The Seagate Times

Issue 61 – Spring 808

Evil Cult Vanquished Kirkul Cleansed!

In previous reports, the Times was informed that the city of Kirkul in the Five Sisters had been taken over by blood-mages and chaos cultists intent on summoning the Court of Chaos to Alusia. At best this would have led to god-wars on Alusia, at worst we would become a world ruled by Chaos.

On Duesday, 15th Frost, a combined Guild, Michaeline, and Mid-Guard force assaulted Kirkul seeking to cleanse it of the cultists. The Guild Party spearheaded the attack, and was led by Count Engalton, accompanied by Queen Aleksandra, (who also acted as party employer), Braegon, Erzabet, and Serendipity, assisted by Sabrina—who was leading in the Michaelines.

They had spent considerable time preparing before entering, including obtaining strangewood shields which would be protective against chaotic magics, and learning to use them. They also acquired the use of an artefact of Justice, a scimitar called the Sword of Solomon, reputed to be particularly effective against creatures of Chaos

By W'ansday, 16th Frost, Kirkul was razed to the ground. No buildings were left standing, no undead, chaos creature, or cultist was left alive. Among those slain or destroyed were the Avatar of Chaos, one of the six Vessels, and El Muerte. Claw Death and Rufus were redeemed, and Bliss was captured.

Witnesses report fire, cold, light, dark, indescribable horrors, and a rain of millstones. This latter was called down by the Michaelines in response to the enemy sending slabs of chaos stone at them, especially near the docks, and it was this exchange of artillery that caused the majority of the physical destruction to the city. They then captured some fleeing enemy and secured the treasure they were carrying for the church. Meanwhile the Guild members had wisely taken cover in a bunker built of Walls of Iron.

Following thorough investigation by senior guild members, it has been ascertained that the previously reported vaults of gold, gems, and artefacts were slightly exaggerated, and have been mostly traded to slavers in the region who were smuggling slaves past the blockades. The remaining wealth has been secured by the Michaelines and Guild members and will be dealt with appropriately.

Portions of the rubble are still significantly affected by Chaos, rendering the area extremely dangerous to the health and sanity of would-be treasure-hunters. As an example, there are even places where dropped objects fall upwards. The guild has issued a travel warning:

"No guild member entering Kirkul may expect a rescue party, and standard guild services do not cover removing chaos taints acquired in Kirkul."

Elsewhere in this Issue:

News in Brief

Bestiary

Puzzle Column

Rumour Mill

and more...

The Avatar of Chaos



Isil Eth:
"So Alfheim
is beset by
eight demons,
a dragon
AND
daffodils?"

Axis to

Naden:

"Does this

to you?"

look necrotic

News in Brief

Guild Party Stops Curse

A Guild party has successfully prevented an outbreak of Lycanthropy in the southern region of Caledonia. Sources tell us that the outbreak was caused by a psychotic Wiccan casting Damnum Magnatum spells over a period of the last few months. She was also seeking more power by attempting a pact with the Cailleach, otherwise known as the Old Woman of Winter, which involved the sacrifice of her father.

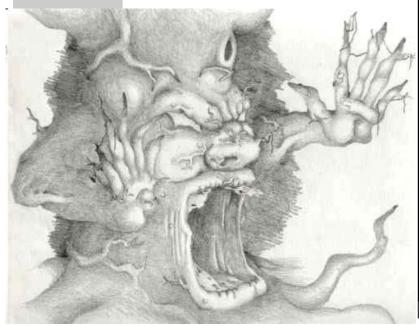
The Guild party had to track down each victim and remove the curse then find the Wiccan. She was tracked to an ice cave in the mountains where the ritual was about to take place. They encountered resistance but was able to overcome it before capturing the Wiccan and taking her for healing, as well as rescuing her father and removing the consecration that had been put there.

Her motives for doing all of this are unclear but it appears to be a case of unrequited love. It is hoped that the Temple of Diancecht can restore her sanity

Guild Party Causes Ecological Disaster

It is with regret that we must report that a Guild Party was responsible for great devastation of the natural order, rendering 120,000 square miles of forest now uninhabitable, forcing the people of the trading village into the river, expelling the Great Apes and the Goblins from their natural habitat, and causing the healing herbs in the Glade to be replaced by the other sort of herbs.

Given that none of this was intentional on the part of the party, we can only advise Guild members to take care that they are not misled in future. We can be relieved that this disaster occurred off plane, and not on Alusia.



Pierre's Recipe for making Greater Beings

First you should find yourself a high-mana zone. The type may depend on what sort of greater being you wish to create. Then you need a base creature to transform into your Greater being. I find that a very long lived semi sentient tree like an Ancient Dark Oak works well. Add a dragon brain. This will begin your greater being on the way to full sentience. There may be traces of megalomania involved as well.

Sacrifice liberally with Ebony Death, Mist Wolves and other assorted undead. Give it the power of the Master of the Forest if you have it. You can add in a super strong Ettin's heart for flavour. At this point you should probably stop sacrificing. However if you are an orc-elf with a touch of mad dragon disease and a predilection for blowing things up you can add in the heart of an evil elvish earth mage pacted to the Master of Trickery (or some other Demon).

This will make the tree that rules the forest, that you are in the middle of, quite evil, and you want to be able to fly away quickly at that stage before 200,000 square miles of forest becomes uninhabitable for all sentient life forms.

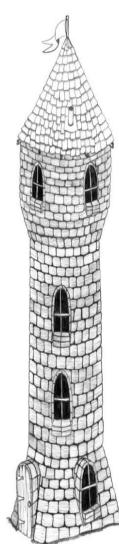
Fae Prince Re-Decorates

Rumour has it that the Fae
Prince Dramus has been having
a bit of trouble with his home
away from home, his Tower of
Knowledge, for some time now.
While we don't fully
understand the details, (and
we're not sure we want to) we
hear he gathered together a
party of selected Guild
members for a spot of early
spring cleaning.

Turned out there were a whole bunch of undead and otherwise monsters, unfamiliar and otherwise, setting up camp in odd corners, along with a stray (and rather unwell) Feyan. There was also some sort of a connection to a Nightmare Seagate, and of course the usual Yellow Brick road to Oz....

We're confused here at the Times, but we gather that Prince Dramus has managed to sort out some of the troubles at his abode, and who knows, perhaps what troubles him somewhat as well...

Do not feed the evil trees!



The Daffodil Dilemma

The SGT secured an interview with Amelia regarding the daffodil issue in Alfheim..

1) To start off with, what was the nature of the daffodil problem in Alfheim?

The three central provinces of Alfheim, Fergensee, Nordlingen and Passau, have much of the arable land over grown with daffodils. These provinces are heavily populated and also normally provide food for the larger Alfheim cities. Currently they have difficulty providing food for the farmers and associated villages.

- 2) Anything you need to be add about this incident? This is not an 'incident' but an agricultural issue that has been in making for over 50 years. Nor are the daffodils new to Alfheim, they have been known for hundreds, and maybe thousands, of years. Their impact on agriculture has ebbed and flowed over the centuries.
- 3) Is there anything unusual about these daffodils, or is this just a rapid proliferation of the flower?

 The abundant health and aggressive reproduction of the daffodil is allowing it to out-grow both pasture and planted crops. The plant has been 'blessed' by one of the ancient elven gods, and the blessing persists to new plants.
- 4) What, if anything are the elves of Alfheim doing about it?

There are various horticultural approaches that are being applied. The farmers this time around have been slow to implement the more effective, so recently an effort is being made to make sure farmers are aware of the best methods to use.

5) Is this something that we need to be concerned about?

Not really; Alfheim will be trading wider for food for the next decade. Guild herbalists should not plants these bulbs in their own gardens, or within 5 years that is all they will be growing.

6) What, if anything is the cause of this proliferation and is there anything that can be done about it? Or was the Guild Party able to fix it?

The situation was caused by elvish farmers being complacent about the spread of the daffodils and letting them get too entrenched in the arable lands. There is no way to easily or quickly remove the huge volumes of plants. The magical suggestions that have been raised have huge downsides.

Something to remember is that the fertility of land is a cycle, and if we just remove or obliterate these plants, then we are also removing their fertility from the cycle, and we risk turning huge areas of arable land into wasteland unable to support life.



While our party couldn't find any immediate solution, I was able to take advantage of the blessed properties of the plant and invent a potion with attractive properties. We are spreading the recipe freely to the herbalists and hedge witches of the area, and encouraging trade throughout Alfheim and beyond to replace the trade for food that is currently stalled. You will see for sale after the Guild meeting samples of the Potion of Joyous Recollection (Venenum recordationis gaudentis) which will bring into vivid clarity a memory of a joyous time.

If any readers desire further information, documents pertaining to the daffodil have been lodged in the herbalist section of the Library.

Potion of Joyous Recollection

This potion will be an excellent birthday or apology gift as it will bring into vivid clarity a memory of a joyous time. Price 50 sp

Amelia Pendragon will be at the Guild for the 1st week of spring



Earth College Scrolls For Sale

Scrolls of the following spells can be obtained from me, at the Guild, for up to a week after the Guild meeting. Otherwise contact me at Bolton Manor. The spells are:

Trollskin rank 12 - 1500sp Armour of Earth rank 15 - 1500sp Strength of Stone (Endurance) rank 13 - 1300sp If you want actual invested items or scrolls of other spells, please contact me. Basalic Isil Elth:
"When are
the Spring
rites?"

Helpful elf:
"In spring,
Ma'am"

"Stowing
Eight tons of
slightly-used
masonry with
the rest of the
loot -- this is
so definitely
an Amelia
adventure"

Sabrina:
"But how do
we get rid of
the taint of
'Sally'
[Seir]?"

Bleyse:
"Just burning enough villages should do it."

Dramus, on the 'Bloodwater Bridge' in 'Nightmare Seagate': "This isn't a good spot for a picnic." Who is...?

Sasha

We were privileged to interview Queen Aleksandra relaxing in her private salon. After we were introduced, the beautiful queen began by explaining: "You can call me Your Majesty. I am Queen Aleksandra or Sasha to friends, never Queen Sasha". And so we politely began our interview

1) When and why did you join the Seagate Adventurer's Guild?

My father was the Marquis of Northern Eltrandor, but he died in suspicious circumstances when I was 10, and my 11 year old bastard brother inherited the title, robbing me of my birthright. A couple of years later my mother remarried and we moved to Aladar

When war broke out in Aladar I was 15. My mother sent me away to safety with a caravan of gypsies, just before the disaster at Barretskine. I travelled with them for a couple of years, before joining the guild in 1993/794 in the guise of a gypsy, planning to regain my station.

2) What do you do when not adventuring? For example, do you have any particular hobbies?

If I tell you that I'll have to kill you. If anyone else does I'll have to kill them and you.

Otherwise, running a kingdom, as my husband would rather not, and getting to know my extremely precocious children.

3) Please describe a highlight of your adventuring career so far.

Well recently I sneaked alone into Furfur's fortress to steal an important prisoner (starting a trend for enchanters to sneak alone into Furfur's realm). Turned out to be a doddle.

4) Which places would you recommend visiting and conversely, which places would you recommend be avoided?

They're really one and the sameplaces that should be avoided are really the ones most worth going to, if you can survive. Demonic realms, chaos infested cities and the like.

Queen Aleksandra (or Sasha to her friends)

5) Why are you still an adventurer and what motivates you to join a Guild Party.

Well, I'm not. Sometimes I organise a group of friends to help me with an insane but necessary task. If I did, what would motivate me to adventure? Lust for ever increasing magic and ability to cheat death. Oh, and sometimes we need to save the world.

6) Have you always been part of Royalty? If not, could you tell us how you became a Queen?

I met Doron on adventure. He was my first courtier master work (the easy part), including working the council of advisors (the hard part), who reasonably thought it was a bad idea.

7) Does being royalty limit your options, such as being able to adventure, because of all the responsibilities?

Of course. I am officially retired from adventuring, but now that I have bred a passel of heirs to the throne and the land is therefore prospering, and I'm expendable, I am allowed to occasionally sneak off.

8) To round off, is there any advice you'd like to give to your fellow Guild members?

Never let them see you.

Get outrageously tough and suppress all the enemy within the first pulse or two.

Laugh a lot.

Dramus:
"Peasants
aren't a
threat."

Mortimer:
"Someone in
your
profession
should be a
little more
sensitive to the
idea of angry
mobs."



The Adventurers' Guide

Tips for Success

If the sign says "Don't touch the levers", then don't.

If some idiot does touch the levers, then run for your life.

Appearances matter, especially when you're trying to win friends and influence people. If you happen to look like something really scary (or something people are often scared of) then don't be surprised if you don't get very far. Try an illusion (or a good disguise).

Important Lessons

When you have created a Malevolent Super Being it might not be such a good idea to keep sacrificing things to it.

When a two ton monster is stomping on you on its way through do not become visible.

Always check what plane you on when you go through a portal. Do not trust your employer.

Elves are easy but they are also probably insane

Don't ask how long counterspells will last as the "longer than you will live" answer may disturb.

Cunning Tactics.

- 1. Charge: Everyone leap on the enemy, we are the Seagate Guild of Adventurers, Dragons fear us when we charge, even if they mistake us for more experienced members, don't give them time to think about it and notice we aren't Sabrina or Gok.
- 2. Charge the other way: Used in situations where we gave them time to think about it and notice who we actually are.
- 3. Diversion Tactics: Issue no instructions, let the enemy try to decipher our plan and tremble in fear at how they can perceive no tactics.
- 4. Overwhelm them with Firepower: Kill them any way possible, including with your bare hands.
- 5. Prepare the battlefield for days: If the enemy gives you enough time, you can make them kill themselves before they ever get to you on just the terrain, make them give you that time from fear of the Seagate Adventurers Guild name.

And above all. If your party member is fighting, stand beside them and fight as well. It always works.

Heard in the Guild Pub

"I love adventuring,
I love the wilderness,
I love the dungeons,
I love the treasures there,
I love the monsters,
I love killing them.
Boom deyada boom deyada
boom deyada boom deyada."

The Artisan Cook's Corner

(This recipe is for those of you adventurers who have managed to shoot a bear and wondered what to do with all that meat. OOC: This is based on a real recipe from the "Lewis & Clark Cookbook" which the editors purchased at the Smithsonian).

Roast of Bear

4 cups red wine
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
1 onion, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
20 dried juniper berries, minced
1/2 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
1 bay leaf
6 to 7 pound bear loin roast
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 tablespoons butter
1 pound mushrooms, sliced

- 1. FOR THE MARINADE: In a saucepan, combine the red wine, red wine vinegar, onion, carrot, garlic, salt, juniper berries, peppercorns, and bay leaf. Bring the mixture to a simmer and continue to simmer for 3 minutes. Remove the saucepan from the heat and let stand until cool. Place the roast into a container just large enough to hold it. Pour the cooled marinade over the meat, and leave in a cool place overnight, turning the meat once.
- 2. Place the roast in a roasting pan and season with salt and pepper. Set aside for 15 minutes.

3. Strain the marinade into a saucepan and discard the solids. Simmer the strained marinade over

medium heat until the mixture is reduced to 1 cup. In a skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and saute until the mushrooms are tender and most of their liquid has evaporated. Add the mushrooms to the reduced marinade and keep warm. 4. Season the roast with salt and pepper. Roast over a medium campfire until done to your liking. Remove the roast from the oven and let stand for 10 minutes before slicing.

Serve with the sauce spooned over the sliced bear roast.

Mortimer:
"I imagine it's
a little like
being savaged
by a
chihuahua."

Clarissa:
"Remember
that would be
more of an
issue for you
than the rest
of us."

Mortimer:
"I think it's
smarter than
most
adventurers.
Hell, it can do
laundry!"



Frightened Villager: "The well has a hex on it."

Rowan:
"I'd rather
call it a
blessing."

Starflower's Bestiary

Of Dire Wolves and Winter Wolves

Talking were-wolves last season brings me to a discussion of other magically altered wolf species.

The most well-known of these is the dire wolf, which can be distinguished from common wolves by its sheer size and strength. Members of this species of wolves are almost the size of ponies. Dire wolves are sentient,

having almost human intelligence. They have been encountered leading packs of common wolves, or forming packs of their own kind, often led by more powerful demonic entities.

These creatures are smart, but not especially innovative in their tactics. They fight as wolves do, going for the neck, and fighting as a pack to pull down their prey.

Dire wolves have are exceptional trackers, since they also never forget a smell. They may be skilled as rangers, and pack leaders often appear to have some military science skill. The more intelligent may possess knowledge of a limited number of spells of the College of Ensorcelments and Enchantments or the College of the Sorceries of the Mind. Speaking of which, if communication is desired, a "Speak to Enchanted Creatures" or "Speak to Animals" spell or "Speak to Creatures of Darkness" ability ought to work.

Dire wolf corpses normally disappear (much to the frustration of adventurers) if they are killed. It is believed that they return to whatever hell they were summoned from Thus, adventurers may assume that dire wolves are generally summoned and may be simply disposed of by

banishing them back to their home plane. This assumes that your party includes a Namer, that they have the proper spells, and that the dire wolf was summoned by means of a spell which can be countered, which is not always the case. Otherwise, it is a simple matter of hitting them until they die of it. Pack leaders are usually noticeably bigger and stronger, and should be the primary target for mages. Strength spells are especially useful to counter



Winter Wolf

their tendency to attempt to overbear their opponents.

Winter wolves are in many ways like dire wolves, except that their fur is almost pure white, with grey markings. They are similar in size, build, in their skills at tracking and their tactics. Like them, they are intelligent, but their magics are those of the College of Ice Magics or the College of Mind Magics. Adventurers who have encountered winter wolves have described them as having a breath weapon like an icy breath, and a freezing bite that does extra damage due to the chill. Like dire wolves these creatures are believed to be summoned from the hells, but in this case the frozen hell known as Stygia.

Tactics for encountering winter wolves are similar to those for dire wolves, with the main exception that protections against cold would naturally be of great utility. It is also likely that fire magics ought to be particularly effective against these creatures, although this has yet to be tested.

It is possible that other lupines aligned with the other elements, such as summer wolves with firey breath may exist, but these have not yet been reported.

Large winter drake: "In the Name of Winter -Begone!"

MDK:
"In the Name
of the Seagate
Guild of
Adventurers Sod You
Jimmeh!"



The Puzzle Column

When the Monsters Moved In

Five wealthy adventurers all went out last session, and all returned to find that their assorted abodes were infested with an assortment of unwelcome monsters, nesting in various places.

Adventurers: Blueberry, Dreadlocks Madelf, Holly,

Princess Silivith, Sir Vitreous.

Abodes: Castle, Farmhouse, Inn, Manor, Tower. Monster: Basilisks, Cockatrices, Gargoyles,

Griffons, Wyverns.

Location: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

- 1. Holly, who didn't live in a tower, didn't have cockatrices nesting at her abode. Dreadlocks Madelf didn't have monsters in his attic.
- 2. Sir Vitreous didn't have a gatehouse at his farmhouse. The gryphons were not nesting in a gazebo.
- 3. The gargoyles were making a nest at the Manor, but not in the stables. The basilisks built their nest in the cellar, but not at the castle.
- 4. The wyverns were not making a nest at Sir Vitreous' abode. Princess Silivith didn't live at the castle.
- 5. Blueberry, who doesn't live in a tower, didn't have wyverns. The wyverns were nesting in the attic. There were monsters making a nest in the stables at the Inn.
- 6. The five adventurers are represented by the one who lived at the tower, the one who had monsters nesting in the stables, the one who had cockatrices making a nest, Princess Silivith, and the one who had monsters in the attic.



"The good news is... it's not mice."

Get the Power of Fire and Light!

Fire College Invested Items: Dragonflames Rk 10 Weapon of Flames Rk 10 Also Rank 8 Weaponry.

New Dragonsmite!!! (ask for details)

Prices negotiable.

Please contact Flamis at the Guild.



"Don't let the fire mage anywhere near the loot. He will blow it up."

Riddles

First:

What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries?

I have holes in my top and bottom, my left and right, and in the middle. But I still hold water. What am I?

What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never talks, has a head but never weeps, has a bed but never sleeps?

Answers to Last Issue's Puzzles:

Those adventurers and their pets:

1st, Tommy, manticore, Holly 2nd, Puck, chimaera, Windflower 3rd, Nobby, hippogriff, Crayon 4th, Cuitie, gryphon, Futon

Riddles:

First: the letter M,

Second: the four elements; water, earth, fire, air,

Third: a snail

What's Hot

Transgression

Silver Braids

Sword of Solomon

Reavers' Axe

Demon Avatars going 'pop" when you stab them

Giant cephalopods that are not Calamar

Bubbles of Force

What's Not

Punishment

Infernal Cold

Lycanthrope curses

Khatovar Engravers

Demon Avatars taking you to the bottom of a lake

The Old Woman of Winter

Rain of Millstones: Ground Zero



Lady Hope: "How may quarters does this city have anyway?"

"It was done with the best of intentions". - Sooty after turning a whole forest evil.



Clarissa:
"Playing
hard to get,
are we?"

Mortimer: "We're not playing."

The Rumour Mill

You heard it here first...

Investigations continue into rumours that Lady Clarissa, the noted courtesan from Sanctuary, has been doing everything she can to stay on the good side of Lady Teeanna. For Lady Clarissa this is a stark change from her domineering ways in the courts of Prince Kadakithis, and we can only guess at the causes behind this behaviour. Was there more to the relationship between Dramus and Lady Clarissa when she was a nanny to his adopted daughter or is it simply envy over a pair of new boots?

After careful investigation of an initially convincing story brought to us by an unnamed source, the Times is confident that there is no truth to the rumour that the true reason behind Countess Liessa of Newhaven's apotheosis and ascension was a desire to escape the triangular relationship between herself, her husband Engalton, and Saydar the Baron of Erewhon. Nor is there any evidence that the Countess was suffering overwhelming emotional turmoil from her husband's divided affections.

Rumours continue that the marriage of fae Prince Dramus to the Lady Te'anna may merely be a cover for his more unusual proclivities, and that the true affections of the Faerie Prince may lie with a certain fair halfling tinkerer well known for his manufacture of *ahem* "cunning mechanical toys".

On a casual reading of the scribe notes we read that "Father Rowan died in a blaze of flames." Given that there is no further mention of the self-styled "canon" we can only surmise that the party forgot to get him resurrected—or maybe his goddess decided to keep him, and not to give him back...

Letter to the Editors

Dear Editor,

I am a new member of the Seagate Guild. When I joined they told me for my first four or five missions I could only expect to find myself fighting

animals, small bands of humanoids and maybe the

odd lesser undead.

I have been out on only two missions so far, but as well as these things have had to battle, an army of Goblins, giant enchanted dogs with exploding teeth, a 12 foot monster made of stone called a Golem, a Litch, a Mist Wrath, a hoard of Ebony Death, a Barghest, and a super strong Ettin.

I have fought with an avatar of the Goblin God of Death and was once faced with some kind of Dragon thingy.

I wish to complain.

The elemental mages roasted the Dragon thingy before I even got a swing at it.

Whoops!" Aaron Ferret, Enchanter

Water College Potions for Sale

Waters of Healing Rk 14 - 400 sp Waters of Strength Rk 10 - 1000 sp Please contact Aqualina at the Guild.



Restoratives for Sale

New Supplier. Honey-flavoured! Up to Rk 6 currently available. Please contact Grizelda at the Guild, or at the village of Thorn's Landing. Only 800sp.





Lucius' Greater Enchantment

Are you feeling outdated and under powered? What you need is a Greater Enchantment!

Only 200sp per cast rank plus the materials cost. Contact Lucius in the guild kitchens for a Rank 19 greater.

You decide what you want!

The Last Word

The editors would like to express their grateful thanks to all contributors to this season's issue of the Seagate Times, especially to new writers. We remind you that we reserve the right to edit all contributions and to determine what shall and shall not appear in print. Please note that opinions appearing in this document are not necessarily those of the editors or staff of the Seagate Times.

T'ana Silverwind, Editor in Chief, Seagate Times Ariel Glitterwing Stargazer, Chief Reporter and Astrologer



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Or check the dqwiki at:

http://www.dragonquest.org.nz/dqwiki/index.php/Main_Page

Dramus: "Whoops!"