

WAR IS HERE



By JJ Schedel
Staff Writer

Barely over a month ago, the settlement known as the Meeting House, a hub of commerce and entertainment, was struck by what appeared to be a huge, burning boulder from the sky. Hundreds were slain, with hundreds more still unaccounted for. Quick response from local members of the Iron Circle, the Green Sash Force, and the townspeople of Convergence helped to prevent more death, but unfortunately, the settlement was utterly destroyed.

According to eyewitnesses, mere seconds after the cataclysmic impact, humanoid figures began to emerge from the burning wreckage. Initial survivors of the blast, assuming them to be other citizens in need of aid, rushed to assist them, only to be cut down brutally. The few remaining Meeting House denizens fled, noting that the new, violent figures began to loot the bodies of the dead, taking their weapons and armor. Though each individual humanoid was reported as being only

moderately skilled in combat, the sheer number has overwhelmed much of the area, forcing refugees into the other settlements that will accept them. Thankfully, a combined effort between the LFT and Iron Circle has given sanctuary to many of those fleeing the combat.

The cause of this attack was a being known only as the Guardian, reported from multiple scholars as an ancient and powerful force of protection. Though reports are varied on the actual nature of this being and its motives, most reports claim that it is some sort of alien being responsible for protecting our world from outside threats. This does not explain why it has chosen to attack the terrestrial settlements, but rumors are circulating that it was prompted by the members of Convergence. The News and Views has yet to reach out to the town mayor for comment, due to the danger of traveling between settlements at this time.

“We have a responsibility to help the survivors, both in rebuilding and in reclaiming their homes,” spoke General E. Callious, leader of the Green Sash Force.

“The effort being put forth by my troops and the other groups helping has been impressive, but more help is always needed.”

While reports state that other settlements have been preparing for the arrival of this Guardian, no official declaration has been made by any of the creatures attacking from the wreckage. At this point, all settlements are assumed to be on high alert, and travel between them is highly discouraged.

“We have men and women on the ground to patrol the roads,” Callious explained, “But with so many of them focused on repelling this invading force, I wouldn’t advise anyone leaving the safety of their walls. Wait this one out.”

With no end in sight and a steadily growing army of invaders, it’s beginning to look bleak that this world will ever return to normal.

MASSIVE FLOODING PROMPTS FEARS

By Lance Velmet
Lead Writer

For most residents of this world, the ever shifting terrain is a simple fact of life. Pathways and trails outside of the major roads move ever so slightly, prompted by an unseen force. With the one exception of the Mountain rising every year, there has been no good way to predict these movements. Truly, survivalists here must be some of the most skilled among any world, to navigate a terrain that walks with them.

Until now, these changes have been gradual and slight. Two weeks ago, adventurers to the far west began to notice an encroaching amount of water, saturating the ground. In under a week, the water had risen to knee level, blocking off much of the lower ground and creating a marshland. As animals and settlers retreated, reports began to trickle in that the entire western front, typically a low-lying plain, had become entirely covered in water.

At first, suspicions of a greater working of magic, done

by the aquatic Sahagin, reached the News and Views. However, when we reached out to our newly acquired contact with that settlement, Tilk Veel, he confirmed that the cause of the rising water was not their doing.

“This is not a Deep Water working, we assure all the air breathers. Shallow water primitives could not have done this either, they live no place near the area.” Veel explained, referring to their more violent cousins in the shallower areas. He urged that those who live on the land not press the question further with the Deep Water tribes, as relations are still in an early stage and suspicions run high.

So then, what could have caused this rise in water? One theory comes from our resident Terrestrial Water Table Specialist, Shintagi Myar.

“An impact in a large body of water could have displaced this, causing the water to rise across the terrain,” Myar explains, demonstrating his theory with a bucket of water. “Usually such an impact would have caused a much larger wave, but then again, we don’t

actually know how far the coast was from where the water is now.”

When asked what exactly could have been the source of the impact, Myar had several ideas.

“I think we should entertain the thought that it was another meteoric attack from the Guardian, first of all,” Myar continued, “Since a precedent has been set. However, there is also the chance that the gradual rise is the result of a large object slowly replacing the water, pushing it up.”

“We live in a world where a mountain rises every year, who’s to say an island isn’t doing the same thing?”

For now, the rising water seems to have stopped, but with the war against the Guardian on one front, and a newly formed wall of water on the other, we can only hope the cause is not something more sinister than a simple land mass.

THE ICT: BRINGING LAW AND ORDER TO THE LAND

By Sue Deauxnim
Crime Reporter

The newly formed ICT (Inter-Settlement Crime Taskforce) has its hands full already. The taskforce is charged with investigating crimes and arresting criminals that have eluded local officials. Asked if such a taskforce is really necessary, Captain Tony Briscoe, appointed leader of the ICT, responded: "You're kidding, right? We've got an entire settlement run by former prisoners." Lt. D-12511, Capt. Briscoe's press secretary, offered a more technical response. "The ICT is designated to investigate crimes. It is necessary to investigate crimes. There is crime. The ICT is, thus, necessary."

Capt. Briscoe expanded on the purpose of the ICT at his first press conference. "We are here to provide assistance to local officials doing great investigative work in their settlements," Capt. Briscoe told reporters, "but we know our local settlements are ravaged by crime, inundated with unlawful individuals, and threatened by dangerous, even terrorist, organizations and some of our local officials are struggling to keep up with the expanse and brutality of the dangers facing our communities. We hope to provide additional resources

and administrative direction for these local officials."

The ICT has received no less than eight requests for assistance since it was created a little of two weeks ago. When asked about these requests and the taskforce's current cases, I was told that the ICT does not comment on ongoing investigations. The Lt. D-12511 refused to even acknowledge the ICT's involvement with specific cases, but sources close to two investigations underway gave details that illuminate the breadth of the ICT's mission and the struggle they are having responding to the many requests already received.

Speaking under anonymity, one source claimed the ICT has a special mission to enforce the new contraband laws being created in many settlements. The new laws restrict the manufacturing, sale, and distribution of drugs and alcohol without the proper license. While all vendors already in business a minimum of one month ago are grandfathered in as licensed vendors (the source joked that even the LFT and ICT needed booze for their Spooktober events), anonymous tips have been delivered to the ICT of illicit activity in the area of Convergence. Though the source refused to name any suspects, the source did confirm that Supervisory

Special Agent Leo Wolfe was taking the case seriously and had organized a team to investigate.

A more disturbing case seems to also have the ICT's attention. According to a person close to the investigation, two missing persons cases and a suspicious murder are being treated as connected, possibly the result of a serial murderer. Though the ICT refused to comment on the cases, individually or speculation of a serial killer, a source inside ICT exclaimed they "have serious doubts we will find the missing individuals alive." Though the source declined to give explicit details, citing investigative integrity, they did claim evidence directly connects the missing persons crime scenes with the murder of a young, female wizard. The ICT does not have any suspects at this time and my source claims "we are really just waiting for another body at this point. Without new evidence, there's not much we can do." The case seems to have baffled even ICT investigators, even to the extent that there are insinuations that the ICT is entertaining the idea of deputizing an outside investigator to lead this case.

HATE GROUP ATTEMPTS TO 'RISE AGAIN'

By I.M. Wright
Staff Writer

Multiple eyewitness have claimed that a roaming band of marauders that has been attacking small settlements and caravans. Witnesses and survivors of the attacks claim the groups target non-humans and what the group calls "non-human sympathizers." Though the group rarely identifies itself by name, it seems quite obvious that this is the work of the Circle of Purity, an extremist group that blames non-humans for their problems and vows to rid society of non-humans' parasitic influence.

The group was thought to have been driven underground by the unification of the Four Monarchies and the influence of Convergence, but it seems a small band has risen under the leadership of two female rhetorical firebrands. While their names are unknown, sources claim these two claim that the Circle of Purity

will "rise again" and have encouraged others through their inflammatory and violent rhetoric. Friends and family claim they are appalled that their loved ones could follow such a hateful and divisive vision. Justin Ward recalls his brother coming home railing against the "outsiders that threaten our way of life" and how he, Justin, should join his brother in "the noble pursuit of making society safe from non-human terrorists."

Though small in size, this group of travelling racists has left horror and mourning in their wake. Survivors of their attacks recall being made to watch as the non-human members of the group (men, women, and children) were beaten and tortured before being executed. One survivor fought through the tears to describe in detail the feeling of helplessness he felt as his wife was killed before his eyes, her screams and agonized faces seared in his memory.

While this group contains the last known Circle of Purity members, we have been warned by extremist expert, Clara Finnegan, that such a group can quickly gain followers, particularly from the uneducated and downtrodden. "The uneducated, suffering masses need someone to blame, a group like the Circle of Purity tells them their circumstances are not their own making, that it is the non-humans that have put them in that situation, and if only they get rid of them, they'll prosper as they are supposed to." We can only hope our readers are able to avoid this group as they sow their path of destruction and that this group of hatemongers will eventually meet justice at the end of a sword.

TAKEN: KIDNAPPINGS BAFFLE AND FRIGHTEN COMMUNITY

By Josh Earnest
Staff Writer

Four members of the United Monarchies have been kidnapped, this according to multiple independent reports to the News and Views staff. The first victim went missing about three weeks ago and has been identified by authorities as Jackson Varney. He is a convicted murderer that was being transported to jail when the convoy was hit by a heavily armed group. One survivor remembers Varney being dragged away with a hood over his head, screaming he "didn't want to go back." Though she can't be sure, this survivor claimed to have recalled a man in a black robe off in the distance.

Details on the kidnapping of the Heard family, which took place about two weeks ago, is equally shrouded in mystery. All three members of the family, Martin, Pauline, and Eric, were taken in the middle of the night. Witnesses claim a heavily armed group took the Heard family, threw hoods over their heads, and pulled them from their home. One witness gave a description of the leader of kidnappers which authorities say is a resemblance of Varney, though another witness claims to have seen a man in a silver mask walking the group and victims into the woods.

Heard Around the World

**Things we've heard that are not story-worthy...yet!
This section does not follow the strict rules for accuracy exemplified in the rest of this publication.**

"Some stupid merchant tried to take a whole wagon off the path to avoid bandits, but then just abandoned it. Easy loot, right?"

"Heard it's corrupted or sick or something now, so the whole group is losing their mind."

"You ever try to eat one? Hard shell but the insides are nice with butter and salt."

"Said he was searching around a giant hole in the ground, a big tunnel. Next thing he knows, an arrow shoots straight out of it, hit's his friend, and drags her straight down."

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