

The Lions Faction Pack-up
October 2002

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Acknowledgements

This pack-up was brought to you by a carrier pigeon with a small trumpet. Dastardly and Mutley failed again.

Thanks also to Tracy Selby, Gav Bodill, Gareth Marklew, David Jones, David Brookshaw, Kaz Mickelburgh, Dan Osbaldeston and Ron the Electric-Crab-Monkey.

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October 2002

Camelot, 10th Month 1102

Dear all,

Despite my best intentions, I was unable to be organised enough to do a pack-up in September, so I took the month off. Still, its October now and so my excuses are all dried up. So here is the first pack-up of the LARP year.

No player submitted a report on the Gathering but certain highlights are mentioned in the letters from the 1 and 3ICs. Of course, the best report you could have is to have listened to the buzz from various players who seem to have had a good time. There's nothing like smiting some evil-doers to be a tonic.

Still, there is no rest for... well... anyone. We have reports from various council types and other Lions. Plus there is Fragments and an update on the Lions Plot Team. The world is constant change and so are we.

In any case, I hope you enjoy the pack-up and I look forward to seeing many of you soon at the either the Lions Winter Parliament or the Mages event (happening on MY land – cheeky, dress-wearing, finger-wigglers!)

All the very best,

Daniel Williams
(Pack-Up Editor and Re-Inventor of the Wheel for the 21st Century)

My friends and fellow Lions

The Summer now past was one of much sorrow, with friends of many years lost to us in battle and to treachery. I'm tired of losing the people I care about so I'm making a royal decree that no-one else is to die without express permission from myself.

Yet, it has also been a Summer of hope as Schadel has manifested among us, we thwarted the plans of Satun time and again, and by allowing the Harts to share our gate at the Gathering we demonstrated that we can *be* generous to lesser factions.

And it has been a Summer of triumph as all three Lions teams performed well in the Heartland Games and the so-called forces of the Dark Alliance were routed and crushed on the battlefield.

For me personally, it has also been a Summer of joy as, for the first time, I got to hold both of my children. Now restored to human form, Prince Jasper is happily running around Camelot, making many new friends. After four years in which I lost my brother, my daughter, my husband and then my brother *again*, I now have my son back and nothing will take him from me.

Family is important and while at one level Jasper is the last family I have left, at another level I have more family than I can count. For, your true family are the ones you can rely on in a crisis, no matter how much you might bicker and squabble the rest of the time. The Lions are such a family, complete with all the rivalry and the petty arguments over nothing. Just as with Jasper, I won't tolerate anyone or anything threatening my family.

Sapphire Carrigana Khazad
Queen of the Isles of Lantia



Castle Camelot
Holy Isle
LANTIA

18th October 1102 af.

Lions,

Its almost time for the Lions to gather for our Winter Parliament, much has changed over the last year in some cases for good with the redemption and return of Jasper and in others with the loss of friends and loved ones for ill. The Lions have had little chance in years gone by to enjoy life and live for the now, even so old habits die hard; we keep watching and planning for the future whilst keeping a wary eye on the past.

We set out to make our presence felt at the political Gathering of Nations this summer I think we achieved that. As ever, at home there are pervading threats on our horizons; there are still the exploding 'Pods' to be wary of (see Sister Bethanie's summary). Some of the enemies of the Lions gather together to plot against us: A Mage calling himself Sengool, Jasper and the (none too small) remnants of the Chaos Hosts, The Watchers who were followers of the 'Dark One', including Mary Bedlam the woman responsible for the death of Magnus Gallowglass, N'tuku of the Ice Court, The Voor, An unliving called Epimania, The Demetus Guards, Illithids

or 'mindflayers'. Much of the information we have pieced together came at a painfully high cost, the loss of several Lions who risked their own lives, to my knowledge there are only two survivors of that gambit.

Some of these enemies have been defeated, some in a hard and bloody battle that brought with it its own price, whilst another namely Prince Jasper was 'defeated' and then restored to us because of a child's birthday party and the embrace of Innocence in the guise of Princess Amethyst his sister.

Through our efforts and through the efforts of those who have fallen, we remain, even so some our enemies are still out there, so be careful. You know as well as I that together we can accomplish almost anything.

May your Ancestors watch over you,

Alyssa

Princess of Lantia
LION

Letter from the Acting Viceroy to the Guilds

All representatives to the guilds and faction masters will prepare a briefing on the guild they work with containing all guild charters, current policies on all nations and other guilds, command structure, current issues, problems, enemies and any other information you deem relevant.

This information is to be given to me in person at the coming parliament. Any representatives who are unable to attend can send me their report at the address below before the parliament or get a representative to deliver the report.

There will be no exceptions.

Admiral Moses Navarre
Acting Viceroy to the Guilds

OOC
Gavin Bodill
41 Riverhead
Drifffield
East Yorkshire
YO25 6NX

Letter from the High Sheriff

From the Office of the High Sheriff and Magister Lictorum:

Following the resignation of Captain Quincannon, Ignatus of the Phoenix Guard is appointed as Deputy High Sheriff of the Lions, Lictor Seniorus of Lantia and Commander of the Militias of the Lions. He speaks and acts with the full authority of the High Sheriff.

For the public safety, any fey mothers of half-fey children concerned about their safety should make themselves known to their local Sheriff's office, who will make arrangements for them to be taken to safety.

Wanted, any information regarding the whereabouts or activities of one Alistair Demetus, formerly of Andulus. Anybody with information should contact any Sheriff.

At the Gathering of Nations Vixen of the Children of Malar, was tried for and convicted of, the murders of Benedict Darkendale, Silk and Dick Lionheart. She was sentenced to death, commuted to exile for life. Lots of people disagree with that sentence. Good. The day too many people agree with me is the day that I get very worried. All I will say on the matter is this. Rest assured on one thing. The sentence was given because I, and the other judges felt that it was the right and just sentence. No other reason, be it politics, diplomacy or fear was in our mind. The law is there to provide justice. That the justice which is received is not always that which we as individuals want is the price we pay for having a system based on law, and not on the chaos of mob rule and popular opinion.

Signed at my office on Andulus, on this, the twenty fifth day of the ninth month, 1102 A.F.,

Sir Oliver FitzOliver,
High Sheriff of the Lions,
Etc.

The Mission to the Searcher

By Sheyna Darkleaf

Note: For those of you who don't know, the Searcher is a strange vessel that pulled into the port at Tamarus a few months back. The crew then came ashore, looking for 'unique and unusual items' to collect. They stole the memories of several Lions, and so their ship was impounded and held under guard by the Celestial Knights. Their memories were returned by a midnight raid that recovered the stone they were imprisoned in.

It was the Saturday morning of the Gathering 1102 when the Celestial Knights put out the call to the rest of the Lions to investigate the Searcher and free any being held against their will within its holds. Shortly before noon, we had managed to gather a party of just under twenty people to board the ship. Checking we had a smattering of magical items, Incantors, Mages, lots of Healers and some hefty fighters, we made our way to Tamarus. Master Fire had kindly lent us Holocaust, and as the Cargo Manifest of the Searcher had indicated the presence of a Nosta Kar Lord, we had Greys Axe with us too. We had been briefed on how tough the crew were by those who had gone on before, so we thought we were ready. I was personally looking forwards to discovering what a Were-Swally looked like.

We reached the Ship without mishap, and boarded her. There was a door in the deck which led down to the hold, which we went through single file. On the other side, we were met by the sight of the Island that somehow manages to fit itself inside the hold. Don't ask me how, it's just strange. Three of the crew were waiting for us on the fringe of a small wood, and asked us politely that if we would

care to deposit our weapons and magic items they would give us a tour of the ship.

Yeah Right, we said.

They then said that we could take it up with the captain if we wanted, and sent one of their number to fetch him. They carried on talking, keeping us waiting whilst their friend went for reinforcements.

Oh No You Don't, we said.

The two crewmen were swiftly subdued and taken to the deck to be guarded by the CKs up there. We then went after the third crewman. We found him about 50 yards away, being eaten by a strange black creature, who was being guarded by a cat-like beast. We proceeded to try spells on the cat, none worked. We tried hitting it, the blows bounced off. Then Thwarg had a great idea - and hit the black thing. That worked, and we pummelled it into the floor. The Cat then disappeared. Suddenly remembering something I had been told a long time ago, I labelled the thing a 'Displacer Beast', something that makes a projection of itself which is totally invulnerable to blows and magic, protecting its much weaker actual self.

We carried on and found the pen that the displacer beast had broken out of. We then got slightly worried - if things were wandering around loose, there were several dangerous beasties mentioned on the Cargo manifest we had... We prepared for the worst, and moved on.

A little further in, all the Incantors started feeling a little strange and tingly. Footnote described it as the same feeling he had when holding the Harts Shield of 'Cast Any Incantations, Light or Dark', so we thought it may be something like that in the area. Instead, it was a lone Crewman, who couldn't speak our language.

Without the Conch of Translation, we couldn't speak to him either so we tried drawing pictures. He responded, and I missed what caused it but he started causing harm to people when he touched them, so he was beaten into the floor in self defence. Then I remember feeling a sharp pain in my head, and the words "THANK YOU" as whatever was in the crewman left, taking the tingly feeling with it. I looked around to ask if the others had heard that, and they were all out cold on the floor.

Great, I thought.

So I picked up all the Healers, and we got everyone to their feet. Only now I was out of Incantation power, as were several others.

We carried on, and soon discovered a group of arguing people. As we drew closer, we saw that one wore what looked like a Sylvan elf tabard, that Quite said was Galantir (the blue ones), a drow, and a lady with totally golden skin. I'd never seen one, but she matched every description of a Nosta Kar Lord I'd ever heard. Grey's Axe came to the fore as we tentatively spoke to them.

As it turned out, they had all had their memories stolen, and had been wandering about on the island for ages. The group talked briefly, and we decided to let them join us, at least until we had finished our mission. Then the Nosta Kar Lord would be dealt with. So we carried on.

Then we ran into the rest of the Crew.

It didn't last long. Even with the quite awesome powers of the Nosta Kar on our side, we were hopelessly outclassed, and within minutes each and every one of us was down. Some had tried running back for help, but were easily caught. From there, it was all black for a while...

What I guess to be about 20 minutes later, I awoke. The only

one, again.

Bugger.

The Nosta Kar Lord was the only other one awake. Looking around, we were unarmed, inside a magical cage with one door. As I watched through half-closed eyes, two crewmen came and took Ren away. She was brought back a few minutes later, her memories gone. Whilst the crew continued to take people out to steal their memories, I quietly snuck around the group, picking up the Healers. Soon out of power, I considered turning furry and charging the crewmen, until Thwarg tried that with a concealed dagger and got beaten to the floor.

I don't know how, but a few minutes later, Konin Jefferson read something from a piece of paper he had with him, and the barrier dropped. Not one to waste an opportunity, myself and those we had managed to wake up charged out to the pile of our weapons beside a nearby tree.

Again, even with only two of them, most of us were beaten into the floor. The last thing I remember seeing was the Nosta Kar Lord flinging Mage Bolts around, as myself and two others made a break for the deck, and the Celestial Knights posted there.

We returned as fast as we could, but it wasn't fast enough. We brought 50 CKs (Healers included) with us, but it wasn't quick enough to save Quite, Konin, Martin or Squall. They had bled to death whilst we were getting help. Our only consolation was that if we hadn't gone, all of us would have died, or been slaves in that ship...

We picked up our fallen, took the box we found amongst our weapons, and returned home.

On my own and Fizaritan's recommendations, the Queen

ordered the Searcher towed out to sea and sunk. Moses and Spike took great pleasure in doing so. The stone we found within the box we had recovered was smashed, and everyone's memories returned. Unfortunately, this would have included the Nosta Kar Lord.

One good thing to have come from the Searcher though, was the Medicine Chest. It seems to spawn bandages that can channel.

A few hours later, I received a report from the Fish Brothers and Tope. The Searcher may have been sunk, but the Island was still intact. There was now a bubble on the bottom of the Steel Sea, with an intact Island within it. And we have no idea where the Nosta Kar Lord is...

And still we have no idea what an Electric Crab Monkey is.

A footnote to the matter of the Searcher,
by William Davrok DeBeers Nightbringer, Guardian of Tamarus.

After the second mission to the Searcher, and the deaths of Martin, Squall, Konin and Quite at the hands of the worldship's crew, it was decided to remove the ship from New Preceptory's harbour - where it was considered a danger to the citizens of that town and to the patients at Sister Bethanie's hospital not far away. Two boarding attempts having met with mixed success, it was decided to cut losses and destroy the ship.

To that end, (then)Admiral Moses Navarre and myself transported to Borealis, where Moses took command of his fleet. Proceeding to Tamarus, the Searcher was towed out of harbour by means of chains fired by Ballistae, taken to the deep seas to the West of Lantia and sunk. The other-worldly wood of the ship would not burn, so the destruction was achieved by holing the vessel below the waterline.

On our return, it was discovered that the destruction of the ship had returned the stolen memories to those who had gone on the mission.

This raises a possible danger - if she still lives, the female Nosta Kar encountered on board is likely to now have her memory returned to her. I doubt she'll be so friendly next time we meet her.

Fragments

In Camelot, hardly a day passes without the young prince Jasper flying into a tantrum of rage. Used to getting what he wants simply by taking it, he is not adapting well to a life where things are not so simple. The fact that his mother dotes on him doesn't help in the least (though the harried castle staff are careful not to say so in her hearing). Other than Sapphire, only his Arms Master appears to have any measure of control over the boy, exerted by threatening to cancel his daily training sessions. Although Jasper retains his strength and skill at arms, he is not yet used to the different shape of his body and doesn't *always* manage to beat his six opponents into unconsciousness...

Out on the Steel Sea, the waters are thick with mottled green pods. The Fisher-folk are now well practised at flipping the pods back into the water as they pull aboard nets full of wriggling silver, but there have been several reports of pods following boats further and more closely than the wake of the vessel should explain. With quarantine measure still in place, infestations of 'pod people' have been kept to a minimum and there have been no new reports of 'pod hoarding' but the sea-borne pods have been drifting further afield and reports of washed up pods have now been reported on all isles eastwards of the Sunset Shipyards, leaving only Azurlon, Akamon, Emmerix, Sammarix and Fort Orientale thus far free.

Among the Isles, Azurlon/Archon sees brief midnight excitement as hysterical woman runs screaming from her house, clutching her children to her breast. Immediate investigation reveals that the woman had been awakened by the drunken return home of her own husband and had feared the worst. In fact, the horrific murders the

Isles saw during the summer appear now to have stopped, with no new cases reported since the Gathering. Though the attacks may seem to have ended, the Sheriff's department has stated that the investigation and search for a culprit has not.

On Rysarius, there are currently several expeditions set forth from the Bardic Guildhouse in search of the Wayward Flame. Though reports are that the questers after knowledge remain safe, as yet it would seem that none have found the object of their search.

On Orlagnon, the frequent midnight activity and occasional instances of turned earth among the countless tombs has ceased. All is quiet and very still.

Somewhere between Tamarus and Ceryphus, the scuttled wreck of 'The Searcher' lies on the sea bed. While it is strongly suspected that a Nosta Kar lord remains trapped behind a shift gate in the ship's hold, further investigation remains difficult due to the depth of the wreck and the water pressures involved. Meanwhile, the great sea walls nearby are ruined and the work of many months to repair. Responsible for the damage, the Lantian kraken nonetheless seems happy enough to be out of its traditional confines and has not yet strayed beyond the channel between the isles. The local fisher-folk have accepted this with their usual practicality and have taken to using the new breach in the walls to sail to other fishing grounds that the leviathan does not threaten.

Beneath Sammarix, old mine workings are steadily being transformed into an underground city of glittering magnificence.

The figures going about the work do so in eerie silence, without noticeable communication with one another.

Fort Orientale is now surely the most ludicrously over-defended fortress in the entire archipelago. Several banks of arbalests ring the transport circle, the walls around the fortress have been reinforced and equipped with trebuchets and catapults, the soldiers resident here are mercilessly drilled and intensely trained each and every day. The new Judge Advocate General of the Lions stalks about the fortress, trailing a faint scent of lemons behind him.

Over Eagles Reach, the skies are thick with wings as increasing numbers of recruits are matched with one of the giant eagles and learn how to fly. In the nursery eyries, the shards of eggshells have yet to be swept away, as the Legio Aquila's support staff are quite simply kept too busy feeding demanding fledglings. The young birds are growing at an almost visible rate; only weeks out of their shells but already far, far larger than any ordinary eagle. For the first time in centuries, regular patrols leave the Reach to keep watch over the jewelled Isles.

On Gallatrix and Fort Hatfield, news of the new Prince Bishop spreads among the men and women of the Veterans Legion. Some of them nod with approval. Others simply shrug, never having been of the Prince Bishop's Men or of the Palatinate.. Others, who *have*, look bewildered and wonder, "Stefan Louis? *Why?*"

On the islet of Halia off the shore of the Isle variously known as Archon or Azurlon, work is already underway to prepare the place for the imminent convocation of the Mages Guild. Shortly after the

Lions arrived in Lantia, Halia was granted to Master Earth Thomas Fitzroy Cholmondeley-Smythe, once of the Prince Bishop's Men, as his residence, and there are many people interested to see how he has decorated the place in the meantime. Though the other occasion of the weekend is to be his wedding to Meg Madrigal, also once of the Prince Bishop's Men, elsewhere there is concern that so many guests from other lands should have been invited into Lantian territory.

Akamon is thrilling with the gossip that High Sheriff Oliver FitzOliver has systematically visited each and every brothel on the isle and spent time behind closed doors with every working girl employed there. Though no other Lantian isle boasts so many brothels as the amethyst Isle of Service, similar rumours are being reported of his activities elsewhere.

Meanwhile, on Andulus, local residents have noted a significant increase in the number of female residents at the former stronghold of the Demetus Guard, now the Sheriff's House (or Oliver's Army HQ, as it is locally known). Knowing winks and smiles are exchanged among the people at the announcement that the girls are all legitimately employed 'knitting socks'. Rumours of a sudden increase in the number of young men applying to join the Sheriffs remain unsubstantiated.

Westward of the Isles, beneath an immense spire, a man presses his eye to a lens and studies the heavens, muttering to himself all the while. "Blood Moon, they say... Blood Moon..." He makes some notes, calculates some figures, then grins at his own cleverness and giggles. "Blood Moon it is, then..."

Northwards, a man dressed in the colours of old blood on snow stands by his pale Queen as she watches her mirrors. Nearby, a woman dressed in the colours of frost on fir stands by her shining King as he broods in thought. The man and the woman exchange icy glares.

At the borders of an Ancestral Realm, a ghost ship sets ashore the spirit of a man whose penance is finally done. Remaining among the crew, as tormented and suffering as the rest, the shade of Lilanthe MacBeth awaits orders. At a word from the Captain, the 'Elysium' tacks into the Ghost Wind and sets sail for Lantia once again. Though the destination be more perilous than it has been for a thousand years or more, Vindex Portitor has an Oath to keep.

In the direction that cannot be pointed to, Philomel and her sisters watch the dancing motes of light that bring them news of Lantia. When Philomel's brow furrows at the tidings she reads, another of the Aerpaia chastises her, "You forsook that realm long ago, Sister. Their troubles are no longer your concern." Philomel answers, "It remains the Realm of my birth, Procne; and all of the Ancient Laws are changing." The two Aerpaia glance downwards to where new fledged Aerpaia are being taught their lessons. "Besides, I'm hoping that certain of their champions will survive another year. Especially that elf in the blue and red surcoat..." The two Aerpaia exchange knowing glances and collapse into gales of laughter.

And in the shadows, those who have long watched and prepared now wait in stillness and silence; for the time long promised is almost come.

Births, Blatant Gossip and Obituaries for October 2002

Births

Symphony

The offspring of Serenade and s'Amul Recal, Symphony was an unexpected delight in many ways. Sharing her mother's charm and her father's... fur, Symphony is a delightful new resident on Rysarius.

Gossip

William DeBeers and Ivory DuBois

The Guardian of Duty and the finest alchemist from the Palatinate are engaged to be married. William Debeers is apparently – contrary to appearances – not feeling at all blue.

Obituaries

Parmenian (The One)

Liked or loathed, there was not a person on Erdreja that did not have an opinion on Parmenian. Always in the thick of whatever was happening, Parmenian never forgot who he was and whom he served. Though he strove to ensure the Power of Chaos would not fall into hostile hands, the Vipers claimed his life and the Power.

Keeva (The One)

Close companion of Parmenian, this radiant priestess was slain by the same killers that claimed Parmenian's life for no crime but for being present. Her beauty and wisdom are denied us evermore and we are the less for it.

Martin Devany (Prince Bishops Men)

There was a quality about Martin Devany that clearly marked him for a notable career in Red Lance of the Prince Bishop's Men. That quality was later confirmed by his participation in a dangerous mission that led to his demise.

Quite the Wordsmith (Prince Bishops Men)

Truly his namesake, Quite the Wordsmith was a fey of conviction, courage and commitment. Stalwart in his opposition to any that threatened Erdreja and his family, Quite opposed Conclave and Brotherhood alike. He fought with skill, dedication and – sometimes – an unfeasibly large pencil. He will be sorely missed.

Konin Jefferson (Elemental Outcasts)

What can be said about Konin Jefferson that is not already enshrined in the song that bears his name? He possessed a unique perspective on life that caused many to re-evaluate the world after he had spoken to them. It is a rare gift to influence lives in such a way.

Squall (Celestial Knights)

Newly come to the Celestial Order, Squall lacked neither the willingness or readiness to do what he felt he had to in order to serve the faction. Unfortunately, this readiness also included the ultimate price, which Squall tragically paid.

Prince Bishop Matteus Varn (Prince Bishop)

Following capably in the footsteps of his predecessors, Prince Bishop Varn was regarded as a good man and wise. Bravely he ventured to the Vipers to talk peace with Stoneburgh only to find that his murderers awaited him there.

Caradoc (Prince Bishop's Men)

Recently appointed to his post, Caradoc's star fell almost as swiftly as it rose with the Vipers mistaking the aide for the Prince Bishop. Caradoc's death was not able to avert the Prince Bishop's fate, however.

Serath Thaine (Guardians)

High Alchemist of the Lions and Guardian of Lantia, Serath Thaine had enriched the Lions with his gifts and talents. Whilst the exact circumstances of his death are unclear, the hand of the Vipers seems to have been involved.

Falcor (Armengar)

On the very weekend that affirmed the alliance of Armengar and Lantia, the brave Falcor met his end. May he rest easy knowing that his people will never have to stand alone.

Cheetah (Children of Malar)

A legend within his own lifetime, and an inspirational figure to many Lions, Cheetah's presence radiated within the Lions. Ever ready to face mortal danger, death was no stranger to this Huntmaster. In fact, he had died a good half dozen times on previous occasions, but eventually he was taken from us.

Words from the LPT

Okay, I was asked to make an address in this, the first pack-up post-the-rather-splendid-G'02, so here it is. Curiously, though I play a Bard and am well used to addressing people in real life, I suddenly find myself uncertain what to say. Forgive me if I ramble.

I could talk about how immensely pleased I am that the players at G'02 took matters into their own hands to the extent that by Sunday night the pre-written plot was judged all but unnecessary and got pretty much thrown out of the window in favour of player-led action and its consequences. I could talk about how pleased I am that the Lions were crucial to the alliance that finally said 'enough is enough' and went to kick Dark Alliance butt (strange how I have to think twice about using the more English word 'arse' these days...). In addition, I could mention the dedication of those people who worked long hours to translate and begin to make sense of the Oathbook, and I could mention those people who thought so far 'out of the box' that a plotline I rather expected (/intended) to run for another year got resolved to a happy ending by means of balloons and a birthday cake. I could even mention how glorious it was to referee such a kicking faction on the battlefield in the most injury-light battle there has been for years... I could say all of this (in fact, I just have), but you really don't need me to tell you that the Lions rock. You already know this for yourselves.

Now, I have no intention of telling you what the Lions Plot Team have planned (would you really want me to?), and there's a limit to what I can actually explain about the sections of plot that you've already solved. What I *can* do is tell you that the current Lions plot portfolio is full to bursting with superb material and that, while some of it may at first seem confusing, sooner or later it'll *all* make sense. The clues are already there. Pay attention, ask the right

questions, work out where it all fits into the pattern and you'll be a long way to solving the puzzle.

That's easy for me to say, perhaps, but I know full well that I stand at a different angle to Lions plot than most people. I've been writing for this faction for the last five years and I recognise that, as a consequence, I see the connections and the continuity far better than most. But there are surviving characters in the faction who should remember (or have since learned about and so can tell you) what happened in the past, I endeavour to be regular with opportunities to learn the back-story, and I also strive to make sure the plot works on multiple levels:- i.e., 'you were there when it began and it is part of your characters life-experience'; 'you can do the investigation/research thing by enquiring into the back-story'; 'you can take it as it comes and let others worry about the whys and wherefores'. These are all valid approaches to plot, but with established plotlines constantly developing and new plotlines coming in all the time, I hope that everyone can find something they can really get their teeth into.

At this point, it seems appropriate to reproduce (with mild corrections) a passage that appeared in this year's 'Lions Rough Guide to the Gathering'. (We're only able to prepare limited numbers of the 'Rough Guide', but each group leader should have received a copy to circulate amongst her/his group. If you haven't seen one, let us know).

Lions plot team and policy

The Lions plot team changes fairly regularly, but always consists of the Command Group (currently Katie/Sapphire, Keith/Mog, Tracy/Alyssa, Dan/Tsalth), plus certain invited others. Former members of Lions plot team now work for the LT in other roles, but are

frequently called upon to advise or consult on relevant matters). These people work hard to provide you with an interesting and challenging variety of plot for each event and throughout the campaign. Some plot threads arise, develop and conclude in the space of a single event; others might have been developing from several years of continuity. All the information on the older plotlines is out there already or available for the looking, so *talk* to one another. If you compare notes with enough people then its just possible you could work out our entire plot and do something about it.

What your character does *matters*. The Lions plot team do not write plotlines with unchangeable outcomes, so what you do in response to the plot you encounter can have a palpable effect on the way a plot turns out. We wholeheartedly support player action and if you manage to out-think us, we will applaud you for it! (We cheered and cursed in equal measure last spring when a plotline we expected to run for eighteen months was solved within six hours!)

It's true. While the LPT *do* take a certain malicious glee in making your characters' lives miserable, we aren't on any kind of power trip and we recognise that our job is ultimately to give you a good time. Thus, no matter how the LPT might have imagined a plotline to continue, if you come up with something that we hadn't taken into account then we will roll with the consequences. (I would, however, suggest that you let us know of such plans ahead of time! It's so much easier for us to help your plans against the bad-guy-of-the-moment work if we aren't surprised by them ourselves!)

Um. Almost done, I think. Just a few last points:-

Upcoming events - The next Lions event is the Winter Parliament and the fourth event in our current arc, 'The Zodiac Mosaic'. There should be a 'Virago' booking form elsewhere in this packup, but you can also download them from the internet at:

<http://spiraltower.users.bopenworld.com/>

Or ring me on 07940 548767 and ask for one to be posted to you.

There are actually two events set in Lantia happening this autumn, the other event being 'A Meeting of Minds - the Grand Conclave of Mages' (15-17th November). Set just off the coast of Azurlon/Archon on the islet of Halia, this event takes place the week before 'Virago' and incorporates developing Lions plot. Once again, a booking form should be included in this packup, or available from:
<http://www.durholme.org/Mages>

Downtime and Research - The LT system is predominantly a live 'up time' game, meaning that you can really only affect the world or make actions at the actual events. However, the Lions have long striven to provide a measure of 'year round' involvement, so we are currently play-testing a system of 'downtime' request forms. A few people were issued with these at the end of the Gathering and depending on how those experiments turn out, we hope to have downtime forms ready for all interested Lions at the end of 'Virago'.

Background - Send us your character background. We might find a way to weave it into mainline plot, or we might decide to bring our full talents to bear on your character *specifically*. Pester your group leader to send LPT a write-up of the island on which your group is resident. The more we know about your back story and where you live, the more we can make your life 'interesting'...

Current LPT line-up: -. The current Lions Plot Team stands as follows:- Dan Osbaldeston, Katie Browne, Keith Meech, Daniel Williams, Tracy Selby, Barney Smart, Lee Heath, Andy Gmitro-Smith and Fergal O'Brien. I'll take this opportunity to say "thanks, farewell and good luck" to the departing Chris Burl, Nick Middleton and Dave Selby and to say "hello, welcome on board and 'mwa-ha-ha-ha'" to our newer recruits.

Well. For someone who wasn't certain what to say, I reckon I've gone on quite long enough. That'll do.

Dan Osbaldeston

Next Month

Oh come on! That would be telling! After all, it's the pack-up that is just prior to the Lions Event and might – just *might* – contain some information that could be relevant.

Still, with the Gorsedd and Mages events also in the same month (and on Lions land in one case) maybe some enterprising PCs will provide the pack-up with a report of what happens.

Or maybe I will regale you with a series of IC limericks...

There was a Prince Bishop named Stefan,
Who claims he's a butch Keremanian,
Yet the man wears a dress,
And its anyone's guess,
If beneath there is more than a finger-span.

ahem I'll get my cloak...