

# Lions Faction Despatches

March 1110



*- No Lion Stands Alone -*

A LIONS OF LANTIA PRODUCTION

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*Special Thanks to Bruce Myers for use of the Lions logo; It stares at me while I sleep..*

Tip of the Season:

Background submissions make Plot Team smile. Send them in. We loves them.

Plot Team also enjoys cake.

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## Editorial

'Tis the night before Wednesday, and all through the room,  
Gav was preparing a pack up of doom.  
He struggled to think, of witty starting line,  
but then thought "Ah, screw it, this one's done in rhyme."

So many people have sent in submissions, making this pack up a dream (no omissions),  
The start of a new season of larping and joy, brings many a tear to the cheek of this boy.  
Did I say 'boy?', for I meant 'Man', any doubters can check my medical scan,  
But I'm getting distracted and should really go on, for this is a poem, not a Meatloaf song.

There is much news from players imparted, which I think was clear when my editorial started,  
News from the front lines, stories and song, blessings of ancestors and stuff that's just 'wrong',  
Prayers for the fallen, new revelations, updated Isles and new transportation,  
All these things lie within, and the process of reading them causes a grin.

"A grin?" you say, suddenly haughty, "does thou make a joke of our pack up's glory?"  
"Nay", say I, with Victorian tones (a manner I think is required in poems),  
"I simply enjoy the feelings therein, a pleasure to study and wholly take in,  
But Sirs and Madams, let's stop this feud, I've a lot to get said, so let's not be rude."

Aside from the many and curious verse, inside this journal (with nary a curse),  
Other good news has reached our ears, causing the raising of fine Belgian beers,  
A new member of Plot Team has joined our ranks, a young one named Aoife O'Connor (our thanks),  
We are very happy to have her aboard, for inside her head are undoubtedly stored,  
Horrors and wonders in glorious measure, designed and refined for Lions pain and pleasure,  
So without further ado and little bad punning, the Plot family welcomes you, (we're collectively  
stunning.)

Anyhow and onward, forwards we read, this new Lions Pack Up, brimming with keen,  
So many thanks to those that wrote in, without you pack ups would be sad and quite slim,  
Keep on submitting (I love it, and you), and the pack ups will continue to be dreams come true,  
And thanks to our readers, as if we lost you, pack ups would be pointless (sad, but quite true).

And now, for those who are quite fed up, with reading bad poetry by an Irish nut,  
I will leave you to read, absorb and laugh, for I must go to continue my graph:  
"The changes that Wrath-Squid have on Corfu, and the resulting destruction, is it of value?"  
So now off you trot, happy and sated, and hope that this poem has not left you grated.

Much love and best wishes, (which technically rhymes with "Persian Couch Fishes"),

GAV

## A Personal Missive

Lions

So few of us were born in Lantia. It makes me wonder sometimes why it is something that we fight for.

Would it be easier perhaps to move once more? To uproot as we have twice before and find something new?

Xivantal has made it clear to us that he wishes us cleansed from the face of these islands. If we were elsewhere we would have no cause to fight him.

So why do it?

For this once I will not tell you why we, as a nation, must do this thing.

Instead I hope to tell you why, as a man, I must.

It boils down to seven very simple words.

It is the right thing to do.

Lantia is more than a collection of islands and wonders. More than sea forts and circles, more than aspects and alignments. It is the life and the heart of the people.

It is the land the farmer tills, the wool upon the loom, the tales scratched onto vellum and the steading on the hilltops.

It is the playful laughter of a child, the smile on a father's face the promise of a new morning free from pain and fear.

This is the reason that I fight.

I fight so that honest men and women can go about their lives free from worry.

I fight so that they can rest safe in their beds at night

I fight so that no being, no matter how powerful it may be, can wrest away from them their right to live in peace.

I know that many of you will join in this fight, I know that many already have. Yet still Xivantal walks abroad in the islands. Now taking physical form, in the shape of the Achillean, he threatens death and destruction on the heads of those whom we must stand for.

To this the Council and Crowns of Lantia call a parliament. On the 5th day of the 3rd month and underneath the great walls of Camelot itself we must gather.

Together a way must be found to stop this creature, to slay it, or return it to its prison.

We must succeed in this task lest others pay the price for our mistakes.

*Seraphim Darkendale*

## Message from the Knight Marshall

I would like to take this opportunity to express my very grateful thanks to Knight-Captain Iolanthe Swan as she steps down from her military position to take up the role of Viceroy to the Guilds.

Iolanthe has been an enormous help to the military for many a year, and her changing of position is our loss.

I am certain that she will perform in her new role with the same excellence she brought to the position of 1st Knight Captain.

*Nethaniel Huntington*  
*Knight Marshall*

## Military Updates

**The Veteran's Legion:** Drilling new recruits on Fort Hatfield. Morale is good and the legion is strong.

**Legio Borealis:** Recently returned from Al'qfar, having sustained very heavy casualties at the hands of the Akari. Approx 25% of those that left have returned. Currently on Tamarus recruiting to rebuild and protecting the Archer's guild house from a potential threat.

**Legio Orientale:** Currently still on Amnor. No engagements reported and the Legion is getting quite bored by the lack of combat.

**Watchguard:** Spread out on all islands, excepting currently the Sunset Shipyards. No major engagements reported.

**Expeditionary Forces:** Took heavy losses whilst on Andulus including Captain Reagan Dacey who led the force. They have had an influx of volunteers which has not quite rebuilt to full strength as yet but is encouraging. Currently on Andulus mopping up the remnants of the Akari. However they report very few minor engagements.

**Marines:** Following the end of the Akari threat on Andulus, have been ordered back to base. Captain Franco Malak wanted for mutiny, attempts to incite mutiny and attempts to subvert the Kraken.

**Fleet Primus:** Still patrolling near Arrakesh and occasionally Du Pre. No engagements reported, though it is to be assumed that the Akari still hold Arrakesh.

**Royal Fleet:** Returning with the Marines to get some much-needed respite following the long engagement.

**Shadow Fleet 1 & 2:** Patrolling the inside and outside of the Steel Sea respectively. Report no engagements. Can be considered at full strength and good morale.

**Kraken:** "Still near Andulus, still got a lot of tentacles", to quote directly from the reports.  
Morale somewhat difficult to determine

## To the People of the Lions Faction

There have been a number of announcements within the Palatinate of late, and I wish them to be recorded here for public information.

Firstly, the matter of Margrave. Margrave Essex requested retirement from the position and made suggestions as to a potential successor. His death removed him from the position more swiftly than either of us expected. For his final acts of bravery, he was awarded membership of Gold Lance. As was his request, the position of Margrave has been taken up by Hadrian Constantine.

Captain Nazareth Sparkel has worked tirelessly in rebuilding Varne since the demons were defeated. Although these acts may not have been on a battlefield, and may not have been grand heroics, I feel they are significant in their own right and worthy of recognition. I also consider them to be above and beyond the call of duty, and therefore she is awarded membership of Gold Lance.

As has already been announced elsewhere, Karnak Justice has taken the position of High Sheriff of the Lions. I wish him well in his new position, and welcome Ilsa Dreamstruck as his successor as High Sheriff of the Palatinate. I am pleased to note she is already proving more than capable.

In sight of St Cuthbert,

+Ivory

## Gazed and Confused

I thought it was about time that one of us spoke up. (And in a slightly larger forum than usual.) For those of you who haven't heard there are some of us who occasionally speak to Edregja the world dragon. I know it sounds mildly insane, but some people hear the voices of the Ancestors.

So, you've dealt with the Akari, put the Cataclysm to bed and are now probably feeling a little bit like the world won't stop ending. (I know I am.) And then there's these here tablets. Outside the ritual circle at the Gathering there were 4 enormous stone tablets, with writing on them.

A brief paraphrase of what they said is "We are the Fae lalalala wheee!" "We are the Ologs WARGH!" "We are the Dwarves, and stoic about it" and "We are the elves, and we have something relevant to say". (Some of us spent quite a while translating them.)

The relevant bit from the elves was that there were some crystals. 4 for the ancient races, 4 for the elders and 4 for the younger's. The elder races used mock battles to empower them. You got a taste of that at White tower last year. They all got empowered, and the races in those categories were then tied into Edregja fully and properly. (Though I am not entirely sure what the benefit to this is, I keep hearing something about awakening. But for those of you not tied to the ritual

circle in search of power, I am not quite sure why you'd want to.)

So there's now a group of races called the "Existentials". Humans, sentient plant things, sentient rock things... the younger than younger. I always thought that Humans were a younger race, but it appears not. And we need some crystals empowering for us, apparently.

Now, I will be the first one to say, there isn't really any reason for this. I HAVE to do this however since when I ASKED Edregja about this I got told to "LEARN" in no uncertain terms. So I am looking into it. If I find a compelling reason for the rest of you to care I'll let you know.

I go now to cope with céilidh inflicted bruising and the massive pile of reading I have to do. I leave you with this thought, the elder races had clear ideas of what they were. Being human I am not however that sure of what we are my sister leant me some clarity on this one.

"We are the humans, we will be free."

*Bliquis Tomewetaver*

*I care, so you don't have too.*

## Birth Announcements

Beast and Silverthorn would like to announce the safe arrival of their four cubs, Lenia, Hengist, Eclipse and Dearthair on the 27th day of the tenth month 1109. Both parents and cubs are doing well.

Beast and I would like to thank everyone involved in ensuring their cubs' safe arrival on Armengar, with special thanks to Niamh.

Many Thanks

*Silverthorn*

## Obituaries

Lanceman Richard Golding

It is my loss that I did not know this man personally. He and his ilk are the backbone of the Lions military, and fight with honour and strength for us all to live in freedom. He died bravely, and I have no doubt that he is sorely missed by his family and friends.

(+Ivory)

Margrave Nathaniel Essex

My Lanceman and my Margrave. The Palatinate is poorer for his loss. But he was also my friend, and I miss him.

(+Ivory)

I couldn't tell you when Sir Orpheus joined the faction: to the best of my knowledge, he's always been here. He joined the military because he was needed, was rapidly promoted because he took charge when he was needed - in fact, doing what was necessary was very much a hallmark of Sir Orpheus' style. He had an easy-going manner and openness to ideas which made him such a great military leader, and a joy to work with. He has certainly earned his rest in the halls of Mithras.

(Iolanthe Swan)

Joel first came to my attention when we were facing a difficult fight with both the high healer and his then deputy being otherwise engaged. Joel, despite knowing nothing of healing, stepped up to volunteer and his organisation prevented several deaths. I recommended him then as Knight Captain, and at the Gathering when I stepped back from the military I recommended him as one to watch for a potential Knight General. I am sure he would be surprised to hear all of this, because he never allowed himself to see his true potential, but I am equally sure that I am not the only one who relied on him so heavily. Joel was the kind of person we never thought about, because he was always there and we never imagined losing him. It is only now that we are seeing how much we shall miss him.

(Iolanthe Swan)

It is difficult to know what to say about Nethaniel Essex. He was a reliable and skilled soldier but more than that he was a friend to many. I do not think there is anyone I have met in the Lions who was so easy to talk to as Nethaniel. He was someone whom a lot of us came to rely upon, and he will leave a large gap in our lives.

(Iolanthe Swan)

Essex.

Sleep peacefully my friend. Until we meet again.

(Helena Shepherd)

Donncha

I barely knew him. I wish I'd had more time to get to know him. I only knew him in passing. These words, and more like them, you will hear about Donncha a lot, and no great surprise. This is what happens when a man decides to change the course of his life, and search for something to give it new meaning. This is what happens when the search takes up so much of one's life, that one doesn't have time to touch on other lives but briefly.

Be glad to know that he found some of what he was looking for. To those to whom Donncha has pledged his support, he was fiercely loyal and a source of great support. Brave, strong and not by any means beyond a laugh when it was needed, Donncha will be missed by those proud to have called him friend.

Go siorraí beó, a chara. We will carry your memory with us.

(Cosaint)

Johannes Wolfe

There are many things that could be said about Johannes, but most I will leave for others. This is no place for history lessons, but know this - the Explorer has finally gone home. Rest well.

(Cosaint)

I have heard many eulogies for him. All of which praise his life, his courage and his love. I shall not speak of those things for of them I did not know. Instead I shall tell you, as one who stood and fought beside him, how Nethaniel Essex died.

It was not long into the fight and all were pressed back by the weight of the unliving bodies around us. Those at the centre of the group were pressed, their arms pinned such that they could not raise blade or board to defend themselves.

Essex stood at the outside. Between the enemy and the vulnerable. He made his body a barricade against the weapons of the dead.

His hand raised and fell a great many times crashing the great axe of Rhino, who guides and protects us, upon the rotting cadavers of his foemen.

Each stroke felled its target, but yet more came.

Again and again the dead surged forth from the darkness.

Again and again he sent them back to hell.

But skill and luck cannot hold out forever and in the end the damned souls of the dead struck him with a blow which would fell all but the purest of souls.

As he fell to the ground he handed over the The Land made Steel into my hand. A lesser man would have held onto it in the hope that it's fury might stop the dead coming for him before it was too late.

Nethaniel Essex was not a lesser man.

He lay there, his pattern falling about him in tatters. Conceding hope, but never conceding defeat. As I fought now over him he struggled to his knees and though it ripped the flesh off his fingers he strained to repair my armour. Had he not done so, I would not be here to write these words.

Before he died he left a message for me to pass on and bade me hold a trust for him.

At the end when he knew that his time had run out he called out in a weak voice to his ancestor to aid him in his final battle.

The spirit of Keremar flooded into him and for one final moment there was strength and vigour and power in him. Drawing blades he leapt forward, he roared the name of his ancestor and gave himself into battle.

Nethaniel Essex's last act was not that of a warrior, it was not that of a Lion, it was not that of a man.

It was that of a hero.

That is how I shall remember him.

(anon)

Orpheus.

I made you a promise but was forced to break it.

I told you that you would not die alone, and yet you did.

I told you that I would stand shoulder to shoulder with you but I could not.

I am sorry, and I hope that someday you will forgive me.

You made yourself a target, drawing the enemy far into the night. You gave your people a fighting chance to survive.

Your gamble worked my brother.

You stood as a candle, burning brightly in the darkness.

A light which the darkness could never hope to consume.

A flame to guide us home and yet to warn the denizens of the darkness that they will stand account one hundred fold for every wrong they visit unto us.

I asked you once to forego your armour and weapons for the day to let the faction be your shield and your sword. To prove that there was more to you than a warrior.

Strange that in the end it was you who were armour to the faction.

Rest well in Mithras' hall. You deserve it.

(anon)

## Songs from the Hearth

I didn't publish this at the time, it had its first actual public performance at Night of Stars, but it would seem to do Caranthir a disservice not to publish it. I realise it seems a little clunky, but it does fit the tune, I promise.

I do not have the words to describe Sir Caranthir Taralom. Friend to many, myself included, our High Incantor, he was never afraid to do what was needed. Amongst his many deeds he dismissed Estoban, the undead leader of the Jackals Faction, and for this, and other actions, was made a Knight of Lantia. He wanted the enemy to know him, to know he was making a difference in the fight. But he never failed to be there for those who needed him either, to support his friends and his faction.

*-Karen Aldain*

### **For the Light – Karen Aldain**

Let me tell you of an elf, a friend who helped us find our way -  
A man named Caranthir Taralom.  
High Incantor of the Lions, always first into the fray,  
Through our memories he will live on.

Faith provides to the end - Never waver, never bend.  
We will fight for the light - So proud.  
In Caranthir's name we will fight to the end.  
Faith provides, we survive - To the end.  
To the end.

From a broken heart there grew a man where once had been a boy:  
His potential was quickly recognised.  
Mentored by Ezekial Crane, enter Incantor Man and Wedge Boy!  
Together fighting undead in disguise!

Faith provides to the end - Never waver, never bend.  
We will fight for the light - So proud.  
In Caranthir's name we will fight to the end.  
Faith provides, we survive - To the end.  
To the end.

He swore to the Prince Bishop, but his true path was his faith -  
A protector following St Cuthbert's steps.  
By dismissing Estoban he showed that no undead were safe,

Undeterred by power, rank or respect.

Faith provides to the end - Never waver, never bend.  
We will fight for the light - So proud.  
In Caranthir's name we will fight to the end.  
Faith provides, we survive - To the end.  
To the end.

If the enemy knew him, then he knew he'd made his mark,  
And the Akari knew he'd take them down.  
Made their hit list and died for his stand against the dark;  
We will fight them to the end, we have vowed.

Faith provides to the end - Never waver, never bend.  
We will fight for the light - So proud.  
In Caranthir's name we will fight to the end.  
Faith provides, we survive - To the end.  
To the end.

Sailing now on the Elysium, our souls still his concern,  
Caranthir lives on through his many friends.  
We cannot help but shape the lives we touch, and be shaped in return,  
And so it is we never really end.

Faith provides to the end - Never waver, never bend.  
We will fight for the light - So proud.  
In Caranthir's name we will fight to the end.  
Faith provides, we survive - To the end.  
To the end.

**Never Yield** –Karen Aldain

I came, alone and afraid,  
You made me feel I was welcome.  
Found friends, a cause to defend:  
Strength unsuspected, revealed.  
I don't stand here strong and brave,  
I am not the hero ideal,  
But I'd die to keep you alive -  
A Lion who'll never yield.

Lions fight for the light,  
Lions, standing strong, holding on,  
Lions, stood with pride, side by side, shield by shield.  
We'll fight for you, die for you,  
Lions, make this world safe for you, Lions,  
Never yield.

We stand, defending our land,  
The Lions' passion still burning;  
Each man, willing to be the brand  
That cries "We shall never yield!"  
We've lost the places we've loved;  
We have wounds that may never heal  
But to you, we will cry loud and true  
The Lions will never yield.

Lions fight for the light,  
Lions, standing strong, holding on,  
Lions, stood with pride, side by side, shield by shield.  
We'll fight for you, die for you,  
Lions, make this world safe for you, Lions,  
Never yield.  
The Lions will never yield.

## Mourn the Heroes

Fish stared into the rising flames and allowed himself a small measure of satisfaction.

They'd all said the wood was too wet for a fire. That it would rain or the fog from the river would choke it before he got started, but he'd ignored them. They had to have a fire tonight, for one thing, he was cold and wet and for another it had said so in dispatches.

“All patrols to honour the dead with a moment's silence an' a few words to be spoken by an officer or patrol leader -” Jasper had read out from the battered parchment. Mal had brought it in the day before. Fish liked listening to him read, he couldn't read himself, but some of the best childhood memories he'd had were of people reading to him. They'd kept away the demons in the night.

“Well done,” said Mal, “Big enough for sausages I think.” Fish beamed at him in response. He liked Mal too; there was something about the cook that made him feel reassured, even in the worst of it.

He also liked sausages.

“There's wolves out on these ridges,” grumbled Klem from amidst his blankets. He'd been the one who'd said they wouldn't be able to get a fire going. He claimed to know Ceryphus well, but Fish had never seen any proof of this. “They'll come for miles when they see your lovely light.”

“Ah hush it,” Hedge snapped at him as he brought up more wood. “You're just jealous cos you made your bed all the way over there.”

Fish chuckled at that until he caught a look from Jasper and quieted down with the others. They'd all been a fair way together now and they all knew when their leader wanted to say something. He stepped back from the wood pile, and sat down. Hedge did the same whilst Mal crouched on the other side busying with the food. Only Jasper remained on his feet, casting a long shadow in the firelight. He took off his helm and put it on the ground.

“They's asked us to say a few words, an' whilst they ain't to know if we did or not out here, it's right an' proper that we do.”

“Aye to that,” said Klem.

“Aye,” said Jasper.

“I don't rightly know many of the nobles,” Jasper went on. “But when a military man dies, all the army gives a moment for 'em.”

“Dead right,” Hedge agreed. Jasper fixed him with a look. “Sorry, poor choice of

words.”

“Yeah it was,” Klem added.

“Hush it,” Fish told them all. “Jasp’s talking.”

“Yeah shut up.”

“Shhh!”

“Anyway,” Jasper said loudly, quieting them all. “I didn’t know the Knight Marshal, or the Knight General well, but I seen em at muster an’ parade. They were good fellows.”

“Yeah they was good.”

“Shhh!”

Mal got up from the other side of the fire and handed Jasper a small wooden cup. Jasper took it and raised it

“So I reckon good men go to their Ancestors, an’ none’s as good as Sir Orpheus.”

“He was a hard bastard.”

“Heard he broke some lord general’s hand just by shakin it once.”

“I heard he used to break rocks with his chin.”

“Shhh!”

Mal carefully made his way around to each of them, Fish took the cup he offered and whispered his thanks.

Jasper cleared his throat silencing them again. “Here’s hopin’ Sir Orpheus found his way.”

Fish raised his own cup and took a sip of water. He thought back to the time he’d seen the Knight Marshal on a parade. He’d been given latrine duty that day because of a wine stain on his tabard. His sergeant had looked feared for his life when Orpheus had called him over. Fish hadn’t felt sorry for him though as he’d sopped out the stalls. People had said they looked alike, but for the Knight Marshal’s jutting beard.

After a moment’s silence, Klem piped up. “What about the Knight General?”

Klem laughed loudly, “What, General Pinkie?” he said and spat. “I’ve had bowel movements more impressive than him!”

“You shut it Private!” Jasper said hotly. “No-one speaks bad of the dead! You even know him?”

“Did you?” Klem retorted.

“No, but doesn’t mean I talk shit about him!”

“Why? he ain’t here,” said Klem. Fish felt himself getting angry and was half way

to getting up and crumpling the smaller man up with his blankets before he felt a hand on his shoulder.

“I knew him.”

Mal walked passed Fish and knelt down next to Klem, fixing him with a look. “I knew Knight General Joel Paltrow,” he said in a low voice, “And he was a good man. He may not have been a shouter or a bruiser, but he was good at what he did. He followed his leader and did the tough job. Orpheus could be hisself. Joel had to be what Orpheus needed him to be.”

Klem flinched under Mal’s hard stare, “I didn’t mean anythin’ – “

“See that you didn’t.” Mal said icily. He stood up and walked over next to Jasper, raising his cup. “Here’s to Joel Paltrow. Ancestors take him.”

“Joel Paltrow,” Fish said getting to his feet.

“Joel Paltrow.”

## Other OC Stuff

### **Research requests**

If you submit a research request to the LT please follow this up with an email to [plot@lionsfaction.co.uk](mailto:plot@lionsfaction.co.uk) with the details of the research so that we can ensure that you receive a timely and accurate response.

Thanks,

Barry  
Head of plot

### **Character/Group Backgrounds**

Ever thought it would be cool if the monsters turned up looking for you?

Ever wondered what would happen if that drow that killed your village arrived wielding your father's sword?

Ever contemplated how people would react if it turned out you were in neck deep in trouble?

Well now's your chance! Send the plot team your character/group background, or any details about your character/group and we may include them in future plot lines! Send all information to [plot@lionsfaction.co.uk](mailto:plot@lionsfaction.co.uk), preferably in a word document.

Thanks,

Barry  
Head of plot

PS Bear in mind by sending us the information you agree to us using it without consultation (we can't go asking people if they mind the monsters turning up. That would just ruin it!). Please also note that sending in any information does not guarantee we'll use it – or that we'll use it in the manner you expect. The only guarantee is that we will read it and if we think we can use it ... well, you'll see!