

The Travance Chronicle

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A PILGRIMAGE TO A FAMILIAR PLACE BY IMRAHL

A wiser man than I once told me: "To travel without being transformed by the journey is to be a nomad. To change without exploration is to be a chameleon. It is the pilgrim that travels and is transformed by the journey."

I paid little contemplation to what I then thought another confounding riddle from a cryptic teacher. Now, years later, the meaning grows clearer to me. Almost ten moons have waxed and waned since I have arrived in Travance. The world was nearly destroyed before I could even write in the Kormyrian tongue, and the place where I was formed and proofed gone. All I sat to supper with in my life previous are gone, or at the least, missing. Learning of this, I was driven to a rare moment of anger, and sought seclusion.

It was on the ridge Clove showed me very early in my time here, near his home, that I sat to meditate on the source of my anger. I struggled for what seemed hours to find my calm. A strong, salty breeze up the escarpment from the bay below rushed past me and I breathed it in alongside my sorrow. The familiar altitude and brine mixed in my mind into a calming picture of my monastery, just as the likewise familiar cry of the raptor above cemented the image. There were all my sangha: loosely translated into Kormyrian, my community. My brothers and sisters. Each radiant with smile. Each embraced me and my fondest brother inquired of my countenance, "What saddens you?" Humbly I replied, "Knowing I shall never see all of you again." Shaking his head with a smile he said to me, "What are you doing right now?" I breathed out joy.

It has taken time and contemplation since then, but the understanding has come. There is no need of sorrow. While the previous sangha has gone on to new beginnings, I remain an integral component of a new one. As a new fond brother of mine in this sangha might call it, another cog in the works. There are many who would yet have my presence. In place of futility now lies utility. Dharma dictates no need to

dwell, for where one is lost, another is also gained so long as life goes on. Here, I've become a pilgrim in this new sangha called Travance.

Thank you, Sifu. May you have found blessed emptiness.

HIGHLANDS REPORT

BY AMBASSADOR MEANDER CORRELIS

In last month's article, I mentioned that Seámus Aislin of Clan MacInnes had left Travance, taking with him a small army of able-bodied fighters. Their goal: to sweep through the Highlands, Calisvorin, and much of the homelands of the Northmen to take out as many demons as they can, reclaim lands, and call back those who have fled in the wake of the demonic destruction. As of February 22nd, Seámus and his company were heading into Calisvorin to receive marching orders from King Valden Ironheart himself.

The company spent January and February in the Highlands. Kirkwall, in MacInnes territory, has suffered a great deal of structural damage to clan homes, and many brogues were simply burned down. The MacInnes clan itself has suffered severe casualties, but with the aid of Seámus' company, they were able to drive the demon blight from their lands. Loch Moyne, in MacIntosh territory, was cleared with only light casualties sustained, though a large number of injuries took a toll on the company's medical supplies. Any MacIntyres will rejoice to know that their territory was cleared with only light resistance and the clansmen are returning to rebuild. Sinclair territory has been retaken from bandits: those bandits that couldn't be recruited were driven off and are being pursued by the Blackwatch. A few men from the company were left behind to seek members of the clan who had fled before the company arrived.

I regret to report that Culloden territory has been completely overtaken: the enemy's numbers are too great. Seámus plans to return at a later date when more men can be rallied to the cause to meet their numbers.

Seámus also included a casualty report: may the fallen find peace in the mists.

Ian McCulloch of Clan McCulloch, slain liberating Kirk-

wall, Jan. 17th, 1214

Korick Hearthfire of Chrimbrazen, slain liberating Kirkwall Jan. 17th, 1214

Vignar Eirson of Clan Heargen, slain liberating Kirkwall, Jan. 18th, 1214

Finnbar MacInnes of Clan MacInnes, slain liberating Kirkwall, Jan. 18th, 1214

Collin Graeme of Clan Graeme, slain liberating Loch Moyne, Jan. 23rd 1214

Donovan MacInnes of Clan MacInnes, slain liberating Loch Moyne, Jan. 23rd, 1214

Kolgrim of the Veneir, slain in skirmish outside Culloden territory, Feb. 20th, 1214

Lukai Embereye of Helm's Hall, slain reclaiming Sinclair, Feb. 20th

I'll continue to try to stay in contact with Seamus over the next few months. The results of Seamus' efforts in Calisvorin will be included in a future edition.

WHEN I THINK OF HOME

BY JACK DIMMS

When I think of home I think of family and friends
I think of battle and bloodshed bitter fights fought until
the very end

When i think of home I think of all the times I laughed
And all the times I hung my head as another man
passed

When I think of home I think of all the celebration
All of the sadness and joy and all the tribulation

When I think of home I think of my mother and dad

When I think of home I think of ale in a glass

I think of mead and wine and falling on my ass

When I think of home I remember the past in which
we used to roam

When I think of the time when my ancestors didn't
have a place called home

Always on the road lives always moving and shifting
Which is why I am glad I have a place now to lay my
head to dream and to envision

When I think of home I think of this new age

And the demons slayed so that we all may settle and
find our place

Change had to happen so that we may craft something
great.

The one thing that didn't change was an idea that had
started

It didn't matter where home was cause home is where
the heart is

So in this darkness I say to all those stuck in the past
There are those without a home so please welcome
them to Travance.

CHESS AND BATTLE: PART 1

*BY EDWIN HAROLDSON, 3-TIME KORMYRIAN
CHESS CHAMPION*

The similarities between chess and battle are numerous. They both require leadership and planning, have an objective, and are broken into parts.

In Chess, the object is to kill the opponent's king. In battle, it varies, but usually eliminating the leader of the opposing forces is a good thing. While in Chess the players are the leaders, in battle the leaders often lose track of the meaning of 'lead'. Just as the king, a very powerful piece, should not be heavily involved in the action until such a time as the danger of a personal attack has abated and the board has mostly cleared, so should battle leaders not get overly involved in combat, else they lose sight and control of the battle, not seeing the forest for the tree they are facing.

In Chess, a game among peers is usually divided into three parts: the opening, middle game, and ending. During the opening, one seeks to bring one's pieces (forces) into play in a harmonious manner so they work together and support one another. During the middle game, one strives to induce and exploit an advantage, whether gained due to an error on the side of the other, or one found serendipitously. In Battle, this is likened to probing attacks, and exploiting poor troop deployments of the foe. Unless the error is of such a magnitude that it causes a quick ending (many of you have felt such a sting when playing me), the game/battle moves to the Endgame. In chess, this is the time when the accumulation of minor advantages is translated into a concrete force advantage that is sufficient to end the struggle. In battle, it is when one side breaks, or the other side obtains its objective.

How does one control a Chessboard and how is it similar to controlling a Battlefield? In chess, the opening moves, in addition to harmoniously deploying one's pieces, seek to control part of the center of the board. Pieces in the center have many more options than pieces on the flanks. They also tend to control more territory and can threaten to drive a wedge between the wings of the opposing pieces, making it easy to defeat each section in detail. Typically, a flank attack started without at least an equal share of the center is a mistake, which a talented player will exploit.

In battle, the same is true. With control of the center, one can choose which flank is best attacked and how to go about it, without worrying about troublesome counterplay from the other side.

Next month – How to open a chess game and how to array one's forces for battle.

MEANDER'S CORNER: NEWS OF HOME **BY AMBASSADOR MEANDER CORRELLIS**

News of Londwyn has finally traveled to this side of the Rift. Sammuel Reynolds, older brother to Travance's magistrate Herrister Reynolds and an officer in Londwyn's army, arrived in Travance last month and has compiled reports on the aftermath of the demon war.

Generally speaking, Londwyn has come out of the war remarkably well. Crownhurst sustained the brunt of the damage: Marshall Herrister Reynolds lured the demon forces toward the capital in order to keep the damage to the rest of the country to a minimum, though the city has been virtually leveled between the demon invasion and the army's tactics to destroy the demons. Nobles and surviving members of Parliament have been moved to Yorkshier while the rebuilding is happening. Casualties in Crownhurst were very high, and most survivors have moved out into the countryside.

In the army, 75% of career soldiers are dead and 10-20% are maimed. 30% of the civilian population is dead from the initial fighting or the blood disease that ravaged those wounded by the demons. Londwyn is currently experiencing a population disparity that favours the south. Tel'Nostroph, on the coast, was largely unaffected, and the wide spread of citizens in the Dread Hills ensured that any demon attacks were not devastating to any large population centers.

In this time of need, let us remember that we are all in this effort toward restoration together. We are not Northern and Southern Londwyns. We are not humans and elves, dwarves and hobbits, fae and goblins. We are Arawyns.

LORE OF THE NORTHMEN: HOME **BY PRIVATE GRIMKJELL ERISON**

I shall tell of home as best I can, being no skald. The northmen are men of honor, strength, and the land because that is what we have. In a place where fire means life and death, and the closeness of your fellow at night is the only thing that keeps the creeping ice-death away, you understand trust.

Travance has been beset with snow of late, but in the north, we walk upon fields of white throughout the year, except in some of the hills and mountains, and special places. The snow falls regularly, though often with less weight than to the south. Yet because it never melts, the piles and weight end up higher over time.

At home, you can never have too many pieces of war-ice, because you never know when one might break, or be left on the battlefield in the brain box of a foe, or just rust entirely overnight. To walk the northern wastes is to walk with the spirits, for they are close there, whispering in your ear and watching over your shoulder. The wendigo hunger, and will speak to you if you share their need for meat, or are unlucky. But other spirits, good ones, sometimes whisper as well. The question is simply which one you will hear in the dark when the fire gutters out.

The north is the land of the Named, in battle or in peace, for that is how you are honored. I am known as the Fury, for reasons which are fairly obvious to those that know me. A Name is given in jest or by a skald, but once it sticks, you have a Name worth speaking, and while you may have others, even one that mocks you will come to be a source of pride, and you will answer to it in time. Names have power in them, and mean more to us than many other things. A man with many names aside from his own birth-name may be a powerful person indeed. Southrons can consider them rather like titles, but not always of Nobility. A man named the Black, is likely not someone who you would want to be running a village, though he'd likely be someone good to stand beside in a fight.

I could write at length about my home, but that is a small taste of it, that you all might understand the North better, why we are as we are, and perhaps a little of how we act in Travance.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ALCHEMY: PART ONE

BY RUDOLF VON KREUTZDORF

Alchemists are amazing individuals capable of brewing some of the most marvelous creations in all of Arawyn. An alchemist can be presented with almost any problem and solve it through his or her craft. In this first installment, you can read about most of the herbal recipes available to students of the alchemical arts and a few of the recipes available in the hermetic arts as well.

Most people in Travance know that an alchemist can brew a number of healing potions, from the well-known *Healing Salve* to the lesser known *Potions of Lesser* through *Superior Healing*. There are, however, other aspects of healing that go beyond mere physical wounds.

Have a headache? Missing a limb? A *Salve of Soothing* can take away the edge until a healer arrives. Did

Little Polly come for a visit? Does it burn when it shouldn't? Are you affected by a disease? Take a *Potion of Rehabilitation!* Be proactive and don't catch a disease or get poisoned in the first place with an *Elixir of Healthfulness!*

Make sure your drink isn't poisoned with a quick splash of a *Potion of Purification*. If you're getting woozy, it's not too late! Even if you are already poisoned, a *Potion of Lesser Antidote* or *Potion of Greater Antidote* should have you back in tip-top shape almost as fast as you can finish the bottle. Is your mind enfeebled or are you confused? Take a sip of a *Potion of Clarity* and suddenly your mind clears and you can devote your full attention to your enemies.

Mages and priests, are you tired after defeating the forces of darkness? Healers, are you exhausted from patching everyone up? Smiths, are you completely spent after repairing armor and weapons all day? Drink down a *Potion of Lesser Refreshment* or *Potion of Greater Refreshment* and get back to work with a pep in your step!

Need a boost to your strength? A *Potion of Giant's Strength* is the way to go, giving you the strength of two additional men for a full five minutes. That's a big help when fighting for the Barony. New to town? Tired of taking a single sword swing from an enemy and then being out of the fight? A *Potion of Ironskin* hardens your flesh, making sure you can stand your ground or at least run away to get help. Not doing enough damage to that ooze or corrupted wolf? Most monsters hate fire, and with a *Fire Bomb* to remind them who is in charge, you won't end up a meal for some wandering beast.

I hope you have enjoyed the first installment of an Introduction to Alchemy. Next month, you can read about the remaining amazing recipes in the hermetic art.

THE CARAVAN IS HOME

BY A GYPSY

Old roads lead to home
A glade of shadows and sunshine
Colors tied to a rope, breezy
Children running and swinging among the trees
That old man sitting on a rock, smiling

Your mind wanders here
There was the place you kissed firstly
Lucky strokes were had yonder
Beyond the sunset, dreams

Open roads asked for you today
Not insistent, but calm
Taking you back to where you were
That place you called home

A broken wheel can be fixed
A horse can be healed
A foot can be mended
The caravan will take you now.

VIRTUE SERIES NO. 4: JOYOUS EFFORT

BY BAT COOPER

All of those individuals who have mastered their craft, from the greatest of warriors to the most cunning of scouts, even the Templars and Paladins, all have one thing in common. In order to achieve their station they must expend a great deal of time and effort. Though the road of virtue has many benefits it has just as many challenges. Because of this it is important to have joyous effort.

Joyous effort is enthusiasm about the path of virtue, even when it is especially challenging. This is similar to determination but it is much less likely to be grim. One can increase one's joyous effort by remembering the benefits of virtues not only for oneself but also for the world around them. Remember that when you walk the road of virtue you are part of a long tradition of strength and honor.

JOURNEYS OF THE HEART

BY AMBASSADOR MEANDER CORRELIS

I've traveled far to stay here in Travance;
A year ago I left, a woman grown,
Meandered here and there to seek the chance
To find a home so far from what I'd known.
Alone, I did not know what I would find.
New knowledge and discoveries, perhaps?
Or would my journey leave my life maligned
And ruined as I sought to change my path?
Then to my joy, somewhere along the way,
Companions joined me in a time of strife.
Their company sang life into my days
And lent protection to a sheltered life.
If home is where the heart is, I don't fear;
I'll find my haven where my friends appear.

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