



Clamps Companion

MEET YOUR LOCAL TOWNSFOLK

By Quinten

In an effort to help the local inhabitants of Clampsboro get to know the people in the area, I will be interviewing a town member, officer, residents or other notables in the area. It will give you the opportunity to share information about yourself, tell your side of things, and let people get to know everyone the nobles, the shield at your side, the caster at your back and the townsfolk putting food in the stall.

For this column's second interview, General Haehoth agreed to tell us about himself:

MEET... THE VERY MODEL OF A BARBARIAN MAJOR GENERAL

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GADABARI WISDOM

- To cure hiccups, bite your thumbs and blow on them.
- The early man never borrows from the late man.
- If you forget to wash the spider, it's a sure sign of company coming.
- Gratitude is the memory of the heart.

MEET YOUR LOCAL TOWNSFOLK (CONT.)

What is your full name, title, and position?

I don't even know my full title at this point... Ridire Lord General Haehoth, Sirriam of Riocht Mac Tire, Magistrate of Clampsboro, Black Wolf of Jarl Vandallarius. In Avandria terms, it's something like "Knight Lord Commander Haehoth, Sheriff of Riocht Mac Tire, Mayor of Clampsboro, a Member of the Elite King's Guard". But never call me all of that. Just call me Haehoth when talking or in the field, or if there's other nobility around, I'm actually fond of General.

I encourage open conversation with anyone. If you wish to talk about any of your concerns or voice an opinion, I am here.

Are you associated with any groups or Organizations?

Aside from the obvious ties to Riocht Mac Tire, no.

“Pick something that no one else can do, and do it. No healers around? Heal people. No warriors around, learn to fight. No one knows how to track? Learn to track. This can even be as... niche... as something like mapmaking or shepherding. Find a way to make yourself useful.”

Where were you born and raised?

Everywhere. When I was growing up, I was a member of the Pink Rock tribe. We were fairly nomadic, traveling from place to place. It wasn't until all 12 barbarian tribes were united under the rule of Jarl Vandal, 4 or 5 years ago, did I "settle down".

What caused you to take up the sword/bow/globe/fireball instead of becoming a baker?

Well, nearly everyone in my tribe knew how to swing a sword. It's what we do. Not everyone has to use it as much as me, but it's pretty much a requirement.

What is your preferred way to engage in combat?

Take advantage of the chaos of combat to place one well place strike on your foe. With a big of a weapon as possible.

Do you have any non-combat or crafting skills you'd like to share with our readers?

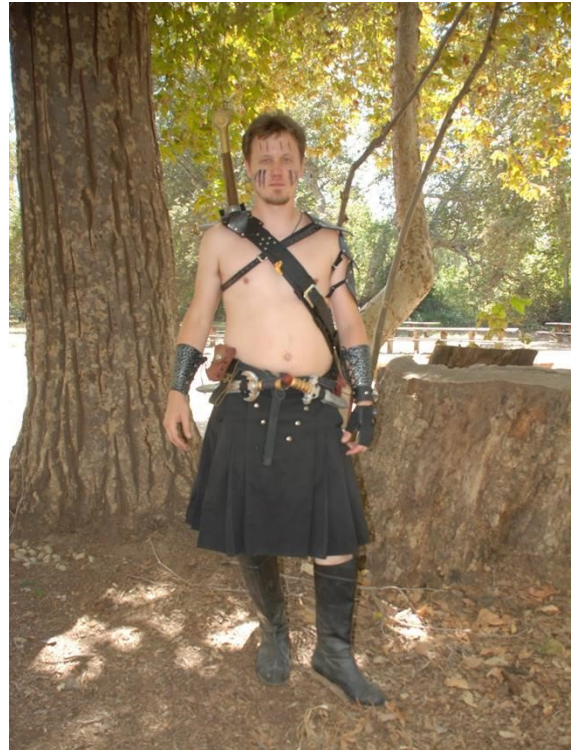
No.

If you could impart one pearl of wisdom to people starting out what would it be?

Pick something that no one else can do, and do it. No healers around? Heal people. No warriors around, learn to fight. No one knows how to track? Learn to track. This can even be as... niche... as something like mapmaking or shepherding. Find a way to make yourself useful.

What is your fondest memory?

The day when Teril and I met. I was in the middle of my first solo scouting mission and managed to slay one ogre I had found, but was surrounded by goblins. After dispatching a few, I got hit with



MEET YOUR LOCAL TOWNSFOLK (CONT.)

some magic, and blacked out. When I awoke, this blonde Amazonian type woman was standing over my body swinging a huge greatsword with wild abandon. Plus, it was a great view.

What is your deepest regret, or decision you wish you could have reversed?

I regret nothing.

What is the biggest danger you have ever overcome?

Being the Magistrate of this town. So much politics. It's a border town. Anything I do wrong could start a war. So I'd say having the lives of thousands of Barbarians and Avandrians in my hands is it.

What is the scariest thing you have ever faced off against?

A Wolven Lord and I fought in the shadows of Reliance, soon after the plague wiped out all of my people. He and I were swinging hard enough that if anyone would have gotten caught between our blades, they would have died in 1 hit. He and I stood toe to toe for many minutes, with a wolven shaman behind him healing him while Teril was behind me healing. Soon after, he looked around and saw that all of his companions were dead. With the help of MHD and town, we were able to kill the Wolven Lord and destroy the plaguestone.

What makes a good adventurer in your eyes?

The ability to follow orders and to think for yourself.

What do you do when you're not smiting evil or trying to kill things that tried to kill you first?

Oh wow, let's see... it's been so long. Well, you wouldn't think this, but I enjoy watching theatre. I actually have a small theatre in my manor. Teril has a traveling circus that she manages, and I enjoy watching everything that as well.

If you had no inner monologue what would we most likely hear?

In complete bluntness: Mostly rants honestly. During times of chaos, you would often hear "Let him die" and "That would teach him a lesson".

What is a message you'd like to send to our readers?

I'm sorry for what's coming. Prepare yourselves.

Who would you count as your greatest or longest ally?

My partner, Teril.

Who is your biggest rival/ most hated foe?

The Wolven. All of them.

What is your favorite color?

Black.

What is your ideal date?

October 10th or so. It's cold enough that my armor alone is enough to keep me warm without being overly stuffy.

You're entering the tomb a 6000 year dead king, the Sarcophagus begins to open, what do you do?

Odds are, being a king, he was buried holding a sword. Snatch it out of his hands before he's fully awake. Then cast some protectives, pull out my sword, and stand at the ready. Give him one chance to surrender, then attack.

Alcohol preference: mead, wine, beer, grain alcohol, whatever is in your cup.

Grain alcohol, strong, with a burn.

MEET YOUR LOCAL TOWNSFOLK (CONT.)

Are you a Cat or Dog person?

Probably cat - the meat is a bit more tender as they aren't as active.

If someone is trying to impress you/earn your favor what should the do? Beside defend the town.

Just be a good person, and try NOT to impress me. Help with any task that I don't like doing, which is pretty much any task regarding managing people.

What is your greatest pet peeve? Formalities. Say what you mean and nothing else.

When I'm about to go off adventuring I always remember to take my? Sword, of course.

If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life what would it be? My mother makes this amazing stew. It's got all of the food groups in it: Beef, chicken, and bacon.

Favorite Joke. The barkeep asked me once why I always carried my sword into the tavern. I just said "Mimics". He must've thought it was funny. He laughed. I laughed. The table laughed. I killed the table. It was a good day.

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BARBARIAN'S CORNER

By Bass (who is getting much better with words)

Journey to Achar Fochlama

The morning was cool and wet for Avandria, even in the late winter month that it was, as Bass loped through the woods. The quickened pace was not quite a run, but a ground-eating pace his tribe had used to emulate their horned hunting beasts. It worked well for maintaining speed and balance in uneven and wild terrains.


The day had refused to warm by mid day as a damp rain had settled over the forest. Had the Red Legs not been complaining so loud about being soaked to their nethers, Bass might have blundered into them in a tangle of momentum and regret. Instead, Bass pivoted a hundred strides out and took cover behind a large tree, his bow reflexively swinging off his shoulder and into his hand.

Silently, Bass cursed his bad fortune. A quick glance around the tree showed him five Red Legs, but worse they were accompanied by three Wolven. With the Sea Lions, or even just the aid of Coral, he'd be far less concerned, but a single archer against the heightened senses of the Wolven was far less than ideal.

What was worse, as Bass waited with quieted breath he could hear one of the Wolven call the others to a halt. He wasn't sure if it was because they'd heard Bass over the complaining mercenaries and rainfall, but it looked like he couldn't simply wait for them to pass.

Checking his quiver, he had only eight silver tipped arrows, and would have to make them work as the only tools he had on him which could slay the Wolven warriors. As he waited and listened, his mind drifted to memories of his Tribe's winter hunts.

BARBARIAN'S CORNER (CONT.)



Wendigos, vicious cannibals with supernatural skills, were uncommon in the northern reaches, but when they awoke to hunt they were a risk to any humanoids living in the area. The Standing Stone tribe had received a cry for aid from a nomadic tribe of elves who had lost many of their warriors to the faster-than-sight predators. Bass with his great hunting bow, accompanied one of the tribe's wise druids, and a handful of shield maidens (including Coral, though she and Bass had not yet been wed) had tracked the trail of blood left by the victims carried away from the Wendigos. He carried Fireheart Arrows, stone heads carved with runes of powerful fire magic, which could slay the Wendigos, but of course it would count on him hitting.

The beast came out of the trees when they attacked the barbarian hunting party. One moved, little more than a blur, and blasted through the line of unprepared shield maidens. The struck maiden, a tall warrior named Moss, crumpled to the floor. Her neck was torn open, exposing the side of her spine and melting the snow at her feet as it eschewed her lifeblood.


It came around for a second pass, and Coral raised her shield in time to be hurled backwards by the creature's monstrous strength rather than being destroyed in much the same way as her sister warrior. The air snapped with the thrum of Bass's bow as he loosed one of his arrows at the momentary pause the impact had forced the wendigo to take.

A cry of victory came up from the three shield maidens and Bass as they watched the creature stumble and collapse with a smoldering hole through his chest, but the wise druid, Moose, hissed and reached into his satchel to draw a small sphere of leather wrapped in fishing net which gave off a cloud of frost in the cold winter air.

The second wendigo dropped from the branches of the trees with a howl of rage, and drove another of the shield maidens to the ground. As it raked at her shield, Moose swung the orb in a quick circle over his head and hurled it at the monster. The brittle leather shattered as it impacted against the wendigo's back, releasing the contents of Ice Wurm blood across its back and freezing the beast solid.

The ice coating it continued to snap and crackle as the beast used its incredible strength to start breaking free of the binding, but before it could turn its rage-filled eyes on the druid, Coral came running back into the fray with her own bellow. Throwing her sword and shield aside, Coral reached down as she charged the creature, grabbing the smoking corpse of the wendigo's fallen partner, and swinging it with the strength of both her arms into the still-frozen cannibal.

The wendigo shattered as the body was torn asunder by Coral's mighty swing. A moment of silence filled the battlefield, and then a mighty victory Yawp came from Coral's throat, echoed by the rest of the hunting party.



The snapping of underbrush from one of the red legs brought Bass's mind back to the present. A team always makes life easier, but the reason Bass had left on this quest was to make his team stronger, more protected.

An insane, wild, and entirely barbarian idea came to Bass's mind and spread a massive smile across his face. He took a deep breath in, his right fist glowing with the draw of celestial energy, and he gave off his war cry as he turned to face the scouting party.

"I call forth the Dragon's Breath!" he shouted as he reduced the nearest Red Leg to ash.

BARBARIAN'S CORNER (CONT.)

The other four Red Legs took a step back in caution and surprise, but two of the Wolven bared fangs and claws at the screaming barbarian. The first lunged at Bass, and went wide-eyed in shock as Bass swiftly drew a trio of silver tipped arrows between his knuckles and drove the heads into the Wolven's chest, snapping off the shafts, and letting its limp form fall next to him. He stared down the other Wolven for a moment before pausing, "Wait, there were three of--"

The third Wolven hit Bass from his flank, aiming to sink claws into Bass's shoulder with one hand and rending straps which bound his quiver to his thigh with the other. Though the quiver dropped to the ground the protective wards Bass had learned to cast on himself protected him from the Wolven's claws and threw the beastial assailent off of Bass's back.

With a cry of barbarian rage, Bass turned toward the other as it charged in.

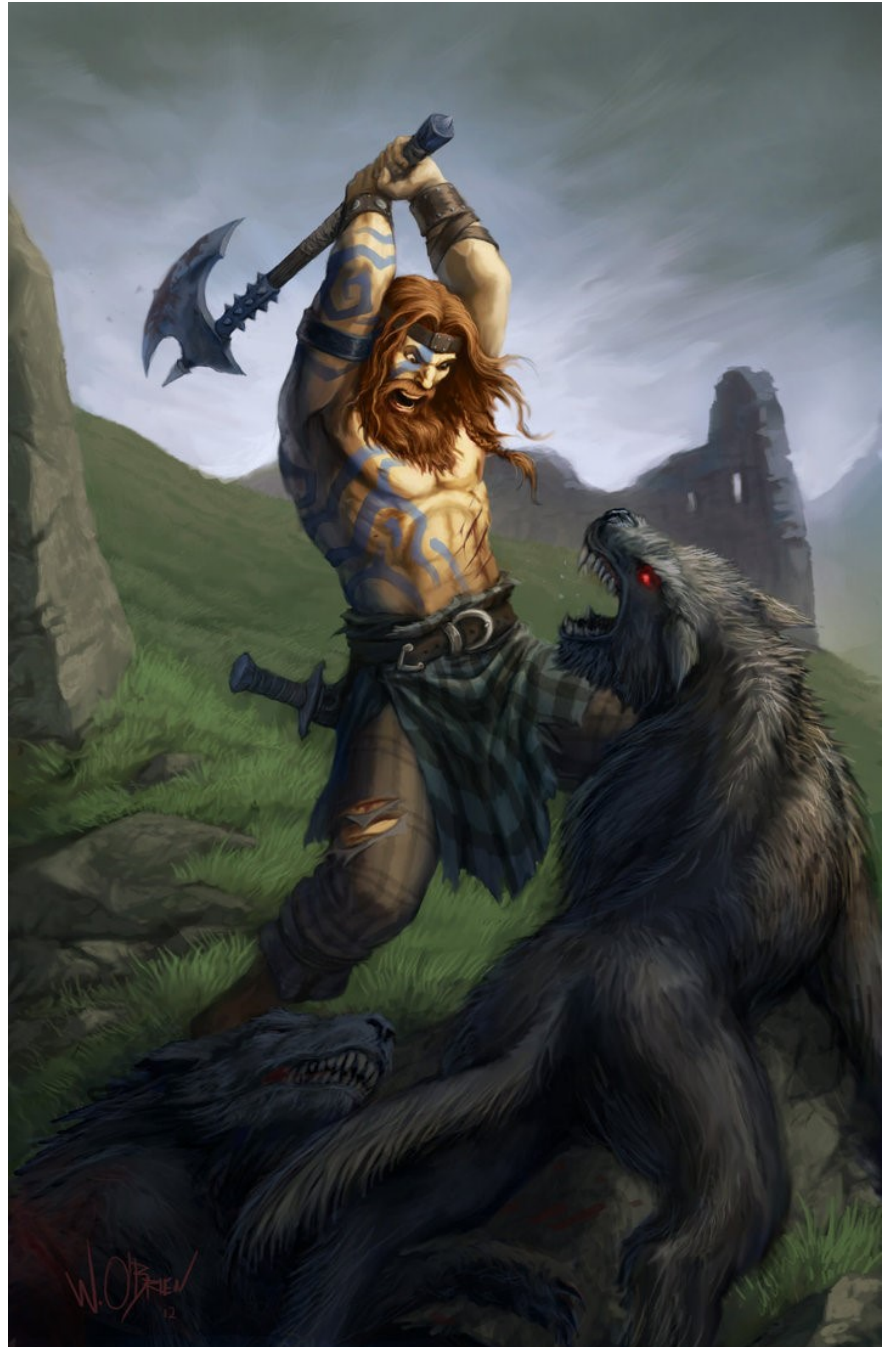
His hand glowing as he called the magic into it once again, Bass incanted an imprisonment spell as the Wolven dove at him. The feral hunter landed beside Bass, frozen in a magical stasis.

The tossed Wolven recovered his feet and turned to charge Bass, only to be slammed by the body of his frozen ally held in Bass's hands. The Wolven was tossed backwards into a large tree, shattering bark off of the trunk and dropping a deluge of rainwater down from the branches onto the dazed Wolven.

Bass turned and raised the frozen Wolven as an improvised weapon in both hands toward the Red Legs. He snarled, "Flee and live, cowards!" The Red Legs, turned and fled in terror from the man who'd raised one of their mighty companions as a club.

He turned and slammed the dazed warrior with his frozen companion a second time, releasing the body as he did.

Scooping up his Quiver, Bass did not leave time for the Wolven to recover. He had five silver arrows left, but it was possible he'd cross more Wolven in his journey and could hardly spare them on the paralyzed and stunned enemies behind him.



DEAR HANA

LIFE AND LOVE ADVICE FOR THOSE LIVING IN ADVENTUROUS TIMES

By Mizumi Hana

To My Dearest Readers,

Winter was an interesting season for many of you, I received a great many missives and I am doing my best to make it through the backlog. I am including a few here that shared sentiments with one another in the hopes that while you wait for your response, you can read of others in an eerily similar predicament and better your circumstances.

Dear Hana,



We are fleeing our homeland, our beloved Avandria has fallen to parasites and corrupted nobles. We are leaving our lands, our home, everything we have ever known to flee to a whispered safe-haven in the North. We know we must flee, our friends and neighbors disappear in the night, only to be returned days later, dull-eyed and possessing a third eye, pulsing in their forehead. Father was taken three days ago, we must flee before he returns, I cannot bear to see the monster that now wears his body. We know we'll have to travel light, take what we can, we'll be running, hiding, avoiding the vicious wolveren and villainous Red-Legs. What can we expect in this new land? Will they accept us? Will they turn us away? Will we be refugees forever?

Avandrian Orphan

My Dear Orphan,

I will not spend overmuch space in this missive with my condolences and sympathies, please be assured you have them, but they are not what you need right now. You my dear, are living out the most terrifying of horror stories, a girl alone, fleeing her home, chased by monsters, killers and body snatchers. As such, plan accordingly. You need shoes, good ones. You will be running, do not twist your ankle and fall to the monsters chasing you. Today you will not be lost, you will not be a victim, you are a warrior, rise up and run. Do not let anything stop you. Fight, for yourself, fight for all those who have been lost in the hopes that they may someday be saved. Carry your memories, your love and your weapon, money if it is easily portable and sturdy shoes. Follow the star to the North and do not stop. You are Avandria, so wherever you are, Avandria will be and because of you, Avandria will be free. Rise up and run. Remember that there is balance in the world, and for as dark as your conquered homeland is now, there is light waiting for you here. We're waiting for you with open arms. You are so brave, and I am so proud of you.

Dear Hana,



Are you looking for a new opportunity? A chance to make a difference with your life? Are you a loner? Moody? Depressed? Do you spend days thinking about how you'd like to punish everyone who ever laughed at you? Every girl that ever turned you down? Every teacher who ever told you that you had to do your homework? We have a place for you! Join the Red-Legs! Travel the countryside bullying farmers and merchants who have better lives than you. Steal from the rich! Steal from the poor! Steal from families and widows and orphans! Press-gang refugees into quasi-legal slavery! Beat children in front of their parents to extort extra payment! Kick dogs! Make people fear you! Make them cry just like you used to, make them beg for your mercy. Turnover is high so positions are always open! Lots of room for advancement! Experienced backgrounds in torture and murder of animals a plus! Apply today!

Make Avandria Great Again

Dear MAGA,

How do I put this succinctly? Kusokurae, jaakuna Kaiju. [*Go Fuck Yourselfs You Evil Monsters*]

How do I clarify that? In short, Bless your Heart.

Dear Hana,



I'm running for my life from my previous Captain and Red-Leg squad and I don't know where to go! I joined the Red-Legs because I wanted to make a difference, to save Avandria from the Wolveren and Ars, but now the Wolveren are in the Court and it feels like undead are everywhere. Last week my brother and I caught our Captain and his friends embezzling the Alchemy we're supposed to be sending to the King to make sure he recovers from sickness, they're just pocketing it and selling it for cash! Captain said everything is for sale now in Avandria, honor, Noble titles, even time with the lovely Dame Jacqueline Du Mast, he says with enough gold he can make that lotus do more than weep. My brother and I refused immediately! We serve the crown, we do not steal from it. Captain murdered my brother right there and then came after me. I fled for my life and now I don't know where to go. I can't go home, they know where I live. I can't go to the North, everyone despises the Red-Legs there. Where do I go? What do I do?

Caught Them Red-Handed

(continued on page 8)

ASK HANA (CONT.)

Dear Red-Handed,

You my boy are in shark-infested waters. You have no choice but to sink or swim. So swim, swim for the shore. Punch a shark in the nose, make him regret ever trying to bite you. Swim for the shore, and be aware that when you get there, you might find crocodiles. Metaphor aside, you cannot go home. And the people of the border and Riocht Mac Tire do not think well of Red-Legs. But, you are no longer a Red-Leg, you are on the run. Many people here have been hurt by Red-Legs, maybe you can atone for some of that. Help the people your companions have hurt. Seek out forgiveness, redemption and a future. Or drown. It seems a clear choice. Also, lose your boots, you cannot swim with them on.



Dear Hana,

I'm an alchemist by trade, I live near the Avandrian border and my business and family are in real trouble. For the past six months, Red-Legs have been coming to my shop and confiscating everything I create 'For the King's Illness'. I love my country and I love my King, and of course I want to help but this is crazy. It's been months and they keep taking everything we make. We can't survive like this. My Nana is convinced that it's not even going to the King at all and the Red-Legs are pocketing it and selling it all. She thinks we should replace the healing with laxatives and teach those 'Red-Shits a thing or two'. What do I do? Should I listen to her? Or continue to serve my King blindly, even at the cost of my business, my family and my home?

Does Nana Know Best?

KNIGHTS OF AVANDRIA

By Edward Peepers

*To be sung with fiery
determination, under the
influence of much mead.*

Come ride with me
Through the planes of history
I'll show you icons
All asleep on their jobs

And how can we win,
When fools can be queens?
Don't waste your time
Or time will waste you

No one's going to take me alive
Time has come to make things right
You and I must fight for our rights
You and I must fight to survive

No one's going to take me alive
Time has come to make things right
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No one's going to take me alive
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"Who is 'Moistening' the King and for what? Summer Solstice?"

Dear Best

Let's do some simple math here, shall we? The human stomach tends to hold approximately a quart of water, but the human stomach is highly expandable and can be expanded to hold up to a gallon of liquid. On top of that, the human body can absorb at most another 14 gallons of liquid within cells, blood, cellular fluid and intestine fluid. So at most, the human body can hold approximately 15 gallons of liquid. There are 128 ounces in a gallon so that's 1920 ounces of liquid. Each vial of alchemy is approximately 3 ounces. So that is 640 vials of alchemy. To this date it is estimated that the Red Legs have confiscated some 632,000 vials of alchemy. Given that approximate total, The King would have to consume the max limit of liquid a human body could hold every day for 987.5 days to consume it all.

This lead us to one of a couple conclusions, either the King is doing nothing, but drinking alchemy and peeing every waking minute of the day, or that alchemy is not all for him. I think your Nana may have the right idea.

One a side, related note, there is a practice among farmers who raise fowl to force feed them as much water as their little bird bodies can hold each and every single to day to plump them up and make the meat tender and moist. The process is called 'Moistening'. Which then begs the question, Who is 'Moistening' the King and for what? Summer Solstice?

BASELESS RUMORS

Corinia's son is not in a good way. Been bedridden for weeks. Can't shake a fever from a giant rat.

Wanted: Seeking Void Components for experimentation purposes. Seek Adlak at the tavern.

A malefic hag is giving eldritch powers to common street waifs.

Crrrrroooooak! Remember the sacrifice of the Knight! Oooone may save more with honor!

Avandria's coffers are running empty. They're having trouble paying the militia.

Looking for farmhands. Pay depends on experience. Talk to Farmer Skinner if interested.

If you're interested in the gladiator fights, bet against Wilvyn--I hear the fix is in.

The Lark sings a happy purple song. Seek the NeXt leaf.

The bard's story last night was very interesting. I can see why he picked it given the politics of the day.

The Fey court is changing! Remember to place out gifts of milk and honey and beer to protect yourselves!

CLASSIFIEDS

Contact Edward Peepers to post - 1 Silver per Word

Missing: Lord Silaris seeks assistance locating his dear friend Onyx the Sarr, last sighted in Clamps. She stands about 5'3" and looks to be at least nineteen harvests old, boasting a light colored top coat. She carries a small, spirit linked dagger. Reward offered for information leading to her recovery.

Missing: My son, Gurasson, is missing. He was last seen playing in the woods. Husband believes that he ran away and joined the army, but I think the Fey got him. Grandmere believes that it was the Spiders. Please help! Reward of everything I have if found... Goodwoman Hylithe

Mercenaries for Hire: The Sea Lions seek adventure, glory, and coin. Let us worry about your troubles whilst you enjoy your wine. Ask for Captain Chrétien de Troyes.

Wanted - Experts in the ways of the elemental planes of Dream and Reason: Contact Edward Peepers.

Formal Scrolls & Components: Has an indecipherable formal scroll recently come into your possession? Not sure what to do with all your extra bat wings and monster teeth? The Sea Lions will pay for quality formal components and scrolls.

Are Your Parents Dead? Are you or do you know an orphan? These lands have seen tremendous suffering. If you lack guardians and holdings, seek Edward Peepers for help. There can be a better tomorrow, together.