

Raven's Herald

Vol. 9 Number 6

Bravery and Remembrance!

August, 597

Duke Alaric Declares Day of Mourning

As the First Anniversary of The Disappearance approaches, His Grace Duke Alaric has declared August 2nd an official Day of Mourning for the loss of our beloved heroes and Nobles. He decrees that all banners and flags be hung

at half mast and that residents wear black sashes or arm bands as a sign of solidarity.

Since that fateful day in 596, much effort has been put into researching the effects of that day's magical wave which left all of Ravenholt's populace

unconscious, during which time many of our greatest heroes disappeared. In spite of the need for all able bodies to battle the Sessuar in our hour of greatest need, numerous search parties have set out in an effort to follow what regu-

larly turn out to be false leads.

Duke Alaric will hold court during the afternoon to allow all those with questions about the ongoing investigations to discuss the matter, and to allow those left behind to express their grief.

Major Maximillian Greystone Knighted, Made Warlord

War Hero Maximillian Greystone was knighted in a quiet, hasty ceremony this past weekend by His Grace, Duke Alaric. It seems reasonable that he receive such an honor, in order to have suitable title to become Warlord of Ravenholt. Upon completion of his oath to Duke Alaric, the newly knighted Sir Greystone swore an oath as Warlord to uphold the sanctity of the lands and to battle until the last Sessuar is driven from Ravenholt.

Sir Greystone has shown himself to be valorous in battle, leading his troops in several key victories against the Sessuar. He first came to the Herald's attention earlier this year when it was reported that a Lieutenant Greystone had led a successful raid to break Sessuar

supply lines in Capulus, just as the Sessuar armies were advancing on Ironvale. While the raid did not stop the loss of Ironvale itself, it is credited with helping Duke Alaric's troops hold portions of Capulus far longer than originally anticipated. His handling of the raid and subsequent reports from his superiors led to a promotion to Captain.

As Captain of a regiment, Sir Greystone led the forces which held the line against the Sessuar attack on Westmarch proper in April. While recent support arrived for the attacking forces and much of Westmarch was lost, his heroism and bravery in battle again brought him commendations.

Most recently, Sir Greystone

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Netherblade Leaves Wake of Death

On the night of Friday, July 25th, the former Warlord, Sagramore, appeared once more in Ravenholt. However, this time he did not come at the head of legions of undead minions to wreak havoc on the town; rather, he came to offer a warning and an alliance of sorts.

The Death Elemental that had been bound into Sagramore's dreaded Netherblade, which granted instant death to all it touched, had apparently been freed by the shockwave which destroyed the magical items of Ravenholt last fall and would be coming to Ravenholt to attack the town that night. Sagramore offered a bargain if the people of Ravenholt would bind it again for him. He described how it could be bound

with four magical candles and warned that he would be coming to get it once it was bound.

That night, the elemental of the Netherblade appeared in town. Anyone wounded by the lethal creature died immediately. The death elemental, however, attempted to mark any that it downed in battle; those that it marked were stabilized but later were rifted out by the creature to the Plane of Death, where it attempted to feed on their life essences in some way.

The first group taken in this manner all died, as they were unable to complete a puzzle that would have freed them before the last of their life essences was consumed. Most resurrected, including Tristemere Mirabad and other

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Netherblade (cont'd from p1)

prominent citizens. Michaela Bronwyn failed to resurrect, taking her final death.

It was clear to all the people of Ravenholt that this creature posed a dire threat. However, the being would be just as harmful in the hands of Warlord Sagamore. A council was gathered to determine what to do about the Netherblade, made up of various remaining members of the noble courts, Lioncourt, and the Mage's Guild. They learned that if the creature could be trapped by the candles on the Plane of Death itself, then it was very unlikely that Sagamore would ever be able to retrieve it or that the creature could free itself.

Accordingly, groups set out to recover the four candles. Members of Arkham, Eastwyck, Lioncourt, and the Mage's Guild headed expeditions to win them from large bands of ogres that guarded them. All four were recovered successfully. In order to trap the creature, it had to be lured into a ritual circle and the candle lit. It was powerful enough to resist its entrapments twice, so at least three candles would be needed. The creature was attracted to those with life forces made strong by great experience and skill, so formidable townsfolk such as Forestlord Ehawk attempted to lead the elemental into circles cast by

waiting Celestials. No Earth Circles could be spared because of the drastic shortage of Life Spells created by the Netherblade creature and the invading Sessuar.

The third time the creature was successfully lured into the circle, Keyla of the Mage's Guild lit the candle and imprisoned the creature. To trap it on the Plane of Death, several volunteers came forward and allowed themselves to be marked by the creature. Then the creature was freed so that it could call these brave warriors into the trap that they had laid for it. The group included Tristemere Mirabad of the Mage's Guild, Illyria of Eastwyck, Baron Alan Moonwind of Cumberland, Taylind and Donnall, both formerly of Anvil.

When the call came, the marked ones rifted out -- but this time, they were ready. A bitter struggle ensued, during which the creature was finally lured into the circle and trapped, however, all of the brave townsfolk were killed in the process. Only Kain, a townsman who was marked before the creature was trapped and who had no idea of the plan, was left alive. He fled through a gate that opened as there was nothing he could do to save the fallen. When the last living being left the Plane of Death, the bodiless of the

others rifted back to Ravenholt. However, many were too far gone to receive a Life spell. Only a small number of the group survived, though all the rest resurrected successfully.

The creature was bound, though it took a high death toll while it roamed free. No word has yet been heard of former Warlord Sagamore's reactions and possible retaliations.

War Rationing

Duke Alaric reminds us all that harvested components, healing potions, scrolls, and other items useful in the war effort should be rationed and, where possible, brought to a member of the Ducal Guard for use in our War Efforts against the Sessuar. The life you save may be your own!

Public Notices

The ARC is looking for all kinds of components and we will pay reasonable prices. If you have something to sell, contact Fallon

Attention All Sarr!!

Tristemere Mirabad of the Mage's Guild and Chastity Valdegarde of the Healer's Guild will be organizing a meeting of all the Sarr in Ravenholt to discuss certain matters. The meeting will be held on Saturday, August 30 at noon. All Sarr who are interested in attending should meet at this time in front of the Healer's Guild. Any questions should be directed towards Tristemere or Chastity.

Elias the Keeper, an ancient Biata who recently passed through Ravenholt asks that any to whom he owes information write to him with their requests care of the library at Port Jaskcara. Requests will be answered as quickly as may be...Thank you. Gwynneth Whitefeather.

Remember, it's summer now, and that means that it's very hot. When you come to gatherings, be sure to drink plenty of fluids. And for this reason, we'll be selling lemonade for 5 copper a cup. -The ARC

Biata Offers Strange Adventure

This July, an ancient Biata known as Elias the Keeper came to Ravenholt seeking adventures for a very different kind of quest. During his fifteen hundred years of life, he had honed his mental skills to a remarkable degree and gained much knowledge. However, he regretted that he had squandered his youth in study and wished to have the sorts of adventurous experiences that he never had sought in the past. Since he was too old to attempt such himself, he asked for willing townsfolk to enter his mind for an adventure there that he would live vicariously through them. In return, he offered information on any question that he could answer from his long experiences and scholarly studies.

The challenge that he set them in his mind was a fairly simple one, fighting various creatures while jumping on pillars across acid pits; however, it was complicated by the fact that each group had to choose from several options before the adventure. Transformed in the Biata's mindscape by his own imagination, groups could choose to attempt the adventure with far lesser or greater skill than they currently possessed, with the mentality of an adolescent, as a friend or someone they greatly admired, or as their own worst enemy. Several groups of townsfolk offered their aid to the scholar and were well rewarded for their efforts. The old scholar remained in town for a few days, and his considerable healing powers were of great assistance on the battlefield.

Hunter Spreads Poison Threat Multiplies with Young

Recently, the creature known as the Hunter plagued Ravenholt with hit-and-run attacks and infected many citizens with its poison. The creature was brought here by the Sessuar and accidentally unleashed last winter.

Some of those who were affected by its venom received cures found on Sessuar soldiers, but it was discovered that those who took the antidote died instantly if they were ever struck by the Hunter's poison again. Several people were killed by this dangerous creature, and one townsfolk who was dragged back to its lair reports having seen its burrow full of nearly-matured young before he resurrected.

The creature and its young have not yet been caught or destroyed, largely due to the creature's great speed and nimbleness and its avoidance of direct conflict. A safer antidote to the venom is rumored to have been developed, but the creature itself still poses a menace to the people of Ravenholt.

Obituaries

Thorge Cyclos, Age 27: In the early morning hours of May 9th, Thorge Cyclos, warrior of The Grey Ravens and friend to all, suffered his final death protecting His Grace and the Duchy.

Thorge's career was a colorful one. He served under the Barons Vallen and Pelgar of Westmarch where he was Baron Pelgar's squire. He then proceeded with his brother Jordreth to the Court of Capulus, then led by Vandal Ravensblood. He served with Capulus through the Baronies of Alaric and Johan, where he was appointed Knight-hood of Dunharrow in the spring of 598.

Recently, he had served admirably with Lieutenant Archer's Grey Ravens Army Company, a unit currently serving with pride and distinction in Ravenholt against the Sessuar Armies. He has faced the Brood, Sakalid, and many others from Ravenholt's Rogue Gallery of Villains. One of the last, great Celestial Templars, he will be sorely missed by all. Thorge Cyclos is survived by his brother, Jordreth Cyclos. He was buried in a private ceremony on the 11th of May.

Michaela Iris Bronwyn, Age 23: Michaela Bronwyn, a well-known slocal spellsinger, died at the age of 23 on July 26, 597. She fell protecting the town from the death elemental of the Netherblade. Michaela was the Chieftan of Clan Bronwyn, and a squire in the Order of the Belladonna. She was a staunch defender of Ravenholt and a healer of its people. She leaves behind a sister, Dulcinea, a son, Joseph, a prosperous clan, and many friends.

Greystone (cont'd from p1)

was promoted to Major after assisting in the killing of a notorious villain known commonly as the "Revenant King." (See May issue for details.)

Sir Greystone is described as a well-centered, private man in person, and a firm and highly competent military man on the field of battle. Those who have worked under him seem dedicated and loyal to a man, and would gladly die for him. His first act as Warlord was to visit the troops in outlying areas to garner an assessment of the larger picture of our ongoing war. Upon his recent return, he determined that the Capitol City is the next most likely target of Sessuar attacks and he has shored up troops in the surrounding towns and expanded scouting missions tenfold.

Killed in the Line of Duty

Adin Aurora of Redgrove	Kore Colour of Gurn	Vanko Magota of Goblinsbane	Yochanan of Elveswood
Agi Aguda of Greenbriar	Legon Moonamber of Waterdale	Veren Doming of Blackson	Yorgos Tivadar
Alesya Phormion of Fenwick	Lexey Patron of Goblinstooth	Willis Kittshade of Dragonshire	Zarita Clement of Deerbrook
Anise	Liley Chlomei of Greater Bromley	Winston Anasztaz of Kiran's Citadel	Zvi Metanth of Whynton
Brendan Baradine of Brighton	Lynn Bubblybrook	Winter Holden	Zylina Lexine of Islin
Caitrin Kammarcy of Gurn	Malvina Obia of Benton Heath		
Calynda Mandare of Merick	Manolis Graham of Kirans Citadel		
Cathel Sosimo of Elvestove	Marcus		
Charl Magaera of Whynton	Marget Zachary of Coomb		
Charles Jannis	Marian Thed of Leeds		
Colan Shay of Arkham	Masamuni Yamaguchi		
Daku Adrian of Pike-In-The-Vale	Matthew Freeman		
Dapane Renneson of Celdric's Trap	Michaela Bronwyn		
Darius Dunixi of Cragen Helm	Mogge of Ironvale		
Dayna Cyma of Ironvale	Norina Juryj of Forden-In-The-Dale		
Devin Icefang	Ogar Wyvvernstail		
Disa of Skye	Paphema Reta of Gon		
Ducetius Ros of Sparrow	Parris Aurora of Redgrove		
Evander Zenan of Sercia	Peter Valentin Reimund of North Fork		
Evanth Raven of Bromley	Pippin Nerline of Lower Uncton		
Fakoor Alastair of Fenwick	Renne Katar of Greenhill		
Filib of Pook's Haven	Richard Horus of Mikon		
Flynnin Sniggles	Rikard Demi of Tara		
Franko Guzman	Rivy Bartal		
Grisegond of Traders' Rest	Ruqayya of Tuck		
Gwyneth Shaun of Goblinwatch	Sefronia Imel of Glouster		
Haniyya of Elvestove	Sepp Megamoi of Garson's Bridge		
Healea Nastusya of Elvestove	Seraphina		
Illyria Southfield	Serenity Corybantes of Kur		
Jairus of Crestham	Teodora Labrys of Dragon Gap		
Janae Lanice of Deerbrook	Thorge Cyclos		
Jenn Gorgos of Greystone	Uzziel of Cecil		
Joetta Niko of Cragen Helm	Ugwar Thumpstumper		
Kaitlin Skylar of Stoneholm			
Kathann Victor of Eastwyck			
Katica Dena of Blackpoole			
Koline Nereus of Potter Hill			

Merfolk Seek Aid

Merfolk from a local Mer village recently came to dry land to ask for help in relocating their people. Their waters were becoming very troubled by lizardmen and they feared their extinction at the hands of a particularly violent group. Volunteers including Neville, formerly of Dragonshire, Forestlord Ehawk, Dulcinea Bronwyn of Clan Bronwyn, and a group of adventurers from the Dragon & Pawn went underwater with the help of special breathing shells. They risked underwater combat to gather water-purifying crystals that the Merfolk needed from lizardman infested waters. The missions were successful, though one Merfolk who had suffered permanent chaos-induced damage to her tail was unable to transform from two legs back to her tailed form. She has been taken in by the Dragon & Pawn.

Half-Orcs Hold Tests

Representatives from The Circle of Four, a new political group among the otherwise unorganized half-orc clans of Ravenholt, came to the capitol last weekend. They were seeking clarification of the rights and responsibilities of their people as citizens so that they could attempt to better unify the half-orc clans within our borders.

They needed, however, to get better acquainted with the local citizenry and nobility to be able to represent their people. To further this end, they set up various tests to learn the mettle and worth of those that they would further integrate themselves with. These challenges included sparring matches, casting challenges, including an obstacle course, and a test for technicians.

Many locals accepted and passed the tests of the half-orcs, perhaps enjoying the respite from the now-overwhelming day-to-day challenges of the Sessuar war. Enough acquitted themselves well that the Circle of Four voted in the majority to begin official negotiations with both ducal nobles and local authorities to add support for the strapped war effort as a first step in better relations with the up until now poorly respected green citizens.