

The Travance Chronicle

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"If it bleeds, it leads."

December 1215

Events of the Last Feast

By Brother Illyrin Soral

This writer is pleased to announce that last feast he was approached by Miss Sihnon in regards to a new column in the Chronicle. Having taken the offer, the author will be endeavoring to regularly present the town with an article on the events of the previous feast, beginning with this inaugural piece.

During the feast of November 1215, the Proper was attacked by a combined force with a common cause: retribution for the deaths of family members at the hands of Travancians.

Supposedly leading this force was a Venier woman known as Svava. Some readers may recall the feast of January of 1215, when the northern tribe known as the Cheveyo followed their sacred Elk south into Travance. The Venier followed as well, aiming to kill the Elk to please Aguarra. The Venier leader in that effort was a man by the name of Vark. He fell in battle against Travance and when news of his death reached the Venier in the north, his father and leader of the tribe, Ulfir, went mad. Svava, Ulfir's wife, took command of the tribe and had her husband put down. Seeking revenge for her son's death, she sought allies from other lands to attack Travance.

One such ally was a hobgoblin by the name of Domag Ravik. For those who attended the long feast of this year, the name 'Ravik' should seem familiar. During the long feast, General Ravik was sent to attack Travance in what as essentially a politically driven execution - his superiors needed to be rid of him and they knew that the force they sent him with would not be enough to defeat Travance. General Ravik, knowing that such an attack would be suicidal, still followed through on his orders - a devoted and honorable follower of Enax until the very end. He died that week's-end and Domag, his mother, sought vengeance for him.

Svava's third ally was a greater succubus commonly known as "Mother". Once a cohort of Balfurous, her motivations are as of yet unconfirmed but it does seem possible that she may wish revenge on Travance for the destruction of Balfurous. (The writer would very much like to stress that as of this moment, this statement is solely speculation.) A number of people were encountered who wore her mark upon them. Through this mark she was able to exert her influence.

It should be noted that the family of a prominent townsman was also involved in the battle. However, in respect to this townsman's privacy, this author will not write much on this subject, except solely to state that the matter was put to an end.

On Saturday, Domag Ravik held a meeting with representatives from the various lands of Travance as well as those new to town - it seems she considered the new townsmen to be free of blood on their hands and free from blame in the matter of her son's death. At this meeting, it is reported that she asked about the final moments of her son's life. While none assembled had been present for the event the story of General Ravik's battle and demise had been made known to some and it was relayed. In combination with ritual combat (which, by all accounts was performed in an honorable manner and not to the death) and a promise to return General Ravik's personal effects to his mother, Domag Ravik left, stating that she would no longer be involved with Svava's attempts at vengeance upon the town.

(If the reader will permit a pedagogical moment, the writer would like to stress the importance that knowing the story of General Ravik had. It is in moments such as these that the value of remembrance and knowledge is keenly prominent - the writer can not stress enough just how valuable it is for the stories of all be preserved.)

On Saturday evening, Svava's forces made their assault upon the Dragon's Claw Inn, where the majority of the town had assembled. Their assault was broken and Svava was executed. It should also be noted that Knight Captain Magnus had earlier spoken with Svava, seeking a peaceful resolution, but reports that she said she had nothing left to live for, save vengeance upon Travance.

The whereabouts of the demoness 'Mother' are as of yet unknown.

Unrelated to the attack on Travance, a druidic ritual was held on Sunday in Firin's Grove near the inn. Led by a man named Malachai, the ritual's original intention was to help ease in the change into the next season - however, after consultation with Hierophant Typhon Scyldinga, it was decided that the ritual would be modified to help return Decay to its original place in relation to the seasons as it once had in the First Age. The ritual was completed with no unexpected events - the results thereof shall be witnessed as the year proceeds.

News of Last Feast (A Labor of Love) *By Ilana Darkwood*

This is a combination of news and a tale of perseverance. My family has proven, over the years, to me that dedication to a cause and climbing over any obstacle necessary are wonderful yet dangerous qualities, especially when love is involved.

I understand that many of you would see my parents, particularly my father, as a couple of the very monsters that Travance is so used to being assaulted by. I do not blame you for this. They attacked many when visiting the Proper, but it was not completely of their own will.

I do not know the entire story of my family, and I will try to keep this short. I am sure if you want the whole story you will find me.

My father, Torin Darkwood, was a brilliant alchemist and researcher. He was always interested in what made Wild Mages what they are. Unfortunately, he succumbed to his demonic heritage to find out the truth and survive to learn more about it. But I will

skip the story ahead a couple of decades. I was split from my family. My parents thought me dead, and I thought them lost as well. I acquired access to a unique artifact in my first years in Travance: sealing wax that could send a letter anywhere, including to those beyond the grave. I sent a letter to my parents, letting them know I was doing well and hoped that they had found peace. A letter returned, my father excitedly explaining he'd finish his research as soon as possible and visit.

I panicked. I remembered what my father had been and did not think that his mind could be anything close to stable after so long. I brought a few individuals from the Proper with me, and though he was struck down in the end, he saved me that night. His research had proved true, yet I never got to hear the explanation of how he had figured it out. Even with his return, that research is lost to us save a few scraps that we will be doing our best to dedicate our time to.

I collected the ashes after the battle. Keeping his urn for some time, I gathered the bravery to call to his spirit with Galladel's grace and thank him. I discovered then that he was still alive. During the next years, I would hear rumors of him in Arkovnia, Loez, traveling throughout Kormyre. I thought I would never see him again in Travance, his paranoia of the place justified. In that time, he was acquainted with a cult called The Brotherhood, a faction with the Knights of the Abyssal Spear. They helped him realize our familial connection to Balfurous and steer his research from suppressing power to strengthening it.

My parents returned to the Proper in September last year. It was very clear they were both being influenced like the many marked of Balfurous. I could not stop them, and as the exact steps of Bloodtide's creation were revealed to me, I realized I could not save my father from the fate that had been created for us without plunging the world into considerable danger.

My mother was able to recover his body after, and Balfurous manipulated the shell trapping his soul within. When we defeated Balfurous I thought that meant my parents were freed, but I learned in time that they were still trapped.

My mother, Nadira, is probably the strongest woman I know. She stayed with my father as he slowly turned into a monster, protecting him from others and others from him. Eventually, she received my call through Arawyn and told me of my father's plight. As we hatched a plan to save him, The Brotherhood found out and kidnapped him instead.

The Brotherhood assisted in the attack this moon, along with the Venir Chiefteness Svava. The skinwalkers, the blighted creatures the Druids have been learning about with their rediscovery of what they call the fifth season, Decay, murdered my mother to send my father into a frenzy at the command of the Brotherhoods leader, a Succubi known as 'Mother'.

But, through the kindness and wit of some Travancians, several allies of the Venir were slowly handled. Geneal Ravik's mother, Domag Ravik, left Travance in peace thanks to some rational thinking of the Travancians part. Auntie, the woman who was offering to play cards within the inn, also known as Melora Antonin, was imprisoned after her part in things was discovered. Svava was killed and her Venir were scattered in battle. The skinwalkers, being quite numerous, will continue to be an issue.

On the battlefield, my father was saved thanks to Sir Ulrich of Alisandria giving me the chance to do so, along with several dedicated friends helping me keep him in sight. My mother, as a spirit, returned to the battlefield as well, to help me save my father's soul and restore it to the Spirit Realm with Gallade's blessing. Their love was a perfect thing. They fought against everything together, for each other and for me, defying all odds and proving that love truly is something powerful, even through death. While I see qualities of both of them in my own personality, their dedication to their family is something I can only hope to achieve a shade of. If our positions had been swapped, I wonder if Bloodtide would have ever been created. I sometimes feel shame for that. Then remember who my family turned out to be, though I will always love my parents.

The Brotherhood and Mother's forces will come to Travance now. Not all of them will be so obvious as the best kind of cultists generally are not. While 'be

wary' is a pretty common thing to say in the Proper, I will say that a Succubi is a unique enemy, even for Travance.

If you have read this far, I thank you for your time. If you have any questions, you may find me and ask them, even if you think or know they are rude.

Lore of the Northmen: Perseverance

By Grimkjell Eirson

To never give up, to endure. That is the way of the North. To defy the world, even when every hand is against you, when everyone says there is only the path of pragmatism and compromise with darkness.

Against Balfurous, if we had only trusted Bloodtide to win the day for us, most of Travance, if not all of it, would have slept on the red snow. But we believed there were other weapons, less tainted by evil, which could help us.

And we were right.

That tale is not mine to tell, except in person, but I will say only that in times such as this, when darkness bears heavily down upon us, and we are likely to see a solution which will cost us our ideals, if not our souls, true perseverance may be in seeking an even harder path.

Remember this, as we face the storm of open War once more.

My words are brief this moon, for I am tasked with the defense of the Proper, and I will complete this task, so I say only this to Travance.

Endure, fight on, and hew to the principles you espoused in the light of day, in your best moment. If you can hold onto them in the dark, you will come through this crucible forged into something better.

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

On Not Giving Up

By Hazel Storm

Never give up never give in is what they say,
But how can that be when sometimes there is no
other way.
A tree dying as time goes by they don't want to give
up but they know why,
The rains come and go but if they did not give up
the world would overflow.
An animal at the end sometimes will fight
But when they give up they become one with the
earth just like us.

Missing the Rose for the Thorns

By Nalick DeMonteforte

"He told me I was crazy," she said taking a sip, "and
after a while, I started to believe it."
During one of my first moons in Travance, after the
most curious series of events, I served as first mate
on a merchant ship. One night, we docked in Faust
and stopped in a nearby tavern for a drink. There I
chatted with a woman who had downed far more
mugs than I could count. She told me story after
story, and for the life of me, I could not muster the
courage to interrupt.

One of her stories was about her ex-husband. She
said every couple of days he would rearrange the
furniture in their home; however, when asked about
it, he flatly deny moving even a single chair. Instead,
he questioned if she had been feeling alright, declar-
ing that whichever piece of furniture she inquired
about had always been right where it was. Unfortu-
nately, it didn't stop at the accoutrement.
"About every time I disagreed with him, he would
turn it around on me, telling me I obviously had it
wrong. Other times, he'd say that perhaps I fell and
bumped my head."

With two fingers, she rubbed just above her left eye-
brow, and in the faint light, I noticed a scar that I
hadn't before.

"I'm a moth to the bonfires that surround me," she
said, gesturing at the men gathered around the bar.
"Not all of them would set me alight," she mused,
sighing, "but why take the risk?"

Though I left with no more than a mere shrug, there
have been so many women I've met since then who
have dealt with fates all too similarly. To avoid being
burned again, they close themselves off behind
watchtowers that scrape the clouds and walls com-
plete with crenellations. In complete safety, they sit
free from the chaos and turmoil of the outside
world.

Yet, they don't see that they are imprisoned by fear.
The image of a rose blowing in a calm autumn breeze
and its accompanying scent are lost to them. They
are missing the rose for it has thorns.
Take a moment to embrace the idea that you're
worthy of the ups as well as the downs. It is most
definitely a risk, but it is one that is worth taking.

:: Arradir Go^{KC} Dringol ::

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*Leave a Missive at the Adventurer's Guild Hall for Inquires.
New Arrivals to the Proper are Permitted One Free Request.*

To Arms

By Datu Guo Chenjing

We will fight.
No matter what we do, we will fight.
Whether that fight is against whoever is threatening
us,
Whether that fight is against natural forces,
Or whether that fight is against the voice inside of us
telling us
"You cannot win. You will fail."
We will fight.

To the last, we keep the line.
We are undeterred - though sometimes wavering.
And perhaps we may not always win the fight
But the importance is that we fought.

This is something I have seen true here.
Travance never will lay down arms and allow itself to
die.
We are full of fighters - though some prefer a game
of cards
Some prefer a conversation

Some prefer to hold mass
And some prefer weaponry.

Some of us fight for Valos, or Gaia, or Andorra, or Galladel.
Some of us fight for Enax, or Chronicler, or Brazen, or Visigalis.
There are those of us that even fight and strike down the town's foes
in the name of Glomm or of Agaura or of Galmachis.
Some fight for no god but themselves.
We are unified.

We, the people of Travance, will fight.
So long as we are threatened, we will fight.
So long as we are able, we will fight.
So long as a single young hero's soul resides here, we will fight.

We will never give up.
We will never surrender.
We will never die.
So say we all.
We will fight.

Blessings of the Great Spirit *Submitted by Vyth Nar Malina' Tinco' Lokion*

Grant, O Spirit, Thy Protection
and in Protection, Strength
and in Strength, Understanding
and in Understanding, Knowledge
and in Knowledge, Truth
and in Truth, Love
and in Love, the Love of all existence
and in that Love, Love of Spirit and All Creation
O voice of the Great Spirit we hear you...
in the sound of the birds singing at dawn.
In the rippling of the waters of the sacred stream.
In the breath of the trees sharing wisdom.
In the beauty of the opening flower.
In our conscience as we care for the Earth.
In our souls as we live in peace.

Yule Blessings
Blessings to you from the Earth Mother.
She is the Moon.
She watches over all of us by.
The light that she casts over the blessed earth.

Walk her night lit path
And happiness you will find at every turn.
Blessed be!
Blessings to you from the Sky Father.
He is the Sun. He holds us up
And brings us strength. Carry his sword
To cleave the evil from your path
And you will be unmolested.
Blessed Be!
Blessings to you from the Great Spirit.
It binds us all together:
Man to womyn; beast to beast; all.
We are it and it is us.
Blessed Be!
May you have a wonderful Holiday.
The time has come for the sun to be reborn
He lies in his Mother's womb waiting...
Awaiting his reappearance on this plane.
Let us all rejoice in his rebirth and ours.
Blessed Be!

A Starfish Parable *Submitted by Squire Amalthea Meril*

A child walked along the ocean and saw a beach, upon which thousands and thousands of starfish washed ashore. Further along, the child saw an elderly person, walking slowly and stooping often, picking up one starfish after another, and tossing each one gently into the ocean.

"Why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" the child asked.

"Because the sun is up and the tide is going out, and if I don't throw them further in, they will die."

"But, elder, don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach, and starfish all along it?! You can't possibly save them all. You can't even save one-tenth of them. In fact, even if you work all day, your efforts won't make any difference at all."

The elder listened calmly, and then bent down to pick up another starfish, and threw it into the sea.
"It made a difference to that one."

