

# The Testament

## GEF, 1109 – Opening Edition

### Success in Persia

*Abdul Faisal Mehdi*

The Jackal Faction gathered in Autumn 1108 to throw the Ottoman invaders from their lands once and for all. A daring raid deep into enemy held territory sowed confusion into the ranks of the enemy, allowing the brave and noble warriors time to build a base of operations, and lead incisive missions throwing further dismay amongst the Ottoman.

Until just before the mission, the Ottoman were believed to be a honourable foe, but they were seen to be consorting with dark forces. Al-Hujja was a name much whispered, and he was eventually uncovered and defeated in a great battle, when the leader of the Ottoman, Great Khan Mustafic, was also slain.

The news was not all good. Although the Ottoman forces were pushed back, their allies managed to corrupt the nearby Ritual Circle. and a dark taint is spreading across the far Western corner of the Southlands.

### Bards Guild Workshops

Wondering where on Erdreja you are? Lost in the post-Cataclysm blues? Getting swamped by bad guys, barely living 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!

### Entertainers Competition

Saturday night, 6pm in the Guild Tent  
Cryers' competition, to be held alongside

### Moot Points against the Akari

*News from the Front*

The first Moot 1109 saw the nations come together on the Isle of Far Reach, in Mauritania, hosted by the Unicorns faction. There awaited a number of vampires and their unliving minions, servants of luxury who pledged themselves eternal service once their own extravagances were done.

On the last day of the Moot, after a titanic battle against the allied forces, the last of the unliving threat was destroyed. Sadly not without cost. We salute the fallen, and join their comrades in mourning their loss and celebrating their lives.

We also salute the Bards Guild members who risked life and limb to report this news, keep us safe, and bring us ice cream on the field of battle: through two battle lines, no less.

But, of course, no party these days would be complete without the thrice-damned Akari, and so we sent forth our roving reporter to discover what she could through her persuasive charm!

One faction revealed that they are part-way through a clandestine operation to deal a 'grievous blow' to the Akari, though wisely kept their plans to themselves! They gave us this message: 'so long as... nations remain unified,' they shall be triumphant.

Whilst on the subject of co-operation, a series of rites and rituals took place during the Moot to further hamper our shared foe and strengthen our forces against them. Rites to remind the Ancient of its true nature and duties also continue apace, with much shouting and waving of sticks.

Successful rites have also been performed to cleanse various ancestors of the corrupted taint, and the Testaments also hear tell of a ritual going sorely wrong and spreading the corruption further within their lands: terrible news, and our hearts go out to those that dwell in the lands affected.

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The so-called 'Light' and 'Dark' factions have been meeting their cohorts to agree upon 'unified symbols' to rally the Heartlands behind and to select a champion from each faction to lead the fighting and other efforts against the foe. Speak to your ambassadors for more information.

We also hear tell of fearsome Akari assassins, corrupted elementals that weather storms of blows and seemingly come through unscathed, who are hunting specific members of the Heartland Nations.

The Testaments are informed that these foul creatures have some 'list' of names of specific Heartlanders who have come to the notice of the Akari for their diligent efforts in thwarting their malignant plans. [Should any be reading this, this reporter would like to make it known that he/she/it is merely the messenger, reporting news, and any feelings or bias detected remains solely the fault of the type-setters.]

However, there have been many successful thwartings of these attempts – and there are those 'on the list' alive to tell the tale!

Sadly, it is also our duty to report the fall of Habeeb of the Jackal nation, and his companion, caught short in a transport circle with no place to go. His loss is a sore blow to our united efforts against the foe. We look forward to tales of his heroics from those that knew him.

Lastly, reports have reached us of Akari assaults on the camps of the various factions: one faction met their attempts at discourse with a firm shield wall and a dedicated rendering of the foe unto – and I quote – “properly dead” gribbles.

And, in the words of our Host from the Moot: “Death to the Akari! Crush to the Face!”

### Dear Friends,

During the First Moot of 1109, a Council of Incantors met to deliberate the appointment of a Champion to stand against the Akari in the coming conflict. On the final day of the moot, five nominees were put forward to take this responsibility. After a discussion amongst these nominees, a majority decision put me forward to lead this august group as a Champion of the Trinity of Faith. A position I humbly accepted.

The idea of the Trinity is a simple one. Its aspects encompass the majority of faiths amongst the people of our nations. There is a Hunter aspect, a Guardian aspect and a Nurturer aspect. Each held in equal measure. In truth, when I sat at that table I knew each person was capable of taking up this mantle. Now as I have spoken to others I see that each and everyone one of us must become a champion if we are to defeat the enemy that faces us all.

If you wield a sword, a shield, a bow, can cast magic, heal, make a potion, or any other ability that might aid us, I, on behalf of all those who sat at that table, ask you to stand. We face an enemy that threatens everything we hold dear and one that must be opposed by every effort that we can muster. Already, many have been lost to this fight and indeed, many more may yet be taken from us. Yet no matter what, we must resist the taint of these Akari and their blight upon our world - to the end.

Whatever you can do to aid Erdreja, we need you.

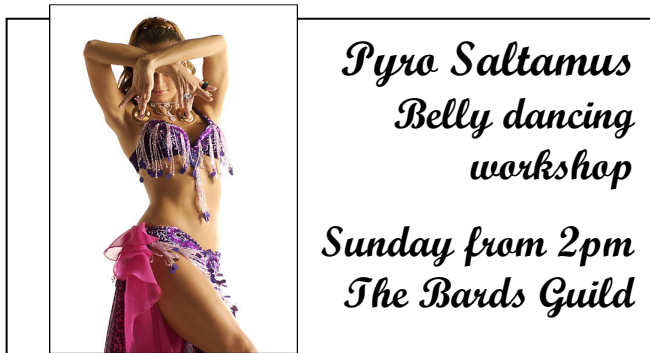
*Pericles*

*Champion of the Trinity*

*If you have any news, information or reports on the battles against the Akari or how to deal with this horrid menace, then send your pearls of wisdom to the Guild or to the Testaments.*

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## The Mages guild: a hero in our midst

Lord Waste (age unknown), a prominent member of the Mages guild, and a resident of the Viper faction, saved many people and prevented an Akari assassination attempt at this year's spring moot. The attempt happened in a ritual circle which had both the Akari spy and Lord Waste within its boundaries.

Once the seal was up, the assassin took his opportunity to strike. The ritualist was fatally wounded and left dying and the healer was slept and removed from the action. Seizing the moment, Lord Waste dived into action, engaging the assassin in a battle of magic.

Needless to say, Lord Waste was victorious and, through his actions, the ritual was able to be brought to a non-explosive, if unsuccessful, ending. The hero of the moment was quoted as saying "It hasn't sunk in yet, I just reacted when I had to." Truly this is what heroes are made of; the ability to react in times of trouble. He has shown us that a noble heart can en-braven even the smallest imp.

It was said at the time that the Mages guild did not lower the seal or act satisfactorily during the incident. It has since been clarified that the ritual seals are under control of the Watchers of Erdreja who are COMPLETELY separate from the Mages Guild. Claims were also made that the assassin was from the Mages guild; this has been confirmed as INCORRECT.

A thorough paperwork search has revealed no documents to suggest this assassin was in any association with the Mages guild or any other guild. Also, no evidence of any particular factional or guild alliance was found on the assassin's person. It was also primarily through the courageous and decisive actions of an active and signed on member of the Mages guild that these events were brought to a conclusion.

## The guild welcomes: New Captain

A new captain has been suggest, selected and elected by the Mages guild. He is the first Dacoatl of the Golden city hailing from Jackal lands. The new captain accepted his commission at the Mages council meeting on Sunday evening at this year's spring moot. We look forward to seeing the guild guards expand and improve under his experience and we will follow his career with interest.

The speaker was quoted as saying "I for one welcome him" and all members should seek out our new captain and become familiar.

## Another new face around the guild

No-one could have failed to notice the confusion caused by the arrival of the Maestro within the Mages guild. It would not be an exaggeration to say that his arrival ruffled a few feathers and did create work for the masters and Arch-Mages due to the rumours of a "sorcerers' guild".

These rumours have now been quietened and it can be explained that any confusion was due to the vagaries of language and dialect. His position in the guild is still being debated by the master Mages and we will keep you updated. Anyone who is curious to meet the Maestro can seek him at the Mages guild, he is the one in plate-mail.

**Don't forget The Mages guild meeting and update at 5:30pm every full day of every gather this year. All members welcome.**

*Written by Celadius Sunnichild (ArchM.) Speaker  
Approved by Driftwood (ArchM.) Neutrality focus*

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### Lyander, Zyme and the Yellow Sign

Troops of the yellow sign sowed carnage across the market place at the first moot in what appears to be a first attack against the wider nations of the heartlands. With the notable exception of a fleshcrafter, who fell in an attempted assault on the Paladins of Lloth in the guild tent area, and caused wide spread destruction in the alchemists guild, when his corpse exploded into shards of bone, the yellow sign's campaign has been solely targeted against the Tarantulas. Perhaps, it was the death of his general and original host Lyander at the hands of a multi-national war party at the recent consecration of the new Incantor's guild headquarters near the Underdark city of Dyer'Turic, which has finally focused the attention of the yellow sign on the surface nations.

What is known of this menace? The Tarantulas were first drawn to the city of Dechenza in 1106, when Adin D'Brassik's remaining forces marched on the city. Facing an army, whose numerical superiority they could not beat, the Tarantulas discovered a tomb, sealed by 4 locks, echoing with the promise of power enough to destroy D'Brassik. Nathaniel of the Wardens followed the instructions contained within scrolls found near the tomb and used one of the primary elements (earth, air, fire and water) to destroy each of the locks. The words from within proved true and for 25 minutes, Nathaniel's body blazed with power, as he decimated Adin D'Brassik's army with storms of magebolts and waves of dismissing power. By the time the magic finally released Nathaniel, the yellow sign had arisen from the tomb and taken possession of the closest body, that of Zyme, a paladin of Lloth. Zyme thanked the Tarantulas and informed them that he would see them shortly.

True to his word, Zyme attended the big gatherings of the year, offering the Tarantulas what he called "Utopia", if only they would follow him. His initial approaches were not hostile, but by the Gathering, he resorted to the ultimatum,

"Join or Die!", but declared hostilities would not commence until the impending cataclysm had passed.

Although the message of utopia was not heeded by the nobles of the Tarantula nation, its words found fertile ground in the ears of the downtrodden of the Underdark, badly shaken by the cataclysm and the ensuing hardships of the aftermath, and in April 07, the city of Matron Mother Naxos De Fey and the current capital of the Tarantula nation erupted in revolt, orchestrated by the newly formed cult of the yellow sign. The Tarantulas failed to curb the riots and Guallidurth fell to the yellow sign, although the Tarantulan forces were able to flee with a sceptre and throne, two of the original keys to Lyander's tomb. The Tarantulas also learned that Lyander was originally locked away by the sacrifice of 4 members of his bloodline. Meanwhile, news emerged that armies of the yellow sign had attacked the Cave of Whispers and Stormspike.

During the main gatherings of 1107, the yellow sign continued to harass the Tarantulas, sending out drones to attack them and cultist assassins to recover the lost lock pieces. Drones make up the mainstay of Lyander's armies and are purpose built from the flesh of fallen cultists to fulfil the role of soldiers. As their purpose is to fight, they have no intelligence or other abilities beyond combat skills.

In the campaign season of 1108, Tarantula forces assaulted and recaptured the city of Guallidurth from the yellow sign, as well as repelling the forces from the Cave of Whispers. However, in a disturbing turn of events, the cultist forces of the yellow sign proved be easy pickings for the undead forces of the Akari General Thorn, who had recently emerged as a third power in the Underdark and the city Trentarus, home of the newly freed Demonfey, came under heavy and sustained attack from Lyander's forces.

Summer 1108 saw the Tarantulas continually harassed by forces of Lyander's drones, backed up by the healing skills of his fleshcrafters.

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Fleshcrafters not only heal drones, but they are the means by which Lyander assimilates new knowledge and they can often be found studying the bodies of the fallen for new tools and abilities, which Lyander incorporates into his latest creations. Experiments of House Karrash'Morr showed that, contained within her is the third of the four keys, during a trip through her creator, Elkintaar's tower in Dobluthe. The Tarantulas finally secured a decisive victory over the yellow sign at Trentarus, only to learn that Lyander's forces were seeking to secure the power contained within the ruins of the second founding capital of the Dark Elf Empire, Telantiwar.

Forces of the Tarantula nation beat Lyander to Telantiwar in October 1108, only to find it was the Akari, who were actually assaulting the city; the yellow sign appearing content to watch from the background. With the help of the Baelnorn, an order of unliving paladins born from the spirits of those who died during the destruction of Telantiwar, the Tarantulas managed to secure the fourth key; the heart of a Golem trapped within Telantiwar, and activated the defences of Zy'Lyrr to protect the city from the Akari and the yellow sign. On the battlefield that day, the yellow sign betrayed his alliance with General Thorn of the Akari, taking the general as his third "improved" host and in doing so gained control of all Akari troops in the Underdark as well as a full knowledge of unliving.



By April 1109, the yellow sign had changed tactics and instead of trying to capture cities, it targeted the nobles of the Tarantula nation at a gathering to consecrate the new Incantor's guild headquarters, near Dyer'Turic. The ensuing battle did not go as planned; the yellow sign's forces were rebuffed from Dyer'Turic and his general Lyander fell during the fighting and was dedicated to Dracos.

The Tarantulas, meanwhile, had turned their attention to the locks for the tomb and a mission was undertaken to the heavily guarded stronghold of Dechenza, from where the first of the locks was successfully retrieved. At the first moot, a second lock was reclaimed from a heavily guarded cave in Mauritania.

So who is Lyander and what is the yellow sign? Lyander was a first age Elf, an immensely powerful ritualist and a member of the white council. Like many of the Elves of his time, he devoted a great deal of time to researching the issue of ageing. He sought answers by studying creatures from the void, which he gradually came to call Daemons and, in doing so, pioneered the art of daemonology.

He came to learn of a being of immense power beyond Erdreja that promised cures to aging and all the other ills that ravaged their lands. Lyander could not refuse such an offer and summoned this creature, the yellow sign, but it was too powerful for him to control and took possession of him, forcing him to kill his beloved wife Ashira. For many months, Lyander roamed freely, unleashing untold destruction upon the Elves, until they realised that they could not destroy him, but instead elected to lock him away in a permanent state of torpor. They locked him into a tomb sealed by four locks, four keys and the sacrifice of four of his living relatives. Of the origins of the yellow sign, little is actually known, save that it originated from beyond Erdreja, although it is believed that destroying it may be impossible and locking it away again may be the only resort.

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## Strathbraan

In the field by the trees she bade him farewell  
As he left with the heroes that day  
Not a tear did she though her heart filled with fear  
At the few words to her he did say

*For men must fight and women must wait  
To see if their men will come home  
But all that she saw was his eyes as he said  
I'll come to you at Strathbraan*

And the lady so wise with her far seeing eyes  
Gave the heroes her strength for the fray  
Then she watched them pass through,  
and all she could do  
Was watch as they went on their way

With just one sword to guard they left to wait hard  
By the trees of the forest so old  
In the sun dappled shade of an old forest glade  
They waited while blood ran cold

Then with shimmering light there came into sight  
Three figures familiar and fair  
One a mage, one a maid, and she saw unafraid  
That he'd kept his word to her there

*Nell McAylwyn*



Calling all ladies and gentlemen who wish to entertain! A marvellous opportunity awaits with... **the Ladies of Al Zuhara.**

Welcome will be given to all who wish to join, whether dancer, musician or beginner! Troupes are also welcome!

We can provide entertainment for feasts, gatherings and celebrations, as well as the celebrations of lives lost. Anyone wishing to book our entertainments may contact us through the bards guild.

For those wishing to join our company, we will be holding auditions and training sessions throughout the Fayre and at other gatherings throughout the year. See the bards noticeboard for details.

السياس  
الدقير

Maysa amat Sayyid al Dahab