

~ CHIRAMS HOLLOW ~

Shiney Dreadfuls Newspaper

Volume V, Issue V

November 9th, 623

Inside this issue:

North Fortress Besieged

North Fortress Besieged On

All Sides, Especially Bottom

Know Your Foe: Void

1-2

Reports of martial activity preventing travel to the demolished castle of North Fortress are confirmed, reports an anonymous source. Following

Paladinic Decrees

3

the collapse of the castle's walls and outer structures after the mysterious earthquake that has

A Better World

3-5

halted standard bastion portal travel to the region, further earthquake activity has sunk the keep into the mines below, leaving only a few of the

Shiney Dreadfuls

6



sturdier outlying buildings standing amidst the rubble. Monster activity has apparently increased, as much of the remaining stone is covered in a strange cobweb-like material, and large spider-shaped creatures have been sighted roaming the area.

Our source reports the evacuation of the citizens of North Fortress to a nearby fortified encampment, where they are apparently under siege by soldiers of a splinter political faction called the "Horde Wall." The source further reports instances of starving citizens being forced at spear point back into the fortress, but clarifies that he was forced to escape the region before further details could be obtained.

It is unknown at this time if the Eirean government plans to send aid or military relief to the citizens of North Fortress. Mounted or foot-bound travelers are advised and encouraged to avoid the area until the political upheaval has settled.

Know Your Foe: The Ultimate Adversary: Void

This could well be the most important Know Your Foe article that I ever write. That anyone ever will. I have it on good authority that the malevolent entity known as Void is in the process of making its final push to destroy our homeland. That the devastation that it has brought about up to this point does not represent the fullest extent of its destructive power is frankly terrifying, but as a people we have endured. We have resisted and fought back and survived long enough that it has come to this: the end is coming. One way or another.

Let's take a look at what we know about the Void being already, starting with its motives. What are

Know Your Foe: Void ...continued

Void's goals? These appear to be nothing less than the end of all life and the utter destruction of everything. The reason for this - as near as anyone willing to talk seems to know - seems to be that that is what Void does. It is Void's singular purpose, unchanged for all time. So not much there to go on.

What about its powers? As the apparent embodiment of annihilation, it's not surprising that Void is capable of inflicting extreme amounts of eradication. The sword itself has been known to channel the shattering of spirits when in the hands of a suitably powerful minion. Additionally, the sword has been observed to produce all manner of other ritual effects either with its own touch or a projected attack. At times it has eschewed being wielded altogether and simply attacked on its own, cutting through the air as though an invisible warrior were using it. Perhaps its most dangerous trait is its tendency to subvert and corrupt those who fight against it and transform them into twisted mockeries of who and what they once were, turning them against those they once fought alongside. Of course, all too many have taken up the black sword of ending willingly, enticed by the power it could provide or enamored of the murder, mayhem and evil they can do in Void's service.

What are Void's methods? As mentioned previously, Void does much of its work through minions, either in service or enslaved. Among the most notable of these are the one-time vampire vansir Bjorn (who may or may not have escaped Void's service), the still very much a vampire Sarr Necalli (a thoroughly evil thug and currently Void's new favorite), the stone elf master of constructs Casseighopeus (rumored to either be enslaved by Void and fighting or secretly Void's equal partner), and according to some scholars the Withering itself, which may be an entity Void created to begin the corruption that has turned Laerthan into the Deadlands in preparation for Void's later triumph. The Withering is postulated to be a separate being by these academics due to the very different nature of its attacks against the living world. The Withering is responsible for slow, steady corruption and decay, often employing necromantic magic and creatures, whereas Void itself is less discerning when it acts directly. In addition to its vast hosts of slaves and sellouts, Void does at times act on its own. Often this takes the form of so-called "void creatures", animated shards of void-imbued crystal that share their creator's talent for pure destruction. It is theorized that rather than being separate entities under Void's control, these crystal creatures are extensions of Void itself.

And now, the most important question asked in this article. Maybe ever.

What can we do?

We can fight.

There is too much, far too much information on how to fight Void that could prove important to include it all in this article. Too much is still unknown. But there are those out there fighting. The Paladins, the Justicars, the Duke and the Queen, knights and seneschals and barons, soldiers and sailors and adventurers and most important: you. So many of you are true mortals with no training in warfare or fighting that have no sense of how important you are to this fight. Of everyone who reads these words, only a handful will cross their swords with the blade that ends the world. Maybe none at all. But every single one of us can make a difference. Even if you can do no more than swing a club, tend a cut or cook a meal, you can help. Every contribution can help to tip the balance. Every willing hand may save us all.

Decrees from the Council of Paladins:

Hear Ye all loyal subjects of Her Majesty Queen Beah, in both Eire and Bastions far and wide. By Royal Decree handed down from the Council of Paladins let it be known that any and all restrictions of entry into Barony, Bastion, or Holding based on race are hereby rendered illegal. All protected races shall enjoy freedom of movement throughout the Kingdom. Any attempt to detain, delay, or expel a citizen race shall be met with harsh punishment up to and including Removal of Noble Title.

~~~~~

Hear Ye all loyal subjects of Her Majesty Queen Beah, in both Eire and Bastions far and wide. By Royal Decree handed down from the Council of Paladins let it be known that any and all Diplomatic Envoy from Bastion or Barony need be vetted by the Council of Paladins and approved by such Council with reservations of confirmation and dismissal to be held by the Queen. Furthermore, any and all such bargains, agreements, or treaties signed by such Diplomats will also be approved by such Council before validation.

In Her Name,

Paladin Sir Victarian Crowe

## *Building A Better World*

*[editors note: the following flyer has been spotted throughout the city of Thelucia, as well as Authenrai, Aiola, White Sun, as well as many kindling piles in Sadeen Moore. We at the Shiny Dreadfuls staff would love an opportunity to interview the author, provided he doesn't make us into an ashtray or some such.]*

Why.

When men overcome the sheer hubris of what we've done, this is first what they would know - why? Why build the Great Pattern? Why risk so much, playing with the very building blocks of creation?

We can say this is the best option. We can say at the behest of the First of Caryth, mortals threw the outer planes out of balance, and this was an opportunity for Thelucia to right a wrong. We can say that, whatever form the icon, the plane of life can only benefit from its restoration. We can say keeping the power of an Icon in the current form - a passionless, infinitely complex mechanical spell engine - can do naught but prevent the tyranny which naturally flows from one being possessing so much power. We can say it is our hope the Plane of Life adapts to this ideal, and discourages artificial hierarchies built on power alone.

## *A Better World ...continued*

All of this is true... yet none of this answers the question... why?

Why would we do such a thing?

In truth, there can be but one answer:

Because the end times are here.

Because it's all going away.

Pick up a handful of soil, and know that in two years' time, that soil will cease to be.

As will you. As will all of us. Everyone you know and love - your friends, your family, your children, your first crush and last dance... They won't even be memories. The totality of civilization, the learning, the achievements, the dreams for a better day... all of it will be wiped from this world.

All except Puriel, except The Void. They will survive... and once again, thousands of years from now, when we mortals have put the pieces back together, they will do it all again, just as they have countless times before.

And once again, only Puriel and The Void will survive.

Why did we do this thing?

Because there is nothing with the power to end this madness that will stand against them. Because there's no negotiating with The Void, just as there's no compromise with Puriel. To either, there is naught but one goal: the total and complete destruction of the other. What scraps of ancient history we've uncovered all say the same: for a shot at victory, either would sacrifice every living being without hesitation. Whether it's the unthinking malevolence of The Void, or Puriel's blind, fanatical devotion, every one of us is just as dead.

And since neither will ever truly destroy the other, the cycle will never end.

They will not negotiate, and no mortal force can stop them.

But the outer planes... they have the power.

Before the combined might of the planes, even Puriel and Void must bend a knee. Only their fractured nature - ever in conflict, ever opposing one another - keeps the planes in check. Sure enough, when the end times come, they will re-seal their borders and leave the mortal world to die; better that than risk becoming trapped in the cataclysm.

Only now... that's not an option.

Now, they cannot simply seal their borders; they cannot leave us all to die. Now, the plane of life is

joined to the mortal realm. Now, they must protect the pattern at all costs, or the carnage will spill over into their realm.

Which means death cannot seal its border, for life alone cannot stand against Puriel and The Void.

And soon after that... the others will come.

In what order is irrelevant- the other planes cannot risk losing the planes and Icons of Life and Death, so they will come. They will come, and together we will put an end to the meat-grinder Puriel and The Void would make of the world.

What happens after that... is immaterial. Quite simply, that we - all of us, all mortals, all those who's feet tread upon this world - that we have the opportunity to find out... to make our better world and see how high we can rise without the threat of annihilation hanging over us... that is what matters.

We did this, quite simply, because it is our best shot at guaranteeing there is a tomorrow.

Not a good tomorrow, or a better tomorrow, but merely...

Tomorrow.

**\*Do you have information to share?\***

**Speak to your local Shiney Dreadfuls Delivery Agent!\***

**\*Will pay for interview with Peeping Eire reporter!\***

**Inquire with your friendly Shiney Dreadfuls Delivery Agent!!!**

**Oh, And Don't Forget To Place Your Classified Ads!!!  
(we've had great success with female Ogres and Ores!)**

# Shiney Dreadfuls:



~We haven't seen the Cerebral Devourers in the last few months because they've been waiting for their sigil to grow to full strength

~After the Thelucian "incident", Duke Southkin disappeared for over a week.

~The rapidly increasing cold has been attributed not to simply a natural winter – but to the attack on the Prime of Fire known as Destruction.

~The vansir Reinheart is the descendant of the chieftain Karag the Black.

~The constructs that helped to cause the collapse on North Fortress were sent by the Malachide to punish the Romani for interfering there and not rejoining him.

~A group of humans and Vansir are trying to start a new home outside of the Bastions on the borders of Tusnia

~All Horrors Eve was unusually quite this year – some fear the multitudes of undead were drawn away to one central location, but for what purpose?

~Naga have been seen in the vicinity of Thelucia in record numbers.

~Several ships were seen launching from the Teshvan Isles in the last month, heading southward. Sea lilies were seen rising to the surface in the wake of the ships.

~Void made a brief appearance in the Queens castle – it simply appeared before the Queen for a brief few seconds until she shook her head no, then vanished once more.

~The Black Keep of Karag has been growing steadily taller in the last few months, as if the stone itself is rising.

~Several break-ins were reported throughout Imirie - In each home, all the bows in the house were cracked in two and left on the threshold.

~Death elementals have been spotted in ever growing numbers in Thelucia."

~Several times over the past month, the city of Aiola has fallen 50 feet or more, before stopping, and slowly floating back up."

~Numerous seers in Authenrai have had visions of a unicorn being burned alive in the bastion fires.