

New Calendale Chronicle

The Laughing Moon, 1115

TWO BODIES FINALLY IDENTIFIED AS MISSING ROYAL GUARD



Two dead bodies completely stripped of their possessions were found dumped in the vicinity of a local Gypsy encampment during the Shield Moon of 1114. After an exhaustive search, the bodies have finally been identified as two Knights of the Golden Briar: Sir Christopher Rumford, and his brother Emery Rumford.

All investigators had to go on were the fact that both men found had long blonde hair, and were found near an encampment of Gypsies. With the assassination of the Emperor of Solinaria, the investigation took a long while to begin. Initially, investigators assumed the men were yet another set of unfortunate souls to have found themselves on the wrong side of Gypsy ire. Extensive questioning of the local Gypsies was a dead end for investigators, who faced either feigned ignorance or outright lack of cooperation. Further contributing to the lengthy identification process was the fact that the brothers were simply travelling the kingdom in their own time, on temporary leave of duty. The brothers had lost all of their immediate family during the

civil war, and as such had no close relatives asking of their whereabouts. The murders were written off as unsolvable.

It was only due to sheer happenstance that a family friend of the Rumfords, Albert, was travelling in the area he had heard they were in recently. Upon running into difficulty finding his friends, and hearing rumors of two blonde-haired male bodies found in the woods, he sought out the guard. Upon making contact with the guard, and looking at a sketch created with great care and detail of the faces of the unidentified bodies, Albert confirmed that the bodies belonged to his friends. The Order of the Golden Briar has been informed of the loss of two of its ranks.

The only aspect of this tragedy that is a comforting one is that the final fate and resting place of the brothers is known to those that care about them. May Negoro guide their souls into eternity.

- Neville Braedyn

A Foreign Perspective

It's been some time since my first writing for this paper, and I think this is another time the community could benefit from my take on things. No doubt this article will sit in the midst of stories of victory against Solinarian attackers. After all, if the Empire takes this town, it's not very likely this paper will still be put out, is it? Any road, I think people are losing sight of the larger picture amidst the furor of war and the celebration of local victories.

First off though, a bit about myself. I am Faustus Vorenus, commonly called Corvus. My father, Tiberius Vorenus, often called Callidus or Vorenus Callidus, holds a seat in the Solinarian Senate, or at least he did until recently, as well as securing a place as one of the Emperor's advisors, as I learned from my late sovereign himself just moments before he was killed. I myself had come to this town a year prior to that dreaded night, seeking to make my own way in the world and establish my own worth free of the privilege of my upbringing. Through a series of strange events, I caught wind of what appeared to be a plot to seize power by a group in the imperial government.

When I heard of the Emperor's impending visit, I saw that it was all leading to that inevitable act of treachery as the conclusion. I warned several individuals in the town as best I could, even tried to warn the local wood elves of what was coming, knowing the history of bad blood with the Empire. Moments after warning the Emperor himself, he was killed by the Twin Kingdoms knights who had been assigned to augment his own guard as a gesture of friendship. To date, I have not learned of these men's names, or gained any true insight into their motives.

Explaining to you a bit about myself out of the way, I will also say I remain a loyal citizen of the Solinarian Empire. My country and even my new Emperor blame the Twin Kingdoms for the assassination and believe this war to be completely justified. I know better, but I will not kill my countrymen for the crime of being lied to. Had fate unfurled just a bit differently, I could have been amongst the soldiers you all face, just as convinced as they are that you all have

it coming. However, things have turned out differently, and I will not fight in this war against the Twin Kingdoms.

In fact, my fate puts me in a more unique position, as a bystander, at least in this particular conflict. I'd say I'm more interested in fighting the war that needs to be fought, not the one that is being fought. To this town's credit, it has been apparently sorely underestimated by whoever is handling the campaign in this region. The community here does indeed have a great strength that would not be apparent to outside observers. The terrain also makes it nigh impossible for the singular massed deployments that the legions are accustomed to. Make no mistake though, if the Empire is truly committed to taking this town, this situation will change. They will devote more substantial soldiers and resources as they are freed up by other victories.

This of course, brings me to another point. Local news is of the area managing to hold up despite aggressive

moves, but I certainly haven't heard any talk of abroad. Cartographers among you might want to consult a map. This town and the Whispering Woods are far from the only viable targets. To the east of the woods is a stretch of open land over which the Empire can access the rest of the Twin Kingdoms, including its two major cities. The open field, I shouldn't have to remind you, is where the Solinarian legions excel in combat, deploying en masse, trained and drilled to act in tandem. I would not be so optimistic of how this war goes without any word of battles in this region and their outcome.

Now, you might be thinking to yourself, that it seems like I am trying to dash your hopes and defeat your morale. I am not, or at least not for the reason you may think. As a bystander I can examine the larger scheme of things, and I see this war as one that neither side truly wins. Should the empire sweep outward and take this kingdom, it will have succeeded in the largest acquisition of territory since its founding. This is a fact that I do not doubt the backstabbers who engineered this conflict are quite aware of. But what comes then? Holding this vast territory will be far more draining as years stretch on than the war ever would be. The people of the Twin Kingdoms are not savages, and are not going to be so easily won over by the benefits of civilized life, as they are already accustomed to them for the most part. Suddenly the Empire will also share borders with many other neighbors, all untouched by a costly war and wary of possible aggression.

**Wave after wave of
fearless unrelenting
soldiers cast
themselves at us
and like the Dragon
Spine mountains,
we would not break.**

Oax's Observations

• Compassion in War •

This past Moon, three Solinarian soldiers were spotted on the main road that travels alongside the guardhouse to the tavern in New Calendale Proper. The trio was headed in the direction of The Scroll and Dragon when guardsmen and townsfolk mobilized to intercept them.

Judge Gabranth addressed the obviously greatly outnumbered enemy soldiers remarking upon their foolish action to walk into the center of Town Proper. The man who was higher rank than the other two responded back with a challenge of an honor duel. Judge Gabranth accepted and the rest of those present gave the two ample room.

Gabranth and the Solinarian fought alone save for a brief moment of interference from Branden Lachlan who may have been unaware that the fight was an honor duel. After being chastised by Gabranth, Branden backed off and the battle continued on. The fight did not last for very long after. Gabranth emerged victorious over his opponent.

Rather than finish the man off, Gabranth let the man rise, his pride broken, and leave with his companions. Some people complained and asked why he had shown such mercy. Gabranth replied that the Solinarians had shown him respect and honor while he had been held captive, so he did the same in return.

Compassion is a characteristic that is usually difficult to find in times of war. When it is present, it's even harder to show to someone deemed an enemy. How can one be expected to show any measure of kindness to someone they do not know who might have tried to kill them for no other reason than following orders to do so? This is probably why Attalia's gift of compassion is truly something to be admired.

Oftentimes, those who take up arms are only obeying those above them who make the decisions. Nobility, Emperors, and Chieftains are just a few examples of those that keep our lands together so that we may thrive. Sometimes those decisions lead us into conflict such as we find ourselves in now.



What if this nation is victorious? What if the armies of the Twin Kingdoms manage to hold against or even push back the legions of Solinaria? It will not really be much better off. Even in victory, the war will have been hard-won. The last Goblinoid War was won by a brave attack spearheaded by a single legion, who died almost to the last man to secure victory. This is how determined the Empire can be in war. If the legions somehow manage to be defeated, they will claim an enormous toll in the lives of your soldiers before they are.

So really, as I see it, neither scenario ends in true victory. The two largest powers on this continent beat each other nearly to death, while outsiders remain unscathed. While our new found neighbors across the ocean watch with interest. While the green-skins no longer feel the pressure of civilization keeping them from flourishing. While bandits seize on the re-purposing of militaries to battling each other instead of keeping territory safe for citizens. While who knows what other things lay in wait like our old mad great-grandfather god, to seek to obliterate us all?

I have always viewed my nation as a bringer of civilization. We have conquered lesser groups by force, yes. But the descendants of these peoples, in many cases, are all now imperial citizens, enjoying all the rights and privileges that entails. In this war, regardless of which nation wins, civilization loses, as the two greatest civilizing influences on this continent burn themselves out. The only true victory is to end this war as quickly as possible with as little bloodshed as possible. I urge you all to keep this foremost in your thoughts, especially when you see something, for example, like a Drevarrian Priest sadistically aiming to publicly torture a captured Solinarian soldier. Back like this is only going to make it that much more difficult to secure peace. I hope I've given someone out there something to think about.

- Faustus Voronus Corvus

Ruminations of an Al'Haziran Scholar

• Of Honor, Deception, and Uncertainty •

Our first gathering this cycle has proven to be quite eventful. I would like to congratulate and recognize Kitara Darnish on her dedication this past moon. No doubt a number of you remember the many raiding parties to the Dark Forest on Spritsday evening that took place throughout last cycle. Their efforts were most valiant, but would have eventually been in vain were it not for Kitara and a few choice allies.

From what I am able to recall and infer, there were areas of impurity where the lingering imprints of necromantic magic festered. Left unchecked, these energies were slowly, silently giving rise to what has been described as "the embodiment of corruption." Artemis Leroux, local enchantment mage and friend of Kitara, stated that this corruption was infecting the embodiment of the elements, which happened to be residing in the forest. Further discussion revealed that these embodiments were not to be confused with the elemental beings that exist on their respective planes, but literally the essence of that particular element that makes up the forest's nature. A brief interview with Kitara herself shed much light on this matter, which undoubtedly is boggling the reader.

Based on what I had gathered from my conversation, the corruption was slowly eating away at the land, like poison spreading throughout a body. Kitara's teacher, the druid known as Darius, began the healing process as a doctor begins removing a splinter, giving the elements that reside within the forest corporeal form. With the infection given a tangible medium to be worked upon, Kitara set herself to the tasks of diagnosing and purifying each embodiment in turn, while her comrades Yun Asakura (local blacksmith, swordsman, and Kitara's suitor) and Artemis did battle with the physical form of the impurity.

With the elements in order and the corruption struck down, the forest and town of New Calendale was saved from the encroaching chaos that the shadow of the Dark Forest would have undoubtedly wrought if left unchecked. I am pleased to announce that Jerdano, in recognition of Kitara's grand act of healing that which he holds most sacred, has deemed her worthy of his power, much to her and everyone's joy. Once again, congratulations on your dedication! May the gods continue to smile on you, especially in these troubled times.



Just because we are in a time of war does not mean that we have to resort to heinous acts. The men that were released after the duel have a chance to continue their lives, their family lines should they survive the rest of the war. How do we know they were not fathers to newborns? Husbands to wives? Caretakers to an elderly parent? We do not. And in this way, are they not so different than we are?

Battles in war are fought in many ways; it is not always to the death. By showing respect for a duel and abiding by the terms to leave peacefully after losing, these Solinarians, and our Judge, show that they are above the mentalities of mindless killers. Even in war, there is still a place for Attalia's grace.

May Arrawigl bless your dreams,

~ Ongx TigerEye

Student and Disciple of Arrawigl

Speaking of which, the war continues to rage on in the hearts and halls of New Calendalg, a strange and unsettling brew of honor and deception. Solinaria continues to send their legions against our townsfolk, be it en masse or in meager numbers. Some have met us with all-out contempt, their war priests stirring the soldiers into berserk frenzies. On a rare occasion or two, this scholar had the privilege of being in the presence of an honor duel, one of which was held between Judge Gabranth and a Solinarian legionnaire, one whose name we have yet to obtain. Victory went to the corporal, and their party of three was allowed to return to their camp unharmed. Such a sight was most reassuring, as it demonstrated that both parties, representative of their lands, recognized the cost of unnecessary bloodshed along with the ideal that we are all rational, upstanding individuals rather than the beastly ruffians that war so often brings out in its peoples.

Perhaps some Solinarian generals and commanders are becoming aware that they do indeed send fathers and sons to leave their wives and families weaving wreaths to place on needlessly, numerous headstones. As proud as I am to protect my fair town alongside my brothers and sisters, I grieve for each branch I break of a family tree, their ashen blood mingled with ours and scattered upon the earth to leave scars not wholly unlike the previous imprints and impurities of the Dark Forest. If any Solinarian man or woman is reading this without blinding pride or scorn, please know that I pray for your soldiers' families alongside my people, that their souls find either safe return or peaceful slumber. May they have lived and died with honor, serving the country that they love, as we live and die for ours.

Though the duel between Gabranth and the legionnaire was a respectful one, there were indeed some instances where such courtesies were not shared. During another intended honor duel between one of our town guard and a soldier, it could be seen along the horizon the familiar phalanx of reinforcements. Though we attempted to show mercy and mutual respect by setting the same terms used in the previous duels, their warriors and clerics answered only with bloodshed. The Solinarian soldier who was supposed to take part in the duel immediately attempted to slay our guards and lost his life in the process. Judging from his behavior prior to the reinforcements, it seemed as if he was stalling until the legion arrived. On top of this, it seems that a ransom was made of Baron Ravenholm, who was allegedly captured; when investigated, the Baron was found safe in his home.

Such duplicity has given me cause for thought as to the condition of the empire, as the conditions of the local can be both indicative and congruent to the conditions of the land. Could there be mixed voices and opinions stirring in the vacuum that the Emperor's death (may his soul rest soundly with the gods) has left in the fields of power and politics? If so, what be their parties and schools of thought concerning this war?

I am aware that some of our own townspeople were born Solinarian, some seeking or possibly had earned dual citizenship in the Twin Kingdoms before this war tore us all apart. Such tears I fear also form in the hearts of these individuals, as their loyalties and compassion are tested and rent with each soldier and proclamation sent here. I pray especially for you, that your hearts find some source of calm and comfort in this storm that surely strikes you twice as hard as any who only can see one side of the silver. Should any decide to seek counsel or consolation, know that my hours and ear are yours to request at any time you require.

May whatever developments that take place in the coming moons provide us with insight as to these happenings and questions, that their wisdom will allow us the means to find an end to this conflict and bloodshed. Until then, may the Eldest Lady guide you in the pursuit of knowledge, and Attalia weep in memory of the slain.

Yours most sincerely,
~ Rizhak Alim fl'Gar



Ghouls In The Woods

The darkness in our lovely town of New Calendale is always concealing some sort of danger - Imps, Undead, Bandits, and many others that all go bump in the night. But according to witnesses, there has been an upsurge in the presence of a particular type of Undead, Ghouls. They are particularly strong and vicious. It is highly recommended that if you spot one, you should make a break for it as fast as possible. Even with a small group, there is a great deal of danger when there are several Ghouls about.

Standard safety measures apply here. Do not leave populated areas alone. If you must take a stroll in the night make sure to take others with you. Your odds of survival increase when traveling with others. Also be careful, they often are able to give horrible disease, so try not to search them, if you are able to defeat them.

All in all, it is not a good sign that Ghouls and possibly their big brothers, Ghouls Lords, are running around.

- Brandon Lachlan

An Anonymous Submission

"Ponder an organization that works to mend the wrongs of the world. Vices known and those unknown. A world where an individual helps another simply because it's right.

Guided by Virtues and beliefs in Justice, they take in and reach out to all who need help. They seek for Prestige to spread across all realms.

With Valor and Honor as shields, who actively fight against villainous beings who inflict distress and oppression.

They take Pride in any task they take on, they've seen through to completion and they continue on with success

They would be there for you to seek out, if you would ever feel loss, pain, worthlessness, helplessness.

Ponder that world."



Citizens To The Rescue

On the 14th Day of the Thawing Moon, New Calendale and the Twin Kingdoms was almost dealt a terrible blow.

Shortly after High Sun, when court was to be held, a delegation from the Solinarian army came to us under the white flag. When asked of their reason, they told us that they had captured Baron Ravenholm!

The silence from the declaration was deafening, only surpassed in its potency by the clamor of outrage and indignation that erupted from the citizenry of New Calendale. Some wanted to negotiate, some wanted to execute the messengers on the spot; in short, the people felt lost.

Thankfully, cooler heads prevailed. No overt action was to be taken immediately. We did not know, after all, if this claim was genuine. Baron Ravenholm's absence from court was suspect, but not proof. So we agreed to hear their demands in one bell's time after we had time to verify the Baron's absence and abduction.

Imagine our horror when we learned he WAS absent and his servants verified that he had departed for court with his standard retinue. It appeared the Solinarians were telling the truth, and all seemed lost.

Fortunately, we made the same mistake the Solinarians did.

We underestimated Baron Ravenholm.

We underestimated ourselves.

Solinarians did assault the Baron and defeat his guards, but they did not capture Baron Ravenholm himself. Through

arts and abilities known only to the Baron, he escaped the trap set for him and managed to make his way into New Calendale proper. Injured, though living, the Baron made it to the shore where he was found by the Cirque De Elantrai, who were themselves preparing to join us at Court.

Not the kind to fail our nobility, The Circus, as we affectionately call them, restored the Baron to health and vitality. As our baron recovered a small unit of our local guard came upon the scene, drawn by news of an attack though not knowing who was accosted by our Solinarian interlopers. Deciding it was best that the guard search the area for further Solinarian abduction squads, the patrol left the task of ferrying the Baron back to his home in the capable hands of the Cirque De Elantrai.

Accepting this grave and important responsibility, The Circus provided escort and protection back to Baron

Ravenholm's mansion, ensuring he was returned to the care of his household staff and defenders.

So it was, as we were at our lowest moment and most worried, that The Circus returned to the town proper to relate the tale of the Baron's great fortitude and resilience. But as we recognize Baron Ravenholms' great ability, we must not undersell the heroic deeds of the Cirque De Elantrai. They exemplify what every citizen should have, the loyalty and sacrifice that every citizen must be willing to display.

I am happy to relate this story because it displays all that is best of our kingdom and our town. That we stand united, that we give for each other and our nobility, and that we are very hard to overcome. Come what may, Calendale will weather it all.

- Codiegr Stone

A Generous Gift From Our King and Queen

In celebration of the upcoming birth of their first child together, and recognizing the benefits to The Kingdom to have an abundance of properly trained mages, King Leopold and Queen Nzhemiah have donated an incredible amount of their own wealth to the Twin Kingdom Mages' Guild.

The sheer amount of money donated to the guild should cover most of its operating costs for years to come. Guild members will still be expected to pay dues for the convenience of access to guild resources, including teachers. Gone are the days where Mages would only be able to continue their learning if their purse was heavy enough. Now, all of those who show a knack for the arcane can pursue the gift given to them, regardless of monetary standing.

What many outside of the guild do not know or remember, is that even so many years after our civil war, The Mages' Guild itself is still recovering from the talent lost during it. The Guild will finally have an opportunity to rebuild itself, thanks to our King and Queen. The benefits to our country, especially in a time of war, are obvious. Upon receiving the news, Representatives of The Church of Viralgé in Vondara threw a large, several-day celebration and festival over the weekend.

- Evelyn Laibbrook



Friends Or Enemies; Vultures of War

War is a hectic time, a truth we know well in New Calendale as we have weathered our share of conflict, battle, and yes, war. Be it the world-threatening conflict of The War For Life against Kavarek, or the bitter and divisive civil war enacted by Duke Talon.

As such many things can happen and a lot of things can go wrong, perhaps most distressing of all is the proliferation of questionable information. Knowledge as much as swords and spells will determine the outcome of a war, so it is no

wonder that nations engaged in conflict will expend great resources to learn and to deceive.

This brings us to the matter at hand, peasant soldiers and conscripted swordsmen. Truly in these times of war there will be those who use the conflict to their own ends, assaulting others and taking from the

wealthy and using the conflict to mask their misdeeds. But there may be others abused, conned, or deceived into doing the work of our enemies.

In New Calendale we are used to dealing with brigands. Far from the heartland many bandits think us easy prey, much to their bloody regret, and so during this war it has been the same. However some who have come to make battle on us come with fantastic tales. Tales of being pressed into service by Solinarian masters, or of being told the town was taken and needed to be freed.

Could these be our misguided and abused brothers?

Could they be Solinarian spies?

Could they be opportunists trying to save their own skins?

Truly only Jeredith knows. So what is our answer? Must we assume all who enter are our enemies? Can we make

allowances for anyone who comes with a sad story?

The answer to both these things is "no." It is all so simple.

We must be vigilant, we must be strong, we must be loyal. And expect the same from our fellows.

We cannot turn a blind eye to the actions of others, nor will we treat them mercilessly. New Calendale has always been a place of second chances, growth and acceptance. So we will treat those who enter with the goodness Jeredith would ask and the justice Leonard demands. We must question, we must observe and we must be open enough to help those who need it.

I assure you, if ever you need aid, if any who require help come to our doorstep, they will be protected, they will be helped, and those taken from us will be rescued. But those who turn from the crown, or use this war to harm their neighbor, those who would turn blade against friend will be dealt with as ruthlessly as the law permits.

This is The Year of Justice, and we will heed the call.

- Codiegr Stone

Queen Expecting Any Day Now

Queen Nehemiah looks more glowing and beautiful by the day! It has been many months since the announcement that she was with Child, and most believe she should be due at any moment. She could even have had them by the time this is distributed!

Many wait near the palace gates day and night desperately waiting for the announcement of our new member of the Royal Family. Several enterprising individuals have begun taking bets on whether our kingdom will be blessed with a Prince or a Princess.

- Vogel Valken

A Wanderer's Reveries

Ulv Shadow-Walker

Cageless

You are held back no more.
Your destiny lies beyond the horizon.
No matter what comes,
Nothing shall hold you back.

Beyond what chains held you down,
You break free from your bondage.
You cannot be stopped now.
Nothing shall hold you back.

Your destiny awaits you now,
Don't let them slip away.
Your story is calling you now.
Nothing shall hold you back.

You will never fail.
Your time is now.
Everything can be overcome.
Nothing shall hold you back.

The day is awry.
You must now go on.
Keep your head high.
Nothing shall hold you back.

Hope

Feel your heart pound
Feel your mind race
No longer home bound
You pick up your pace

Sun shining on
Wind at your stead
All troubles are gone
You've now a clearer head

Strength in your soul
Renewed from the old
No matter what comes
You have no more problems

Take pride in your life
Your story starts here
Don't suffer from strife
Your destiny's near

You have no restraints
You cannot be stopped
There are no more gates
Nothing now blocks




Editors' Notes



Due to low interest, the riddles are being removed from the Chronicle. We are working on revamping the "Enigmas of the Moon" section into something that we hope will better engage more of our reader base. Be sure to keep an eye out for the new changes. And remember, even if you do not know all the answers, send in your guesses regardless. Every submission is a chance to win that Moon's prize.

Happy reading!

Victor Hamilton
Editor in Chief, New Calendae Chronicle

~ Onyx TigerEye 

Student and Disciple of Arrawiel
Senior Editor, New Calendae Chronicle

~ Rizhak Alim H'Gar
Editor, New Calendae Chronicle

