

Special Mid-reign Issue
July 1999

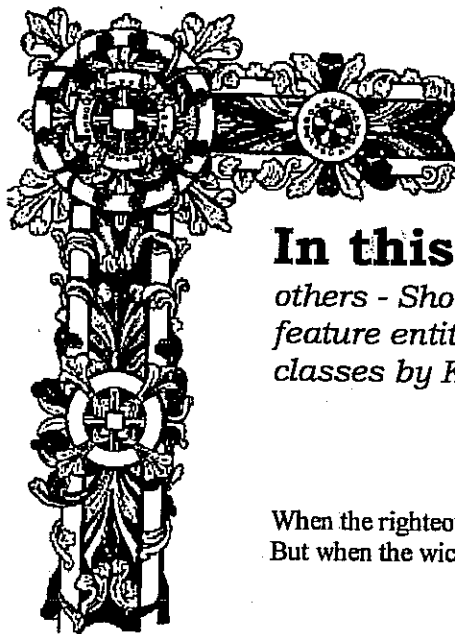
**Exclusive
Guide to
Clan '99!**

The



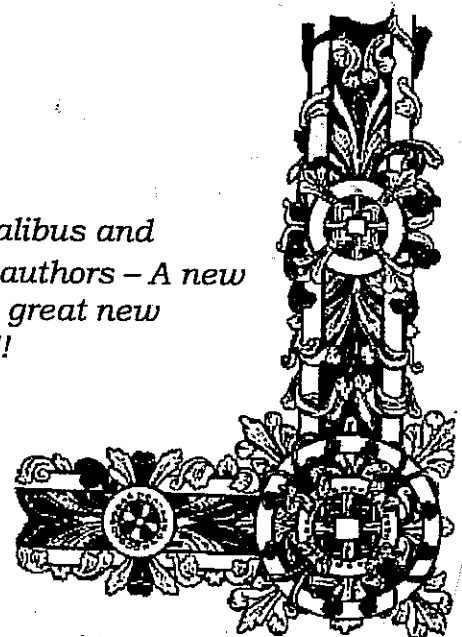
TAR

The Official Literary
Magazine of the
Celestial Kingdom



In this issue: *Art by Deigo, Clalibus and others - Short stories by aspiring young authors - A new feature entitled Ask Dr. Drakknar - Two great new classes by Kansuki - All this and more!!!*

When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice;
But when the wicked rule, the people groan.
Proverbs 29.2



The Star Credits

Poetry

I would like thank Erin Lichtmann and
Al Branach for their submissions

Stories

Another credit goes to Erin Lichtmann

Articles

I would like to thank Kansuke for both of his new fighting classes, along with Drakknar,
Rand, and Demurrier for their submissions.

Artwork

Diego, Nightlynx, Clalibus, and Argus Lynch contributed the original pieces of artwork.
My thanks goes out to them.

Note From The Editors

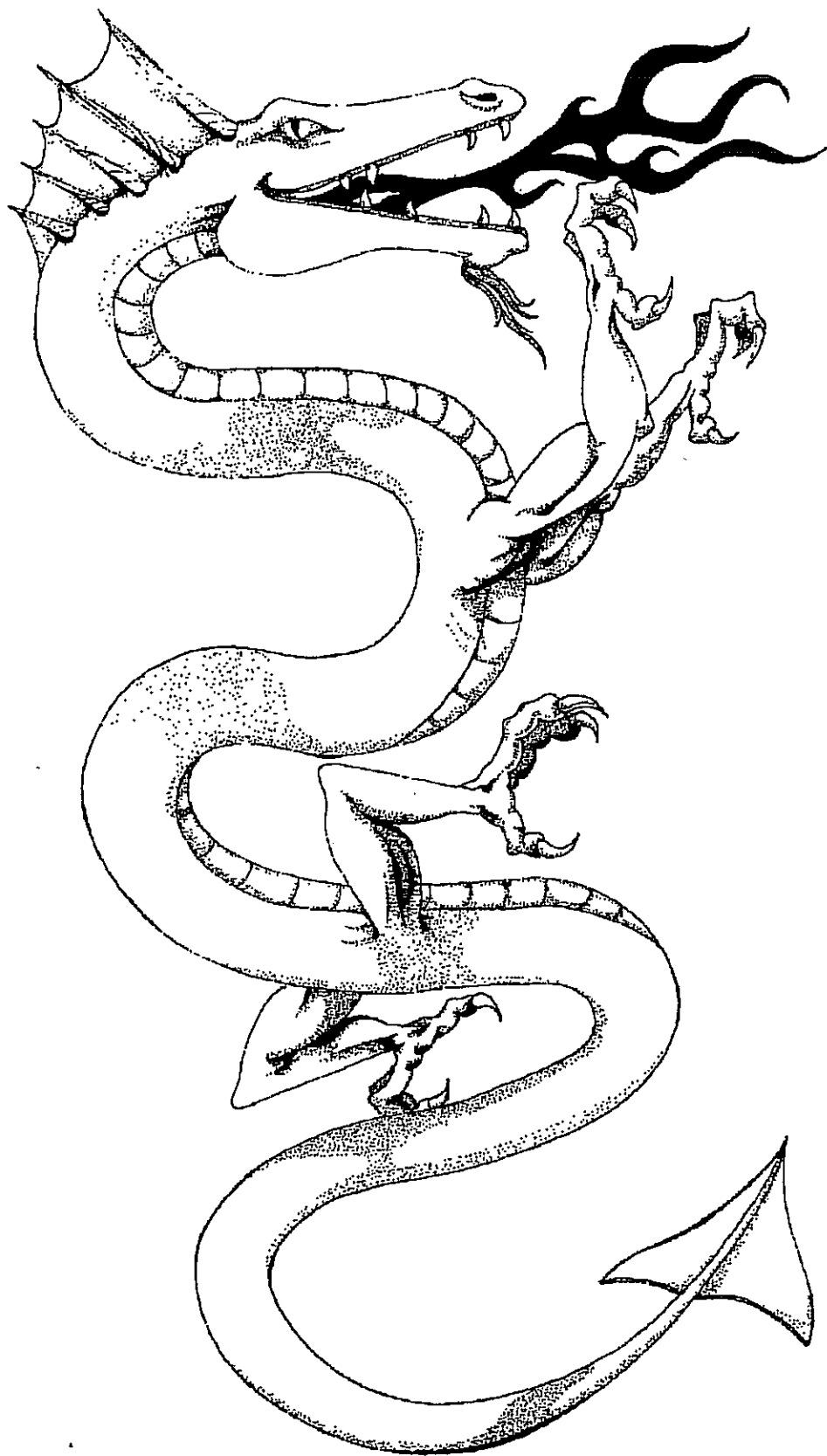
As you might have noticed, The Star is in a slightly different format than to which you might have been accustomed. In the past years, we feel that The Star has crept away from being the literary magazine of the Celestial Kingdom to becoming something more of a quarterly newsletter. Therefore, with the Prime Minister's and the king's permission, we have embarked on a radical new course.

A word of caution seems necessary to readers who might be offended by the content. Although somewhat ribald, we have taken care to assure that the content does not focus on one individual or group exclusively. If there are issues which you as a reader have, please do not hesitate to send a note detailing your concern. In the next issue, we plan on having a Letter's To the Editor column.

Because we had only three short weeks in which to prepare this issue there is by necessity a dearth of material. However, we think that what is provided is top grade and if this project is successful, we want to encourage everyone who reads this to submit a story, drawing, article, or poem to either myself or Squire Rand for possible publication. Our special thanks go to all those who submitted entries in such a short span of time. The quality was excellent and we are proud to see them in print.

Sir Arthon of the Golden City (smythe777@hotmail.com)

Squire Randolph Falconbridge (scavitt13@yahoo.com)



Never laugh at live dragons!

B. Baggins

Letters From The Kingdom

Unto the populace,

Greetings to the Kingdom. First off I would like to say welcome to mid-reign with any luck this should be a excellent event. Thanks to Marquis Margul for auto-crating this event. I would like to thank all of you who are in attendance this weekend and also thank those of you who have been supporting me through this first half of Medryn's reign and mine. My personal appreciation to Sir Arthon and Squire Rand for putting a copy of the Star on very short notice. These two picked up publication when things didn't exactly work out with the previous editor. I plan to do a lot more in Kingdom traveling which will be much easier with Traitors and Gates basically being one land again. Huzzah to all the people out there that are making this one work. You are all setting an outstanding example for this kingdom to follow. Make ready for clan as it is coming up quicker then ever. And once again thank you all for coming.

In service to the dream,
Sir Belgarin Lightfoot Nav Nox
Darkjester
Monarch of the Celestial Kingdom
lord_belkev@hotmail.com

Ho! Ho! Ho! To the bottle I go
To heal my heart and drown my woe.
Rain may fall and wind may blow,
And many miles be still to go,
But under a tall tree I will lie,
And let the clouds go sailing by.

J.R.R.

Tolkein, The Lord of the Rings

Unto THe Populace Of the Celestial
Kingdom--Greetings.

This reign has Started OUt a bit Rocky But it has been fun. Dragons Master wen well even if the turnout was less than expected, Congratulations to Sir Nightlynx for taking the tourney hands down. Collegium, while som what of aumm how should i put it, clusterf***, actually was enjoyable, after all the date problems, the lady who owned the site never showed up to let us in*sigh* All in all we got to see som really nice garb and diego showed us how to make a paper box *grin*. I hope that next time this will be a little easier. SPEaking of next time Sir Nightlynx will be teaching a class on leather tooling at coronation. Price will be \$10 and that will include a set of tools a mallet and an anvil for you to take home. Space is limited so please come register with me as soon as you can. Now on to some more serious stuff. If anyone has problems with what has gone on this reign please come talk to me about them, if anyone has ideas or suggestions please come find me or Belgarin, we are here to serve you but we can't do that if we don't know what you need. I hope that I have been A good regent so far and i would like to be Even better in the coming months. This reign has been a lot of work but I am enjoying it and think i am up to the job, to I take this opportunity to declare my intent to run for both King AND Regent for the next reign. I look forward to talking to all of you and I hope that i can serve you as you need.

In Service to the Dream,
Squire Prince Medryn Bloodblade
Darkjester
prentisj@southwestern.edu

A Simple Test

The courtyard was gold in the light of the morning, its limestone walls shining with brilliance far beyond their means. Vaulted archways sent shadows skittering in all directions over the pebbled ground. Windows set into the high stone parapets showed this to be a fortress not meant to protect from warfare. Even the barred gate on the entranceway never locked. If this courtyard were ever besieged, the attackers would easily take control. But for one simple thing that so many attackers overlooked. Hidden to even the most trained of eyes by the glimmer of the golden bricks in the early sunlight lay a web of intricately woven barrier magic.

Sorcha often wondered if the weave was to keep others out or to keep her in, yet she would never voice those idle speculations to the ones within. As she took a breath of clean morning air and hovered dangerously close to the warded gate, she studied the distant green pastures, the far-off castles shrouded in the hazy mists of morning. She saw clearly in her mind the inhabitants of those castles, rising from their silken sheets to the sun streaming in from slender windows, dining on fine fresh fruits and milk in their linen gowns and doublets, wanting for nothing, but still living a simple life.

She trailed one pale hand across the fragile texture of stone, then whirled impatiently, her waves of auburn hair billowing about her. One crystal tear dropped from her chin onto her white gown before she took a firm hold on her emotions. No, a life outside meant nothing to her. Her life was here, inside these gilded walls, a life coated with more than a hint of illusion and loneliness. Unable to reign in her motions any longer, Sorcha allowed her dark eyes to fill with tears, held her full sleeves in front of her face as if afraid that one of those within would see her weakness.

Idly strolling to the fountain in the center of the courtyard, Sorcha let the tears fall unabated, one for every moment that she wished to be somewhere, anywhere, besides where she was. As she stared into the deep waters of the pool, her reflection began to change into an image of a field. Unconcerned, Sorcha looked deeper, willing the vision to manifest itself. Her visions had put her here in the first place, yet she knew that if she exploited them properly, they would get her out as well. As she watched with critical eyes, a face began to appear.

Niall MacIain stood alone on a hill overlooking a sea of tents and men shining the metal of their swords and axes. The glinting of the steel caught the sun and reflected it in enough directions to blind the casual onlooker, or the enemy spy. Niall could almost smell the cleaning fluid mixed with the smoke of the morning fires, the roasted meat from last night's dinner warming for this morning's meal. They could spare no food, no supplies. The march had been long and the resources few.

He shook his head, the bright red of his hair flying in the wind. Too many men would be lost for this unreasonable cause. Be it the will of the gods themselves, there was no purpose in such a hopeless goal, an unattainable end. But it was not. Only the will of his stubborn clan chief to regain his daughter from the stronghold of the Druids. Oh, men had tried before and failed. Men more numerous and more experienced than the young warriors whose swords glimmered so brightly from the valley. Niall refused to shed a single tear for the daughter of that stubborn bastard who sent them on this quest, but for

the men, the tears flowed freely. He little liked the deaths of innocents to save one insignificant life. All honor to the clan.

Niall scowled into the thin broth simmering in his tankard. "Ahem," came a soft voice from directly behind him. Niall whirled smoothly into the placid face of his young advisor, Raibeart. "Oh, 'tis only you. Well, what have you to say, lad?" Raibeart cleared his throat again. "Well, sir...I jest thought you might want some company." "Ah, well, sit down then, as long as ye are here. Would ye like some broth?" Niall gave another disdainful look to his tankard and held it out to Raibeart, who took it gladly and hurriedly slurped down the contents. "What say the men of this mission?" "Well, sir, none would speak a word ill of you, Niall Glic, their brave commander." Niall shook his head at the nickname of "wise" that his men had pinned upon him. He was anything but...foolish, more, to risk so many lives. "But of our illustrious chief, what say they?" Raibeart blanched as pale as the broth he was drinking. "Surely ye donna want me to speak ill of Chief Lauchlann? 'Twouldna be right, sure."

Niall hid a smile under one strong hand. The boy had a misplaced sense of loyalty to a man who had sent him to sure death. But Niall had to respect loyalty in anyone, whether it was sensible or not. "Nay, laddie, 'tis all right. Ye donna have to speak ill of anyone. Just idle curiosity. Seems the men would be tired and dissatisfied after the march. But who am I t' say?" Niall paused, thoughtful. "Go down and tell the men t' pack. We leave before the sun is high. Must na be caught in the heat of day." Raibeart bowed gratefully and trotted down the hill.

Niall stood in one fluid motion and turned to cast an angry eye on the distant tower. "Just you wait, lassie, we'll be showing ye just how much your life is worth. If ye be wantin' slaughter, ye'll get it aright." His green eyes turned hard as he made a concentrated effort to unclench his fists and turn back down the hill.

Sorcha shivered uncontrollably. The hardened eyes of the young man chilled her to the bone. Though she could not hear a word he had said, she knew he had been angry with someone or something. Ach, but if she could only hear the sounds while she had a vision...then she would understand them better, not to mention be given leave to go home, away from this dreadful prison. Home...she had not felt this home sick in quite some time. But the badge on this young man's kilt had her father's insignia and motto. Mayhap a member of her clan, come to rescue her again. When she thought of all the blood spilt on the hills around the stronghold, it made her ill. "Father, if I ever see ye again, I'll be givin' ye quite a talkin' to. Ye simply donna send young men a'dyin for to rescue me. Not men such as that!" Gods, she wished her father would see reason. Her life was hardly worth one innocent life, let alone hundreds on hundreds.

She gestured distractedly at the water, waving the image of the young man away. But she couldn't dispel those searching eyes and that shock of red hair. Something about him had touched her soul. She had never been this profoundly affected by a vision before. Maybe it was a sign that she was reaching to the end of her training. Maybe she was making too much out of a striking pair of eyes when she had been alone far too long. She laughed at herself. "Ye be hopeless, lassie. 'Tis nothin' but regrets for all the wasted years alone here."

Those inside were never much consolation, going their quiet Druidic ways, holding out against the onslaught of Christianity. Very rarely did they come out of their reclusive hiding but to teach her...they had not left their stronghold since they had

claimed her as a young child. She was dreadfully alone in the stronghold, its golden walls not big enough for more than one trainee...perhaps not strong enough. She wondered often enough if she was truly there for training, or perhaps as leverage to keep the Scottish clans from surrendering to the new religion. She could not, perhaps, read the emotions of the Druids in their eyes, but her visions showed her more than their faces ever could.

Sorcha rubbed her linen clad arms, trying to regain the sensation. She felt so dreadfully cold and terrified. Somehow, she would warn this wave of soldiers from her. She would not let them be slaughtered by magic they could not even see. Closing her eyes, she let the dark void surround her, calling forth the face of the young man and trying desperately to hear his words as she slipped into the magic of Calling.

Niall gathered his troops just outside of the circle of magic surrounding the Druid stronghold. His magick scouts had placed warning flags in the ground just at the edge of the shield that they could sense blocking the tall, golden walls. Niall grimaced. He knew the death shields were in place, yet he could not avoid advancing closer. He was on orders from those higher than he was. He shook his fist in helplessness. "Damn ye and yer magick. I hate to lose one man for ye. Yet, on orders of me clan chief, I'll lose hundreds. Why?" He wondered for the millionth time today. "What lassie is so important that she warrants the life of innocents?"

On orders of his clan chief, he'd do it. Not happily, sure, but dutifully. Niall laughed ruefully. He was sure that the men harbored as much anger against Chief Lauchlann as he did. Anger, however, even disagreement, was no cause for disloyalty. He'd fight his own father to the death if Chief Lauchlann commanded it. He'd lost all respect for the chief long ago, but to disobey Lauchlann was both dangerous and dishonorable. Niall looked bitterly at the gates of the castle. "If you're in there, lassie, and ye can hear me, ye better do somethin' quickly before more men die on yer account. There's na much I can do."

He turned. "Raibeart!" The brown-clad form of his advisor darted quickly towards him. "Tell the men to prepare for battle." Raibeart rung his hands. "Do ye think this is wise?" He inquired. "The scouts did say that all who cross that line," Raibeart gestured at the row of flags, "would die on the instant. I donna know about ye, but I donna want to see the men die." "Not much we can do." Niall admitted. "Unless we disobey the chief." Raibeart started. "We couldna do that! 'Twouldna be right." he exclaimed. Niall just nodded. "My feelings exactly. So go tell the men." Raibeart bowed his head in assent and ran off towards the troops.

Niall watched him call them to ready, watched the men gather swords and axes dutifully, as if the weapons could stop the magick. The wind whipped through their hair as they adjusted their sword belts and scabbards and wound cords around their braids. Their eyes flashed with anger as they stood in readiness. Niall fought back tears once again and turned a pale face once again towards the castle. He thought he saw a dark shape approaching the gate and tightened his hand on the hilt of his sword. "Well, lassie, I hope ye are happy. Someone, at the least, has to be. "

With that, Niall began to bring his great sword up and around in the signal to charge. Before he could get it halfway up, he heard a scream from the tower voicing a single word: "STOP!" Breathless, Sorcha ran towards the door crying "Stop! Stop! Don't put yourselves at danger for me."

Hazily, in the distance, she thought she could see the leader of the troops pause. Using her Sight, she Looked closer. He was bringing his sword around in an arc and had paused momentarily near the top of the arc. He looked around wildly, but, perceiving no one, he began to swing his sword back down over his head. Sorchka knew the command to charge, knew it well from years of slaughter occurring outside of her prison. She wasn't going to let it happen again. Frenzied, she darted for the gate and fumbled at the latch. She could feel the magic seeping through the boundary, warning her with jolting electricity not to cross, not to go further. She knew what she was about to do meant death for her, but what was her single life compared to that of hundreds?

Sorchka took a deep breath and prayed to all the gods that she might be successful in preventing the charge; that she might live to see another moment in time, or if not, that her death would bring some meaning, some understanding, to her father's clan. Then, with all of the strength she could drag from deep inside her, she threw herself through the gate and into the glistening boundary.

Time slowed and seemed to float cloudily through her mind. She could see the colors of the army before her, the stronghold behind her. She could see the air around her shimmering like a soap bubble, a glass crystal, a prism of lights and colors reflected through the scattered air. And then, suddenly, it burst, forcing her back into reality. The speed change sent her flying faster than the wind through the air and into the leader of the army, narrowly missing his great sword. With a crash, the two tumbled to the ground.

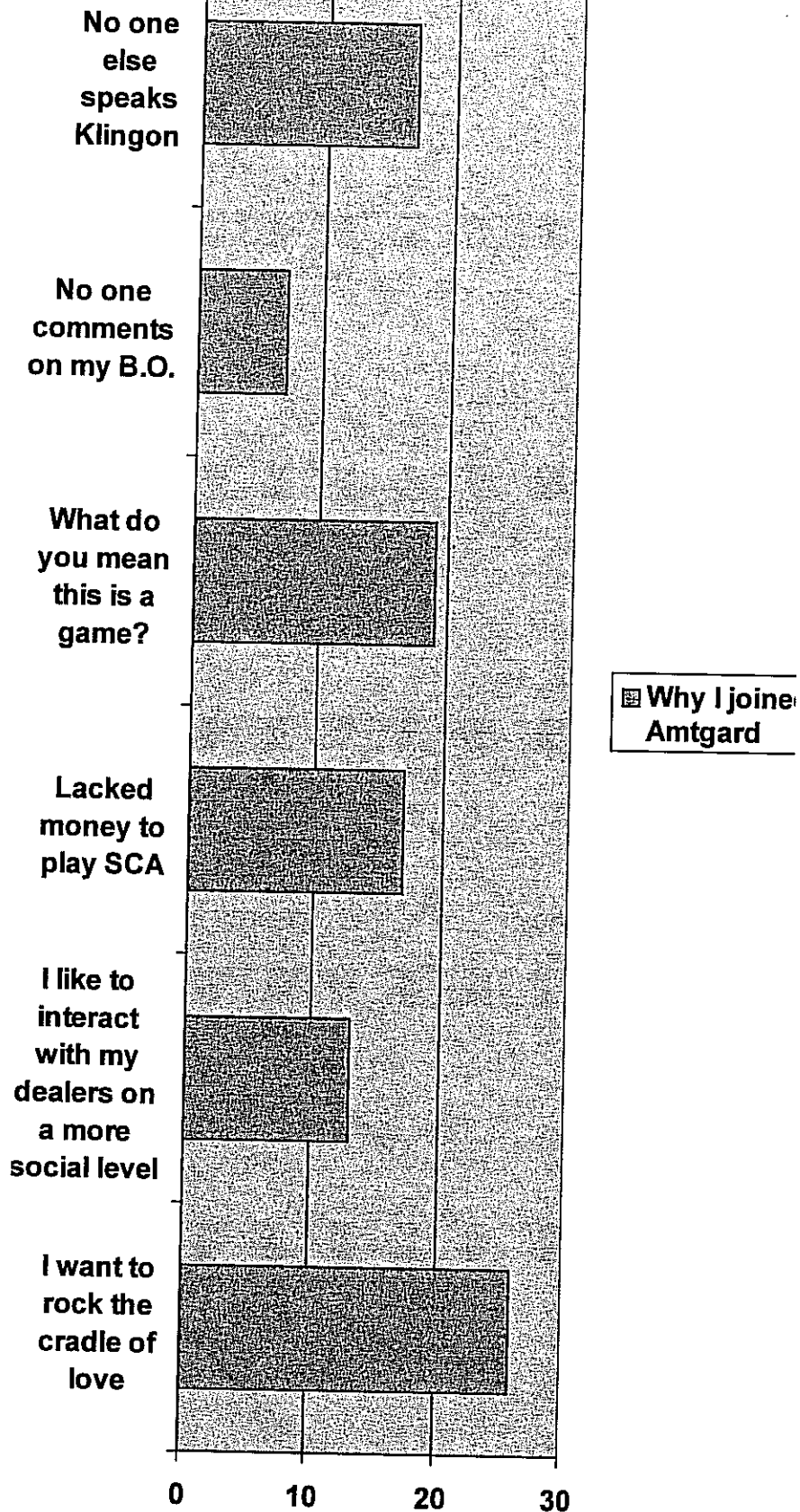
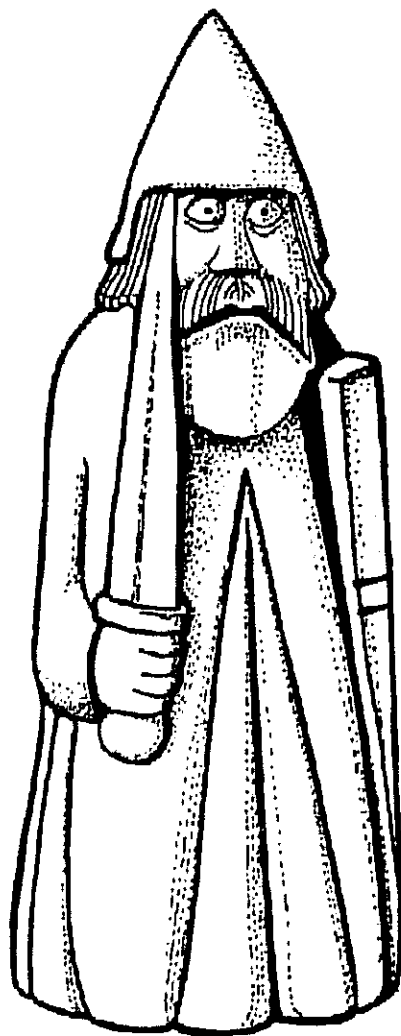
"Donna let them advance, I will na allow it." Sorchka glowered. "I donna value my life above theirs or I would na just have leapt through a magick boundary." Sorchka turned towards the stronghold. "Canna say I know how I did that, no how." She blinked.

Niall stood up and took her arm to help her off the ground. "So ye're the one we came for? Seems I was wrong about ye. Ye aren't a selfish lass. But why have ye let so many die before?" Niall inquired. "I couldna stop it before. Either they came without warnin' or I couldna make them hear me. This time the magick let me stop ye. I wonder why? That boundary shoulda killed me."

As Sorchka looked again towards the stronghold she noticed that the air was no longer shimmering in the telltale sign of magick. A single Druid was standing in the doorway. She heard his voice. "Sorchka, you have passed the final test of selflessness. You are now free to go or stay, as you will. Your training is complete." Sorchka exulted in the warmth of the sun and smiled at the brave captain standing next to her. "Come now, let us be goin'. Its been a long while since I been home and I miss my father." Niall just took her hand and led her down the mountain and past the gaping men onto the path home.



Recently, the editors of The Star took a poll on the Internet to find out why the majority of Amtgarders are playing. The results were varied but several trends emerged. Collated by the accounting firm of Plumbley & Cavitt the results are correct within plus or minus 3%. Pictured here on the chart are the top reasons that Amtgarders across the country play the game today.



Uncle Arthon's Poetry Corner

Hey kiddies! Today's poem perhaps requires a bit of introduction. Sir Michael, Hammer of God was twice crowned king of the Celestial Kingdom. About two years ago, he moved away to the Iron Mountains in Colorado. There, he left the door of his new sports car open on some sort of camping event or another. Somehow, a bear managed to find its way into the car and managed to close the door behind. The rest, as they say, is history. -Arthon

The Lay of Sir Michael and the Bear

O, Aramithris the great, here now my cry!
Lift up these words, thou mad muse of Amtgard
Help me to tell the tale of courage most high
Lend me thy pen, who art both knight and bard.

Thou noblest muse, an escapéd lunatic
Transport this simple song to the realms of myth
Inspire this hand from its palsied fit
So that the story is told to all ken and kith

As is known in lands far and wide
Sir Michael holds the Hammer of God
Deep is his girth and long his stride
Quick is his anger and mighty his rod

A righteous man by all accounts
His fame earned not just by wit
But by service to his kingdom in great amounts
And skill at arms as to a knight befits

A king born from fell stock of old
Few men can compare with his deeds
Those that try lie deep in the moulde
And nourishment give to the ploughman's seed

Long are the lists of widows he has made
Short the list of men who escape his wrath
Long are the hours he has applies to his trade
Short is the time he has spent in the bath

Long he lived in the City of the Moon
Called Tiras Lunae in the Elvish tongue
'Til that fair place was brought to ruin
and only curs to the remnants clung

A knight errant wandering was he
A king without a home
He came to the mountains, far from the sea
And there he ceased to roam

A fair people in that place long had been
Hearty, quick to laugh and full of grace
Alas, the air, the air was so thin
So high in the mountains, so high in that place

A simple people they long had been
Smiling, laughing, of sin there was no trace
But there was no oxygen since the air was so thin
Thus in games of wit they took last place

'Twas there that Sir Michael did make his seat
An extra large one, fit to hold his crown
And also the rest of him, for he was made
mighty by means of meat
A greater thrown in any land could not be found

Although their wits were small they recognized
his skill
Both at strategy and at the dinner table
Thus the people of the land submitted to his will
So he became their king, righteous and able

Now we have come to the meat of the story
The reason why I spin this aire
For this is a tale of courafe and glory
It is how Sir Michael did hunt the bear

There in the mountains the air it is cold
The nights they are long and bitter
No coat had he for he had no gold
And many a night he spent a-shiver

The good king called his advisors hither
And related his irksome plight
His tale put one and all into a dither
For they were used to the long cold nights

One said, "When you have no wife away the
cold to fend,
Here in this kingdom it is arranged as thus:
Nothing, oh nothing, warms like the wife of a
friend.
There is no mess, and very little fuss."

Sir Michael, he growled in anger and spat
His councilors cringed and shook in their seats
"This wife swapping, I'll have none of that!
'sides, 'twould take 10 women to cover my feet."

"I know what I'll do!" he started with a shout
"I'll have a bearskin rug to cover my chin.
I've seen many a beastly wandering about –
A mighty fine blanket I'd make of it's skin."

Sir Michael than began to devise
A plan to secure his future blanket
To stay warm he needed a bear of tremendous
size
A task for which he'd surely thank it

Late that night as Sir Michael slept
Legrey, the god of guile, arrived and spoke
"I'll tell you, o king, how a bear can be kept
for the price of just one pack of smokes."

Sir Michael agreed and the bargain was sealed
All too soon the stoogies were swapped
"Bait it into your carriage." Legrey revealed
"Once it enters make sure that the door it is
locked.

Your blanket's assured once the bear inside is
trapped.
Then you may take the bear's measure
After a while it's strength will be sapped
And then you may dispatch the beast at your
leisure."

Legrey disappeared in a bright puff of smoke
Leaving nothing but drifting ash
From his dream Sir Michael finally awoke
But missing his wallet his teeth he began to
gnash

"Still, the plan is sound." the good king thought
He scratched himself, belched and ere long he
arose
This was the inspiration for which he had sought
"No longer will I sleep with cold toes!"

The king's carriage was his source of joy and
pride
Leagues it'd traveled, from the south it'd been
brought
Sleek were it's lines and lavish 'twas inside
With all manner of comforts that the king had
bought

Into the mountains Sir Michael did drive
Long miles 'til the hour grew late
Into a country where bears did thrive
And his trap he began to bait

He drew his advisors and also his horse
To a spot far away where all would be safe
In the carriage he tried an old trick of the Norse
Leaving therein a steak which the beastly would
crave

Night fell and all drifted to slumber
The trap was ready, the bait it was set
Into the carriage a bear it did lumber
And the carriage door sprang shut on it

All woke to hear the howls of the beast
A frightful noise it was making
It sounded as though Lucifer himself was at feast
And the carriage was tilting and shaking

"The bear is mine!" Michael cried with delight
"Let us now slay it and take from it it's hide"
The bear was filled with wrath at it's plight
A desperate attempt to escape it now tried

When they all reached the carriage they stopped
and did stare
The coach had shutters to let in the light
However, the shutters opened on the side of the
bear
And now they were closed and locked up tight

"The bear will soon tire and then he is ours,"
Sir Michael said, "Good councilors worry not.
I estimate that in just a few hours
We will give him as good as we've got."

A few hours passed, and then a few more
No signs of tiring did the bear show
Every time they approached they were met with
a roar
Until in the east the rising sun did glow

At last a bold man-at-arms did approach
And with great speed unfastened the door
But the bear was ready and sprang from the
coach
Running full tilt to the woods on all fours

After the bear the men they gave chase
Through the countless dales and the glens
But the men were too slow so the beast won the
race
And was never heard from again

Sir Michael returned to his carriage and did look
At the carnage the bear there had wrought
He cried out and then with weeping he shook
For inside it looked like demons had fought

Not a cushion survived, not a pillow was whole
The fixtures were all gnawed and broken
As a captive the bear enjoyed not its role
And of excrement and left many a token

The king wept and raged and shook his fist at the
sky
But nothing his acts did avail
“Legrey, you wretch, I’ll get you!” did he cry
Against gods and men did Sir Michael rail

But there was nothing to do but return to his
home
Into the coach of stench he did climb
The ride back elicited many a moan
For the smell of the bear was not so sublime

His hair he did pull, his beard he did tug
He bemoaned his beautiful carriage
He felt certain that since he’d no bearskin rug
To keep warm he’d be forced into marriage

Where the tragedy occurred, back in the glen
Legrey appeared with a smoke in his mouth
Long he laughed ‘til tears coursed down his chin
Then he left and was seen no more in the south

Thus ends the Lay of Sir Maichael and the Bear
Go you now in good stead
If there is any lesson to be learned from this aire
It lies in the tale that you have read



A Clan Survival Guide

The Gathering of the Clans - the pinnacle event in the Amtgard year. And this year, you're going. There is just one problem. It's not that easy. Sure, you've got the directions and you've got the will to go, but now what? This guide will give you the inside scoop on Clan '99: the dos, the don'ts, the I-really-mean-it don'ts and the o-dear-jesus don'ts.

The Trip

First off, we'll cover the trip. The Gathering of the Clans is held in the Sleepy Grass Campgrounds just outside of a peaceful little town in New Mexico called Cloudcroft. There are several methods to travel to Cloudcroft.

First, you might take your own vehicle. This may seem an optimum solution allowing the most flexibility and the least amount of expense unless one of the following applies to you: 1) Your car is older than you are. 2) You drive at speeds in excess of 100 m.p.h. and there is the slightest chance that your tires might simply shear off on the blistering hot pavement. 3) The thought of a jackrabbit, armadillo, buzzard or deer being embedded in your grill causes you the slightest amount of concern 4) You still aren't really sure what they mean by "Oil Change".

Second, you might ride with someone else. On the plus side, you need not worry about the expense of vehicle maintenance and you may not have to drive yourself. However, there can be a number of disadvantages: 1) Sharing the back of a pickup truck with 10 Amtgarders in summer. 2) Sharing the inside of a minivan with 10 Amtgarders in summer. 3) Going inside the QuickieMart for a Twinkie only to find that the vehicle has departed without you. 4) Trying to get into the car during a rainstorm after your tent has collapsed only to find that the owner has turned it into the "Shaggin' Wagon".

Third, you might put on your red shoes, click them together and say, "I wish I was home"x3. There are no disadvantages to this method with the exception of not actually arriving at Clan. However, this is offset in lieu of the fact that if you actually try this method you are probably so far gone that you will think you are at Clan and will have a great time anyway.

Finally, you can travel by rental vehicle. This is highly recommended. This way, collateral damage to the vehicle does not concern you, the vehicle will be in good repair, 24 hour roadside assistance will be provided, and you are not left with the foul smell of filth ridden Amtgarders wafting through your car for six months or more.

Packing List

Now, you've got your transportation squared away. Next, you'll need to think about what to bring. Here is a good list to start off with.

- 1) A tent ... normally renting a hotel room would be the better option but there is small chance that there will be an available room - not to mention that it is far easier to stagger to your tent rather than try to drive with one eye closed back to Cloudcroft.
- 2) A sleeping bag ... it gets chilly up in the mountains.
- 3) Another tent ... after Sponge falls on the first.
- 4) Another sleeping bag ... after the first one is soaked by the inevitable thunderstorm.
- 5) At least one pair of clean socks ... however, based on previous history, many Amtgarders feel that they stay clean enough to require no extra clothes, deodorant, showers or toothbrushes. Hopefully, you are one of those lucky few.
- 6) A Mag Light ... in case Taz gets uppity or you want to see at night.
- 7) A selection of tasty beverages ... God forbid that you be one of THOSE people with no drink of your own, wandering from campsite to campsite leeching from other people like an alcoholic vampire.
- 8) Your weapons and shield ... more than one sword is a good idea. There must be something about the mountain air that makes you want to break your weapons over people's backs.

9) Money ... enough to bail you or a dear friend out of the pokey.

10) Prophylactics ... wait a minute ... who are you trying to kid? You don't have a chance.

The Campsite

All right, you've arrived at Clan and you've packed the right equipment. Now all you need to do is set up camp and begin the process of having fun. There is one question though ... where should you set up your tent? The Sleepy Grass Campgrounds are fairly extensive (about a mile in total length) and there are lots of people camped there already. The best choice is to set up camp with your household or company. Failing that, your local duchy or barony will probably have an area to themselves. If this is not the case, do not panic. You have one last recourse. Put on a grey and black tabard and go up the northern hill. There you will find many other loners such as yourself also in grey and black tabards. Since they are also wandering vagabonds such as yourself they will be happy to welcome you within their camp. There, they will probably refer to you as "Maggot" (in the old tongue it is a phrase of endearment used by nomadic tribes to identify a kindred spirit). Do not worry, it is a sign that you are appreciated. The camp is a sort of commune and everyone takes on his share of work. So, if you are asked to chop some wood, carry some rocks, or polish a few boots, take it in the spirit that it is meant and oblige them. Remember, everyone on the hill is your spirit brother but if you use teeth they will smite you down.

The Rating System

Once you've set up your camp it is time to have some fun. In order to do that it helps to know what the different campsites at Clan have to offer. The following is a list of the most popular places to visit, background information on each, and a rating system to help guide you toward the places most suited for you.

Newbie – A good first-timer camp. People go out of the way to make even the oddest feel accepted, with warm fuzzies all around.

Idealist – A campsite for more mature Amtgarders who have grand schemes of changing Amtgard for the better and like to while away the wee hours of the night discussing the evils of Aramithris, Draknar, Corbin and Killraven. Must have played Amtgard for at least three weeks and believe in The Dream to qualify.

Veteran – The more jaded players of the game are drawn toward these campsites. Lots of libations and members of the opposite sex (or same sex, or whatever) are to be found here. The atmosphere in Veteran camps is devoted more towards a good time than role-playing. Those who act strangely or out of the norm are viewed suspiciously.

Geezer – In it's own class; these campsites are populated by those who find the pursuits of the Veteran campsites to be a little tame. Here, drinking from giant phalluses, the burning of undergarments, and bazooka vomiting are to be found in almost equal amounts. Veterans are humbled; Newbies and Idealists run (or are driven) screaming from these places of debauchery.

A Short List Of The Most Notable Campsites & Places Of Interest

Green Dragon Camp: Located at the far end of the campgrounds, the Green Dragons are a fighting company from the Emerald Hills. Combining a zest for fighting with a zest for intoxicants the company lends a bohemian air to the mountainside. One side note – if you approach this camp they will demand tribute of a rock. This campsite is rated Veteran.

Corsair Hill – These folks are all-around nice guys. One of the oldest fighting companies in Amtgard, they welcome visitors onto their hillside. Why, if you just ask, they might let you wear some of their cool garb or share in their feast. Note: If you enter the Corsair libation tent for ANY reason, do not apply for a corporate job within thirty days. This campsite is rated Idealist.

Claw Castle – Constructed by Squire Zol, this castle is magnificent to behold. It not only has beautifully painted walls but also two towers that can actually be climbed into and defended. This place is a must for those who enjoy being hit by long pole arms. This campsite has not yet been rated.

Claw Camp – If you are in Amtgard, you have heard of the dreaded Claw Legion. Their power extends throughout the known kingdoms. Their camp is the center of political machinations so extreme that they would make Machiavelli weep. The debaucheries to which these jaded denizens of Amtgard resort in order to sate their passions are just as extreme. The smell of sex and Franzia permeate the place even after everyone has packed up and gone home. This campsite is rated Geezer. Be forewarned.

Editor's Note: Please disregard the above information as it is now dated. Claw camp this year will consist of Wolfram sitting alone in the woods and wailing.

Storm/Torch Camp - A black cloud follows these folks. Hated in their own lands, they seek to entice the unwary into their camp with drink so that they may molest the young maidens and club the men with Mag Lights. Last year the Torches were reckless enough to have been kicked out of Clan, one and all. God knows what deeds that they are capable of. House Storm is little better and decidedly less attentive to personal hygiene. This campsite is rated Newbie.

Saracen City – A third world ghetto of tents and huts, this place gives you the feel of what it would be to live like a peasant in the Middle Ages. Other than the squalor, the Saracens who reside here are devoted to having a good time. If you need a friend, you can find one at the Saracen City. If you need more than a friend, a blindfold is suggested. This campsite is rated Veteran.

Andralaine's House of Pleasure & Pain – Unfortunately, no information is to be had on this particular "shop". All field agents who have crossed the threshold are never seen again. This campsite is rated Geezer (It is to be thought).

War Dancer Camp - The Wardancer clan is, for lack of the use of better words, considered to be the "Boy-Scouts of Amtgard", except in one department. It is rumored that their ranking system relates to strange deviant sex acts. But there's a lot of booze there to drink. So live it up. This camp is rated Idealist.

Pebyr's Shop - If you are a Saracen then you should feel at home here with the camaraderie of others and alcohol. Pebyr, assisted by Vera and many others sell a miscellaneous assortment of items such as hamburgers, breakfast sausages, cold Cokes, Gatorade, pickles, Playboys, hand creams and lotions. This place is highly favored by Newbies, and Idealists. Pebyr is a lone Geezer in this scenario.

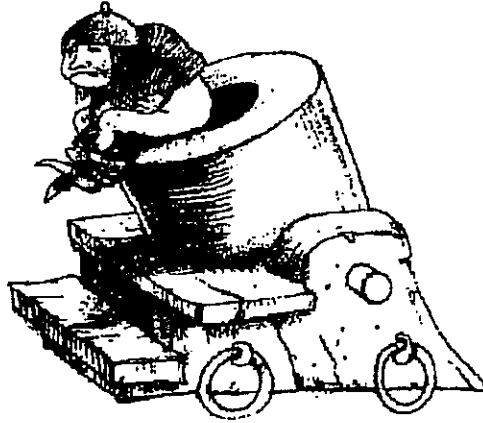
The Showers – Although not located in the campgrounds it is vital that you know their location. They are run by retired people who close down for lunch as well as for their own selfish whims. Get there early so as to avoid picking up the inevitable venereal disease some Amtgarder acquired the night before.

Merchant's Lane- This is a place where many sell "what-nots". There are many interesting and unique things to be purchased here. But remember well what you brought with you in your car, because it might be on the auctioning block now for anyone willing to drop a dime on it.

Wetland's Camp – The Wetlands is a populated by nice people. Although a relatively new kingdom they have worked hard to perfect both the fighting and the cultural arts. All are welcome here. Their camp is the center of political machinations so extreme that they would make Aramthris weep. The debaucheries to which these jaded denizens of Amtgard resort in order to sate their passions are just as extreme. The smell of sex and cheap beer permeate the place even after everyone has packed up and gone home. This campsite is rated Idealist.

Some Final Notes On Clan

Clan XVII (Jesus, it has been that long) will be what you make of it. You can choose to get angry at the shot-sloughers during the wars or you can choose to accept it as inevitable and have a good time. It is important that you do not under any circumstances take anything too seriously. Most importantly of all, if you are inebriated at night and see a glowstick in the middle of the road, do not try to pick it up. Undoubtedly, it has a string connected to it and there is someone in the shadows fishing for drunks.



"War – I know it well, and the butchery of men.
Well I know, shift to the left, shift to the right
my tough tanned shield. That's what the real drill
defensive fighting means to me. I know it all,
how to charge in the rush of plunging horses –
I know how to stand and fight to the finish,
twist and lunge in the War-god's deadly dance."

Hector, *The Iliad*



The Road goes ever on and on
Down from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the Road has gone,
And I must follow, if I can,
Pursuing it with eager feet,
Until it joins some larger way
Where many paths and errands meet.
And whither then? I cannot say.

J.R.R. Tolkein, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Attention , citizens of the Celestial Kingdom!

We, the members of the Celestial Republican Army, weary of the Torch oppression and of the Kingdom's lack of response to the aforesaid do hereby ordain the following

The Torches are godless Huns and must be destroyed. All Torches are guilty of heinous and wretched war crimes against newbies and innocents everywhere. Thus far they have eluded justice, therefore we, the patriots of the CRA, do hereby declare unremitting war against these heathens.

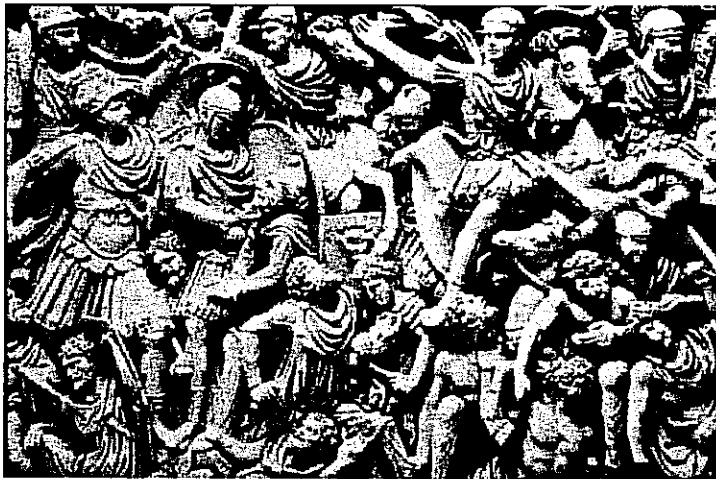
Furthermore, citizens of the Celestial Kingdom who do not stand with us will be considered the sympathizers of these foul tyrants and shall be expunged as well in fire and blood.

Good people everywhere, take up the call to arms. Freedom is nigh. We must but stand together and route these cruel oppressors from our lands. Only by adopting their methods shall we have a hope of overthrowing this most dangerous of enemies. Too long have we danced to the tune of this sadistic piper.

Even now, they reach out their shadowy hands to control the kingdom for their own ends. King Belgarion cannot even cough without instructions from Draknar. On all levels of government they have inserted their agents of despair. Soon, blackness shall engulf the kingdom and drag it down into screaming chaos.

We will have neither parlay nor truce with you, Torches, nor your allies. We will fight on the beaches. We will fight on the shores. We shall leave no duchy unturned in our efforts to route out Torch sympathizers. Beware one and all; Torch allies could be anyone or anywhere. They might be your friend, your lover, your monarch!

Fear not, good people of the Celestial Kingdom, the C.R.A. shall win no matter what the cost ...



Do You Seek Adventure?

Do you like to Travel?

Here is your chance to see new cultures and meet other people!

JOIN THE FAMOUS IMPERIAL ROMAN LEGIONS!!

Roman Citizenship Awarded after 20 years of loyal service!

Retirement Benefits include land grants in the province of your choice and a year's paid severance! ** Inquire at your local Roman Embassy Today! **(Other Benefits may vary)

Ask Dr. Drakknar

- an advice column -

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

I have recently started playing Amtgard and I am a hot, sixteen year-old chick. All the guys I meet are really nice and polite but after a while they begin to want me to do things, strange things that make me feel uncomfortable. I like my new friends and want to keep them. What should I do?

Peaches-And-Cream in Dragon's Haven

I am afraid that those guys are trying to take advantage of you. You are too young for those to be a true relationship of equals. To men like that you would only be of use as a sex object, which would be quite harmful to your emotional development and self-esteem.

I recommend that you find new friends. Now, a man like myself will respect you for your mind. So feel free to come to my tent at any event. I will ply you with liquor and tell you how adult you are. Have you ever thought about being a squire?

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

I see a problem in the C.K. although there are hundreds of color schemes available, almost everyone seems to favor solid black. I want to live in a festive, happy kingdom. What should I do?

Black-Is-Tacky inTori-mar

Move to Colorado.

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

Being king seems like a cushy job. You get free smokes, free rent and free babes. I want to acquire a following that will blindly elect me so that I can reap the rewards. What should I do?

Tommy in Tirana

First, join the largest company or household that you can find (preferably both at the same time). Next, pick a small group of social pariahs to make the enemy of the state. Finally, offer offices, awards, titles, and government contracts as needed to get

elected. Once in office there is no way you can be compelled to follow through on any promises. It worked for Hitler. It can work for you.

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

I have been playing Amtgard for over two years now. In my homeland I am considered quite the stick-jock. However, every time I show up to a C.K. event, I get spanked like a newbie. My self-esteem is so damaged that I cannot become sexually aroused for at least three months afterwards. What should I do?

Wetting-My-Pants in the Wetlands

Your problem stems from the fact that you are a cheater. In a soft kingdom like the Wetland, this allows you to defeat most of their weak, sheep-like fighters. When you come to a veteran kingdom like the CK that is used to dealing with cheaters, the corresponding harder and more frequent blows cause you to lose. I would encourage you to play healer so that you will be of some use to the real fighters in Inter-Kingdom events.

P.S. Your problem with sexual arousal is non-issue until another person becomes involved. Until then you are only disappointing yourself.

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

I am the monarch of a large kingdom in Central Texas. One of the best perks of being king is receiving oral gratification from women at events. However, I have discovered that the high quality chicks will not perform as directed. What should I do?

Depressed in Darkjesteria

- 1) Get taller.
- 2) Pay them money.

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

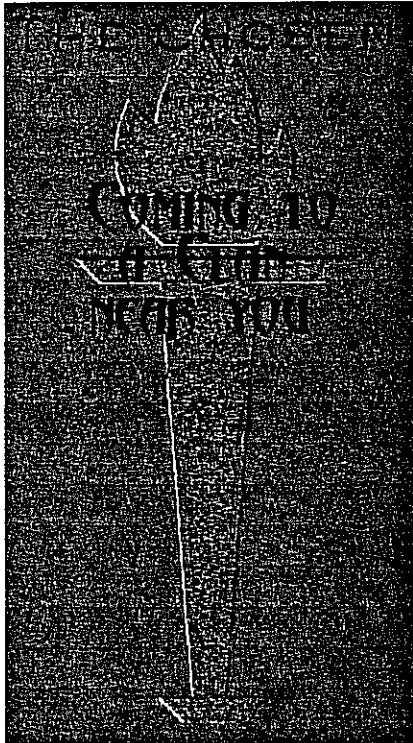
I have recently started playing Amtgard. However, all the popular names have been taken. I can't seem kick over a rock without stumbling into a dozen Conans, Aragorns or Rands. I need a really good name. What should I do?

Nobody in Turis Lunae

Get a name quickly. If you do not come up with one, one may be chosen for you. I guarantee that it is much

easier for others to remember a name like Mooncheese, Steelskin, Pansyman, or McTurd than it will be to remember a pseudo-fantasy name that you would prefer. If necessary, do as many Amtgardians have done in the past and select a random color or metal followed by a random animal (Examples: Steel Python, Black Eagle).

Good luck, Zitboy!



Dear Dr. Drakknar,

I joined Amtgard because I thought it would help me get laid. However, even copious amounts of alcohol at events do not seem to do the trick. What should I do?

Trying-Hard in Traitor's Hollow

Lower your standards. You are a freak of nature, but there are women in Amtgard that will have sex with you. Do not waste your time on women that other men desire. Competition is not your friend. Instead, drink more yourself. Then, go and find the truly desperate women that exist in Amtgard. For example, if you see a girl humping a tree in a misguided attempt to make men more attracted to her, then make your move.

As long as you are drunk enough, you will enjoy yourself. Do not, however, fall asleep in her tent, as waking up in the morning can be the most frightening

event of your life. Also, never give your real name. I recommend that you use a name like Balinor.

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

I have been playing Amtgard for some amount of time. My ultimate goal is to be a Warlord. How should I accomplish this goal?

Zero in Xanadu

Move to Colorado.

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

I followed your advice from last month's column. I want you to know that you and your whole company are a bunch of black clad, jack-booted, goose-stepping, nazi thugs. However, after adhering to your directions, my [girlfriend] has not mouthed off to me since. Thanks.

Mac-Daddy in Drakenrock

Thanks for all the kind words.

Just remember what Dr. D says "Always the back of the hand, Never the clenched fist."

Dear Dr. Drakknar,

You seem so bitter. What kind of doctor are you?

Baffled in Bifost

I have a Ph.D. in Loveology with over 11 years observing the primate mating habits in the Kingdoms of Amtgard.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Drakknar is a stick-jock with no redeeming social skills. His opinions do not reflect the opinions of the monarch, kingdom, the editors or anyone at all in fact.]

.....
"You talk of food?

I have no taste for food – what I really crave is slaughter and blood and the choking groans of men!"

Achilles, The Iliad

Ride Of The Barbar

Whence once strode a barbar,
(Smelly and stout)
Not unlike a beastman
(Or a ten-year-old trout)

With beard all a-tangling
(And snarf on his snout)
Armpits both a-drizzling
(And a rancid breechclout)

Down the low road to Turriss
('Twas somewhere hereabout!?)
Our hero goes shambling
(His balance in doubt)

Grunting, belching,
(And cussing goes he)
While scratching hisself
(Where hisself kinna see)

Stubby fingers all twitching
(As they strive to sling free)
A yellow-green gobbet
(From his nose, recently)

Toes all encrusted
'Tis but armor, it be!
Savin' up fer a Stoneskin
(Waste no washin' on me)

Poisonous airs,
(A-foggy with dew)
Do the fellow befollow
(Where no mortal would do!)

The very pathStones
(Now slimy wi' goo)
Shrink back from the roadpath
(Wi' an audible E-E-E-E-W-
WWW!)

His passings and partings
(And his walking by, too)
'Twould besicken a troll
(Usually quite fond of poo!)

Now arriving at Olmos
(To the mundanes' dismay)
Our hero stands puzzling
(And bellows, and brays)

"Where the BLAZES is
Amtgard

(The mundanes all go gray)
Ain't this their field
(Where they always go play?")

One foolish young redneck
(In his redneckian way)
Laughingly shouts out
(Wut chew 'sposta bay?)

The barbar spins round
(And the calfboy stops cold)
Affixed with a stare
(That make his bowels lose
hold)

A growl is forthcoming
(From beneath leathered folds)
As the barbar gives comment
(To one more foolish than bold)

The cowpunk just whimpers
(As his chaps flow bright gold)
What befell his new Levis
(Is too sad to be told)

Our hero breaks laughing
(Then cackles a curse)
"I never smelt no one
('Cept me who smelt worse!)

Fire up yon land dragon
(Or ye'll be needin' a nurse)
And bear me tae Bifost
(Where we'll empty yer purse!)

Onto the land dragon
(Which smelled more like a
hearse)
Climbed up the barbar
(Still yelling in verse)

"Break out yer bullwhip
(And stamp on the gas)
And get me to Amtgard
(Or I'm kickin yer ass!)

Up the great highway
(And down through the pass)
Sped our tearyeyed plowboy
(Atop a squishy, warm mass)

The barbar stood sniffin'
(Like a bear huntin' bass)
On the back of the dragon
(Caught the scent, at last)

There's foam in them hills
(The barbar did yell
'Tis Amtgard, I'm sure
(Tia a battle I smell)

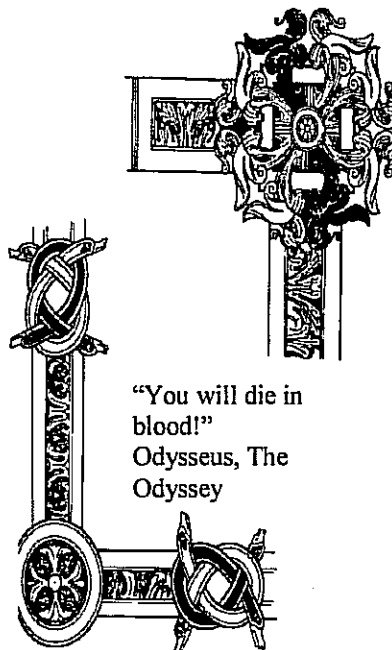
To the Gates of Solaris
(Like a bat outta hell)
Did the land dragon rocket
(What a story to tell!)

To the field leapt the barbar
(When the speed thay did quell)
The cowlover wept weakly
(Mom, I ain't feelin' well!)

So ye mundanes be warned, now
And ye Amtkinders, aye)
Speak not spite to a barbar
(With a twenty-inch fly)

Point out the signposts
(And stand to the side)
Or the Amtseekin' brutes
(Will ye take for a ride)

And should ye play nomad
(As well as yer park)
Know that barbars will find ye
(They can smell in the dark.)



Zodiac's Zodiac

Editor's note: Due to circumstances beyond his control, Sir Zodiac was not able to cast this month's horoscopes. Filling in this month is Squire Demurrier. Our apologies.

Aries- Ever since you went skinny dipping with your Amtgard friends, they keep cutting the length of your squires belt. As if to tell you something?

Taurus- Hey man I can't say it any other way. You gonna get rickets.

Gemini- You will receive two gifts: one a cork screw, the other a condom. Think it over.

Cancer- Medryn's sexual territorial issues threaten your child.

Leo- You will be visited by the Ghosts of Stick Jock Past, Present, and Future. They will appear in this order, Aramithris, Clalibus, and a sperm cell with an illegal sword.

Virgo- You will get hit on by Goldberg, and we ain't talkin' about Whoopi.

Libra- A very close Scorpio is marrying a Pisces, but you disapprove of their courtship. Get to know her better when she is not around her significant other, then you will find approval.

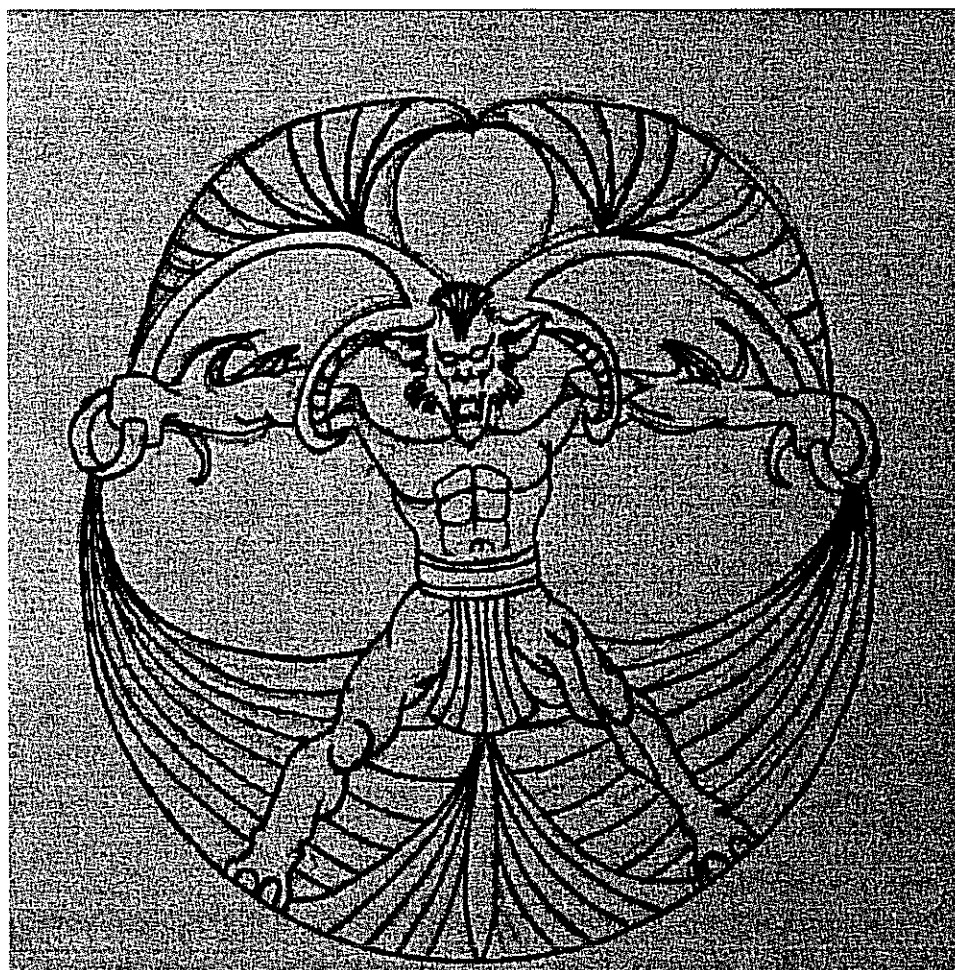
Scorpio- Your Libra friend is trying to get your women. KILL HIM!!!!

Sagittarius- Hey, Hitler was a Sagittarius

Capricorn- You will be visited by the ghost of the Notorious B.I.G. during a midnight snack. He will tell you, "Back off, bitch, those are my pork ribs!"

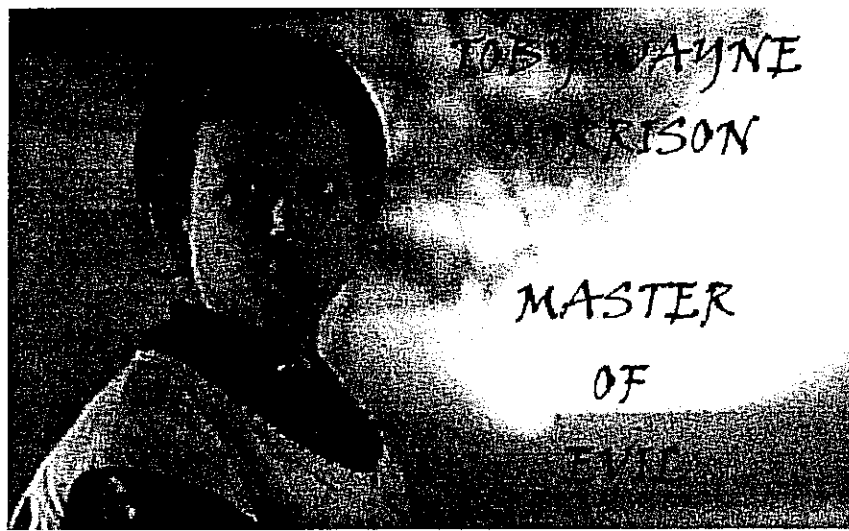
Aquarius- You will have sex with a beautiful woman, and get beat down by Bilbo Baggins. In which, during the beating, he will yell " Didn't you know that was my BITCH??!!!"

Pisces- You will impregnate or be impregnated a Spice Girl. Congratulations!



1. Do not think dishonestly.
2. The Way is training.
3. Become acquainted with every art.
4. Know the Way of all professions.
5. Distinguish between gain and loss in worldly manners.
6. Develop intuitive judgement and understanding for everything.
7. Perceive those things which cannot be seen.
8. Pay attention even to trifles.
9. Do nothing which is of no use.

Musashi, The Book of Five Rings



Toby Wayne Morrison: Master of Evil, currently residing in Fort Collins, Colorado. Toby was born on October 31, 1987. He became involved in Amtgard at the age of 8, quickly engineering the destruction of three small parks. Quickly gaining a reputation as a shot-sluffer, he dropped off the face of the Earth, vowing revenge on all Amtgarders. Currently, Toby Wayne Morrison is active in the Celestial Kingdom, attempting to undermine it from inside. The photograph above is the last known picture of the young man. It was taken at the midreign of Father Thomas Von Drakken, in 1998, when he was spotted replacing the Annihilus beer kegs with alcohol-free beer. Normally he operates through dupes, pawns, and hypnotized minions.

Resume of Evil: The following vile crimes have been attributed to Toby Wayne Morrison. Mr. Morrison should be considered "armed and dangerous". The Spumco Corporation has offered a \$1000 gift certificate to anyone providing information leading to Mr. Morrison's arrest and conviction.

- Dug the trench at Tori-Mar, often hides in the bushes and watches people trip.
- Introduced the custom of Darklords speaking in All Capital Letters on the CK List
- Invented the practice of Shot-Sluffing, previously unknown in the Celestial Kingdom.
- Beat Snicker Furfoot and/or Sponge Jimmykicker with a 18" MagLite flashlight at Clan XVI.
- Introduced the custom of Grape-Tossing, previously unknown in the Celestial Kingdom.
- Began the rampant knighting in the Celestial Kingdoms, leading to the current total of 374 knights active in the Celestial Kingdom.
- Started the Menazon/Amazon thread on the CK List.
- Attempted to replace Aramithris's shampoo with Nair in 1994.
- The production and distribution of pirated Spumco Action Figures, manufactured in Hong Kong.



And Samson said,
"With the jawbone of an ass,
Heaps upon heaps,
with the jawbone of an ass
Have I slain a thousand men."
Judges 15.16



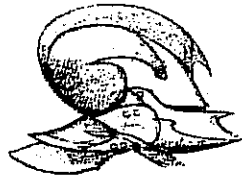
O Lucifer, brightest of angels all.
Now thou art Satan, and can never win
Out of thy miseries; how great thy fall!
Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales

This Just In From the front -

Our correspondent, Squire Demurrier, recently went on a fact-finding mission to the Duchy of Solaris. The following is a shocking report of the conditions of the Wardancers in this war-torn duchy.

The Wardancers are, in theory, a "fighting company" which have inhabited primarily the Celestial Kingdom and the Golden Plains. Their order is very hierarchical and consists of a highly regimented ranking system. The following is highly secret and was brought to you at the cost of many Arms Company spies. A member of the Wardancers with only a white star on one of his or her sleeves, is what the outside world would call an "Intern." This "Dancer of the Way" has to carry a cigar with him or her at all times to help higher ranking members and themselves to feel more comfortable. The next higher rank is that of a Dust Dancer. This person searches for the very hard to find "Dust Bunny" in a couch, while someone "helps" from behind. "Dancer of the Wave" is next and his duties consist of the timing of the "jiggling" of the body fat of others, and then reporting said times and subjects to the higher ranks. Fourth up in rank is the Wind Dancer. This Wind Dancer has found peace through Flatulence, and can be found eating beans by the fire and always wanting to put his arm around the new guy and getting too friendly(this means you!). Then there is also a rank of Flame Dancer. These people have been burned by a gerbil in a (un)pleasant way or fashion. These people are all on the Richard Gere FANatic mailing list. At last is the High Dancer. He or she is person who has usually been in the game for sometime. This person has to use mind altering drugs to stay attuned to the game and keep up with the Richard Gere mailing list, but since he or she is at the top of the ladder, it no longer matters.

Squire Demurrier
High Priest of BoB
Field Reporter



Westron Wind

Westron wynde when wylle thow blow
the smalle rain downe can rayne?
Cryst, yf my love were in my armys
and I yn my bed a gayne.

Anonymous



K/Night

Knights move crookedly on the chessboard
This I cannot comprehend.
They are also called 'rooks'
I do not like to be rooked, do you?
I am receiving mixed messages
Knights supposedly represent the light
But are named after the dark
Elton John and Ronald Reagan are knights
If that is not a mixed message, I do not know
what is
Children learn stories about knights

In shining armor
Or armour
Batman is the Dark Knight
That is like saying the "shining sun"
Of course it is
What else would it do?
Why do all the knights end up sleeping with
Marilyn Monroe?
Why can't a man rise above being a knight
And become a man?

Musketeer (Wizard variant)

Garb: Yellow belt or sash. Some sort of military garb or the various trappings of black-powder firearms such as powder horns, bandoleers, et cetera. The Musketeer must of course have the ubiquitous gun.

Weapons: Musket, and any one handed, non-hinged weapon under 4ft in length, staff, spear, dagger. Note that the use of weapons will deduct from the Musketeer's available magic points. Due to their limited spell choices, it is appropriate for a musketeer to select more weapons than a wizard ordinarily would. In keeping with the spirit of the class, every Musketeer should make their own musket, which should have a stab legal tip (bayonet) and strike legal stock (butt-stroke). For rules purposes the musket is a spear, albeit a somewhat clumsy one.

Armor/Shields: None, but see below.

Levels: Instead of class levels, Musketeers select spells from the Wizard spell list in exactly the same way that normal wizards do. These are not actually spells, but are intended to model the effects of the musket and appropriate "class abilities". The spells suggested are merely that. Verbal spells are more accurate, while spell balls can be used more often, so the spells represent various degrees of damage, accuracy, and rates of fire. All effects should be treated exactly as their normal spell counterparts would, for simplicity of play. Multiple spell balls can be charged and thrown, simulating more accuracy or greater damage, but this reeks of cheese. If the musket is damaged or destroyed, then the Musketeer should not be able to use any missile spells; to do so would be poor role-playing of the worst kind.

Level 1: Basic shots are simulated with "**Magic Bolt**", a spell ball doing 1pt of damage on a hit.

Level 2: Shots are simulated with two spells; "**Lightning Bolt**" for a powerful and lethal shot that ignores armor on a direct hit, and "**Wounding**", a verbal which represents accurate shooting to injure.

Level 3: The increasing deadliness of the Musketeer is modeled by the "**Fireball**", which ignores armor.

Level 4: Even deadlier and more accurate shooting is represented by the lethal verbal spell "**Curse**"

Level 5: The musketeer has attained the peak of his killing art, now capable of killing even the most heavily defended foes with a well-placed shot. This is modeled by the "**Sphere of Annihilation**".

Level 6: The Musketeer is capable of setting a final explosion using his personal supply of gunpowder, represented by the spell "**Killing Grounds**".

Suggested Genre Spells: Non-missile/projectile skills are just ones that fit the particular flavor I am going for with the Musketeer class, and are entirely optional. The staging of the spells should be changed to show the new flavor of the class. Please note that many of them are defensive in nature, representing armor of some sort, hard cover, or even luck, while others deal with flame and explosives. Given the Musketeer's affinity for gunpowder, this should be readily apparent. A few, like "**Honor Duel**" or "**Bladesharp**" reflect the fact that Musketeers are warriors like any other, proud and capable of battle, often becoming experienced and tough as they progress in skill.

Lvl 1: Honor Duel, Bladesharp

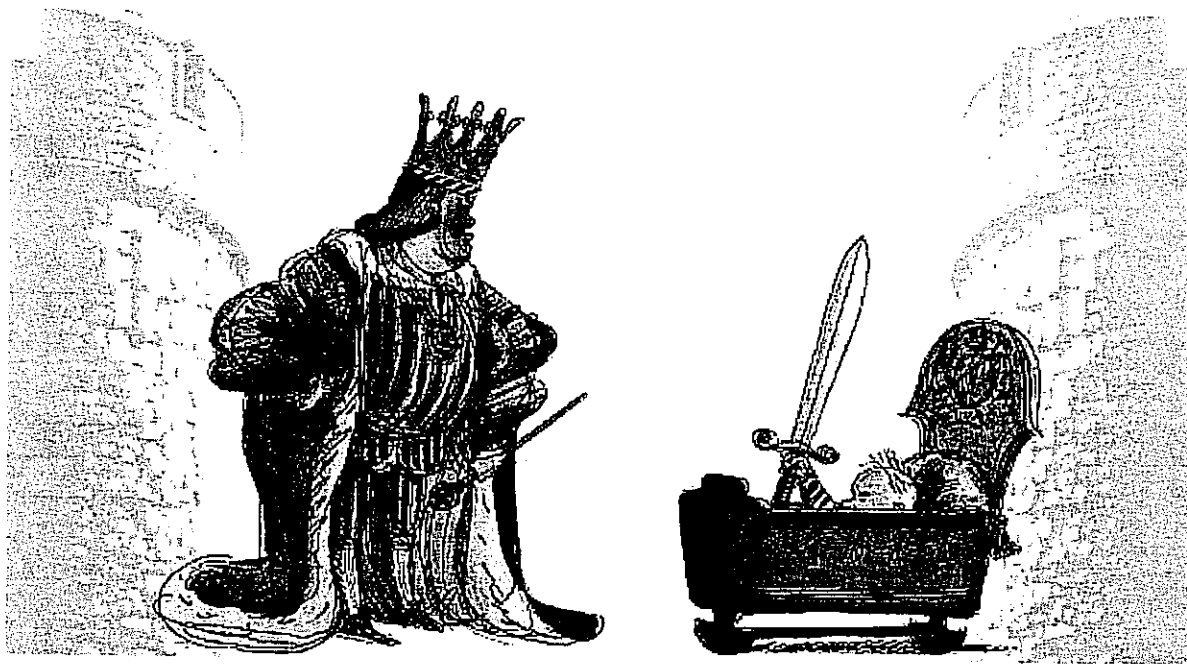
Lvl 2: Mend, Protection from Flame

Lvl 3: Protection from Projectile, Protection

Lvl 4: Protection from Magic, Pyrotechnics

Lvl 5: Vivify, Warskill

Lvl 6: Defend, Expertise



THE AMTGARD LEGAL MUSKET

The Amtgard legal musket made its debut in the Celestial Kingdom, at Spring War 1999. The reception was quite positive, and a number of people asked me how to make it. What follows is a step by step way of making a musket. Please note that each person will probably want to customize theirs, varying its length and weight. Mine was fairly large, with stab legal bayonet and smash legal butt-stock. Before you start, get a good idea of what real muskets look like. That way, all of this will make more sense. Anyway, here goes.

HOW TO BUILD YOUR MUSKET

#1) BUILD THE CORE: Take two sticks of 1/2" thickwall PVC or similar material as a core. One should be approximately 5' long, while the other should be about 6' long. Tape the tubes firmly together, with one end even. I suggest mixing duct tape and strapping tape at points every 1' for maximum strength. When you are done, the longer tube should protrude 1' past the shorter one in the front. The shorter tube will be the TOP, and will form the "barrel", while the longer tube will be the BOTTOM, and will form the stock and core of the bayonet. File and cap off all tubes like you would any Amtgard weapon core.

#2) BUILD THE BARREL: Obtain two 6' sticks of grey pipe insulation of a size large enough to fit around your core tubes. If you use the kind that is split in the middle with adhesive strips, your task will be much easier. Run one foam tube from about 1 inch from the front end of the TOP tube, allowing it to hang 1' out over the back end. This overhang will later form part of the buttstock. Once the foam has been secured firmly to the TOP tube, it should be smooth and straight, with no tears or warps. Now apply clear packing tape to the length of the grey packing foam, except for the part hanging off the back. The glossy clear tape over the grainy grey/black foam will give the illusion of polished gunmetal.

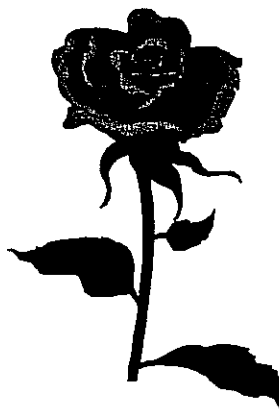
#3) BUILD THE STOCK: Using the second grey foam tube, run it along the BOTTOM PVC tube, so that it partially overlaps the "barrel" on the sides. It should start at the same point as the barrel and run backwards, stopping about 1' short of the back end. This portion will be where the hand goes when the gun is used. Secure it firmly using the adhesive strips on the foam itself. Once this is done to your satisfaction, cover the "stock" carefully with brown duct tape or some other color of your choice. This will simulate the wooden furniture of the musket. Once this is done, run strips of black tape around both the "barrel" and the "stock", one inch from each end and one in the middle. This will make your musket more durable and simulate the iron straps used to hold the gun together.

#4 BUILD THE BUTTSTOCK: At the back of the musket, you should have a dual core of PVC and a piece of flapping foam extending off the top about 1'. Cut out three or four slabs of camper pad foam, forming an isosceles triangle of the desired size for the buttstock. This will form the mass of the buttstock and give it some shape. Secure the camper pad slabs to the PVC shafts with duct tape, the more the merrier. Fold the extended piece of grey foam around the top and back of the camper pad, adding more as necessary to build the buttstock into an authentic and safe shape. When you have achieved a proper thickness and softness, cover the entire thing with the same brown tape you used on the stock. Take care to hide any seams or irregularities in the foam, so that it looks good. For added realism, use grey duct tape on the back of the butt to simulate an iron cap.

#5 FINISHING TOUCHES: At the very back end of the "barrel", immediately above the handgrip, you should now build the "lock", the so called "worky-bits" of the gun. The easiest way to do this is to take a small piece of foam, cover it in black tape, and stick it to the barrel off-set slightly to one side. For added realism, attach a piece of burnt white cord (1/4" thickness is best) to the "lock". This will look a bit like the match used to ignite the gun. With all this done, you should have a finished musket, lacking only the bayonet. This should be made in the normal manner that you normally make your blades, but I recommend using more realistic covers than many used for their swords.

HOW TO USE YOUR MUSKET

The musket can be used exactly like a normal spear, for two-handed thrusts with the bayonet or swung like a staff to strike with the butt. Resist the urge to use it like a madu. You will find that the weight distribution is a bit unusual, and that the musket is a bit more cumbersome to fight with than a spear or a staff. Nevertheless, once you get used to the musket, you will find that it can be quite effective in close combat. This is both true and realistic. That is what you get when you bring a gun to a sword fight. In real combat, bayonets and butt strikes were used only in desperate circumstances. Emulating the musketeers of yore, it is recommended that you have a handy melee weapon available, such as a short sword. You will need it.



The envoys of the heart should be
The noble deeds of chivalry:-
A daring charge, an escalade,
A knight or banner captive made;
A pass against a host maintained,
A name through trials borne unstained-
Thus love most eloquently spekas;
This is the homage naiden seeks.
Girard Calanson



I love good friends, good cheer, and handsome presents. I hate parsimony, a friend who fails me in the day of need, the man who speaks evil of dice, and the sorry fellow who refuses to play.

Monk of Montadun, ca 1300 A.D.

SOHEI (JAPANESE WARRIOR MONK)

The sohei are warrior monks, Buddhist priests who carried arms in service of their home temples. They were freed from prohibitions against bloodshed, and armies of these warrior-monks were feared even by the mighty samurai. The sohei were important throughout Japanese history, as time and time again they intervened in the various struggles for power. Sohei were infamous for their fanatical bravery and immunity to fear, often going into battle-frenzies and fighting long after they should have expired. This interpretation is entirely Amtgard legal, playable in any kingdom, as it is actually the standard barbarian template with changes made to names and props. All rules and game mechanics are identical. The sohei's special abilities are granted by their religious fervor and fanaticism rather than by mere berserk frenzy as is the case for barbarians. In keeping with the spirit of the class, groups of sohei should act in support of monks that are members of the same sect. Likewise they should attack sohei or monks of enemy sects in preference to other foes.

Garb: Japanese styled garb of any sort, plus a white head covering (hood, cowl, or bandanna). A visible religious symbol appropriate to the sect should also be worn, such as prayer beads or a shield device.

Weapons: Any melee weapon, "rocks", throwing axe, javelin, short bow. Short sword, naginata, and katana are the most commonly chosen weapons, though bows are also used. Instead of "rocks", throwing weapons should be called axes or throwing stars.

Armor: Up to 2 points, preferably Japanese styled armor.

Shield: Any, though not commonly used.

Immunities

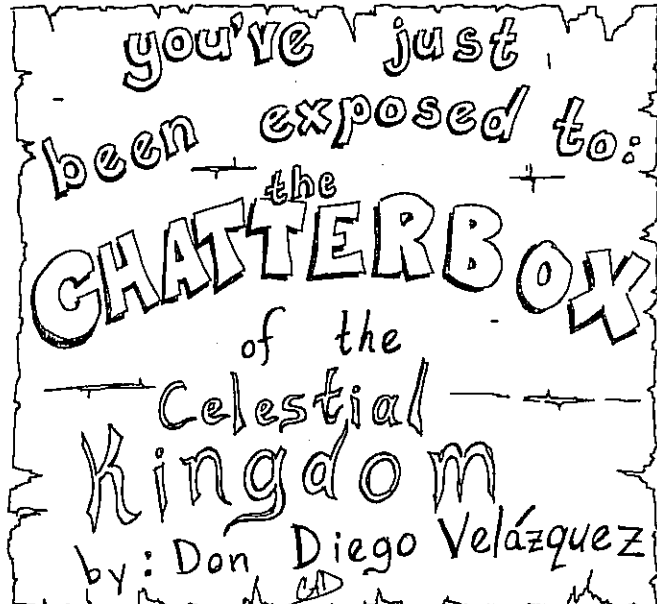
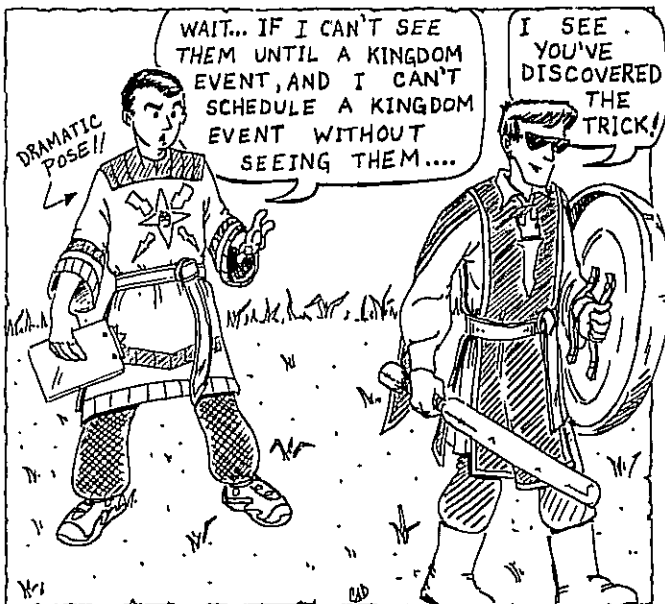
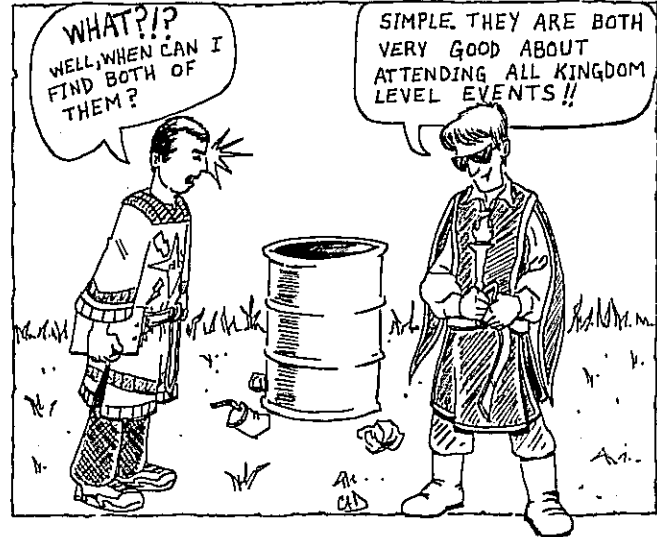
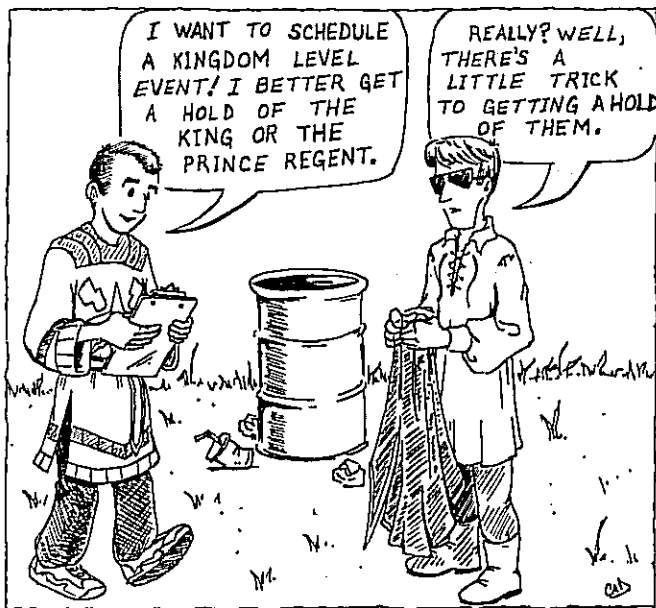
- 1) Cannot be held or subdued, magically or otherwise (exception- healers stun spell).
- 2) Can not be made 'lost.'
- 3) May not carry enchantments.
- 4) May not carry relics other than Odin's Hammer.

Levels

- 1st- a) One less life than other classes (total of 3). b) May go berserk on last life. c) Heal self once per life.
2nd- 4 total lives.
3rd- Fight after death when berserk.
4th- 5 total lives.
5th- 6 total lives.
6th- May go berserk on last 2 lives.

Notes:

- 1) Berserk- Gives the following effects: a) 2 point overall body armor (a healing spell will repair 1 point of armor on any specific area of the sohei's body). b) Melee weapons are considered bladesharpened or bludgeoned. c) Berserkers may not retreat unless outnumbered by 5 to 1 or more or when facing magic. d) Must wear a red arm or head band and chant loudly as they fight. e) Berserkers may not use projectiles, armor, or shields.
- 2) Heal self- The sohei must carry some appropriate religious literature, like a scroll or a small book. The sohei reads aloud, chanting for a 100 count to be healed.
- 3) Fight after death- Berserkers may continue to fight for 10 seconds after they have died. Leg and arm shots against these berserkers still incapacitate the affected limb. Note that physical and/or dangerous contact is still not allowed. May not fight after death if killed by: siege weapons (or monsters' equivalent white weapons), flamewall, firetrap, fireball, call lightning, and sphere of annihilation.



The Troll

Troll sat alone on his seat of stone,
And munched and mumbled a bare old bone;
For many a year he had gnawed it near,
For meat was hard to come by.

Done by! Gum by!
In a cave in the hills he dwelt alone,
And meat was hard to come by.

Up came Tom with his big boots on.
Said he to the Troll: 'Pray, what is yon?
For it looks like the shin o' my nuncle Tim,
As should be a-lyin' in a graveyard.

Caveyard! Pavtyard!
This many a year has Tim been gone,
And I thought he were lyin' in graveyard.'

'My lad,' said Troll, 'this bone I stole.
But what be bones that lie in a hole?
Thy nuncle was dead as a lump o' lead,
Afore I found his shinbone.

Tinbone! Thinbone!
He can spare a share for a poor old troll
For he don't need his shinbone.'

Said Tom: 'I don't see why the likes o' thee
Without axin' leave should go makin' free
With the shank or the shin o' my father's kin;
So hand the old bone over!

Rover! Trover
Though dead he be, it belongs to he;
So hand the old bone over!'

'For a couple o' pins,' says Troll, and grins,
'I'll eat thee too, and gnaw thy shins.
A bit o' fresh meat will go down sweet!
I'll try my teeth on thee now.

Hee now! See now!
I'm tired o' gnawing old bones and shins;
I've a mind to dine on thee now.'

But just as he thought his dinner was caught,
He found his hands had hold of nought.
Before he could mind, Tom slipped behind
And gave him the boot to larn him.

Warn him! Darn him!
A bump o' the boot on the seat, Tom thought,
Would be the way to larn him.

But harder than stone is the flesh and bone
Of a troll that sits in the hills alone.
As well set your boot to the mountain's root,
For the seat of a Troll don't feel it.

Peel it! Heal it!
Old Troll laughed, when he heard Tom groan,
And he knew his toes could feel it.

Tom's leg is game, since home he came,
And his bootless foot is lasting lame;
But Troll don't care, and he's still there
With the bone that he boned from its owner.

Doner! Boner!
Troll's old seat is still the same,
And the bone he boned from its owner!

J.R.R. Tolkein



The Rose

On the day the young lord returned to the manor it was dark and sullen. His pale grey horse was a reflection of the sky as it plodded toward the gate. The air was bitter cold and so his rain dampened cloak was drawn up securely around him. His mother was standing there, waiting to greet him, along with all of her servants. He scanned their faces as he slid off his horse. Most were young children, not yet strong enough to tend fields or too young to assist the matron. There were none there that he remembered. He sighed as he went to greet his mother, a wan looking woman who had once been beautiful. As he was exchanging pleasantries his eye caught a flash of colour. Scanning the huddled mass of grey shapes he saw it again. It was a pale snow-flower, laced into the most wonderfully dark brown hair. His gaze followed down the hair to its owner's eyes. They were a blue-silver colour, the kind that are always changing, and they were looking straight into his own.

The old man had rung the great bell and its tone had echoed mournfully across the grounds. All that could gathered to watch the Squire's son approach. As was her duty as the Lady's personal handmaid she organized the young children into a semblance of order. The smallest one bade her to approach. She knew the child well. He had always been sickly and she had spent many nights nursing him through his fevers. "What is it, little one?", she asked. "I found this for you." he replied and from under his thick cloak he handed her a pale, yellow bloom. "I got it to make you beautiful. Let me put it in your hair." As she bent down further to let him weave it into her hair she scolded him gently, for to find this flower he would have had to have spent many hours in the freezing drizzle. He would probably catch another fever and she would have to stay up with him yet again. But still, she smiled and blushed a little at the attention. When he was done she embraced his fragile body and bestowed a quick kiss on his bone white cheek. She straightened and turned just as he came riding in.

He sat straight in the saddle, his curly black hair managing to escape the confines of his hood. His face looked tired but his eyes were alive as they flickered around the assembled throng. She looked down and drew her cloak closer to avoid his gaze. Then, he slowly dismounted and began to speak with Her Ladyship. She looked up to examine him more closely. As she did so she found herself transfixed by his midnight black eyes.

They walked along a trail that danced among the feet of solemn oaks. Every so often they stopped to admire a freshly blooming flower or to listen to the sound of baby birds, newly hatched, sing for their supper. Pausing when the path fell in step with a stream he bent and picked a wild rose from a bush that grew by the bank. Bowing deeply he held the rose out to her. "Its beauty can not compare with yours but it is lovely all the same. 'Tis fitting you should have it." Laughingly, she took the rose and placed it behind her ear. She looked into his eyes and saw the glimmering merriment there; they embraced.

Later, as they made their way from the forest, she bid him stop. Halting beside a strand of willows he looked at her with questioning eyes. "It is not seeming that we should be noticed leaving the forest together, milord."

"Pray tell, why is that?" he asked.

"You know full well. You shall be lord of the manor after your father and I am but a handmaiden. It would go ill me to be seen with you."

"Nonsense! As you say, I shall be Lord after my father. Who will dare to offend me by harming you?"

"For the time being your father is still Lord and once you are older you shall be safely married and I shall be cast off like an old rag."

He blinked twice before replying, "But it's you that I love and none other! I shall never be married to any but you."

She laughed out loud, "Silly boy, you are of high station!" She plucked the rose from behind her ear and held it before him with a shaking hand, "Your love for me can last no longer than the bloom of these petals, whether you will it or not!"

Dropping the rose she turned and fled across the fields, away from him and the forest. He stared after her, a look of bewilderment playing across his features. After a moment he stooped and gently lifted the battered flower from the dust. Looking at it a change came across the features of his face. Shielding his eyes from the glare of the setting sun, he began to stride purposely toward the town, oblivious to the soft, pink clouds behind him.

It was dark by the time he reached the ancient shop. He grabbed the chain outside the door and began to ring the bell with vehemence. A covey of ravens that had been nesting under the eaves flew into the night, startled by such a late arrival. After many moments the door edged open and a crack of crimson light oozed across his face. There, in the doorway, was a man who had once stood tall but with the passing of years was now so stooped over that his head came only to the young lord's chest. "Good apothecary, open your door. I have need of thy art!" The stunted man, realizing at last who it was, murmured an apology and bade him to enter. From the folds of his shirt the youth produced the wild rose, already drooping. "It is of paramount importance that this rose be preserved for all time. You are the only one with the skills to aid me in this. Can you help me?"

"Pressing it in a book would serve you well, milord. I know that there are several volumes to be found at your manor."

"No, 'tis not good enough!" the lordling replied. "The rose must be kept unchanging, forever."

The bent old man opened his mouth again to say something but as he looked at the youth and then again at the rose he became silent and sighed instead. "I will attempt it. It

would be best if you called for a carriage. This labor you have set me to shall take till dawn, and that is still a long while coming."

"No", he said, "I shall remain here." and he sat down in a straight-backed chair. The chemist shrugged and shuffled into the laboratory, leaving him with the fading embers of the lamp.

He awoke when the door creaked open. It revealed the old man's figure, outlined by a reddish glare. The stench of sulfur caused him to choke and draw back. As his eyes adjusted to the light he realized the old man held something in his withered hand. "It is done, milord." and into the young man's hand he placed the rose. "This is a miracle!" he exclaimed. Then he threw open the outer door so that the rose might be examined more closely in the sunlight. The apothecary came up behind him, "No, milord, not a miracle. The price for miracles is too high to pay." The young man laughed, "No fee could be too high for this!" And so saying he paid the man richly and commanded him to be silent about his work. Then, setting off with an impatient stride he made his way toward the keep.

She spent most of the night crying. Toward dawn she finally fell into a restless slumber, tossing and turning constantly. There was a noise and she awoke with a start. He was there, on her balcony, climbing over the railing. Her face lit for an instant but the glow was extinguished almost instantly. Her shoulders slumped but still, she got out of her bed, threw on a robe, and went to the window. "Why do you torture me so, milord? I stand to gain nothing by seeing you. He looked at her then and she saw how haggard was his appearance. His eyes held her though for his stare had a fierce and desperate intensity to it. Startled, she began to back away from the window, looking fearfully at the man. He followed her in, always with his eyes fixed on hers. She noticed he was smiling now, transforming it from wrath to one that was kind and tired. Of its own accord, a timid smile graced her features and she stopped moving away. He knelt before her saying, "My only love, for I will have no other, you scorned me saying my love for you would be as brief as the bloom on a wild rose." With that he reached into his pouch and drew forth something small. As he did so he caught her hand. She jumped with the suddenness of his action and tried to draw back again but his gaze was fixed on hers and she slowly drew close again. "Now, that bloom and my love shall last an eternity", and into her hand he placed the rose. She looked at it and her mouth opened but no words came forth. It was the same rose, yet it was not. Hard to the touch it was and deep inside could be seen it's faint, pink colour. She looked at him now and his eyes were glistening with tears. With a sob she threw herself into his arms and together they held each other.

"You sent for me, Father?" he asked as he entered the trophy room. His father was seated facing the fireplace in a huge, high-backed armchair with his back toward the youth. A hand emerged from behind the chair and motioned him forward. The fire was purely ornamental for it was almost high summer. As he rounded the chair his father's craggy features came into view. His eyes were fixed on the blaze, staring deeply into the flickering forms that danced together upon the logs. Taking a poker, he stirred the fire, sending a shaft of sparks up the chimney. "These rumors I've been hearing about you sneaking off

with one of the servants will stop, do you hear?" he commanded, still prodding the embers. The youth began to speak but his father held up his hand, "That is the end of it. Our reputation is all we have and I won't have you sully it with a serving girl. Now go, and let me hear no more of this." And with that his gaze returned to the flames. The young lord remained where he was for a moment, clenching and unclenching his fists. Then he swiftly turned and stalked out of the room, his shadow predeceasing him into the corridor.

"So what will you do?", she asked with a quaver in her voice. They were sequestered in a glade inside the forest, surrounded by tall birch trees growing straight into the sky, leaving only a small patch of blue showing at the top. "There is nothing I can do, I will obey his orders," he said. As he spoke he paced, taking only a few long strides before turning and repeating the process. She looked down as he said this and clasped her hands tightly together. "I see", was all she said. Instantly he was down on his knees in front of her. "I said I would do exactly as my father said. He instructed me that he should hear no more of the affair", he said with a smile on his face, "and that is exactly what shall happen. We will just take extra measures to insure our trysts are safe from watchful eyes." A look of amazement spread from his eyes to her cheeks and mouth. She laughed then and drew him to her, holding his head to her breast. He held her, chuckling to himself. He did not see when, a moment later, the smile left her eyes and instead they became bright with tears.

His brow was creased as he entered the glade, kicking aside tufts of leaves as he walked. Immediately she stood and went to him, "What is it that troubles you?" she asked. He sighed and then held her to him, "It is the fool, my cousin. He lives in town yet somehow he has heard of you and I. He had the gall to bring it up in front of my family while I was there today. He would not apologize for his words. I had no choice but to challenge him to a duel. We meet tomorrow, at dawn." She sagged in his embrace, "A duel?" she asked. As he attempted to soothe her, a gloom settled on her features, contrasting with the bright autumn day.

All that night she held the stone rose to her chest, curled into a ball on her bed until dawn's approach drove her to the window. There, the light from the lanterns bobbed to and fro as the duelists and their parties made their way to the green. She held the rose close then, and so tightly that a tiny piece snapped off, fell to the floor and shattered. Outside, a cry of pain floated across the field and she unconsciously echoed it, making herself jump. Then the lanterns began their solemn march back to the manor. As the light bearers slowly drew closer, she saw her love with a bloody bandage around his arm striding confidently ahead of the dirge-like procession. A moan escaped her lips and she sank onto her bed, cradling the rose and rocking back and forth until she passed into slumber.

"I will not!" he cried. "I will refute him. ~~He cannot make me marry.~~" He was almost wild with outrage. He had already worn the snow away on the ground where he paced.

"There is nothing you can do, milord. You must accede to your father's wishes" She huddled by him, shivering in the cold.

"No...we will go away from here, far away to a place where he will not matter", he said, stopping a while to glare back towards the manor. She looked at him with pleading eyes, "And how shall we live, by begging? No, there is no other way." He whirled and stared at her, "I cannot marry her!", he almost screamed. She countered, "You have no choice, don't you see? This is the end for us." "You are right", he said, "I do not have a choice. As long as the rose holds its bloom I can have no other but you."

"Whether the rose blooms or not you have your duty."

He turned to her and his expression was that of anguish, "Speak not to me of duty...it is my duty to uphold my oaths and so I shall! Did you think the vow I made to you was so cheap that it could be broken because my father wills it?" With that, he turned and stormed away leaving her to stare at delicate petals of stone in her hand.

The white stone walls echoed the sound of her bare feet as she paced the length of her room. Her eyes were red-rimmed and her hair was a frenzy of conflict. She stopped for a moment and looked at the fragile stone rose she still held in her hand. She closed her eyes and held it tightly for a moment before she began her rounds anew. There was a gentle rapping on the thick oaken door. It was not loud yet she whirled like a wild animal and leapt to the trunk at the bass of the bed. There, she hid the rose within and stood just as the door opened. A thin, pale hand was revealed, followed by the gaunt features of the boy. He had grown some yet it seemed like he had gained no extra weight, making him stretched and ungainly. She motioned him in and he stood uncertainly in the center of the room. He gave her a questioning look but she bade him to be still. She stared at the chest for a time and as his gaze moved from her to it tears crept down her cheeks. Wiping them on the sleeve of her shift, she went to a table, took a quill, dipped it in red ink, and began to scratch furiously on a piece of parchment. Going to the chest she knelt there and retrieved the rose. The boy came up behind her and placed his hand upon her shoulder. She started to tremble. With a shaking hand she retrieved the rose and folded it into the parchment. Turning, she brought the boy's delicate ear close to her lips. After a moment, he slowly stood and solemnly marched to the door, leaving her kneeling at the foot of the long, black chest. Outside the door she heard a crack and then, the sound of running feet, fading away and leaving only a ghost of an echo in the stone halls.

He was standing on what was normally called the greens when the note arrived, only now it was thick with snow. It came from a young boy who was bundled up as if for a blizzard. He took the missive from the emaciated hand and gave the messenger a coin. The boy refused the token and scampered back towards the manor, his dark cloak flapping behind him. The letter rattled as he shook it and as he opened it a pale pink sand trickled between his fingers and turned the snow red. He stared at the stain upon the snow and then at the letter. Clutching it to his chest he began to stagger after the messenger his breath sounding in his throat like the shrillest of winter winds.

She came to him at his bed. He lay there gasping, the note still clutched tightly in his left hand. She ran to his side and snatched his hand to her breast. "It was for you...oh, it was for you", she moaned. He opened his eyes, the candlelight making him squint. He held up the note and dropped it as he took her other hand. "For me, life and love are one, there can be no other", he breathed and held her hands tightly. As she sat there the boy made his way past the matron and stood by her side. The young lord clenched his teeth in pain and began to moan. The matron made to push her aside to get to the lord. She held onto his hand with fierce strength and could not be moved. Eventually, the boy began to tug at her sleeve, first gently, than with increasing force. Finally she placed her love's hands upon his now silent chest and allowed the boy to lead her away and into the corridor. Outside, as dusk turned the air to bitter cold, the old man began to sound the bell.



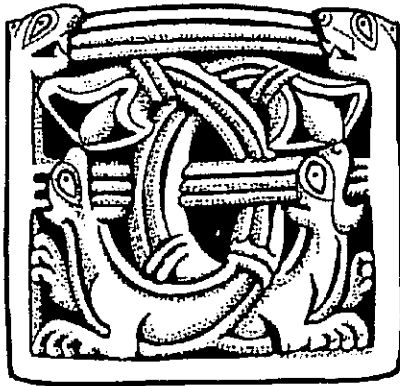
The Road goes ever on and on
Down from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the Road has gone,
And I must follow, if I can,
Pursuing it with eager feet,
Until it joins some larger way
Where many paths and errands meet.
And whither then? I cannot say.

J.R.R. Tolkein, The Fellowship of the Ring

Untitled

Almost wrecked-ship beautiful
Moss-covered stones
Scream Scottish loch in ancient tongue
Over the ancient green water
Almost, I see a castle
Majestic stones
Reflect the toil of ancient man
Over the ancient green water
Almost treacherous giant trees
Shadowing stones
Weep the willow tears of ancient religion
Over the ancient green water
Almost future-past-present
Mythical stones
Speak of today, tomorrow and ancient days
Over the ancient green water

Erin M. Lichtmann



The Red Room

Cold and alone
the silence is
peircing
in the gothic
vastness of
red-bound books leather chairs
and carved tables
vaulted ceilings
reaching to touch
something grander
than arched windows
and candle lamps
and theses from ages
long left in history
and it is quiet until
I cannot
Speak

Erin M. Lichtmann



The Road goes ever on and on
Down from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the Road has gone,
And I must follow, if I can,
Pursuing it with eager feet,
Until it joins some larger way
Where many paths and errands meet.
And whither then? I cannot say.
J.R.R. Tolkein,
The Fellowship of the Ring

INSURED: HARRY PLUMBLEY
AMERICA'S LOW COST INS. AGY.

AGENT: AMERICA'S LOW COST INS. A PAGE: 11
512-451-1658

TEXAS LIABILITY INSURANCE CARD

Keep This Card

IMPORTANT: This card or a copy of your insurance policy must be shown when you apply for or renew your:

- * motor vehicle registration * driver's license
- * motor vehicle safety inspection sticker

You also may be asked to show this card or your policy if you have an accident or if a peace officer asks to see it.

All drivers in Texas must carry liability insurance on their vehicles or otherwise meet legal requirements for financial responsibility. Failure to do so could result in fines up to \$1000, suspension of your driver's license and motor vehicle registration, and impoundment of your vehicle for up to 180 days (at a cost of \$15.00 per day).

Tarjeta de Seguro de Responsabilidad de Texas

Guarde esta tarjeta

IMPORTANTE: Esta tarjeta o una copia de su poliza de seguro debe ser mostrada cuando usted solicite o renueve su:

- * registro de vehiculo de motor * licencia para conducir
- * etiqueta de inspeccion de seguridad para su vehiculo

Puede que usted tenga tambien que mostrar esta tarjeta o su poliza de seguro si tiene un accidente o si un official de la paz se la pide.

Todos que conductores en Texas deben de tener seguro de responsabilidad para sus vehiculos, o de otra manera llenar los requisitos legales de responsabilidad civil. Fallo en llenar esta requisito pudiera resultar en multas de hasta \$1000, suspension de su licencia para conducir y su registro de vehiculo de motor, y la retencion de su vehiculo de por un periode de hasta 180 dias (a un costo de \$15.00 por dial).

CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED THROUGH: OLD AMERICAN COUNTY MUTUAL FIRE INS CO.

AND IS VALID ONLY UP TO 90 DAYS FROM THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF: 6/ 3/99

NAMED INSURED: HARRY PLUMBLEY

ADDRESS: 200 W. ANDERSON 3105

CITY: AUSTIN TX 78753

----- COVERED DRIVERS -----

HARRY PLUMBLEY

----- VEHICLE DESCRIPTION -----

YR: 97 MAKE: SATURN MODEL: SATURN SC2COUPE VIN: 1G8ZG1275VZ151478

This policy provides at least the minimum amounts of liability insurance required by the Texas Motor Vehicle Safety Responsibility Act for specified vehicle and named insureds and may provide coverage for other persons and other vehicles as provided by the insurance policy.



CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE