

Raven's Herald

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Strength and Renewal!

March, 600

Oberon Anduin Stripped of Assistant Guildmaster Title

On March 2nd of this year, Oberon Anduin, self-proclaimed Archmage of Time and Spirit Manipulation, was removed from office as Assistant Guildmaster of the Mages' Guild and was forcibly stripped of his investiture to the circle. Guildmistress Lady Tristmere Mirabad was quoted as saying, "I've had about enough of his tedious and unfounded babbling. The man's a fool!"

His removal comes shortly after his announcement that he has discovered a path to an alternate timeline and that he alone can ensure that, should the timelines collide, our spirits will not be taken over by those of the alternate timeline. Lake Hollum has declined to provide an official comment, but one mage who spoke on the condition of anonymity said, "The man's batty as a

loon. We've got years of study into time travel and it all points conclusively to a single time stream. There's no way there are other me's, or much less, other Oberon Anduins, out there."

Those who were once close to Oberon expressed concern. Baron Moonwind worried that Oberon would do considerable harm to himself as he continued to try more and more danger-

ous rituals. "If only he'd left the magic or his youth behind. He had such potential as a warrior - I had high hopes he'd become a Baronial Knight some day. Perhaps even a Ducal Knight, His Grace willing." Gwyneth Whitefeather had helped gather components for some of Anduin's earliest experiments, but says she didn't realize fully what he was trying to do. "Had I
Continued on page 3

Lady Samara Aislain Arrives

While few nobles from Northmarch's reaches have managed to safely travel to Ravenholt since the onset of the Sessuar war, a recent noble visitor has caused quite a stir. Prince Kevynn Blackfox attended a recent feast held by His Grace and Barons Moonwind and Johann in honor of both His Royal Highness and visiting Lady Samara Aislain.

Court insiders report that Lady Samara's family and Duke Greystone have long-standing history, and that the two may have spent

considerable time together as children. A serving maid who wished to remain anonymous declared, "She's the most beautiful laydee I've ever seen!" The Lady is said to be lithe and willowy: "A petite young thing, she was, and ever the picture of style and grace," said one elderly

woman attending the feast.

She has an almost elven face and long golden hair, and, in the few sightings reported since she arrived, appears to be an impeccable dresser.

It is said that, while the feast was in the Prince's honor as well, His Grace

rarely took his eyes off the elegant young visitor, at one point nearly ignoring a question from His Royal Highness. Prince Kevynn seemed somewhat smitten by her eloquently spoken stories of her trip from Niman, as well.

Several members of the Ducal Guard have been made available to Lady Samara for the duration of her stay in Ravenholt. She is expected to be living at Greystone Keep as a guest of His Grace for at least the next several months.



Vivisectionist Caught, Executed

by Tam Yuril

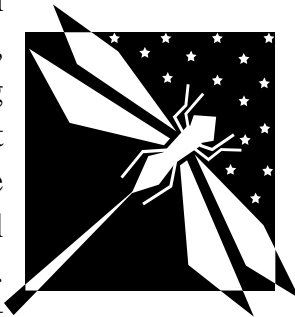
The recent events of the gathering in early March have shocked the residents of Ravenholt City. A discovery of cruel, dark, and twisted use of ritual magicks and alchemy have led to the harshest tragedy seen in years by many. These events unfolded beginning with the discovery of a mishap between wife, man, and midwife, early on the first eve of the March gathering. Through much investigation it was determined that the mishap was caused by the apparent death of an infant, under the care of the midwife, and then the discovery that the child was sold as property to an unknown third party. If this were not shocking enough, with more investigation it became clear that there was an increasing pattern of children missing, and it appeared that these disappearances coincided with each other. A Gorbe woman (name unknown) came into town early the next morning, claiming that her child had been kidnapped by some unidentified creatures, which had headed into the forest.

A few members of the Dragon and Pawn such as Zenith Mirabad, Erin

McClain, Thorondarr Darkthunder, Sebastian, and many others, were all asked by the mother to attempt to track the creatures responsible and bring the child back. As the morning wore into afternoon, the party of townspeople tracked throughout the woods, attempting to find the child. They visited numerous sites, always a step behind the caravans that were apparently carting the child (and numerous others) to a final destination, stopping along the way for rest and a few strange tests, alchemical in nature.

Throughout searching, the group came across many strange creatures, similar to ones seen in town, that appeared to be a strange mixture of animal and sentient. They appeared to have some features of both. By this time the sun had already begun its setting in the west, and the trackers continued, unaware that they had startled their quarry into moving ahead with their plan, and journeying on. A missive between the Vivisectionist and his "son" Samal, led the

party to a position in the woods that they believed the child nappers would come to. It was in one of these letters the party learned that the Vivisectionist was searching for a 'cure' to some unknown disease that ailed his daughter. As they left the previous site, a few of the Sarr in the party began to catch wind of a horrible stench that permeated the back of the building. They searched the woods behind



it and found a massive mound of overturned dirt. They dug it up, and found a badly decomposed mass grave of nearly 15 children of all races and youthful ages. With horror, they covered it over and marked its location to come back later. Still shaken, they set themselves up in the building marked on the map, that they believed the people would come to. Their gamble paid off and a combat ensued, capturing a multitude of the strange half-beasts that were evident all through the mission. The child was retrieved and carried by Sebastian to safety.

When they returned to town, the group of adventurers became aware that there was more to this still. As quoted by a townsper-son, "I noticed this gypsy woman running to and fro with the group called Dasha Morbihan, talking about a 'Wiwisectionist'. I think that was just the accent, so I figured it was about the Vivisectionist everyone was talking about. I saw them talking to some ghosts the night before, so I figured the ghosts were involved."

Indeed, there had been some incident involving an unsubstantiated number of ghosts the night before, who had some conflict over the loss or killing of a child. Following these leads, the townspeople managed to piece enough information together to follow his next actions. His apparent plan was to attempt some sort of ritual alchemical cure the next day, at a certain location. After some heated discussion it was decided to allow him to complete this cure, for good or ill, and arrest him after. The next morning went as planned.

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

The group (names unknown) that tracked the Vivisectionist down were successful in bringing him in after he successfully completed the cure for his daughter. His reaction to their bringing him to justice was utter submission, but for an incident involving the slurring of his daughter's name because of

her cure. He was tried and convicted of multiple counts of murder, and sentenced to three deaths. He resurrected successfully after the first death, and will be allowed to live long enough to repair the damage done to his animal/human hybrids before the rest of the sentence is carried out.

Hightown Rag

Everyone's all abuzz with the arrival of this delicate creature we see His Grace fawning over. By all accounts, she's a looker, with a dreamy personality to match. She regularly finds time to visit the guilds, and has taken it upon herself to oversee the improvement of area orphanages. She's often seen singing lullabies to the children, and even her voice is lovely.

Baron Jason Askani of Westmarch is making the most of his new, more compact Barony, holding court in his rebuilt capital of Darkmoor.

While there are whispers that granting the Minotaurs land rights is unfair to the people of the Duchy, no one can deny that Baron Zomar has made rapid improvements rebuilding both Capulus and lower Westmarch. With the condition Sercia was in when it was recovered, some thought seafaring trade would never return to normal, but trade routes to and around Evendarr have been reopened. Baron Zomar, with his impeccable sense of diplomacy, has even somewhat eased tensions with those living in the Stonewood Forest. We overheard one stoic elf say "He's honorable, at least." Both Barons are apparently working jointly to rebuild the once-proud Ironvale.

Baron Moonwind reports that Aradia will be hosting a gathering in August in honor of the fallen and to celebrate the rebuilding of the Duchy. Baron Johann and Lady Shardon of Eastwyck will be hosting the feast at the Gather.

Continued from page 1

known, I would have discouraged him. He was such a nice young man."

Oberon himself, when asked how he felt about his removal from the Guild, stated: "Unfortunate. Lady Mirabad doesn't fully appreciate the ramifications of my research. Any who do are welcome to visit my lab and discuss it rationally." When asked to provide details regarding his promised method of protection, he handed over what he called his "Doctrine of Time Connectivity and Spiritual Relativism" (see side article for synopsis). He refused to reveal the details of his work, but rather, mysteriously whispered, "Roderick's the key. The seed, if you will. Something's amiss."

Sheriff Wolfstar, when asked about the danger factor Anduin presented, said "Let him kill himself and anyone fool enough to buy into what he's selling. So long as he keeps to that house of his, I've no concerns about him. He's harmless."

Lowdown on Lowtown

Sheriff Wolfstar was recently seen manhandling a rather scraggly looking Undead Thing found walking through town. No, we don't think he was consorting, but the sight has become so rare, we thought it worth comment. He and his men have done a fine job clearing much of the undead rabble from the lands. We only wish we knew how he did it!

Handsome Head of the Merchants' Guild, Amra Asland Al-Qadim, is still on the most eligible bachelors list, ladies! He says business is booming now that the war is over, so anyone who nabs this catch is likely to be a well-kept woman!

Dasha Morbihan is making a showing recently in town, taking the Tournament by storm and the field in an impressive display of militant fortitude. They seem to have caught the eye of His Grace, Duke Greystone, who has been seen in conference with them on occasion. And then there is the mismatched gypsy Ajahana, who has been seen with them. She is a stylish spot of color amongst the stoic black and blue. Why are they importing gypsies anyway? This is obviously an attempt to get culture onto their team.

Doctrine of Time Connectivity and Spiritual Relativism

(Excerpted with Permission of Oberon Anduin, Archmage of Time and Travel)

It is well and truly accepted that there are a number of Elements at work, shaping our very beings. We are creatures of earth, of air, of fire, and of water, as are all those creatures who walk upon Tyrra. And yet, there is more. What is a bag of earth, of air, fire, and water? Nothing, without a spirit to bind them. And so come forth the other Elements that bring us to being, shaping not our physical form, but our spirit itself: Life and Death, Chaos and Order, Light and Shadow, Reason and Dream.

Without Life, there would be no being. Without Death, there would be nothing to differentiate between being and non-being. Order brings one side of our spirit into being – we must accept order of the nature of our thoughts and our actions. And yet, without Chaos to balance the spirit, we would all be one and the same. Chaos adds to the flavor of the collective Order. Light and Shadow shape our moods and provide change to our day. Reason provides the ability to bring all elements into cohesion. Dream provides the ability to think beyond reason and create. All these things together make us what we are in any given instant, and yet there is one more thing which must exist to bring us into being.

Time is the glue that binds our Elements together, and Time can shatter it in an instant. Time shifts and shapes itself around the choices we make, and is elusive, at best, as we try to harness it. Five minutes can be two things to one person – to a mother, awaiting a life spell for her fallen child, five minutes is an eternity. And if that life

spell never comes, five minutes is an instant. An hour behind schedule means life to one soldier, the scout who is not killed by forces delayed in travel, and death to another, whose battalion awaited the arrival of supporting forces that came too late.

Time cannot be stopped, nor tasted, nor seen, perhaps, but it can be made. At each divide in a road we come to, affected by each of these other elements, time, too, becomes a factor. Each decision we make that could have gone another way. Each choice chosen in haste. Each thing left un-done. These things all provide Time with an instant in which Time is Time Itself. Time is at its purist in that lifetime of a second before a decision is reached. For at that point, Time can choose to fracture into infinite possibilities. It is at that point that, should we choose to control our own destinies, we must hold Time dearest to us. For at any given point such as this, we are all the us's that we can ever be, together.

It is at this moment, this precious moment, that we can choose to move through time, shifting, changing, twisting our lives to suit us best. Uncertainty is anathema to us. We must merely present ourselves with suitable choices and make our decisions with Finality in Time.

I postulate that, should we be able to capture that decision in the making, to direct Time to flow as we choose, we can keep other us's from being as they might be, and only as we are. This is the root of that which I research.

Tourney Results

by Thomas Gate

The showings for the tourney were many and bright during the early winter gathering, and the crowds were buzzing as the townsfolk competed in various things. Combat and Spellcasting were brief, with many teams not bothering to compete in them. The competition for Entertainment was very well put together and organized by the Duke's Dark Lions and his scribe, and the town's showing was extremely well received. The Baljar gypsies took it by storm with a magnificent dance performed by Alora Sedgewick and Zenith Mirabad. The scavenger hunt, though not tallied, was apparently dominated by Dasha Morbihan, who sported extremely stylish team colors as well. Though the final results are unreleased, the unofficial word from the scribe is that Dasha Morbihan won the day, completing the most events with the best quality.