

The Testament

Great Erdreja Fair, 1108 – Opening Edition

ENTROPY—the biggest threat yet

Cheiron, April 1108

Entropy is once more threatening our world, and if it succeeds there will be no world left. This time it is being more cunning than ever before. I hope that this article will shed a little light on the subject and that people who read it will spread the message, and hopefully stand together to defend Erdreja.

What is Entropy?

Perhaps I should start by explaining exactly what Entropy is. I'll try and keep it simple...

The world we live in is the surface of a giant Dragon's egg. There is a baby Dragon, Erdreja, inside the egg waiting to hatch. In the beginning there were sixteen 'Ancients', or smaller dragons, whose purpose was to influence Erdreja to be like themselves. For instance, the Ancient of Good wanted to make Erdreja Good, and the Ancient of Evil wanted to make Erdreja Evil. The idea was that, with all sixteen Ancients doing this, a balanced baby dragon would eventually hatch.

During the Elder Race Wars, some of the dragons were used as weapons by the races of Erdreja, and as a result four were destroyed. These dragons were Evil, Fire, Fate and Time. But, because the dragons were immortal, they could not die. Their patterns went into the Void and stayed there in stasis. Gradually, over thousands of years, they became warped. They still saw their purpose as making Erdreja like themselves, but now they wanted to put her into stasis. They wanted to create a stillborn Dragon.

The four dragons became what we call 'Entropy'.

If it succeeds in its aims, it won't just be the death of a baby Dragon, but the death of all those living on its surface, and all ancestors associated with them.

What has happened so far?

The four entropic dragons showed themselves at the Gathering of Nations 1106AF as four 'Masks': each Mask representing a different dragon. That year we managed to untaint two of the 'Masks' – Time and Fate.

In 1107AF, the Entropic dragon of Fire attempted to take over the Plane of Fire. However, like fire, it was unsubtle and we also succeeded in untainting that dragon.

There is one entropic dragon left – the dragon of Evil. And it is clever and cunning....

What is happening now?

Entropy is attempting to take over the Plane of Unlife. During the cataclysm, Existence wove that Plane into the fabric of Erdreja. It now belongs, it is part of the world. If Entropy succeeds in taking control of this plane, it shall not be long before the rest of Erdreja is in its grasp.

Satuun, along side the other Aspects, Ancestors (both light and dark), and forces resident on the Plane of Unlife are standing united to fight Entropy. However, Entropy has taken the battle onto our plane also. Light ancestors questioned by their followers on where their loyalties should lie have called upon their faithful to unite with those fighting Entropy.

Entropy is being cunning. It is veiling itself in other guises and offering people anything that they desire – whether this be personal power, the destruction of unlife, or any other ambition. With various faces it is persuading people to work for its cause. One set of people who have already gone over to the side of Entropy are the Fae called the Akari. They are from Telluria (a place outside the Heartlands). Entropy offered them immortality and power. It has granted them such – they are now extremely powerful unliving Fae Lords – and they are fighting for Entropy. Various places in the Heartlands have already fallen to them, York in the nation of Albion is but one example.

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Entropy, through the people working for it, is tainting the land wherever it can. When standing on Entropically tainted land, Entropic creatures, such as the Akari, cannot be controlled or dismissed. Further to this, any living creature who stands on the land will die within minutes, and any non-entropic unliving will be tainted within twice that time. We stand little chance of winning the war if it is fought on such land.

What can we do?

It is possible to cleanse tainted land through rites. Call upon the powers which you are faithful to – your Ancestors, or powers from the Plane of Life – and use them to drive the taint out. Conduct rites to protect your land from Wraith-taint before it happens. If you cannot conduct rites, there is still much you can do. Spread the word, bring the Ancestors of your lands together to fight against Entropy as one. Be vigilant, try to learn as much as you can, and tell others.

I would ask for people to put their enmities aside. Let Light work alongside Dark, and living work alongside unliving. The non-entropic unliving are one of our most powerful weapons when fighting the forces of Entropy – they are resistant to many of its weapons. Let us all stand with the Aspects, the Ancestors, and Satuun to fight for the Planes of Unlife, for if they fall everything is lost.

If you have any doubts about anything stated here, please, talk to your Ancestors, ask them to confirm what has been said. Or come and talk to the Guilds and ask what they have learnt.

Unfortunately there is not enough space here to go into the detail I would like. More detailed information on how to fight our enemy will be made available, and for those of you who wish to understand the mechanics of how entropic stasis works, it will be discussed in ‘The Looking Glass’ (available from the Bank of Erdreja).

Bards Guild on Entropy

The Bards Guild is fully behind the efforts by members of various factions to learn all we can to thwart this latest, most serious menace.

We would encourage all who have intelligence on this matter to bring it to our attention so that we can ensure it is disseminated far and wide.

Through sharing and co-operation lies victory; through isolation, secrecy and hostility lies destruction.

Brave Southlanders Expunge Corrupting Taint

The brave and noble members of the Jackal Faction have acted once more to defend their life and liberty, most recently on the mystical island of Punt. This island rose from the waves as a result of the Cataclysm, and its icy nature was maintained by Talius, a powerful elemental.

Talium became corrupted by forces unknown, and was slain by the Faction's expeditionary force, to protect those creatures living on the island, and to deny this corrupted power to any malefactors who would make use of it.

The unique nature of the weather of Punt occasioned much comment, as it was an island formed mostly of ice, a habitat preferred by Talium. With his removal, the weather has changed to be more in keeping with the rest of the Southlands, with potentially dire consequences for Punt.

To maintain the island, the weather must be changed once more, and controlled to remain in its unique state, or Punt will once more return to the depths of the ocean. The state of the island is degrading quickly, so to complete their victory, the Jackals must act sooner rather than later.

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BATTLE OF THE BARDS - Dragons choose new High Bard on the eve of battle

As the Dragon army amassed ready to drive the Fomori out of the western provinces of Erin and back into the sea, another battle was about to be fought – a very private one that was very publicly decided on the eve of the greater campaign. The battle for the title of High Bard of the Dragons – responsible for keeping the faction history, maintaining its morale, organising its entertainment, and acting as herald and voice of the Dragons. The job has been done for many years by Llwyd ap Neb, of Borthawr, but on the eve of war he was challenged to defend his title by Padraig ap Taran, whom Llwyd himself had declared Bard some years earlier.

“I was half expecting a fight, or at least a blank refusal” said ap Taran, who was recuperating from wounds sustained fighting followers of Hafgan at the time. “But Llwyd explained that he considered himself the bard of Maclan, our former God-king, and not of Rhodri, the current Lord Dragon. He was waiting to see who would challenge him for the post rather than step down.”

Ap Taran, who has led a long and varied career as ritualist, sea captain, diplomat and priest, spoke to us from his extensive Caer Danon estate, where he outlined his plans for the faction. “I’ve already negotiated the building of a new Bards Guild house in the lovely seaside location of Derry. I hope to make the place a training ground for a new generation of bards, who will of course have to pass my own rigorous testing in the four key areas – history, entertainment, creativity and diplomacy. I also hope to encourage greater co-operation with the Guild, as I feel they have a lot to learn from us, and us, to a lesser degree, from them.

I also will use the role to keep issues affecting us at the top of the inter-factional agenda, such as exposing and bringing to justice the murderers of King Kumman at last year’s Gathering, and the shameful behaviour of the bewigged fop faction who I shall not mention here for carrying it out.”

Padraig ap Taran is 30 and currently single. His interests include sailing, good food and drink, hearing new songs and stories, and ripping the throats out of Hafgan-worshippers before drinking their blood. Come to think of it, it’s no wonder he’s single.

So...what can we do for you?

Bards Guild Workshops

Wondering where on Erdreja you are? Lost in the post-Cataclysm blues? Getting swamped by bad guys and back stories? Or just want to learn a song, an instrument or a story?

Well, then come down to the Guild and see what we can do for you! We run impromptu workshops on anything you wish to learn, from the secrets of using our Library through to which came first – the Dragon or the Egg!

Whatever your curiosity, the Guild is here to fill you in!

Bards Guild Presents Who’s Rhyme is it Anyway?

An improvisation workshop plus entertainment experiment for its members. Ask at the Guild for more.

The Entertainers’ Competition

Sunday evening, 6-8pm, open to all:
entry a Silver Piece.

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Wanderings of a Master Tart

Greetings!

Well, since ye seem to have a keening for the ol' reports of my adventures, I thought I'd bring ye up to speed on my travels. [Well, OK, only one of ye does – but she's pretty and so the rest of ye can grin and bear it!]

Well, it's been a hard slog since the Guild calling came – it's not easy teaching those buxom maids the ins and outs of better wearing their corsets, and working on resisting the charms and temptations of the world. Who'd be a Master Bard, I ask ye?

Now, the winter saw the Bears finally bring an end to the tyranny and terror of Ciara and his haggish minions, who threatened to seize control of Lady Anu's underworld realms. After several years of clashes and battling, and much loss of good Caledonian lives, in a mighty titanic battle the forces loyal to the Queens and their allies were triumphant – and the wayward ancestor put down.

It started well, I thought, when we were met by a lovely lass and her guiding lantern – but it wasn't long before we encountered the underworld's less pleasant inhabitants. My own duty was to tread, with others, into the realm of 'Sorrow' – there to bring smile to those poor tortured souls who had lost all hope, and then to glean what information we could to restore the rightful lord [whilst chasing off the troublesome Nightmares and Bain Sidhe that tried to thwart us; it's never all talk with the Bards Guild!].

Meanwhile, our intrepid heroes ventured in groups to the other realms to restore them to Her Light – before we could finally summon and challenge Ciara himself. And what a titanic struggle it was! As he summoned all manner of the Underworld denizens as well as those minions we had already faced once and crushed. However, we restored him to Her Light with a righteous kicking and all is well once more...

Come the Spring, I found myself joining the Dragon warband to teach the former a thing or two. The ancestors, of course, had other ideas – and, as Master Cosaint turned to me and said 'So, Kianan... you've been to the underworld. What can we expect?' I knew things were about to become interesting!

This time, alas, there was no cute chick to guide us – though we did bring a rather lovely priestess with us - but there was a beautiful princess in need of rescuing, an ancestral boar and its kin to hunt [and subsequently some fabulous eating!] and, of course, hordes of Hafganites trying to kill or corrupt us as well as several screaming nymphs. It seems our friends under the border are having similar troubles to Caledonia, yet with many a sausage to eat we prevailed on this strange shore.

That was, of course, preceded by the successful trip to Forever Tale – where the Guild and its allies finally laid to rest the last of the three 'aspects' that had been plaguing us for some time: Vox, the Storyteller [the others being the Treeman and the Gamesmaster]. Which left just enough time for the Bruid's Beltaine festival [and excellent hospitality!] and then a trip to Lantia to round up yet another of the Bards Guild's foes: for, indeed, Thrydwulf is now no more.

And here we are again, another Fayre, another dilemma to resolve...

