Puzzled Pint June 2026

Cups

ELEMENT *Water*

WATER SIGNS

Cancer.....The Crab
Scorpio.....The Scorpion
Pisces.....The Fish

DOMAIN *Feeling*

Be it the psycho-emotional or the intuition of a psychic, feelings are the focus here. But as with all things, beware. Being too absorbed in your feelings may lead you to abandon your common sense.

The people were desperate, and the town's oracle, Hersilia, had refused to see an audience. For too many years, they had relied on her talents, so much so that she had taken to writing any visions in code. *Her system relied on a thirteen-letter heterogram key, a phrase containing no repeated letters. The remaining letters were written in alphabetical order underneath, allowing each letter to pair up.*

P	O	W	E	R	F	U	L	M	A	G	I	C
B	D	H	J	K	N	Q	S	T	V	X	Y	Z

Figure 1: Recreation of Hersilia's first code

The key "POWERFUL MAGIC" would encode her name, HERSILIA, as WJKLYSYV, but she found this code too easy. So, she used a completely new keyphrase, one that used *multiple layers of coding and symbols.*

Desperate for answers, the local authorities had tried to send in undercover agents to befriend her and catch her in the treasonous act of defiance. In doing so, they uncovered document scraps (Figure 2) that helped them *work out her latest heterogram keyphrase cipher, which employed additional symbols under the new sets of letter pairs.*

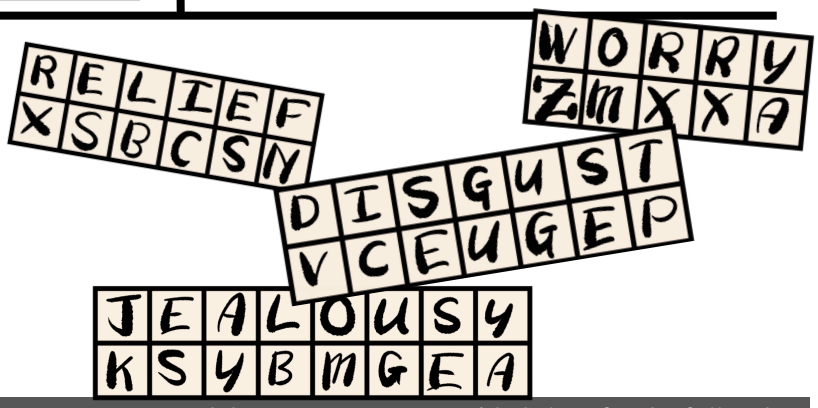
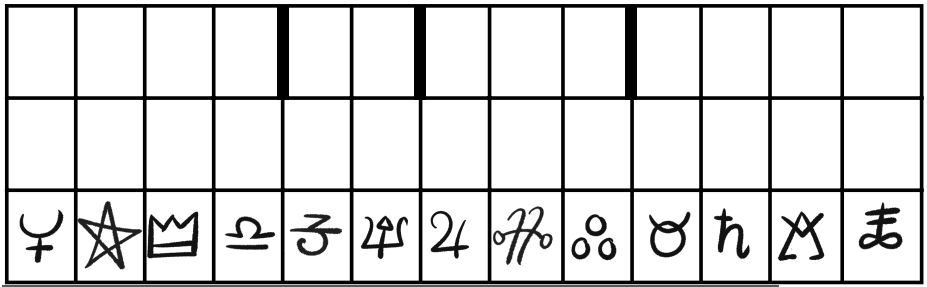


Figure 2: Recovered document scraps provided clues for the full code

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

Workspace for finding the keyphrase for Hersilia's newest cipher. Hint: Use the scraps to get started. Any words coming to the surface?



A third layer - Additional symbols to further encrypt the message

As it turns out, Hersilia, being a beacon of insight and understanding, had figured out what they were up to. When the authorities broke into her quarters, she was gone. They secured a tightly bound chest. Ignoring the note below, they foolishly pried the chest open – only to release a swarm of angry hornets!

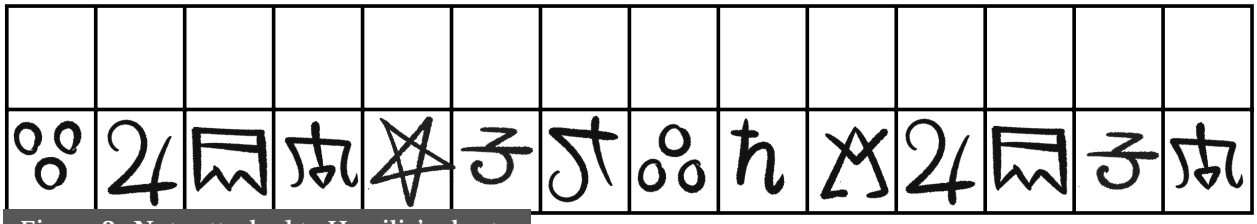


Figure 3: Note attached to Hersilia's chest

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