

Unto the Mouth

From a lonely toe in the forces of the (former) Debonai 6th Heavy Lancers - (the Late) Lady Dame Brittany Tirtoroth commanding

Re: The situation in the splinter field armies of Debonai

I break my silence, and possibly my cover to make certain that you receive this message if it is in anyway within my power. We in the splinter armies (I cannot say that they are in rebellion -- as they are not truly -- they have left the territories of their homeland and offer no threat to it -- wise as I think very few of the line troops would agree to harm their nation -- for they love it, no matter what) are continuing to travel south at a very fast clip, we twice would have lost the combined (well, combined except for the train of the sixth heavy lancers, Lady Dame Tirtoroth will not suffer to be separated from it) support trains were it not for the nimble work of the auxiliaries in hurrying the trains along and offering their physical strength to help move the trains. Three times we have suffered... I can only call them jumps... in which somehow we seem to have entered... well, I guess a trance... and have then traveled enormous distances, each time in a single day. The horses are exhausted beyond words at the end of these days, weak and having lost weight -- we travel easily for 2 or 3 days time thereafter to let them recover -- but in no case have we lost distance, but rather gained enormous amounts of it -- passing dangerous and sometimes rough terrain with ease, and gaining weeks of travel in those single days. ("I swear to you honored mouth, I am not insane - though you will think I am shortly for certain, I am not").

I am sure you already know that we have made several "odd" translations honored mouth - I suppose it is some form of magic, and I know nothing of magic. I am equally sure that you know that we have fought several short battles -- I would characterize them as slaughters -- involving local people along our route - despite an attempt to pay them for what we take (one cannot eat silver- as we were told by one group before we had to put them down). I am equally sure that you do not know about what happened last night.

Last night, I stood duty. Colonel Ebenezer Gilbert from command HQ passed me, with him, on the way to inspect a "possible disturbance" were the Lady Dame Brittany Tirtoroth - our commanding general, and also the Very Reverend Charles Dansforth, a bishop without portfolio of holy mother church and chief chaplain of the combined force. The three of them went off with two guards, also from HQ, to the west of the camp. I continued my patrol, and about 15 minutes later saw an odd - greenish and disturbing light beyond the treeline that we had cleared. I determined that it was my duty to the field army, and my responsibility to my homeland, to check this light and disturbance.

In closing on the area where I had seen the light I saw a considerable struggle in process. The armor of the HQ guards and colonel lay empty on the ground, a group of amorphous creatures, seemingly only partially solid were attacking Lady Dame Tirtoroth and Bishop Dansforth. Before I could determine what actions to take, I realized that their position was impossible and so did nothing except stay in hiding. They fell quickly. Two of the amorphous beings more fully materialized and oozed upon the fallen then. The other three moved to the armor empty on the ground -- and entered the armor -- at which time Colonel Gilbert - or his seeming - reformed; as did the seeming of the two HQ guards. Moments later Dame Tirtoroth and the Bishop rose up again -- or, I suspect their seemings as well.

The light faded -- and as it faded my eyes were drawn to a hollow in the ground where it seemed that a virtual arbottoir was located, blood and bodies -- mostly of young children filled the dale. The command group, including the newly risen Dame and Bishop - departed quickly. After another 10 minutes or so, I approached the dale and examined the slaughter site more closely -- finding that all of the children were lightly built, slender, and light skinned, with hair of gold or sometimes silver -- and some pointing to the ears. I believe

that they were each to some degree of fey or elven blood -- although all were clearly primarily human. I must also note that. I was prepared to return there to the site with an officer after dawn, but as I watched the bodies dessicated, and then... well honored Mouth - fell apart, leaving only what seemed old dry bones, and not even a tatter of skin or swatch of hair. There was nothing to show an officer, so I did not return.

I cannot explain this bizarre slaughter, nor the disappearing bodies, nor can I explain the amorphous creatures. I can only suppose that the entire command group was ambushed upon entering the grove and the Colonel and his guards eliminated even before I reached said grove. I believe that the entire command group are now some form of strange doppleganger.

I do not dare to contact you again, the "command group" surely knows that I was not at post when they reentered the camp, and if I am searched I do not want my remaining contact tokens to be found. Therefore I will bury the remaining three, and if I live to have another report to give, I will desert the army and hope to find my way to you myself.

I remain always in service to his most eminent grace the Archduke, to the house of Ashberry, and to the Light of the Lord Glor'diadel.

Oli