

The Testament

Moot 1 (Jackals Land), 1107 – Opening Edition

What has Existence done to my world?

The names and identities of the people in this article have been omitted to protect the innocent.

Like many people I assumed that the Cataclysm would be something overnight... at the Gathering of Nations I refused to fight, knowing that I would not be the play thing of some cosmic creature that saw me as a tool in a centuries old war.

When I saw the bodies of my friends return, and some not, then I knew that the bloody cost had been paid. However, returning to my homelands I saw a carnage that I did not expect. The mountains themselves started to move, the sea levels changed erratically, once rich mines hid their treasures from the people inside, and who paid the cost: The people of this land on which we live.

We have had harsh winters, and all upon this land are not unused to pain and suffering, but this winter was something else. This was the deliberate plan of a malevolent entity known as Existence – to shape the world in its image, as part of a twisted game played by her pawns in the Heartland Nations.

However, it was early this year when we received the invitation of the Bards Guild to travel to the Great Erdrejan Fayre. This was heralded as a time to celebrate man controlling his own destiny and to toast the end of the Cataclysm.

I am but a humble mage and scribe, but I have no illusions that this Cataclysm has not ended and man's destiny is no more in his hands than it was a year ago. The Foul forces of Existence are still at work and we can all see this.

As I travelled to the transport circle to go to the Great Fayre, I heard people cry out that they could read. This great gift that Existence has granted all of mankind – the gift of Feast. Lovingly wrapped up in these words but let us look at the cruel truth, this is the end of civilisation as we know it. If the peasants of the land can read – then they will want rights as free men, and the choice to control their own destiny. As for me as a scribe, a skill that I

trained for many a year for, my career is now over. Who will want to pay me for a calling that even a beggar has had magically gifted.

I digress, as I travelled to the transport circle, I called upon the powers of the Elements to grant me passage to the Great Fayre. Nothing happened. I tried again, this time with more ceremony and after a minute or so of calling forth the power I found myself in the void – being transported on a pathway of light to the Island of Merrinhault. However, the cost was high. As I arrived on the Island I found my power drained from me. A quarter of my magical energies were taken for just trying to transport myself through the void.

I walked to the Bar to recover... thinking myself safe from any more of Existence's evil tricks. But from the cover of darkness three black clad thieves drew weapons on me. Three of my spells left would surely finish them off. I called to the elements to make them run in fear – but nothing happened. Existence had stolen more from me than these thieves would. I tried again, this time calling for the power to fumble the weapon from the leader's hand. It fell and I grabbed it, thinking to deprive him of it.

The weapon seemed oddly weighted in my hand, as though I was familiar with its use. Another "gift" of Existence I assume. Thank you, oh great cosmic power for giving any thug the ability to pick up a sword and threaten me with it. I brought the sword up and parried their first blow to see them run from something that had appeared on the ground behind me.

Six creatures made up of fire had fallen from the sky. I just want a bottle of mead – that's all I want. Can I not get to the bar? I threw my final two magicks into striking the creatures to the ground. Something that existence had not managed to take from me. The others kept coming... Playing around with the world seems to have affected the Planes as well. Is this an accident, has Existence made a humble error, or is

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this part of its evil plot.

As the creatures of fire kept coming I started to run, dropping the Ne'er do well's sword as I ran. The creatures stopped and performed a macabre rite – probably to Existence – and the sword was consumed. I couldn't help but look, but it stopped them chasing me and I made it to the bar.

So a pox on the so called Immortal Patterns that have destroyed this world for their own enjoyment, and raise a glass to the humble tea-shop that did what all of us dreamt of; Placed a dagger into Existence's heart.

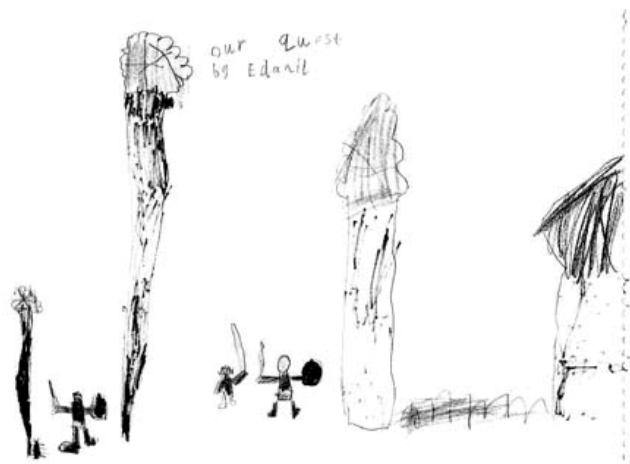
Mission Report

by A erun age 8 from House Falcon in the Harts
Pictures by Edanil age 6 from House Falcon in the Harts



Wilhelm was sleeping a lot because of a demon that only children can see. One of her friends let me and a bear be leaders. So we set off to do our mission then I saw some demons. We attacked them they used magic to strike us down, shatter our weapons and they used enchanted weapons. Then some more demons and one elemental came. They did the same damage. Then we went to the mages guild and we got someone going to help us about the demon. Then we went to the Vipers' camp. We told them about the demons. And then me, Mr Poll and Edanil had some lunch then we went to the Oric's place. We tormented some monsters and talked to the Oric and then teleported to the outpost of Toluria I think? We attacked demons and zombies then my money fell out of my pocket then we went through the path of bad dreams then suddenly monsters appeared. We fought them they were outnumbered a guardian was surrounded she gave us some money and vanished.

The prince will be awake soon Lady Stesha, we promise, and King Edward too. I spoke to the Lord Regent of Albion that Prince Edward will be awake soon and I liked speaking to him and he is a nice person.



We went to see Lady Stesha of the Vipers and her friends. One of her friends was a demon but a friendly one. Lady Stesha told us that Prince

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Arabian Law as Applied to This Moot

Arabia does not have laws covering the entire country. Each Sultanate is governed by a Sultan. He is in charge of the administration of his sultanate and keeping law and order. This is done through the use of Arabian Knights, armed men loyal to the Sultan. They patrol his lands and make sure the peace is kept. As we will not be directly in the city, rather camped near 'The Forgiving Circle' the Sultan of Abbabis will not be sending his knights to keep the order. Instead this duty will be down to the Militia.

The laws as they shall be enforced are:

1. Hospitality is a keystone of Arabic culture. To act in a disrespectful way to your host is vile, and will not be tolerated.
2. Do not commit the sin of murder.
3. Do not steal.
4. Do not sell goods that are false in their nature. To sell a forgery is akin to theft and goes against the good of trade and so the good of Arabia.
5. Djin and Genie are the most respected of Arabia's creatures. To harm them is to be cursed by the land itself. The curse may not last very long as the people of the land will come for your blood.
6. Necromancers will be tolerated on Arabic Lands – but any who practice necromancy must bear a licence to do so. The patterns of the corrupted must be cleansed once their service is done.
7. Destruction of non-sentient unliving will be treated as destruction of property, which falls under theft. Destruction of sentient unliving will be treated as murder.

Each faction shall have its own law in force within its own camp and shall, by tradition, be able to treat their camp as their own land for the duration of this meeting.

Shock as Guildmaster Dies at Great Erdrejan Fayre

The Alchemist guild is still in mourning today, as they come to terms with the shock loss of Guildmaster Joshua.

The surprise death of Joshua occurred while he

was on stage during the opening ceremony of the Great Erdrejan Fayre much to the horror of the gathered crowd. He took the stage and had a word or twenty to say to the Wolves Faction over the loss of his ancestors' temple in Silver Falls. More importantly he was concerned with their lack of effort in taking it back.

Suddenly and somewhat mysteriously he then collapsed on stage and despite receiving healing assistance quickly he passed away from this realm into the arms of his ancestor. Tests were carried out to make sure no foul play was afoot but all seemed normal. The current official cause is he had over exerted himself during the speech and old age took its toll but other causes have not been ruled out yet.

Official Alchemist Guild sources stated the guild is in deep mourning over Joshua's passing and the guild will be holding several remembrance parties in his name over the coming moots and gathering of 1107. Grand Master Captain Thorn Ashrow said "I know for one that I am going to miss him, he was cranky but he meant well. He was a character who will go down in the history of the guilds as being one of the few Guild Masters who passed away seemingly to natural causes".

Also the guild have decided to honour his last words in which he stated he would now be selling poisons openly from the guild to aid the factions in getting rid of vermin. The guild wishes to point out that people's views of what are vermin may differ from theirs and therefore cannot take responsibility for people who deliberately misuse them.

Alchemists Research New Reagents

Several teams of Alchemists are currently researching the new reagents released by the Guild masters at the Great Erdrejan Fayre.

What these mysterious liquids may or may not do is yet to be determined. Rumours are however rife of their possible powers in making or improving the many potions and other liquids the guild currently produces.

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The Guild masters have stated that although people are speculating on what these liquids do only time will reveal their true purpose and people should be very careful when attempting to use them.

Anyone wishing to seek knowledge of them should contact the guild, which will be holding teaching sessions on anything they discover.

Alchemist Guild Announce Price Fixing Drive

Over the last 10 years the guild has become more and more concerned over the costs of its services and for what their wares have been sold. The guild sees these services and wares sold by others at vastly over inflated prices

After much discussion, the Guild masters have decided it is time to buck the trend and stop the booming inflation affecting the economy of Erdreja.

Therefore, to aid this cause they have announced a maximum selling price of all liquids made in their labs by guild and non-guild members alike. Master Qui Gon stated "The guild masters as a whole believe our services have drifted into the hands of the rich and have left many of the normal people of Erdreja unable to afford to buy our creations. We now have fixed prices, which will still allow a good profit for those who make them but also allow the whole of Erdreja to afford them. Anyone who deliberately sells at higher prices will no longer be welcome to use our laboratory facilities to make their wares, as we believe this will benefit the majority of the people in this realm and if we step on a few ego's I will have no regrets in doing so. We will not be selling bulk to anyone and anyone found trying to do so will not be welcome again in the alchemist guild".

All of the factions will benefit from this not only in the short term with cheaper wares from the guild but in the long run as we struggle to bring the rampant inflation down to a more acceptable level.

Postulations On Pyro-People

By Pillow the Hypothesiser

Didn't Cosaint look nice at the Fayre, standing on the covered stage, smiling and tall in front of all you miserable beggars as he spread his message of optimism and hope? I think there's a message there for all of us: Buy An Umbrella.

Anyway, the truly observant amongst you might have spotted the occasional mobile campfire wandering around during the festivities. Some you might even have been among those eager masses that huddled around them for warmth, prodding them with weapons to stir up the blaze. Seriously guys, just bring a blanket – it's so much easier.

These Fiery visitors were found by Those Who Knows to be a wee bit corrupted (as well as hungry for your tasty magics). What's more, a friendlier emissary of Damp explained to us that the Plane of Fire was growing in power and throwing the others out of balance. Now why would that be, you probably don't ask?

Anyone remember that little hoo-hah at the Gathering last year? The battle to defeat the Ancient Dragons of Evil, Fire, Fate and Time? Well for those who care about scores, we only managed half the job. Fire and Evil got away to we know not where. Hmm, corrupted Ancient of Fire unaccounted for, Plane of Fire being infused with corrupting power. Make the connection, or moo like a cow!

("But what about Evil?" I hear you murmur disinterestedly. Everyone enjoy the new game at the Fayre called 'Spot the Surprisingly Powerful Zombies'..?)

So where does that leave us? (Next Headline: Testament Article Poses Dozens of Irritating Questions. Does Anyone Care?) We have a possible lead on our two missing Ancients. We have corrupted Fire Elementals popping out and trying to steal magics to further feed their Plane. We have Earth Elementals being forced into this Plane by the expansion of Fire, and not being too happy about it. We have very little idea of how to deal with the problem, and we have the whole

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happy hierarchy of Creation waiting to descend on us. Here we go again!

Anyway, some other things probably happened as well. The Archers had a tiff from some dryads on the pull; the Armourers invited the Bards to a party, but forgot to put them on the guest list; games were played and sogginess made. And now we all get to enjoy the repercussions. Have fun and/ or die people, but do it with style!

Thoughts on Changes

By Themi, High Bard of Albion

So, there's been a Cataclysm. Almost everyone lost someone they cared about in that final awful battle against Entropy. But has anything really changed? There are still ten factions; the guilds are all in place and everything worked well enough to pull off an excellent first Great Erdrejan Fayre.

But if you look beneath the surface the changes are apparent. Over the past few months, Erdreja has shifted. Mountains have risen and fallen as She shifts in her sleep, new landscapes have been revealed, nations have hidden themselves away and more Wellsprings are rumoured to have sprung into existence across the Egg. It needs to be remembered that two of the Entropy creatures escaped the final battle of the Cataclysm. As a result, they are stalking our world and their effects must be watched for and dealt with once found. The embodied Patterns are of course, gone banished by Existence; with agreement made by all Erdrejans to kill any seen to reappear upon this plane, lest they again damage our world.

Even on a smaller scale though, differences can be seen. The effect of Feast upon the world has begun to manifest itself, with factional barriers now so weak that people have found themselves simply falling through these supposedly impregnable walls. Transport circles too now seem to require an excess of time and effort to convince them to work at all. With the Mages Guild apparently unable to return these things to full strength, this reporter can only ponder the further consequences on magics such as the Ritual of Peace. It seems that the predicted consequence of

Feast upon Erdreja is coming true. Soon it will indeed be gruel and mediocrity for all.

People are also beginning to notice changes in themselves, with new spells and abilities manifesting in the unwary. Even the simple curse 'Blast' seems to have taken on perilous new meaning. Fire elementals stalked the fields of the Great Erdrejan Fayre and there is much speculation upon the movement of the elemental planes.

However it seems unlikely with an event of such world-changing proportions that these are the only changes we will see in our lives after the Cataclysm.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir/ Madam,

On behalf of his gracious majesty King Edward Pendragon and the Harts of Albion I would just like to take this opportunity to publicly express our gratitude to the guilds of Erdreja, and in particular the Guild of Bards, for their respective roles in the creation and hosting of the first Great Erdrejan Fayre. Not only was the event met with great enthusiasm amongst our people but the pleasant atmosphere of the Fayre marked a welcome change from the dubious contrivances of Orcus and Spittle in years past. Whilst it is sad that some present were unable to restrain themselves from visiting violence upon other factions I hope this will not cause you to consider your efforts any less of a success, and we look forward to the prospect of a bigger and better Fayre next year.

In the service of the Pendragon

William Hulce

Lord Regent of Albion

Albion Crashes Out Of Cup

The Albion jigger team crashed out of the Erdrejan World Jigger Cup at the second round stage, the sting of defeat only lessened by the fact that it meant players and supporters could retreat from the bitterly cold and unrelenting rain, at this

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years Grand Erdrejan Fayre.

In the dry of a Saturday afternoon, Albion's people turned out in force to cheer on their team against the Bards' Guild, hosts for the weekend's activities. And, like good hosts, the Bards allowed Albion's men and women to run riot for the first third, being able to find nothing to counter the pace of the quicks or the skill of the spears. With a passion fired by a raucous crowd which possibly undermined the reputation of the Harts for continual generosity of spirit in the sporting field, goal after goal was scored with little reply, the Bards at one point abandoning all thought of attack to attempt to stem the flow with the famous, if derided "hedgehog" formation around their bucket. On the final whistle the Harts were rewarded with dancing from the cheerleaders and singing from the fans.

The second round was played in a colder, wetter surround, and the initial lack of passion shown by the players both quietened the fans and allowed the Tarantulas to race into an early, unassailable lead. In a niggly, unfriendly match, both players and fans came back into voice and with goals - at one point closing from twelve down to within five of the eventual runners-up. However, despite the defeat fans and cheerleaders kept singing to the very end.

The Tarantulas went on to reach the final against the scouts guild, where they were defeated in a close match 14-12, with generally acclaimed man of the tournament Finsbury Park the difference between two closely matched teams.

Sports Report, The Londinium Evening Post Summer 1107

Baking Competition

The Harts of Albion would like to announce the Queen Elspeth Memorial Cake Competition, to be held at the second Moot.

If you feel you're a dab hand at baking, why not enter!

Categories are:

- Cakes
- Pie / tart / flan

- Best decorated cake

Absolutely no scones.

All entries should be made with a mind to taste as well as appearance. The current world situation will not be accepted as an excuse for poor taste quality.

See Lady Katerina Grimmer for details if interested.

Any poisoning will be severely frowned upon and referred to the Lord Provost's office.

An Obituary: House Charenten

At the Great Erdrejan Fayre Lord Julian Charenten, Duke of Winchester, Acting Lord Marshal and cousin to King Edward Pendragon, and Lady Aisla Charenten the Seneschal of Silverlake, were assassinated, together with all of their household present, on the orders of the newly appointed Lord Regent, William Hulce. After the act, he claimed the Charenten household had conspired to commit treason. No accusation of such was formally brought before them while they lived, and thus they had no chance to defend themselves with words or arms. The assassins used a poison to render them helpless before butchering them like cattle.

Julian was a brash, proud and difficult man, but a more generous and true friend I and Albion have never known. Aisla, his wife, was his equal or better in martial skill, and while Albion was not her place of birth she fought to defend it tirelessly, as did all of those who were slain that day. The tally of those who fell to the assassins' blades was seven all told:

Lord Julian Charenten.

Lady Aisla Charenten.

Theodore Charenten, renowned astronomer and astrologer.

Suhail min Zahn, High Mage of Albion and storyteller of note.

Thomas Farenden, a merchant and retainer of the household.

Seacat Charenten, a mere child, the Duke's niece and ward.

A household servant.

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There are many rumours that Julian was plotting treasonous acts; the victor can write history as they please when their enemies are dead. But there are those who will not be silenced, and who will remember the steadfast and true friends they have lost.

What will befall the remaining members of the House who were not present, including Sheriff Enias Charenten, and Julian and Aisla's infant child Angharad, is anyone's guess.

Requiescat in pace

Hadrian Constantine

The Harts – An Expose

Told to our reporter by A. Nonymous, an ex-Hart

“The Harts are really weird” my source tells me, “I’m well out of there”. “It’s only now I’ve joined another faction I realise quite how weird they really were. For a start, what was going on with these faction musters? I realise that other factions have them too, but what was this whole business with the limbo dancing? They made us go in a conga line round the command tent, and then we had to limbo under [censored for national security]. And it was so low. It has given me chronic back problems to this day. And then after the faction muster was over we had to do it all over again. I used to dread musters, but my position was such that my absence would have been missed. And after all, I felt obliged to set a good example to my subordinates; though I’m sure people wondered why I spent some of the musters hiding in the lavatory. I always just blamed too much of mum’s eel stew, but I’m sure some of them must have suspected.”

“Recently I’ve heard some dark rumours about the deaths of House Charenten, and people claiming that the Harts did some of their own faction members, and I would not be at all surprised if this was true, because the Charentens were amongst some of the most vocal proponents for the abolition of the ceremonial limbo. Another key factor, I believe, in their deaths was their opposition to the so called ‘shadow command’. Oh I realise that this makes it sound all dark and necromantic and stuff, but it’s nothing like that.

Basically what it is, is that the people who claim to be in charge are mere puppets.”

“So who, I hear you ask is actually in charge? Who is this shadowy master of power who sits at the nexus of all the webs linking his nefarious schemes? Well, in fact, it’s nothing like that. It’s all so embarrassing. Whenever the Harts faction needs to make a decision – whether to go to war, who to ally with, what flavour of slush drink to buy – they use ferretomancy. No I did not just make that up. It’s a valid word. Look it up in the dictionary. Anyway, they have this huge box of ferrets, and when they need to make a decision everyone goes and bows down to the ferrets and makes their opinion known. Then, according to the behaviour of the ferrets, a decision is reached. What sort of behaviour? Well, mainly biting. They’re mad about being shut in the box, you see.”

“I, and many others who are still in the Harts and therefore afraid to speak up, feel it has to end. We have lost too many good men this way. Leastways, they’re not men after an encounter with those ferrets.

“I know this sounds unlikely, but just look back at recent Harts’ foreign policy. You know it makes sense.”

Editorial Commentary

It will no doubt have come to the attention of many, that some of the articles which have seen print in the Testament, both in this edition and in others, have put forward what can only be described as opinion, rather than fact. The question of what to print and what to withdraw has ever been a sticky one. While we have, in the past, withdrawn articles which we have felt to be blatantly inflammatory or, on at least one occasion, an attempt to use this publication to progress a terrorist agenda, we are always very cautious about doing same. After all, might it not be considered as much a form of bias to refuse to print an opinion as to allow its opposite number be circulated? Accordingly, we would ask that any who feel slighted by opinions expressed in these pages to formulate a written rebuttal of same, that their side of the argument might be afforded equal chance to be read.