in the courtyard by a worshipper of the goddess or her consorts and found trustworthy enough to gain access to the mysteries uncovered by explorers, travelers, and followers of the Starsong.

### 3. THE SANCTUM

This room is an indoor worship space for quiet contemplation and meditation. Those seeking counsel on the most serious matters may speak with a cleric or champion of the order here. These meetings are often held on mats or cushions spread about the room and are always observed by a few fluttering butterflies that make their way in from the garden.

### 4. THE LIBRARY

On the second floor, a library full of scrolls and maps provides a research space where only a select few may study. Prospective visitors must obtain written permission from a high priest or priestess of the House of Seven Faces to enter. This requirement protects potentially dangerous knowledge from falling into the wrong hands. Resources here offer knowledge on travel and exploration, as well as far-flung cultures from the Material Plane and beyond.

### 5. PROVING GROUNDS

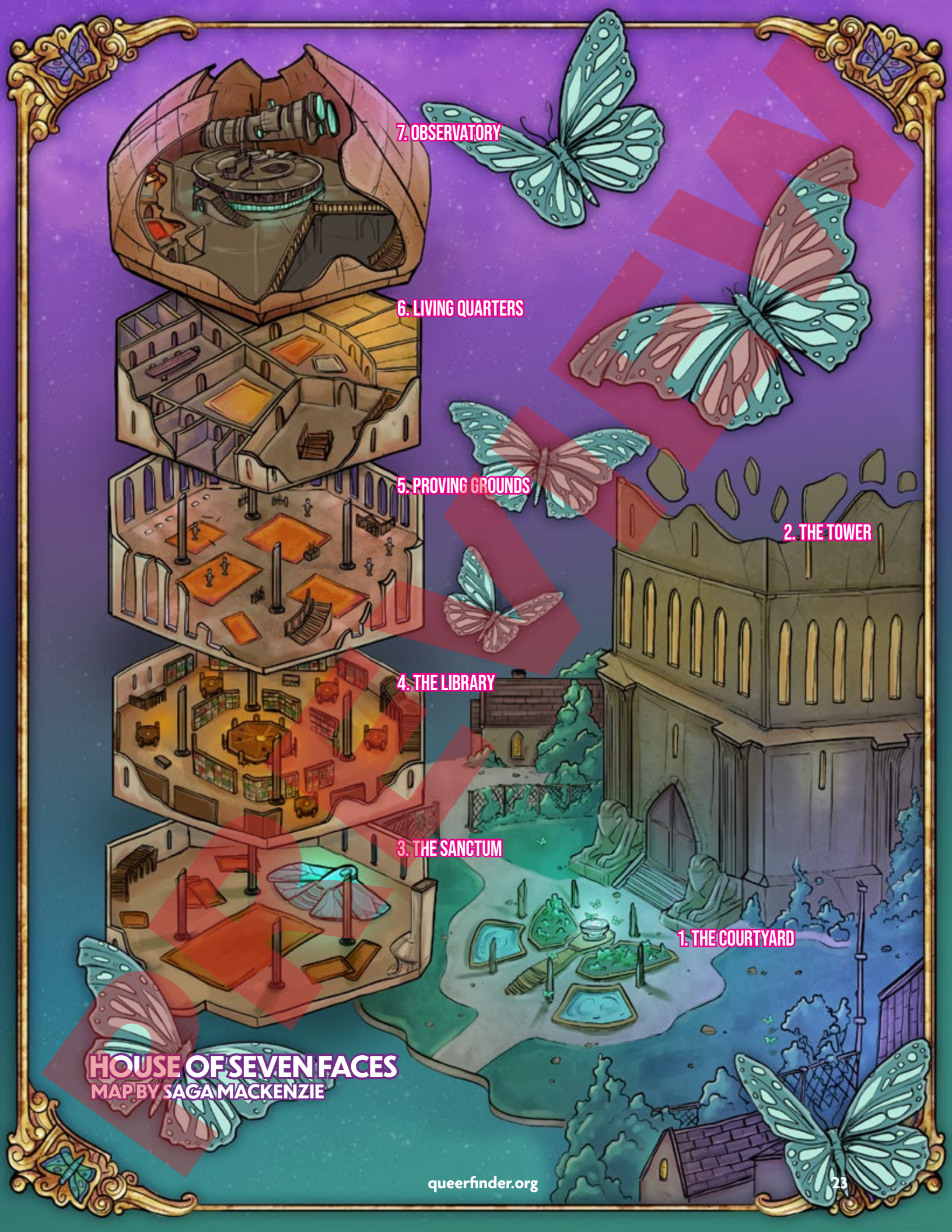
The devout train for physical and arcane combat in this space. There are enchanted target dummies, weapon racks, instruction manuals, and refreshments throughout the large room, and large butterfly illusions fill it with a comforting breeze.

### 6. LIVING QUARTERS

Half of these rooms are reserved for priests and temple caretakers while the rest are always prepared for travelers in need of shelter or adventurers fulfilling the needs of the temple. The House treats the devout of Desna's many lovers amongst the pantheon of gods as though they are her own.

### 7. THE OBSERVATORY

This domed observatory is used for stargazing and charting astral events of import. High Priestess Seleenae and the Ebon Wing also have living quarters on this floor.



7. OBSERVATORY

6. LIVING QUARTERS

5. PROVING GROUNDS

4. THE LIBRARY

3. THE SANCTUM

2. THE TOWER

1. THE COURTYARD

**HOUSE OF SEVEN FACES**  
MAP BY SAGA MACKENZIE

# **An Oracle Reading at the Night Butterflies Market**

by Azra R. B. L. Hawthorne



**Opposite page and corner:**

Butterfly ink art by Storyblocks

**Below:** Phiara greets a visitor to the market and prepares to perform a card reading to determine the shop they should visit. Illustration by Isiah X. Bradley

**Following pages:** Starfield background by Francesco Ungaro from Pexels and Kai Pilger from Pexels. Constellation art by Enrique De Vera at penji.co



Two censers bearing smoking incense hang at either side of a small table, cleansing the air and creating a calming atmosphere with their subtle lavender and chamomile scent. It's serene and peaceful compared to the hustle and bustle of most markets. Sitting across the table shuffling cards is a strongly built feminine figure in the robes of a Desnan priest, the hood drawn over her face. An ornate starknife lies in the center of the table. She beckons for you to come forward and offers the seat across from hers.

"Welcome to the Night Butterflies Market. I am Phiara, caretaker of the Night Butterflies Market. It is no mere coincidence that you've arrived here tonight. No, the Lady of Fate has woven the threads so that we may meet. Come, I shall deal you a card to tell of the year ahead. Shall we see what message the fates have for you?"

She begins shuffling the cards and humming lightly to herself, a pleasing tune full of holiday cheer. "I watch all manner of folk come through. You are clearly an adventurer, yes?" Phiara smiles wistfully. "Ah, to be free to wander where you please and help as you can. Those were the days." She pauses, gazing into the distance as if remembering something painful, then refocuses. "But we are not here to reminisce on the past, but to look to the future!"

She lays each card out in a circle around the starknife. "There are thirteen cards here, each representing a constellation of the Cosmic Caravan." Once the circle is complete, she says, "What I will do is have you shuffle the cards, imbue them with your energy, and then fate shall decide what shop is in store for you today." She smiles again like a cat who has caught a canary and snatches up the cards in one swift circular motion before you can examine them all.

"Now before we go further, I must be clear: in exchange for the reading, you agree to make a pledge at the Ritual of Stardust this year. The card directs you to the shop that will support your needs in the coming year, and once you've obtained its boon or service, we ask that you make an offering to the ideal of that boon."

Phiara selects a card from the deck seemingly at random, a blue-white glow emanating from it as she does so. "For example, this card, The Bridge, represents a joining of hands in cooperation toward a goal, symbolic of diplomats. Now, you yourself may not be a diplomat, but perhaps you are facing negotiations and deals in the year ahead. You'll find many items sure to make you more charismatic at the Bridge's stall." She nods toward a small shop a few stalls away. "Once the deed is done and the item purchased, all we ask is that you reaffirm your commitment to the goal you have, whatever it may be."

The market's caretaker places the deck of cards on the table before you, still holding the card representing the Bridge. "Catch my drift?" She smiles wryly as she lets go of the card and it drifts softly back to the top of the deck, its soft glow fading as it rejoins the other cards. Phiara collects the deck again and passes it over to you.

"Now then, care to shuffle?"

As you take the cards, a crackle of energy sparks through your hand. It grows to an audible low humming sound as you shuffle, and the cards' edges begin to glow blue-white. When you finish shuffling and place the deck upon the table, it's glowing and humming with energy.

Phiara smiles warmly and draws the top card.

# THE COSMIC CARAVAN ORACLE DECK

Conduct a reading by choosing 13 cards from a standard deck and assigning them to each archetype here, or by rolling a d20 (rerolling any numbers above 13). Based on the card drawn, Phiara sends the character to the corresponding shop.



## THE THRUSH

When she draws this card, Phiara sounds solemn. "Yes, this is certainly the time of year for seeking new horizons. Drosil will be your guide; their shop sells wares of all kinds to help you on your new journey, starting a fresh path after a cold wintry night. They will not lead you astray."

### THE SHOP

The Thrush symbolizes new beginnings and seeking the horizon. It's often drawn by those who are in times of change or contemplating a journey.

**Proprietor** Drosil (they/them), CG nonbinary liminal fetchling ranger

**Sample Items** ablative armor plating, clockwork goggles, *everyned pack*, *gloves of storing*, traveler's chair

### THE PROPRIETOR

The shopkeeper of the Thrush is a young fetchling named Drosil, a recent addition to the Night Butterflies Market. Yearning for wonder and excitement, Drosil left their hometown on the Shadow Plane in search of new horizons and soon found Phiara and company. Now they assist others in exploring their own new horizons and offer equipment and advice for such journeys.



## THE LANTERN BEARER

Phiara stares long and hard at the card. "I once believed myself to be a guide, but it was I who needed guidance. Inkua is a kind and dear friend, and she means well with whatever joke she may tell, of that I am certain. A solemn guide who understands the need of levity."

### THE SHOP

The Lantern Bearer symbolizes guidance, divine or otherwise. Those who draw this card may be guides themselves, or in need of some form of guidance in their lives.

**Proprietor** Inkua (she/her), CG trans mistbreath azarketi magus

**Sample Items** *bottled sunlight*, *candlecap*, *cat's eye elixir*, *crafter's eyepiece*, *eye of enlightenment*, *tindertwig*, *tracker's goggles*

### THE PROPRIETOR

Inkua, the shopkeeper of the Lantern Bearer, ensures all guides see their charges to safety and in turn have the guidance they need to do so. She has a debonair personality despite her respected position and while she takes her work seriously, she often teases Phiara to lighten the oracle's mood.



## THE PARTNERS

Phiara smiles broadly. "Someone after my own heart! Come, friend, you will find all you need here. Garril is a wonderful human and they are sure to reinforce in you the need for your own loyalty to your friends and companions. Not much of a romantic though."

### THE SHOP

The Partners symbolize loyalty and are represented by the Newlyweds constellation. Those who draw this card may be staunchly loyal companions or those seeking a measure of loyalty and companionship, platonic or otherwise.

**Proprietor** Garril (they/them), NG nonbinary winter-touched human sorcerer

**Sample Items** *everburning torch*, *lady's knife*, *lover's gloves*, paired rune

### THE PROPRIETOR

Garril is a stern individual and not at all interested in romance. They are far from a cold person, though—in fact, quite the opposite! Despite their gruff exterior they are quite devoted to their fellows and do at times seek companionship. Their shop reflects this with a myriad of items to express devotion, be it to a cause, person, deity, or otherwise.





## THE BRIDGE

Phiara's eyes sparkle when this card reappears. "Looks like this card needed to be seen! You are one who connects people. To bring opposing sides together in peace is a difficult task indeed. May this message serve you well in times of need."

### THE SHOP

The Bridge of the Cosmic Caravan signifies diplomacy. This card is drawn by those who are ambassadors themselves or negotiating their adventures to come.

**Proprietor** Ruun (he/him), NG cis catfolk investigator

**Sample Items** *diplomat's charcuterie, empath's cordial, games, healing potion, musical instruments, potion of shared memories*

### THE PROPRIETOR

Ruun is softspoken yet confident, able to bring bitter enemies to agreement with a few quiet words and a smile. The amurrin's gentleness and genuine concern for others make him a highly respected mediator and adviser, but anyone who mistakes his mild demeanor for weakness quickly learns Ruun is a fierce advocate for what he believes is right.



## THE DANCER

Phiara looks at the card and chuckles. "Ah, one who wanders with unabashed joy. I admire that level of optimism. Our merry bard will be happy to help you bring joy to others."

### THE SHOP

The Dancer (also known as the Daughter) represents joy, optimism, and wanderlust. This card points to a whimsical shop.

**Proprietor** Talaro (he/him), CG cis celestial envoy kitsune bard

**Sample Items** *boots of bounding, dweomerweave robe, musical instruments, waffle iron*

### THE PROPRIETOR

Talaro is joyous and exuberant. His genuine love for others and joy at their accomplishments is boundless. Talaro and Phiara have been lovers for a long time; they enjoy a healthy relationship and act to ground each other.



## THE RIDER

Phiara smiles warmly. "Ah, the Rider, someone after my own heart. My partner will get you squared away. When all else fails, persistence can win out. Mind you, not every goal is meant to be achieved, no matter how tenacious you are."

### THE SHOP

The Rider signifies steadfastness. This card depicts a steady, measured hand. Those who draw it are trustworthy and reliable, or seek those qualities in themselves or others.

**Proprietor** Zephyr (he/she/they), CG bigender draxie sprite barbarian

**Sample items** *brooch of shielding, psychopomp mask, stalwart's ring*

### THE PROPRIETOR

Zephyr is a constant companion of Phiara when not attending to duties at the Night Butterflies Market. Yet she is odd for a fey. He doesn't always act the part of a capricious trickster; in fact they are often serious and level-headed, which can surprise people who just met him.



## THE ELDER

Phiara looks at you kindly. "Wisdom is gained over time, my friend, not bought and sold in a simple shop of wares. Essaru is the right person to talk to, for she has much wisdom to give out."

### THE SHOP

The Elder, also known as the Patriarch of the Cosmic Caravan, represents wisdom and caretaking. For those who need wisdom, the Elder card has guidance.

**Proprietor** Essaru (she/her), CN cis unseen lizardfolk cleric

**Sample Items** *holy steam ball, magnifying glass of elucidation, puzzle box, spyglass eye, traveler's chair*

### THE PROPRIETOR

Essaru stands out among this group. No one questions her devotion to Desna, but she parleys with other deities, including Gozreh, Cayden Cailean, and Hanspur. She does not serve any one deity alone. She is the oldest among this group and has served the Night Butterflies Market since before Phiara was elected its warden some years ago.



## AN INTERVIEW WITH THE ADMIRAL

**ADMIRAL COLDWATER** WAS GRACIOUS ENOUGH TO GRANT ME AN interview as well, which has been edited for length and clarity, as she never once seemed to break character. She's a tall, striking figure in a red-and-gold captain's coat and a matching open-front skirt. A particularly small grindylo w perches on a stool next to her and is never far from the Admiral's elbow as she shows me around the barge.

**ILOYANAVICH:** Admiral Coldwater, thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to do this interview with me this evening.

**COLDWATER:** Yarr, the pleasure is mine. S'not every day a pretty journalist like yourself comes lookin' to interview me about my operation here.

**ILOYANAVICH:** Thank you, Admiral. So, where did the idea for the *Parrty Barrge* come from?

**COLDWATER:** Arr, that be a tale! I ran away from home to seek adventure, you see—Andolettan doctrine, bless my sister's heart but that sort of lawful life just wasn't for me—and found m'self aboard a merchant ship. I got a job as a deckhand, and on our first journey out, we were attacked by pirates. We were given a choice: join the crew or be marooned on an island to be rescued later.

That's where I stumbled into one o' the femmes who would become me partner in this endeavor, Jayna. They're a great alchemist and an even better brew mxtress. They've pioneered every one of our house special grogs on this ship.

Anywinds, Jayna an' I became fast friends and eventually worked our way up to bein' the captain and first mate of our own ship, the *Jolly Violet*. We had an all-femme crew at this point as well, just sorta happened that way. We were fairly rich but the crew and I finally decided we wanted something different out of life. Jayna was looking for a partner with an idea fer a themed bar, and I had just come in from reading a story about Besmara and one o' her raids on Hell, where she and her crew posed as wandering high seas entertainment. That's when I realized that what I wanted was an all feminine-crewed pirate ship themed bar.

So, we renamed the *Jolly Violet* the *Parrty Barrge* and went legit. Some o' our crew weren't too happy about this change, but as it turns out, folks who like the idea of workin' as a party pirate were good and plenty here in this port, and so replacing them was as easy as sailing a calm sea. So, I turned my experience running a pirate ship into running a pirate "theater" bar an' got myself some fancy new clothes. The rest, as they say, is history.

**ILOYANAVICH:** Fascinating! Would you consider yourself a follower of Besmara?

**COLDWATER:** Arr, she is more of a role model. A pirate's pirate. She's the one who set out the ground rules that would become the Pirate Code, which we followed on the high seas. We actually run on a similar Code here. We share the profits from each night, and are always ready for a mock battle. Quarrels aren't settled with violence now, the guards tend to frown upon that. But of course we generally talk those quarrels out and

settle it without coming to blows. Everybody has an equal vote as well, and if anybody is injured they or their next of kin are compensated.

**ILOYANAVICH:** Amazing. Who knew pirates could have such complex codes of conduct. I'm dying to know, where did you meet your grindylo w companion?

**COLDWATER:** (smiling as she gently pats the grindylo w's shoulder) Her name is Sea Legs Roberta. She's not just a companion, but also one of me best friends. I saved her when her parents abandoned her fer being a wee sickly lil pup, and in return she's saved my ass more times than I can count in our many adventures together.

(Roberta nods enthusiastically and says something to Coldwater in her own language, which causes Coldwater to laugh. She doesn't share what was said between the two of them.)

**ILOYANAVICH:** Wow, a strong arm and a heart of gold! Do you have any closing comments for us, Admiral Coldwater?

**COLDWATER:** Arr, I do indeed. Come on down to the *Parrty Barrge* an' if ye be the adventuring sort, I got an adventure fer ya. We're always looking for rare ingredients for our house special grog, or even an extra hand fer Mutiny Night.

Admiral Annessa Coldwater  
and Sea Legs Roberta  
art by Daniel Dacena &  
Joey Cordero





# DRAGOMIRA ILOYANAVICH

FIELD REPORTER

Dragomira Iloyanavich, illustration by Enrique De Vera at penji.co

## DRAGOMIRA ILOYANAVICH

## CREATURE 7

UNIQUE CG MEDIUM FETCHLING HUMANOID

Fetchling reporter (she/her)

**Perception** +14

**Languages** Common, Skald, Varisian

**Skills** Acrobatics +18, Deception +13, Diplomacy +15, Scribing Lore +16, Society +16, Stealth +16

**Str** +3, **Dex** +7, **Con** +4, **Int** +5, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +4

**Items** armored coat, crossbow (20 bolts), holy water, many books (fiction and nonfiction), notebook, +1 rapier

**AC** 25; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +18, **Will** +12

**HP** 112

**Inured to Confusion** Dragomira spends so much time in taverns that her ability to compensate for mental confusion is sky high. Dragomira has a +3 status bonus to saving throws against being confused.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ rapier +18 (deadly 1d8, disarm, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+10 piercing

**Ranged** ♦ crossbow +18 (range increment 120 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 2d6+9 piercing

**Discerning Eye** ♦ (concentrate) Dragomira designates a creature as the target of her discerning eye, reading their actions like an open book to predict what they might do next. She must be able to see the creature. Dragomira gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC when attacked by the designated creature.

Dragomira can have only one creature designated as the target of her discerning eye at a time. If she uses Discerning Eye against a creature when she already has a creature designated, the prior creature loses the designation and the new target gains the designation. This designation lasts for 1 minute.

Fancy a drink? Dragomira Iloyanavich has you covered. Hailing from Ustalav where alcohol is a prescription for day-to-day life, this intrepid freelancer loves exploring inns and taverns! And we love her even if she has a habit of disappearing for months at a time before resurfacing with incredible coverage of a hidden gem in some dark alley of Avistan! This erratic behavior totally has no impact on our insurance premiums.

Dragomira has a bookish nature that belies her swashbuckling swagger. A dry description of a tradesman's craft excites her just as much as a thrilling romance or adventure. She has a habit of scribbling cryptic notes on scraps of paper and using them as bookmarks, revisiting the stories she read as she writes her own. Those who do her a favor, such as giving her a lead on a new tavern to visit, may find themselves in possession of such a bookmark/note, which usually presents a mystery she uncovered that she didn't have time to pursue herself. Given that good drinks and stories fascinate Dragomira far more than gold or magical artifacts, adventurers may find such leads more fruitful than they seem at first glance.

The best inns and taverns—in Dragomira's opinion—are the ones with a gimmick. The *Parrty Barrge* is an excellent example with its pirate theme and unique twists like water cannons and a diving board plank. Other favorites include Tip of the Iceberg, an inn carved into an iceberg moored offshore of Irrisen, and Clowned Nine, a traveling tavern that bills itself as the World's Greatest Circus.

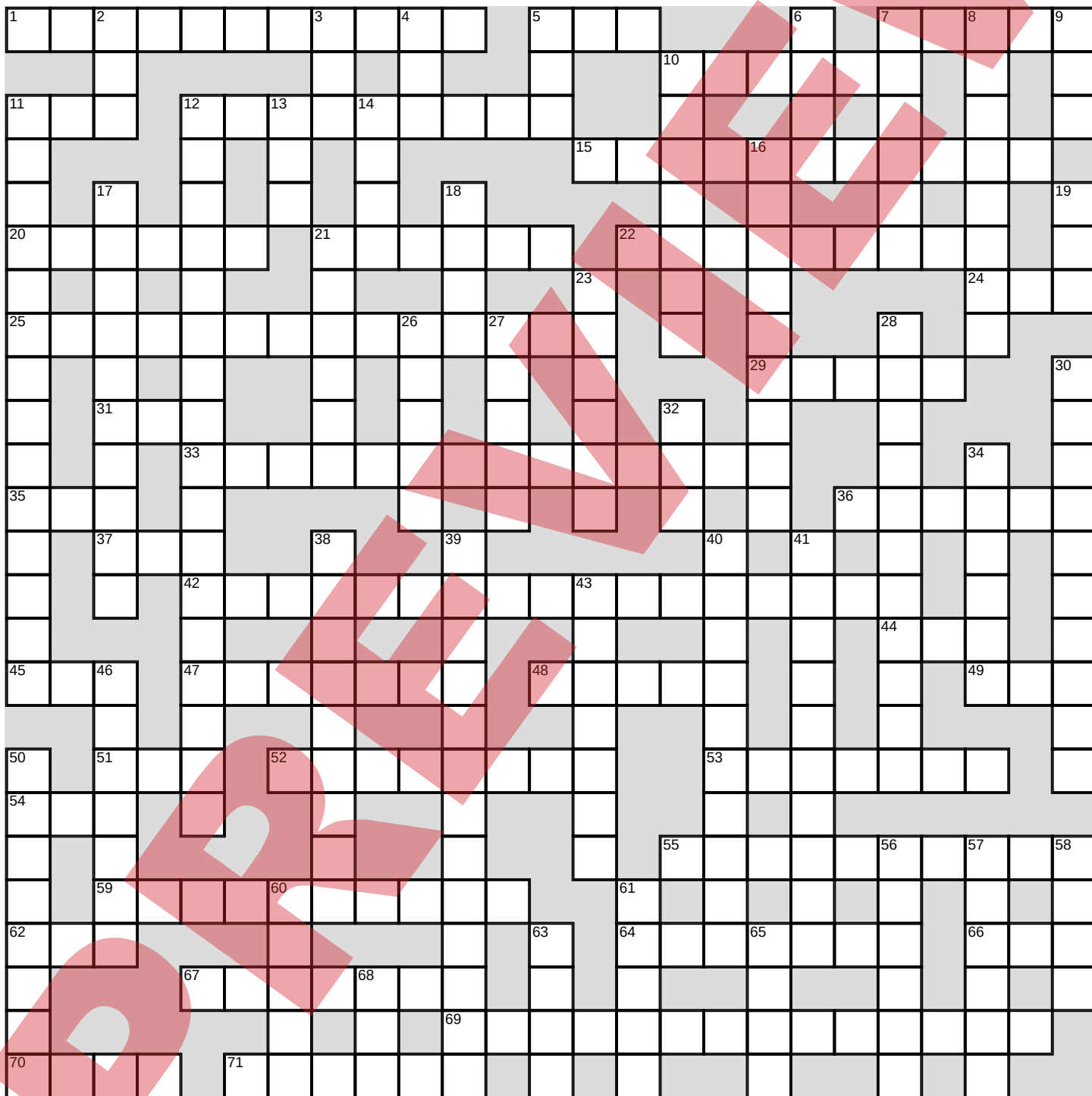
Those who earn Dragomira's trust may gain entry to various fetchling communities that would typically be wary of strangers. She feels blessed for her upbringing among the tight-knit groups in Ustalav who balanced protecting their members with encouraging them to travel and learn. She brings that gift to other communities, connecting those in need with those who can help and bringing books about the broader world to those who cannot wander themselves.

*Dragomira Iloyanavich is the creation of Irene Bloodrose, who developed the character and the articles credited to her.*

# PUZZLE CORNER

## CITY AT THE CENTER OF THE WORLD

a crossword by Vanessa Hoskins



SOLUTION ON PAGE 54