



CRITTERS, CRYPTIDS, & CURSES

ANTHROCON 2026

CON BOOK



# ZENITHS

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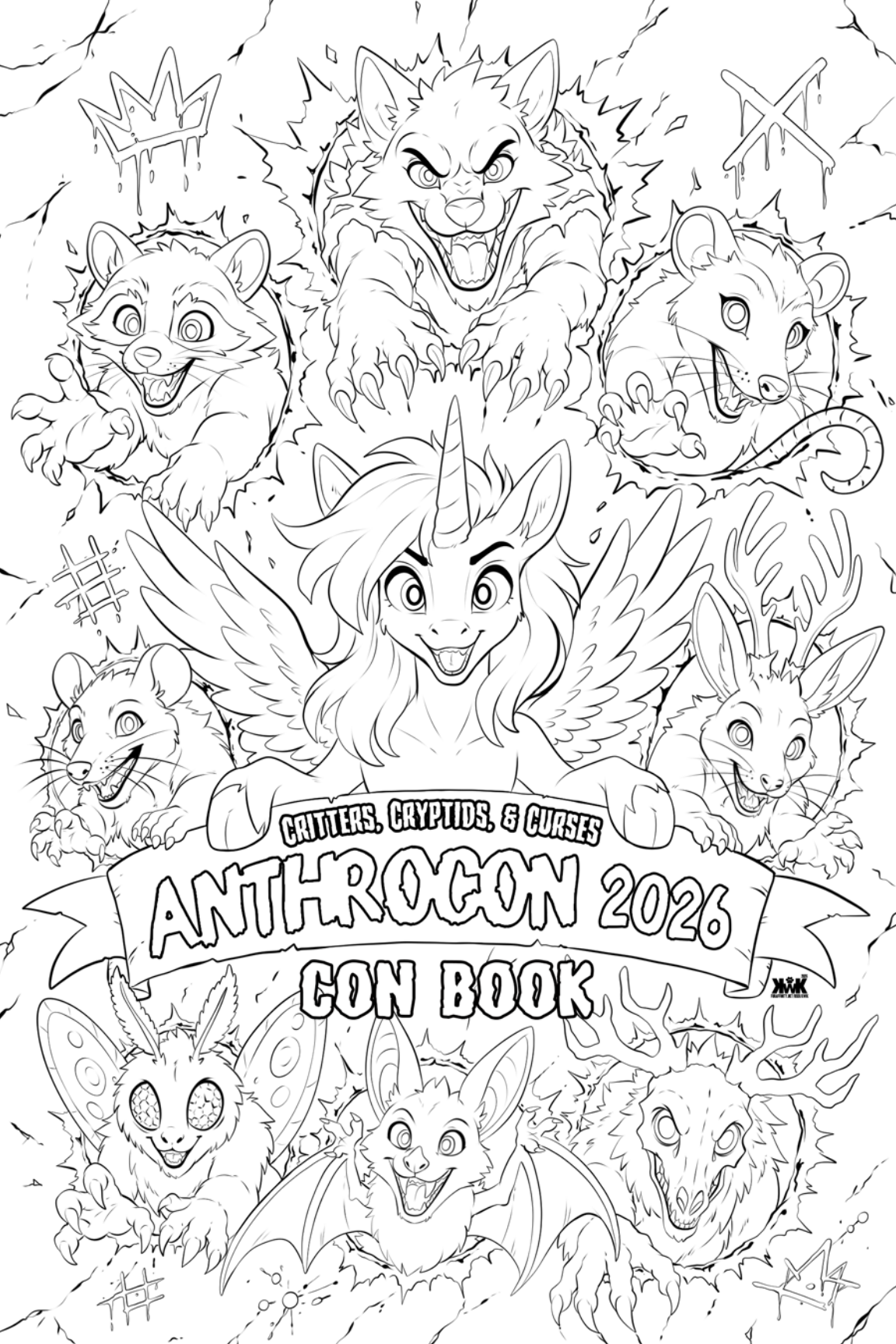
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CRITTERS, CRYPTIDS, & CURSES

ANTHROCON 2026

CON BOOK

MK



# "ALS CAN KISS MY FUZZY BUTT..." BE AN ALS HERO!!!



Scan to donate!

Tony "Dogbomb" Barrett's courageous battle with ALS in 2018 brought a fandom together like never before. The support from Furies near and far showed the true meaning of love and generosity. Though Tony eventually passed away on April 5th, 2019, he is NOT forgotten!! That's why WE NEED YOU, FUZZY BUTTS...



**TEAM TONY** will be gearing up again this year to walk in his memory, while supporting those currently suffering from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, a disease of the nervous system that causes loss of muscle control. It is also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, named after the baseball player who was diagnosed in 1939.

Please join us for **United Against ALS 2026** on **Saturday, November 7th** at **PARK PLACE** in Irvine (near John Wayne Airport). It will be a fun-filled morning packed with activities for all ages, highlighting with the walk and a catered lunch for attendees. A fursuit changing tent will be provided.

We're proud to announce **TEAM TONY** raised over \$7,511.00 last year, and ranked in the **TOP 3** of all teams involved in the walk. Since 2019, **TEAM TONY OC** has raised over \$69,500.00 for ALS Orange County. **We're not done yet...PLEASE JOIN US!**



For More Information,  
Please Contact:

- **ALS UNITED Orange County**  
[www.alsuoc.org](http://www.alsuoc.org)
- **Denise Creek**  
[dgreek@alsuoc.org](mailto:dgreek@alsuoc.org), 714-285-1088
- **Joe G. Bear**  
[@joebear67.bsky.social](https://www.bsky.social/@joebear67)
- **Terine Gray**  
[terineg@gmail.com](mailto:terineg@gmail.com)





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## Cover & Spot Illustrations

**Little Critters & Things** by Aardwolf Arts  
Seen on pages: 10, 11, 19, 26, 27, 28 & more!

**Spot Art with Orange Dog** by x)ACKALOPEDx  
Seen on pages 30 & 51

**Cover Art** by KwiK

**Himbo Mothman** by Moth Monarch  
Seen on pages 36 & 105

**Justin's Sticker** by Hexedcoin  
Seen on page 104

HUNDREDS & HUNDREDS OF READY-TO-WEAR BADGES!

# CERTIFIED



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VISIT MARY MOUSE'S CERTIFIED FURRY TAGS - TABLE C01

INFURNITY 20  
THE 餘獸 重生 26  
LAST OF FURS



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台中福容大飯店麗寶樂園 | 2026.10.30-11.01





## *From the desk of Sue Deer*

Welcome fuzzy friends to the pages of your 2026 edition of the Anthrocon Con Book!

We are *enthralled* (heheh, see what I did there...) to present you with a book that's about **DOUBLE** the page count of the 2025 book! So many pages we had to change our binding method! It's also a smidge bigger on dimensions, that's why it feels a little heavier in your hands.

We received an overwhelming response to this year's theme of Critters, Cryptids, & Curses, particularly in how much writing was submitted. Last year, we didn't get much. This year? Woo! Bunches of art! We also got a chunk of coloring pages and Justin, our graphic designer and layout editor for this book, put together an extra sticker/activity page or two as well! Justin came in clutch in mid-May and has done a heck of a job with the concept we had in mind for this issue!

We also got a big response from people wanting to advertise! Please, do visit them in the Dealers Room, say hello, make a purchase if there's something you like, and thank them for helping to support the printing of this book. Don't miss our Staff Artists ad page. They're the ones responsible for all the cool merch and swag, maps, and main stage scenery, our ad swaps with other cons, and other public-facing things, like the Friends of Anthrocon, street flags, and DLCC banner! All ads were collected, checked, and organized by Fiddle. Don't know what I'd do without Fiddle. I hate paperwork. >>

Regretfully, we couldn't fit everything into the book this year. They won't let me print a brick-sized book... yet. So, if your piece(s) didn't make it in this year, please try us again next year. We do what we can to print as much as we can.

WITH MUCH LOVE FOR YOU AND THE JOB  
WE GET TO DO, AND GRATITUDE TO MY  
STAFF WHO GETS IT ALL DONE! WE ARE:

Sue Deer *Head of Art & Branding*

Fiddle Lemur *Ad Coordinator*

Justin *Graphic Designer & Layout Editor*

### STAFF ARTISTS

Bramble Bean  
Cybertech Fox  
KwiK  
Chihuahua  
Moth Monarch

FishyBoner  
Rosebud Rat  
Serge  
Siz





We're all here to have fun and enjoy the company of likeminded individuals, some of whom may never have met in-person, or at least see each other in real life very infrequently.

Furries are a diverse selection of individuals from all walks of life with various aspects of origin, nationality, creed, identity, neurology, interest, and belief. What an individual knows or holds dear and valuable may or may not precisely match with yours.

Some point at a familiar franchise, art style, species, or interest and identify or bond with it, while others take to various artistic mediums to express and create their own vision. This variety is what makes our fandom that much more special and different than others.

That said, this is also a place of community, so we ask that all in attendance conduct themselves in

a respectful manner, and not go out of their way to maliciously wreck somebody's day.

This is some people's hard-earned *Paid Time Off*, or maybe even their one annual vacation from the mundane world. Please don't ruin that for them. Please don't be the problem. Please be considerate of others.

### **DON'T BE "THAT GUY."**

Lastly, Staff are unpaid volunteers who are trying their best to put on an event they think a large crowd of likeminded individuals will enjoy. This fandom is their home as much as it is yours. Please treat them with respect and they will strive to return that in kind.

### **BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY... BE SAFE AND HAVE FUN!**





# Standards of Conduct

---

This is the Standards of Conduct for Anthrocon, Inc. and all events sponsored by Anthrocon, Inc.; these entities are referred to as ‘Anthrocon’ henceforth.

The primary purpose of Anthrocon is for our attendees to have fun. To ensure that the greatest number of people do so, we have established these Standards of Conduct. These rules are to ensure that the behavior of any one small group does not disturb the membership as a whole, and does not detract from the comfortable atmosphere of the convention. Anthrocon welcomes all parties with an interest in anthropomorphic animals; however, the convention’s management reserves the right to deny or revoke the membership of any individual at any time for any reason.

Anthrocon also reserves the right to amend these rules at any time

without prior or posted notice and reserves the sole right of interpretation. These rules must be followed by attendees. In any dispute, the general rule above will apply. If you have any questions, please contact our staff for assistance.


Anyone who accepts a membership agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Anthrocon from any claim for personal injuries or other damages or equity arising out of any individual’s activities at Anthrocon, even if such injury or damage is caused by negligence by or on the part of Anthrocon.

As a condition of membership, all Anthrocon attendees are required to abide by these standards of conduct for the entire duration of their stay, even prior to Opening Ceremonies or after Closing Ceremonies.



## THE GOLDEN RULE

The following rule supersedes all others listed below and may be invoked at any time:



**ANY ACTION OR BEHAVIOR THAT CAUSES SIGNIFICANT INTERFERENCE WITH CONVENTION OPERATIONS, EXCESSIVE DISCOMFORT TO OTHER ATTENDEES, OR ADVERSELY AFFECTS ANTHROCON'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ITS GUESTS, ITS VENUES, OR THE PUBLIC IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN AND MAY RESULT IN PERMANENT SUSPENSION OF MEMBERSHIP.**

## GENERAL RATING OF THE CONVENTION

All convention space is considered to be "PG" at all times, with the exception of events or exhibits that are specifically noted to be inappropriate for minors and with access only for adults.

Public displays of affection should be kept to those appropriate for polite company. Please express your devotion to your significant other either in appropriate ways, or in private.

## CLOTHING GUIDELINES

Any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as masks, required by venues or other Anthrocon policies must be worn.

Shirts, pants/shorts/skirts, and footwear must be worn when in areas of hotels or the convention center that are accessible to non-attendees, such as lobbies, restaurants, and concourses, except

for hotel swimming pools. Full-body fursuits qualify as shirts, pants, and footwear provided that the costume is not unacceptably suggestive. Fursuiters must respect the policies of hotels and other venues regarding areas where costumes are not allowed, which may include restaurants and hotel swimming pools.

When in public areas, attendees may not wear clothing or accessories which are overly revealing, inappropriate to the atmosphere of the convention, or likely to draw reasonable complaint or offense. This includes clothing or accessories that are fetish-related or restrict mobility, such as a leash attached to an otherwise acceptable collar.

Other than fursuits for which the inclusion of a uniform as a costume accessory is obvious, police uniforms, tactical gear or other outfits which may be easily mistaken for such are only to be worn by law enforcement on active duty.

In certain circumstances, clothing or accessories that might otherwise be considered inappropriate may be included as part of a costume if specific approval is granted by Anthrocon's Safety Team.

## PUBLIC DECORUM

No items of any kind may be thrown, flown, or dropped from hotel or Convention Center balconies or patios.

No water pistols, silly string, or any thrown, flown, or projectile item may be used in any area of hotels or the Convention Center.

Lighter-than-air balloons may not be brought into the Convention Center.

For safety, only handheld glowsticks are permitted in the dances. Glowsticks on strings or on polearms must be cleared with Safety staff before being used. The decision of the Safety staff on any particular item will be final.

Please do not sleep in convention space or hotel lobbies; return to your hotel room or home.

In order to minimize the spread of contagion (commonly known as “con crud”), anyone showing any sign of illness, regardless of cause, must wear a CDC-approved mask or will otherwise be asked to leave convention space. Anthrocon cannot provide masks for this purpose.

Anthrocon attendees must abide by instructions given by Anthrocon Safety staff. Failure to do so will result in loss of membership privileges. Any disputes or concerns may be addressed onsite at Convention Operations.

Anthrocon convention space is open only to members, and all attendees should wear their membership badges at all times. A badge is valid only for the person to whom it was

issued; badges may not be shared under any circumstances.

Knowingly transporting, hosting, or otherwise enabling an individual that is unwelcome at Anthrocon to attend or enter convention space will result in permanent revocation of Anthrocon membership privileges.

## **HARASSMENT**

Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at the convention.

**IF YOU HAVE BEEN THE TARGET OF HARASSMENT, WE URGE YOU TO REPORT THE INCIDENT IMMEDIATELY TO A MEMBER OF SAFETY OR TO CONVENTION OPERATIONS.**

The sooner an issue is reported to us, the more appropriately we can address it.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Physical assault, battery, stalking, or unwelcome physical attentions.
- (b) Conduct, dress, or speech that targets, threatens, intimidates, or is otherwise intended to cause distress to other attendees, or members of protected classes (such as those based on race, age, religion, national origin, disability, gender, or sexual identity).

If people tell you “no” or ask you to leave them alone, your business with them is done. If you continue to attempt contact with them, you may

be removed from the premises and have membership privileges permanently revoked. Remember: “A costume does not imply consent.”

Anyone who has been convicted of a crime of violence against another person for which they are required to register with any state or local law enforcement agency may be denied membership to the convention at the sole discretion of Anthrocon, Inc.

### **ATTENDANCE BY MINORS**

Anyone who is under the age of 18 years at any time during the convention must present a signed and notarized parental permission form (or consent assignment form) unless accompanied by a parent or able to produce evidence of legal emancipation. There are no exceptions.

Minors are not permitted under any circumstances to enter areas designated for mature audiences.

Anyone providing false documentation of identity or age will be denied membership and reported to the police.

### **SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY**

Pets are not permitted in convention space. Service dogs (as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act or ADA, Title II) are permitted in convention space provided that they are under appropriate control. Emotional Support Animals and Therapy Animals are NOT considered service dogs by the ADA, and are not permitted in convention space.

[ADA.GOV/TOPICS/SERVICE-ANIMALS/](http://ADA.GOV/TOPICS/SERVICE-ANIMALS/)

## **HOTEL MATTERS**

Anthrocon partner hotels will have their own rules, policies, and terms and conditions customers of those hotels will be expected to abide by. These rules, policies, and terms and conditions may be more stringent than those set forth here. Where the rules, policies, or terms and conditions of a partner hotel differ from or are more stringent than those set forth herein, those policies control all conduct in that space. Attendees are expected to abide by such policies as if they are set forth herein at length. If attendees have issues or concerns with such policies, they should raise them with Anthrocon, Inc. so Anthrocon may address such concerns with our partner hotels as necessary.

### **HOTEL PARTY POLICY**

Gatherings in hotel rooms must not make noise that can be heard in neighboring rooms during nighttime hours. Hotel doors must be kept shut during such gatherings and guests are not permitted to congregate in the hotel corridors.

Loud parties will be given a single warning to remain quiet. No second warnings will be given before action is taken by the hotel to remove the offending individuals.

Hotel guests who host any gathering are responsible for cleaning up afterward. Please plan to bag excessive amounts of trash so that housekeeping is not overburdened.

## **OTHER HOTEL MATTERS**

Any act of vandalism, deliberate or excessive damage to hotel property, or interference with any hotel or Convention Center workers in the performance of their duties will result in permanent revocation of Anthrocon membership, criminal prosecution, fines, or any combination thereof.

Please do not affix any stickers, posters, or other objects to the walls or doors in any hotel or Convention Center, to the elevators, to Anthrocon signage, or to hotel room doors. Any person found in violation of this rule will have their membership permanently revoked and will be barred from the premises.

The person in whose name a room is rented is solely responsible for the conduct of all individuals in the room as well as for the condition of the room. Excessive trash, soiling or other damage to hotel property, or any circumstance that may present a hazard to hotel housekeeping staff may result in permanent loss of Anthrocon membership privileges.

Hotel Housekeeping staff are required by corporate policy to inspect every room once per day, even if the room is not to be serviced. In some of our partner hotels, Housekeepers will delay their rounds for our benefit, and will initially bypass rooms with “do not disturb” signs on the doors. At the end of their rounds they must return to those rooms and will

knock on the door. Attendees must allow housekeeping staff access to the room to inspect it at that time, even if the “do not disturb” sign is displayed.

Overly large requests for room amenities such as towels and pillows will not be honored. Kindly bring such extra items from home if you anticipate the need.

## **SALES OF GOODS AND SERVICES**

The offering for sale of any goods or services at the convention may only occur in appropriate and authorized areas of convention space, only at authorized times, and only by registered, authorized vendors of the area in question. In all cases sales will be governed by the applicable rules of each area, such as the Dealer Rules & Information Packet for the Dealers Room. Unauthorized sales of any goods or services may result in revocation of membership.

## **SMOKING, ALCOHOL, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Smoking is not permitted in any area inside the Westin or the Convention Center. This includes electronic cigarettes, at the request of venue management. Smokers are asked to use designated smoking areas, to properly dispose of cigarette butts, and to comply with any other venue rules.

Anthrocon asks that any bottled alcoholic beverages be brought promptly to hotel rooms for storage or responsible consumption.

No alcoholic beverages may be brought into nor consumed in convention space unless said beverage has been approved by Convention Center management as part of a programming event.

Any possession or use of alcoholic beverages in the convention center without the explicit permission of the staff of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center is grounds for the immediate revocation of membership without further warning. If membership is revoked for such reason, no refund will be considered or given.

Anyone knowingly or unknowingly providing alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 may be removed from the convention and be reported to the authorities. It is the sole responsibility of persons serving alcohol in room parties to ensure that every person in attendance is over the age of 21, even if that person is not drinking alcohol. The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board is extremely serious about this law and we ask our members to respect it.

The sale, distribution, or use of any illegal or controlled substances is not welcome at Anthrocon. Any individual found to be distributing such substances will be removed and reported directly to the authorities. For safety, any obviously intoxicated or impaired attendees will be asked to return to their room or seek medical attention until the effects have passed.

The possession and use of any controlled substance which is legal in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania must be done in accordance with the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, and the rules and policies of the venue, partner hotel, or other such location.

### **WEAPONS POLICY**

No actual weapons or any item that can be easily mistaken for one may be carried either openly or concealed at any time in convention space, regardless of any government permits which you may possess. Exceptions may be made only for duly appointed law enforcement officers by prior arrangement with the Safety Department. Personal pocket knives with single-edged blades less than 4 inches long are permitted.

Realistic weapon replicas are permitted as part of a costume only during costume events such as the Fursuit Parade and must be appropriately peace-bonded; ask the Safety Department for instruction on how to do so. They must be cased or otherwise secured when being carried outside of costume.

### **MEDIA RELATIONS AND USE OF ANTHROCON IMAGES OR FOOTAGE**

All journalists, media photographers, and any other members of the press are required to display an official Anthrocon Press Badge or be accompanied by a senior Anthrocon

staff member at all times while in convention space. Members of the press who have not been issued a Press Badge may not conduct interviews or take photographs, audio or video footage without an escort.

If members of the media are present, attendees must act responsibly. Media representatives who do not have Press Badges and are not escorted by an Anthrocon staff member should be reported to Anthrocon Safety staff or to Convention Operations immediately. Do not speak to any unbadged and unescorted members of the press!

Anthrocon members should be aware that audio and/or video recordings are frequently made in convention space and that their likenesses may appear in those recordings. Certain areas of convention space, as well as certain convention personnel, may be fitted with audio and/or video recording devices for the purpose of enhancing the safety and security of our attendees. Individual members agree to assign without compensation the use of their likeness(es) at Anthrocon for the use of promotional material such as high-light videos.

The name “Anthrocon” and the Anthrocon logo are registered service marks of Anthrocon, and must not be used in any fashion that disparages or dilutes that mark. Members agree to remove from circulation or publication any image or recording that in the sole opinion

of Anthrocon, Inc. misrepresents or defames its service mark.

Anthrocon receives requests each year for Press/Media Passes from personal bloggers as well as journalistic media. Please note that Anthrocon does not require a press pass for individual bloggers or podcasters so long as they are not attempting to:

- A. Conduct recorded interviews of any type with any Anthrocon attendee or member in Anthrocon space.
- B. Film documentary footage of Anthrocon spaces, events, or attendees.
- C. Exhibiting or recording behavior that is in violation of the Anthrocon Standards of Conduct.

Anthrocon considers recorded interviews of any type performed in Anthrocon spaces to be a form of media representation and requires an approved Anthrocon Press Pass. Please note that if determined necessary, an Anthrocon Press Pass may require an escort and can be revoked at any time. An Anthrocon Press Pass is not a substitute for a membership. Determination as to whether or not a Press Pass is required rests solely with Anthrocon.

## **PAYMENTS AND MONEY MATTERS**

Anthrocon accepts most major credit and debit cards. Chargebacks

(denying a charge) that are made for the purpose of avoiding payment to Anthrocon or of avoiding hotel cancellation fees, that are made without sufficient cause, or that are made without first attempting to resolve the dispute with Anthrocon may result in permanent revocation of membership privileges and possible legal action.

Checks that are presented against insufficient funds will be charged a fee of \$30 per check.

Members who have an outstanding balance due to Anthrocon must settle that balance before being permitted to attend the convention.

Please note that Anthrocon is a 501(c)7 nonprofit organization. As such, donations to the organization are *not deductible* from individual U.S. Federal income taxes.

Anthrocon cannot involve itself in financial disputes between individual members, and cannot divulge information about an individual member to any party other than to banking officials or legal authorities.

## TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The usage of any technology or device in a way that is malicious in nature will not be tolerated, regardless of the reason – there are no exceptions. Examples of usage defined as “malicious” include, but are not limited to:

Disrupting or interrupting any digital signal or frequency

Stealing, duplicating, or reading/sniffing other signals or frequencies

“Hacking” any digital device, service, or system that belongs to an Anthrocon attendee, the convention, or the venue(s)

Any other action or behavior by a device that causes harmful or disruptive impact to the integrity, availability, or confidentiality of any system.

Any instance of the above, regardless whether or not deemed criminal in nature, will be reported to the appropriate authorities in addition to any consequences determined by Anthrocon, Inc.



**DICE OF FATE**  
27 - 31 October 2026 | Sarpsborg, Norway

**FURNAVIA**  
Norway's largest furry convention!

Check out our webpage for more information!  
Art made by: Amatsuba & GreyvKath

Furnavia.org

The poster features two anthropomorphic characters: a blue bird-like creature on the left and a brown bear-like creature on the right, both holding wands. The background is a vibrant purple and blue space-themed scene with stars, musical notes, and dice. A QR code is located in the lower center, and the text 'FURNNAVIA' is prominently displayed in large, bold letters.

# Miscellaneous Notes



The standards of conduct for Anthrocon will be enforced by Anthrocon Safety Staff. Please remember that your membership badge is the property of Anthrocon, and must be presented and/or surrendered to any Staff member requesting it. If you have any problem with any action taken by a Staff member you may take the matter up with the Safety Head or with Anthrocon's Chairman.

Please be reminded that these rules involve "worst-case" scenarios and are put into place to ensure the safety and comfort of our members. They are also not all-inclusive; in all cases, the singular rule that supercedes all others is: "Any action or behavior that causes significant

interference with convention operations, excessive discomfort to other attendees, or adversely affects Anthrocon's relationship with its guests, its venue, or the public is strictly forbidden and may result in revocation of membership privileges."

We anticipate no difficulties, as our members as a whole are rational and responsible people. Anthrocon is prepared to handle difficulties as efficiently as possible should they occur. We thank our members for their past cooperation and for their continued assistance in making this a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. Please remember to be courteous of those around you, and have fun!

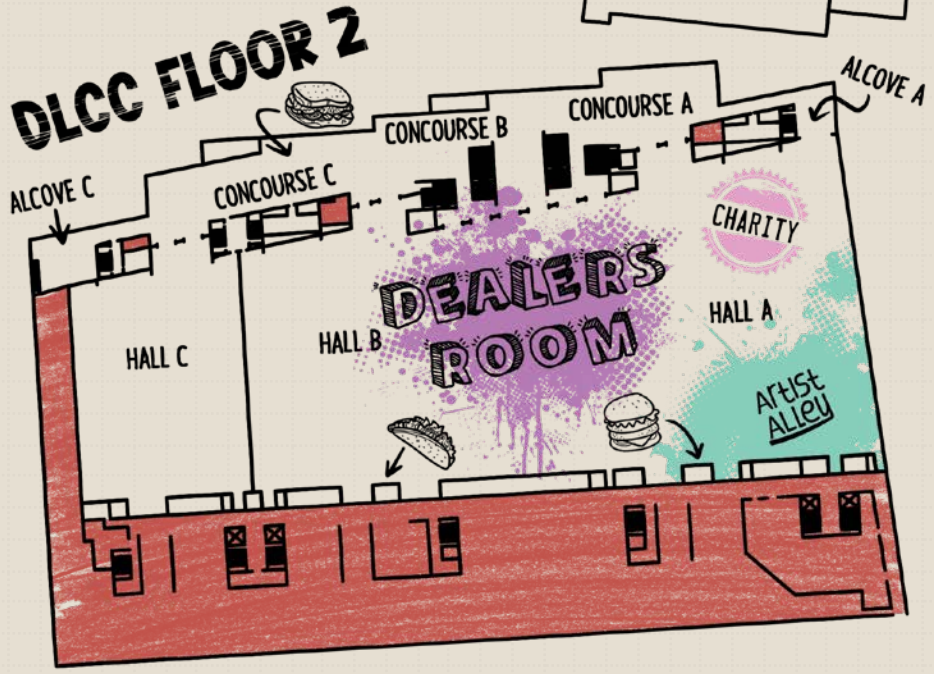
**TOON FURS**  
EST. 2023

Love cartoon animals?  
Looking for a community of  
folks who love cartoons  
too? Check Toon Furs out!

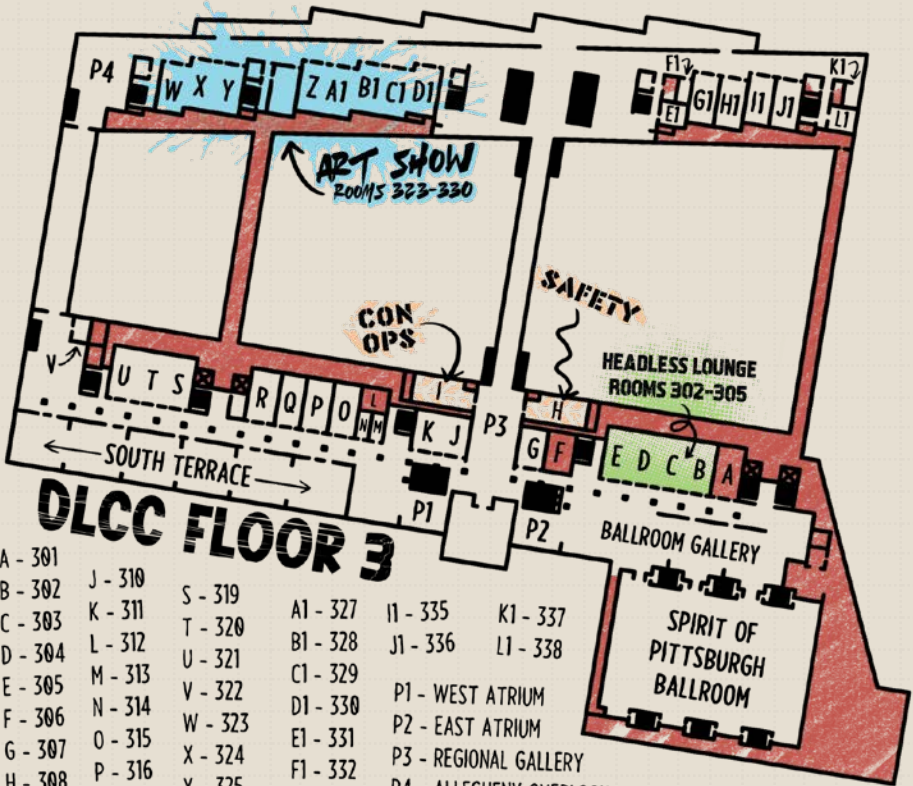
<https://toonfurs-info.carrd.co/>



**DLCC FLOOR 1**  
(STREET LEVEL)



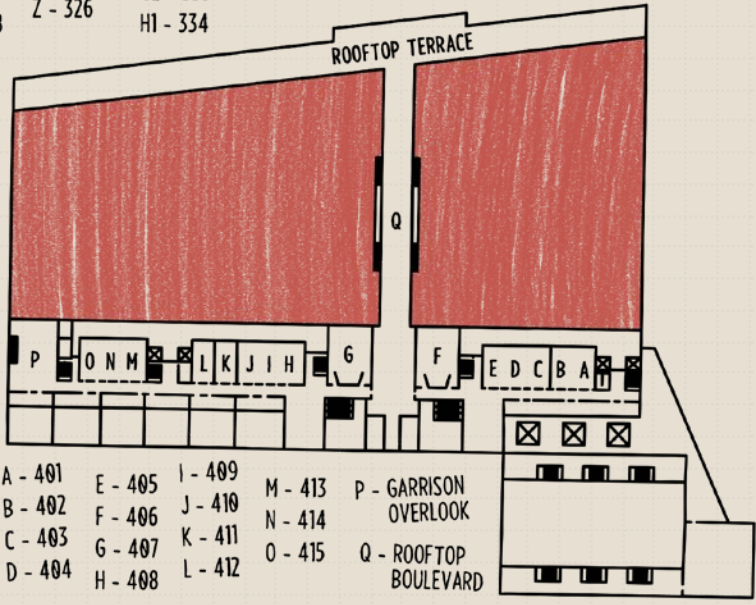
**DLCC FLOOR 2**



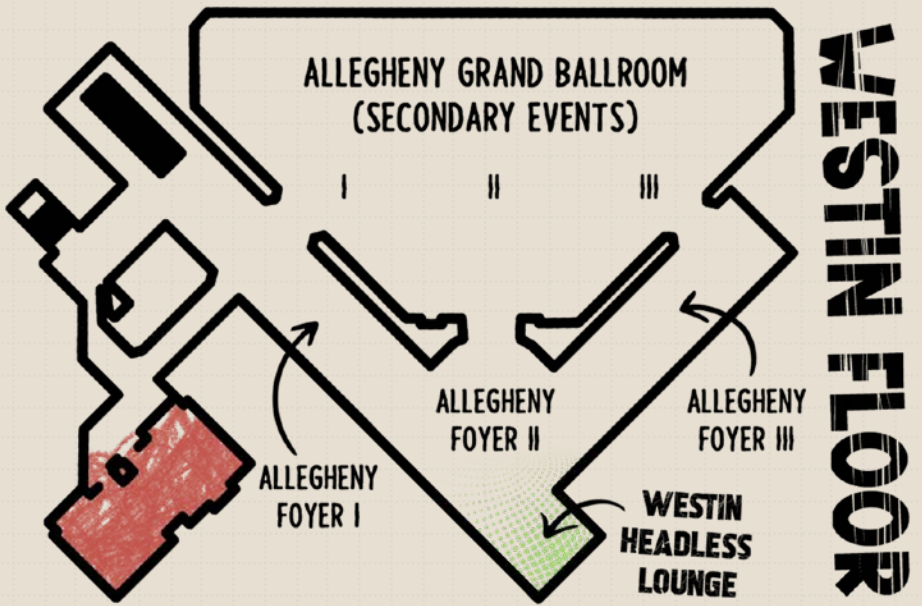
# DLCC FLOOR 3

- A - 301      J - 310      S - 319      A1 - 327      I1 - 335      K1 - 337
- B - 302      K - 311      T - 320      B1 - 328      J1 - 336      L1 - 338
- C - 303      L - 312      U - 321      C1 - 329
- D - 304      M - 313      V - 322      D1 - 330      P1 - WEST ATRIUM
- E - 305      N - 314      W - 323      E1 - 331      P2 - EAST ATRIUM
- F - 306      O - 315      X - 324      F1 - 332      P3 - REGIONAL GALLERY
- G - 307      P - 316      Y - 325      G2 - 333      P4 - ALLEGHENY OVERLOOK
- H - 308      Q - 317      Z - 326      H1 - 334
- I - 309      R - 318

# DLCC FLOOR 4



- A - 401      E - 405      I - 409      M - 413      P - GARRISON OVERLOOK
- B - 402      F - 406      J - 410      N - 414
- C - 403      G - 407      K - 411      O - 415      Q - ROOFTOP BOULEVARD
- D - 404      H - 408      L - 412



# WESTIN FLOOR 3

WALKWAY TO DLCC →

# WESTIN FLOOR 2



- A - BUTLER WEST
- B - BUTLER EAST
- C - CAMBRIA WEST
- D - CAMBRIA EAST
- E - WESTMORELAND WEST
- F - WESTMORELAND CENTRAL
- G - WESTMORELAND EAST
- H - WASHINGTON
- I - LAWRENCE
- J - ARMSTRONG
- K - SOMERSET EAST
- L - SOMERSET WEST
- M - FAYETTE

- N - PENNSYLVANIA EAST
- O - PENNSYLVANIA WEST

# Mature Dealer Section



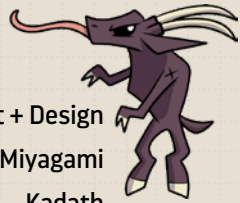


**N16/17** . . . . . Black Cat Atelier  
**I25-J25** . . . . . Bleucan  
**M10N** . . . . . BlindCoyote  
**Q00R** . . . . . Blue Canary Gallery  
**I20** . . . . . Blue Harbor Creations  
**EAST 28** . . . . . Bluebell Art  
**E13F** . . . . . BoldKobold LLC  
**Y01** . . . . . Braeburned!  
**R01** . . . . . Brian Reynolds  
**E15** . . . . . Brushfeather Creations  
**EAST 23** . . Bubbly Sheep Creations  
**I10** . . . . . Buizilla  
**X04-X05** . . . . BUNFAN GAMES LLC  
**F06** . . . . . Byte Size Treasure  
**P11** . . . . . Cactimutt  
**G08** . . . . . Cafe Beret  
**G11-H11** . . . . . CAMP HOWL  
**I16-I17** . . . . . Camp Mustelid  
**P12** . . . . . candy critters  
**I02** . . . . . Canis-Infernalis  
**WEST 25** . . . . . captainwolfee  
**Q01** . . . . . Cashmere Sky  
**Entrance** . . . . . Cats Paws  
 Chair Massage  
**WEST 04** . . . . . Catsudon  
**WEST 26** . . . . . Centikit  
**A11** . . . . Chakat Windshear's Wares  
**R02** . . . . . Charles Brubaker  
**EAST 30** . . . . . Cheer Creativity  
**WEST 23** . . . . . Cheripi  
**B02** . . . . . CherryBox  
**I18** . . . . . Chibbutts  
**EAST 40** . . . . . Chimeracon Art  
**ISLAND 2** . . . . . Chronicle RPGs  
**J23** . . . . . Chupakaibra  
**Q15-Q18** . . . . . CloverPuff  
**H05** . . . . . Club Scragster  
**J10-J11** . . . . . Coey and Shy  
**N14** . . . . . Coffeeklaws  
**K14** . . . . . Colorful Creatures  
**B12** . . . . . Comfort Kingdom  
**C12D** . . . . . Cooling Vests  
 by ThermApparel  
**ISLAND 3** . . . . . CorgiBeans  
**WEST 31** . . . . . Corrupted Plush  
**I06** . . . . . CosmellCosplay  
**WEST 15** . . . . . Cottontail Cottage  
**Q11** . . . . . Coyotic Trouble  
**O18** . . . . . Coywolf Collections  
**EAST 04** . . . . . Crafty Kibby  
**Q10R** . . . . . Crazdude Art & Design  
**K13L** . . . . . Creature Cottage  
**E00F** . . . . Critter Kickback Festival  
**EAST 10** . . . . . Crittercrawls  
**R11** . . . . . Croc Confidential  
**F07** . . . . . Cross' Critters  
**Q05-Q06** . . . . . Crow Party  
**P04** . . . . . Crowlines  
**K08** . . . . . CrowParade  
**WEST 09** . . . . . Crunche Art  
**T06-T07** . . . . Curiosities by Caribou  
**I14-I15** . . . . . Curlworks  
**R03** . . . . . Cursed Pine Studios  
**EAST 37** . . . . . Cyberknife Studios

**D07** . . . Cynthia Conner Illustration  
**F11** . . . . . D.Bruin's Art and Prints  
**H23** . . . Danea Fidler Illustrations & Creations  
**S12-S14** . . . . . Daria Aksenova  
**S06** . . . . . .Dark Natasha  
**F23** . . . . . .DarkChibiShadow  
**WEST 06** . . . . . Darling Ear Shop  
**R12** . . . . . DaSueDragon Designs  
**D08** . . . . . .Dawn Grayford  
**K18-K19** . . . . . .Dead Bomb Art  
**EAST 21** . . . . . DeathKylinArt  
**O10P** . . . . .Deer Hudson Crafts  
**X13** . . . . . .Delectatio Morosa  
**K17** . . . . . . Diana Stein  
**F21** . . . . . . DiZZiNESS  
**H17-H19** . . . . Doctor Gus Designs  
**G15** . . . . . . Doom Space Co.  
**004-005** . . . . . . double dog  
**WEST 33** . . . . Draconic Decorum  
**M11N** . . . . . . Dragon Coop  
**R06-R07** . . . . . .Dragonmelde  
**O19** . . . . . .DrakenByte  
**Q21R** . . . . . DREAMVISION CREATIONS, INC  
**West 05** . . . . . Droseattack  
**001** . . . . . . Eclectic Clay  
**R04** . . . . Elisabeth Alba Illustration  
**P14-P15** . Elvenhound Illustrations  
**EAST 16** . . . . . EMMBUNN  
**C10** . . . . . .Emobarkz  
**EAST 24** . . . . . Erin Roseberry  
**A07** . . . . . Fantastically Fluffy

**S00T** . . . . . Faux Paws Socks  
**WEST 02** . . . . . feels like Instinct  
**EAST 36** . . . . . FelisRandomis  
**EAST 27** . . . . . FenneCrafts, LLC  
**K21-K24** . . . Fenris Publishing, LLC.  
**B09** . . . . . .Feral Threads Co  
**H23** . . . . . . FeretStudios  
**000** . . . . . .Flair Fighter  
**X08** . . . . . . FloggyDoggy  
**EAST 09** . . . . . .FloofUnlimited  
**M21N** . . . . . . Floral Frolic  
**EAST 29** . . . . . Florid Corvid  
**X15-X17** . . . Fluff & Stuff (formerly FurryDakimakura)  
**S08** . . . . . . Foxclover  
**tattoo 1** . . . . . Frances Evans  
**ISLAND 5** . . .FurPlanet Productions  
**B07** . . . Furry Comics by Demiurge  
**B06** . . .Furry Flags and Shifter Arts  
**WEST 11** . . . . .Fursewna Studios  
**P06-P07** . . . . .FursuitGlasses.com  
**A02** . . . . . FursuitSupplies.com  
**L00** . . . . . Gay Breakfast  
**S18** . . . . . .Gentlemonster  
**WEST 17** . . . . . GentleMoonBell  
**WEST 21** . . . . .Giant Avians Village  
**008** . . . . . .Gideon's Corral  
**A06** . . . . . .Glitzzy Fox Studios  
**X03** . . . . . . Glopossum  
**J24** . . . . . Gneech: The Last Coffeebender  
**K04** . . . . . . Goataroo  
**O11** . . . . . Golden Druid





**WEST 34** . . . . Green Basilisk Studio  
**J16** . . . . . Grinning Wolf Studio  
**P01** . . . . . HackPGH  
**E23** . . . . . halybs & indui  
**G02** . . . . . Haruka Illustration  
**K16** . . . . . Heather Bruton  
Illustration  
**Q12** . . . . . Hey, it's Zray!  
**I04** . . . . . hibbary  
**I21** . . . . . Hibiscus Stitch  
**N03** . . . . . High Coyote Leather  
**Y06-Y07** . . . . . Hive Mind  
**EAST 39** . . . . . Holiday-Fox  
**EAST 17** . . . . . hoodiedogs  
**F02** . . . . Hopeful Monster Studios  
**K11** . . . . . Houndsaint  
**ISLAND 6** . . . . . HOWL OUT  
**EAST 03** . . . Hunny Bunny Studios  
**R13** . . . . . Husious  
**ISLAND 7** . . . . . HYENA AGENDA  
**WEST 27** . . . . . Icecolo  
**T08-T09** . . . . Icy Paw Productions  
**C09** . . . . . inki-Drop  
**P13** . . . . . Inkmaven Art  
**T05** . . . . . INKtiger  
**T12** . . . . . Ishaway  
**006** . . . . . Jacato  
**X18** . . . . . Jackalope Jaymes  
**TATTOO 3** . . . . . JAYSTOR  
**F03** . . . . . JenKiwi  
**G21-G22** . . . . . Joanna Barnum  
Watercolor  
**EAST 31** . . . . . JoshFoxDen

**S15** . . . . . JustaSuta Art + Design  
**T03** . . . . . Kacey Miyagami  
**T19** . . . . . Kadath  
**G24** . . . . . Kaiju Kafe  
**F23** . . . . . KamoriaArt  
**E14** . . . . . Kangaroomis  
**EAST 07** . . . . . Kat Used Charm  
**G13H** . . . . . Katy Lipscomb LLC  
**D05** . . . . . KayCat  
**T18** . . . . . Kaylii  
**EAST 18** . . . . . Kazzen Creations  
**Q13-Q14** . . . . . Kestrel Clay  
**G23** . . . . . KeyLime Creations  
**E10-E11** . . . . . King Guro  
**WEST 20** . . . . . Kitsuel  
**B05** . . . . . Knittin' Kitten Fashion  
**K12-L12** . . . . . Kopes Kreations  
**K02** . . . . . Kory Bing  
**EAST 38** . . . . . kurenji's workshop  
**E04-E08** . . . . . Lairbrew  
**B11** . . . . . LakeMutt  
**D09** . . . . . Laura Illustrates  
**EAST 33** . . . . . Lava Alley  
**O16-O17** . . . . . Lemonbrat Studio  
**West 10** . . . . . Lepus Studios  
**K00** . . . . . Licca Kirk / Atlas House  
**A03** . . . . . Lily Moon Suits  
**O21P** . . . . . Limeythecheetah  
**S10T** . . . . Lindsey "Rhos" Burcar Art  
**S11** . . . . . Lion Paw Suits  
**G18-G19** . . . . . LittleSofts  
**F04** . . . . . Lizard Lamination and  
Embroidery



- D00** . . . . . Lizbie Cafe  
**H08** . . . . . LUCKY DRAGON & CO.  
**Y19-Y20** . . . . . Lycantasy  
**Y28** . . . . . Lyonne Riley  
**G20** . . . . . Made by Nao!  
**R05** . . . . . MadshyArts  
**WEST 13** . . . . . Magpie Madness  
**H15-H16** . . . . . Malytwotails  
**H09** . . . . . Manfish Inc.  
**E25F.** . . . . . Mango Island  
**C01** . . Mary Mouse's Certified Furry  
Tags  
**P02** . . . . . MatchaPeaches Art  
**EAST 06** . . . . . Mcpippypants  
**E18-E19** . . . Melissa Mendelson Art  
**Q19** . . . . . Meredith Dillman  
Fantasy Art  
**EAST 02** . . . . . Milo's Dino Stand  
**EAST 20** . . . . . Milollustrates  
**EAST 14.** . . . . . Mini Miau  
**N01-N02** . . . . . Moko's Makery  
**F05** . . . . . Monster Kitty Society  
**P08-P09** . . . . . Morelitea  
**J14.** . . . . . MOTEL777  
**K01** . . . . . Moth Monarch  
**B03** . . . . . MR. KITTYS  
**WEST 35** . . . . . MsMaw  
**K25L** . . . . . MUTTASUR  
**F18** . . . . . My Arm Can Fly  
**S09** . . . . . Necromeowncer  
**EAST 43** . . . . . Nekeith Fox  
**EAST 11.** . . . . . NekoCrispy  
**D01** . . . . . NeonSlushie  
**N19** . . . . . Night Owl Misfits  
**C11.** . . . Nightengale Custom Plush  
**I22.** . . . . . NightEyes DaySpring  
**E22** . . . . . NightlineZ Art  
**009** . . . . . Niis  
**WEST 08** . . . . . Nikki Kahlmorgan  
**WEST 30** . . . . . Ninth Runs Wild  
**Y12-Y15** . . . . . NorthShore ABDL  
**S03-S04** . . . . . NovaMutt Costumes  
**P05** . . . . . Oakley's Creations  
**WEST 07** . . . . . Oddgrowl Art  
**O12** . . . . . Otherworldly Alchemist  
**T17-T18.** . . . . . Otter & Odder  
**S01** . . . . . OxEyed Press  
**H10** . . . . . Painting Dragon Feathers  
**G00H** . . . . . Papaya Badger  
**J18-J20** . . . . . Paradoxxpalms  
**E03** . . . . . Part Time Dragons  
**J22.** . . . . . Part-Time Cryptid  
**S20-T20** . . . . . Paw To Press  
**B13** . . . . . Pawstar  
**EAST 22** . . . . . Pepper Coyote  
- Fandom Music  
**R14** . . . . . Peri Pendrake  
**C00** . . . . . Pinfeathers  
**N04-N06.** . . . . . Pinku's  
Crafty Cottage  
**EAST 12.** . . . . . PlagueRat's Baubles  
**I05.** . . . . . Plant Panda Studios  
**N15** . . . . . Poofsuits  
**K03** . . . . . PoofyIion Arts  
**E09** . . . . . Pookatdino crafts  
**T11.** . . . . . Potachi

**I19** . . . . . Primordial Pals  
**Y04** . . . . . Primrose Kennel Club  
**G07** . . . . . PrismPaws  
**F10** . . . . . Puzzled Jay Productions  
**I11** . . . . . Quack Quack Honk Designs  
**J04** . . . . . Quailtea Goods  
**H14** . . . . . QuietNova Studios  
**WEST 29** . . . . . raevi10  
**N08-N09** . . . . . RAIZAP by Chu  
**R15** . . . . . Rat Wednesday  
**WEST 24** . . . . . Rayratts  
**X07** . . . . . REVELION  
**B10** . . . . . Rhonda Libbey  
**N07** . . . . . Rinibeanie Arts  
**ISLAND 1** . . . . . Rocky's Roastery  
**H06-H07** . . . . . Rosebudrat  
**WEST 28** . . . . . Rosepuppies Art  
**WEST 18** . . . . . RoxxieKitsune  
**F14-F16** . . . . . Rukis Art  
**I23-I24** . . . . . Rysingson Accessories  
**C04** . . . . . Sailor Shrimpp  
**G03** . . . . . Sand Dragon Press  
**EAST 19** . . . . . Sandy Paws  
**K15** . . . . . Sandy Schreiber  
**D02-D03** . . . . . SanityxRationelle  
**F22** . . . . . Sassypants  
**WEST 10** . . . . . Saturn Peach Art  
**G16-G17** . . . . . Scaly Shop  
**J02-J03** . . . . . Scrolling Fantasy  
**EAST 32** . . . . . Sea Serpent Works  
**WEST 22** . . . . . Sephive Illustration  
**S16-S17** . . . . . Servalsurf  
**I08** . . . . . Sharkstudio  
**E20** . . . . . She-Jackal Arts  
**Y05** . . . . . Sheaths Bark  
**T04** . . . . . ShinigamiGirl  
**Q07** . . . . . Show & Tail Creations  
**T01-T02** . . . . . SixthLeafClover Studios  
**T13** . . . . . Skulldog Studio  
**S19** . . . . . SkyTeaa Studio  
**I03** . . . . . Sleeping Fox Art  
**J15** . . . . . Sleepy Thyme Art  
**A08** . . . . . Slink Apparel  
**X19-X20** . . . . . Sly Fox Leather  
**E16** . . . . . Snapjaw Swamp  
**E21** . . . . . Snowifer  
**G04-G05** . . . . . Soic  
**Y21-Y22** . . . . . Something Squishy Toys  
**H24** . . . . . Songdog Studio  
**C03** . . . . . Spacey Paws  
**C02** . . . . . Spainimation's Art and Fursuits  
**I07** . . . . . Spicy King Co.  
**I01-J01** . . . . . Splitgrapesoda  
**K09-K10** . . . . . STABLERCAKE  
**EAST 05** . . . . . Starlace Arts  
**EAST 35** . . . . . StarWeaverArts  
**H01-H02** . . . . . Static Claws  
**Y02-Y03** . . . . . STATIIK ART LLC  
**Y26-Y27** . . . . . Stephanie's Art Corner  
**WEST 32** . . . . . Stray Songdog  
**K05-K07** . . . . . Sugar Bunny Shop  
**D06** . . . . . Sugar Lich



**WEST 03** . . . . . Sundae's Sundries  
**Q20** . . . . . Supykun  
**P16-P17** . . . . . Sushi Tomodachi  
**EAST 08** . . . . . Tacksidea  
**B04** . . . . . Tailends Studios  
**H22** . . . . . Talenshi Studios  
**Y25** . . . . . Tansy  
**Y25** . . . . . Tansy  
**D10** . . . . . Teabeary House  
**P18-P19** . . . . . Tech621  
**X06** . . . . . The Amber Fox  
**Q03-Q04** . . . . . The Gryphon  
 Generation  
**F19-F20** . . . . . The Pirate Artisans  
**Y23-Y24** . . . . . The Wandering  
 Bard, LLC  
**B07** . . . . . The Yogurt Kingdom  
**007** . . . . . Toon Raccoon!  
**T14-T15** . . . . . TOP Dog Studios  
**X01-X02** . . . . . Tough Hide  
 Leatherwork  
**A04** . . . . . Triangle Manor  
**C07** . . . . . Triclops Rabbit  
**F09** . . . . . Tropical Heat Studios  
**WEST 01** . . . Twining Tree Creations  
**E01-E02** . . . . . Twokinds  
**WEST 19** . . . . . Underfoot Studio  
**TATTOO 4** . . . . . Vexed Vixen Ink  
**G14** . . . . . VintageWilds  
**MOON** . . . . . Waffle Wishes  
**R18-R20** . . . . . Warhorse  
 Workshop - Soap Pony  
**I12J** . . . . . Waywardmutt

**B14** . . . . . Weasel Gear  
**B01** . . . . . Weighted Wonders  
**A05** . . . . . Winkwag  
**F01** . . . . . Wisparia  
**EAST 34** . . . . . Wolfsong Workshop  
**C08** . . . . . Wooperworks  
**H04** . Wyldefell Woods-OtherWorld  
 Menagerie  
**EAST 01** . . Wyrwood Pyrography  
**Y16-Y18** . . . . . Xenocat Artifacts  
**WEST 14** . . . . . Y2Kute  
**ISLAND 4** . . . . . YARD SARD Furs  
**EAST 42** . . . . . YchFursuits  
**D04** . . . . . Yellow K9 Creations  
**B08** . . . . . Yipp Yapp  
**G06** . . . . . YKSOBA  
**014** . . . . . yocholol  
**015** . . . . . ZENOPHRENIC  
**A10** . . . . . ZeroRemnants



COME AND SEE **THE ANTHROCON**   
**ART SHOW**

**DLCC 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR** **IN ROOMS 323-330**

**GALLERY HOURS**

**FRIDAY 2PM TO 6PM**  
**SATURDAY 10AM TO 6PM**  
**SUNDAY 10AM TO 12PM**

**ART** **auCTION**

**SATURDAY 11PM 18+**  
**SUNDAY 2PM GENERAL**

**BIDDER INFO** 



**NO SLOP! AI NOT ALLOWED!**



I HEAR THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF  
PARANORMAL ACTIVITY IN THIS AREA...  
YOU AREN'T CHICKENING OUT, RIGHT?



© froggsalt





# ASC

*Anthro SoCal*

ANTHROSOCAL.ORG  
SEPTEMBER 18-20, 2026  
ONTARIO CONVENTION CENTER  
ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA



*Daniel Eastwood*



# Fern

## **WILDFLOWER SODAPOP**

“Through clinging vines and  
babbling brooks,  
Darkened forests and  
claw carved nooks

On ebony wings, they cut through  
the night.

Trilling, howling, and  
cackling with delight.

Whispers of curses hang in the air,  
As the promise of July  
steadily creeps near.

They gather in droves,  
the haunting creatures of lore.  
Nails biting wood,  
at Anthrocon’s door”



longtooth





Cedar Cryptid



# Anthrocon

2026 Critters, Cryptids, & Curses

# On AnthroCon

## HIKARIDOGS

Every 4th of July weekend something magical happens in the City of Pittsburgh. The intersection of 10th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue comes alive as the David Lawrence Convention Center hosts AnthroCon, the world's largest furry convention.

For four days each year, the streets and hotels, bars and restaurants, convention center, waterfront, and every space in between are all filled with furies, fans of anthropomorphic animal art, literature, media, and costume.

Some attendees are young, some are not. Some come with their families and friends, some come alone. Some are wealthy, some less so. For some, it may be the one time of the year they get to celebrate something important to them, a piece of who they are. For others, it may be the only time all year they will see friends who live far away, escape broken homes, or be able to safely express their authentic selves and live their truths. For others still, it is an escape from the humdrum of their every day lives.

Some have vast, elaborate full-body fursuits, some have partials, and some have none at all. There are artists and artisans, authors and poets, content creators, fursuit makers, DJs, musicians, and game developers. And there are those who are there to appreciate and support.



But as you see people talking and dancing, costuming and horse-playing (yes, even equines), or simply just hanging out in the streets or in the halls of the convention center. Whether they're eating food or consuming drink with old friends, new friends, or enthusiastic locals who go "all in for the furies." Whether part of the annual Fursuit Parade, perusing the Dealer's Den, Artist Alley, or Art Show. Whether there for panels, games, parties, events, or the AnthroCon Block Party, one thing is for certain.

For one weekend a year, no matter who we are or where we're from. No matter our home or family situation or heritage or abilities. No matter who we love, or what brought us here. No matter if its our first convention ever or we've been coming for more than twenty years. No matter any other category, or label, or experience.

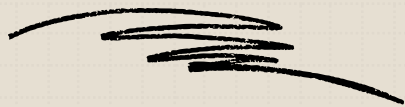
We're all here together.

And above all else?

No matter what?

For one weekend each year?

We ALL belong.





**DON'T WANNA GO HOME YET?**  
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When?: Monday, July  
5th, 2026 @ 12 PM

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WITH A BUNCH OF FURRIES!**





# 29.53 DAYS

NAVA

Twenty-nine days have passed.  
The full moon is set to  
rise once again.

But this night, her beautiful  
silver shimmer carried a dark  
undertone unlike any of the  
countless times I saw her.

It was the first time since that  
accursed encounter.  
I thought were-creatures were  
only fantasy tales.  
The kinds that elders made up  
and crowed over and over about.

But fate reared its grimmest face.  
An ambush at night.  
A fight for survival.  
And a mark tinted red.  
I lived, but from there, the  
clock started ticking.

The thought was  
consuming me every day.  
Was it going to hurt me?  
Was it going to be permanent?  
Was all of me just going to  
disappear once the beast set in?  
I dreaded these questions every  
night as I saw the moon get more  
visible each passing evening.

But I knew... it was not  
going to be the end of me.  
If those creatures exist and roam,  
then I know life would continue.  
My heart would still beat.  
My lungs would still breathe.  
My existence in this realm  
would still be present.



The candle wouldn't be snuffed.  
It should continue to burn.

In between that blanket feeling of  
fear, there were specks of wonder.  
As if there was freedom visible  
between cage bars.  
Impulse hiding in the inhibition.  
A new sense of self that I didn't  
even know could form.

Call it unknown.  
But also... new.

Ah, the sunset.  
The last of those warm orange  
rays are fading.  
And the fated dusk of a new  
change arises.  
It feels the night falls  
faster this time.

So, if this is the...  
curse I have to bear...  
...then I reckon... it's time  
I work this magic.



Kombucha



CRYPTID LUAU



©2026 Charles Brubaker

# LAUREN IPSUM

A comic strip by CHARLES BRUBAKER  
(FIND ME IN THE DEALER'S ROOM!)  
lauren.smallbugstudio.com





# J & FARMS

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# Hannibal Took 16 Days to Cross the Alps

**CORRAN ORREAUX**

Coyote crossed your garden faster.

He doesn't want to be seen  
Through the yard,  
garden,  
over flowerbeds he claimed before  
Undisturbed. Easy.

An unpaved Appian Way.  
All roads lead to your half-eaten burger.  
He dares a yip when he reaches the walls,  
an expert in siege warfare, he knocks it over in the grass,  
And feels clever enough to yap.  
That's for later, though.  
he rips through your garbage bag,

don't complain  
It isn't like you wanted it anyway,

And sifts around with the care of a watchmaker.  
Only half of it ends up on the lawn.  
He finds a prize worth yapping for—triumph!  
Only then, while he's running away in victory,  
he alerts you with a yap-yap-howl!

You'd think of Caesar returning to Rome,  
carts laden with loot and captured kings,  
of Mehmet entering Constantinople,  
the weight of prophesy on his shoulders,  
of the kind of glory you only read about in books,  
with how this coyote trotted off,  
ham bone between teeth.





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# Stable Decay

YANA CAORÁNACH



A pile of detritus and dead wood collected against a bridge post in the water, ten or so feet below. I stared at it awhile, caught in a liminal state while wandering home. Lazy currents dragged at the branches. Just one breaking loose would tear the haphazard monument of decay asunder. No assortment of branches, no collection of timber, would quite create the same composition ever again.

I looked down at my hands, watched as skin rippled and boiled. Scales emerged. My reflection stared back up at me from the water. A skink? Bleeding orange hues from the setting sun lent a sparkle to my reflection incongruous with my dull finish. It then melted away to pale slick flesh, a drooping newt-like visage. Fur would be next. Always some rhythm when I was discordant.

Reptile, amphibian, avian, mammal, human.

Reptile, amphibian, avian, mammal, mammal. Could hardly call myself human, like this.

Whenever I imagined a form, I became it—almost. Biped where I should be quadruped, scales reptilian when I meant them to be serpentine. Always, though, the pattern, my thoughts pulled from one form

to another, then another. Me, torn into a new array of bone and keratin before long, nothing ever quite sticking. Always the draft, never the artwork.

Why couldn't I be something stable, water-weathered and sun-worn like the branches? Why couldn't I be happy with a single vision? Multiple futures stretched out in front of me, then collapsed. The cycle began again. Feathers pushed free and fledged from my skin, a pale blue-grey in the dusk. Perhaps this form would stay, find itself complete. Yet I knew this hope was as futile as the last. The cycle would renew; the body would find its rhythm. Again. And again. Perhaps the only constant was change. Was my comfort only to be found in embracing the new?

I watched a branch scatter my reflection and catch the edge of the driftwood tangle, holding fast. Its single leaf—still green—fluttered in the evening breeze. Added precarity or needed stability? I told myself that dusk made it too dark to tell.

As I stumbled home, feathers melting to fins, I had no answers. Maybe I'd find my own bridge post to tangle against some day. Something solid. Someone safe.

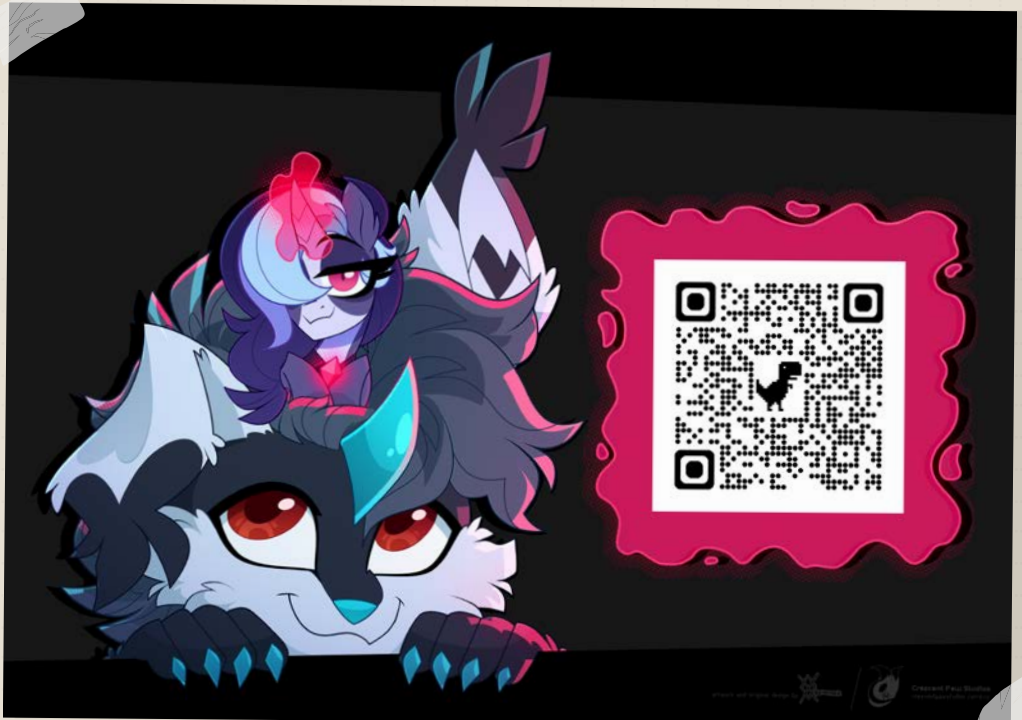
Maybe that would be enough.



Uh...  
**UNO???**



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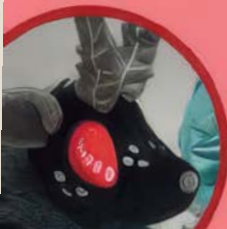
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New Cryptid Design!

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# The Strange Tale of Dandelion Thunderfoot Childs

MIKE ROUKAS (JJ MIKE)

**IF HUMANITY CANNOT ENTER EDEN,  
BECOME SOMETHING THAT CAN!**

That's how the vacation brochure went for Hare Grove Gardens. Daniel Childs was more than skeptical. Who wouldn't be? But now that his sixth day at "The HGG Camp" had come about, he knew, in the most visceral sense, that this was the most honest brochure he had ever read.

On the first day, one of the camp staff hugged him. It had been his first hug since he was eight years old. After a moment of disgust, he returned the hug out of courtesy. Then he returned it again, apologetically. By that point, the entire staff was around him, embracing him softly and with gratitude.

On the second day, he was up early with the rest of them. They worked barefoot in the garden, and he laughed at their jokes. Oh, and those jokes of theirs - they had no punchlines, but they all ended in something like love stories. He pulled a carrot up by its greens, wiped it clean, and took a good bite of it. As he chewed, the grit of its remaining dirt was loud in his ears. "What's up, Doc?" he asked. He had meant it as a joke, but couldn't laugh. It had come out too well.

On the third day, he helped the staff make soup for the whole camp. Celery, carrots, beets, chickpeas, spiced and crafted in a way that no Manhattan restaurant could match. During his five years at Chase Bank, he had never created something of such value. Spending all day cooking is exhausting. They feasted. They gluttoned themselves.

On the fourth day, he woke up with his new ears. Those tall, furry stalks in the mirror were like an extension of their laughter in the garden! He laughed at himself. The staff laughed at him too, but they didn't laugh AT him. It gave him courage. It smothered the terror before it could take root.

On the fifth day, he looked into the mirror again and saw an entity who could only vaguely discern the hints of its old life. He cried out for help, but the staff was nowhere to be found. Maybe they knew that today was the day he would see the heart of Hare Grove Gardens. It was some mixture of Brigadoon, Chernobyl, and wherever his stuffed animals had gone when his parents threw them out on his eighth birthday. But even that was just scratching the surface of it.

Daniel barely slept that night. But on the morning of the sixth day,

today, the camp staff returned. They hugged him again, but something was new about it. Or maybe something was new about him? Or something old and hidden had emerged, and just appeared new? He learned the heat of their fur, and they the heat of his. It was not some boardroom huddle. All the bank vault doors opened for him at once. But there was no treasure inside. In a leap of instinct, he knew that the treasure was missing, and that he had to put it there. Was he the treasure, and did he have love to give as well? He did, and they gobbled it up, just like the soup they made together! They licked his tears, and joined their cries of joy with his own. They called him cute, and laughed at how he blushed under his fur. Then he laughed too, and blushed no more, knowing he would never blush again in this life or in whatever lay after it. They gave him his new name - Dandelion Thunderfoot Childs. Because even changed things have a history, and history never dies.

It is nearing midnight of the sixth day. Dandelion Thunderfoot Childs and the rest of the camp dance around a bonfire whose flames are red as the blood of some freshly culled demon. It grows brighter when he throws his shirt into it, flickering faster, as if his stamping foot works its bellows.

The screams of wild hares have been mistaken for the cries of murder victims. Something between a hymn and the sounds of

a slaughterhouse resonates around the bonfire. For those who dare, as Dandelion has, there is a special vintage of love beyond madness. His buck teeth thicken and settle in with force enough for him to taste his own blood.

On the morning of the seventh day, the bonfire is ash and cinders. Down past the wooded grove, there is activity. But I am not permitted to elaborate on what we do there, and this is the end of my brochure.



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# Speaks

WILLIAM ROGERS

This was the part of the con Jackie liked best. The Fursuit Parade was over, but out here on the street the party was in full swing. In spite of the heat some of the 'suiters were still out performing. The townspeople loved them. It was glorious.

She edged into a circle of bystanders to see what they were watching: A wolf fursuit, and a magnificent one, worn by a dancer who was amazingly good and energetic. He was dressed in a loincloth and barbarian jewelry of stone, bone, and fangs strung on leather thongs. He spun and leapt, shaking a spear with a realistic leaf point at the sky. The crowd loved it.

"Do you like him?" said a voice at her elbow.

"Oh he's great. You could think he was real." Then she saw who, or what, she was talking to and stopped. She was startled. The costume was that good.

The woman to her left managed to seem frail and somehow dangerous at the same time. She had colored her long, lank, straight hair white with green tips. She wore a plastic water lily over her right ear. Her gown was as pale and lank as her hair. Her white gloves had claws for fingertips.

"I.. I.." Jackie stammered. Then she blinked and smiled. "I love him. How can he dance like that in that suit? He has to be dying from the heat. And your costume

is wonderful too. Hi. My name is Jackie. Are you a kelpie?"

The woman smiled. "Hi. I'n Sibyl. Not a kelpie exactly, but something like that. The dancer is Speaks. He's a friend of mine."

"He's good. Never breaks character! He looks like a werewolf shaman. I like that his eyes don't match. It's one of those odd little personal details that makes a costume seem more like a real person."

Sibyl chuckled. "In a way that's more true than you know. That part of the costume is real life. Speaks's eyes really don't match. One is blue and one is amber. And by the way he's not a werewolf, exactly. Ever hear of the Michigan Dogman?"

"No."

"I'm from Michigan myself so I've heard of them. My family runs a fishing business on the Lake, has for ages. The Michigan Dogman—there's one in Wisconsin too, as I recall— is like what Speaks is, as you see him here today. He shows up every ten years or so. Gets himself shot or run down by cars or something from time to time but he always comes back."

"But he's not a werewolf."

"Not really. Maybe in his world he was one of the places the werewolf legend came from. According to lore it isn't that he actually turns into a wolf-man under the full moon. Rather, he is always a wolf-man but usually he can hide himself as something else. By day you could see him as a rock, a tree, or even another human. By night he can hide well

enough to seem to be something else closer to what he really is. A bear cub, a big dog, a raccoon, something like that. But under the full moon he can't hide. Under the full moon you see him as he is."

"That must be cool to see. And terrifying."

Sibyl chuckled again. "You can only imagine."

"I'd be scared fartless but it would be so cool to see anyway. Look at him dance for that little kid! That's just wonderful."

"Speaks loves to see people and dance for them. He lives such a lonely life. He longs to be part of a, um, group, but the poor fellow has been hurt enough that he's become pathologically shy. He lives alone except for a few friends like me. An event like this lets him come out of his shell and meet people. He's come to live for times like these."

"The suits can free us to be what we are inside."

"That's certainly true for Speaks. Even his loneliness is part of the character you see here. You know how the theme of this con is Curses and Cryptids? He fits perfectly. He's a cryptid and he's cursed. Loneliness is most of that curse."

Jackie smiled at Speaks, now joyfully posing for photos for the crowd. "He doesn't seem evil enough to be cursed."

Sibyl's eyes flashed. For a moment she seemed angry about something. Had Jackie offended her? But Sibyl relaxed and smiled sadly.

"Do you think evil is the only way to be cursed? Love and sacrifice will do it too. The Fates are bastards. According to lore he saw that the time of his people, the Leaders of Wolves, was ending. He prayed to the Fates to save them from extinction and offered himself as a sacrifice for that gift. The Fates granted the wish by making Speaks immortal, so he had to see the rest of his people die and go on as the last of them, all alone until the world changes again. They granted the wish. The Leaders of Wolves aren't extinct. Speaks is still here, after all."

"Ugh. I hate that kind of trickster genii story."

"Yes. Those wish-granters suck completely, always changing the wish into something horrible. But maybe that's how it works, sometimes. Maybe some tragedies have to happen, and all you can do is change something about how they do. How should I know?"

"He seems so real. You know, it would be so wonderful to think that the Ancient Ones could use an event like this to, you know, see today's world and get out and meet people. To have one of the creatures of fantasy as fursuits be a real, living myth. Who knows? With so many wonderful suits and performers, one of the ones among us **COULD** be real."

"At least one," Sibyl said, smiling widely.

Jackie shuddered. There was something alarming about Sibyl's teeth.



Larza Moragas

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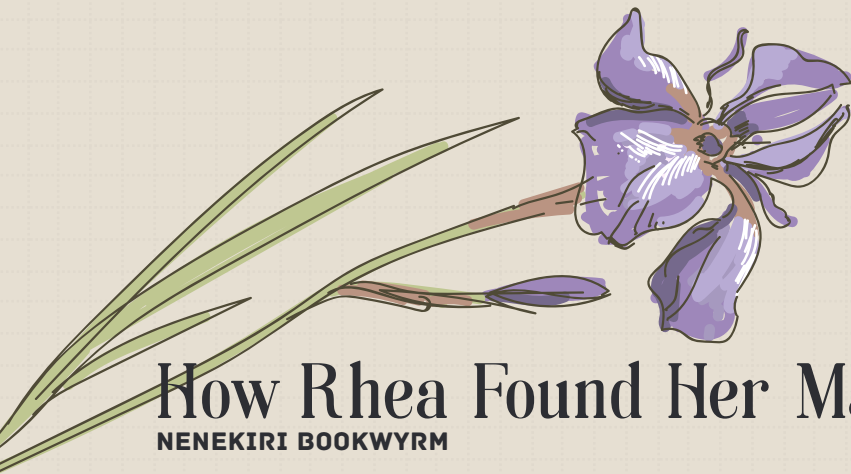
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# How Rhea Found Her Magic

**NENEKIRI BOOKWYRM**

Now seein' as you're asking the question you must've run into Rhea somewhere on your travels. She does tend to get around that one. Any particulr' reason you'd be asking an old toad how her magic works? Me an' Rhea got a good thing going and I'm keen to keep in her good graces.

What's that? You don't believe me?

Well, I know the story, sure I do! It's not really mine to tell, but she ain't here to say no, so...

Rhea's a jackalope, s'like if you crossed a hare with a deer. She can ride with the best of them, cuss your fur redder than a cardinal, and drink you clear under the table. She wasn't always this ornery, mind you. There was a time she was just a traveling fool, back before the bounties. Back before the hunts. Back before Trouble, with a capital T, started dogging her every move. She's told me as much, and while I can't say for certain she ain't lying, the look in her eyes tells me she misses when life was a bit simpler.

She kept her identity as a jackalope hidden as best she could. Wearin'

a long green coat with a big hood that covered up her antlers. Folks get jumpy when they find out, y'see. Jackalopes have a tendency to have very chaotic magic and when you're just trying to go about your day, all peaceful like, there's an implication to seeing a jackalope stroll into town that sets 'em on edge. They wouldn't have nothing to worry 'bout anyhow, she didn't have magic back then. But that's tough to explain from behind a jail cell. She'd been arrested a few times, mostly for petty crimes. Hanging around the taverns too long, being found in places she shouldn't be able to get to, a stolen loaf of bread on occasion. To hear her tell it, it seemed like she got put away to ease the tension of all the animals who didn't want to deal with a jackalope. She always got let out and didn't get more than a slap on the wrist and some fines, but after a while, you tend to get a reputation.

That led in part to the first ever bounty put on her by a little known religious sect. Not really sure about the particulars myself, but they wanted her for her magic, and were willing to pay handsomely. She

caught wind of it, and went without sleep to put distance between her and her would-be pursuers.

Unsurprisingly, when she ran herself ragged enough to collapse in the road, she was restrained and turned over to the local law. The lawman took one look at her and decided that those priests who put the bounty out ought to have her handed over. He collected the bounty, the priests locked Rhea in a carriage, and they rode away. No one would come to find her. She told me she liked going it alone because it was more exciting that way. Getting out of scrapes using your own wits and making a living while moving was how she preferred to be. And it don't matter none if you get caught, as long as you don't stay caught. She was always able to find a way out, but not this time. Even rabbits' feet can't have all the luck in the world.

She remembers being in the carriage for a long time, a few days at least. Whenever they let her out to do her business and get some water the priests always looked jumpy. Mind you, they were a group of kangaroos, but it was about how they looked at her. Like they were surprised she hadn't tried to make a break for it. Like they were expectin' her to kill 'em at the drop of a hat. She couldn't figure out what was setting them so on edge. Sure she knew folks didn't take kindly to jackalopes, but this was something more. It wouldn't be until

she arrived at the dungeon of a castle at the top of a winding hill that she would find out.

Y'see, Rhea was brought before a judge, all official like. He read off all the charges that she was going to be held for and Rhea noticed that she didn't recognize any of the crimes they were accusing her of doing! She'd been brought in for another jackalope's crimes. When she tried to plead her case, the judge wasn't having it. He waved his paws and the guards took her away to the dungeons underneath the castle. Down, down, down they led her along the winding steps further and further into the side of the hill. Now as a rabbit, I thought she might like being underground, but this weren't no warren. There was only one entrance in and out and the stone exuded a kinda malice that made you feel unwelcome.

You're looking a little pale there, friend. You want a top off for your drink? I'm not gonna sugarcoat it, the rest of the story don't get much nicer.

Alright, alright, you asked for it after all.

Rhea was put into a cell with a group of other criminals and shackled by her arms and legs. Now, you'll have to forgive me, but she wasn't too keen on reliving all of this nasty business. She did tell me that they fed her very little and she didn't get much sunlight on even the best of days.

She told me she was most frustrated about not being able to use magic. She had tried to ask her parents how she would know the touch of magic, the feeling of it, but they weren't jackalopes themselves so they couldn't tell her. She was left to think for hours and hours and felt more and more desolate and desperate when each new idea didn't work out.

When she had enough of feeling sorry for herself and the other prisoners were awake she took to talking to them. It turns out that after getting to know them and not judging them for how they looked, they had a lot in common. Pretty soon she was sure that everybody in that cell with her didn't deserve to be locked up like this. Sure they had made some mistakes, but it wasn't worth all this fuss and misery over it.

She's not sure how long she was held there. Her best guess was a few months at least. When she learned from overhearing a guard's conversation that they meant to execute her, she started to panic. She barely made a move when the guards unlocked the cell and came to get her. Till this day she don't know why this one guard, a lion, took pity on her and offered her a last drink from the gourd tied on his hip. She'd had alcohol before, the type of watered down ale that was on offer in most inns and taverns along the road, but this was something different. It was much more potent than anything she had ever drank before. And while she didn't

know the name of it at the time, she learned the smooth burn of whiskey quite well later on. Her paws gripped the gourd for dear life, her claws digging into the outside rind as she drank and drank and drank. The lion's conscience didn't account for losing so much of his later revelry and he yanked it back from her paws, some of the whiskey dribbling out onto the ground in front of her in a small puddle.

But it was too late, y'see. There was a swelling feeling burning up from the inside of Rhea's whole being. She could feel the ends of her fur stand on end with the buzzing potential of it.

She played it cool until they had unlocked her hands and feet from the side of the dungeon wall. They kicked her to get her to stand and she slowly raised her head from looking down to meet their eyes. She winked with a crackle of energy and then she was gone. In the outline of dust that exploded out from her dash, they clamored to get their bearings. They shouldn'ta bothered trying, Rhea was too fast for any of them to keep up with as she zipped around the walls of the dungeon. Each of the guards lunged at her as she ran along the sides of the walls and each in turn knocked themselves out on the cool stone of her prison. She gathered them all up in a heap and used the chains they bound her with to tie them in nice and snug-like. And then she stole the keys from their belts and quick as you

please freed all the other prisoners. If she was gonna get out, then they were gonna get out too. No reason to let anyone else die in this cold and lonely place.

She knew the others wouldn't be able to make it up the many stairs to the surface before someone checked on the guards. So she came up with a hare-brained scheme that could save 'em all. She used the rags and remains of all of their clothes and tied together a long string of fabric to her waist. Then she turned to each of them and told 'em to grab onto the makeshift rope and not let go when she gave the signal. She crouched her legs down as low as she could get them and concentrated real hard. Then with a mighty jump, she sprang into the air towards the ceiling. The other prisoners grabbed on and Rhea burst through the ceiling in a shower of sparks and light. She rocketed through the earth until she popped out the top with a crash and a bang louder than a thunderclap. Landing was a bit rough, but there was a grove of trees nearby that caught their fall. Rhea whizzed up and down the branches until they were all safe on the ground. Then with a quick nod, she dashed off. She passed out in a field after running for hours in her fur and nothing else!

When she came to, she felt like her head was splitting down the middle, but she knew once and for all how to tap into her magic. And so she got back on that trail

planning to make the most of it. She had a tougher time of it, for sure, seein' as how she was wanted both for the crimes she didn't do and the huge breakout she did. But Rhea was ready to show them just what a jackalope could really do.

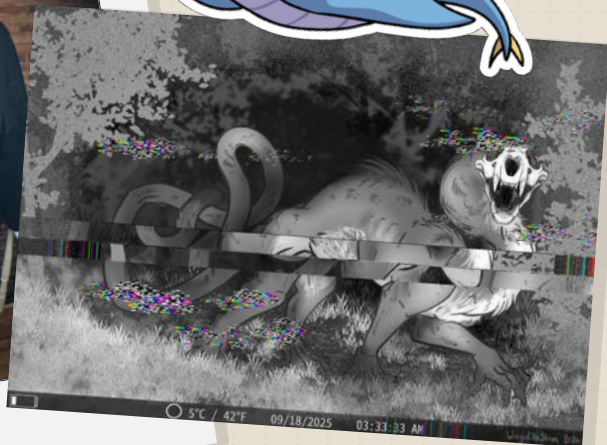
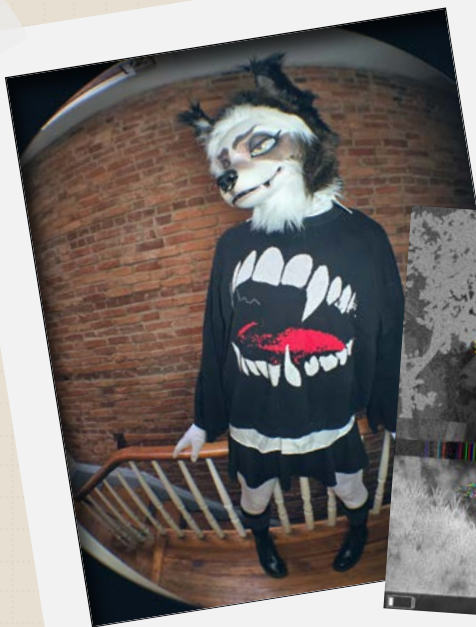
And that's the truth, I swear on my Mama's last croaking breath. Now iff'n you want to know the rest, you ought to ask her yerself. I already feel bad mentionin' what I did to you.

How do you find her? Ain't you been paying attention at all? You don't! She's more likely to find you than you find her. But if you're serious, then you follow her legends. Follow the stories told 'bout her from town to town and you just might see her. Don't be expectin' an easy ride on the prairie when you do. She's been in enough scrapes to outwit anybody fool enough to try.

What'd you say? Speak up son, so I can hear ya better.

Oh, you're not "just anybody", huh? Well you let me know how that goes when she gets a drink in her and gets it in her mind that you ain't worth the trouble. Now I do believe our business be concludin', so go on and git, afore I lose my hospitable nature.

He's a strange one, never seen a rabbit with that many teeth. But if he says he's kin with Rhea, what's an old toad to disagree?



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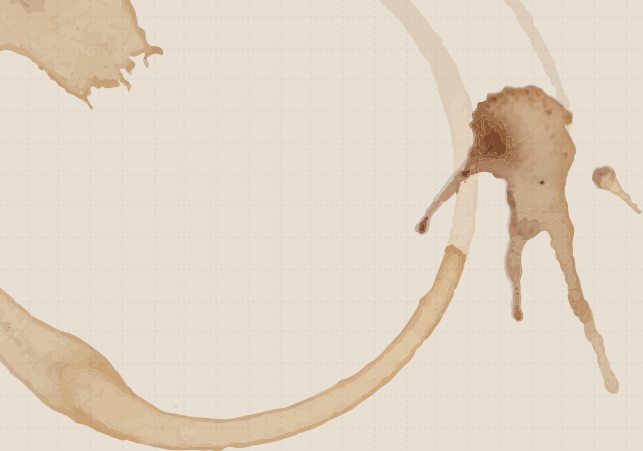
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# Reflection of You

REDSHADOWDRAGON

It was the last week for a project that's been gnawing at you: being assigned to write or make a video essay about a specific piece of folklore in your region. Your first thought was perusing a library at your leisure. However, nothing really jumped out at you at first. Finding a stack of old newspapers from decades ago, you started to flip through them. Most of them were either things unrelated to your research or drama from decades ago; you could have sworn it was taunting you at this point. However, on one of the final articles in the back of the second-to-last newspaper in the stack, an unheard-of rumor jumps out at you. It spread throughout town back in the day, mainly among those who thought it was a complete farce because anything could be doctored, even back then. Testimonies stated that a phantom that can be seen only when alone in an abandoned mining town, an unlikely story for anyone wanting to ensure no one could ever prove it. Reading on, there was a small artist's

depiction of the phantasmagorical figure, about six and a half feet tall, the size of a man, with wings, antennae, and astonishing, sharp, red, beady eyes. Feeling slightly reminded of something familiar with this depiction, you could not put a finger on it, however.

You chalked this all up to speculation and thought it was some playground rumor meant to get people talking. However, there was an additional photo in the newspaper that seemed to be from an old mining town, of a lost-to-history estate owned by a wealthy family. This added more credibility to the rumor. Curious about where this mining estate was, you dove into parsing old map records to sift through it. It was situated on the outskirts of a state highway, not far away. However, one small detail brought you from thinking this might be a folklore story. Recently, you heard on small community boards that, while driving at night, they briefly saw

something humanoid on the side of the road before it vanished. You have always had a fascination with the unknown, even when the subject is creepy and unnerving. The desire to prove this to yourself leads you to research further into where this mining town was. Wanting to prove that the claims are true, you thought that video documentation of the entire area was a way to get some credibility in your studies and earn some praise for your hard work.

Finally, having something to move forward with on your project, you drove to the site listed on the old map at dawn on your next free day. Once parked, you held your camera up and started recording, breathing heavily as you observed that the footage was slightly blurred, with only the awning of the sun and your flashlight as light sources. Trekking into the depths of an overgrown path in the forest, bypassing a gate with seemingly no other signs than "Pathway Closed". The path was packed full of trees, moss, and branches that snapped under your foot, causing you to flinch for a moment. Listening in for any wails that might be present, you kept to yourself, only anchored by the video camera, and flashlight in your other hand. to find this old small little mining estate, you noticed along the way the entrance of an underground mine, but it was completely caved in, almost intentionally with all the jagged rocks that were piled in the front

of the entrance, ensuring whatever was in there was not getting out without some substantial effort. In the distance, you spotted a few dilapidated houses, way beyond any reasonable repair. Yet one of them, the main estate, wasn't in much of a state of disrepair, so deciding to head there would be the best course of action to start your investigation, especially since that was the one you had recollected in the photograph beforehand.

The squeak of the floorboards intensifies as you wander through the old estate, abandoned decades ago in the once-thriving mining society. Ash and dust stir to life as you brush your hand over the railing of the rickety staircase, losing your balance as you almost tripped over a hole that formed from the rotting wood where your left foot landed. Consequently, as you regained focus, a faint chirp echoed throughout the estate as you secured your footing. Thinking it was just some small creature that made its home here, you ignored it at first, pressing on up to the second floor of the estate. There, you thought, surely would be some insight into the history of this estate.

Meandering throughout the floor, your flashlight flickers at random intervals, hitting the flashlight to regain your main source of light to ensure you were able to get footage of this house, and, admittedly, not wanting to be standing in the dark.

Eventually, you come across the estate's main office, which, once you open the old wooden door, another chirp echoes throughout the hall behind you. A shiver runs down your spine; it sounds nothing like anything you've heard before. Commencing an investigation of the office, you found a large desk with memorabilia of the mine's achievements scattered around the room, half-hazardously. You infer they left without much notice, given the room's messy state.

Investigating the ornate desk, all that was there was dust that blew into your face as you reached down. Opting to check the first drawer, you found a few folders and some office supplies. Parsing through them, a brief incident report caught your eye; it was about a human-like insectoid creature spotted by the estate owner's son. Fearing for his life, they made the rash decision to eliminate the creature as they ran away by using explosives inside the mine. The mine collapsed, and not long after, everyone had to abandon the premises. Civilians attest that after the collapse, the creature's chirps began haunting the dreams of anyone in the town, causing paranoia.

Attempting to gain more insight by flipping through another file with shallow breaths, you felt a tinge of something passing you from the right side of the desk. Turning around with a small creak of the floorboard, you attempted

to grasp the wooden office chair to ground yourself.

Surely, that was just your mind playing tricks on you. As the moments passed, it only felt like something coming closer and closer, emanating its presence towards you. Gazing upwards, you flashed your flashlight towards the noise. You gasped and shuddered in fear; you knew exactly what you were witnessing. The insectoid-like phantom screeched, as its beady eyes stared into your very soul. Bracing your ears to deafen the noise, dropping your camera in the process, everything around you flashed; the sheer brightness of the room closed your eyes, and you lost track of the phantom.

After a few moments, you opened your eyes, hoping that the flash-bang of lights was over. Your flashlight fell onto the ground, shining towards the files you needed to prove your project's thesis, and you swiftly snatched them and pulled them to your chest. Then everything went dark around you, aside from the beady eyes of the phantom being the sole source of light in the now pitch-black room, staring directly at the documents you grabbed, with clear animosity. Attempting to flee towards the office entrance, your only way out was blocked by the horrific figure in front of you. Glass scattered across the ground as it wailed from your attempt, echoing throughout the estate, shaking you to your core.

The imposing presence watched your movements like a hawk. It seemed to sense something inside of you, was it fear, animosity, or something more primal? Nevertheless, you needed to get out of here; there was no clear path, with your only exit being blockaded. Realizing that the phantom was staring almost exclusively at the documents, taking a few moments to assess, you assumed it was angry at the family that had cast it aside and executed the creature, not at you directly. Even so, you weren't sure if you made an enemy of the creature for trying to decipher and steal the documents for yourself for selfish reasons. As fear gripped your soul, your breath quickened and your body tensed, and an intense stare-down ensued with the insectoid. You settled to go for something irrational, with a lighter you had in your pocket, and the only clear source of irritation was the report, which only appeared once you read the report. Even if it's something you knew you needed for your project, especially lost history. The idea of it existing without anyone knowing about it, but as soon as it's discovered, it's a public enemy, and swept under the rug with rubble. made you sympathize with the phantom

You decided to erase history and possibly set the creature free from its anguish, despite what you stood to gain. Holding the lighter, flicking it on, as the flame breathed to life. Slowly lifting the flame up to the reports, the paper's edges fell to the ground as it shifted to ash. Never

to be seen by another, ever again, it wasn't something people needed to verify. There were enough rumors about the beady-eyed creature to last decades, and that was enough for you. However, once the last of the paper flowed away across the wooden floor, you witnessed the phantom finally stop staring. Its beady eyes shifted towards you, before stepping towards you, and grabbing your hand, and chirping yet again, in celebration.

The next moment was a flash; however, you couldn't quite tell where you were—the ambiance of wildlife, plants, and the shifting rustle of trees. Struggling to get up, you're unsure how to stand properly, but you manage after a few attempts. As you did so, a thumping noise behind you drew your attention to your backside, yet you couldn't quite tell if it was your imagination or not. Your senses were completely overwhelmed at this moment, being able to hear and smell the smallest of details you swore you weren't able to before.

A small yet shimmering moonlit pond caught your gaze, thinking it might be a good time to witness if you're in a delusion. Peeking upon yourself in the clear water, you gaze upon a reflection that wasn't human for sure. Yet at the same time, you knew this was you. This creature, a reflection of yourself, gazed back at you with a warm smile. It was up to you now. Survive in fear of what you've become, or thrive in the night as a creature, ready to embrace the wild side of the night.



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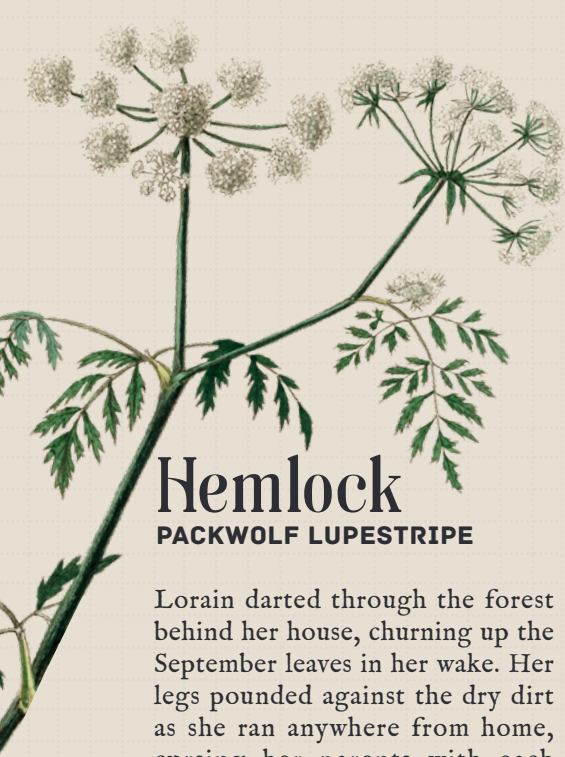
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# Hemlock

**PACKWOLF LUPESTRIPE**

Lorain darted through the forest behind her house, churning up the September leaves in her wake. Her legs pounded against the dry dirt as she ran anywhere from home, cursing her parents with each passing step. It was the same old arguments day after day, the same feeling of dislocation that sat heavy in her chest.

How could she confess who she was to them when they didn't understand her at all?

She cut deep into the trees, hoping to lose herself completely. She wanted to be as lost as she felt.

Twenty minutes later, she skidded to a halt by the shore of an unfamiliar lake. She leaned on the trunk of a tree and stared out at the expanse of water before her. Golden flecks of sunlight kissed the surface, casting a shimmering trail from one side to the other. She followed it up to the mountains that fringed the opposite bank and desperately wished she could ascend there.

She stared back into the water, blinking at the blinding light. Her gaze caught her sorry reflection looking back at her, a mirage of everything she was. Every other second, the waves interfered with the image, transforming her into something new. Yet when she blinked again, she still saw the same masculine-looking dog staring straight back.

A tear ran down her cheek, followed by a second and a third. Her chest started to heave and she collapsed onto the earth. Tucking her head between her legs, she tried to catch her breath, but all she could do was break down and sob.

She twisted her tail around her body and curled into a ball, rocking herself slowly. She sniffed, catching the balsamic scent of hemlock in the air, but not even the warm autumnal scents could break her from her malaise. Her tears dripped softly to the floor, with all the futility of watering dying leaves. She would lie and decay there too, if she had the choice.

“Why are you here?” a soft voice lilted on the breeze. “Why do you feel how I feel?”

“Who’s there?” Lorain said, standing up swiftly. She turned to face the way she had come. The fading light cast specters through the trees, but she could distinguish no shape through the curtain of tears.

“I, like you, have lived here many years. And I, like you, dare not show my true face. No one has come here looking for me and I have not shown myself in many a year. Yet here I now am, talking to you. And here you now are, looking for me.”

“I’m not looking for you,” Lorain said defensively. “I don’t know who you are.”

“Then why are you here? Didn’t your heart guide you to this place?”

Lorain thought for a second.

“I...I don’t know,” she admitted. “What are you, anyway?”

“What I am isn’t important. What’s important is we’re here now.”

Lorain heard a shuffling behind her and picked up a stick.

“Stay back!” she snapped. “Don’t think I won’t hurt you!”

“Please,” the voice said just as calmly as before. “I wish you no harm. Sit, and tell me your tale.”

Lorain wiped the tears on her sleeve, but still could not see the creature who spoke. She stared through the forest, the evening sun

casting long shadows over the leaf-strewn earth. She checked her watch and shuddered.

“I...I should probably go,” she said. “The sun will set soon and I have to get back. My parents will be worried and I’m not sure where I am.”

“Tell me your tale,” the voice repeated. “Please keep me company. I’m lonely like you.”

A sharp pang shot through Lorain and her muzzle quivered. She scoured every direction for the owner of the voice, but all she could see was the lake and the trees.

“W...W...Where are you?” she said.

“I’m in my home and you are my guest. Please tell me what brought you here.”

“Who are you?”

“I could ask you the same.”

Lorain turned the question in her head. Three simple words with so many clear answers. Three simple words with no clear answer at all.

“Please,” the voice persisted. “Talk to me. I know how you feel.”

“You don’t know how I feel!” Lorain snapped. “How could you possibly know how I feel?! I don’t even know who you are!!”

Lorain’s heart beat in her temple and for a second, she thought she’d scared the creature off. Then the voice mocked her once again.

“Do you not spend every day ashamed of how you look? Are you not always hiding in plain sight, living an act that gets harder with

each passing day? Do you not wish for a body different to the one you currently have, yet fear you'd be ugly and it won't resolve how you feel?"

The air became heavy, coiling around Lorain like a snake. She sensed a dryness in her mouth, yet the voice continued its taunts. The wind picked up, but Lorain didn't notice, for she was buffeted by the words coming out of the ether.

"No, I know exactly how you feel," the voice continued. "Because it's exactly how I've felt for hundreds of years."

"That's not true!" Lorain sobbed. "THAT'S NOT TRUE!!"

She stamped on the ground, the tempest swirling around her, but its energy was soon spent. She slumped to the floor, collapsing into the realization. The rustling leaves provided the only counterpoint to Lorain's cries, which quietened with each passing second of acceptance.

"It's not true," she whimpered. "It's just not true."

Lorain tucked herself into a ball again and rocked slowly back and forth, thinking about the frustrations that had got her to this point. The silence consumed her, hanging over her like a sword, while her brain struggled to parse the truth she'd always known.

Then a thought flashed through her mind.

"How do I know I can trust you? I still don't know who you are."

The silence lay even heavier.

"If I show myself, will that put your fears to rest?"

"Maybe. But you said you haven't shown yourself for many years. Why show yourself now?"

"No one has come looking for me in that time. At least, no one I can trust."

"And you think you can trust me?"

"I think we feel the same. I'm happy to take that chance. But please, don't recoil when you see my true form."

"O...okay," Lorain said.

"Promise?"

"I promise."

Lorain squinted into the gloaming, her eyes still moist with errant tears. In the periphery of her vision, the scrub parted, and a small warty creature came into view. It shuffled towards her, a trail of tears in its wake. It smiled meekly, its snout quivering, gripped by a fear of rejection that Lorain understood only too well.

The tension seemed to last forever, but it must have only been seconds as the two creatures sized each other up. Before Lorain could start speaking, the cryptid cut in.

"Let me tell you something about the forest," it began. "There are two types of hemlock growing in these woods. They may share the same name, but they are very different plants. The first is a flowering variety called conium maculatum while the second is a coniferous tree known as the Tsuga."

Lorain nodded.

“*Conium maculatum* is poisonous whereas the *Tsuga* is not. The smell of their foliage is what led to the confusion. The senses can be deceiving, but that doesn’t change who you are. Don’t live with your poison when you could be evergreen.”

The dog sat in silence, taking this in. She wiped further tears on the back of her sleeve.

“I’m Lorain,” she said, raising her paw. “Thank you for coming out, I know it must have been hard.”

The creature smiled and nodded.

“So, who are you?”

“I am the Squonk. I have lived here forever. This is my home, the only one I have known.”

“And what are you?”

“Just the Squonk. I am the only one of my kind, but I feel you and I are not too dissimilar. Like you, my skin is ill-fitting. Like you, I despise how I look. Like you, I spend every day weeping, wishing it all could be different.”

Lorain looked the creature up and down before staring into its watering eyes. She smiled in sympathy, seeing elements of herself reflected painfully back.

“Can it be different?” she asked.

“It can be for you. There is one major difference between you and I. I cannot change; this is my curse. I am forever condemned to be who I am. But you have the power to be whoever you want. You just have to

have the courage to realize it. And I’m sure when you do, it will be the most beautiful thing in the world.”

“Why can’t it be true for you?”

“I am tied to this forest with no power to change, running scared of my shadow, let alone my reflection.”

“Everyone deserves happiness. Why not you too?”

The Squonk sighed. “I don’t know, this is how it’s always been. But that doesn’t mean it has to be this way for you.”

Lorain felt more tears welling in her eyes at the Squonk’s sad tale.

“I understand,” she whispered. “Thank you for showing me.”

“I must go now,” the Squonk continued, “but I’m glad I met you Lorain. I’m glad you gave me the opportunity to help. You’ve given me more happiness than I’ve had in hundreds of years.”

Lorain sniffed, trying to hold back the tears.

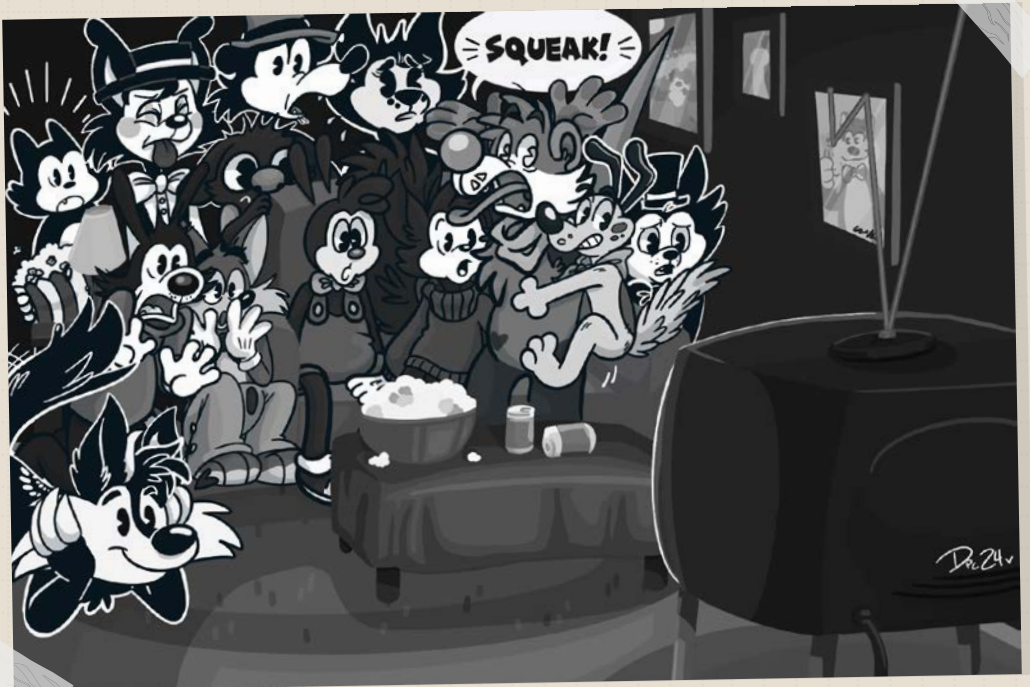
“Please heed my advice. Don’t live as unhappily as I. Cast yourself free and live your best life. And please let your loved ones help you out too.”

“I will,” Lorain whispered, her eyes welling up as the Squonk dissolved itself in its own tears. “Will I ever see you again?”

“I’ll always be here, should you ever wish to return,” the Squonk said as it faded from view. “I cannot wait to see everything you become.”









# Definitely Real Cryptid Proverbs

By Dee Cee  
With apologies to Matt Groening



Garrulous Mothman proverb



Jaded Sasquatch proverb



Anakinian Jackalope proverb



Pessimistic Squonk proverb



Pragmatic Chupacabra proverb



Universal Jersey Devil proverb

# And Through the Cracks, the Flowers

## VIGNETTE

On the last day of its life, the Elytrian Phasmid decided that it would be seen.

It had never been seen by a person. Not even once. And now its scythe-like legs creaked, and its compound vision was a lattice of a thousand blurry worlds. Its head ached, and its eyes were sore, and it knew that the next time they closed, they would never open again.

So, on the dawn of its last day, it left the reeds and went down to the village.

On the way, it found a flower. It had seen the humans bring each other flowers, and so it plucked one with its mandibles, and thought about eating it only twice.

When it reached the village, dawn was breaking. The phasmid scythed-walked to the door of the closest house, raised a leg, and knocked.

The door creaked open and light spilled out.

“Hullo?” Behind the door was a pot-bellied man who smelled of fish and ferns. He squinted directly at the phasmid. “Anyone there?”

The phasmid perked its antennae and presented the flower.

The man grunted. “Daggum kids...”

And then he closed the door, and the morning was dark, and crickets chirped in the distance. The phasmid tilted its head.

It walked, breeze-like, to the next door. And it knocked, and waited, and balanced the flower upright between its mandibles.

“Hmm?” mumbled the woman who opened it. She looked straight at the phasmid, blinking sleep from her eyes. “Hullo?”

The phasmid chattered, and the door thunked shut, and the morning was dark again. Little weights weighed down the phasmid’s antennae.

So it went with the next door: “Hullo?”

And the next: “Hullo?”

And the next: “Hullo?”

And before the sun had crested the hill, the phasmid had visited every door in town, and had not been seen even once.

The morning sun boiled the air as the phasmid trudged back to the lake. Mud stuck to its spindly limbs, and flies settled on its face. Pulling its legs out of the muck got harder

with each step. Its joints ached, and its jaw was sore, and it let the flower fall into the mud. It sat on its haunches by the lake and looked down.

A thousand blurry phasmids looked back up at it. Their carapaces were frayed, and their eyes were cloudy, and their front right legs had grown in wrong. Their mandibles were chipped on one side.

The sky was a wide, blue sea.

From behind, a voice: "Hullo?"

The phasmid chittered dully.

Something small and warm grabbed its back leg.

The phasmid spun. Its limbs wound like clockwork, independent of each other, and behind it stood a thousand blurry copies of a small fox girl holding a muddy rose.

"I think you dropped this," she said.

A thousand forgotten joys flooded the world. The sun warmed its carapace; fresh berries burst in its mandibles. Its head was clear as day. Its antennae relished the air. It pranced and leaped and bounced around the girl, dewy grass licking its legs, and it was young and spry and the sky had never been bluer.

And it spoke, using the sounds of reeds and waves and clicks of its mandibles. You can see me you can see me you can see me.

"Course I can," said the girl. "You're the size of a horse."

The phasmid let out a trill so high that it fell down.

As it sat back up, the small girl stepped closer.

"My name is Gloria," she said. "What's yours?"

The phasmid tilted its head. Then it rubbed its legs and clicked its mandibles and mimicked the sound of wind whispering through the reeds, and slender limbs wrapping around its long-ago mate's carapace, and their hearts thumping as one.

And when it was done, its song trailed off in a sorrowful aria.

"Why are you sad?" the girl asked.

No one can see me, whisper-clicked the phasmid.

The girl furrowed her pudgy brow and thought for a while. "When I want people to notice me," she finally said, "I put on a play. I make sets and puppets, and I put it on in the town square. Then they have to notice."

The phasmid's antennae perked up.

Gloria bounced a little. "Do you want to make a play?"

The phasmid looked down and rubbed its forelegs together.

I'm not sure how.

"Here." She wrapped a hand around its reed-thin leg. "I'll show you."

They went together into the forest as the sun rose high in the sky.

The first thing about a play, said Gloria as they ducked under branches and clambered over logs, was the story. And she said more, but as soon as she said that, the phasmid knew what it would be.

The story went like this: There once was a phasmid who was very lonely and very hungry. He ate and ate anything that looked like reeds, until one day he accidentally bit another phasmid's front right leg off. The other phasmid ran away. Then next year, the phasmid saw another phasmid whose front right leg had grown back wrong. He chased her and she ran away again. But then the phasmid had an idea. He sat down and he chewed his own leg off. And when it had grown back, he approached her a third time, and she did not run away, and he nuzzled her and they danced the same wobbly dance and he put a flower crown on her head. And then they were mates forever.

"Do we really need the part about him eating his own leg?" asked Gloria. The phasmid assured her it was very important.

As the sun peaked overhead, they made sets.

Gloria could not walk on water, so the phasmid gathered the reeds. But then it ate all the reeds, so it needed to gather more. This happened a few times. Finally it skated back to shore, where the girl had made little twisted strings of grass to bundle them.

Does that mean I can't carry them in my mouth?, clicked the phasmid.

"If you did," asked Gloria, packing together balls of mud, "would you eat them?" Gloria carried the reeds.

As the sun crept lower, they made puppets. The girl gathered sticks, and the phasmid tried to help, but it couldn't hold them. Instead, it hunted spiderwebs. Its joints began to ache, so it sat down in front of one web and slowly unwound it, until globs of sticky silk were wrapped around both its forelegs.

The girl hated spiders. She sat under a tree while the phasmid stuck the sticks together with globs of silk.

By the time they were stuck together, the sun hung low in the sky.

Won't your parents be missing you by now?, the phasmid stridulated as the girl picked flowers.

The girl cocked her head. "No," she said, after a moment. Then she plucked a rose and wove it into the crown.

The phasmid tried to help, but its legs wouldn't knit. They were creaky and stiff. Instead, the girl made it tear up some flowers.

Why do we tear up the flowers?

"For confetti," said the girl, her blond hair tinged orange by the setting sun. "It's not a real play without confetti."

Finally, as the sky smoldered, everything was ready.

The phasmid stumbled as they walked into town. There were people talking and people eating, and none of them looked at them. Not even at Gloria. Its heart pattered. Its breath rattled.

Are you sure this will work?, it chittered.

"Now," said Gloria, sticking reeds into mud. "When I say 'for eternity', you drop the confetti."

Then she pulled back the curtain, which was two parts of an old bag the phasmid had chewed through, and they began.

The he-phasmid trotted in from the left. He swayed on strings of silk, and when it was time for him to eat the reeds, the phasmid leaned down and masticated them itself.

On a nearby bench, a lion and a cheetah continued their conversation.

Gloria was supposed to control the she-phasmid. But she yakked when

she touched the silk, so instead the phasmid played both, and Gloria did the voices and sound effects. She ran around the set, snapping twigs when the he-phasmid ate the she-phasmid's leg, jumping up and down and stomping as the she-phasmid ran away.

A deer leaned against a lantern-post, staring straight through them.

It was time for the he-phasmid's big scene. It rubbed its forelegs together and although they were stiff, they did not ache. He chirped the song of the birds, then, and the fish, and the frogs, and the water lilies. He chittered mournfully, and a thousand suns set fire to a thousand horizons, and a thousand couples found each other.

And the two phasmid's danced, kissed by swaying reeds, and they were here and now and forever.

Gloria lowered a flower crown onto the she-phasmid's head.

"And they were together," she proclaimed, "for eternity!"

The phasmid tossed up its legs, and rainbows showered upon the square.

It held the two puppets together, tangled in their webby embrace. Then it straightened its creaky neck, and it shook the petals from its head.

The square was empty. Every lantern was out. Every door was closed.

Shredded flower petals floated, lifeless, on a sea of bricks.

Only crickets bore them witness.

The phasmid's antennae drooped.

Aches spiderwebbed through its legs then. Holding up the puppets was a lot of work, so it let them fall. Standing up was a lot of work too. And sitting. And keeping its head up.

A thousand town squares were very dark, and very empty.

Something warm wrapped around its leg.

"Are you okay?" Gloria asked.

The phasmid did not speak. Speaking was too much. Instead, it stretched out its legs, cracking and popping like a thousand sticks underclaw, and draped them over the girl's shoulders.

She paused for only a moment, then laid down curled up against its stomach. Crickets chirped. Fireflies flickered.

Every breath was exhausting.

On its third try, the phasmid convinced its limbs to stridulate.

Why didn't they notice?

Gloria thought. "Sometimes they don't."

Air burned the phasmid's lungs. If they'd seen it, it stridulated, do you think they would've liked it?

"Iunno."

The phasmid tried to move its legs. Then it tried again. The air weighed a million pounds, and its muscles were made of flimsy grass. It couldn't figure out how to move them. The sky was a deep purple ocean, compressing it beneath its heavy waters.

Then, with a deep inhale, it stridulated.

Did you like it?

Gloria thought about that.

"Yes," she said finally. Her voice warbled through the ocean.

"I liked the story." The phasmid let out a deep breath, and its neck untensed.

"And I liked gathering reeds by the water."

Its breathing slowed.

"And I liked how you handled the spiderwebs," she mumbled, a melody of bursting bubbles. "They were really scary."

Its headache eased. Its eyes fluttered. The water melted the tension away, and the weight, and all of a sudden, it was calm.

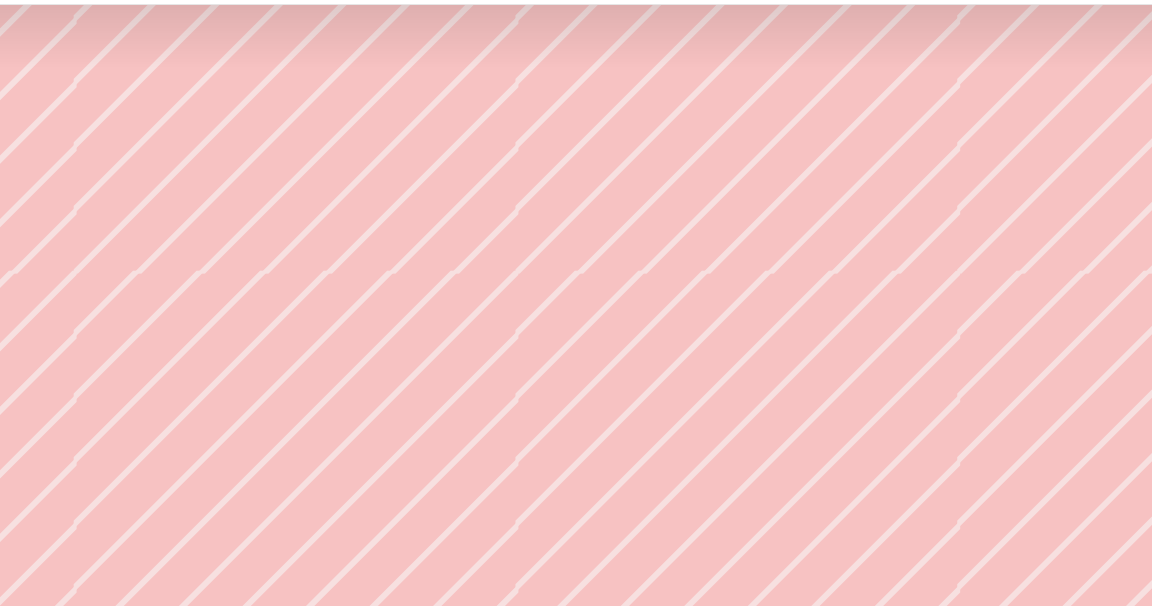
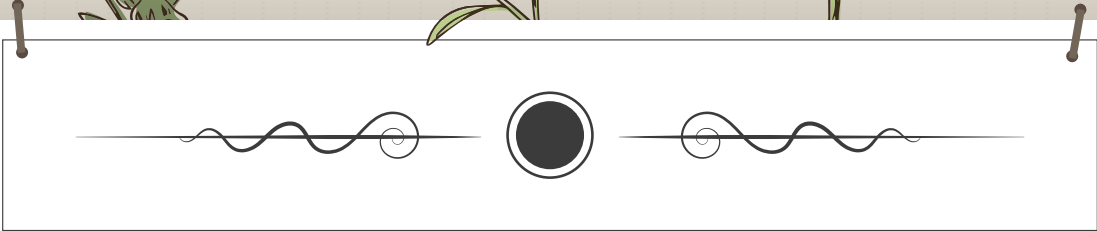
"And even though he was made of sticks and spiders, I'm glad he had a happy ending."

More words came. Ripples, bubbling through the water. But they were muffled, and it let them drift by. The thin threads of time unwound, and the tyranny of gravity was conquered, and the sky whirled into a slow, burbling vortex that pulled it slowly upwards.

“Next time,” whispered Gloria, “I think you’ll get a flower crown too.”

The sky sparkled with shattered diamonds. Quiet calmed the waters; peace stilled the breeze. Only a breeze disrupted the silence. It wound through the streets, past closed doors and shaded windows, around fences and slumbering lantern-posts, and found the square, and the girl, and, kindly and gentle, hugged her and pulled a column of dust up from a bed of bumpy bricks.

And through the cracks, the flowers.







Creatures, Critters, and Cryptids of Anthrocon,

# Next Stop: NYC FurMeets



nycfurmeets.org



The collage features a large crowd at an event with a rainbow flag, a person in a furry costume, and a person in a futuristic or sci-fi costume. The NYC FurMeets logo is a stylized white paw print on a colorful circular background.



**STATIIK**



The background of the STATIIK logo is a collage of colorful, abstract patterns including halftone dots in teal, pink, and red, and geometric shapes in blue and red.

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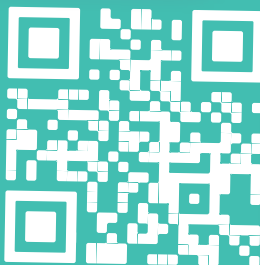
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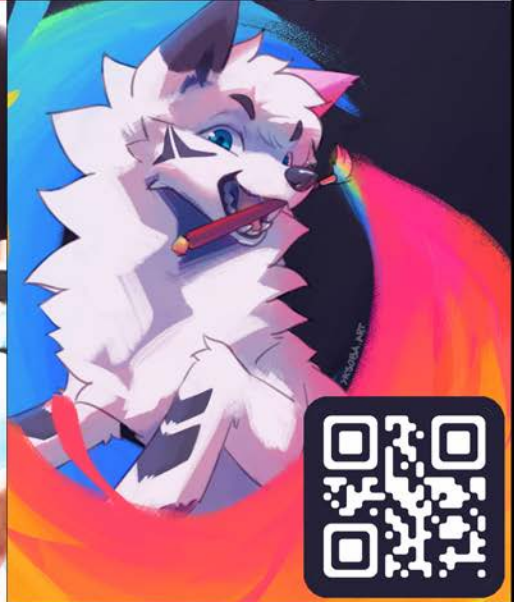


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 Furries at UCLA



**Triton Tails** (UCSD; x SDF)



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**Furries at Stanford**



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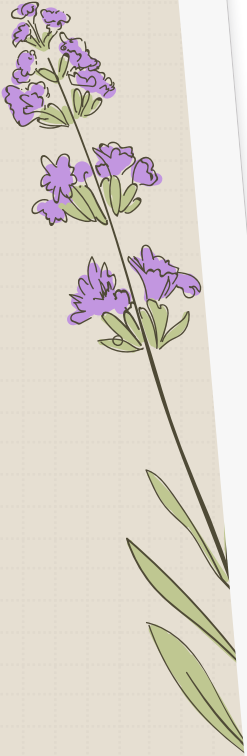
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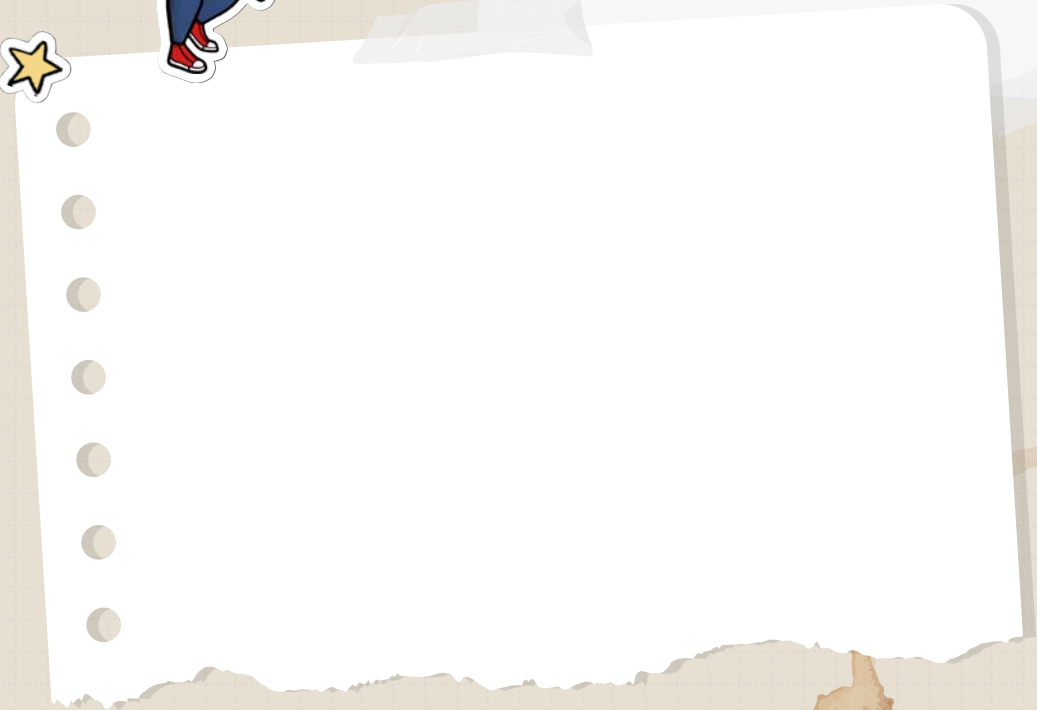


QR Code Art: @DF\_Lemons  
Design: @Carbon\_the\_Wolf  
Event Photos: @BerkeleyFurries




# Adventures at AC





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