


Echoes of the Hill

Newsletter of the Emerald Hill



Everything is relative, even time is like
Re-reading a very old book"-Nexus

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Cover by Nexus Crow
Photos by Sutra and Duchess Clio

King Sir Trinity Skythasis



Queen Lady Tangenna Skythasis



**THE ORIGINAL
EH AP Belt Favor**

Layout/Design [Sutra Bahuas]

Officers for Reign 38

January to June 2007

Monarch	Sutra Bahuas	monarch@amtgard-EH.com
Regent	Nexus Crow	Regent@amtgard-EH.com
Champion	Blaise DeMurray	champion@amtgard-eh.com
Prime Minister	Lady Dreanya Jurista	pm@amtgard-eh.com
Treasurer	Elder Vermilon	treasurer@amtgard-eh.com
GM of Reeves		gmr@amtgard-eh.com
7.0 Rules Committee		
Representative	Sistar Tolken	kidwell@yahoo.com

The Class Guildmasters

Anti-Paladins	Sir Trinity	Archers	Sir Trinity
Assassins	Sir Delphos	Barbarians	Draeven
Bards	Sir Larin	Color	Dame Tanara
Druids	Elder	Healers	Typhus
Knights	Sir Morgan	Monks	Sirrakhis
Monsters	Sir Delphos	Paladins	Sir Nevron
Scouts	Sir Sparhawk	Warriors	Tobias
Wizards	Sir Larin		

<i>The BOD</i>	<i>Mundane Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Term Expires</i>
Dreanya Jurista.....	Andréa Jacobs	President.....	JUNE 2007
Elder Vermilon	John R. Elder	Treasurer	MAR 2007
Sistar Tolken	Kevin Kidwell		JUNE 2007
Sutra Bahuas	Jorge Rodas		JUNE 2007
Rayel Greenholde	Michael Peavy		DEC 2007
Sir Morgan Ironwolf	Jason Jacobs		DEC 2007
Faith Silverose	Erin Daughtery		JUNE 2007

<i>The RGK</i>	<i>Term Expires</i>
Ewen McFadden (Landlord, 972-686-7755)	N/A
Samantha Three Jugs(RGK Selected Seat)	N/A
Elder Vermilion Treasurer/EH BOD Rep/Secretary	BOD Rep
Sutra Bahuas (Monarch).....	JUNE 2007
Shamus Green.....	SEP 2007
Dame Faunna Demonspawn(Monarch Appointed)	MAR 2008
Sir Wolverine (President)	MAR 2008

Email the RGK at rgk@tanglewoodforest.org

Amtgard-EH.com Contacts

Webmaster

Webmaster@Amtgard-EH.com

Administrator

admin@Amtgard-EH.com

Officers for Reign 39

July to December 2007

MonarchSir Trinity Skythasismonarch@amtgard-EH.com
 Queen-RegentLady Tangeena SkythasisRegent@amtgard-EH.com
 ChampionSir Morgan Ironwolf.....champion@amtgard-eh.com
 Prime MinisterLady Dreanya Juristapm@amtgard-eh.com
 TreasurerElder Vermiliontreasurer@amtgard-eh.com
 GM of ReevesEsquire Gabriel.....gmr@amtgard-eh.com
 7.0 Rules Committee
 RepresentativeSistar Tolkenkidwell@yahoo.com

The Class Guildmasters

Anti-PaladinsSir Trinity Skythasis	ArchersSquire Sutra Bahuas
AssassinsSir Delphos Darkheart	BarbariansTBD
BardsSir Larin Moonstar	ColorDame Tanara StormCaller
DruidsSir Forest Evergreen	HealersTyphus Deathcaller
KnightsSir Morgan Ironwolf	MonksSirrakhis Larethian
MonstersSir Delphos Darkheart	PaladinsSir Larin Moonstar
ScoutsSquire Kenta Redhawk	WarriorsLord Gott des Krieses
WizardsSir Larin Moonstar	

<i>The BOD</i>	<i>Mundane Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Term Expires</i>
Dreanya Jurista.....	Andréa Jacobs	President.....	DEC 2007
Elder Vermilion	John R. Elder	Treasurer	AUG 2007
Sistar Tolken	Kevin Kidwell		DEC 2007
Sutra Bahuas	Jorge Rodas		DEC 2007
Rayel Greenholde	Michael Peavy		DEC 2007
Sir Morgan Ironwolf	Jason Jacobs		DEC 2007

<i>The RGK</i>	<i>Term Expires</i>
Ewen McFadden (Landlord, 972-686-7755)	N/A
Samantha Three Jugs(RGK Selected Seat)	N/A
Elder Vermilion Treasurer/EH BOD Rep/Secretary	BOD Rep
Sir Trinity Skythasis (Monarch).....	DEC 2007
Sir Gavvin Quinn	SEP 2007
Dame Faunna Demonspawn.....	MAR 2008
Sir Wolverine (President)	MAR 2008

Email the RGK at rgk@tanglewoodforest.org

Amtgard-EH.com Contacts

Webmaster

Webmaster@Amtgard-EH.com

Administrator

admin@Amtgard-EH.com

Endreign Schedule o Events

FRIDAY

12pm

Gate Opens

7:00 PM

24hr RP Campaign Sign-In @ Ditch Field

9:00 PM

Leafblighter II Battlegame Sign In/Rules @ Ditch Field

10:00 PM

Leafblighter II Battlegame @ Ditch Field

Open

Ditching @ Ditch Field

SATURDAY

10:00 AM

Magic 101 @ Court Area - Everything you ever wanted to know about being an effective caster and were too afraid to ask. (Hosted by Sir Larin, Elder, Typhus (Forest))

11:00 AM

Repa Physica Meeting @ Court Area

12:00 PM

Knights Meeting @ Knight's Circle

12:00 PM

Bellydance Workshop II @ Court Area

1:00 PM

Kid's Activities @ Court Area

1:30 PM

Relic Quest Sign In/Rules @ Ditch Field

2:00 PM

Relic Quest @ Ditch Field

3:00 PM

All Class GM Testing @ Court Area

5:00 PM

Park Officer Meeting @ Court Area

5:30 PM

GM Meeting @ Court Area

-Open - 6:00 PM

7:00 PM

24hr RP Campaign Ends

7:00 PM

Feast/Court @ Court Area

Following Court

Bardic - @ Bardic Stage

-Ditching - Open

SUNDAY

GTHO - 12:00 PM in General

Monarch's Farewell

Hail Emerald Hills,

Greetings servant of the Golden Phoenix,

I am Sutra Bahuas, a humble servant of the lands of the Emerald Hills. It has been an interesting journey that began in December of 2006 that has led me to this very moment. To this moment while I pen these very words you're reading.

By the time you read this, I will only be a name in forgotten archives. By the time you read this, I will have handed over the burden only a few have volunteered to experience. A responsibility only a handful in a sea of faces are brave/foolish enough to take on.

The task of being a servant to the populace.
The task of being the representative of a kingdom.

The task of being a monarch of the Emerald Hills.

I write this in hopes that it finds its self in the hands of a kindred spirit. In the hands of the next name to be written in the pages of lore. In the hands of the next person crowned as this kingdom's monarch.

I dedicate this humble offering to those before me. To the ones who braved the tumultuous dreaming, to the ones who helped build this kingdom, brick by brick, soul by soul, tear by tear.

I dedicate this humble offering to those after me. To the ones who will aid in the continuation of a legacy started here, in the verdant hills. Here, in our homelands. To those who will lay the future path with their blood, sweat, and tears.

My situation was an odd one. I had not served in any other kingdom office besides a three month pro-tem champion position. When I was ushered by the intense desire to give back to the dream

that had already given so much to me, I realized that as monarch; I could change the world.

The fear that this member of the populace, lacking in a political resume that would thwart any doubt nearly overshadowed the phoenix's light. I strove to show the darkest corners of this kingdom, that even the meekest can have illusions of grandeur. And with the Phoenix's guidance, could make those illusions a reality.

My reign, just like any other; was not an easy task. It was fraught with disension and ill-wishers. It was weighed down with those who actively sought to drag the spirit of the reign into the darkest pits of political mire. I survived, my reign a successful and memorable one, indeed! Stand fast and strong, for they will fade, and your legacy will remain.

Where you thought you had friends, you may find disillusionment. Where you thought you had enemies, you may find indifference. And where you least thought to look, you may just find counsel.

I salute you future King of the Emerald Hills, for being the next in line of a special lineage that only a few can claim.

I salute you future Queen of the Emerald Hills, for being the next in line of a special lineage that only a few can claim.

To you, future monarch of the Emerald Hills, may your actions and decisions bring honor and glory to our kingdom. And may the Phoenix light your path until the last living breath of the dream.

Humbly,

Sutra Bahuas the Red

Grand Inquisitor of the Emerald Hills

King of Hearts

Reign 38 - Dec 2006 to June 2007

Announcements

Topic: Updated Emerald Hills Website**Sutra**

Check it out! www.amtgard-eh.com. I will be working on helping keep it updated. See any errors or have a suggestion, please let me know!

Topic: Reminder from the GMR**Tolken**

In order to gain credit in a class you must play that class in a battlegame, and to play that class you must have the appropriate garb.

If you do not have garb, you can only play peasant and only get warrior credit.

Topic: EH Olympiad 2008 Bids and Committee**Sutra**

In order to avoid any last minute rush, I am requesting bids for Olympiad 2008. Deadlines will be determined and announced. Want to be part of the committee, just get in touch with Elder or Sir Morgan.

Topic: Zero Tolerance Policy in Effect**Sutra**

Just wanted to remind everyone of the Zero Tolerance Policy, approved back in Dec. 06, will be in effect.

It will be enforced.

Topic: Kingdom Roleplay List**Sutra**

Remember, there is a kingdom role play list that is open to any and all who want to get involved in the roleplay in order to sort and make sense out of all the madness that is:

The Misadventures of M'Alice and future RP themes up and coming court's will bring.

<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/ehroleplayers/>

Tell em Sutra sent ya!

S

Topic: Redhawk Radio**Sir Larin**

Thursday nights from 7-9pm CST on [www.red-](http://www.redhawkradio.net)

hawkradio.net Radio Free Amtgard is on the air.

Topic: RGK Announcements for 6.29.07**Sutra**

Greetings EH,

A friendly reminder from the RGK.

Find all the appropriate documents regarding land grants/rules here:

<http://www.tanglewoodforest.org/info/>

EH companies and households with land grants, or those looking to get one, here's your chance to get those hours through work weekends or cash donations!

Purchase any amount of land hours, be it your annual 50 upkeep hours or any of the 150 initial start up base hours for land grants at the amazing low price of \$20/hr!

SPECIAL DEAL: 10 RGK hours will be given for donating the cost of one indestructible table* found at Sam's Clubs. (\$120 s+h included).

Got questions about how many RGK hours you/your company has or needs? Want to buy some hours or tables? Ask Elder at treasurer@Amtgard-EH.com. Have a question in general? Ask the RGK at rgk@tanglewoodforest.org.

Topic: Newest Knight of the EH**Sir Forest**

Please join me in welcoming the newest Emerald Hills Knight of the Flame, Sir Everlast. I am very proud to have had the chance to call him my squire!

Forest Evergreen

Topic: June 9-10 2007 -- Althing Results**Lady Dreanya Jurista**

1.) Make the dues paid membership \$6, from the set \$5. **Yes**

2.) Allow any kingdom (subgroup) park outside of the 150 mile radius, a 1/3 discount at kingdom events held at Tanglewood Forest. **No**

Announcements

3.)Corpora: Change section II.H.2 (GMR) from "Works with the Monarch and Prime Minister to ensure the rules are applied accurately, fairly, and honestly on the battlefield"

to

"Works with the Monarch and Prime Minister to ensure the rules are applied accurately, fairly, and honestly" **Yes**

LDJ

EHPM

Topic: The EH Welcomes Soul's Crossing Sutra

I want to be the first to welcome Soul's Crossing to the Emerald Hills!

Thanks Crunchu for being a great contact for your park! You make them proud!

ORK entry:

<http://www.amtgardrecords.com/chapter.php?chapterID=215>

Congrats Soul's Crossing and welcome home!

I will be organizing a delegation from the DFW area to follow up and visit with you and yours soon, so watch for details!

Regards,

Grand Inquisitor Sutra Bahuas
Monarch of the Emerald Hills
www.amtgard-eh.com

Topic: Reign 39 Cultural Events

Lady Tangeena Skythasis

Greetings,

As the incoming Regent, I would like to outline a few of the dreams that I hope to pursue.

All players need encouragement to imagine, and create items to enhance their experiences in the game.

1. I am scheduling a "Gecko Master" for each park during our reign. I will encourage everyone to enter their creations and be "judged" and then learn how to improve your Arts and Sciences entries through constructive, positive criticism. If you have aspirations to be the best Garber in Amtgard, this is your chance to learn tips and tricks from Master Garbers. If you are a weapons maker, jewelry creator, artist, chef, or bard, some of our best will be available to help you make that great creation. I have some great "judges" ready and willing to share tips and suggestions to everyone, on all the categories of the Dragon Master or Crown Qualifications.

Remember that the Emerald Hills is hosting the next Olympiad next March and it would be awesome to have a lot of quality entries from the Emerald Hills residents.

Start planning your entries now, so when we come to your park, you can enter your creations, and become the "Gecko Master" of your park!

All entries can be entered in the Dragon Master that will be held near the end of my reign.

2. If you would like to share your knowledge and skills to encourage more participation in the Arts and Sciences, please contact me to become a "judge" at your park and/or to travel to other parks. We need to share our knowledge and experiences of Amtgard so others who want to learn more can enhance their persona and skills.

2. Workshops will be planned also for the parks. I know there are not too many parks with electricity for the sewing machines or the tools, but we will try to have some handouts and samples of quality pieces for everyone to learn how to do the Arts and Science creations.

I am encouraging all the "Masters" to step up and offer to do a workshop in a park this reign. Again, please contact me if you have an idea or suggestion for workshops, and "teachers" are very welcome to offer to demonstrate for us. Leather workers and

Announcements

chain maille makers are needed for many more warriors to become armoured up for Banner Wars. Please share your knowledge!

In Service to the Dream
Lady Tangeena

Topic: Weekend updates for May and June Sutra

May 20th

Visited the FK for the kingdom's fourth (#4) Kingdom Visit and Battlegame. Alice has tainted every kingdom holding except Finder's Keep. The fate of the Court of Hearts would be decided at this battle. The battle waged was long and tumultuous, but in the end, the bleeding hearts of persistence and defiance prevailed that day. Finder's Keep also held it's Crown Quails with Trianna and Kofka qualifying for park level officers. Congrat's goes out to the organizers of the day's activities and judges for the quails A+S!

May 24th

The Gamer's Guild Birthday/Amtgard Demo was a blast! The shop had enough room to fit about 50 RP's heads in their well stocked and amply spaced store for this memorable celebration.

May 26th

So the rains came and went and die hard work weekend warriors answered the call to help down at Tanglewood Forest. A loud Huzzah goes out to the brave souls who camped out Friday night, eagerly awaiting the Saturday work bell to sound! (Way to go Wolf Pack!)

June 9th and 10th

Mourningwood Glenn held their park level quails and it turned out to be a great day out at the park! Good show MWG! Eagleshire saw it's own park level quails and hosted a park appreciation day fraught with good eats and better sticks! An amusing battlegame was had after an intense tourney, where fun was had by all. Good show to all park officers who make their park one to go back to!

A big thank you goes out to Lady Dreanya Jurista for making the kingdom Althing go smoothly for all the park PM's by providing an extremely useful packet of materials that made this Althing one of the best I've ever been privileged to witness!

tolken:

This is a year for clarifications to the rulebook. Next year will be rules changes. Rules clarifications must be submitted before the end of June. Here is what has been submitted by members of the EH so far.

Casting Stack does not give you the ability to cast two enchantments on that player for the remainder of his lives for that game (The question arose because it is a neutral)

A magic user Strapping a non buckler shield to his arm renders that arm unable to cast magic, even if he has an empty hand.

Casting a spell on a player with sectional invulnerability (stoneskin) where one section has been completely removed may target the empty section to affect the player. (instead of having to remove every point of sectional invulnerability as suggested by the wording)

If you have any clarification you would like to see, you can resond here or contact me privately.

tolken:

Additional item

Choose one:

- a. Players under the effect of Hold Person/Earthbind/Trap may Teleport/Pass Without Trace. Any effects and counts that the players were under stop while moving but resume upon completion of the Teleport/Pass Without Trace
- b. Players under the effect of Hold Person/Earthbind/Trap may not Teleport/Pass Without Trace.

Support for choice a:

Players under the effect of Teleport/PWOT are con-

Announcements

sidered out of game. While out of game players cannot affect, nor be affected by, anything and are unnoticeable for game purposes. (ROP pg68) Since the player cannot be affected by anything, Hold Person/EB/Trap are suspended during the Teleport/PWOT. However, Telport/PWOT says nothing of canceling these effects so they would resume once the final destination is reached.

Support for choice b:

Hold person states that a person may cast magic that does not require you to move your feet. This implies that you cannot use any magic that requires you to move your feet. Teleport requires you to immediately head towards your location so is prevented by Hold Person. Earthbind and Trap function similar to Hold Person, and Pass Without Trace functions similar to Teleport so they are being grouped for the purpose of simplifying the rules.

Forum: Cooking

Topic: Fundraising Cookbook

Dreanya:

We are in the preliminary stages of creating an Emerald Hills' Fundraising Cookbook. If this goes well, distribution will be at World Banner Wars. If you have a recipe (or three) that you would like to share, please send it (them) to dreanya@gmail.com. Please put Attn: FCC in the subject line. If you'd like to be on the Fundraising Cookbook Committee (which at this time is separate from the Emerald Hills corporation**), please post here or let me know.

Any questions or concerns, please email me at dreanya@yahoo.com.

Lady Dreanya Jurista

Foodie

**This issue was tabled at the last BOD meeting but is currently on the agenda for the next one scheduled for June 23, 2007.

Dreanya:

Right now, we are just trying to gather recipes. There are a couple of focuses the Cookbook(s) can take;

however, that depends on the recipes received.

Ideas so far (not titles, just ideas):

:arrow: Camping Food (How to eat at an event without getting sick and/or on a budget)

:arrow: A&S winning selections

:arrow: Foods from (or influenced by) the Medieval and Renaissance Periods. [These recipes tend not to do well in competition but are interesting... more of a history book]

So, please, don't worry (right now) in what category your recipe would fall. Send it to us!

LDJ

Dreanya:

This E-Sam post has added an additional possibility to our Fundraising Cookbook: Feast Foods.

Anyone have any feast recipes they'd like to share? If so, email them to me at dreanya@gmail.com. Also include for how many people the recipe feeds. lol:

Thanks!

LDJ



Dame Allesandra working on another award winning project.

BOD Meeting Minutes for 5.12.07

Sir Morgan Ironwolf

Board of Director's Meeting Minutes May 12, 2007

In Attendance:

*Andréa Jacobs
Kevin Kidwell
Michael Peavy
Jorge Rodas*

Meeting called to order at 11:14am at 301 Centennial Blvd Richardson, TX 75081.

Routine Business

Approval of April 14, 2007 minutes
Spelling error found under Routine Business. The 'other' should be 'others' under Riverstone. Michael Peavy moved to pass the minutes with the inclusion of the "s." Passed 4-0-0.

Monthly Update: BOD correspondence (A. Jacobs).
No correspondence sent.

Petitioning/Interested Parks (Rodas).
Souls' Crossing ~ J.R. spoke with Crunchu on the phone and they will sign the petitioning park contract this weekend.

Riverstone ~ Yusheng is coming down to EndReign to sign petitioning park contract.

Mystic Mountains ~ Strongdrake is coming down to EndReign to sign petitioning park contract.

King's Point, Hurst, Texas ~ Slash will sign petitioning park contract.

Gecko's Fire ~ Hawaii from Riverstone.

Unnamed park in Plano, Texas ~ In contact with J.R.

Old Business

Update: Collecting new park contracts. (Board)
Received from Midnight Sun and Finder's Keep.
Eagleshire will be signed tomorrow.
Mourningwood Glen will be in July.

New Business

Termination of Midnight Rain Petitioning Contract (A. Jacobs) Michael Peavy moved to terminate Midnight Rain's contract because
(1) their last ORK update is October 26, 2006; (2) their ORK is not accessible by the Kingdom PM; (3) their last PM has advised that we should pull their contract.
Passed 4-0-0.

Kingdom Fundraising Ideas (A. Jacobs/Rodas)
Tabled.

"Road to 501(c)(3) status" (A. Jacobs)
Tabled.

Letter for RGK
Michael Peavy moved to have Andréa Jacobs to write a letter for Susan Tuscana re: the RGK bank account.

Taxes (A. Jacobs on behalf of J. Elder)
Taxes were sent off timely.

Schedule Meeting
Next meeting Saturday, June 23, 2007, at 11am at 301 Centennial Blvd Richardson, TX 75081.

Meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

EH Crown Quals - May 12-13th, 2007 Results

Nexus Crow

Sir Morgan Ironwolf

Cheese Ring	3.24
Honey Butter Ham	3.44
Autumn Cheesecake	4.28
Gazpacho Salad	3.54
Golden Chain Bracelet	3.86
"My First War"	2.9
Armor Piece	2.34
Blue and Yellow Sword	2.68
Etched Mirror	3.1
MS Loaner Items	2.72

Sutra Bahuas

"Mother's Tears"	3.2
"Call to Order"	3.34
Monthly Newsletter	4.025
Mom n' Kubs Booklet	3.925
"Campaigners"	2.5
"Archer"	2.76
"Elven Falls"	2.5
"Wanted"	3.42
"Republic of the EH"	3.32
"Late"	3.68
Award Templates	3.74
Kingdom Propoganda	3.7
Full Suit Armor	4.36
Emerald Hills Banner	2.38
Bardic Song "One Caress"	2.8

Tolken

Tortilla Soup	4.22
Pollo Pibil	4.1
Rice Pudding Tamales	4.44
Mushrooms Florentine	4.16
Lapis and Chain Bracelet	4.4

Flare

Anti-Paladin Tunic	4.04
Rogue Belt Favor	2.9

Siegfreid

Apple Pie	3.52
Spear	3.16
Sword	3.38
Shield	2.78
Concept Character "Bone Rider"	2.78
"Twigg the Fairy"	2.54

Kenta Redhawk

3 Lightning Bolts	2.32
Grey Sword	3.42
Skeleton Dagger	1.1
Tan Madu	3.6

Dizzy

Squires Belt	3.02
Crown Knight's Belt	3.46
Sphere of Annihilation	2.62
Polearm with Ornamentation	3.5
Red Skull Shield	3.32
Flame Knight's Belt	3.42

Cygnus

Squire's Belt	3.98
"Vampire"	3.5

Crimson Witch

Court Garb Purple Dress	4.14
Green Cross	3.6
Abstract Dragonfly	3.1
Abstract Shapes	3.3

Lady Tangeena

Crab Cakes	3.86
Corned Beef and Cabbage	3.9
Trifle	4.08
Irish Soda Bread	3.6
Fighting Tunic with Embroidery	4.4
Black and Silver Brocade Dress	4.68
Brownie Garb	4.48
Black and Silver Purse	4.12
Wisdom Necklace	3.22
Choker	3.82
Rays of Amethyst	3.64
Feast Box	4.28
Shiny Weapon Set	3.0
Dark Hills Banner	4.6
Triple Masks	3.7
EH Loaner Tabards	3.7

Sir Trinity

Spicy Shrimp	4.0
Drunken Pork	4.72
Chocolate Custard Pie	4.0
Orange Chocolate Fudge	3.68
Slough Coat	3.36
Griffon Garb	4.68
Winter Hat	3.9
Pirate Skull Cap	3.28
Dark EH Favor	4.5
Shaman Stick	4.5
Plate and Leather Armor	4.24
Sword Pair	2.64
Polearm and Dagger	3.24
Shield	3.82
"Phoenix Rising"	3.8
"Winged Serpent"	3.54
"Spirit Door"	3.88
"Heart of the Hills"	3.88

A Knight at the Inn

Sir Delphos Darkheart

Snow fell throughout the day and the Captain could find not one place on the Albatross to keep warm. Her hull had only been half repaired by the docksmen and she had begun to take on water... across the sleeping areas of both cabins.

Assisted by the Grand Meader, Delphos quickly relocated all the bedding and sat down on his posh pallet, in an attempt to warm his bones with a pint.

"Ah, good Sir... the Blackberry is of particularly fine taste this year" he told the Grand Meader.

A smile appeared across the bearded face of the Grand Meader and the spark in his eyes shone just a little brighter. After some shared simple conversation, he took his leave and the Captain took his watch on deck, the cold still deep in his bones.

"Truth be told, there was one place... but trouble could find you easily there and some did not feel the warmth of good company among the seedier elements lingering in dark corners."

As the afternoon wore on, it became obvious that a good meal would be in order.

In past voyages through time and space, the village within the Alabaster Walls had always provided for its own. A great Feast held on the middle night of the cruise was the traditional order of things and all were welcome to join until the entire menu was dispatched.

Those days had passed some time ago and only the memory of comradery and a meal shared remained in the minds of those who now wondered where to go for such comforts.

Truth be told, there was one place... but trouble could find you easily there and some did not feel the warmth of good company among the seedier elements lingering in dark corners.

So, the question remained...

It was decided, by those powers who make such

grandiose fate changing decisions, that what remained of the crew... as the younger scaled creature and her little redheaded friend had been sent back to the Dragon's Lair, The Captain & The Dragon... would venture out into the frozen wastes, seeking sustenance and warmth.

Inquiring on their way to the Wizard if he would care to join them...

To their great surprise, he declined and offered no explanation as to why.

"Strange"... they both thought, as they set out for their destination.

The Dragon and the Dark Knight soon found themselves seated in a strange eating house. The food was plenty, though served by not overly pleasant, mundanely dressed young women, who all seemed to look alike.

"It has something to do with 'genetics' I think..." said the Dragon.

With hearts warmed and bellies full, the two mystical creatures began to contemplate the trip back to the Alabaster City...the cold...the icy wind...and the drafty upside down ship they knew and loved so well...

"So..." said the Dark Knight, as he turned to the Dragon...

"what's it gonna be Dragon?"

Suddenly...

as if on the magical wings of the Dragon herself... Delphos found himself at an Inn...in a soft cozy bed...!!!

Though his purse was much lighter, his feet were toasty warm and he didn't care.

Sleep found him quickly and he dreamed of faire young women with dark intentions.

To be continued...

"Blood runs Cold... When Hell Freezes Over"

Sir Delphos Darkheart

There was a storm on the rise when the Dark Knight donned his Captain's Coat and headed up the ramp and onto the main deck of the Albatross.

A storm the likes of which the locals had never seen before. Cold and grey with a biting wind that cut through the ship like a sword of frost, leaving a chill to one's bones straight out of the tomb itself.

As he turned his collar up against his chin, he noticed the condition of the deck.

There was debris everywhere and nothing was in place for the commencement of the journey...

"This will never do...!!!" he exclaimed.

There were no "hands" on board, as there was little or no crew... Except, of course, for the Dragon herself... hardly a "Crew Member" by any stretch of the imagination.

In tow, the Dragon had brought her protegee and offspring... Yes, I said there were now Two Dragons on the ship.

As if that were not enough Magic to throw the entire voyage off course...

Delphos heard a high pitched "giggle" emanating from behind the younger of the Dragons known as the "Doom Dragon" (already not a good sign)...

The "Giggle" belonged to one of the strangest creatures the Dark Knight had ever seen.

Atop a small spindly body and a ghostly pale face, rested a mass of the reddest curls ever to adorn a male.

It was a Leprechaun... sure enough...!!!

Well, wasn't that just dandy...!!!

There was no telling where the ship would end up with all these creatures on board...

The Captain snapped a few orders at the Doom Dragon and the Leprechaun...

who promptly left the ship to seek less productive pastimes...

"Takes care of them..." thought the Captain and he turned his attention to getting the deck ready to make sail on the morning tide.

There was much to do, sweeping the deck, rearranging the rigging and hanging the main sails. Dust and leaves had found their way into every corner of the ship, so the portals were opened wide as the wind cleared the air and the Dragon's wings swept the dust away. Delphos tied the rigging and they both hung the main sails. Soon the deck was looking shipshape.

They would indeed be ready to sail...

just where they were bound was truly the question.

Up in the hold, things were not so chaotic and the Captain soon had his quarters neatly squared away...

As he set up the last of his creature comforts, the Dragon commented on his trappings saying with a slight sniff..."Delphos I swear, every year you get more posh!"

The Dark Knight agreed wholeheartedly and they both laughed.

The tide would come too early in the morning, so the crew turned in shortly into the night. As they slept, the storm moved ever closer and

hell itself was feeling the freeze.

Daybreak brought little sunlight into the grove, but that would not stop the living waves from passing by the ship... that was, after all, how the Albatross was able to sail through time without moving through space and still reach her destination.

Normally that destination would include warm spring breezes, scantily clad women and sword swinging barbarians, not to mention a plethora of other sights, smells and sounds known and loved by all who travel to see such distractions or be a part of them.

Well this journey, with its strange cast, was about to embark on an exhibition to the little known Frozen Polar Regions of the Renaissance Village.

A place where Hell has truly Frozen Over and we are all in its wake.

The first sightings came as a joke or perhaps the celestial spirits had come early to those who touch the land and know the path...

But no, these were walkers and talkers, not listeners.

So, it must be true...

Delphos, his feet stiff with cold, could not believe the words at all...

"Snow...!!! You must be insane! There can't be Snow...!!!"

Demanding proof beyond the tales of those who found their way onto the deck, the Captain wrapped himself up in his cloak and stepped into the living stream, letting the current take him forward. His feet moved along with no discernable purpose as he looked around at one of the most unusual sights he had ever beheld.

Large white flakes of snow were falling among the Faire Folk...

Some with their cloaks drawn tight around their necks, others barely covered with only a wisp of material. Still others, bravest souls of all, had donned the tradition garb of the Period and were thereby dubbed the Sisterhood of the Cold Cleavage and worshipped as such for the remainder of the trip.

Scots had even been spotted...some reported to have blue legs.

Could this have been due to the misuse of tinted dyes...??? Not likely!

Yes, Hell had frozen over and the dead were walking in Scarborough... at least some were reporting that they were freezing to death, though a mortality count was never held.

As he returned to his ship, the Captain noticed the Wizard across the way.

He seemed to be handling the weather without a second thought.

Outside his Treehouse, covered in layer upon layer of what may or may not have been mystical cloth, he simply continued finding just the right Dragon Eggs to Cleave, setting yet even more Dragons free into the Realm... leaving their caves to be treasured forever by those young hearts who dream of fantasy and magic.

The Dark Knight made a mental note to himself...

"Hell freezing over has little or no effect on Wizards... or does it...???"

To be continued...

To the King [RP for FK Kingdom Visit 5.20.07]

Various

Sutra Bahuas

Dreaming:

The apprentice walked cautiously behind the master.

He had quickly learned to never let his guard down. Even around his own.

It was the nature of the world, especially in the absence of light.

His path had become his nurturing mother. Teaching him things he could have never believed. He had found her faith so natural to accept.

'This is where you die today, young one.' whispered the ancient.

'This is where you are reborn, Sutra.'

The howling roused him from his light sleep. Sutra shifted in the tree canopy, cradled in the nook of a baobab.

He wondered how many of his missives reached the eyes and hearts of those who claimed allegiance to the crown.

Looking to the stars, he managed to tabulate a rough estimate of time.

Time to move.

Perched high in the sky, the gods this day granted the dark figure merciful cover; thick clouds vied his journey north.

Reaching a strong river, he kneeled; glad for the break. He had been walking for hours now.

The cold water was a welcome diversion from his nearing task. Splashing the clear water on his dirt stained face, he managed to drown his worries for a moment.

Peering up from his own suspicious reflection, he caught a glimpse of a trotting red fox. No, he focused harder. Not a fox. A coyote.

A red coyote. In the forest?

'Loki seems to have found favor in you Sutra...' spoke a familiar voice.

A wicked smile formed on the squire's face.

"And the company of a wise knight..."

Sutra stood and turned on his heel to find him self alone.

Was he still hearing things, he mused.

He couldn't remember the last time he was ever really alone.

The curious yip of the wild beast caught his attention once more. The red canine seemed to patiently perch on a tall mound along the river.

"Follow the red coyote..." spoke the spirited voice.

A childish spark of curiosity drove him to a chase.

Sloshing steps through the running water quickly brought him to the other side of the river. Eagerly leaping at the mound the sanguine colored animal trophied, vines provided a secure handle.

The ground quickly gave way under him.

It was not an oblivious fall he suffered. He was still at the rivers edge. A fall of about four feet unto solid ground assured his survival for a couple moments more.

Laying on his back, Sutra bellowed out a thunderous melody of unchained laughter.

The coyote crept up to the edge of the broken ground, peering down at the amused man. A quick yip and the dog was gone.

Slowly rolling to his left side and propping himself unto his elbows, the sharp sensation of pain struck him oddly.

A broken rib or leg? He wondered.

Sutra sat up and dusted himself off, checking for any broken bones. Nothing out of the ordinary.

His mind settled down for a moment.

Slowly standing, he began to examine the odd structure he had accidentally found.

The moss and layers of grassy soil found caked on the odd material seemed rather fresh. Less than a years worth of growth.

He broke off a piece of the underlaying 'earth' and studied the yellow-white porous material.

Bone. Sun dried and aged...bone.

To the King [RP for FK Kingdom Visit 5.20.07]

Various

To his amazement, he found an imbedded row of death, two large eye sockets, and a long snout. He had found a skull.

A really, really large skull.

Slowly climbing out of the odd fixture, he stood off to the side and peered over the incline the coyote must have disappeared over. There he noticed similar growth of which made it's home on the skull.

The outline was distinct now.

It was more than a hundred yards long, at least fifty wide, this morbid grave.

The skeletal remains of a flying wyrm.

The remains of a dragon.

It was then that he realized, he was traveling north. As north as the kingdom could go.

To the land of the Finder's Keep.

To the land of no dragons.

=====

The warning bell tolled as the lone figure approached the mighty walls of the keep.

The whining sound of taught bow strings seemed to harmoniously sing.

Wielders of majicks, swords and shields, and the darker crafts prepared for the onslaught.

The dark figure carried an unfurled banner strapped to himself. The tear and eye were unmistakable.

Alice's forces had come to quash the last remnants of any resistance.

Two hours before:

Sutra leaned against the stoney guard tower at the top of the south-east wall of the keep.

He studied the horizon. The tree line swayed in unison. The forest knew something. As if it wanted to warn the people of Finder's Keep.

Run.

Hide.

Escape.

The people were not listening. Captains barked orders to small patrols. Bowmen strung their bows. Swords and arrows were checked and rechecked.

Demonstrations of fire balls, produced in the hand of an experience wizard entertained the gathered children.

Soon, the one's too young or old to wield a sword would be placed in the depths of the protective keep. Soon, those able to kill would see one of the greatest battles they would live to tell.

"The people are ready for your inspection my liege." spoke a familiar face.

It was good to see that not all his missives were lost to the sands of time.

He stood at the tallest peak nestled in the high walls.

His eyes studied every capable face in the force any experience veteran would consider a make shift militia at best.

Sutra had always loved overwhelming odds.

This one was going to be such a day.

"I am not going to embolden you with words of heroic nature. I am not going to promise you that you will be a hero today. I'm not even going to promise that you will see the sun set.

But what I can promise you is something grander than glory. Something greater than the empires riches or the adoration of nations.

I can promise you that you will keep your dignity. You will remind those who wish to raze your lands, kill your sons, who want to enslave you mothers and wives, sisters and daughters, why you are free. You will remind them of the pain and tribulation you suffered to ensure your right to never submit.

Today, they will know that this is the Duchy of Finder's Keep.

Today, you will keep your freedoms.
Today, they will take their last breaths."

Sutra nodded, and walked off.

The keep doors blew open with such tremendous force, that it knocked the men bracing it back a yard or two. Alice's majicks

To the King [RP for FK Kingdom Visit 5.20.07]

Various

were stronger than anything the keep had seen in ages.

Yet the keen eye of the keep's archers ensured that her sorcerers did not enjoy the fruit of their labor for too long. Arrows found their marks true. Over and over again.

Sutra knocked another arrow and took aim. A warrior fell with his arrow lodged through his neck.

The familiar druid rushed to the door with a great bear behind him. The ursus was a sight to see. Sutra's heart was glad to know that not all of the woodland creatures had given into Alice's corruptive lies.

The dark general slowly strode towards the splintered doors. Clad in bright armor, the dark Anti-Paladin made his presence known to the entire contents of the keep. Their only exit was now cut off.

One hour before:

Sutra sat with the keeps captains and considered hurried tactics. Sending out waves would ensure constant pressure on their enemy. Widdling down their numbers was key.

"And what happens if our keep doors are broken down?"

The question was grave, forcing thoughts of a dark wave of enemies pouring into the keep.

"We will mend it as best as possible. If and when it falls, we will exploit the path that leads to the west of the battlefield. It was meant as an escape route for situations like this." confirmed one of the keep engineers.

"Good, then we will let them think that taking the entrance is our doom, then we will surprise them from behind." reiterated the confident monarch.

The silence in the room was thick. War was upon them. It was a good day to fight indeed.

The rumbling earth split the ground as a stone golem rose at the destroyed gates frame. The keep fighter's cheered. The Red Knight was true to his word, he provided help in the most dire of moments.

"My liege, there is confusion among the shadows..." shouted a pious voice.

Sutra turned and ducked at the wall to focus on the female

monk who spoke to him.

"They don't know when or with whom to go with! They need to be organized!" she pleaded before rushing off to join the fight.

The time for using the escape route had come. Quickly rushing along the wall, Sutra reached the small group of masked faces waiting for a chance to prove their valor.

"You, you, and you! Go!" Sutra quickly organized the masked ones into groups and gave them explicit instructions to be followed at his command.

They nodded eagerly and rushed off to the secret exit.

Sutra caught a glimpse of a dark shadow standing among the rushing crowd of warriors and magicians.

His familiar bow with blood dipped arrow head instantly made him unmistakable.

It was his knight come to join in the fight.

Sutra squinted as a bright ball of fire lit a stack of dry hay ablaze. He searched for the familiar face but was unsuccessful.

No time.

Rushing back to the gate, the blazing eyes of the dark one froze him in his footsteps. Something dark and sinister, something familiar flowed from the dark anti-paladin.

A forboding sensation of majestic regal emanated from the figure wielding the polearm that had impaled many of his men and women.

Sutra took aim and fired a glowing black tipped arrow expecting it to penetrate the thick hide of metal armor. The arrow struck hard causing the man to reel a step back.

Nothing.

He was protected against projectiles, Sutra realized to his horror. The visage was soon blocked by the motion of moving rocks. The golem had replaced the door with itself.

Good.

Sutra rushed back to the walls, eagerly rejoining the fight.

Today, Alice would now that the Keep was just that.

A keep.

To the King [RP for FK Kingdom Visit 5.20.07]

Various

Frostt

Frostt awoke with a start. The sounds of marching feet and clanging metal startled him from his needed slumber. The soothing smell of his new forest home was quickly being replaced by the pungent smell of sweat and fear. Crouching low from his perch nestled high within the trees of the forest, he quickly surveyed the open fields before him. An army was quickly approaching the keep. The last stand was about to begin.

Confusion began to set in for the half-demon. While he had no allegiance to either side and would fight for whoever paid the most, he had in fact pledged his allegiance to his older brother, who was nowhere to be found. So the quandry came to what he should do. Should he fight for either of the two sides, and risk angering his brother? Should he fight for both sides and collect spoils from them all? Or should he just sit back within the distance and watch? After a length of time, Frostt decided to sit back and watch. At the very least he could amuse himself from time to time and see who he could spot within the outlying treelines.

Comfortably he sat upon his perch as the attacking army closed in upon the keep. Projectiles of both arcane and fletched types began to hurl over the walls from both sides. Warriors fell at the walls, and from the walls, and within a matter of moments the doors to the keep were splintered in a fiery blast. Very quickly an imposing figure clad in black and emanating an aura of raw, evil aura advanced upon the open doors where it the figure was quickly met by a stone golem. The half-demon continued to watch to battle with ever growing amusement, until something caught his attention from the corner of his eye. Movement within the scattered shadows of the trees close to him. A masked figure, with his bow drawn. Curiously he watched as the figure knocked and arrow and loosed it into a foe from the attacking army.

Frostt watched as the army began to panic, blindly firing off arrows and spells into the trees. Curiosity struck the half-demon, and now he would have his fun. As silent as the night itself, he descended upon the figure kneeling within inches of its back. Immediately he knew this figure was no pawn. He knew that if he played his game too long, he might get a greater surprise than he bargained for. Sneaking back into his cover, Frostt began to play voice games. Changing his position to throw his voice out in different directions. "Why do you hide within these trees? Why are you not perched upon the wall with the rest of the archers?"

The masked figure lowered his bow quickly looking about, yet gave no sense of fear. "Why do you hide within these trees? Why do you not fight at all?" came his reply. "I care not for either side in this battle. I only fight when needed, and right now i am not needed." proclaimed the half-demon. Frostt

caught a glimpse of the figures eyes and an overwhelming sense of familiarity came over him. He had seen them before, somewhere else.....

"You seem familiar to me, and yet i cannot place where or why. Rest assured you can continue to do your job without further interruption, i have had my fun." And with that Frostt vanished, going further from the figure to contemplate this new sense that was washing over him.

Sutra Bahuas

The invisible fire erupted from his left arm again.

He stared at the thick gray cover above.

The battle was over. Thick columns of black smoke hid undiscovered horrors waiting to be accounted for in the approaching dusk.

His eyes sluggishly focused on the fluttering banner.

The blue crest and black tower remained hung on the keeps banner pole.

Next to it, the welcoming sight of the red heart crested ankh fluttered just as defiantly.

He smiled.

The shouts of the living and the screams of the dying reverberated throughout the thick stone walls.

The pain racked him again, this time, an odd weightlessness in his right side. Slowly he tucked his chin into his chest and noticed protruding bone and sinew planted in an obscene wound.

"The spear broke two ribs and ripped enough meat out of ya to make a good stew..." muttered the hurried keep healer. Her job was no where done and time was not on her side.

Her hands felt warm on his gaping wound, her mouth began to form the words of the incantation. Quickly, the welcoming warmth become a painful searing.

He didn't remember the last time a battle medic had to make a rushed heal. The slow kind were always much more pleasing. Slowly, Sutra peered passed the pretty girls face and formed the outlines of familiar shapes.

Those closest to him, loyal to the crown stood over him. Watching and waiting.

"Did we win?" asked the freshly awakened monarch.

To the King [RP for FK Kingdom Visit 5.20.07]

Various

They eagerly nodded, saluting each other in the reminder that they indeed lived to fight another day.

“And what of her...” a flash of engulfing darkness and a pair of stark white eyes peered into his thoughts. “...general?”

“It was his spear that felled you my liege.” voiced an anxious bystander. Their voice seemed to be laced with something unfamiliar to him.

Something that felt like anger. Confusion. Distrust.

“Aye,” interjected a second voice. “when you suffered the wound, you managed to fire a volley of arrows...” the familiar face gazed at the others with a hint of discomfort before continuing. “at their warriors....and ours.”

“What!? Nonsense! I don't remember any of that! I remember taking out their blasted wizards and feeling a sharp pain, and darkness. And now, here I am, laying prostrate and eager to rejoin the fight!”

The small audience stood motionless. The silence was overwhelming.

Had he turned his bow on his own? Preposterous he convinced himself.

The pain in his right side momentarily subsided. “There, sort of better for now, you'd better get it checked on before you leave the keep.” Her pretty smile reminded him of why he wanted to be home again.

“Thank you m'lady.” With that, she was gone, attending other's that had some hope of making it till sunrise.

“Ready the men! We march south...” a racking cough emanated from the resting shadow.

“Back to Tanglewood.”

The men understood and silently nodded before joining the jilted fray of surviving populace, their orders easily unmistakable.

The Court of Hearts was not defeated this day. They had a second chance.

A second chance at redemption.

Found only in the royal forest of Tanglewood.

-----30 minutes before-----

“Come on you cowards! Come and take it!”

The last push was forced back out of the keep walls. The Alician's managed to break the lines, entering the fortification with a small number of bloodthirsters. It was quickly repelled and a new defense was mounted.

The dark shadow hovered at the door unable to get around the towering mound of living stone.

He brought death to those who veered too close to the gates. He had managed to bring down more than a handful of the keep's best with only a polearm.

This anti-paladin made a feared general indeed. Sutra would consider what his purpose was in this most recent theater of war, but now was not the time.

“Watch the shade at the gates!” barked the excited archer. His arrows struck true over the course of the fight, his mind capturing every kill in the name of the kingdom.

He never noticed his excitement would be his undoing.

He had ignored his own advice.

The polearm had range. It quickly punctured his right side. The dark one twisted the sharp poisoned blade with sadistic glee.

The gapping wound was a reminder that even the crown was not immortal.

The last arrows he released found enemy throats and hearts true.

Even the ribcages and spines of those who had kneeled to him hours before.

Oh the pleasure of gifting death to the heretics, of burning the faithless.

Soon, she would come.

And she would find him wanting.

“Their voice seemed to be laced with something unfamiliar to him.

Something that felt like anger. Confusion. Distrust.”

To The King (con't)

Various

Thangorn Waterwalker:

Eager to get back to the keep I run through the forest of tangle-wood hoping that I am not too late to join the fight. Reaching the edge of the forest and finding a battle field. I see People everywhere impaled with spears, shot with arrows and bolts, men stabbed and cut with knives and swords of all kind. Broken swords, shields, polearms, arrows, and people lay everywhere. Obviously too late to join the fight I run into the city and seek word of Sutra. Only to here he is going to leave the city to pursue those who rebel against their home.

And So it Begins

Kenta Redhawk

Kenta Looked over the assembled crowd. Man it was good to see again.

"Take a look at yourselves. Go on take a look around. What do you see? A group of malcontents? Rebels? Traitors? NO I see those who would stand up to tyranny, and fight for what they know to be right.

What Tyranny you ask?

The tyranny that says that all men must bow to the crown's wishes and forget the centuries of previous edicts. Of true born drow who are commanded by this new Fin Varra to forget their ancient betrayal by the elves and share in brotherhood with them. WELL I SAY NO MORE! We are free to elect a King, then we must take responsibility and admit to our mistakes and bring Him to justice

Kenta heard the mumbling in the crowd, the increased hearing had not left him when his eyesight was restored. No, I do not demand that you all fight together. I am not a hypocrite to condemn one man only to mimic his actions for the greater good. Let each fight this war in their own way. Let the Drow band with Drow, Human with Human, Orc with Orc, Goblin to Goblin. We are all hunted and wronged, so let us turn the tables. We shall become the hunters. I offer this strategy to you all....the great keep at Finders Keep is being fortified. Wagons of weapons, food and troops will be on the march to defend it. If these supplies don't arrive, then the defense will fail. and Alice shall take the northern reaches. That is our task, to make sure these supplies don't reach the fortress.

And So it Begins

Kenta Redhawk

Kenta looked over his gathering of faithful. The smile and flaming hair of one drow catching his eye for a moment.

It is said that the Great Lord will return, this is an undeniable truth. The current regime seeks for this to not happen...they fight the return of a true and rightful monarch will all their being. That is because they know that the crown was taken from the rightful king and given to the usurpers

At that point Kenta's eyes rolled up in the back of his head. His body stiffened and a raspy voice droned out across the crowd

"I passed by his garden, and marked, with one eye, How the Hawk and the Panther were sharing a pie--" The Panther took pie-crust, and gravy, and meat, While the Hawk had the dish as its share of the treat. When the pie was all finished, the Hawk, as a boon, Was kindly permitted to pocket the spoon: While the Panther received knife and fork with a growl, And concluded the banquet, and consumed the land into its bowels



Asmodius preparing for battle.

Returning Home

Sutra Bahuas

Kneeling, he waited for the footsteps to produce an owner.

The foliage made excellent cover, yet it also obscured his sight.

The fight in the northern keep only fueled Sutra's desire to return the kingdom seat to it's rightful owner. Her people.

Messengers and shadows alike had managed to track the retreating forces of the defeated Alicians through unknown lands.

He had seen the overwhelming mountain peak he had seen in his dreams a couple hours earlier.

He had indeed visited this place once before. The ability to discern between dreams and visions had become second priority to his most pressing desire.

To find Alice.

The shadow that emerged from the verdant brush caused a wave of nausea to wash over the anxious assassin.

It had been too long since he had donned the mask. At least in the hunt.

The visage was unmistakable. He stared back at the dark knight he had encountered before.

His intel was right, Alician's retreat took them through the western paths unmarked on any of the official cartographic scrolls found in the kingdom libraries.

They avoided passing through Eagleshire, surely, it would have attracted un-required attention.

They were on the move south. Regrouping and counting their losses, it could be counted on that Alice was preparing for the Court's counter-attack.

A peasant carrying a sword followed closely behind the anti-paladin, fodder for certain. Voices spoke yards beyond the two scouting figures.

He was not alone, fellow members of the local tribes had seen the unwelcome guest's and had sent out war parties

to ensure their autonomy in these lands.

Sutra had meet with the tribe elders and made a temporary peace ensuring his ability to continue his tracking of his homelands enemy.

A shade also haunted the woods. His own knight had come to find fresh blood. Carrying his bow and poisoned weapons, the apprentice's knight wandered the deep forest, prowling like a famished tiger.

The dark anti-paladin froze, listening for any conspicuous sound. He and the young warrior stood only mere yards away from the motionless watcher. Under no cover, Sutra focused his energy in obfuscating himself, hoping to be ignored by the dark one.

His back was an open target, primed for a well placed dagger. Sutra hesitated.

A base instinct ripped his desire to kill into shreds.

The snapping twig caused the ancient one to turn on his heel. Sutra peered into the forest examining his escape.

The rushing feet of the warrior and the metallic clang of a dragging polearm was his sign to move.

Rushing through the foliage, Sutra veered through the newly blazoned paths.

A minute or five, he wasn't sure; had elapsed. He stood at the forest line, at the edge of a larger path. It was a freshly cleared road.

Sprinkled with blood and decorated by bits of rotting flesh, the defeated war party Alice had sent were ill prepared for the failure they had not planned for.

With no healers, her army was falling apart, literally.

Up ahead, about a quarter of a mile, the tail of the caravan could be seen.

They were in a rush to join their master.

Sutra would make sure to press light on the pursuit, lest they be aware they were being followed.

Returning Home

Sutra Bahuas

The stinging thud confused him.

A well placed arrow found it's way into his right leg. His leg gave out like dead weight in water.
'Not now...' he growled under his exhausted breath.

The anti-paladin, his peasant follower and an archer had managed to trace his hastily made path ahead of them.

With much hesitation, he teleported to safety, avoiding capture once more.

He had indeed grown rusty in his dark proffesion.

This all would have to change.

Soon, he was sure of it, this group would merge with the larger contingent back in Tanglewood.

There, she would be waiting for him.

His flesh tingled with keen interest. His dream evaded his longing grasp. Prophetic visions or zealous nightmares, it all blurred together into one confusing stream of consciousness.]

He stood on the verdant fields of tall grass. The breeze caused the field to sway in a rhythmic motion. Almost like an ocean.

The sounds of battle echoed in the distance, just outside view; over a large hill. It called to him.

He strolled up the side of the moist earth. Walking, yet almost like a gliding, not feeling like he was touching the ground underfoot, yet she was connected to him in some form or fashion. He didn't know. Didn't care.

Over the ridge of the peak, two opposing forces faced off for supremacy of the land. It was familiar, in sight, sound, and scent.

The orchards here had once been laden with giving fruit. That was ages ago, all that remained was scorched earth. A petty plot of dead ground to die over.

He wanted to run to them, to show them the ways of peace. That concessions and compromise could indeed

prove worthwhile. He tried with all his might to interrupt the fight, but time here was not his to control. This dream was not his own.

Men and women fell, blood bathing the parched earth. Before his very eyes, the ground drank deep. In the place of blood stained mud, fresh dark stalks burst through the wet soil. Leaves brilliantly stained blood red unfurled from the majestic trunks of maturing vegetation.

He reached out to save the dying. He never noticed the tracing blur his own corporal figure had taken. He was a shadow of his former self. It would take days and nights to realized his new condemnation.

Sutra reached out to an eager archer gathering arrows. He felt the warmth of life emanating from the familiar face. His mind formed the magic, uncontrollable and perfect. "Touch of Death..." The flowing darkness washed over the breathing man. Instantly, the corpse splayed across his feet.

His mind reeled in panicked horror. As quickly as his grief managed to develop, it was replaced by a new sensation.

Power. Dark and demanding.

This dream was not his own.
This power was not his own.
This grimace was not his own.
The vengeance he would reap, was all his.

The blood of the innocent was shed, mixed without prejudice of the guilty. This land would flourish again. Only under a new moon, under a new reign. Under a new tyrant.

Sutra would see to it that it would all come to pass.

Sutra would see.

Sutra could see.

Sutra see's.

His travels had lead him through his own homelands, up to the northern keeps, back to the newest point's of kings,

Returning Home

Sutra Bahuas

a brief vision in the glenn of mourning and now the valley of the feathered raptors.

Alice's battered and defeated battalion had made impressive progress, moving under the cover of night.

Sutra would find them soon enough.

That night, invited by secret missive; Sutra found himself in the private home of a familiar from a forgotten past.

It was outside of the kingdom's realm. Well hidden, it was rather unfortified, never having seen an army of men lay siege to it. It had stood for ages unmolested.

His host was most gracious and giving.

The high ceilings and exotic decor was magnified by the burning aroma of incense only found to the lands of the east.

A selection of delicacies were presented before him, both in forms of food and drink. Thankfully, he took his limited fill. Exquisite lavishness was never his expertise nor his preference.

It was something else that drew him here.

She lay propped against a mountain of silk laden pillows. Her bright red and gold robe flowed across the span of the floor. Servants waited on her hand and foot. I would not expect less for such foreign royalty. Her sanguine lips glistened like ripe honey coated strawberries.

She was enchanting beyond measure. Her sun kissed flesh, powdered by ground gold flakes glittered like a thousand night skies. Her powerful eyes could bewitch a warlord. Bright and radiant like a blue pool of spiritual abyss, she penetrated the thought's of men with a smile. Sutra studied her with curious fascination. He had known her in simpler times. She was a woman of self induced fortune. She knew a life of nothing, yet out of a vision did she built her private empire. Silent and unnoticed, she lived in private comfort.

The unfamiliar calls of peacocks and sweet breezes induced by hanging fans were all so foreign and yet comfortably pleasing at the same time.

"So then Bahuas...have you found her yet?" she asked. He

would swear to all the gods of the pantheon that when she spoke, a thousand hearts would melt.

"This...Alice?" Her lips curled as she remained motionless. The white gold choker that started just under her delicate jawline and ended at the base of her collar bone though divinely distracting, limited her motion. He thought it accentuated her statuesque mannerisms even more.

No matter.

"No...not yet. But the time draws near. And I will have my fill of her heart's blood. Only then will I be truly sated..." the dark monarch whispered. His tribulation had begun to take it's toll on his flesh.

The dark scar had been discreetly hidden from prying eyes, yet his fading voice was a different matter altogether.

She politely smiled. His words rang familiar. He was not the first to face an opposing force, nor was he the last to promise an end to his torment. More would come after him.

The stars and the moon shifted with every passing moment.

It was the courtesans song that lulled him to sleep. Her high pitched voice was like a rusty nail drug across silk. He remembered resting his head against a padded column as he stared at the pretty girl who sang of something beautiful in her native tongue. The words were foreign, the message possibly the same.

His eyelids weighed down by physical fatigue gave way to pleasing slumber.

He could remember slumping his chin deep into his chest. He could recall the last words he heard, spoken by the one who had known his truest heart.

"In less than a moons waning time...we will be together again..."

Sutra unsuccessfully fought off the spirit of sleep.

"...together again...my love..."

Returning Home

Sutra Bahuas

Sutra stood on the sloping hill overlooking the wide open prairies. As far as the eye could see, the land seemed to undulate, almost in a perpetual revolt against itself. He reluctantly knew that he would have to leave the safe harbor of the forest he had made his home for the past couple months; in order to inspect the shire of the eagles. This land was uncomfortably barren, yet it was home for some of the strongest in the kingdom.

In the distance, a bright flickering flame defiantly brushed the skies.

He waited before embarking in the expedition. He sensed his solitude had been interrupted by another.

Either his keen skill had warned him of the intrusion or it was only because the new shadow had allowed himself to be detected. Sutra gladly accepted the latter.

“So...it seems that it's a monument to the land...” murmured the young apprentice.

“Well then, perhaps we should pay homage...don't you think?” amusingly spoke the dark knight.

Sutra nodded agreeably at his knight's words of curious wisdom.

Sutra understood that Sir Delphos had an odd sense of honour that many did not comprehend and that even more had never learned.

The teleport to the gates of the temple was quick and unnoticed.

The stone walls surrounded the colossal temple ominously.

Sutra chuckled at the thought of whether this was a measure of protection for the people or the gods.

The fire blazed brilliantly, a loud screeching sound drowning out the calls of the merchants and the crippled. Booths set up and weighed down by all sorts of protective amulets and blessed candles lined the outside of the temple walls.

The cries and pleadings for alms by the crippled made for a morbid and heart wrenching chorus. They begged for silver pieces, prayers, and mercy. Ailments ranging the

gamut of broken bones and shattered faiths to blindness and severe deformities could be accounted and cataloged. Holy men and women stood at the corners preaching differing theologies and aspects of the eclectic span of faiths and beliefs. Shrouded in humble rags and piety, they tear and sweat faces grimaced and contorted in theatrical splendor. They all shared the same common ground. The end was neigh. That only through the shedding of blood, could the lost cause of the kingdom be redeemed. Sutra tugged at his dark shroud as he strode through the unsuspecting crowd. They had never seen a monarch travel through the sanctuary unless it was some sort of festival procession. And even then, it was typically an effigy of the crowned ruler. A royal schedule was commonly saturated with important ventures, and an graven image of themselves should be enough to appease the masses.

“They begged for silver pieces, prayers, and mercy. Ailments ranging the gamut of broken bones and shattered faiths to blindness and severe deformities could be accounted and cataloged.”

Occasionally, Sutra could make out the form of his knight, who preferred to remain comfortably out of sight. This allowed him the sense of self imposed freedom. Sutra smiles wondering how many of us were ever really free.

Reaching the gates, armored guards halted the dark stranger and demanded to know his business there. Producing a kingdom pass typically granted to local officials, the guards cautiously allowed him passage.

A place of free worship, at the local clergy's discretion.

How convenient.

Sutra made a mental note to add this to his already busy agenda.

He paced towards the center of the ancient temple, lulled to the furiously burning pillar of fire.

Standing at a comfortable distance, he noticed the marking on the floor beneath him. The tiled floor was sec-

Returning Home

Sutra Bahuas

tioned off in circular colored partitions.

Different levels of prophets, scholars, and wizards stood at different sections of colored stone.

The brighter the stone, the closer one would stand to the fire.

Sutra motioned to a parishioner and inquired as to the curious scene.

“You see, the different spheres represent one degree of piety. This fire represent the ever burning desire of the gods for us to know them. All gods are represented in this fire, for it is a universal element.” the old man spoke. Without breaking his focus on the towering inferno, Sutra posed, “So this sphere system, who walks at the base of this fire?”

The old mans eyes widened in fanatical fervor. “Why, only the gods themselves stand in the fire, for they are the fire. And only the true prophets of the gods stand at the base, proving to us that they listen and that they speak to us through them.” His eyes teared up at his seemingly rehearsed words.

Sutra frowned and focused on the old mans wrinkled face.

“Have you ever seen a prophet stand there...” Sutra motioned to the fire. “At the base?”

A wave of unconvinced sorrow washed over the mans face. “No. Not yet. The gods have not sent a true representative yet, but they will.”

Sutra nodded and thanked the learned man who graciously bowed and limped away.

“Hellfire...” spoke a dark voice.

“What?”

“Where I have been....we call that...” His finger pointed at the fire. “Hellfire.”

Sutra pondered for a moment and questioned.

“You mean to tell me that they pray to their gods of light, and in reality; they worship at the altar of hellfire?”

The dark knight's frown lightens into an amused smiled.

“What is ones dark god may very well be anothers god of light.”

Sutra smirked at the cryptic reply.

He understood.

The echoing voice broke the sacred mantras recited by the faithful in the hall.

“Like the path to heaven or the road to hell our choice is our own, consequences bind.”

A lone figure stood at the first sphere and stepped into the second.

“We are the kings of wisdom, the fools as well. We are the gods to many, we are humble men.”

The figure stepped into the third sphere and bellowed out louder.

“We who build great works just to break them down. We who make our rules so we never fail.”

The veiled figure stepped into the fourth. The hall began to bustle as excited yells erupted. Some called for the person to halt their procession towards the flame, others shouted the name of their gods in hopes for a true prophet.

“Shall I think of honour as lies or lament it's aged slow demise?”

The figures clothing began to smolder as they stepped into the fifth sphere. Cries of fear, panic, and faith filled the temple center.

“Shall I stand as a total stranger on this day in this stone chamber?”

One sphere left, the one at the base the old man had previously mentioned to belong only to the true seers.

The figure stumbled into the six and final sphere, a harmonious hushed silence fell upon the anxious crowd.

Instantly, the figure erupted into flames, the cries of horrified clergy and magicians rocked the walls.

Returning Home

Sutra Bahuas

The burning figure fell into the swallowing fire. Nothing.

Men tore at their clothing in revulsion and angry panic.

Sutra stood frozen having witnessed the scene.

"Amateurs..." chided the dark knight.

"A little respect for the deceased sir!?" barked the flustered squire.

"The dead?" Sir Delphos howled in laughter. "That person is more alive than these walking corpses will ever be!"

"You'll see young Sutra...one day. You'll see." replied the ancient anti-paladin.

Sutra stood alone in the chaotic halls as he replayed his knight's words in his convoluted mind.

"One day...you'll see."

Kenta RedHawk:

Alice looked into the scrying pool and smiled. The scene before her of Sutra and his Knight in the temple.

"Everything is going according to plan my Lord" she said to the gathering shadows "The pretend King runs in circles and sees only what we show him. He is powerless to stop your resurrection and ascension to the throne. We have placed our generals as his closest advisors, and right now one teaches him of the peace of oblivion"

The shadow smiled. Soon the return would be at hand.

Finder's Keep - Day at the Park



On The Trail To Alice

Sir Delphos Darkheart

Sweat covered his brow and drenched his tabard as he stalked the small scouting party through the thick underbrush. The moisture seeping through his mask made it hard to draw breath without making soft sounds against the fabric.

No matter... he would keep sight of the group until the time was right to lose one fateful arrow into the chest of their leader, thereby sending a message to Alice herself.

They were on his ground.

They were but pawns in this game of death.

A Game with which he was very familiar...

The moment came suddenly...

Stepping out onto the road he notched an arrow and drew back the bowstring. For a moment, time stood still. A Life hung in the balance of tension between string and arrow...

With a snap all was undone.

The arrow had broken under the stress of the pull and the Assassin had been discovered.

Cursing the arrow smith who had long since left the realm for parts unknown, he pulled another from the quiver attached to his bow.

But it was too late...

A Scout from the party fired first.

Missing its mark, the Scout's projectile hit the Assassin's bow which instantly shattered into splinters.

With no time to think, the Assassin ducked back into the thicket and ran a distance through the spike laden vines which permeated this forest.

Around to the other side of the path he ran, quick as a cat on the tail of his prey.

Then in a moment fast as a wink, he sent a dagger flying into one of the younger defenders.

A cold sting struck his leg and he dropped like a stone upon the path.

In one hand he held a poisoned dagger and with the other he reached down to pull the arrow from his thigh.

Winced at the pain, he made ready to send another to the grave...

But there were none left to kill.

The road was empty save the dead, lying on the ground in pools of their own blood.

Then from behind he heard a dark familiar voice...

"To live, you'll have to die..."

Without hesitation the Assassin plunged the dagger into his own heart...

Blackness took him and the voice was silent.

Penitent Truth [Elven/Leafblighter RP]

Sutra Bahuas

The stories are true indeed.

The nascent sidhe have gathered together to take pride and joy in their heritage.

The Elven Court under Queen Eclipse's reign no longer exists, except for a handful of ancients who remember the past, living and breathing; reminding those who have come after them of the past. Both good and bad.

I myself was aware of the true court when Finvarra Osgiliath was in power and during the Morgorach/Elven Wars. This was the extend of my interaction with the court that was.

The new gathering is not a court.

It has no ties to the outlawed court.

It does not consider itself to be superior to the true monarchy of the Emerald Hills.

The Finvarra proudly kneels to the true crown of this kingdom.

This new household is organized, not as a pyramid of power from the top sitting upon the strong foundation of it's members, but is reversed.

The Finvarra is a servant to the nation's members. I applaud the noble Justicars for being true upholders of law and order. They diligently followed the monarch's decree then, and I expect them to defend the kingdom now, as they always have.

Do not allow misconceptions and misunderstanding mar the good name of the Justicar's or any other who would be swayed by maleficent agendas. They are protectors and defenders of the crown, not madmen driven by ill forged rumors.

As monarch of the Emerald Hills, I have the power to grant the newly organized household royal protection. I can absolve the court from the ancient decree of exile. I, as Grand Inquisitor; will not play favorites to my own. I, as Grand Inquisitor; will not undo something not levied against this new house.

Our kingdom is as diverse as Valhalla above and as intri-

cate as the Hades below.

This kingdom is made home by not only sidhe.

But by Lupines, Nosferatu, Thundreans, Angels and Demons. Dragons and Men, and even a Time Lord.

The list goes on. And the kingdom has survived accordingly.

This kingdom is unequaled in honor and legend. The current crown has been even-handed in it's dealings with all peaceful representatives in it's holdings.

Do not be mislead by deceitful propaganda, for it is corrosive to it's core, and will only be used to weaken a strengthening kingdom.

Some claim to be defenders of the light, though seem to be mislead by an encroaching oblivion. Others claim darkness as home, and have the honor to defend the crown. Only some truly serve the light and only some truly tame the darkness.

And yet there is balance.

Where do you stand brother?
Where do you stand sister?

Defiant, with the crown; against those who seek to usurp the Phoenix's strength?

Or do you raise arms against our own motherland, who has only existed to nurture her rebellious children?

May your decision this day bring your house honor.

Vivat the Emerald Hills!
Humbly,
Sutra Bahuas



Sir Delphos and Septumus plotting.

Anti-Mage

Various

Lord Gott des Krieges:

Gott stood in a defensive stance with his shield covering his torso. In full armor he faced off with a mage who favored lightning. The sword of flames flared, proudly defiant, in Gott's right hand. The mage stood with his right hand raised and ready to strike with the furious anger of lightning and thunder. The mage moved his hand quickly towards Gott and shot out a powerful blast. Gott managed to dodge it and ran towards the mage. Twenty feet separated them now.

Gott charging and the mage readying another bolt. The second blast came from the mage and was struck in mid-flight by the sword of flames. The sword dispersed the spell away from its' owner. Ten feet now laid between them seeming to grow further and further in the fog of the night. Gott's eyes stayed focused, his ears listening intently, every hair of his body standing on end. The distance finally closed and another bolt blasted the shield from off Gott's arm.

A sudden leap into the air brought Gott crashing down on the suprised mage. An ear-piercing noise filled the air, The grinding of sword and bone. The mage carried a short sword which was thrust up to pierce Gott's left arm. Gott's blade found the mages' hand, a wound. The flame of the sword spread from the mages' hand to his arm and then to the rest of his body. Gott was wounded but the mage was dead. The mage fell, his sword still lodged in Gott's arm. A grab, a tug, a pull, the sword came from his arm with a wince of pain. A man came from the brush to the side.

It was Phantom, and elven healer.

He placed his hand on Gott's wound and began to chant. "Let the white light of healing descend on thee, let the white light of healing stop thy spilling blood, let the white light of healing mend thy bones, Let the white light of healing close thy wounds, Let the white light of healing restore thy vigor, The white light of healing hath healed thou."

A radiant light resinated from his arm and he felt the pain slowly subside. "Thank you Phantom." He said as he gathered the remains of his shield. "Lets head back now." Gott said and began to walk back towards the Duchy gates.

Sutra Bahuas:

The young students sat in the large hall. Their proffesor had never been this late.

The Equerian Academy was known as one of the most prestigious school for the young adepts of the majicks. Childish giggles and gossip filled the air. The thunderous clap silenced them instantly.

An unfamiliar man strode in.

His long black robes seemed to hoover around him. A thick sense of curious dread filled the hall.

"Now then...who can tell me what they know about...relics..." boomed the deep voice.

The children sat petrified.

The robes were those issued to a teacher in the academy, yet none of the third year student's had seen him before.

"Nothing? You mean to tell me, that your mothers and fathers are spending their hard earned gold for you to come here and sit idly by while the world burns in the flames of chaotic anarchy, all because our kingdom does not have the much needed majickal resources to stave off our most guranteed and impending doom?"

"They are old! Sir..." shouted out a trembling voice.

"Ah! So it seems some of you have mastered the art of basic conversation! Excellent!"

"So they are old...anything else of interest..."

"They were wielded by the one's after the pheonix and before the 3rd War of the Arafel..."

"Splendid indeed!" replied the amused instructor. His dark eyes focused on the source of the well founded response.

"You are indeed very correct in your observation, your parent's must be very proud." The dark figure strode up to the sitting place of the youth. Her puckered lips sat like a ripe strawberry on her already pallid face.

"And can you tell me why they were created?" inquired

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the leaning professor.

"The...they were made by the fates to give man a fighting chance against creation." hurriedly replied the brightest pupil in the class.

"And..."

"And...they are granted to those worthy enough to carry the gift's of the gods...heros and heroines alike have wielded them throughout the ages."

"And why would the god's grant these extensions of themselves to simian hybrids in the first place?"

The girl sat speechless. She couldn't recant covering that material in her study books.

"Maybe....just maybe..." leaned the gray eyed man closer, "because they want US...to clean up the mess they started?"

Her throat burned and the sensation of tears welling up behind her eyes became instantly unbearable. She was not afraid of him, yet his eyes spoke of a deep darkness that shook her to the core.

Satisfied, he stood straight and returned to the front of the class, taking the high chair with an overwhelmingly odd sense of dignity.

"The relics...10 of them in total...are blessed artifacts that have been handed down from champion to champion since before men understood the concept...of rain."

"Each relic is an extension of all things eternal. They signify the first and the last. Only the Phoenix is greater than these items combined."

"Every single one of these artifacts have their very unique properties. You should all know them, and if you don't; well then I am sure the pop quiz before the end of class will help rekindle any misplaced memories."

"Though these items revolve around the concept of forever, they can be destroyed..."

"Sphere of An..." piped up a brave voice.

"I know that...detention for speaking out of turn boy." spouted the annoyed lecturer.

"Unless specifically blessed by the gods, such as the Shield of Reflection or is enchanted by a powerful spell of protection, they can and are destroyed only to be temporarily returned to the stream."

"So what happens if a cast lighting bolt hits...say....the Sword of Flames..what is the effect?"

"It's destroyed" replied the defiant girl. He reminded her of her father. His cold gaze and harsh tone took her back to her home life.

And she hated this new stranger.

The teacher stood up and focused on the expressionless face.

"Correct. It is very much so destroyed." She would prove to be a worthy mage, this he would make sure of.

"Now then...before the end of class, you will have read chapters fifteen through twentyfour; and you are to turn in a five page summary on the mechanics of the manipulation of fire through meditative projection."

Today's class was going to be an intense chance of pace for the third year student's at Equerian.

Lord Got des Krieges:

Gott stood before an old friend of his that he had met back in his early days in the EH. The man was a smith, and a powerful mage. "Why do you hunt mages?" The man asked him. "I hunt those tainted by darkness. I am no threat to the pure." Gott and the mage stood, eyes locked for several seconds. "You speak the truth." The mage said. "I do." Replied Gott. "Very good. Now, Why have you come to me? I sense a purpose to this visit." Spoke the mage as he sat down by his forge to work on a dagger. "I need an instrument that will aid me in my fight against evil." Gott said as he began to sweat from the flames heat.

"You already have the sword of flames." Said the mage. Gott sat down on a barrel near him. "True, But for how long. Soon the sword will vanish and the quest for it will begin again." Said Gott. "You had better fight to get it

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back then." Said the mage as he pulled the red hot blade from the coles and examined it. Gott hanged his head and placed his forehead in his hand. "Is there nothing you can do to help me?" He asked seeming quite hopeless. The mage laughed. "Of course I can help you. I'm just giving you a hard time." the mage said with a chuckle. "I can always transform you into a monster." Said the mage. Gott blinked a few times as he thought this over. "There is a monster that is commonly known as the magebane. No magic can affect it." Said the mage as he recalled memories of an encounter with one. "Yes. I think that would be the best thing to do without the sword." Said the mage. "Thank you." Said Gott as he stood. He bid the mage good-bye and walked out the door heading in the direction of the keep.

Sir Larin Moonstar:

The silent form from the darkness watched as Gott finished his business with the mage and left. He had the information and confirmation of what his lord has suspected, and the time had come to report in. As quietly as his training allowed him, the shadowy figure retreated to make his way back home.

Within half a day the young scout was able to make his report.

"It is as we surmised your Grace. Lord Gott is the one killing mages, and while he claims they are all touched by the darkness..." the scout reported.

"... Yes, I know. That would mean killing most of the magic using section of the population here in the Emerald Hills." Larin replied.

"Add in the fact that he is running around with a powerful relic and it becomes something that is going to require dealing with. Justice is tenuous enough here without someone going completely vigilantly on us.

Especially considering those so called madmen are front line cannon-fodder whenever the next war with the Celestial Kingdom sparks up again. Send a light squad with a healer and a mage and bring him in, alive if you can."

"Sir, I'm afraid that won't be enough. He is working to have himself transformed into a monster called "magebane", or some such. The wizard he was talking to said he would be completely immune to magic with it was done." said the scout.

"Hmmm, that does complicate things. Send a heavy Calvary patrol out to recover him. I want them protected to the point they glow and tell them this guy is as dangerous as going to take down Sir Sparhawk."

Larin raised his hand to stop the retort from his scout.

"Yes I know he isn't nearly that dangerous, but with a relic and having himself turned into a monster the man is obviously crazy, or at least that is how I will present it to his majesty, and should not be underestimated. I want the men on their toes. I'll write to his majesty and ask what he wants done with Gott once he is in custody. I stress though, I want him alive. The man's madness may be curable."

The scout bowed and went to his task as Larin sat down and tried to figure out how to explain to his king this odd situation.

Sutra Bahuas:

Adia sat pensively at the end of the library table. The long study work surface had been inundated by old manuscripts and the most recent publications on fire manipulation theories.

The new professor had shown up with a wicked wit and a morbid sense of gluttonous misery.

She replayed the scene in her mind. The cold face asked a difficult question, but had she not buried herself in her insatiable passion for learning beyond the measures her peers had; she would have frozen at the trick question.

He had lied, lied to whole class; and he allowed her to believe she was right in her misleading answer.

Something about him was foreboding and did not sit well with her.

"He knew my answer was completely wrong and he let me go without taking the quiz?" she inquisitively stated.

Her small group of study mates paused for a moment, sets of envy stricken eyes focused on the small oval face.

She concentrated on the old tattered book on 'Invulnerabilities and the monsters that yield it' in a feeble

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attempt to stave off their burning gazes.

"The Sword of Flame... it's natural protection from flame would render it safe against a magician's lighting bolt. It says so in the codex of relics!" she sternly assured herself.

"Maybe he was testing you!?"

"I think he's dreamy..."

"You're such a goblin tar..."

"Mind the language children...." stated a hushed whisper.

The embarrassed boy peeked around his tall book on the physics of sword play and it's interaction with the dreaming.

An elderly man, draped in simple robes strode by their table, placing homeless books in empty bookcase slots.

"If you were right Aida, then why not speak up to the teacher?" asked the ancient voice.

She shuffled through all the potential answers she could grasp for. Nothing seemed reasonable enough that would seemingly prove suffice.

"I...I don't know. He just reminded me of my..." she stopped mid phrase before she had a wave of anger almost over take her.

"I think it was a trick!"

"She didn't have to take the dumb quiz now did she!?" interjected her anxious friends.

"A falcon always studies it's prey, especially the serpent." The old man's fumbled among a stack of books on his rickety cart, producing a simple looking book with no title on it's cover.

He flipped through the blank pages and smiled. "Ah yes, this is the one." His lowered his head and peered over his spectacles and smiled again.

A trembling hand reached out and presented the book to the bright child.

"This one will indeed come in handy someday Adia. I hope you enjoy the read, I know I did. It came in handy, especially when I was your age."

"Was that before the school was built?" teased the bold boy.

The boy's book snapped shut on his thumbs. "Ouchhh!!" The old man grinned at the boy's reaction, before smiling at Adia. Without hesitation, he nodded and pushed his cart off, disappearing around the corner; into the maze of bookcases.

Adia held the old book in her hands. A slow and hushed heartbeat drummed in her head.

The mid-day bell toll shook her out of her drifting state.

"Race you to the feast hall"

"Only if you don't trip on your own tongue!" proudly declared her classmates, as they hurriedly collect their books; rushing off for lunch.

"Come on Adia! You can't eat a book!"

"She might!"

She scrunched her face in a wordless reply to her teasing friends before collecting her belongings, following after her racing mates.

Tonight, tonight she examine her new find.

Sir Larin:

"Your Majesty,

It has come to my attention that Lord Gott has begun murdering lower echelon members of the wizard's guild in the northern lands of the Emerald Hills in and around Finders Keep. My intelligence thus far is that he claims to be assassinating wizards "tainted by darkness." As you well know some level of combat losses in the guild are expected among the juniors that seek out on their own, but not to this scale.

At his current rate, Gott will have removed 10% of the kingdoms draft eligible mages of the kingdom not assigned to a unit or already in the Army or guard within 2 months. To compound this issue Gott is conspiring to

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have him turned into a form of monster to shield him against the effects of magic. This is simply unacceptable and as Guildmaster of Wizards I am lodging a formal complaint.

This cannot be allowed to continue, and I trust your Majesty to remedy the situation as soon as possible. To aid you in this task I have send members of my person retinue as well as elements of the 2nd Heavy Calvary Brigade to apprehend Gott and bring him in before he can continue his campaign. I am confident that he will be ready to speak to you at the Wizard's Guildhall at your leisure. I look forward to speaking with you in person about this issue. The messenger bearing this missive has instructions to teleport you here if you wish.

In service to the Hills,

Duke Larin Moonstar
Guildmaster of Wizards
Chief of Magical Forces, Justicars"

Larin laid down his pen, folded the letter, and sealed it. A young mage stood waiting and accepted the message, and with a flash of light the mage was off on his journey to the king. With that done, Larin turned back to his work, hoping that his forces would be successful and quick.

Elsewhere in the kingdom, fifteen riders had tracked Gott down and were moving in to capture him.



Lord Gott and his battle game face.

House of the Black Rose and the Howler Crimson Witch

Crimson Witch and her sons made the trek to the shire of Mourningwood Glen where rumors of the "Howler" lived.

"Evrek and Draik, we must be careful not to run into Sir Ice, we have no quarrel with him. It is said he is the brother to Kenta, the Howler himself and they both are Werewolf Lords. Tread lightly, if we are to seek out the "Dark One" then we need fellow light-elf killers on our side."

"We agree matron mother," they both said in unison.

They made there way inside the sleeping man's abode. Draik asked, "Is this him? He doesn't look so scary as the rumors make him out to be."

"Don't be foolish, Draik, he's a werewolf, remember?" Evrek said snidely.

"Werewolf Lord to be exact. What are you Drow doing inside my home?"

Come to assassinate me in my sleep?" the Howler said with sleepy sarcasm.

"No sir," Draik said.

"We are here to find the Dark One. We heard rumors that you know where he is. We've come to aid him in decimating elves, m'lord."

Crimson replied.

"Next question, how'd you get passed my werepups?" the Howler asked.

"Oh those three, we are Drow, we learned pretty much at birth how to sneak around without being heard, m'lord." Evrek answered.

"Yes, I see that you are indeed Drow but I thought all elves were united?" Kenta asked.

"Not all elves are the same, I remember where I come from, those night elves do not. I would slay where you lay right now if it were not that we fight for the same cause for such an insult." Crimson replied haughtily.

The Howler's eyebrow lifted as the drow's fiery tresses swayed as her temper flared. "HHmmmm...."

"Well, do you or do you not know the whereabouts of the Dark Lord?"

The Boon Of Ancient Wisdom

Tobias Djevelt

A grayish brown flash....

The sound of a hundred calvary.....

The roaring of a dozen lions.....

This was no advancing army, but that of Tobias hunting down those which had taken his beloved, the elf girl of his forest home. They had abducted her in his slumber, yet their stench lay in a trail almost visible, coupled with her scent; he tracked.

In his rage he hadn't thought to pick up his normal weapons but had snatched two war-axes that lay next to his woodpile; the only suitable thing he could find to chop wood. And thus Tobias tore through everything that lay in his path. the smell got stronger the more he ran, and soon there in his sight was his target, the vile beast that had taken from him what he held most dear. The aberration hulked over her, ready to feed. Tobias grinned a toothy grin as he leaped through the air, his axes raised and aimed at the beast. He missed and rolled landing on his feet ready to advance again as the beast turned to him.

"You cannot kill him by means of man made weapons, Tobias", the now familiar voice spoke to him, clearer than any other instance.

Tobias heeded not the voice, his blood-rage giving him direction.

He advanced and with every bit of him proceeded to decimate the beast, heavy axe swing after heavy axe swing. He pounded till he realized that he was hitting dirt and there seemed to be no beast. no whole beast, that is.

There lay the parts of what once was what the elves called a "darkstalker". Even as Tobias examined his work, the parts began attempting to find each other so that they may rejoin.

"Shenanigans!" Tobias yelled, remembering their aggressive regenerative properties, something he had learned during his madness in alchemy.

"Tobias, you must flee. You know those who can help you. this beast does not go into the mountains. You know them. The Urnsil"

Tobias understood. He tucked his axes into the back of his belt and scooped up the elf girl and broke into a dead run toward the mountains, knowing the route all too well.

As it began to get colder Tobias stopped to catch his breath. He removed his hide tabard and wrapped Jade in it. Jade's eyes began to flutter and she slowly woke.

"W-where are we, Tobias?" the elf girl inquired.

"Fret not, love, i know this place. We are in the land of the Urnsil; The Bear People. We will be safe here."

Jade then nodded and came to her feet; trustingly following the bugbear.



Alice, Would I Lie To You?

Sutra Bahuas

The pretty milk maid's smile cracked Sutra's hardened frown from the inside out.

She smiled cautiously before hauling the simple colored clay pot of spilling water off to her home somewhere in the gently rolling hills beyond the city walls.

He considered following the trail of parched earth turned to spotty mud.

A gentle cool breeze stoked cyclic warmth under the tattered cape he had pieced together from littered sackcloth.

The sun and moisture seeped deep into the ripped fabric.

His own flesh had taken a darker shade since the onset of the summer months.

His heart beat in thankful harmony with the pulse of mother.

He found a moments solace under the giving shade of a pear tree, not yet aged enough for cutting fruits; but whose limbs were weighed down with verdant foliage. Inhaling deeply he stared over the dusty wall precipice he edged upon. The walls here were as ancient as the surrounding plains. It was the land of fabled dragons. Stories long past.

He focused on the war games in the main arenas. Men and women shielded in rusty armor marched in formations and broke off into simulated combat.

“He could feel her presence, close behind and to the left. She smelled of bittersweet roses. Of a bouquet that had lone withered away.”

They prepared for their never ending war.

“Will they ever find the time to make peace...?” spoke a gentle voice.

Without hesitation, the brooding shade gripped the hilt of a dagger. She had come to visit him again. Was this another nightmare or intrusive vision, Sutra angrily puzzled.

“Maybe if they were given a chance to know what peace was...witch...” the crowned assassin replied.

He could feel her presence, close behind and to the left. She smelled of bittersweet roses. Of a bouquet that had lone withered away.

The kind you find in an abandoned cemetery.

“Actually sweet Sutra, I meant peace amongst their own...” her fingers reached out seemingly caressing the dirty fabric the king had donned as a simple disguise.

Stepping out of her reach, he focused on the rehearsed military movements just outside the walls.

“They will fight every wave bent on destroying this kingdom, just as they have done so with every passing moon before me.” A satisfied scowl made it's home on the shaded face.

A girlish giggle erupted from the cloaked figure.

“The offer still stands dark one...it's not too late you know...” Her eyes read his aura with ease. He had learned much in the past six moons.

“Until then Sutra...may you find true solace...someday.”

Sutra tilted his throbbing head to the right and smirked.

He remained motionless, under the giving shade of a pear tree, not yet aged enough for cutting fruits; but whose limbs were weighed down with verdant foliage.



Of Days Gone By

Crimson Witch

It was said a Queen from days gone by had announce that all elves were to be executed on sight. Since then, no monarch has abolished this decree....

As you may know the drow themselves are a matriarchy society but the goddess had deemed that all drow were to be spared death even to the lowly males beyond second born. It is a time of rebirth she had said.
A time to reconnect the severed bonds to the Dark Lord himself.

Crimson decided to seek out the aid of the Howler, he had helped out her family in the past.

Lady Aylin's Gallery:

http://photos.yahoo.com/aylin_karyn

Sutra's Gallery:

<http://photos.yahoo.com/jrodas00>

Dame Nightengale's Gallery:

<http://s110.photobucket.com/albums/n97/nightengael/>

Sir Ice's Gallery:

<http://s119.photobucket.com/albums/o133/IceAndPaddi/>

Clio's Gallery:

http://photos.yahoo.com/clio_the_muse

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The End Is Near

Kenta Redhawk

Alice's curved dagger slid through the throat of the Royal messenger....blood the color of wine pooled and bubbled briefly at the man's throat. Taking her delicate finger she began to inscribe the message on the door to King Sutra's own personal study...she must be quick for he would return soon.

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall....Humpty Dumpty had a great fall
all the King's horses and all the King's men, couldn't put poor Humpty
back together again
Just a bit of fair warning.....something to think about
Love....Alice"

"...blood the color of wine
pooled and bubbled briefly
at the man's throat."

The Dark lord sat in his prison of oblivion....watching through the mirror of Alice's eyes. She had always been good at creating diversions and ambushes. This time was no different.

"Why her my lord? Why not one of your trusted Death Knights? Or more reliable servants? Why this crazed witch who seems to be intent on toying with the King of Hearts?"

"Because almost a millennia ago..I made her a promise that if she became my servant, I would let her have her revenge on the King of Hearts...this poor fool is just paying for the sins of his predecessors. Her goals coincide with my own. Do you know the best way to subdue a village?"

"No my Lord"

"you bring in a rabid tiger...and loose it on the village. Wait a few weeks, let it eat some people, then come in and tell the frightened people that you will deal with the threat. They will follow your orders blindly because of their fear. After a time, they will become accustomed to following your orders, and the village is yours. So then you take your tiger and move on to the next village"

Kingdom Gallery

Various

