

TO PRAISE OR TO SCORN? OUR NATION DIVIDED!

Former Duchess Ethelyn continues to evoke strong emotions at all levels of society. From dockers on the waterfront to the highest nobles in Fairhold, no group seems capable of falling squarely on one side of the debate over her legacy. After weeks of rumors, the crown has affirmed her loss of title and lands is due to her involvement in treasonous activities. The Crown affirmed her masterminding a foul plot to destroy the R.N.S. Coaltongue on the 12th of Therendor. This destruction would have taken place while her own cousin, Queen Aurala, along with the Queen’s brother, the first warlord and minister of magic, and several prominent military officers, nobles, and industrialists were aboard the ship. The attempt was foiled by attentive agents of the Royal Eyes of Aundair under supervision of Assistant Chief Inspector Stover Delft. All dignitaries on board had no idea of the tragedy that could have happened.

The 12th of Therendor has been the last time the former Duchess has been seen in public. The Sharn Inquisitive claims she was involved with an invasion of one of the islands north of the Blackcaps in Lake Galifar. The Inquisitive claims she wanted



to incite a new war between Aundair and Breland. Sergeant Saal Adriansen served under the former duchess for years, and claims she always had the best interests of Aundair at heart. She was invested to show the larger public the negative impact of industrialization. She tried to turn the direction the Queen has taken. All this has caused for a divide between Aundairians. There are those who defend her motivations, if not her methods. They call for a moratorium on new factory construction, strict limits on technological imports from Breland and Karrnath, and an assessment of the long term impacts modern industrialization might have on Aundairian society. On the other hand, there are progressives who view the actions of the Duchess as nothing short of the highest of treasons, punishable by death. These continue to call for investigations into her actions, her once closest allies and a purging of hardcore traditionalists from positions of power.

Rumors about the former duchess and ambassador of the Unseen Court keep popping up. Some claim the Unseen Court is even angry with her actions, {see DUCHESS’S DOWNFALL, pg. 2}

HAUNTED HILL HALTED

A sharp increase in ghost sightings in the Nettles over the last month have prompted District Mayor Reed Macbannin to limit access to the upper reaches of Cauldron Hill until his office has put in place proper containment measures. Large shipments of salt, holy water, iron and silver dust, and even more exotic materiel are scheduled for delivery in the coming days. Funding for these reagents will not impact the social welfare programs enacted by Mayor Macbannin since taking office, according to an official spokesman.

Such stirrings of spirits are not new to the region, and, until recently, the mayor’s tenure has marked a notably diminished level of malevolent magical activity. As the only unelected mayor, Mr. Macbannin was selected by the previous mayor and Governor Stansfield especially for his extensive knowledge of counter-curses, warding spells, and white necromancy learned during his studies at the Arcane Congress in Arcanix. {cont. pg. 8}.

FACTORIES AFLAME

The plague of fires targeting the industrial center of Passage has continued unabated these many months. Like the arsonist’s targets, all new leads have gone up in smoke. City watch guardsmen scour Parity Lake and the Nettles for disgruntled workers, primalists, and other likely suspects while the Royal Eyes of Aundair investigates the possible involvement of foreign provocateurs, doomsday cults, and fey sympathizers. All efforts thus far have failed.

Witnesses continue to link Hana “Gale” Soliogn to several fires at factories with close ties to Dragonmarked Houses. This has led to calls for tighter crackdowns on Vekshi mystics, long rumored to practice arson as a sacred rite. Gale is also implicated in the disappearance of a lightning rail survey team in Cloudwood and the attempted assassination of Aundairian tax official Kane Westman. Mr. Westman escaped with only his tax logs a little worse for wear thanks to the prompt intercession of brave Aundairian citizens.

With over 60 deaths, if these fires are the work of a single culprit, she may be the most terribly prolific serial killer in Aundair’s history. {cont. pg. 3, see KILLER COMPETITION, pg. 10, DRAGONS SEEN AT FACTORY FIRE, pg. 13}

CASUALTIES IN CITY WATCH AND WORKER MELEE

As the strife between factory workers and owners grows more intense in and around Parity Lake, some of the former have resorted to walkouts, which has led some of the latter to resort to lock-ins. City Guards were forced to intervene last week when a mob of pro-worker protesters rioted while attempting to break the lock in at Zenith Glassworks. During the resultant melee, a cart of glass etching chemicals was overturned. Two of the rioters were killed in the subsequent deluge of acid, and dozens of others required curative treatments. Several of the guardsmen involved received light injuries, were given commendations, and returned to work the following day. City watch are now searching for the organizers of this and other protests in the area; they may be held criminally responsible for damages to factory property, injuries to guardsmen, and possibly even casualties among the protestors.

In the meantime, the city watch presence around the lock-in factories has been staunchly reinforced. Likewise, the number of protestors has continued to grow. This is the third straight week of protests without pause. Their demands for increased pay, reduced hours, and safer working conditions have thus far fallen on deaf ears. {see FACTORY FRACAS, pg. 8}

WATERFRONT UNION VOTE

‘Dockers of the world unite’

Is the cry often heard upon at the piers during the day and inside the harbor bars at night. The common laborers of Passage’s waterfront, long divided by their fiercely held individualism, have at last found common ground in entertaining the thought of forming a union. When reached for comment at his unofficial office inside the Thinking Man’s Tavern, docker organizer Thames Grimsley claimed “unionizing is a way for dockers to combat the growing divisions in both the city and in our society.” Many dockers interviewed expressed sympathy for the captain’s goals, but also believe they would face reprisals from employers, harbor authorities, and ship owners alike in case they participate in the vote.

Not everyone has such a rosy outlook on the possibility of a union of dockers. “Whereas a proper guild fosters the talents of junior members and protects the livelihoods of its skilled craftsmen, this mob of dockers would no

doubt seek only to bully and burgle those that supply the capital and the ideas that drive progress,” opined local industrialist Guy Goodson. With a note of caution for those that would soon be voting on the measure, the owner of Pemberton Industries, Benedict Pemberton, counseled that “it seems to me, that no matter how big the pack gets, the only ones guaranteed to get a bite are the top dogs.” {see VIEWS ON VOTING, pg. 9}

FAMILY FOCUS ON FORTUNATES

Organized crime, in the form of the Family criminal organization based in Thrane, is on the rise. Undercover reports indicate that the Family sees the growth of Passage as an opportunity to expand in new markets. The growing number of gnomes in Passage involved with the Family indicates the influence of Zilargo could be rising in its ranks. The past years the Family has been competing with various local gangs. Morgan Cippiano, the face of the Family in Passage, has been heard to say that the organization deliberately focuses its violence against other criminals, wealthy factory owners, and merchants, rather than everyday people. An intense rivalry is escalating between the Family and Lorcan Kell, who is reputed to be a fixture in the industrial smuggling scene. {cont. pg. 4}.

QUAKE QUELLS CONSTRUCTION

Work on the western end of the Central District subrail ground to a halt last week. Immediately following yet another arcano-science-baffling, city-shaking tremor, the red line tunnel was inundated by water from nearby Passage Harbor. Several workers were injured in the flooding, but no fatalities have been reported. Artificers from House Cannith have been hired to expurgate the seawater and harbor debris, and to seal and reinforce the tunnel walls against such leaks in the future. Sergeant Sanne Bateu of the Central District city watch was quick to rule out sabotage as an alternative cause. She added the city watch of each district was firmly dedicated to the protection of their citizens. {see SUBPAR SUBRAIL, pg 11}

THE WEEK IN NEWS

MURDER. District guardsmen release Ragman suspect, promptly murdered by real Ragman! REA to take over investigation {more on pg. 3}

MAYHEM. Karrnathian eschatologist extremists seek ancient relics in string of Bosum

Strand warehouse robberies. Gaurdsmen in pursuit {more on pg. 5}

MUSIC. Repairs to the Navras Opera House nearly complete after Rock Rackus’s “Rock Opera” {more on pg 9}.

MARRIAGE. Mass wedding performed in Cloudwood. Goodson & ir’Imaradi wedding days away. {see SUMMER CEREMONIES, pg 10}.

MISFORTUNE. One of the imported jaguars missing from the Battalion Military Academy has been found dead, apparently poached for its exotic hide. {more on pg. 7}

MONSTERS. Sailors warn Beshela, archfey of the sea and ally of the former Duchess, continues to show her displeasure on all ships in Aundairian waters. {more on pg. 10}.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Eschatologists of Passage United representative Abiera Stackhouse organizing pilgrimage to Metrol. {pg. 5}.

House Orien’s solution to lightning rail crossing of the Mournland will be on show at the K. A. T. E. {pg. 8}.

Fey pepper in factory rations blamed for accidents. Sabotage? {pg 7}

Gorodan Ashlord of Vralkek, orders construction of a lighthouse dwarving the Great Lighthouse of Trolanport. Alina Lorridan ir’Lyrris, challenge accepted! {pg. 6}.

Celebration at building site of new Hotel Aurum, highest building of Passage has been reached. {pg. 5}.

Thranish pastry craze! Fried dough knots take Passage by storm. {pg. 10}.

Erskine Haffkruger, famous Mror environmental biologist, first in captivity grown Nymmflower to blossom. {pg. 12}.

Lathon Hulpum of the Talanta tribes resigns his position, claiming a Lathon is no longer necessary, now that the war is over. {pg. 10}.

Farimal Klavarin, head of Paragnostoc Society of Thrane starts guest lectures at *Jierre Sciens d’Arms* {pg. 4}.

Royal Eyes agents arrest Emerald Claw cell in Fairhaven. Unfortunately plans of terrorist attack destroyed by Cell members. {pg. 11}.

Civil unrest in Starilaskur grows, curfew at sunset introduced. {pg. 8}

Bloodsails seen in Eldeen Bay. 2nd fleet increases patrols to maintain secure passage for Aundair’s ships. {pg. 9}