

The Seagate Times



Issue 28 - Autumn 800

Dark Circle Looms Over Seagate

We have been informed that the perimeter of the Dark Circle has recently passed over Seagate. Fortunately the only effect noticed so far has been that the stars in the night sky are clearer and more brilliant, which some people have referred to as 'the only good thing to come out of all this'.

The Circle itself, causes a faint magical aura to radiate from the ground with the primary College involved being Namer. This effect is muted within Seagate, presumably due to the close proximity of a concentration of magical energies located at the Guild complex. A returning adventuring party referred to the Guild as being a Hardpoint for normal reality, hence residents need not fear of Undead walking the streets by day. This reporter was still highly suspicious of the black cloaked stranger in the tavern who was consuming a dark red drink and declined the publican's offer of the house special meal, which was roast chicken garnished with garlic. Instead he was nibbling on a plate of green vegetables.

Many of the Ducal Guards have been found dead in the last quarter but it was discovered that they were doppelgangers. The cause of death has been determined to be an infestation of cerebral parasites. Fortunately they are harmless to living people, except Mind Mages. If a Mind Mage is found to be infected, they can be cured by walking through a Wall of Light.

Another recent infestation has been that of rather large rats, with hand-like paws, that have been seen roaming the town. These rats are mostly harmless, friendly, and appear to be very intelligent. However, be warned that they are attracted to valuable items which they will steal and take to their masters, which, so far, have all been hobbits.

It has been established that both these infestations were caused by a Guild party returning from the Plane of Greyhawk. There has been strong recommendations that the Guild set up quarantine procedures for adventurers returning from offplane.

A Guild warrior defends her fallen companions against an Undead foe.

Some Speculations on the Origins of the Dark Circle

By Phaeton

On our previous adventure some divinations were performed which lead us to believe that the Gaunt Man is either the master of, or is allied with, the Necromancer Rashak. If this is the case it is very likely that the current threat of the Circle is of his doing. He has had at least one encounter with a Guild parties before, the group commonly known as the 'Engilgoons', so whether this is his means of retaliation is unknown.

The other likely possibility is that the Dark Circle is his means of spreading his influence on to his plane prior to an invasion. Not much is known about the Gaunt Man but it is believed that he takes over planes and literally consumes them in order to gain more power. He no longer has a Plane of Origin - it's long gone.

It is also theorised that he is connected in some way to the Planes of Hell. He is not immortal and not a god but is extremely tough, much like a major demon. When killed, he can come back unless he is killed by a specific permanent death, the exact nature of which is unknown.

According to our divinations his main weapon is Despair and the best defence is Hope.

Elsewhere in This Issue

News in Brief

Dark Circle

Bestiary

Puzzle Column

Silken Web

and more...



News in Brief

Duke Denies Increase in Piracy: Higher Taxes Imposed

Last month, in response to several Merchant Guild complaints, Sir Piers Wrothworthy (Warden of the Harbourogh of Seagate & Lord Commander of the Carzalan Shore) denied that there was any significant increase in piracy near Carzala "Although there may have been a temporary decrease in the perceived number of inbound vessels," he said, "this is merely the rare combination of seasonal variations with certain singular cosmopolitan events." When politely pressed for specifics by this reporter, Sir Piers eventually mentioned "... the recent unpleasantness in Nova Dom and sporadic residual calendrical uncertainties, millennially speaking, within the international community.

Furthermore, it is understood that the Serene Republic of Destiny is currently revisiting its marine schedules with a possible, transitory contraction in the per mensem mercantile volume of trade-goods offloaded at our illustrious city." He emphatically denied that the Black Circle was responsible for the disappearance of any ships, saying that

Meanwhile Captain Seth "Salty" Waters, the harbour-master of Seagate, confirmed that at least five merchant vessels sailing from South-eastern towns, including trade-ports on the Coast of Araby, are know to have been lost. He also explained that there is much "scuttlebutt" of renegade piracy conducted by rebel Destinian Royalist ex-barons [assuming this reporter has correctly understood the precise naval terms "cow-pokin' silk-puddenned fid-caulked dago waisters"]. Captain Waters thought it unlikely that rumours of Drow activity had any factual basis.

He added that inbound merchant captains are usually content to pay the increased fees to dock or stay in Seagate, because of our relatively safe harbour and the "rare goings-on & portents" currently visible at sea. You may recall that Sir Piers previously announced of 15 Heat 800 (last summer solstice) harbour fees and importation taxes will rise by a further 10% to partially recover the current shortfall in His Grace's Revenue due to this so-called "temporary decrease" in inward trade.

It is understood that several dockside inns have been circulating false reports of an alliance between Destiny & the Duke of Seagate to attack Nova Dom & Sanctuary. Off-the-record, several Merchants of Significance admitted that they were conditionally in favour of such a naval assault, if it proved to be successful. However Sir Piers said such rumours were "precipitous and totally unfounded."

On observing a chicken laying cockatrice eggs, clucking loudly all the while,

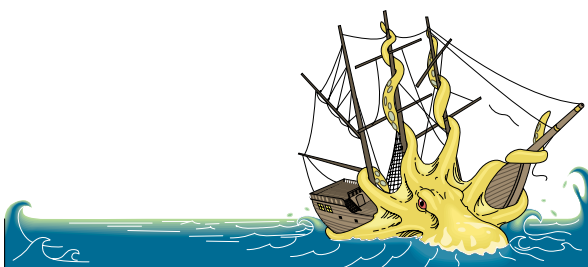
Scratch: "It's an enchanted chicken."

Silverfoam: "More like a dis-enchanted chicken!"

Hagan: "We could always hire a fishing smack."

Kyseri: "You smack fish?"

Hagan: "Only Smackerel!"



"Our Men folk were Stolen"

These are the cries of the innocent womenfolk who until recently were living in Brastor until an Evil witch by the name of Anathea led them off without real cause into death and destruction. After leaving the women and children with other guild members it is believed she has taken the men into the depths of the High Mana Forest north of Brastor for strange sexual rites and depravity the likes of which mortal men can nary consider.

Under the guise of "saving" the village from the hordes of undead, Anathea encouraged the villagers to leave the safety of the village and trek into the forest where an attack was staged.

"She bewitched our menfolk and led them astray" said a farmers wife. Anathea has not returned from the High Mana Zone to confirm or deny the allegations, but we did get an interview from one of the party she was with.

- Interviewer: What was on her mind when she was separated from you?
- Liessa: She wanted to stay with the men.
- Interviewer: Did she mention the women at all?
- Liessa: Na she just told us to get them out of there as quickly as possible and to make sure they did not return.
- Interviewer: What was her reason for staying?
- Liessa: She said I have to look after my men.

Dialogue contained in this interview has been altered to appear more damning to the accused. The paper takes no responsibility for any witch-hunts that may ensue.

Guild Cauldron Mended

After months of work and investigation our hardworking healers and alchemists have declared the damaged Healing Potion Cauldron fixed. Unfortunately there has been a little long-term damage and the concentrated 20 point dose is no longer available.

At the request of members, a 'quick to scull' container has been devised, for those moments when one more tiger bite will change you from an entity to an object.

The new healing draught is available from Trudy in the healing supplies shop in the Hospital basement.

Urgent Astrological Announcement

Thunor the Warrior is Square to Ariel the Messenger, in an Air sign, but doubly in Trine to the Sun & to Helga. This makes it an extremely unlucky time to attack messengers, heralds, or reporters -- especially if you fly or travel on a winged mount. However the Solar and Lunar aspects make the upcoming season a very fortuitous time for such a person to attack the forces of evil, especially necromancers or rune-mages, or if there is much travel involved.

Graf: "Call me Marquis"
King: "No Comment."

On 1st Meadow, the Mittelmark Royal College of Heraldry announced that the claim of Margrave Ludvig II to Mittlemark has fallen into Abeyance because Ludvig "the last," a close companion of King Sigismund the Pious, disappeared over 300 years ago on the same ill-fated Crusade.

The College has decreed that, in accordance with ancient Royal laws & charters, the dignity of Margrave passes to the heiress of MMHS, Graffin Flavia. Therefore the de jure Margrave is Diego, her husband, the new Graf of Mittelmarkhaptstadt. The Patriarch of the City, High Priest Ur-Ulrich, thanked the New Margrave for his compassion, nobility, and generosity.

As yet there has been no response from the Regent of the Western Kingdom, however the Comte de la Forêt-Sauvage, the most senior member of the Court of the Western Kingdom present at the ceremonies, was heard to remark that the Western Court was ignoring the wedding and "self-promotion of ex-Don Diego" because of rumours that he had hired some assassins from Seagate to kill his political enemy the late King Carlos of Destiny. The Bowcourt nobleman then began to discuss loudly the potent effect of Elderberry wine on Lord Diego's parentage when he accidentally brushed against Baroness Schonhausen and, in the confusion, sustained minor injuries or perhaps fainted. Fortunately some halfling waiters gave immediate assistance, and the poor Count is currently understood to be recuperating at his country estate.

Briefing for those Entering the Dark Circle

First up, you can tell when you're in the Dark Circle at night 'cos the stars are brighter, during the day your first clue will be that the Vampire who's giving you neck surgery isn't getting toasted by the sun.

Rule 2: If it's undead, assume it can kick your arse. They're all a lot tougher than they used to be. Make sure that your entire party have amulets that help you sleep. Once you kill some undead you start having nightmares, not much of a problem except that if your mates don't have an amulet your sleep will be disturbed by them waking up screaming. On amulets, forget the ones that are supposed to keep undead at bay. They never once worked for us. If you don't have one you're likely to be more careful about undead. Remember rule 2, if you assume an amulet will protect you, you'd better put in a booking for resurrection.

Make friends with some priests - real priests that can supply you with Holy Water! There's all sorts of nasty wasting diseases and drains that only Holy Water seemed to be able to fix. Skeletons (and maybe Zombies) inspire fear in all those in their presence, only Elves and those with exceptional willpower seem to be immune. If you're within about 50' of a Skeleton then expect your willpower to start draining away. Don't waste arrows on skeletons!

And forget your poncy court weapons. Don't go into the dark circle unless you have (and can use) a good solid hacking or bashing weapon. Once you start smashing Skeletons in melee, be warned that they will make you weaker. Every time that you hit them or they hit you you could start losing strength - Necromancy counterspells helped with this. To add injury to insult, the bastards explode when you kill them. Not all of the time and often it'll bounce off a decent set of armour, but sometimes it can be twice as bad as one of those methane grenades going off in your face.

Be prepared to fight blind, the more organised groups love to throw flash of light grenades into the middle of combat. Not to mention the skeleton archers firing arrows into melee. The zombies and ghouls carry some nasty diseases, if they injure you then you're probably infected. The one we encountered most often starts locking up all of your joints until you can't move. Remember that Holy Water!

The vampires used some sort of blade venom that makes you bleed like a stuck pig - don't get hit. If you're going in there with a reasonably sized group, take pikes. A good pike block will cut up most non-skeletal undead before they get close enough to do their worst. If your companions die or you find dead people and you can't get them resurrected before a night passes, destroy their bodies! Otherwise you'll be fighting them tomorrow. The same with anyone who loses all of their willpower, by dawn they'll be a servant of Rashak. Remember that Holy Water!

If you do get drained and survive, you'll recover over a period of days - dawn brings healing. If you're anywhere near the bandit hills (whatever their real name is), watchout for the bats. There's a band of several thousand vampire bats that'll swarm all over you. Particularly bad if you're flying with shadow wings. A decent armour spell will prevent them from doing any damage. Even without you can deal with them. But flying and casting are out. The mages say the noise makes it too hard to concentrate. Visibility is crap too. They're sometimes led by some sort of bat lord flying around on a large undead bat-thing. He seems a bit of a wuss though, he fled after we shot his mount a couple of times. The skeletal knight was probably the worst thing we ran into - extreme bad luck in his presence makes him hard to fight (+25 on all dice rolls). As well as being a staunch bastard who'll drain you while he hacks you apart. The one we faced had a rat cloak as well which absorbs incoming spells for the wearer. Fortunately these do run out but it takes a while. So use your cheap easy damaging spells on them until the rat cloak is gone then bring out the big spells.

Overall, don't get hit, don't get hurt, don't die, don't underestimate them, don't forget your Holy Water, and most importantly... kick their arse before they kick yours!

Count Aryan.

Kilrudum:
"We're fighting on the side of chaos!"

Elisabet:
"Fighting? Did YOU draw a weapon?"

Later at the battle feast:

"Do dragons always tell the truth?"

A dragon:
"Yes."



A Brief Guide to the Ethereal Plane

By Phaeton

The party I was in, recently had to travel in the Ethereal Plane. So, for those of you contemplating such a trip, here are some notes taken from a mixture of personal observations, notes lodged in the library, and tales told by sages, bards, and adventurers.

The Ethereal has been described as a plane of everything and of nothing. Some philosophers theorise that here is the basic material, which is usually referred to as 'proto-matter', that all the planes are made from, and that it is this stuff that Binders use when they create objects. The Ethereal infuses all matter and surrounds all the Prime and Inner Planes (including the elemental planes).

There are actually two parts to the Ethereal - the Border Ethereal, which surrounds each plane and the Deep Ethereal which fills up the rest. Think of each plane as an island, the Border as the shallow sea around it, and the Deep as the ocean and you won't be too far wrong. Only very rarely does a plane not have a Border, such as the Boundless.

The first impression that a traveller gets when entering the Border Ethereal, whether it be by spell or potion, is of a thick fog that surrounds everything and obscures vision down to tens of feet. There seems to be no visible means of support but the ethereal being is able to 'stand' on this stuff. Movement is three dimensional and any usual means are possible, walking, flying, swimming etc. Objects in the plane just left, can be vaguely made out but do not affect the ethereal traveller thus walls can be walked through. It should be noted though that certain spells and materials, such as Bound Earth, can create barriers in the Ethereal preventing access by that method.

When we were there, we noted that the Solar Mages and the Air Mage had acquired a sense of direction, similar to the ranger sense, but it pointed to the nearest point of a particular plane. In the Solar's case it was the Plane of Radiance while the Air Mage's North was towards the Plane of Air. I can only surmise that other colleges would be pointed towards the following planes:

Water	- Elemental Plane of Water
Earth	- Elemental Plane of Earth
Fire	- Elemental Plane of Fire

Ice	- Elemental Plane of Ice
Necromancer	- Negative Material Plane
Shadow	- Demi-Plane of Shadow

If there are other Colleges corresponding to the other elemental planes, members of those Colleges would sense the direction of that plane. A dwarf may have a similar link with the Plane of Mineral.

Getting into the Deep Ethereal is just a matter of willing it so. To any other travellers, it looks like that person has just stepped into a fogbank and disappeared. That traveller will now find themselves standing by a Curtain of Vaporous Colour that marks the border between the Border and the Deep. Getting back to the Border is just a simple matter of stepping through the curtain which appears as a huge hanging sheet of colour that is constantly being agitated. Lights dance across the surface in random patterns.

The colour for each Inner Plane is believed to be:

Prime Material	- Turquoise
Air	- Sky Blue
Earth	- Brown
Fire	- Red
Water	- Green
Ice	- Aquamarine
Smoke	- Pearl
Ooze	- Chocolate
Magma	- Maroon
Lightning	- Violet
Steam	- Ivory
Radiance	- Shifting rainbow pattern
Mineral	- Milky pink
Vacuum	- Ebony
Salt	- Tan
Ash	- Dark Grey
Dust	- Brownish grey
Positive Material	- Pure white
Negative Material	- Pure black

However, many of these are not verified apart from the first six and the last two.

Silverfoam to Scratch: "It took a look at your soul."

Fizzgig: "That was pretty good, being able to find it."

Scratch: "Yeah, I don't usually take it with me."

Silverfoam, on the way to the Elemental Plane of Air:

"We're going to be employed by the houri or the dey."

Other colour curtains do exist and these lead to demi-planes. The one we encountered, the Boundless, had a silvery-brown colour. It is recorded that the Demi-Plane of Shadow has a silvery coloured curtain but, again, this has not been verified by recent observation.

The Deep also looks like one is standing in the middle of a thick fog. Going places can be done in the same way as the Border. It is best to know exactly where you are going, or have a guide, otherwise it is so easy to be hopelessly lost.

One thing our party discovered was that summoning a Phantasm on the Ethereal Plane was rather dangerous to us. The phantasm gathered ethereal matter into itself and became freewilled. In that state it wasn't affected by Mind College Counterspells. A Binder Counterspell was used to slow the accumulation and the phantasm was destroyed as soon as it came into contact with the Curtain. However, it was useful in locating a lost party member.

We encountered no indigenous life forms in our travels but, it is believed some creatures do exist there. Details on them were sketchy.

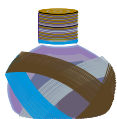
Next issue, I hope to have completed my research on the Inner Planes. If anyone wishes to discuss this further, I can be found most evenings in the Library - and it's not because of the Librarians.

Water Magics for Sale

Waters of Healing Rk 10 - 400 sp

Waters of Strength Rk 9 - 800 sp

Please contact Aqualina at the Guild.



An artist's conception of the Border Ethereal

Adventuring Tips

How to Cook Griffon Shis-ka-bob

* Included as a public service for the benefit of culinary confused Guild parties.

** WARNING : Do not eat 'Crystal' species, the shards may be dangerous when consumed.... **

"Griffons are such wonderful feasts, actually two in one - you have your white and red meat, now just don't serve wine...." Maxa the Elf, Taris 5

Ingredient List:

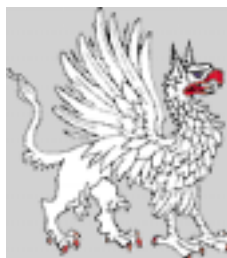
1 plucked and skinned griffon, separated into white and red meat.

Dath Khhn's famous Vaydinian soy sauce (or whatever)...
Sliced and/or diced vegetables, preferably Kinlu style

Method:

Cut griffon into small 1 in. by 1 in. squares. Marinate red meat in Dath Khhn's soy sauce. Slide onto barbeque fire-sticks, alternating with vegetables. Cook over large flame until done(?). Makes about 62 servings.

***Note : Does anyone know when a griffon is done?



On observing Grendel, badly beaten up, yet still immolated, Silverfoam:

"We can tell the trollskin is working. The pilot light is still on."

Later, when burning the troll bodies:

"Throw another troll on the Grendel."

Starflower's Bestiary

The Unquiet Dead - Revenants

Not all undead walk the earth as the result of necromantic magic. That class of restless dead known as revenants can be formed whenever an entity dies under stressful circumstances and with serious unfinished business. Since this clearly suggests murder as the cause of death, that business frequently revolves around revenge. But revenants are also bound to their place of death. So it is hardly surprising that many revenants are not entirely sane. Furthermore their undead status means a revenant may frequently continue to exist well beyond the life span of their murderer. At which point the revenant's unfinished business would be difficult indeed to complete. Such profound frustration must be truly maddening.

Revenants, depending on circumstances, may become ghosts or night-gaunts. Ghosts are usually relatively harmless, being insubstantial and lacking both skills and magic. Their sole power is fear, and that is ineffective on elves, since ghosts are lesser undead. But this in itself is sufficient to create havoc in populated areas. For some reason only known to those deities who watch over the

unquiet dead, ghosts seem to be most frequently created in large inhabited buildings such as castles, manor houses and inns. Whoever heard of a haunted hovel?

Since such buildings are generally owned by persons of means, a party of adventurers may well be called upon to "lay" the ghost. This process will generally begin by talking to the ghost, and thereby finding out the nature of its unfinished business. This is not always easy. There is not guarantee that a ghost will make sense, or that it will tell the truth. And it doesn't help when half the party runs away screaming in fear!

Night-gaunts are far more dangerous to the inexperienced. They are greater undead, which means that not even elves are immune to the fear they may project. They are not necessarily revenants either. Night-gaunts can be created when a wight drains an entity of endurance beyond the point of death. But typically night-gaunts are revenants, most often created when the circumstances of death involve an unfulfilled geas or oath.

Night-gaunts wax and wane in opposition to the Sun, being insubstantial during the day, and increasingly corporeal after sunset, reaching full solidity just after moonrise. When the night-gaunt is in its ethereal state attacking it is futile, but it cannot cause harm either, except by means of magic. Nevertheless the author would not advise initiating physical contact with a night-gaunt, however insubstantial. The difficulty is that night-gaunts are capable of draining life force on contact. Armour does not protect; and in some cases, neither does keeping the night-gaunt at the far end of a long pointy object, magical or not. They have even been known to drain adventurers through their own silvered weapons. Which brings up another important matter for dealing with night-gaunts. Like many other species of greater undead they can only be harmed by magic, or by silvered or magical weapons. Time to see the weaponsmith, perhaps?

The nastiest kind of night-gaunt is that which was a celestial mage in life. Night-gaunts retain the skills and abilities that they had in life, with one exception. They rarely keep magical skills, except those of the celestial college. Generally they will be Dark or Shadow mages, although the author has heard of one instance where a night-gaunt was a Solar mage. However, their magical prowess is usually less than that of a wraith or a wight. Fortunately.

The worst and best ways to tangle with a night-gaunt were amply demonstrated by a recent party. The worst? Half the party run away in fear, including the blast mage, while a lone fighter-mage engages the night-gaunt in melee. The best? Less than a minute later, the fighter-mage has withdrawn to the relative safety of the area effect of two amulets of jade, another party member has retrieved a quiver of silvered arrows from one of the frightened, and the fighter-mage proceeds to skewer the night-gaunt repeatedly until her final deadly arrow pierced it in the groin. A fitting end, since this night-gaunt had broken an oath of marriage!

A fearsome night-gaunt

Douglas (speaking of a ghost the party encountered): "Just what would the necromancer want to do with the lady ghost?"

Hagan: "Oh, I don't expect he wants to marry her. Just lay her."



The Puzzle Column

Riddle from Jorgen the Sphynx:

What was given to you, belongs to you exclusively and yet is used more by others than by yourself?

Bad Jokes from the Bardic Academy

Q: Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?
A: He didn't have the guts.

Q: What happened when the ice elemental ate a curry ?
A: He blew his cool !

Q: What do you say when you meet a hydra?
A: Hello, hello!

Q: What do dragons called armoured knights?
A: Canned food!

Q: What did the adventurer do when he lost his hand ?
A: He went to a second hand shop !

Q: Why did the troll walk over the hill ?
A: Because it was too much bother to walk under it !

Human: Where do fleas go in winter ?
Werewolf: Search me !

Q: What happened to the boat that sank in the river full of piranha fish ?
A: It came back with a skeleton crew !

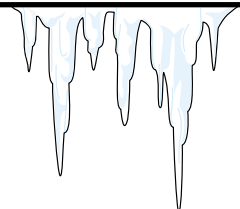
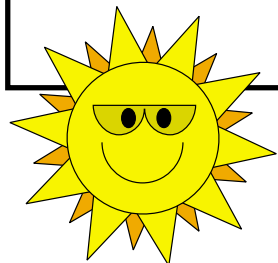
Q: What is a kraken's favourite dish ?
A: Fish and ships !

What's Hot

- The Ethereal Plane
- Silvered arrows
- Holy Water
- Pyromancers
- Shell of Silence
- Hope

What's Not

- Djinni
- Undead
- The Dark Circle
- Necromancers
- Animate Dead
- Despair



The Silken Web

Hi darlings,

Frantically busy here, you know how it is, mutant dwarves, 20 foot nagas and a Demonic Emperor wanting to know why we've broken his doorbell. Honestly a girl barely has time to get her knickers on, at least that's what Lysander claims and far be it from me to assume anything different.

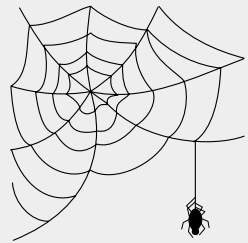
Little birds have been busy whispering in my ear these last few weeks. This Dark Circle nuisance certainly seems to be dividing the Guild into the goody goody angel bottom-kissers, the evil minions of Insufficient Light and those who frankly couldn't give a monkey's unless there's something in it for them.... Tut tut you naughty evildoers, come along to a few church services and swish about in the vestal garments and like me you could be pleasantly surprised!

Apparently Amaranth has been off plane in Oz doing good works and bringing light and happiness to all who see her. Now I know there are those who say she's a mean spirited, tight fisted, neurotic, badly dressed old bag but obviously you have misjudged the poor lovie. Nobody was happier than me to hear she's been snuggling up to Brock. It seems he offered to "do it for Amaranth especially if she wasn't feeling good" and proved to be quite the sovereign remedy. Poor Eidolon, unlucky in love again, surely there's a winsome lass or personable duck out there with his name on?

Who's that knocking or perhaps we should say banging, on Hope de Winter's door?. Seems there is a certain foul mouthed (but silver tongued) doorkeeper with a big smile under his dwarfen beard. I hear she also has a working girl's relationship with self professed scum, Scratch (honestly darling, you don't have to say it yourself there's no end of willing volunteers) I hear Scratch can stick to any surface..that must come in handy. Just a hint, Hope dear, white may not be your colour any more. The poor girl will no doubt be needing some of those lovely skin emollients and lubricants that Anatheia finds so very effective. I understand the naughty little witch (Anatheia) has been "rescuing" some peasants up by Brastor, funny how the women all got left behind somehow. One hears tell of "strange sexual rites and depravity the likes of which mortal men can nary consider". Goodness me, Anatheia, must get a pottle or two of those unguents for myself!

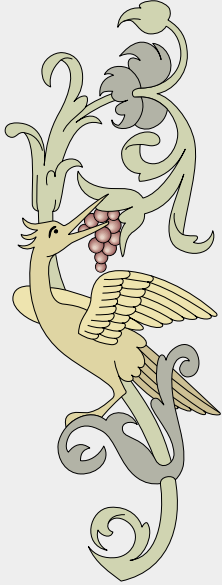
Now I've heard of sending a potential employer one's "C.V." but apparently Grendel felt inspired to post his ..ahem..particulars to a djinn he/she? was hoping to work for. So if anybody is offered a pair of small spherical objects while having tea with a djinn in the near future, I'd go for the prawns if I were you.

Speaking of balls, I had a fabulous time at a big society wedding in Mittlemarkhauptsomethingortheother. The gorgeous and gracious Grafina Flavia married the dashing Don Diego of Destiny. Anastasia sent out the invites to 700 of her closest friends and all the beautiful people were there, Arthur Pendragon (a special "friend" of Diego, if you know what I mean), Amelia, that little tyke Fenris, Count This and Baroness That, even that dreadful social climber, Isil Eth.



Callas: "There are a lot of creeps in the Guild."

Scratch: "Me! I'm one!"



I had a lovely chat with Mistress Serendipity and her little pussy cat, oh wait Mistress Seren WAS the little pussy cat...a trifle spiky for patting but with such lovely twitchy whiskers.

Arwen, Starflower, Glyn and Clementine were supposed to arrive with the rest of the hoi polloi on the Cloud Flotilla but fortunately for the enjoyment of everybody else failed to put in an appearance...although possibly they were at one of those tables behind the columns at the back of the room.

Of course I spent the entire evening attempting to evade the amorous clutches of Baron Silverfoam. Sad really, he is a married man after all. I was shocked and disappointed to hear from a reputable source that Silverfoam's wife had, I quote, "A little elf in her". And he looks so virile...ah well, appearances can be so deceiving, don't you find? Perhaps he should see if Mortimer Graves can whip him up one of those fascinating little mechanical appliances for the Discerning Gentleman.

And on the subject of those with pretentious and silly titles, Hairy-yin the Count of Ebola was noticeable in his absence, having irritated the Western Church, annoyed some big slanty eyed yobbo and been so generally offensive that nobody invites him anywhere these days. Also missing were Lady Kathleen and Brother Christopher who were allegedly off getting hitched in some dubious type of "wedding" somewhere in Bowcourt. Brother Christopher obviously belongs to one of those orders which allow a little flexibility in the chastity vow department. Donna Astoria, (Diego's chic and pouting sister) whispered to me that Kathy and Chris were plotting with hairy Yin or she could have said "potting" with him, which given Hairy's known proclivity for getting in jams could well be more likely.

Things are looking up since the demise of Carlos the Chronically Boring and it seems Illusionists are very much in vogue in Mittlewhatsit...see, not EVERYBODY thinks you're completely useless, Galland.

Festivities carried on for a fortnight and about eight months from now I would say Mittlethingamy will be just the place for you life aspected sorts.

Could it possibly be true that Blitzkreig has renounced his title, found religion and joined a nunnery? He was always a rather confused boy...perhaps too many smackings by stern Abbesses in his youth or possibly not quite enough of them. I like a good Church Knight as much as the next courtesan but really sweetie, self flagellation just hurts everybody in the end.

I was also forced to listen to the dreary and uninteresting doings of Kryan, Gideon, Sh'rel and Dramus but honestly sweeties you don't want to know. Let's just say they involved a rabbit, sign language, 4 metres of star silk and a short sword and leave it at that. Oh I believe a dragon was involved somewhere. I daresay the Servile Reptile (you know who you are, don't think your silly curse is going to stop me, Lizzy Wizzy) was hanging about, ready to buff it's scales.

Now Martin is an adventurer that I've always thought was a pompous, overdressed, underbrained, vain, pretentious

excuse for a spoilt brat with too many toys. Turns out that is not entirely accurate. Never let it be said that Silken cannot change her mind about a man. It turns out that none of his ridiculously powerful weapons, monstrosly useful out of college spells or ludicrous abilities...such as not breathing and regenerating like a nasty piece of fungus, are anything that any hard working guild member couldn't pick up in the course of an every day adventure. Fancy that.

And while I'm saying such nice things, I really should mention that Mary-em is a super little hobbit, not at all indecisive and a whiz at checkers.

Ta-ra for now and as my dear old granny used to say "If you haven't got anything nice to say about anybody, come sit next to me"

Love, Silken

Letter to the Editors

Sir,

A dangerous, dark pall has cast itself over the once-free city of Seagate. I refer, of course, to your shameful abuse of editorial privilege. Since there is no author attributed to the disgusting fictions in "The Rumour Mill," which I note is only capable of grinding coarsely, I assume that all responsibility (!) for these libels is yours.

It is a minor misfortune to be abused in one of your sordid little rags; in both, is editorial carelessness. In your delinquency, you are tempting grave mischance. I almost think you implied that there was some legal or otherwise immoral relationship between myself and a previous recipient of the Star of Alusia. I would insist that you publish a full apology, or prepare yourself for the consequences.

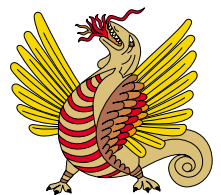
Silverfoam.

PS: Me and my army.

The Last Word

The editors would like to express their grateful thanks to all contributors to this season's issue of the Seagate Times. 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 (especially those appearing in the "Silken Web"). Oh, and Silverfoam, we are very very sorry, but like we said... Not necessarily our opinion. Besides, wasn't the other "rag" so much more insulting?

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