

The Snakesford Gazette: Special Morning Edition

Curse Claims Another Victim!

MURDER can strike even at the very heart of affluence in Snakesford, as the wealthy denizens of Birch Row discovered in the early hours of yesterday morning. Responding to the ghastly cries of alarm raised by the Carpenter estate, nearby officers of the Constabulary stumbled upon a grisly sight: the lifeless body of LORD CARPENTER himself! Although Constables Porter and Hrungasdottir mean-spiritedly declined to make a statement to the press before rudely ejecting our reporter from the scene, an emotionally overwrought Mrs Whittle, the estate's cook and housekeeper, reported that the deceased had been discovered locked into his own study, and appeared to have been struck upon the head by some mysterious assailant!

The late Lord Carpenter had, of course, recently come into possession of the notorious JET ABACUS, a fell and ill-fated object which has brought nothing but misery and doom to all its previous owners. Today this newspaper has the privilege of reporting an EXCLUSIVE TWIST which will shake you, dear readers, to the core! Our sources tell us that on the very day that the murder was discovered the abacus was reported STOLEN from its display case in the Carpenter manor!

The current whereabouts of this foul and dangerous object, which is clearly responsible for ending the life of a noble and upstanding citizen of Snakesford, are unknown.

In related news, rumours abound that some matter concerning Lord Carpenter's will has caused an upset within the family. Fiona Smythe, daughter to the deceased, and now Lady Carpenter, firmly declined to speak with our representative. The executor of the estate, Mr Skruthsson of Skruthsson, Skruthsson & Fletcher, paled and walked briskly away when asked to comment—proof positive that some unsavoury scandal is being concealed!

Guild of Mages Claims Abacus “Harmless”

Speaking before the council earlier this morning, Master Alfin Rosseler of the Guild of Mages claimed that “no evidence exists” that the abacus poses a threat to the public—astonishingly, Master Rosseler went so far as to assert that it possesses no magical properties at all. This newspaper is shocked, dear readers, that an organisation bound by its charter to protect the citizens of this city from the dangers posed by unregulated magic can be so cavalier in its fulfilment of its duties.

Station Opening In Peril?

Uthar Thargsson, speaking for Carpenter & Thargsson, assured us that Lord Carpenter's untimely and tragic demise would not affect the grand opening of Snakesford Station in a month's time. Employees of the company appear to be working around the clock to ensure that the construction is completed on schedule—but will they succeed?

The ambitious project to connect the drow subway system to the yuan-ti rail network has been plagued by delays and allegations of sabotage from its inception—and a source within the company revealed to us that on the very night of Lord Carpenter's death, another highly-placed engineer had mysteriously VANISHED! When pressed for comment concerning this disturbing incident, officers of the Constabulary described it as “unrelated”.

The mere possibility that the grand opening—which has such illustrious personages on its guest list as His Serpentine Majesty Zzizzizth the First and Her Imperial Highness Miressa of House Brizzhulian—might have to be postponed must be a nightmare for the many city councillors and diplomats who have staked their reputations on its success!

In a separate press conference, the new Lady Carpenter extended her heartfelt condolences to her late father's colleagues, and offered the assistance of her husband's own engineering firm, Smythe, Smythe & Cooper, to the foundering project. Mr Thargsson's response is as yet unknown.