

The Travance Chronicle

VOL. 4 NO. 6

"If it bleeds, it leads."

JULY 1215

CATCHING UP

BY ILANA DARKWOOD

In April an odd occurrence, even for Travance, transpired. A creature we called the Lord of Nightmares plagued Travance with a court of nightmare creatures. The moon was spent planning the most effective way to defeat the monstrosities and finally defeat the Lord after the town was rallied by Croinamara Ull Uidhir. Croi successfully summoned a guardian known as the Dream Knight using an ancient song and the Dream Knight graced us with his presence offering information as he could. We met the monsters, deciding not to cower from them but to fight. Croi's patience and bravery should be noted and remembered in this situation; it takes an extremely unique patience for anyone to be dealing with the town as a whole.

Unfortunately, some high ranking individuals arrived late to the battle and decided that the King needed to be attacked first instead of his pawns. As a result, the Dream Knight's power ran out and the Nightmare Lord was able to escape before he was destroyed.

Agra Xul is the last creature we dealt with that was heavily involved with dreams when we lost Dream Advocates from the world. The chance that this Nightmare Lord is also a demon of similar strength is very high and after the defeat of Xualla and Balfurous leaves a power void in the Abyss that could be filled in by him. We have certainly not heard the last of this creature, but we need to keep a spark of hope and remember this defeat so he is not forgotten and we can do better in the future.

Before the caravans left that feast, a group of Jaxuarians from the jungle of Xilhinthax arrived requesting aid from the warriors of Travance whose stories of battle had traveled to the other side of the continent. They spoke of armies of undead, people taken captive, and other atrocities that could not be permitted any longer. A group of Travancians went with the Jaxuarians of their own accord to investigate the situation.

The group that went spent the month in the jungle battling waves of undead and learning things that very

few have had the honor of knowing. Kisin, who claimed to be the king of the land, had followers who believed their children were being trained as soldiers. Instead, it was learned that those children were being exsanguinated and turned into undead creatures for Kisin's army. The Travancians returned with this news to find that an ambassador of Kisin's kingdom had made his way to the Proper and was trying to negotiate a treaty with the Kingdom of Kornyre.

It was a moon of empty pleasantries and slowly gathering of information and resources by both sides. Kisin struck the first blow, attacking a small delegation that went to investigate the ziggurat he had slowly begun construction on along the outskirts of the Proper. Travance rallied and struck out against Kisin, eventually defeating him and his followers. The ziggurat crumbled and the Jaxuarains returned to Xilhinthax to tend to what would be a strange uprising in Xilhinthax. We have not heard from them since and hope that they are doing well.

As we were dealing with the remnants of undead from Kisin's attempted invasion, a new challenger arrived on Travance's doorstep. The Warlord Revik, dishonored of New Gaaldaron, prepared his assault on our town to try and reclaim a lost glory. This warrior, though noble, had too much pride and once lost a village he was sworn to protect. Stripped of his honors, he was granted a suicide mission to kill as many 'heroes' as possible and find glory in a death at their hands. There were other individuals, generals that were also bound to Revik's task, that were dealt with in various ways by the town over the course of the feast. However, an interesting individual approached Revik personally, an alchemist who promised him an army that would make the suicide mission into a success. Revik accepted the deal and Travance met a new kind of enemy: the soulbound homunculi.

Before those creatures, we were berated by a steady onslaught of weaker goblinoids meant to wear us down over the course of the feast. The homunculi appeared later on the feast day, faceless constructions that had a soul fragment within. These were not abominations to Galladel like the old undead were. These souls were

artificial in nature, a mortal creation. What gives the right for the Maker to call them a soul I am unsure of, but as we were part of his experiments perhaps one day he will be interested in offering a bit of detail on the matter. I am quite curious myself.

The homunculi were eventually destroyed and Revik was ultimately defeated. He was killed with a blade in his hand and allowed to die a warrior after his capture.

Revik's army did not completely fail. They successfully took one life completely from the material plane that you will read about in this paper: Jack Dimms. Though, through ritual and Galladei's blessing, Sir Dimms was allowed one last battle that moon against the Fire Giant Surtur that was plaguing Pendarvin. His demonic influence over the lands has diminished and repairs have continued as the people of Pendarvin weed out what remains of his cult and snuffs out his corruptive flame for good. More information will be written about this in the future after the Templars Nightwing are recovered in any fashion.

The most recent events in June were unique. There were no monsters or armies, but a small assortment of individuals that some did not even realize were part of the same congregation. A group of serial killers were corralled towards Travance to begin extinguishing the hardest game on Palmydia to kill: us. Their sport was ultimately unraveled and though several killers and sponsors escaped, the majority were captured and dealt with accordingly.

The town partly made up for the disaster of April's tactics, able to split up effectively and eliminate enemies as they found them with precision. To the leaders of the battle groups, we thank you for your coordination and diligence in the matter. Please keep up the good work.

What this upcoming feast will bring? Who knows, but let's keep the events of the past fresh in our minds.

GOBLIN ASSAULT

BY AMBASSADOR MEANDER CORRELIS

Late in the month of May, Travance was met with a large-scale attack by the goblin army led by General Revik, forces originating from New Gaaldron. Despite the far superior forces of Travance, in skill if not in number, Revik was determined to lead his troops in what amounted to a suicide assault. Not all of his forces were so blindly determined to throw themselves into death, however: one of his number by the name of

Goard was challenged to honor combat by Korr, the leader of the orcs within Travance. Korr proved victorious in a combat to three strikes and Goard joined with Travance.

In addition to Revik's army, the forces of the ogre Weg were to be pitted against us. But like a child, Weg was able to be plied with food and song and, like a mother's lullaby, Weg was sung to sleep by Billiam and Xod, neutralized from the upcoming fight. The Black Knight and a scarecrow golem, believed to be a servant of the King of Kornyre (he had well-forged and legitimate looking papers), were other key players in the main assault.

Dame Emiline Patterson of Alisandria and Lieutenant Grimkjell Eirson led Travance's forces, making excellent use of traps and choke points to hold off the initial assault. Eventually though, Revik's superior numbers forced the Travancian forces back to the Dragon's Claw Inn and managed to flank them. Revik himself was a fighter of devastating power, tearing through our ranks before engaging in a final duel with Lord Aleister Tartaros. Lord Tartaros struck down Revik and the battle was won.

Despite the heavy press of numbers, Travance did not suffer loss of life during that final assault, though Pendarvin still mourns the loss of Sir Jack Dimms (posthumously awarded knighthood), who was taken out by assassins the night that the army came into town. In the end, the soul of Jack Dimms was able to return one final time to assist his land in its fight against the fire giant Surtur, and Lieutenant Eirson assured me that his killers were felled during the final battle.

ONE HAND CLAPPING: THE RECOGNITION OF CHAO WO

BY IMRAHIL

For many years of this life, I had thought myself an outsider. From my earliest memories I was not like my peers. Just as I thought I had attained a place among them within the world, came the realization I had further still to search to find my place. I came to Travance in hopes gaining a sense of belonging, but instead found another completely alien experience.

While many were familiar with the wider culture of the empire I hailed from the specific ideals of my order were not widely understood. Local humor was picked up quickly, but it took quite some time to become familiar with custom and yet more to understand hierarchal order. As I assimilated to these new surroundings and ideals, my sense of belonging began

to return. I found particular solace in serving the law of these lands. My culinary gung fu has provided much enjoyment to my fellow Travancians. There are even those who seek my aid or counsel in their private affairs. Some of these have bristled against my desire to remain humble, but that acceptance is as insidious as the tar of the poppy.

For some time I was content to believe that it was the acceptance of my peers that brought my satisfaction. Becoming aware of this impact upon my nature, I sought the wisdom of the universal consciousness. For many weeks I meditated on this conundrum, and the revelation was liberating. While the gratification of my peers is as satisfying as a marvelous meal or finally achieving a long sought goal, it was not what drove me. It was my sense of utility that tended to my needs; the acceptance merely a pleasant side effect. The past caught up quickly. I was embraced warmly by the understanding I had served this end for all of my memory. Soon after came the realization that others depended upon me as well. Truly, we all depend upon each other as we depend upon the very air we breathe.

WHAT IS DEPENDENCE

BY HAZEL STORM

What is dependence, it could be many things
Depending too much on someone or something
Using it as an excuse for many things
Fighting it yet still letting it control you
Letting yourself get lost.
Then again it could be a good thing as well
Finding out you can stand on your own
To not be dependent on someone or something else
Finding the higher calling without being dependent on a test
Yes dependence can mean lots of things but remember
this you, yourself make your own destiny

I CARRY YOUR SOUL IN MY HANDS

BY SQUIRE AMALTHEA LAURENT-BELMONT

It was Owen who pulled me from the biting, inky waters, but I didn't realize that until much, much later. Rudolf's miraculous flasks bestowed upon me the curse of consciousness even after receiving mortal wounds and awareness was slowly coalescing around me. The first thing my racing thoughts focused on was that I was out, that I was on land again. Then, the

continuing pain reminded me that I was still helpless and dying. The young man pulled me towards a sound and left me on the ground before he too fell.

After several moments, the clouds over my consciousness lifted enough to take note of what was happening. All around me were the bodies of those left behind in Evernight, those who didn't make it out through the earlier portals. My best count had over a dozen of us. I'm still not sure of the final number. A scant few were still fighting the undead, others of our party had been converted into them through Litanies of Doom.

There, in the center of the field, producing the sound to which I was dragged, was Croínamara. She was singing. Over and over again, surrounded by bodies, she sang and sang as her comrades fell.

"I carry your soul in my hands
And I lay with this voice beside you
(and) I tether you here to the land
This part of you I will hold true to."

At first, I didn't understand. What was this song? Then, one of the creatures tried, and failed, to attack her. It couldn't hit her. The dirge she desperately intoned was her Requiem for the Dead. I could feel its power- the wounds I received weren't closing up, but neither were they killing me so long as I was near her. Her song, her unbreakable voice, was keeping all of us alive.

Croí sang. On and on, she sang. As we fell, she sang, trying to keep us near. One by one, we fell, until she was the only one left standing. She sang, and while her voice cracked, it never broke. She cracked, but she never broke. They told her it was hopeless. The monsters, the shadows, they taunted her. She sang. Weakly, I joined her song. I couldn't put power through the music like her, but I could help her ignore the shadows for a moment. She sat beside me, and held my hand, and wept with me, and sang.

Time seemed to stand still in her song, so I'm not sure how long she'd been singing when, finally, one of ours converted to one of theirs made his attack. He used the power of chaos to thwart her song, to turn her against us. When I saw Croí's allegiance changed, when I saw all of us fallen or turned, I kept her voice beside me. Her words echoed: "This part of you I will hold true to." I knew we'd be alright. I knew I could count on her to keep us alive. Even at that bleak moment, it was an act of kindness Croí paid to a shadow of a friend that got us home from Evernight. Croí got us home. Croínamara, the last woman standing, saved us all.

BEDTIME STORIES: THE SWING

BY CROINAMARA ULL UIDHIR

Once upon a time there was a swing.
And the swing had a very young friend.
And the young friend would say
do you ever find it awful?
And the swing would answer
what would I find awful?
And the friend would say,
The way you reach for the sky, over the branch, never
make it there, and always fall back.
Well said the swing I made it there once. I got stuck in
the sky, wrapped up in the branch, unable to fall
back or swing anymore.
What did you do asked the very young friend.
I waited, said the swing, for someone to reach up
into the sky, over the branch,
To make it to me
To help me fall back
and swing me back down where I am.
In a hesitant voice the very young friend asked, swing,
would you ever go back
And the swing said Oh,
on my own, no,
but with you dear friend if you'd like,
I will give you the sky over the branch and we'll make
it I promise you that.
And the very young friend smiled and said
and I promise we will always fall back.
The end.

We are all one. Imagine being a fish. You swim and leave
behind a wake and send waves of motion far out of
sight. It is only by the invisible nature of air that we are
fooled into thinking we are not connected. -Gunnar
Gunnarson

INDULGENCE

BY ROWAN ULL UIDHIR

Fresh berries right before an important meeting.
Cold cream and fudge to sweeten a sour mood.
Chamomile tea and a pipe right before a good night's
sleep.
Rare steak right off the grill to rejuvenate after a
mighty battle.
A tankard of water after being revived from a bottle of
healing salve.
Eggs, sausage, and griddle cakes to waken the senses.
Chocolate and coffee to keep a watchful eye until

sunrise.

Shaved ice to cool down after a summer day.
A few ales with the bar in between monster attacks.
Roasted pig from the forge to stoke the fires for
weapon-making.
A hot and hearty bowl chicken stew to strengthen the
bones in the dead of winter.

Indulge in what you crave after or before a stressful
situation. Sometimes, life proves to have too many
hardships for one to handle on an empty stomach!

*Praying a little excitement of the pretty, non-
dangerous variety? Then let a little alchemy into
your life!*

*Every month, on the Friday prior to the main
feast weekend, Pulpepper Farms will be boasting
an evening of fireworks, created and hosted by alche-
mist Meander Correlis! Dazzling colors in the
sky will brighten up your night! Come enjoy with
friends and family.*

MY FRIEND JACK

BY NALICK UNDERHILL

Jack Dimms my solitude, my loneliness and apathy
I sometimes lacked the time for Jack, but he always
had time for me.
Others may have seen Jack as crude
As such, he lacked their praise.
But he put me in the greatest moods
Throughout my salad days
Unpretentious as the common man
Easygoing as they come
He was always there to lend a hand
Or two when drinking rum
So here's a toast to my old friend,
Sir Jack Dimms, a man apart
Broken hearts take time to mend
Perhaps now we can start

A FAIRWELL TO JACK DIMMS

BY GRIMKJELL EIRSON

I have offered to write a final account of Jack Dimms, Knight of Pendarvin. And so I shall. Jack Dimms died for what the healers and doctors said was the last time during the incursion of General Revik's goblin and humonculi forces into Travance. He was slain by the elite assassins who gathered as Friday evening turned into Saturday morn, and died on the road to Ostcliff. He died alone, though mourned by many, and his body was held to be disposed of as he wished in his will.

The subjects of Pendarvin and Kaladonia prepared to go and oppose that plague of Honor's Peak, Surtur, in his fiery home. I was with Lord Silverbow and Sir Hurgar when, upon stepping into the valley below the slope of the volcano, we saw Jack Dimms walking amongst us once more, calling out to Galladell that this was his judgement, Jack's war-ice in hand, fighting Surtur and one of his Fire Giant kin alone upon the crest of the Volcano itself. We moved to join him, and for a moment, I was able to give a nod of acknowledgement to my fellow man of the North. The fighting swept us apart, but I am told that he continued to fight bravely, meeting his end as a Northman should, sword in hand. He stepped into the way of a blow that would have made someone dear to him sleep, reddening the black fire-rock with her life's blood, and he fell in that moment as a Hero would, his strength gone for good.

Surtur himself fell not long after, from a combined hammering of the might of Pendarvin, Kaladonia, and help from many of their allies.

As we regrouped, rested, and counted our cost, Lord Silverbow, in his capacity as Dimms' Jarl, made him a Knight of Pendarvin, in honor of his final death in service of Pendarvin. It was received with cheers, and sadness as well, for a man who intended well had finally found the glory and respect that seemed to elude him in life.

I am not a skald, that was Jack's place, but it would be to dishonor him as a skald to give anything other than an honest account of him. He was at times very foolish, and indeed sought glory and the esteem of others instead of doing his duty honorably, at times in the past, but his final actions did redeem him, as did his actions in other battles many times before. His legacy, and it is one that should be carried forward, is that from even the most wrong-headed of men, nobility can spring, and a man should always be given a chance to redeem himself, if he asks and works for it.

As Travancians, we should always be willing to listen to those that seek to make themselves better. As, too, we should remember to bring honor to the dead, in all that we do. For as Jack perished, so shall we all, someday. When we make our accounts in Galladell's hall, it would be better to face the Judge of Souls with pride, instead of shame, in our hearts. So I write for the last time. Jack Dimms Hjolda! Until next winter, warrior, and until the last song is sung, Skald.

Dimms - You had one job. Not to Die. What happened? Now I give you a new job. Have a great afterlife. Please don't mess this one up. - Caldor

I MET HIM ONCE

BY GUO CHENJING

I didn't know him

The man who once was here

But I met him, once, a few days before

He was a kind, funny soul

He let me have the meat which he had prepared for himself,

taking instead the later-placed

An act which spoke volumes of him.

I have heard he was unwise

A poor planner

But during the moment I knew him,

He was a good man.

He was a kind man.

He was a generous man.

So no, I did not know him.

Perhaps I ought have -

But seeing the pain which his departure has caused?

Perhaps it's better I not have.

A while ago, you reached to me

Suggesting I write for the Chronicle

In my land, the word is "anxi"

I say in this, my first article.

Editor-in-Chief: Lois Maxwell

Assistant Editor: Lorelei Sihnon

Assistant Editor: Thalia Burdorn

Chairman: Amizar Wizwhir

DAILY AFFIRMATIONS WITH GROGNAR THE DESTROYER

Grogna, sometimes I feel like I'm invisible. How do I get people to take me seriously?

-Illusion Sphere Dropout

Dear Illusion Sphere Dropout,

YOUR ABILITY TO PRESENT YOURSELF FALLS ENTIRELY ON YOUR SHOULDERS. IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO REMEMBER AT TIMES BUT IT IS LIKELY THAT NOBODY IS IGNORING YOU ON PURPOSE. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO STEP FORWARD WITH COURAGE AND MAKE YOURSELF HEARD. IF THERE IS SOMETHING YOU WISH TO DO OR BE INVOLVED IN THEN YOU NEED TO GET OUT THERE AND TAKE IT! YOU MAY NOT MAKE A SPLASH BUT WITH EACH STEP YOU'LL BRING YOURSELF CLOSER TO GAINING THE NOTORIETY YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.

ALTERNATIVELY, A GOOD WAY TO MAKE PEOPLE TAKE YOU SERIOUSLY WHEN YOU'RE INVISIBLE IS AN INTELLIGENT APPROACH ON SNEAK ATTACKS. DEPENDING ON WHETHER OR NOT YOUR INVISIBILITY WILL FADE AWAY AFTER AN AGGRESSIVE ACTION OR NOT YOU CAN GAIN A GREAT REPUTATION AND EVEN FEAR AROUND YOU. WHEN YOU ARE KNOWN AS THE BLACK BLADE IN THE SHADOWS, I ASSURE YOU THAT PEOPLE WILL TAKE YOU SERIOUSLY INDEED.

GROGNAR RECALLS THE TIME THAT HE GAINED A BELT OF INVISIBILITY. THE DURATION OF IT WAS UNCLEAR BECAUSE THE SHAMAN SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE PROPERLY EXPECTING HOW THE DEAL SHOULD HAVE GONE. HIS DYING CURSE WAS ALSO FAIRLY WEAK AND HAS YET TO HINDER ME IN ANY APPRECIABLE WAY.

GROGNAR CERTAINLY HOPES THAT THE CASTLE FULL OF NINJAS FULLY APPRECIATED THE IRONY OF AN INVISIBLE FOE STRIKING THEM DOWN ONE BY ONE. IN ANY CASE THEY CERTAINLY FELT THE IRON OF BOTH MY HAMMER AND MY BLADE AS I CRUSHED THEIR SKULLS AND STABBED THEM BETWEEN THE RIBS.

SO, CHOOSE WISELY HOW YOU WISH TO DEAL WITH YOUR INVISIBILITY. YOU CAN CHOOSE TO STEP OUT OF THE SHADOWS AND GAIN FAME. OR YOU CAN STRIKE THE UNWARY FOR YOUR INFAMY. EITHER WAY, YOU WILL BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, GROGNAR ASSURES YOU.

-GROGNAR THE DESTROYER