

The State of the Loot

by loottheroom - Wednesday, December 06, 2017

<http://loottheroom.uk/the-state-of-the-loot/>

I posted this on Patreon earlier tonight, but I figured it's worth posting here too.

It's been a while since I last updated you all, and I figured it's time I stopped sitting around silently and let you all know where things stand.

Firstly, I want to say a massive thank you to you all. My last post announcing that I was taking a break was incredibly tough to write. I've always had a habit of taking on too much work and pushing myself too hard, and I've never really allowed myself to hold up my hands and say "I can't do this, and I need a break". Admitting that publicly was difficult. It felt like admitting failure, which in a way it was.

Many of you reached out to me after that post to offer your support, and I want you to know that that meant a huge amount to me. I count myself incredibly lucky to have such a generous, understanding group of supporters and fans of the work I do, and your patience while I've taken this time away from writing and running the site has been very gratefully received. I feel a little guilty that I've taken so much time off, but I'm also deeply moved by your continued support.

So, here's what's going on. I'm keen to hear how you feel about it all, and to hear any suggestions or thoughts you might have.

I'm probably going to leave Loot The Room and this Patreon campaign dormant until the end of the year. I've started writing and drawing again, working on finishing off a few of the projects that I've started - including the Shadepoint writeup, among other things - but I'm not yet ready to start updating the site regularly again.

I'm going to make sure November's Best of DMs Guild post goes up soon (I'm aiming for this weekend), and I'll do one in December too along with a Year In Review sort of post for DMs Guild. Those posts will very likely be the only things that go up on Loot The Room this month.

That's because I'm working on building up a backlog of content, so that when I start posting regularly again I don't have to produce all the content for each week in the couple of days before it's meant to go up. Just having a safety net of content that I can fall back on if I need to take a couple of days off for whatever reason is going to be a huge help in ensuring that I stay consistent and regular with posts, so while I've got this opportunity to create work without any pressure I'm going to take it.

I'm also working on redesigning the layout of the site. It won't be a huge change - just a spring clean, really - but I'm hoping to have that ready to go for the beginning of January.

Realistically, three posts a week isn't going to be tenable. I've said before that working on Loot The Room is at a minimum a 40-hour-a-week job, and what I've learned over the past few months is that I just don't

have the energy to do that on top of working 40 hours a week in my day job. I'd love to be able to do that, but at least for the moment I need to accept that I'm not capable of it.

I'm going to relaunch in January, and I'm going to start slow. I'm going to roll the post schedule back to one post a week, plus a monthly Best of DMs Guild post. At the moment I'm figuring out what the schedule is going to look like: I'm absolutely going to continue with Let's Build A Campaign, and random tables of things aren't going anywhere. I really want to get back to writing longer articles, too, so I think I'm going to aim for one of them a month.

Then, of course, I need maps. Maps are where Loot The Room started, and I know that they're a large part of why a lot of you read the site and support me here on Patreon. I'm going to dedicate one post a month to maps, but I'm going to try and make that post more than simply "here's a map". With longer to work on them, I'm hoping to be able to flesh out that post a little more - perhaps with more variants (colour, player and DM maps, whatever), or perhaps with mini adventures for them, or maybe just with one post containing more than one map. I still don't know exactly what I'm going to aim to do with the map posts, but I'd love your thoughts on it.

One of the things I've really struggled with has been juggling producing website content and producing DMs Guild products simultaneously. By cutting down to fewer website posts, I'll be allowing myself more time to work on bigger projects. I'm not going to commit to any release schedule or anything yet, but I'm excited to have more time to work on longer form content. I also really miss working on non-D&D stuff - writing fiction, for example - and I want to give myself more time to do that stuff. It's quite selfish of me, really, but I love writing fiction and I miss it. So I'm going to give myself the opportunity to do it.

One post a week isn't necessarily where things are going to stay. I'd really like to get back up to 3 a week, but I need to get there organically rather than jumping in with both feet and floundering to make it work. I'll start with 1 a week, and grow as I feel it is appropriate. Paying other writers to contribute to the site is still on the cards (and while many of you have reached out offering to write for the site for free - which I appreciate - I don't feel right accepting those offers. I won't have people producing work for me "for exposure". Exposure is something people die of).

I also plan to start streaming again. I really enjoyed doing it and I regret that I stopped. I may make it a fortnightly stream to begin with, but the aim will be to get back to doing it once a week again.

The final thing I need to address is this Patreon campaign. I need to make some changes to it, because the rewards I'm offering currently aren't great and I want to be sure that anybody who supports me here gets actual value out of it.

I'm going to leave it paused in January, but I'll be posting Loot The Room posts in advance here once the site is ready to start up again. So you'll still get those rewards, you just won't be charged for them.

I'm very likely going to revisit the reward tiers and strip them down massively. At the moment I can't tell you what rewards each tier gets without having to look it up, and that simply isn't acceptable. As with the 1 post a week, I think it's best to start small and grow naturally. At the moment I'm thinking about reducing the tiers to simply two - a \$1 tier that gets you the posts in advance, and a \$2 tier that gets you

the advance posts and a link of your choice in the Hall of Heroes. I like the idea of a tier that gets you a free copy of PDF releases, but currently I don't produce them regularly enough to justify that.

That's about all I have to say now, since I haven't worked out any specifics. I'd really like to hear your thoughts, though; is 1 post a week enough for you? If it is, are there any kind of posts you absolutely want to see (or, conversely, is there anything you wish I'd do less of)? How do you feel about the changes to Patreon tiers that I'm proposing? I'm open to any and all suggestions and feedback.

I can't reiterate enough how grateful I am for all of your support. This break has been really valuable to me, and I'm incredibly excited to get back to work again.

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