

Crystal Ball of Sixles City

by DM Superelf

In the City of Sixles, Crystal Balls are quite common, and most are of the Sixles City variety. Crystal Balls of Sixles City can be used as a communication and information accessing device. Sixles City Crystal Balls are connected to the Arcanet, a magical information network (like a rudimentary and limited form of internet). The Arcanet is a phenomenon local to the central North Aentic continent, mostly confined to Sixles City but also occasionally accessed in Eindolphilius, Iril, The Society of Advanced Thought and The Holy City of Ulendar. Local businesses advertise there, a handful of channels broadcast via the Arcanet, and last but not least the Arcanet is home to its own social media network known as YouTwitFace.



YouTwitFace is manipulated by voice and pointing at images that appear in the crystal ball with one's finger as opposed to a mouse. The text in most entries is limited to 10 words or less, and these entries will usually have just captions or titles. A high-level spell seems to be necessary to create posts of 10 words or longer, but it is unknown to this sage what that spell would be.

Short scenes of moving pictures of a minute or less can also be recorded via a [Communication Gem](#) or [Gem of Transmission](#) (q.v.). These scenes can be of any event that the user of the aforementioned gem sees and will show up to a minute of the sights and sounds that the gem owner records, no matter how trivial.

The Communication Gem is mentioned elsewhere; it enables users of 2 or more of these devices to see and hear what the other(s) is/are experiencing. It can function as a real-time communication device or it can record up to a minute of sight and sound, as mentioned. These short, captured bits of sound and audio are called, by some, "Mo-mo Clips".

Mo-mo clips can be recorded by other Crystal Balls of Sixles City, Gems of Transmission, or by other magical means. These clips form the bulk of the content on YouTwitFace, and thus a form of limited social media is maintained. Replies to "posts" are facilitated by the poster recording a sound or video clip or writing a 1 to 10-word response.

Heyonor, a young local musician, had this to say about the Arcanet and YouTwitFace [*Author's Note: Heyonor is the main character in the forthcoming first novel of the Sixles Adventures, "Incident at Posh Point".*]:

"The Arcanet is a magical information system invented by the Arcane Guild. It's kind of like a big library that you can see with a crystal ball. It's like, you record voices, scenes, pictures, and scrolls on it. Then, anyone with a Sixles Crystal Ball can see it. There's lots of entries on there, so you have to know what you're looking for. In addition to the library, there's also shows going on on there too. Most are recorded before you see them, but some are happening right as you watch. Like when somebody's car is hopping around and about to explode and then it punches him in the face. Anyone with a Sixles Crystal Ball or a Gem of

Transmission can record that shit and put it on YouTwitFace.

YouTwitFace is a special part of the Arcanet. People can just record anything and put it there. People record video scenes, talking, or pictures, sometimes even writing on a scroll. They put it on YouTwitFace, and others can comment on it. I can only imagine what they're saying about the footage of me and my car.”

The Arcanet was originally created by the wizard Algor of the Sixles City Wizard's Guild. Now ridiculously rich, he created the Arcanet as a business enterprise, a means of mass communication that would help the citizens of the city to communicate with each other and the outside world, help the guild attract new members, and help to line his pockets. A few years after its creation, a new “parchment” appeared called YouTwitFace (a parchment on the Arcanet is the equivalent of a web page on the internet).

Also around this time, an odd figure began quickly gaining fame on the Arcanet, the living ghost of an unusual ogre named Gawgl. Gawgl was, quite uncharacteristically for an ogre, gifted with extraordinary intelligence and became a sage. Upon his death a few years ago he was able to transfer his life force into a YouTwitFace page, and now he lives on in his own virtual magical realm, dispensing information to whoever asks it. His knowledge seems to know no limits, although he is sometimes wrong, just occasionally. Gawgl is a happy and jovial fellow, which also sets him apart from his ogrekin. His exuberant and friendly manner of answering questions has earned him the adoration of hundreds of thousands of fans in the Tri-City-State area, and it has earned him the hate of a few.

Gawgl can be accessed at any time by owners of a Crystal Ball of Sixles City, but his answers are only about 90% reliable (it is suggested that DM's who use the Crystal Ball of Sixles City in their game use this to their advantage occasionally to mislead players when desired for a plot device, rather than just letting the dice decide).

Gawgl is also very busy, due to being asked lots of questions constantly by hundreds of thousands of people. Any answers asked only have a 10% chance of being answered immediately. Use the following table to determine the timeliness of his answer:

d% Roll	Time Until Answer Is Received
01-10	Immediate
11-20	1d20 rounds
21-50	5d30 turns
51-80	1d10 hours
81-96	1d4 days
97-00	Never

Gawgl is an enigma; he's an ogre, but an extraordinarily friendly one. He possesses



genius-level intelligence, but talks more like a typical ogre. A typical conversation with Gawgl would go something like this:

“Uh, hi fellas! Haw, haw!” (waves his fat ogre fingers)

“Er, hello Gawgl. We were wondering, what’s the capital of Valinak?”

“Haw! Dat’s easy, I know dat wun. Ahh, dey had a big town in da center wif thirty thouzin undead an hoominoids but den dey built a big fortress city in da moun’inz called um, Iris Eustachia. All da most powaful hoomanoids an undead spell castahs is dere. Dere’s sixty thouzin at da last censiss. Da primary export of Iris Eustachia is rusted pikes an bagged cattle fartz.”

Also on the Arcanet are a few other parchments worth mentioning:

TV shows - A few regularly-appearing shows are broadcast via the Crystals Ball of Sixles City. In the City Center, close to the Market Square, Skyport, and the entrance to the Portal Square and Eindolphilius, is the Viewing Pavilion. Several very large (3’ diameter and bigger) Sixles Crystal Balls are installed here, with seating for at least a thousand. Many people who can’t afford or find a Crystal Ball of Sixles City congregate here and watch their favorite shows. A few of these are:

Sixles News Network (SNN): Perhaps these excerpts from my own campaign logbook can best describe SNN and a few of the other shows;

“Naranzim says “Algor”, and suddenly a sign for a tavern or shop appears in view in the crystal ball, reading “Giorno’s Pizza”. The view slowly pans down and rotates to show a crowded cobblestone-covered street where some strange mechanized vehicles are traveling with a few horses and carts. The view pans further and shows a woman in fine clothing and holding a staff with a blue gem on top. She begins speaking into the gem and appears to be delivering a news report. She talks about various local events, a sale at Gonzo’s Emporium, new laws being considered, and a fight between two groups of orcs in the west end of town. Apparently staff members from the Municipal Orcish Sector of Transportation (M.O.S.T.) clashed with forces from the Union of Municipal Workers United Together (U.M.W.U.T.), and 3 were killed and 11 wounded. Finally, she states, “this is Daria Hightower reporting for Sixles City news.”

I Love Lucy:



The screen goes black briefly, and then a grainy sort of fuzzy texture comes into view which slowly fades into black and white images of a man and woman talking; this is some sort of comedic entertainment show with a woman named Lucy and a man named Ricky. In the show, Lucy does a lot of crazy and hilarious things and Ricky is exasperated with her. She always seems to get in trouble, going from one ridiculous situation to the next. At one point in almost every show, Ricky walks in the door and announces, “Luuuucy! I’m home! Joo got some splaining to dooooo!” This is usually followed with some funny dialogue that somehow solves the problem within 22 minutes. Finally, the show ends, and a large heart appears on the view with the words, “I Love Lucy.”

Ow My Balls:

This show makes even less sense than I Love Lucy. A series of short clips are shown, where a commonly-recurring character gets into very improbable situations

where great damage is invariably done to his crotch. He is very clumsy and keeps falling on things that injure his groin; railings, doorknobs, caltrops, etc. Apparently the producers must be paying the actor a lot of gold and have lots of Cure Light Wounds spells handy...

Accuquest - (shamelessly "borrowed" from Glen Halstrom of the Thaco's Hammer and Save or Die podcasts and the Ol' Man Grogard YouTube channel. Thanks Glen!) *Accuquest* is a "temp agency" that can be accessed via the Arcanet and has "jobs" available. This is an obvious but easy-to-integrate system to facilitate adventures for the player characters. The Dm should list a few of these and let the group pick an adventure. Remember that some NPC has put this quest up on the "job board", so he or she will be looking for some item from the adventure, and some reward will be forthcoming once the quest is completed.

YouTwitFace and Gawgle's parchment (page) - as previously mentioned.

Other parchments - All of the more well-known stores will have parchments set up on the Arcanet. Some of these stores or organizations from Sixles City are listed below:

The Union of Municipal Workers United Together -

"Rather unfortunately abbreviated as UMWUT. It's all the orc workers you see around the city helping out the Highway Department. Actually, they mostly *are* the Highway Department. And the Building Department. And whatever other departments the city feels it needs. The orcs mostly behave themselves or they're out of a job. They push the little carts of ore and dirt around that the appointed spellcasters from the magic guild use in Stone Shape spells to do all the never ending construction that's always going on. Mank had a job with them for a while before he got fired for working too hard. Yeah, really." - *Heyonor, from "Incident at Posh Point"*

Municipal Orcish Sector of Transportation (M.O.S.T.) -

The competitor organization to UMWUT. Several street fights have broken out between these two groups in the last couple of years. MOST just deals with highway work, however, where UMWUT has a broader scope of work. That doesn't prevent the leaders of MOST, who are reputed to have ties to the Sixles Thieves Guild, from having issues with UMWUT and plotting against them.

The Department of Health and Non-Human Services -

"I've had to go to this damn place so many times. The worst part is that woman you have to talk to at the counter. I'm practically on a first name basis with her, but she asks me the same stupid questions every time...

"Whatcha name hunny." The smacking of the gum she's chewing on sounds like gunfire. Good thing I'm well-balanced or that would be really annoying. Oh, wait.

"Heyonor."

"Occupation."

"Uh, thrash metal guitarist."

She looks over the rim of her glasses at me."Thrash metal, hah? What izzat?"

"It's, ah-" She waves a hand at me to shush as if she's shooing a fly but doesn't want to actually get any fly goo on her fingers. You know, that little flick of the fingers, where the rest of the hand doesn't move at all.



“Did you thrash last week?”

“Well, um, no-”

“Did you try to thrash?”

I sighed, “Yeah.”

“Okay, move along.”

She answered my quizzical look with a pointed finger, directing me further down the counter. The guy at the other end gave me 2 silver, bah. Well, at least the rent is paid for the week.” - *Heyonor, from “Incident at Posh Point”*

Elf Storage -

“My first job when I finally moved to the city. Interesting place; the old man, Erebal, hired me because I'm a half-elf. I know that sounds horrible, me being against racism and all, but I really needed the money and he was otherwise a nice guy. Hey, don't get wrong, racism still sucks.

“So, they have a lot of odd stuff stored here. I saw some group of adventurers bring in a red dragonhide, which I thought was just some weird tapestry made out of red metal scales, until I figured it out a little later. Then there was that severed beholder eye. It kept looking at me, twisting around on the stalk to stare at *me*, even though there were 5 other people in the room. Freaky as hell. I tried to poke it with my finger, but the barbarian caught my hand and almost broke my finger. Bastard.

“The best part about the place is that all the good stuff isn't even stored there. Well, not really. In the back, they have a portal that goes to one of those little extra-dimensional planes. I was just the new kid so they never let me in there, but supposedly it's just a few hundred square feet of space. They have some complex system, where you need to have a code phrase, but it's in 2 parts, and Erebal and the other guy each have a part. The one time I actually saw Erebal go in, the other dude (yeah, I forgot his name, sue me) said, “Tastes Great”, then Erebal said, “Less Filling” and went in. Hey I dunno, I'm just tellin' you what I saw.” - *Heyonor, from “Incident at Posh Point”*

Belzur's Alchemical Creations

Alco's Magic Components Shop - quality magical components. Characters can put in special requests for an additional (sometimes pretty high) fee.

Accuquest, Inc. Headquarters

The Demi-Plane of FUN!!! (amusement park)

Mierta's Murder Hole - tavern and metal club where *The Balls Of Saaros* (Heyonor's band) often plays.

Nexxa's Fine Hair Products and Defoliant Shop

Budget Components - cheap magical components. They're close to half-priced but don't work 20% of the time.

War-Mart - Purveyor of cheap weapons and armor. The best place to go for budget arms, although 5% of what they sell is defective.

Sylvarian Embassy - Public relations building for the Nation of Sylvara, the organization of half-elves who claim they are a new race called the Sylvara Sapiens, or Sylvarians.

Eindolphilius Furniture Factory Outlet

Gonzo's Emporium

Giorno's Pizza

Copper Jen-Ral - like a fantasy-world equivalent of a dollar store. Terrible quality

stuff.

XP Value: 2,000

GP Value: 25,000