

Aire Currents

*Newsletter for the
Canton of Aire Faucon*



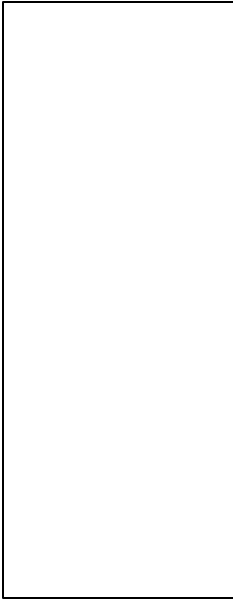
*Volume VII, Issue IX
September/October A.S. XXXVII being 2003
Gregorian*



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<http://aire.atlantia.sca.org/airenoframe.htm>





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Kingdom Calendar

December 2003

6	Unevent (RP)	Ramseur, NC
13	Feast of St. Andrew	Harleyville, SC
13	Runestone Collegium/Winter Solstice	Asheville, NC

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Christian	October 26
Kathryn	October 27



MEETING MINUTES

October 14, 2003

New Business: Una's grandmother has passed away. In situations like this, it has been canton practice to donate a book in their name. Una suggests a costuming book. Will need to get in touch with the collection development person at Gaston Library to see how to handle the donation. Katherine would like to invite everyone to her house for the December meeting. It will be a potluck and she will post directions to the canton egroup.

Seneschal/Chronicler: Looking for a new deputy seneschal, as the current deputy hasn't been seen at a canton meeting for several months. The quarterly report is due mid October. Have a Deputy Chronicler now. Lady Katerina has stepped into that position.

Exchequer: \$1309.24 in checking account. The quarterly report is done. Need to pass the hat for meeting costs more often. The financial policy was voted on and passed by the members present.

Marshal: Not present.

MoAS: Not present.

Chatelaine: Not present.



THE SENESCHALE'S SENDING

I'm so excited about the plans several of you have told me about for Inn on the Road, The Pyramid of Giza. Don't forget to share them with everyone on the egroup. I'd love to get some brainstorming sessions going to make this a truly memorable event.

As I'm finalizing the updated Canton Phone and Address book, I'm amazed at the number of people I see that don't have Baronial or Kingdom level awards that they deserve. Please, take a look at it, and recommend these fine gentles. They deserve to be thanked for all their hard work for the Barony and our Kingdom.

In service,
LADY MAEVE



A&S' LIGHT

- 1) University went well, from what I hear, and we had several folks from our canton teaching, so vivant to all who volunteered to teach! I believe they were: Susannah, Kisaiya, Fiona, and Lidia.
- 2) Baroness Susannah is still having spinning nights at her house on the second Tuesday of each month, as far as I know. Please correct me if I'm wrong, Susannah! :)
- 3) Due to moving and major life attack, I'll be unable to host an A&S night at my house this month, but will try to get one going soon. If Susannah is still willing, we will have the regular A&S night for the canton on the 4th Tuesday of this month, at her house. Please let one or both of us know if you'd like to attend, and if there's anything in particular you'd like to focus on, let me know ahead of time, and we'll see what we can gather.



4) Runestone is coming up! If you're interested in teaching, please make sure to contact the appropriate folks (I believe Susannah is in charge of the teachers, again, correct me if I'm wrong)

This concludes my report as MoAS of the Canton of Aire Faucon.

Sincerely,
LADY SERAPHINA



THE CHRONICLER'S MUSINGS

I hope everyone enjoys the articles in this issue of the newsletter. I was so pleased to get another wonderful story from Katerina and the terrific article on retaining.

Enjoy yourselves and remember, send me your ideas, stories, persona info, recipes, artwork!

And, I finally have a deputy; Lady Katerina has graciously agreed to accept the position ;-)

Always in Service,
LADY MAEVE

WHAT MAKES A GOOD RETAINER AND WHY?

By Baroness Vanora ni Ewan & Baroness Simone Marie Genvive Fornneau

Discretion - Ability to keep all the insider information quiet and to yourself. Nothing ruins someone's event or time in the SCA like finding out before hand what kind of award they are going to get at a specific event then not receiving it.

Loyalty / Commitment - Committed to their Majesties as household members, friends or in whatever way you are associated. They come first and foremost before anything else. Ability to keep all promises made during the reign, such as staying diehard to the end of the reign, making all the events you promise to (barring real life emergencies).

Familiarity / Knowledge of Kingdom - Read your laws and read corpora!!!!!!
- Knowledge of the Society as a whole.

Enthusiasm - Speaks for itself.

Willingness to Work - Retaining is a hard, demanding job; you must be willing to sacrifice your personal fun at an event to do this job. However, retaining is fun in itself, just a new kind of fun.

Travel - Must be able to travel with Their Majesties for the entire reign.

Appearance / Wardrobe - A must, we are the backdrop. Have at least one good court type outfit and one good everyday outfit. Depending on Their Majesty's whims, they may request



specific garb (i.e. 14th Cent.) Are you able and do you have the clothing that you need, can you make it or have it made for you?

Organized - A must, you have to remember everything they need to do, make copious notes, lists, and timetables if needed. Get the information they need to write thank you notes.

Detail Oriented - Like being organized; can you remember every detail that needs to happen. For example at feast, do not forget to arrange toasts to all the royalty.

Common Sense - Ability to judge right from wrong without book knowledge. If you know your Majesties despise someone, keep him or her away from him or her so problems do not occur.

Etiquette - Do you know how to set the Royal table? Kindness and courtesy come first. If you do not know someone's title address him or her as Gracious Lord or Lady.

Who's Who by Hats - Know your Kingdom's Sumptuary Laws. Learn others. _

Tools of the Trade

Thank you notes

Lunch Kit

For yourself and for their Majesties.

Sandwich Meat

Bread / Crackers

Cheese

Water

Soda (Pop/Coke)

Coffee / Tea / Sugar / Creamer

Fruit

Things in your bag or basket Checklist:

Notebook with Pens/Pencils

Gifts Received Sheets

Painkillers

Antacid

Glucose Tablets

Special Medication for your Royal

Small sewing Kit

Baggie with safety pins

Extra ribbon (black/white) for emergency lacing.

Kleenex or handkerchief

Hard candy or mints (altoids or something similar but not gum). Breath freshener.

Lip balm or her majesties favorite lipstick that she always wears.

Sunscreen

Small snack (crackers, raisins or chocolate)

Watch

Goblet and Water

Fan

Wet Ones individually wrapped.

Umbrella (rain poncho where applicable)



Small garbage bag.
The list of things happening that day!

Overall Knowledge:

Know your charges:

Food Allergies

General Allergies

Whims

Quirks and Phobias

Likes and Dislikes

What is their boiling point and how to diffuse it?

Know when to back off.

What is the signal?

Know your Majesties, Highnesses, Heirs, etc for toasts; keep them written down for feasts. Write them with **phonetic** spellings.

Always consult the feast-o-crat / Herald before arranging toasts.

Know how to set up the Presence!!!!

Know how to set up head table.

Ladies always ask the Lords for help carrying items. "We portray Chivalry not Women's Lib".

Your charges never carry items except gifts and or personal items (don't take away their woobie.).

Event Lists - See attached.

Special Things to Remember for Wars

1. Forgo vanity for comfort of your feet; Do not lock your knees when you stand for long periods.
2. Take care of yourself so you can take care of your Royals. Eat properly, get enough rest, know when to say when, (with your own stress level and your goblet).
3. Use good judgment as to when your Royals may need some down time, food, water, sunscreen, etc. (with gentle, not pushy suggestions).
4. Do not wear baldrics unless you are currently retaining.
5. Always watch your mouth and do not comment on anything unless necessary. Do not speak ill of anyone. Do not even agree with someone who is speaking ill of someone. All it can do is hurt the Royals.
6. Know the chain of command. If you get yourself into a situation where you simply cannot or should not give an answer or make a decision, know who to go to above you. This is rarely the Royal under which you serve. It may be the chamberlain or the Head Retainer for the day, but it may also be the autocrat of an event (or war). Try not to bother the busy Royals with details/problems better left to the retainer staff (us) to handle for them. Of the flip side, do not make decisions you do not have the authority to make.
7. Make sure your Royals look good. There are little things you can do, like pick the lint off the garb before they go out in public. Straighten a crooked hem or seam. Have the Royals readjust their crowns or coronets because they are crooked.



8. Pay attention to how you look too. Comb your hair. Use a damp cloth occasionally to wipe your face. Check for lint and crooked veils on your own person. Brush the dust off your skirts and tunics occasionally.
9. Presents for Each Kingdom - needs to be done way ahead of the major events, such as Wars. Think 3 months where possible. Request gifts from the Laurelate or Populace.
10. Are the Royals hosting a Known World Royalty Dinner, Queens Tea, Known World Party, or other engagement? Arrange these way before the event. Think 3 months when possible. Request help from the populous, Laurelate, Pelicans, or Baronies for hosting.
11. Make sure that all the regalia gets there and is in good order and clean.
12. Never let the Royals out of your site (except when they are in their own pavilion) - especially when they go to the rest room. If gentles see them unattended they might take the opportunity to interrupt their trip and yak their heads off. (Royals - it makes your retainers look bad too so please do not play the "Let's see if we can sneak away from the retainers without them noticing game).
13. When accompanying to Royal Dinners and other invitations - You may have to arrange for the thrones to be delivered, gifts and dishes ahead of time so they do not have to be carried in procession.
14. Opening Ceremonies at major events such as Wars- Arrange the procession, thrones for a Dais?
15. Battles - bring umbrellas, cushions for field chairs, fans, sunscreen, and WATER!!!!
16. Remember you are always "On-Display" even when you do not realize it. People are always curious of what is going on in a Royal Encampment, even the first week of Pennsic. If you do not think you can handle this aspect...really handle it...then you may want to rethink your involvement at a war. How you act directly reflects on the Crown. This also goes, although more diluted, for when you are off duty...out doing the party circuit.
17. Learn to recognize other kingdoms and Principalities by not only their arms and colors, or their crowns and coronets, but also by pictures of the reigning royalty where possible. This is very hard. Very, very hard. But for certain, if you do it will save your butt and make your royals look fabulous.
18. Be courteous in your interactions with other kingdom and principality retainers. Big happenings sometimes at War so NO GOSSIP (the war is full of scouts).
19. The Encampment
 - a. You need an experienced camp coordinator and deputy coordinator to help with the initial layout and camp set-up and teardown.
 - b. Think about having a Royalty Encampment Book to organize schedules of the Royals, Guards, Peer/Ppod on duty (Ppod- is a member of the staff who is not a peer but filling in for the Peer on Duty in case there is not one available. They need to know how to deal with the worst of the happenings that can befall a royal encampment and will sit at the gate to talk with visitors, inquiries, etc.) gifts received, pages schedules, maps with all the royal encampments marked, daily duties, etc.
 - i. Set up schedules before the war where possible.
 - ii. Even if you have a group in charge for the day, you still need someone in camp to help and know what is going on.
 - c. Make sure there is a good division of responsibilities through out the encampment.
 - d. Always keep the encampment visibly clean and tidy. This goes for those whose pavilions open into the courtyard. If you are not going to be tidy and clean, close your doors. It makes a bad impression if you're slob. Ditto it you have out of period stuff in your area, such as furniture, coolers, etc. Try to make your area of the encampment (at least outside your pavilion) look as period as possible.
 - e. There should be an official open and closing of the camp. (Close the gate!).
 - f. Meetings and parties - arrange ahead of time so that areas to be used are tidy and refreshments and servers are available.



SMILE AND HAVE A GOOD TIME!!!

IVAN, THE FIREBIRD, AND THE THREE GODS

A Russian Folktale

By Lady Katerina Sina Samovicha

In a far land there was once a mighty Tsar named Radomir, and his daughter, Princess Natal'ia, was the considered to be the most fair of all maidens. So fair was she that princes came from far off kingdoms to petition for her hand. Among her admirers was a young man named Ivan Vladovich who, though he was no prince nor was he very wealthy, had managed to win Natal'ia's heart with his courage and kind heart. However, her father, the Tsar, disapproved of Ivan, and thought him only a love struck youth who would, in the end, bring only heartbreak to his daughter. So the Tsar decided to set a test, to prove who was worthy to wed his daughter. Those who sought Natal'ia's hand would be given a year and a day to seek out the majestic Firebird and bring back one of it's golden feathers to Natal'ia as a wedding gift. Whoever returned first with a feather would be given Natal'ia's hand in marriage.

Ivan swore to his love that he would return with the feather before the year was up, and without hesitation he set off on his quest. He traveled through many kingdoms, and over many seas, yet could not find the Firebird.

Eventually Ivan came to rest against a mighty oak tree, which he knew are sacred to Perun, god of thunder. Ivan prayed to the god for guidance, but could do no more than to lay his head down in sleep after his long journey. In the night he awoke to find a powerful man with a copper beard standing over him. In the man's hand was a mighty axe, and behind him Ivan could see a chariot that was being pulled by a powerful looking he-goat.

"Who are you, that sleeps beneath my sacred tree?" the god bellowed.

"O Mighty God of Thunder, I am Ivan Vladovich, and I am on a quest. I seek the Firebird so that I might bring one of its feathers to my beloved Princess Natal'ia, and thereby win her hand in marriage. Please, O benevolent Perun, can you tell me where I may find the Firebird?"

"Nay, Mortal," Perun answered. "I know not where to find the Firebird. But pray seek out my sister Mokos, for she knows all things of the earth and of beauty and may know better than I where the Firebird lay. But she has not a temple or sacred place to find her. All the earth is sacred to her, seek her in her garden."

Ivan thanked the god, and promised that once he found the Firebird and was wed to Natal'ia, he would sacrifice many roosters, bulls, and he-goats in honor of Perun's benevolence.

Again Ivan set out, traveling over fields, and through forests, with no hint of the Firebird. Eventually he came to a beautiful garden, which he knew must belong to Mokos, goddess of the earth and patron of women and all fiber arts. Ivan prayed to the goddess for nourishment, but could do no more than to lie down amidst the garden and rest a while. Again he was awakened in the night, and this time a beautiful woman stood over him, her face kindly and her appearance the embodiment of motherhood.

"Who are you that sleeps amidst my garden?" the goddess inquired.

"O Beautiful Mother of the Earth, I am Ivan Vladovich, and I am on a quest. I seek the Firebird so that I might bring one of its feathers to my beloved Princess Natal'ia, and thereby win her hand in marriage. Please, O kind Mokos, can you tell me where I may find the Firebird?"

"Nay, Mortal," Mokos answered. "I know not where to find the Firebird. But pray seek out my brother Dazhbog, for he knows of all things that travel the sky and may know better than I where the Firebird lay. But you will not find him wandering the land, seek him out in his palace to the east."

Ivan thanked the goddess, and promised that once he found the Firebird and was wed to Natal'ia, he would hold a mighty feast in her honor, and would feast only on vegetables, as they were of her womb.



Again Ivan set out, traveling across lakes and over mountains, with no trace of the Firebird to guide him. Eventually, he came to the golden palace of Dazhbog, god of the sun. He entered the palace and stood before the god on his gold and purple throne.

"Who are you who enters my palace unbidden?" the god queried.

"O Radiant God of the Sun, I am Ivan Vladovich, and I am on a quest. I seek the Firebird so that I might bring one of its feathers to my beloved Princess Natal'ia, and thereby win her hand in marriage. Please, O generous Dazhbog, can you tell me where I may find the Firebird?"

"Aye, Mortal," Dazhbog answered. "I know where to find the Firebird, for he and I have hunted together on many a day. But why should I tell you, a mere mortal, where he lies?"

"O Dazhbog, I have traveled far from my home in search of the Firebird, but I would travel farther still to prove my love for my beautiful Natal'ia. My only wish is to bring her the feather of the Firebird, to match her own golden hair, and to show her that my love is greater than all others."

The God of the Sun looked thoughtfully at Ivan, for Dazhbog rays had shone on many lovers before, but he thought that perhaps there was finally a love that could outshine even the sun god.

"Very well, Ivan Vladovich, I will aid you in your quest. But I cannot merely tell you where to find the Firebird, for he lives in Paradise, where no mortal can find him. If you will step into my golden chariot, I will take you to the Firebird, so that you may complete your quest."

And with that Ivan was whisked away in the Sun God's chariot, even farther east than Dazhbog's palace, into a place of unimaginable beauty. As the chariot stopped, Ivan was awed as he looked around. Blooming flowers of every color imaginable surrounded him, and curious beasts he had only ever heard of came out to investigate. In the distance he could hear the gentle rush of water.

Dazhbog called out once, and soon after, a beautiful bird flew into view landing only a few feet from Ivan. It was perhaps only the size of a hawk or falcon, but it was impressive nonetheless. Its feathers were the colors of the sunset, crimson, gold, and deep purple, with jeweled eyes, and a long, flowing tail. The bird looked curiously at Ivan, as Ivan looked at Dazhbog, unsure of himself. Dazhbog only said that now Ivan had found what he had been searching for, he did not need Dazhbog anymore.

Ivan again turned his eyes to the Firebird, to speak his plea.

"O Magnificent Firebird, I am Ivan Vladovich, and I have quested long and hard to seek you out. I have but one request, that I might bring one of your beautiful feathers to my beloved Princess Natal'ia, so that I might gift it to her and win her hand in marriage."

The Bird remained silent. But thinking of Natal'ia made Ivan grow confident again, for the Firebird was known to be a patron of lovers, and there was never a love as strong and pure as that Ivan and his Natal'ia.

"Please, O Spectacular Firebird," Ivan pressed on. "I would do anything for my Natal'ia, if you would only ask something of me in return, I would grant it to you willingly."

The Firebird tilted its head slightly, as if considering Ivan's plea, then, all at once, it opened its beak and let out the most beautiful song Ivan had ever heard. In its song, the Firebird seemed to compose all the love, and grief, and beauty in the world, and by the time the song was finished there were tears on Ivan's cheeks.

The Firebird took one more look at Ivan, and then launched into flight, leaving a single golden feather on the ground at Ivan's feet.

Still openly weeping from the Firebird's song, Ivan bent down and picked the feather from the ground, tucking it safely away in his tunic. He turned to see Dazhbog smiling at him.

"It isn't often that the Firebird gifts a mortal with his song, it means that he has given you his blessing along with his feather."

Ivan was still speechless from the Firebird's song, so he silently climbed back onto the golden chariot, and as Dazhbog cracked his mighty whip, they flew back into the sky and left paradise behind them. Ivan looked back longingly only once, then turned his face to the west, where his Natal'ia waited for him.

The sun god was kind enough to take Ivan all the way back to his own kingdom, the golden chariot setting down just outside the Tsar's city.



Ivan waved goodbye to Dazhbog as he flew away to the west to finish his daily cycle 'round the sky. And at last Ivan set out for the Tsar's palace, to present the Firebird's feather and to finally claim his bride.

But as Ivan entered the city, he noticed the city was much livelier than normal for this time of the year. Ivan stopped to ask one of the local merchants what was happening today, and was horrified at the merchant's answer. Apparently one of Natal'ia's other suitors had come back only days before Ivan, with a supposed feather belonging to the Firebird, and it was said that soon he and Natal'ia would wed.

Without wasting another second, Ivan ran to the palace. Barely pausing to catch his breath, he threw open the doors to the Tsar's great hall.

On his great throne sat Radomir, and beside him stood Natal'ia, looking even more beautiful than Ivan has remembered, with her gold hair and fair skin. Before the Tsar and his daughter, knelt a young prince, whom Ivan remembered had been one of the more persistent of Natal'ia's suitors. In the prince's hand was a small feather that looked vaguely gold, but not nearly as gold as Ivan knew the true Firebird to be.

"What is the meaning of this?" the Tsar shouted, clearly upset at Ivan's interruption. But Ivan took courage when he saw Natal'ia's face become suddenly aglow when she saw him.

"Your majesty, I fear you were about to make a great mistake," said Ivan, walking purposely towards the Tsar, his daughter, and the still kneeling prince. "For this man has lied to you if he has told you that he found the Firebird."

The prince sputtered at Ivan's accusation, though he was obviously looking a little worried now, as he held his false feather as closely as he could. The Tsar looked between Ivan and the prince, but at his daughter's beckoning, indicated Ivan should continue.

Ivan walked up to the prince, and took the feather he was still trying to conceal. Ivan took the feather between two of his fingers and rubbed it slightly, and when he took away his fingers, he let out a laugh and held them up for the Tsar to see.

"Paint," Ivan proclaimed. "This charlatan thought to deceive you by merely painting an ordinary feather gold. Is this truly who you wish your daughter to marry? A man who must deceive you to win your blessing?"

The Tsar took the false gold feather from Ivan, and after he examined it himself, he turned angrily towards the prince, who was now cowering far from the Tsar's wrath.

The Tsar called for his guards, and would have ordered the prince thrown into the dungeon, but Natal'ia pleaded for him to merely banish the pretender. For she did not wish any suffering to come from his lie, even if it would only be his own.

Once the wailing prince was dragged from the hall, the Tsar turned to Ivan.

"I thank you for revealing the trickster for what he is, but that is not enough if you still wish my daughter's hand. Were you able to find the Firebird?"

Ivan took one look at his lovely Natal'ia, her eyes were warm and loving, and he felt a peace flood through him. Without hesitation, he reached inside his tunic and drew out the Firebird's feather.

A golden light seemed to infuse the room, and Ivan thought he could still hear the Firebird's song. Radomir gasped when he beheld the golden feather, which was the same color as his daughter's golden hair, and he reached out and took Natal'ia's hand. He looked from the feather, to Ivan, and finally to Natal'ia, and he sighed as he realized that today he would lose his daughter forever. But then he smiled, as the golden light from the Firebird's feather seemed to penetrate to his very heart.

He took the feather from Ivan, and stroked it only once, amazed at its softness, and then he placed it in Natal'ia's left hand, and gave her right hand to Ivan. Radomir thought to say something, to formally announce his acceptance of Ivan as Natal'ia's betrothed, but he saw that Ivan and Natal'ia only had eyes for each other, so he merely smiled, and left them alone.

The very next day Ivan and Natal'ia were married. A mighty bull was sacrificed to Perun, as well as he-goats and roosters. For their wedding feast, Ivan asked specifically for many vegetables, in honor of Mokos. And all day Dazhbog's rays shined on the happy couple.

And that is the tale of how Ivan Vladovich met the three gods, found the beautiful Firebird, and married his beloved Princess Natal'ia.



The Dialogue of Chivalry of Duke Finnvarr de Taahe

Praefatio

Part II

"At this point he went to his knees and said that, since his lady was not present, would she be so kind as to be her proxy? He left with her coins, model suits of armor, and jewels. And for the rest of the day he sent every opponent to her. If they had bested Sir Thorvald then they were to state that he had failed her and she must determine the cost of this failure. If they were bested then they were to let her know that her inspiration had been more than they could bear. He did this at great cost to himself, with great majesty, and only because it was the right thing to do. He did not know this lady from Eve. She had no rank or influence and could give him nothing in return. He had nothing to gain by this exceptional effort. That is the mark of true chivalry. Sir Thorvald, and those like him, are my inspiration.

"I have more such stories, about other good folk, but since they are long, I will only tell them if you want to hear them."

At this, Baron Tibor said, "I for one love a heart-warming story of this sort, but I feel impelled at the moment to answer Duke Finnvarr's questions about less worthy behavior. No one yet has mentioned the trait I object to most among knights, though I feel all of us have seen it. That is the narrowness of some few of them. These are the knights who do little but fight, who yet see what they do as so important to our society and our existence that they are satisfied that they do their part. You know the ones: the ones who never dress nobly, who go nowhere unless they will find fighting at the end of the journey, who stand in the back of court and talk during it. Master Galleron de Cressy," he gestured to the man standing next to him, "and I were just discussing this."

Galleron bowed to the company and said, "Noble Finnvarr, and all you good people, I think that when fault can be found with the knights of today, it is most often this: that they overemphasize the skills required to win the typical tournament, to the relative neglect of other virtues. Consider how greatly the average knight exceeds the average man-at-arms in skill at arms. How often does the knight excel to the same degree in courtesy, or generosity, or the splendor of his array?"

"And often the quest for knighthood does not correct this fault, but worsens it. Consider a man taking up the profession of arms, utterly undistinguished in skill, in courtesy, in largess, and in his equipment. He measures himself against those that are knights, and sees none admitted to the order that are not the equal to the skill at arms of the other knights, which is a high level of skill indeed.

"He looks at the array of the members of the order, and at their courtesy and generosity, which has its greatest measure in the honest and just acceptance of blows. In these things he sees many members of the order that, while without glaring fault in these things, are in no way superior to an ordinary gentleman.

"If the order is in great disarray within his kingdom, he may even see knights that are less than generous in their judgment of the blows struck upon them, or arrayed like pillagers or base villeins, or devoid of proper courtesy.

"So, if this aspirant desires to become a knight and is a sensible person, he will naturally put all his efforts into improving his abilities to win as many tournament combats as possible, and waste little time on developing other virtues. He may also discover that he has much to gain and little to lose if he gives himself the benefit of the doubt a bit more often in judging blows than he gives that benefit to his opponent.

"Likewise, he may discover that he wins more combats, and suffers no reproach, if he wears armor and uses weapons that are well suited to our tournaments but little like the armor and weapons of a true knight.

"How can this be mended? First, the aspirant should be encouraged to cultivate all the virtues proper to a knight, even if they do not lead to the reward of knighthood. They are to be sought for their own sake.



"Second, the Crown and Chivalry should, in considering entry into the order, give proper weight to all the virtues pertaining to a noble knight. And those that are now members of the order should examine their conduct, and always carry themselves as befits a noble knight, not simply in prowess, but in all things.

"Third, a kingdom should not be so large that the Crown and Chivalry cannot know well all the qualities of a candidate. The fame of victory can travel far, but a man can only judge the courtesy, generosity, and judgment of a gentleman with his own senses."

At this Sir Saeric was moved to comment. "I have been a knight of this realm for only a few years, and I can still remember that one of the things that surprised me most about chivalry meetings is how little the prowess of the candidates was discussed. Usually, their prowess is there or isn't, but there is always discussion about their peer-like qualities.

"I've seen knights speak against various candidates because they couldn't tell a saucepan from a sonnet, had worn the same faded tunic for the last three years, had armor that was always cobbled together, or had no knowledge of or interest in the ideals of chivalry. And the discussion of candidates is always taken seriously, with no consideration of politics, favoritism or cronyism."

"Your Grace, may I reply?" asked a noble squire.

"Certainly," said Duke Finnvarr. "My ladies, my lords, this is my squire, Lord Nicolae Cioran. "I confess I am curious as to what he is about to say."

"Your Grace, Sir Saeric, ladies," said Nicolae, "I regret to say that to those watching, there seems to be little common agreement as to the behavior to be noticed and rewarded by the chivalry, and little common agreement on what is correct. Also, knights seldom intervene in the formative training of new men at arms, waiting to squire them once a degree of prowess is attained. While squiring every new fighter is not necessary, gentle direction at an early stage will help direct and form their image of the knight they wish to be. If the chivalry agrees on the example they will set, there will be little cause for complaint with new members of the order, as they will have matured into a figure the community finds is admirable."

Tibor looked surprised at this and interjected, "Is this, indeed, true? That knights do not train all new fighters? I would have thought that the Chivalry would train as many new fighters as possible, in love of their art, reserving squiredom not just for those they feel have the potential for prowess, but also the potential for friendship and a good relationship. Am I mistaken?"

"You are both right and wrong, Baron Tibor," replied Duke Finnvarr. "It would be a bold man who would try to speak for all knights or all masters of arms, but I think many of them do take squires because they find a kindred spirit, or someone they feel they can teach important things. In my case, the things to be taught are never martial prowess. There are many others who can teach fighting better than I.

"But most knights want squires who are committed to excellence in arms as well as to the other knightly virtues. And so they often wait to see signs of prowess in a possible squire, because without commitment few gain any skill.

"As Nicolae said, knights can train new fighters without taking them as squires. This is true -- if a knight is present when new fighters are introduced to our society or the practice of arms, it that knight's duty to take a hand in this most important matter. Yet often there is no knight there. How many shires, even baronies, are there in our society where there are no knights, or none who are actively exercising arms?"

"I am aware," said Finnvarr, "that this is too easy an answer to Nicolae's charge. He clearly speaks of situations where the chivalry could act but do not. And to the charge that the chivalry give no consistent direction, no words are adequate answer. Only deeds will do."

"Your Grace," said Nicolae, "you have questioned us about the faults of we see in the chivalry. You have been a knight for many years. What say you?"

"I am caught," laughed the duke. "But what I dislike is no laughing matter. Let me first define chivalry as Duke Gyrth Oldcastle once did. Duke Gyrth said chivalry differed from courtesy because 'chivalry involves killing people.'

"The ideal of knighthood--old or new--wrestles with this difficulty: how can we train people to be killers, or even to emulate killers, and expect them to remain civilized? Or perhaps I should say 'courteous'?"



"Knighthood has no validity if the ability to use force, prowess, is not tempered by humility, courtesy, and other gentle virtues. Thus the most offensive fault any knight of our society can manifest is forgetting the duty to uphold the gentle virtues.

"Let me say that I do not expect everyone to follow a single definition of courtesy or gentility. No time or people have a monopoly on generous behavior. However, to act as a brute because you can get away with it is the antithesis of knighthood.

"Knights and other fighters pursue a sweaty vocation--high spirits and crudity will break out among them. I am talking about more serious matters. I have seen knights intimidate and abuse new fighters whom they were supposed to be training or authorizing. I have heard knights denigrate those who do not fight. I have been told of knights who encourage their households to flaunt rudeness where it is least welcome and most inappropriate.

"Those who do such things no doubt feel that they are proving something -- perhaps how tough or how superior they are. They do not realize that no one doubts their toughness. They do not realize or care that we reserve our highest respect for those who know when to stop being tough, and when to be generous, courteous, helpful, and even humble!

"If we want our knights to realize this more difficult challenge--to achieve prowess with gentility--we have to keep reminding them that this is what we want. If we praise victory alone, then we deserve the consequences."

Sir Myles then said, "I, too, see this arrogance, manifested as condescending bad manners. And I have wondered where it comes from. When I'm in a bad mood, I think it was there all along and cleverly hidden. When I'm in a good mood, I think it was misread as pride and exacerbated by the accolade. The signs of arrogance can be excused as manly pride or youthful enthusiasm, especially if the mentor, the knight or the master, shares in that arrogance. It sometimes seems to me that this fault tends to run in veins from knight to squire.

"This makes it more important for others in the Chivalry to speak to fighters who are not their squires, and especially to knights gone astray. I am somewhat ashamed that I held my tongue on occasions when I should have stood up and been 'a Champion of the Right and the Good.' If only I could exchange those for the times I jammed my boots into my mouth up to the spurs."

Master Crag Duggan, who had journeyed from Calontir, spoke. "Finnvarr asked, what sullies our society? I say, when we stand by and see wrong things done, and we turn our heads. This responsibility is on all of us, but falls on the peers the heaviest, for we are keepers of the flame. When I speak to gentles on their vigil, I urge them to ponder the difference between respectability and honor. Respectability is a cloak that you may put on and off, and is only for public consumption. Honor is what you do because you know it is right even when no one but you and your God know it.

"Many times honor and respectability clash. Sometimes your fellows, your friends, your peers, even your Crown will say don't make waves, let it pass. Sometimes you cannot be popular and respectable while at the same time being honorable. If you chose honor, you will have to be prepared, sometimes, to risk your popularity and good name for what you hold right. People have been nailed to the cross for that.

"I have had over the years to read the riot act to a monarch or two and at least a few peers," Crag said with a smile. "The art of it is to be civil, kind, and courteous, all the while being unyielding. Crown or carl, treat them kindly but firmly. Look them in the eye, and tell them gently and kindly what you feel is right, and bow not to what is wrong. Give them a chance to fix things, but take your stand. Of course, not all will respond to sweet reason. If they won't, study their weaknesses, and you will find how you may lead them to fall on their own sword. Then," he said, with a second, smaller smile, "you can shed an honest tear for such a waste."

Then Mistress Alexis MacAlister, who had been silently listening, said, "There are times when a bold word can make all the difference. I know of one instance where a knight spoke to a squire of some martial accomplishment, and told him 'Although you are hot with a sword and are generally a good guy, you have the manners of a goat, which is not likely to get you knighted.' That squire took the words of the good knight to



heart, and he is now a member of the order of Chivalry. This sort of criticism would not be easily taken by most, I would wager. And yet, if someone were to come to me and tell me about a problem with my behavior, it would give me pause to reconsider my actions.

"I sometimes wonder how the strutting peacocks can think that they fool us. I was an officer of the Crown for almost three years and watched Crown Tournaments very closely, knowing that behavior exhibited on the tournament field can be indicative of behavior in curia. I was never surprised. It may be difficult to judge a fighter's honesty from the gallery, but what cannot be mistaken is the temper tantrum on the field, or the words in anger."

Sir Fernando said, "Merely a different form of overweening pride, is it not, my lady? Gutierre Diaz de Gamez has often told me that humility in victory is the distinguishing characteristic of the good knight. Is that not so, Gutierre?"

"Yes, my lord," replied Gutierre. "Their humility is part of God's plan to remedy the arrogance of the wicked, by the principle *contraria a contrariis curantur*. It is this humility in victory that makes them the order of knighthood of the good defenders."

"But you've said more than this, another time," said Fernando.

"If you insist, my lord. I have stated that they are not all good knights who ride upon horses; neither are they all knights to whom kings give arms. Some who attain the name do not pursue the calling. These wear the mantle and bear the name but they do not observe the rule of life. They are not knights but phantoms and apostates."

"And, alas, such do exist, even in our society," said Finnvarr. "I suppose we should not be surprised. The Round Table itself had them."

Thus ends Part II of The Dialogue of Chivalry

VIVATS

To Lady Katerina who received the first Award of the Golden Gazelle (youth service for the Kingdom).

To Lord Christian who received an Undine at Coronation.

To Baroness Fiona who was made a Court Baroness at Kingdom Crusades.

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