

The Testament

Spring Moot, 1109 – Opening Edition

Spring offensives against the Akari

As 1108 saw the rise of the Akari menace across much of the Heartlands, and several circles fell to their foul corruption, it seemed as if all the hard labours on Helenica and our weathering the storm of the subsequent cataclysm might be for naught.

However, as the seasons turn, so too do fortunes, as us gypsies know only too well – and this Spring has seen a tide of successful strikes against the dark menace. Slowly, but surely, as we learn more about our foe, we are able to drive back the dark cloud above the wraith-tainted lands and grind down the abominations and enslaved forces sent against our people.

I have seen with my own eyes the dedication, determination, bravery and courage of several of the peoples of the Heartlands united against this foe – a sure sign of hope for our future. Indeed, on my last foray against them, folk from no less than four nations fought and bled side by side to rid our lands of their taint. And some welcome and familiar faces continue to rear their heads in each and every nation.

So fear not, for as winter turns into Spring, so too will the darkness of the Akari fall before the rays of hope and friendship.

Report on the Bears Mission

The Akari took an island, resurfaced during the cataclysm, with its own transport circle to the north of Caledonia. There they forged an army of unliving formor, amongst other abominations, with which to assail the mainland: taking the coastal fortress of Balnagowan before pushing south to the fallen capital of Pitlochry.

The heroes of the Bears nation, along with allies from 3 other factions, gathered on MacFinn lands to celebrate their Festival of Heroes – and also for a pre-planned strike against the Akari foe.

Having dealt with a local clan issue, where clansfolk had been turned against their clan and Queens by hardship and an ancestor of chaos who preyed on their vulnerability, the heroes celebrated hard – few daring to expect to weather the storm the ‘morrow brought.

Yet weather it they mostly did – and more – striking a mighty blow for Caledonia, and turning their fates in the war so far: from one of frantic defence to vengeful assault. It was a daring, and dangerous, plan but – under excellent military leadership – the Bears and their allies valiantly pulled together to win the day.

As two armies converged on the edge of the wraith-taint, luring Akari forces towards them, five transport groups transported in to the corrupted circle at Pitlochry and held a perimeter against a host of unliving whilst a cleansing rite was performed. The defenders were swamped by hordes of lesser unliving, led by monstrous unliving formor and wraiths, ghouls diving in, as the desperate Akari threw all they had to break the circle and interrupt the rite.

However, the Bear forces had planned well and equipped themselves for the task at hand, and with countless feats of personal bravery, the defenders protected the rite team long enough to complete the cleansing. As the groups began to pull back out again, further Akari forces teleported into the circle itself, assailing the defenders from within.

It made a bloody and terrifying battle, though too late to defeat our purpose. As the circle of defenders slowly closed, and the unliving dropped to our blades, the forces transported out of the circle. Alas, when stock was taken back on MacFinn lands, six of the mighty heroes who bravely formed the rearguard were found to be missing – and now presumed lost as the circle fell again to the Akari horde.

The entire battle took less than 15 minutes, yet was perhaps the most intense combat I have witnessed. It was an honour to fight alongside all who came with us that day, and the sacrifices will not be forgotten. My sincere condolences go to the clans who lost.

And now the armies of Caledonia have retaken the circle of Pitlochry, and the taint is broken – and retreating slowly back towards the sea.

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Report on the Lions Mission

The heroes of Lantia mustered on the Isle of Rhysarius, there to drive an Akari presence back into the sea. Both the Akari, and minions of the XIV, probed their defences, seeking the ancient Wonder of the Isle – which they finally ensured would not fall into enemy hands. The Akari and the XIV both had tried to make pacts with the Lions against the other, but both offers were soundly rejected – the XIV's aims are sadly too destructive for Lantia to consider any alliance against the Akari.

On Rhysarius, the Lions and allies fought both foes, and also watched them fight each other, as their scouts raced their foes to locate and secure the Wonder. They also ventured to Armengar, there to discover a new Wonder forming – and to broker a deal to placate another would-be foe. The deal bought peace for a time, time enough perhaps to seal the fate of the Akari presence in Lantia – and hopefully time to find what the Wonder seeks.

The Akari in Lantia have enslaved a race of fey, newly merged into Lantia from Orst, named the Choma – and these poor people were driven like lambs against the heroes' swords. With many feats of bravery and compassion, the Lions tried to reason with them and bolster their courage to resist the Akari leash, and many were saved or spared – but alas the whip master was never far behind, instilling terror.

On the third day, the Lions marshalled their forces to strike against the heart of the Akari presence on the Isle – and at the fearsome Mummy Lord that led their forces. Having demonstrated their powers over the last few days, the Incantors of the Lions came together wonderfully to utterly destroy the foul creature with a vast wedge before it could land a blow that would surely have sundered and decayed both armour, flesh and bone.

With their leader gone, the remaining forces proved easy prey to the bold heroes of Lantia, though the battle was neither short nor simple. However, as the sun met its pinnacle, its rays touched down on a battlefield won – and cleansed of tainted creatures.

However, the victory was not without loss, and my condolences go to the families of those that fell in the build-up to that mighty battle.

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.

MISSING!

The Talathi are appealing to the good people of the Heartlands to aid us in finding our missing friends. Three of our hunters were kidnapped from Unicorn Lands at the end of Autumn 1108. We are desperate for information as to their whereabouts.

They were taken from near Caer Carrikk on North Isle and transported to the circle known as CANDLE IN THE DARK. The leader of the group is called Elanna Whisperwind.

If you have any information as to the whereabouts of these missing elves, then please contact Rhiamon Knighttale or Elarys Knighttale at the Unicorn Camp.

Please help!

*Rhiamon Knighttale,
Taur-en-Faroth of the Talathi
Unicorn Minister of War*

Husband got no *courage* in him?
Want to bring *love* into your life?
Looking for some "*protection*" for your dalliance?

*Miss Jessie McRybryn's herbs and charms,
available for sale along with a discreet
consultation.*

Ask for her in the Bards Guild.

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The new and improved Mages Guild!

No more elemental colleges

Grand Master Dargon has disbanded the elemental colleges to unite the Guild and to ensure that we are all working towards ridding the world of Entropy and the Akari. The colleges worked together in the past, but much effort and work was duplicated as individual groups formed around each of the colleges.

The way forward

To help in the fight against Entropy, the Grand Masters wanted to ensure that all people on Erdreja feel that they can approach the Guild, whether it is to learn new skills, purchase items, request aid for quests or battles or even just to come and debate any number of topics or theories of magic or life in general (or to take part in the Mages Guild pub crawl this Saturday...). His first action to reach this goal was to disband the colleges, as mentioned before, and to establish new paths within the guild.

Four paths within the Mages Guild

Everyone within the guild may choose to follow one or more paths. They are not exclusive, but each path leads to a different area of magic or the fight against Entropy. New paths may be needed in the future, but at the moment there are only four. Below is a brief description of each path.

Path of Neutrality

The path of neutrality does exactly what it says on the tin – it wishes to remain neutral in all aspects of politics; be it guild or faction. The ultimate aim of the path is to ensure that all those who wish to use the Guild's resources to learn, fight or shelter feel able to do so. It is also the path's aim to liaise with all of the factions and guilds and, where possible, try to focus the energies against a greater foe. The Guild Guard also follow this path. Currently I, Driftwood, am the Focus for this path. I am looking for a Deputy Diplomat and a Captain of the Guild Defenders/Guards.

The Captain would also be in charge of organising training in battle magics. Please come and see me at the Guild or ask your guild liaison to approach me on your behalf if you are interested in either of these posts.

Path of Creation

The path of creation mainly concerns itself with creating items with power without the use of rituals. With the dangers of using ritual circles and wishing to stop any harm to the Baby, the Guild is researching alternative methods of creation. Currently this path does not have a Focus, but a few individuals have expressed an interest in the post. Please speak to one of the Master Mages if you are interested.

Path of Magic

Following the Cataclysm, new strands of magics have become available to us. This path wishes to understand these different paths and seek ways of enhancing each strand. These, so far, include Enchanting and Shadow Magic. Richard is the current Focus for this path.

Daemonology

Study of daemons. Enough said. Lord Waste is the Focus for this path.

Guild member meetings (aka lower council meetings)

We hold daily guild member meetings within the guild where we try to ensure that all members are aware of current issues. This is also the opportunity for you to feedback or raise any issues that you may have or need help with. Celadius is the Chair of the Lower Council and acts as the link between you and the Masters. Please approach him if you wish to raise any issues at the meetings or separately with the Masters.

The Guild will post notices about the times of the meetings and will inform all Guild Liaisons/High Mages of the times on the Saturday morning of the Spring Moot. All members and interested parties welcome.

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Lectures

The Guild organised several lectures at the Gathering and these proved to be very popular. This year we will be organising more lectures throughout the Moot and will publish a list and timetable on Saturday morning. Likely subjects will be Purifying Wraith Tainted Circles, Entropy & Akari, Battle Magics (interactive workshop) and Introduction to Magic/Rituals. If you would like to attend a lecture on a specific topic not listed above, please let the Guild know and we will try to organise one.

More Defenders/Guards needed in the Guild

The Guild is looking for more Defenders and Guards. You do not need to be a mage to take up post with us. You can choose to be paid for your services or receive training in return. Please speak to Driftwood, Celadius or one of the Masters if you are interested.

Stay safe!

Driftwood

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!

BARDS GUILD MEMBERS

There will be a Guild Council meeting at the hour of noon of the second day of the Spring Moot. All members welcome to attend. Please speak with the Heads of the Inner Council if there is any issue you wish to raise.

In Memory...

The Bards share in the loss of Alchemist Guild Leader Thorn Ashcrow, who will be sorely missed: a grave loss to all on the paths of knowledge. Raise a glass in memory, or maybe a bottle...

Memories from her Guild members

She was many things, someone full of cheer and as open as a book if she felt you a friend or potential friend, but she could be dire when roused.

She always kept a clear purpose though, and in all thoughts of justice we should keep to her example. Preparation and great care that avenging her is not to the detriment of the Guild or people whom she spent so much time and effort on.

Ffion Kendrick, Guild Member

The Guilds and the Nations of Erdreja mourn for her passing, her will was carried out by the bank and its contents completed. There is nothing I can say or do over the loss of Thorn as mere words will not do. Now the Guild demands revenge as do many nations and all of the Guilds.

Sirathol, the creature that ordered her death, is living on borrowed time and I demand his very existence be removed to satisfy my blood lust and to avenge Thorn's life.

Guild Master Qui Gon DeBeer

I would also like to raise my voice to honour the life and work of Grand Master Thorn. It is a grievous loss for the Guild and Erdreja and one that we will never forget. I would like to thank all those that spoke kind words and provided support and assistance throughout the weekend, rest assured that when the time comes we will call on all of you so that the blood debt can be repaid.

Guild Master Kal

Notice to all weapon & armour smiths

The cost of making items is likely to have changed over winter. Additionally, we will be putting a small levy on items made to create a war fund to fight Entropy. We hope to have new costs Friday evening, so please come and visit. For Friday evening, forges are only open to those who have done sufficient service, within the last year, to warrant paying. We will be open as usual Saturday morning.

The Armourers Guild