

### **VATERMONT 1, AC 1015: New Hard-Ball Season.**

**Location:** All around the NACE. AS

**Description:** The new hardball season begins in every nation of the NACE. Teams from the same countries compete for the right to go to Ionace in Flaurmont and win the trophy. The Mirros Knights are again invited to compete this year. (See Fl. 28.)

### **VATERMONT 2, AC 1015: Afflicted Harassed.**

**Location:** Ciudad Morales, Torre<sup>^</sup>n. SC

**Description:** The Afflicted throughout the town of Ciudad Morales find themselves the target of thrown vegetables and rocks. Soon enough, a full-scale riot breaks out in town, and Baronesa Isabel is forced to send soldiers in to calm things down. (See Va. 7, Va. 10.)

**What This Means:** The Torre<sup>^</sup>ners have also had a slight fear and mistrust of the Afflicted. When a plague broke out last year among them, many began to fear that the Afflicted would cause the death of countless non-Afflicted. The mistreatment of the Afflicted today is simply the continuation of this fear.

### **VATERMONT 2, AC 1015: Population of Odom Doubles.**

**Location:** Odom, Suma'a. SC

**Description:** Hopeful miners from Gombar and even Suma'a have flocked to Odom causing its population to double even though nothing has yet been found. A lot of activity outside the mining area is also occurring in Odom at this time with new taverns, inns, and supply stores opening overnight to accompany the projected influx of people. (See Nu. 27; Th. 22.)

**What This Means:** With the new influx of people the faith of Gombar is beginning to expand in Odom and the Odom region, while the church of Sumag is at a loss at what to do about this.

### **VATERMONT 3, AC 1015: Dragonflies Shot Down.**

**Location:** Glantri City, Glantri. OW

**Description:** Jaggar has a meeting with the heads of the Dragonfly recommission project. During the course of the meeting, he is informed that the damages sustained by the Dragonflies in their last mission were extensive, and will be costly to repair. Jaggar is disappointed, and knows it will be an uphill battle to get Dolores (the Council's Treasurer) to put up the money for repairs, but is confident he will win in the end.

Unfortunately, his advisors tell him, the damages are only half the problem. The skyships need to be refueled, and the only known source of fuel was destroyed by the Dragonflies in a climactic battle against dragons years ago. An expedition could be mounted to seek a new source of fuel out, and to mine the ore, but the cost...

Jaggar frowns and tells the project heads that he will think about it, inform them of his decision in a few days. In the meantime, he begins to seek out other means of attaining skyships. (See Nu. 17; Va. 7.)

**What This Means:** It looks as if the Dragonfly project has hit a serious snag. DMs could make a mission or series of missions for PCs to uncover and acquire a source of fuel for the skyships. Such an adventure could be very dangerous, as the ore that fuels the skyships tends to attract dragons (especially reds). Unless the DM decides to have his PCs undertake such a mission, assume that any efforts to get the Dragonflies in the air once more are either unsuccessful, or come too late to play any decisive role in the war against the Ethengarians.

### **VATERMONT 3, AC 1015: The Patient "Finally" Revives.**

**Location:** Haldemar, Alpathian Neatharum. HW

**Description:** After weeks of recuperation, Dogrel's charge has regained consciousness. Dogrel meets with the man in private, where they speak for several hours. Emerging from the chamber, Dogrel places guards at the door. (See Nu. 12, Nu. 25; Va. 9, Va. 15.)

**What This Means:** Zandor had actually regained consciousness a few days after being brought to Haldemar, and feigned unconsciousness to eavesdrop on his host. Since then he has learned much about Dogrel and his fears. Using this information Zandor has formulated a plan of action.

Zandor informs Dogrel that he is in fact Zandor, the rightful Emperor of Alphatia. He tells Dogrel that there is a power struggle within the Imperium. Supporters of his mother wish to lead Alphatia on a docile path based on trade and non-expansionism, whereas he represents the aspect of the Empire that desires to exert rightful Alphatian power through whatever means necessary. Zandor tells Dogrel that he was forced to flee the Alphatian Continent due to attempts upon his life by supporters of his mother.

Dogrel eagerly listens to Zandor. To him, the story is easy to believe as Zandor's presented beliefs mirror his own. Aiding this is the secrecy in which the Imperial Court has cloaked the matter in. Dogrel knows nothing of Zandor's true crimes.

Though wary of the possible implications, Dogrel is sorely tempted to offer Zandor aid in exchange for an ally that may be Emperor someday. However, despite the limitations the Empress has imposed upon him, he is not too thrilled about committing treason. He concedes to offer him sanctuary for the time being. This is satisfactory for Zandor, as all he wants is a safe place where he can regain his strength and most importantly assemble a new spellbook.

#### **VATERMONT 4, AC 1015: The Dragon's Defeat.**

**Location:** Black Mountains, Karameikos. OW

**Description:** Sir Yuschiev and his party find the white dragon's lair. The white is not in, so they plan to ambush it when it returns. Unfortunately, the white manages to sense the intruders and catches them by surprise instead. The battle is bloody on the adventurers' side, as the dragon continuously flies above sword reach, breathing down upon them.

Derkost eventually manages to pull the dragon down, pinning it long enough for his human allies to finish off the huge creature. Several minutes are then spent bandaging the massive cuts on Derkost who had received the full fury of the white's claws during his wrestling match.

The group then enters the lair and divides the treasure amongst themselves. Of particular note, Derkost manages to obtain a staff of power. (See Nu. 18, Nu. 26; Va. 15, Va. 18.)

**What This Means:** The party was able to discover the lair rather quickly thanks to Derkost. When his group raided King's Road Keep a few years ago, they scouted the entire area looking for their own caverns to rest in. Derkost therefore knew where most of the caverns large enough to hold a dragon were located. The party simply tried each of them until they found the right one.

Now that the white dragon has been dealt with, Sir Yuschiev is once more a hero. The exact contents of the dragon's treasure hoard is up to the DM, but the frost giant witch-doctor should obtain a staff of power or similar magical item.

**What The PCs Can Do:** Obviously, if they are part of Sir Yuschiev's party, the PCs will greatly affect the outcome of this battle.

If the PCs are on their own and defeat the dragon themselves, then the DM should find another situation for Sir Yuschiev to once more be a hero. Yuschiev must be awarded the title of Baron before the year AC 1018 so the events in the novel "Dark Knight of Karameikos" can take place as written.

#### **VATERMONT 4, AC 1015: Stragglers Return.**

**Location:** Xorg, Orcland. OW

**Description:** A few stragglers from last year's failed raid on Fort Hobart return to Alebane's keep in Orcland today. They have been holed up for most of the winter, but they come back with some interesting news. They have discovered the highly secret Darokin Tunnel - a back way into Rockhome!

Alebane plots on how best to utilize this information as quickly as possible. (See Fl. 5, Am. 15.)

**What This Means:** Alebane is getting rash in his old age -due both to the weight of his numerous defeats as well as the influence of the Huptzeen he wears. He plans to build up his forces and mount an assault on the dwarves of Rockhome within the next few months.

#### **VATERMONT 5, AC 1015: Von Klagendorf on a Mission.**

**Location:** Freiburg, Heldannic Territories. OW

**Description:** Herr Wulf notifies senior members of the order that he has received word of personal matters that must be dealt with in Hattias.

He manages to convince the others that, as this is personal, and it could affect his ability to lead effectively if left unresolved, he should head south by ship immediately. He appoints a council to rule in his absence, and selects a small group of Knights to accompany him. (See Nu. 17, Nu. 27; Va. 8, Va. 11.)

**What This Means:** Herr Wulf has come up with an excuse to cover up his mission. As long as everyone believes he has personal business, no one will question his absence. He has decided to name a council to rule in his absence so that no one person can usurp his position easily.

**What The PCs Can Do:** If the players have lobbied Herr Wulf to accompany him, they will be going with him. If they are working for any of his political opponents, discovering the true nature of this voyage would shake the nation.

#### **VATERMONT 7, AC 1015: Afflicted In Arms.**

**Location:** Ciudadela de Le^n, Torre^n. SC

**Description:** After a week of continuous abuse by the elves and humans of Torre^n, a group of Afflicted in the capital take up arms and begin attacking the non-afflicted in retaliation. Another riot breaks out, but it is soon squashed by the numerous mercenary companies found within the town. (See Va. 2; Va. 10, Th. 12.)

**What This Means:** Despite attempts at keeping the peace, tension is mounting between Afflicted and non-Afflicted.

#### **VATERMONT 7, AC 1015: Jaggar's Petition.**

**Location:** Glantri City, Glantri. OW

**Description:** Prince Jaggar petitions the Council of Princes for permission and funding to make skyships. He desires to create them to help in the war against Ethengar.

Jaggar uses the arguments that it could also help against Thyatis, who now has its own skyships, and who is much more expansionist than Alphonatia ever was.

The Council agrees to the petition. (See Fl. 9, Fl. 14.)

**What This Means:** Prince Jaggar is using the war as an excuse to increase his own power. With skyships, his military will be stronger than ever, and that will only give him more influence on the Council once the war is over.

Still, the reasons he desires the skyships are valid, and he truly will use them to defend his beloved nation of mages. Another reason, which he did not mention, is that he misses being in the air. His pegasus mounts refuse to let him ride them (because of evil deeds he performed while influenced by Synn), and he has only just begun to realize this fact.

#### **VATERMONT 7, AC 1015: "Senkhites" Surround Tarthis.**

**Location:** Tarthis, Nithia. HW

**Description:** Forces loyal to Senkha have seized large swaths of territory along the Nithia River in the Delta Kingdom since the beginning of the year. Now, her forces have converged on Tarthis, the main stronghold of devoted supporters of Ramose. Quickly they manage to begin a siege today, effectively blocking all land and sea access to the city - they even manage to turn back floating barges that make their way to the capital. (See Nu. 17; Va. 20, Va. 27.)

**What This Means:** With the apparent discrediting of Ramose, due to Senkha's successful passing of the test of pharaohs [See AC 1014 Almanac. Ed.], the old pharaoh's supporters are in disarray. Senkha's forces have seized the advantage, and so were able to conquer large swaths of territory in the Delta kingdom, despite tough resistance in certain regions. With the encirclement of Tarthis, the Delta kingdom is effectively cut in two.

**What The PCs Can Do:** If the PCs are on the side of Ramose's forces, they could perform such missions as scouting the enemy, and trying to send information, important goods, and other things through the blockade. They could also be asked to try to harry the besiegers in their camps, thus causing discord and hampering the siege.

#### **VATERMONT 8, AC 1015: Herr Wulf Departs.**

**Location:** Freiburg, Heldannic Territories. OW

**Description:** Herr Wulf and his chosen companions leave Freiburg today for Port Hatti.

**What This Means:** Herr Wulf and his party have set sail for their quest. He has no intention of arriving in Port Hatti, and has made arrangements for a stopover to be made in Zeaburg, Ostland, where he and his party will change ships and head straight for Vanya's Rest. (See Nu. 27, Va. 5; Va. 11, Th. 14.)

#### **VATERMONT 9, AC 1015: A Nest of Spies.**

**Location:** Haldemar, Alphatian Neatharum. HW

**Description:** Alphatian agents still in Haldemar uncover a series of small-scaled tunnels beneath the buildings of the city. Using magic, the agents access the tunnels and follow their paths. They come to the tunnels' main chamber and engage the diminutive persons.

The spies flee with surprising speed. However they leave behind three of their party, one of which is wounded badly, while two are taken captive. Also captured are notes concerning the observations the Kubitts had made. With their captives and captured notes, the agents immediately secure passage aboard a skyship and travel to the Alphatian Continent. (See Nu. 25, Va. 3; Va. 15, Va. 17.)

**What This Means:** Alphatian agents investigating the sightings of the diminutive persons discovered the passages the Kubitts had used to move about areas of the city. Using magic, they shrank themselves to a size that allowed them to access the tunnels. This gave them the opportunity to surprise the Kubitts, which proved enough to take the prisoners and secure the documents before the Kubitts could flee with them.

With their base of operations discovered and their observations taken, the surviving Kubitts will have to start over again. Their task will be made more difficult now as they have lost the factor of surprise. They have also lost their leader, since one of those taken prisoner is Captain Zoranthi [HW Box page 57] who was badly wounded in the brief battle. So the Kubitts will have to be more careful and stealthy.

**What The PCs Can Do:** If PCs were the ones that uncovered the Kubitts and their tunnels, then they will be well received in Andaire. They could then lead the effort to discover the identity of these small spies, possibly including their Alphatian origin. They also have an opportunity to act as diplomats to the Kubitts. If they treat the captured Kubitts well, then an important first step between the two peoples has been initiated. Other options for Alphatian PCs include pursuing the Kubitts that evaded capture.

If the PCs are Kubitts then they may assemble a rescue force. A rescue attempt is more favorable while the captured Kubitts are still in Neatharum awaiting the skyship to depart, while infiltrating the flying continent will prove more difficult. Rescuing their fellows and departing will really be challenging either way. Then remains the task of reorganizing and rebuilding their spy network in Haldemar.

#### **VATERMONT 10, AC 1015: Afflicted Regroup in Las Guajacas.**

**Location:** Las Guajacas, Torre n. SC

**Description:** Afflicted throughout the Baronia de Torre n have begun fleeing to the village of Las Guajacas. The small town soon becomes almost entirely composed of Afflicted and the largest known enclave of Afflicted on the Savage Coast. (See Va. 2, Va. 7; Th. 12, Kl. 9.)

**What This Means:** Most Afflicted in Torre n were hermits or small groups living just outside of normal people's way. And these small groups were easy targets for the paranoid who feared them. Fleeing from the dangers, many started heading to the village of Las Guajacas, which already boasted a 75% Afflicted population. With the increase of Afflicted to the area, many of the non-afflicted began fleeing that same town.

#### **VATERMONT 11, AC 1015: Stopover in Zeaburg.**

**Location:** Zeaburg, Ostland. OW

**Description:** Herr Wulf and his party arrive in Zeaburg, and switch ships. Their new vessel, a small sailing ship, will head straight for Vanya's Rest. A substantial sum of money convinces the shipowner that this is not too far out of the way. The original ship will still head for Port Hatti so as not to arouse suspicion. The party leaves the same day. (See Va. 5, Va. 8; Th. 14, Fl. 4.)

**What This Means:** Herr Wulf had decided before the quest that switching ships would be a good way of eluding pursuit. He had made arrangements beforehand.

**What The PCs Can Do:** Again, the players are along for the ride on this one. Their skills may be needed to procure extra supplies, however, and to ensure that the whole operation does not attract attention.

#### **VATERMONT 12, AC 1015: New Allies!**

**Location:** Atruaghin Territories. OW

**Description:** After weeks of fighting, leaders of Atruaghin war parties and the leaders of the Great Migration meet to discuss an alliance against their mutual enemies, the Tiger Clan. The two parties agree to join forces. (See Nu. 22; Va. 19, Th. 1.)

**What This Means:** Atruaghin forces have been slowly coming down from the plateau (via routes through the interior) in order to help drive the goblinoids off. It has become apparent over the weeks, however, that the Great Migration's true goal is to raid Tiger Clan lands. If that is indeed their target, the Children of Atruaghin would rather let their enemies fight each other.

After much discussion and communion with their respective Immortals, the two groups have reached a tentative alliance. This will bode ill for the Tiger Clan.

**What The PCs Can Do:** PCs have ample opportunity to be the peacemakers here, or to attempt to forestall agreements between the two peoples.

#### **VATERMONT 12, AC 1015: Spies Report to Catriata.**

**Location:** Issarthyl, Schattenalfheim. HW

**Description:** The spies reach Issarthyl, after covertly traveling through the southern part of the Azcan Empire. They are quickly brought to Queen Catriata, who listens to their reports with great interest. At the mention of the lost city of Aengmor, she becomes even more intrigued.

Later that day, after consulting with her generals and advisors, and communing with her patron Atzanteotl, Catriata announces that the Schattenalfen must have this city which once belonged to them. It is their right. However, in order to take the city her spies inform the court that they will have to conquer their enemies the shadow elves - otherwise they stand no chance of holding Aengmor. It is thus decided that the largest military force the Schattenalfen have ever committed to battle will be sent up the annelid tunnel to attack the shadow elves on their home territory.

Preparations are begun immediately to gather the necessary resources to support such a massive force: food is gathered and stockpiled, as are weapons and armor, clothing, tools, and so on. Meanwhile Schattenalfen tunnelers set to work extending a tunnel to join up with the annelid tunnel; patrols of outlying territories are ordered to be cut, and the Schattenalfen begin to withdraw from their most distant outposts. In Issarthyl, training camps spring up around the city as large numbers of troops are brought home and begin a series of rigorous drills and exercises. (See Nu. 7, Nu. 8; Va. 13, Va. 17.)

**What This Means:** Conflict between the two kindreds of shadow elves has always been a strong possibility since they made contact a few years ago. Now, the Schattenalfen have found an excuse to be the first to strike. Although they will be taking on their enemies on the Shadow Elves' home territory, the Schattenalfen have a slight numeric advantage. They will exploit their element of surprise to its full potential.

#### **VATERMONT 13, AC 1015: Spies Depart for the Shadow Elf Territories.**

**Location:** Issarthyl, Schattenalfheim. HW

**Description:** Many of Schattenalfheim's best spies leave Issarthyl today in small groups, heading as fast as possible through (and under) Azcan lands to the tunnel at Atacalpa. Accompanying the spies are some elite tunnelers, who will begin tunneling back towards Schattenalfheim to speed the effort of the tunnelers back home. (See Nu. 8, Va. 12; Va. 17, Fl. 10.)

**What This Means:** In a matter of days, the Shadow Elf Territories will begin to be infiltrated by Schattenalfen spies. These spies will attempt to cause as much trouble for the shadow elves as they possibly can before their military forces arrive.

#### **VATERMONT 13, AC 1015: Slagovich Hires Bounty Hunters.**

**Location:** Slagovich, City-State of Slagovich. SC

**Description:** Still unable to discover who raided the cinnabryl during the second exportation in Kaldmont 1014, Margrave Miosz II decides to hire bounty hunters.

A Yavdlom swetanga (destituted noble) named Zuberi answers the call. (See Nu. 9; Th. 26, Kl. 20)

**What This Means:** Slagovich is the main supplier of cinnabryl to the Savage Coast and their Kaldmont shipment last year has been stolen. Margrave Miosz II suspects Hule, Zvornik and Hojah of supporting the pirates, but he has no proofs. Moreover he cannot spread his fleet too far from Slagovich because he fears a new attack by Zvornik and Hojah.

**What The PCs Can Do:** PCs with a ship can be hired by Slagovich as hunters, otherwise they can find work aboard Zuberi's ship.

#### **VATERMONT 13, AC 1015: Dead Elves Can't Talk.**

**Location:** Great Forest of Geffron, Denagoth. NW

**Description:** The party of elven explorers who entered the Denagoth Plateau last year discovers many skeletons and common graves inside the Forest of Geffron. After examination, the group realizes that all of the bodies are those of elves. The Alfheimers start to understand the extent of the atrocities committed by the Shadowlord. Nevertheless, they continue to advance. (See Th. 13, Fl. 19.)

**What This Means:** The Alfheim explorers on the Denagothian plateau have now discovered the horrible truth about the clans supposed to live there: they have been almost completely exterminated by the mysterious Shadowlord, whose troops now claim nearly two-third of the Geffron Forest. Also, as no reports come from the scouts who went to the Lothenar Forest about three months ago, their comrades start to fear the worst.

**What The PCs Can Do:** If the PCs are members of the expedition, they will have a tough time repelling the goblinoids and monsters that ply the forest.

#### **VATERMONT 15, AC 1015: Hero's Welcome.**

**Location:** Mirros, Karameikos. OW

**Description:** Sir Yuschiev's band arrives back in Mirros at the head of a caravan (carrying the gold from the dragon's treasure). Word of their deed has arrived in Mirros before they did, and many people are waiting in the streets to welcome them as heroes. (See Nu. 26, Va. 4; Va. 18.)

**What This Means:** Defeating a dragon, even a young one, is no easy feat. They deserve the heroes' welcome.

Derkost is not with the party, having returned to the School of Magecraft. He plans to discover all the secrets of his newfound staff of power.

**What The PCs Can Do:** If they took part in defeating the dragon, then the entire celebration is in their honor. Let them reap the rewards.

#### **VATERMONT 15, AC 1015: A Weary Return.**

**Location:** Haldemar, Alphonat Neatharum. HW

**Description:** After weeks searching the surrounding countryside for their quarry, a party of Alphonat agents return to Haldemar to replenish their supplies and have a brief rest. Their rest is interrupted by the appearance of King Dogrel, who invites them to dine with him.

Over dinner, Dogrel asks them about their search. He even tells him of the recent discoveries of the "diminutive people." The conversation varies but centers on politics and recent events, all centered on Alphonat. Ultimately he brings up the earlier numbers of Alphonat agents.

The dinner guests tell Dogrel that they, and the others, were charged with tracking down and apprehending someone for the Empress. As the conversation progresses, the agents eventually tell Dogrel that they are pursuing Zandor and why. They tell him of his crimes and abuses of power during his short stint as Emperor.

Shortly thereafter Dogrel ends the dining engagement and dismisses the agents, wishing them luck in their search. He does suggest the agents stay in Haldemar for a few more days. He also suggests that they look into the diminutive persons problem. (See Va. 3, Va. 9; Va. 17, Va. 19.)

**What This Means:** Dogrel still has lingering doubts regarding Zandor, at least in fully supporting him. Hearing of the arrival of the agents, he presses them for information using a courteous dinner as cover. He finds a great deal. Most of the other aspects of the conversation support the portions that paint Zandor as a criminal. With this circumstantial evidence, he feels certain that the agents are telling the truth about Zandor.

Dogrel does not tell them that Zandor is so near. Dogrel recognizes that if he captures Zandor himself, it will do much for his prestige within the Empire. However, he suggests that the agents remain in the area; that way Dogrel has some “muscle” around should Zandor resist too much.

#### **VATERMONT 16, AC 1015: Humans Hit Alfheimers.**

**Location:** Forest of the Curse, Wendar. OW

**Description:** The humans living along the borders of the Forest of the Curse (the Alfheimers’ territory) start making frequent raids into the forest. They slaughter many woodland animals, often leaving carcasses scattered around the forest, cut off many trees and even cause havoc in a few small elven villages by driving large packs of wild boars or other nasty animals through them. (See Nu. 8 Nu. 14; Va. 24, Va. 27.)

**What This Means:** The humans want their revenge against the Alfheimers, accused of having caused the plague that has killed more than 40,000 of them during the last year. They are arranging things to provoke the elves without attacking them directly and they are succeeding. Again, this plan is (unknown to the Wendarian humans) being orchestrated by the followers of Idris.

**What The PCs Can Do:** If the PCs are Alfheimers, they can try to avoid major damage caused by the humans, but this will not stop them. There are different groups at work, and the PCs will not be able to stop them all. If however they are humans, they can either participate in the raids or pretend to ally with the human bands while working undercover for Bensarian to discover who’s behind these actions.

#### **VATERMONT 17, AC 1015: Glantri City Harassed.**

**Location:** Glantri City, Glantri. OW

**Description:** Early in the morning, a series of magical occurrences plagues the city of Glantri. Swarms of stinging insects appear from nowhere; snakes and animals run rampant through the city streets; there is even a minor earthquake that erupts in the city!

Fortunately, the wizards of Glantri City are able to mobilize before any real damage takes place- a few some buildings in the suburbs outside the city walls are knocked down by the quake, and there are a few casualties from the occurrences (snake bites, primarily).

Three of the perpetrators of the incidents are caught- clerics of the Ten Thousand Fists of Khan, an Ethengarian movement that operates illegally within the Principalities. They are tried and executed for their crimes almost immediately. The watches around the city are put on double duty.

**What This Means:** This is the first example of the war between Ethengar and Glantri. Moglai Khan’s agents have been infiltrating Glantri covertly for many years now, and they are becoming more openly belligerent since the declaration of war between the two nations. Many events such as this will occur over the next few months. (See Va. 3; Va. 7; Fl. 9.)

**What The PCs Can Do:** If Glantrians, the PCs can investigate the events and try to capture the agents responsible. High-level PCs may even try to track down Song-Anh, the mastermind of the Ten Thousand Fists of Khan in Glantri. If Ethengarians, the PCs can be behind the events, and try to evade capture by Glantrian authorities.

#### **VATERMONT 17, AC 1015: Schattenalfen Settle for Peace.**

**Location:** Traldar Lands. HW

**Description:** The Schattenalfen, needing all their armed forces for their upcoming assault on Shadow Elf lands, sue the Traldar for peace. They tell them that a group of scouts discovered this sacred place and mistook the Traldar artifact for a lost artifact of their immortal patron Atzanteotl, described in their legends, and which was said to be guarded by an hydra. So they mistook the Traldar artifact for their own and took it. However, the vicious Azcans, who had learned of their quest, attacked those elves who were bringing back the artifact and took it to their lands instead. The elves bring the bodies of their scouting party and some dead Azcans to testify of their story. They apologize for the misunderstanding and propose that the Traldar can cross their territory freely to track their lost artifact into Azcan land.

The Traldar are convinced by the Schattenalfen's lies and proceed to raid the Azcans, while the elves are content with their deceit. (See Va. 12, Va. 13; Th. 11, Fl. 10.)

**What This Means:** The Schattenalfen needed some rest from the Traldar attacks, because they are deploying their forces toward the Outer World. They hope with this deceit to put two of their enemies at each other's throat. The lands they give access to the Traldar are lands they cannot defend anymore anyway because they're withdrawing in order to attack the Shadow Elves. The bodies they show as proof are, in fact, the executed Shadow Elf diplomats.

Though the Schattenalfen believe they have totally deceived the stupid, primitive Traldar, the Traldar actually still have many doubts, and though they do stop attacking the Schattenalfen and start attacking the Azcans, some heroes begin to spy on the Schattenalfen to try and find out the whole truth.

#### **VATERMONT 17, AC 1015: Dogrel is Raided.**

**Location:** Dogrel, Alphatian Neatharum. HW

**Description:** In the mining town of Dogrel, Neathar warriors stage a midday raid. The raid is repelled with minor casualties for either side. The raiders then fall back into the surrounding countryside. (See Va. 9, Va. 15; Va. 19, Va. 20.)

**What This Means:** This raid was not as minor as it seems: Zorok himself is there to plan the attack. His tactic was for the Neathar raiders to draw the defenders into pursuing them into the surrounding country, where the Neathar would attack them in mass.

#### **VATERMONT 18, AC 1015: Sir Yuschiev's Reward.**

**Location:** Mirros, Karameikos. OW

**Description:** During a ceremony in the court of Mirros, King Stefan Karameikos III announces that Sir Yuschiev, in honor of the several brave deeds he has performed for the nation and the royal family, is awarded the title of Baron. He is awarded Rugalov Barony - land along the Rugalov River, several miles north of Rugalov Keep.

Baron Yuschiev's men, including Grygory, are also all knighted personally by the King himself.

A celebration is declared, and it takes up the rest of the day. (See Va. 4, Va. 15.)

**What This Means:** Yuschiev is the first Traladaran to obtain a landed nobility title. King Stefan viewed this as another way to cement the relationship between the two peoples of his nation. Unfortunately, it will have mixed results.

Many of the older Thyatians were able to live with the Traladarans as equals, but now that one of them is actually of higher social standing than they are, the minor nobles begin to fear being outclassed by the Traladarans. This sparks up feelings of hatred toward Traladarans which started out as, unfortunately, nothing more than jealousy toward an individual who is now of higher social class.

Although now a greater noble of Karameikos, Yuschiev will be mocked by the lesser nobles whenever they can get away with it. This will only further his hatred toward the Thyatians.

But Yuschiev still doesn't have complete support of even his own Traladaran people. The most powerful Traladaran lords, notably Dmitrov and Marilenev, are angered that this adventurer gained the title of Baron before they did, seeing how they have been ruling their own lands for over four decades now.

Note that, as mentioned before, it is important that Sir Yuschiev becomes a baron and Grygory receives his knighthood. The Thyatian-Traladaran hatred is also a necessary part for the setting of the novel "Dark Knight of Karameikos."

**What The PCs Can Do:** If part of the dragon-slaying party, they can probably also be rewarded with the title of knight or something similar. Regardless, they should be treated as heroes for the next few weeks at the very least.

#### **VATERMONT 19, AC 1015: First Blood.**

**Location:** A few miles outside of the village of the Chameleon Tribe, Atruaghin Territories. OW

**Description:** Joint Atruaghin/goblinoid forces clash with the army of the Chameleon Tribe today. After a fierce and bloody battle, the Chameleon Tribe army is soundly routed, the penalty for having underestimated their foes. As they retreat to their village to await reinforcements, the opposition marches closely behind them. (See Nu. 22, Va. 12; Th. 1, Th. 17.)



**What This Means:** Hool's quest for the Great Knife begins here, in the Tiger Clan territories. As followers of Atzanteotl, Hool hopes they will have knowledge of the Knife's whereabouts. He will interrogate any prisoners he manages to capture, using any means of torture available, in order to secure what he seeks.

#### **VATERMONT 19, AC 1015: Dogrel Assaulted.**

**Location:** Dogrel, Alphatian Neatharum. HW

**Description:** The Neathar once again attack the mining town of Dogrel. This time the raid is more intense and lasts for several hours. The defenders are hard-pressed to hold off the assaults, but they do. (See Va. 15, Va. 17; Va. 20, Va. 21.)

**What This Means:** With the previous tactic of drawing the defenders out and into the trap not working as planned, Zorok launched a direct assault on Dogrel. The defenders were well prepared and able to hold off the assaults.

#### **VATERMONT 20, AC 1015: Menkara Falls.**

**Location:** Menkara, Nithia. HW

**Description:** A large group of Senkha's forces, having branched off from the main force last month, catch the coastal city of Menkara by surprise, storming its walls and capturing much of it within a day, after some fierce fighting in the streets and along the main bridge. Citizens are urged to remain in their homes, and little violence erupts against the populace as a result. (See Nu. 17, Va. 7; Va. 27, Th. 3.)

**What This Means:** The defenders of Menkara were caught totally by surprise. They had heard news of the invasion, but they did not expect Senkha's forces to advance so quickly. As a result, the city's defensive forces had not been fully mobilized by the time the "Senkhites" arrived.

Most of the city is now in the hands of the invaders, but some holdouts remain in some of the temples along the main bridge, as well as some other public buildings. These will all be defeated in the next few days. The invasion was also a surprise to the general commanding the invading forces; he did not expect his opponents to be unprepared.

**What The PCs Can Do:** If they happen to be in Menkara when it falls, they could be asked to send important information to those areas loyal to Ramose that have not fallen, or possibly safeguard a holy relic. Given that Senkha's forces control the city, there is little they can do here, apart from assassinating any leaders they can find, though this could lead to repercussions against the populace.

#### **VATERMONT 20, AC 1015: The Reckoning.**

**Location:** Haldemar, Alphatian Neatharum. HW

**Description:** Dogrel decides it is time to act. He summons Zandor to his study and confronts him about the crimes. Zandor casually confirms each and every accusation, adding several that Dogrel was not told. Zandor then justifies the acts as being well within the rights of the Emperor. Then his arguments become a series of incoherent screeds.

Dogrel takes the initiative and casts Power Word Stun. As Zandor is knocked down, Dogrel moves in to cast a Feeblemind spell to be followed by a Web spell to hold him. As Dogrel approaches, his feet crash through the flooring stopping at his waist. Zandor takes advantage of this and recovers his senses enough to respond. As Dogrel struggles to free himself, Zandor begins pummeling him mercilessly with a metal pitcher.

Dogrel's guards arrive and begin bashing the locked door down; behind them are the Alphatian agents Dogrel had previously dined with. As they batter the door, Zandor casts Wraithform and Fly and escapes. Inside, the guards find a bleeding and unconscious Dogrel wedged in a hole in the floor. They gently remove Dogrel from the hole and carry him to his sleeping quarters where his wounds can be treated. Dogrel's aides ask the agents to stay the night. (See Va. 17, Va. 19; Va. 21, Th. 3.)

**What This Means:** Dogrel decided it was time to confront Zandor. Zandor surprised Dogrel by affirming the accusations, then went a step further by displaying his insanity. It was too much, even for Dogrel.

Dogrel tried to capture Zandor alive by unleashing a planned out series of spells. Unfortunately, on the brink of success, the floor gave way. Zandor used the pause to exact some revenge before having to make a hasty escape utilizing the few spells he had regained while under Dogrel's care.

The guards were close at hand and intervened. The Alpathian agents had been in the area investigating Kubitt passages that led into Dogrel's compound, where they heard the sounds of magical melee and the crashing of the floor timbers. Dogrel is scraped up, bruised, and woozy, but these wounds are superficial.

Subsequent investigations uncover structural weaknesses in the floor joists. The beams bear small hack and saw marks. This sabotage was enough to cause the floor to collapse under Dogrel's weight. The marks and the discovery of a passage recently cut into the building suggest that the diminutive persons are involved.

The Kubitts did weaken the floor as an act of revenge against Dogrel whom they hold responsible for their losses to the agents that infiltrated the spy network. They actually have no sympathies for Zandor. Since being in Haldemar, they have overheard conversation regarding Zandor and his crimes. They were even present during Dogrel's confrontation of him.

#### **VATERMONT 21, AC 1015: Dogrel Explains.**

**Location:** Haldemar, Alpathian Neatharum. HW

**Description:** A bruised and battered Dogrel summons the Alpathian agents to him. He informs them that Zandor had been in the city as his guest. He explains to them that he had hoped to trap Zandor by lulling him with a false sense of security. However, that trap had been thwarted by the diminutive persons. Dogrel feels certain that the diminutive persons are in the services of Zandor. (See Va. 19, Va. 20; Th. 3, Th. 17.)

**What This Means:** Dogrel knows that losing custody of Zandor compromises his defense and justification in harboring him. Aware that word of the fiasco will soon reach Andaire, he decides to go on the offensive, summons the agents and tells them the whole story. Of course he adds, omits, and emphasizes aspects of the story to justify things and better his own image.

#### **VATERMONT 21, AC 1015: A New Way of Rafiel?**

**Location:** City of the Stars, Shadow Elves' Territories. OW

**Description:** The Civil War has ended, but the religious problem over the rightful Way of Rafiel lasts. The Royal Wizard Kanafasti invites Princess Tanadaleyo to find a peaceful solution to the problem of the Wanderers. Though she could not care less about the Shamans and their ritual, the Radiant Princess is sympathetic to Kanafasti and Falanen, now both Wanderers, so she asks the Shamans in the City of the Stars to attend a meeting to revise the verse of the Wanderers.

Porphyriel does not care about the Wanderers as long as they do not cause problems with Rafiel's main project, the Chamber of the Spheres, so she agrees on a meeting to be held in the City of the Stars. (See Nu. 7, Nu. 20; Th. 26, Fy. 3.)

**What This Means:** The meeting will be held in the City of the Stars, so Wanderers won't be allowed to take part in the debate because they're not allowed underground. Kanafasti selects Princess Tanadaleyo as the Wanderers' representative at the debate. Many important people will take part in the forum, including Porphyriel, King Telemon, his daughter Calenderi (a young Shaman) and several high level Shamans.

While the long debate goes on, General Garafaele and his troops (those who didn't get back) stay in Rafielton to prevent another uprising.

#### **VATERMONT 24, AC 1015: The Alfheim Avengers Strike Back.**

**Location:** Forest of the Curse, Wendar. OW

**Description:** After many incidents caused by humans, the Alfheim Avengers start to organize retaliatory actions against the humans living nearby their territory. Unfortunately for them, some humans are injured, a village is burned down and they take the blame for it. (See Nu. 14, Va. 16; Va. 27, Th. 3.)

**What This Means:** The Alfheim Avengers have fallen into the trap of the Church of Idris. Having set fire to some cottages which resulted in the destruction of an entire village, even the elves believe they might have gone a little too far. This and the fact that some huntsmen have been injured by the Alfheimers will be used by the humans against them.

**What The PCs Can Do:** The PCs can only limit the damage if they are on the humans' side, or help in the raids if they are with the elves. They won't have the opportunity to discover the followers of Idris at work before it's too late.

### **VATERMONT 27, AC 1015: Tarthis Conquered.**

**Location:** Tarthis, Nithia. HW

**Description:** After almost a month of pitched battles outside the city walls, the invading forces of Senkha manage to defeat their opponents, and break into the city. Many soldiers loyal to Ramose surrender, being outnumbered by almost two-to-one, though many die in the fighting. In a panic, the citizens flee for the relative safety of their homes, and for the most part are unmolested by the invaders. Quickly, the commanders of the invading force order their men to question the populace and detain any known, vocal supporters of Ramose. As for the former pharaoh himself, Ramose is nowhere to be found. (See Va. 7, Va. 20; Th. 3, Ya. 12.)

**What This Means:** While the invaders were well-supplied and well-fed, the defenders were almost out of food and other essential supplies towards the end of the siege, even with the aid of clerical magic.

### **VATERMONT 27, AC 1015: Humans vs. Alfheimers.**

**Location:** Wendar City, Wendar. OW

**Description:** A delegation of human citizens led by human mayors petitions Gylharen for heavy sentences to be passed onto the Alfheimers responsible for the destruction of the small village of Barkhill. Gylharen officially orders Doriath and the other Clanleaders either to stop the Alfheim Avengers or to think about relocating to another region. (See Va. 16, Va. 24; Th. 3, Th. 9.)

**What This Means:** Law is against the Alfheimers. The humans are manipulating the events to have Gylharen expel the Alfheimers without breaking the laws of the country. Gylharen knows the fault lies on both sides, but the evidence of the facts shows that the Avengers have gone too far. He regrets taking steps against his brethren, but he must if he doesn't want to provoke a civil war.

The Alfheimers are now seriously thinking about the possibility of moving to a different region for the spring.

## TOPIC OF THE MONTH:

### **CIVIL WAR IN CANOLBARTH: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES**

*Always attentive to inform our readers, the Almanac editors asked John Watson, retired adventurer and renowned elfologist, to shed some light over the apparently unexplainable civil war among shadow elves in the so-called Canolbarth forest (or at least what remains of the forest).*

Tempers ran hot this winter in the Canolbarth forest. It seems that the mysterious shadow elves are not as united as a race as it looked in the first place.

Everything started late last year when the shadow elves somehow managed to raise the city of Aengmor (or Oenkmar according to the Dwarves) to the surface. Suddenly, when the bordering nations started worrying once again about their seemingly huge power, the shadow elves started quarreling among themselves over some obscure religious question and finally they were at each other's throat.

The religious debate involved an old elvish custom dating from centuries ago and which apparently disappeared in modern elvish communities: wanderers.

Centuries ago, when the whole elvish race inhabited the southern hemisphere of Mystara, a disastrous cataclysm, commonly referred to as "The Great Rain of Fire" in elvish tales, struck the planet destroying the elven homeland (known as "Evergrun"). That was a dark era for the elves, because they had to rebuild their once shining civilization from start, but resources were scarce and life difficult. It was then that the practice of wanderers was introduced among some particularly unlucky elvish clans. As you may know, elven lifespan is very long, but, as I said, food was scarce and life was harsh after the cataclysm, so some Clanmasters decided that the elves who reached 800 years of life should depart their clan and never retrace their steps.

Obviously today such a custom is no longer needed and no one but the shadow elves follows it anymore.

I've been frequently asked why, in my opinion, do the shadow elves still carry out this apparently evil practice. Well, we don't know very much about shadow elves and their religious beliefs, but we know that they usually live underground in an unfriendly environment with few (or no) resources, so they need a way to limit overpopulation and the custom of wanderers is certainly a good solution.

But let's get back to the point. Upon moving to the surface many shadow elves (mainly those in the City of Aengmor) felt that this old custom was not needed anymore, because of the larger areas and greater resources now available to them. Unfortunately it seems that this practice is deeply rooted into shadow elf religion and everyone knows how they're paranoid about following their traditions to the letter. Moreover most of the elves supporting the abolition of the wanderers custom were actually wanderers living in Aengmor together openly defying their customs, in short they were considered sacrilegious by the more conservative shadow elves.

Supporters of this change in old customs soon moved to Rafielton to spread their beliefs and the shadow elves split into two factions. Due to their violent and stubborn nature, the discussion soon turned into a civil war that involved the whole Canolbarth forest. Princess Tanadaleyo surprisingly sided with the supporters of the so-called "New Way of Rafiel;" it's not clear why she did this, fear of being killed by the "heretics" or ambition of ruling an independent nation are two possible explanations. Anyway her move forced her father, King Telemon, to send forth his best troops to quell the rebellion in Aengmor and Rafielton.

The once green forest was quickly turning bloody red, when the unexpected happened: a child managed to stop the civil war. Well, he's no standard child; he's Prince Erian, the youngest son of King Telemon. This child is really an outstanding elf, he was part of the group that managed to stop a war against Darokin just after the Great War, and now he stopped the civil war risking his own life (see the "Events" section for more about this).

Erian's gesture and the reaction of the other shadow elves at his presumed death show us that shadow elves aren't plain evil as some, especially the Alfheim Avengers, want to paint them. I would say that they're suspicious of other races, but somehow naïve and easily controllable by powerful and trusted members of their way of life. Shadow Elves show a strong sense of duty for their nation and their religious traditions, so they see any attempt at introducing something new into their community as a threat and they react violently. The conquest of Alfheim and ensuing discovery of a whole world above ground has certainly shocked many shadow elves, producing a rift between the more conservative elves, among which we can surely count the mysterious shamans (religious guides rarely seen in Rafielton), and the increasing number of younger and more open-minded elves (Prince Erian is probably the brightest

example of these). The lack of diplomatic skills turned this tension into a civil war, but their strong instinct of self-preservation (as a race) made them realize quite soon that it's pointless to kill your brethren for such a trivial issue.

If shadow elves really lived underground for so many centuries as they claim, then we should believe that they've never had some sort of serious discussion, otherwise they should long have either killed each other or developed diplomatic skills.

The last section of this article is probably the most interesting one for those learned in elvish lore, though it's also the less detailed one. According to a scroll written in ancient elvish that the editor gave me (giving no clues on how he got it), the question of wanderers has been settled diplomatically, probably for the first time in the shadow elves' history.

This is more or less what that scroll says: "On 10 Shaman of the year 2120, guided by our beloved patron Rafiel I, Radiant Shaman Porphyriel, state that starting from now there will be a change in the common interpretation of the precepts about wanderers that our guide Rafiel set in the stone for us to see and follow.

From now on elves reaching the venerable age of 800 years of life, will still have to undergo the ceremony that turns them into Wanderers, but they will no more be forbidden from retracing their steps or meeting other elves."

This is a certainly a big revolution in the shadow elves' traditions since their precepts seem really set in stone. The commitment of one such old elves to the place of chief representative of Rafielton in the peace talks with Alfheim exiles is certainly another promising step for a better and more peaceful future in and around the Canolbarth forest.

*John Watson: born in Akesoli, he spent most of his youth adventuring in Darokin and surrounding areas. He later founded his small trading house and moved to Alfheim Town where he had a relationship with a female elf from Clan Chossum. When the Master invaded Darokin he packed his goods and moved again to Ierendi where he happened to know our publisher Joshuan Gallidox.*