

The Travance Chronicle

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"If it bleeds, it leads."

November 1215

The Travance of Yesteryear and Tomorrow: A Series on the History of Travance

By *Birgitta Drexel*

Travance has certainly changed over the years. The lands have expanded; Ostcliff being the newest out there. It's different as soon as you step upon the soil. It is different in how you are greeted. It is different in how you are treated. It is not the same place in style, context or environment than it was so many years ago.

This series is to show how much the place called Travance has changed over the years and to perhaps introduce those newer to the Barony just how far it has come in culture and mission.

Entering Travance.

The passage over the Rift was considered a single great achievement. Horses were not here because the ground would not support their hooves. The paths were not dug in or established enough for them to comfortably traverse the heights and the passage over the Rift. The Inn you know so well, and the town that surrounds it, was simply an outpost that was well-armed and well-set for the passage of goods and materials.

It was a gathering place for those to camp and gather supplies and establish the wagon train that would attempt the trek into Travance. Notice I wrote 'attempt the trek', for many failed and never returned to their starting point either. The passage was lengthy and the road needed to be recut often as you went. Downed Trees blocked paths and animals hunted alongside looking for a way to separate out Human, Elf, Dwarf or animal to their demise. You slept on the road in shifts and kept your weapons in the blankets with you as you did so. That was the hell you had come to on this side of the Rift.

And when you arrived in Travance the caravan was greeted by many of those in town who were looking for mail from home and much-needed supplies. If you acted as guard in any official capacity, you were compensated in supplies or silver. Travance was not on the gold standard it is today and silver bought you supplies, food and drink as a single gold coin does today.

There was no 'Let us show you around town' greeting party or escorts to find you a place. People got their things ordered and paid for and went home to begin the planning for the nightfall's usual incursions from the wild lands around Travance. You were told 'Find a place for your gear and set out a bedroll to sleep in wherever you can'. Meet at the Inn for a bite to eat and stay close to others and do not walk the streets alone. That information was given if you were wise enough and lucky enough to ask.

I did.

Travance was in survival mode back in those days. You had to help each other or the things native to this side of the Rift would sever you from your life strands - be you a young mage, healer, or warrior. It didn't matter because the things that roamed the night simply didn't care what you were other than flesh and blood which made you taste just fine.

That fine Inverted Tower was a long-held secret. The bottom and top floors were as dangerous as the wilds around Travance. Bears, boars, wolves, Goblins, ghouls, ghosts and even certain kinds of walking greenery could and would snack on you at will if you didn't heed those warnings. They would and could open the doors to your cabin and raid you, dragging you out of bed and laying you out on the floor as a snack. There were no great magic mantles of protection or traps with multiple hits except in one place - the bar.

That's right, the bar. It had a waylay trap that knocked out anything from the toughest Ogre to the most mild healer. It protected the staff and the food that fed us all. Feast was a wonderful meal guaranteed for all. If you didn't gather enough supplies, you were considered weakened by the hunger you felt in your belly. People shared what little they had and offered some assistance when they could but there no great groups of people with 20 healing salves or itching powders. No one scoffed at the few things they were given as if they deserved more. There often was no more to give.

This is not to say there were not wonderful things in Travance. The Focus was an amazing thing. The greater magics were being discovered right here and the copper and silver and gold in the mines were being sought out to improve life. Seeds were a huge thing and needed to

start the fields in Alisandria and the swamps of Drega mire. Plants were scoured for healing properties where new recipes were being experimented with for effects. Kaladonia was established as the fighter's home with the dragoons being a heavy presence. And Galladel was the God most chosen in this place for it was he we were most likely to see for judgement if any of the natives got hold of you.

And the evil that was here was just as ready to wipe Travance away as the ones we see today, only back then no one really understood why. The farmers, tradespeople and adventurers were all together, for one would not survive without the other. The term Hero was not tossed about to include adventurers because everyone here came for a fresh start: some running from and others running to but in the end we were all together. That isn't to say everyone liked or even got along with everyone else. In fact that was often not the case.

Next Month... Relationships.

Angelic Affair

By *Nalick DeMonteforte*

What if you're an Angel?
What if, right now, you're high above the trees and symphonies of nightingales and canaries?
What if you're miles and miles away from the stars at which I gaze each night, thinking of you? What if you look down upon me with the same tear-filled eyes?
What if you hail not from the fae realm, but from a kingdom far above the clouds?
What if those wings you lost on your journey here, were not those of sylphs, but of Angels?
What if, on St. Astrid's day when I last saw you and sang to you, you joined St. Kwildar on his return trip?
What if seven more moons crawl past before I hold you again?
What if our initial meeting were not spurred on by an overzealous Celtic gentleman and my reluctance to admit the truth... but fate?
What if I needed you far more than you needed me?
What if by helping me gain my wings, you earned yours?

A Cross in the Road

*Lo chase was given.
Empty shack, I wasn't there.
I was meeting God.*

R.F.

From Malevolence Comes Monsters

By *Anonymous*

A man came to Travance. A man who already had bad tendencies but was in love, deeply in love.

These tendencies and skills were used as a weapon, a tool, and in so doing, the man became a monster.

His love was sacrificed.

And he remained a monster, but no longer a useful one, on a chain.

And we killed him.

Travance should stop creating the monsters that plague it. Perhaps then we would be a more peaceful town.

Watch over your neighbors and those who come to town. If they hurt, comfort them. Do not turn your back or use their suffering as a tool. Because one day, the dog you train to bite your foes may bite your hand as well.

One Hand Clapping : Chasing Dragons

By *Imrahil*

Since the first I had heard it, I have always been uneasy with the phrase "the pursuit of happiness". Uncountable hours, perhaps months, have I spent meditating to the focus of the Sri Yanta in the hope it would guide me to the root of my unease, and I believe I have arrived at a truth: One does not attain contentment through their surroundings. One simply is content, or not.

Through further rumination, I have arrived at a hypothesis in this matter: There is an inextricable relationship between contentment and gratitude. I'm sure many of you are thinking to yourselves, "*Of course, foolish man! I'm happy; therefore, I am grateful!*" I assure you, it is not that simple. For instance, I know many for whom a pocket full of gold, or more importantly, what it could buy, would make them happy. But what of weeks later, when the shine has left the bauble? Surely you know at least one whose fabulous wealth cannot seem to afford happiness. What can be done for one such as this?

I offer this counterpoint: It is not contentment that makes one grateful, but gratefulness that makes one content. When one appreciates what one has, even if it is little, they are sure to radiate with happiness. This radiance draws in others, more often than not giving more reason to be appreciative, reinforcing that contentment. The conclusion is that one who seeks happiness shall never find it; one who finds happiness shall see no need to seek.

As always brothers and sisters, carry peace, and gratitude with you.

Lantians

By Colin Flamel

The word history has such a different meaning to me than it does most anyone else. There are certain implications that make something historic that one usually just doesn't apply to events in their own lifetime. No one takes the time to think of how their actions change the world around them in memorable ways. The recent demon wars were certainly historic, but to others they are still current events. It's hard to put something into a history book until it is over and done with, but the fact is one could watch any given event's impact over the years if they observed enough. So the usual cutoff that an event needs for it to be considered history is it having been done by a previous generation.

That's where things start to break down a bit for me. As far back as any history book records things are all memories I have that, in many cases, I played a role in. I often have people talk to me about demon wars, and my immediate response is usually "Which one?" From most perspectives the recent demon wars are fresh in everyone's minds and it's hard to remember this has all happened before on a much larger scale. From my perspective, this recent war was far more of a scuffle between a few large powers than the world changing war of my youth. Not to discredit the actions of those who stood against Xualla and Balfurous, but those were just two demon lords. I remember fleeing from dozens as they destroyed the great nation of Lantan, a now forgotten memory.

So to help others see as I do, I wish now to speak of my once great home. Long ago, races were more ambiguous, as one was only referred to by their nation rather than by their heritage. What is now called a Dwarf was just a bearded Lantian. Many other such modern races were just variations on what we all assumed were the many different appearances we all had. There were some exceptions obviously, a Goblin has always been a Goblin. And an Elf, at least in the sense that all Elves are just Elves, was still an Elf. For the most part, however, the lot of us just collected into groups of like-minded individuals.

Lantan was home to some of the greatest thinkers in the world, who all came to share that knowledge and expand it. Had the nation not been destroyed, I ponder how advanced we could all be today. In the years that followed the people split up and eventually settled with others who thought similarly to themselves. The demon wars created great rifts in what was considered to be acceptable. Some races today cling to ideals that certain technology and power is evil to use, when really only became that way because of the demons.

I miss my home greatly, and although my new home shares many similar qualities, I still miss talking to the little folk with their great suits of armor that moved on their own. Perhaps if Lantan had somehow survived, we would have thrived more as members of this world

against those from without. So to me history is less events recorded in a book, and far more things forgotten into the past. As such it has a slight negative meaning, and I have great disdain for it. I wish to share all that I know with everyone. But alas, this too will someday be forgotten and return into the dark corners of history.

Medical Bulletin: Astral Flu

By Dr. Tobias Armitage

As the winter months come by, sickness is a natural consequence of harsh weather and exertion. However, as many of you know and some of you have personally experienced, there are diseases that are unique to Travance, the surrounding lands, and to the specific phenomena that the more adventurous folk tend to encounter. I would like to draw attention to one of the more complicated diseases that we have recently seen in Travance.

If you have recently:

--Traveled by Gate

--Experienced a temporal distortion, or -been exposed to immaterial entities for an extended period (Note, this does not include, nor specifically refer, to negative -energy creatures)

Please be aware of the following symptoms: -

-A newly discovered ability to manipulate the forces with which one swings when a weapon is wielded -

-Apathy

--Emotional suppression

--Resistance to attempts to treat the above.

A multitude of treatments are being developed to deal with this disease, and proper surgical procedures (around the nervous system) can suppress and provide temporary relief from this ailment. If you suspect you or an acquaintance have the disease, contact a trained Physician at your discretion. I will note that as of yet, the disease is not contagious without exposure to one of the trigger situations- though that may change. Take this news in good health, and stay safe.

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Questions, comments? Contact our offices in Honor's Peak.

DAILY AFFIRMATIONS WITH GROGNAR THE DESTROYER

Dear Grognar,

Over the last few months, I have had increasing issues with people breaking into my tent late at night for the purposes of either randomly killing the occupants or stealing their valuables. Thankfully for me, I wasn't in the tent for either of these instances, but I am concerned for the safety of my friends and myself in the future. Do you have any suggestions on protecting one's domicile?

Signed,
Concerned

Dear Concerned,

IF THERE IS ONE THING GROGNAR DETESTS OVER MUCH ELSE, IT IS THOSE BRIGANDS WHO ATTEMPT TO SACK AN ENCAMPMENT WITH RANDOM INTENT. IT SHOWS HOW SMALL THEIR VISION IS, THAT THEY WILL SIMPLY ATTACK ANY SANCTUARY IN THE HOPES OF SOME SMALL GAIN OR FOR THEIR OWN AMUSEMENT RATHER THAN TO PLAN OUT A PROPER CONQUEST. IT REEKS OF AMATEURISH GREED AND UNPROFESSIONALISM.

AS FOR YOUR QUESTION, I WOULD FIRST CHECK WITH YOUR COMPANIONS TO SEE WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAVE ANY ENEMIES WHO MIGHT BE MAKING USE OF THE COVER OF NIGHT TO ATTACK YOUR TENT. IT MAY BE UNLIKELY, BUT ONE CAN NEVER DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT YOUR ATTACKERS MAY BE SENT BY SOMEONE WITH A PERSONAL VENDETTA AGAINST YOU. IF YOU CAN ROOT OUT THE SOURCE OF YOUR PROBLEMS, THEY ARE MUCH MORE EASILY TAKEN CARE OF.

BUT CLEARLY YOU WERE ASKING ABOUT TENT DEFENSE IN PARTICULAR. EVEN ON A LARGE SCALE, AS WITH GROGNAR'S ARMY OF DAMNED RAIDERS, THE PRINCIPLES ARE STILL THE SAME. KEEP A GUARD READY AT THE FRONT. SOMEONE WHO IS CAPABLE OF BEING STRUCK AND ABLE TO STRIKE BACK EVEN HARDER. YOU DO NOT WANT A HEAVY SLEEPER IN THIS ROLE AS ALL IT WILL RESULT IN YOU ALL SLEEPING LIKE THE DEAD.

SOME SPEAK FOR THE USE OF MAGICAL WARDS AND TRAPS, BUT GROGNAR PREFERS THOSE THAT ARE PHYSICAL IN NATURE. SHOULD YOU HAVE THE TOOLS AVAILABLE, SPIKED PITS AND TRIPWIRE SWUNG LOGS ARE CLASSICS AND CAN HAVE ALL MANNER OF CRUEL POSSIBILITY ADDED TO THEM. IF ONE IS STAYING IN A CABIN, THERE IS ALSO THE MORE JUVENILE ROUTE OF A

POT OF BOILING OIL OR ACID PERCHED ABOVE THE DOOR. AHHH... THOSE CHILDHOOD MEMORIES.

ABOVE ALL ELSE, DO NOT LET IT SIMPLY STAND AT AN ATTEMPTED RAID. WITH ACTION MUST COME RETALIATION. CAPTURE ONE OF YOUR INVADERS AND INTERROGATE THEM BY ANY MEANS. OR LET ONE ESCAPE AND TRACK THEM BACK TO THEIR ENCAMPMENT. IF YOU TRULY WISH TO SLEEP EASY THEN THE BEST TACTIC IS TO STRIKE THEM SO BRUTALLY THEY UNDERSTAND THE VIOLATION YOU FELT AT THEIR ATTACK AND MAGNIFY IT TENFOLD.

KEEP ALL OF THIS IN MIND AND YOUR SLEEP SHOULD BE EASY, IF STILL ALERT AND EVER VIGILANT. GROGNAR MAY HAVE TO TEST YOUR DEFENSES HIMSELF TO BE SURE THAT THIS ADVICE WAS FOLLOWED PROPERLY.

WISHING YOU THE SLEEP OF BARBARIAN BABES,

GROGNAR THE DESTROYER