

Herelandra

number 34

July



Aiela is kallia--the peaceful race ruled by the mighty, emotionless iduve--so he accepts his abduction and slavery as his fate. But then the iduve tamper with his mind ... and not just his, either.

Hunter of Worlds

C. J. Cherryh

Isande was there in the morning. Her cheerful presence burst in enthusiastically while Aiela was putting his boots on, and it was as if a door had opened and someone were standing behind him--where there was neither door nor body.

"Must you be so sudden?" he asked her, and her joy plummeted. He was sorry. Isande had never been so vulnerable before. He was concerned about last night and out of sorts about time wasted and a tight schedule with Daniel.

"I would try to help," she offered.

His screens tightened; he knew her opinion of the human, her dislike of the creature. If it were not unlike her, he would have suspected her of wishing to harm Daniel; her feelings were that strong.

What do you expect of me? she asked, offended.

Answers. What do they want with him?

And a strange uneasiness was growing in him now that Daniel was on his mind; Isande's thoughts grew hard to unravel. Daniel was waking; Aiela's own heart began to speed, his breathing grew constricted in sympathetic reaction.

"Calm!" he cast him. "Calm! It's Aiela. It's all right."

Isande--who is Isande?

Daniel perceived her through him. Aiela's impulse was to interrupt that link, protecting both of them; but he sensed no harm from either direction, and he hesitated, suffering a strange double-passage of investigation as they probed each other. Then he received quite an unpleasant impression as the human realized Isande was female: curiosity reached for body-sense, to know.

Violently he snapped that connection, at once prey to the outrage of them both.

"I can fend for myself," Isande voiced at him, seething with offended pride. "He is not of our species, and I'm sure his curiosity means nothing to me."

But Daniel was too angry to voice, He was embarrassed and furious, and for a moment his temper obscured the fact that he was not equal to a quarrel either with Aiela or with his situation.

Aiela fired back his own feelings upon the instant: frustration with the ungovernable Isande, revulsion at having been made the channel for an alien male's obscene curiosity--male, not man, not fit to touch a kalliran woman.

Barriers went up against him, fell again. Aiela felt the human's despair like a plunge into darkness, a hurt mingled with his own guilt. He was too disoriented to prevent its flow to Isande. Her anguish struck him from the other side, coldly doused as she flung up a screen.

"Aiela! The echo--stop it."

He understood: mind-linked as they were, each brain reacted to the other's emotions. It was a deadly self-accelerating process. His reaction to Daniel's offended masculinity had lowered a screen on an ugliness he had not suspected existed in himself.

"Daniel," he sent, and persisted until the unhappy being acknowledged his presence. It was a terrible flood he received. All screens went, as with the link, defense abandoned. The images came so strongly they washed out vision: amaut, cages, dead faces, grief upon grief. Daniel's mind was the last citadel and he hurled it wide open, willing to die,

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at the end of his resistance.

I am sorry, Aiela hurled into that churning confusion like a voice into the game. Daniel!
I was hurt too. Stop this. Please. Listen.

Gradually, gradually, sanity gathered up the pieces again, the broken screens rebuilt themselves into separate silence; and Aiela rested his head in his hands, struggling against a very physical nausea that swelled in his throat. His instincts screamed wrong, his hands were cold and sweating at the proximity of a being unutterably twisted, who rejected giyre and kastien, who loathed the things most kalliran.

Aiela. Daniel reached the smallest tendril of thought toward him. He did not understand, but he would seat the memory behind a screen and not let it out again. Dying was not worse than being alone. Whatever rules Aiela set, he would conform.

I'm sorry, Aiela replied gently. But your perceptions of us are not exactly without prejudice; and you were rude with Isande.

Isande is yours? Daniel snatched at that possibility. It touched something human as well as kalliran. He was anxious to believe he was not hated, that he had only made a mistake.

It was like that, Aiela admitted, embarrassed. He had never expected to share such intimate thoughts with the creature. It disturbed him, made him feel unclean; he screened those emotions in, knowing he must dispose of them.

"This arrangement," Daniel said, scanning the situation to the limit Aiela allowed, "with a woman and the two of us--is no the best possible, is it?"

That was sent with wistful humor. The human foresaw for himself a lifetime of being different, of being alone. Aiela was sorry for him then, deeply sorry, for there was in the being an elethia worth respect.

"We are at the mercy of the iduve," Aiela said, "who perceive our feelings only at a distance."

"There are so many things I don't understand here that I can hardly keep my thoughts collected. There are moments when I think I'm going to--"

"Please. Keep your questions a little longer. I will find it easier to explain when you have seen a little of the ship. Come, get dressed. Food comes before other things. We'll go out to the mess hall and you can have a look about."

Vital Statistics

Good evening and thank you for tuning in to installment 34 of P.J. Gaughan's Perelandra, made possible by a grant from the National Public Radio Drama Fund, and by the Tandy Foundation [sponsors of BMT Jazz on NPR's Dallas affiliate]. Subscribe to NPR Perelandra at a rate of only 75 cents an issue, and receive our free souvenir mug [a styrofoam cup with Pere scrawled on it in black felt-tip].

Things you can get for sending money to Pete Gaughan (3121 East Park Row #171A, Arlington Texas 76010; 817-633-3208)...

for 75 cents each, issues of Perelandra.

for 25 cents each, issues of Thulcandra, a warehouse zine.

for a stamp or SASE each, issues of Ecotopia, official newsletter of the Dipcon Committee.

for \$1, Masters of Deceit, an anthology of Dip articles.

for a SASE or stamp, a copy of a little tool I've devised for myself. It's a 'directory' of major zines and services--whenever I hear from a novice or have a sample requested, I send a copy of this list.

No, this collection is not being produced by Rod Walker... ["The problem is not with your set. Please stand by."]

Standbys in Perelandra receive a free issue immediately, and three more if they play out a position. Our current heroes are Mark Frueh, Pat Conlon, Pierre Touchette, JR Baker, Mike Colandro, John Crosby, Guy Hail, Evans Givan, and Greg Ellis.

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1983 G - Darkover

THE BRITISH ARE COMING

Autumn 1910: England retreats a gal-war; France retreats f mid-por.

Winter 1910: England builds f edi, a lon & a lvp; France removes f apu.

SPRING 1911

Austria (John Crosby, 830 Hunterhill Tr, Roswell GA 30075***): f adr h, a boh s Fa bur-mun /nso/ (a vie s a boh), a gal-ukr /r bud otb/.

England (Evans Givan, 8066 Camstock Ct, Citrus Heights CA 95610-4606): f edi-nth, a lvp-yor, a lon-pic (f eng c, f bel s), f nid h (f iri s f bre s), a ruh s a mun, a sil-boh (a mun s), a war-gal (a ukr s), a mos-lvn, a sev-rum /r nos otb/.

France (Greg Ellis, 700 Rio Grande, Austin TX 78701): f wes-spa/sc (f por s), f tyn-wes (f naf s), a ven-pie, a tyo-mun (a bur s), a mar-gas.

Turkey (Guy Hail, 1103-B Lorrain St, Austin TX 78703): a rum-sev (f bla & a arm s), a ser-rum, f con-bul/ec, f alb u.

***John Crosby has a COA as of July 15 to: 1496 Washington Lane, West Chester PA 19382. John, remember to send me your new phone number.

No draw proposals last time or this. Austrian and English retreats, and Fall 1911 moves for all, are due before 9pm CDT, Sunday 29 JULY 1985. And, believe it or not...no press. See Evans' comments elsewhere about GM interference and "stabs".



1983HC-Mimir

MOSCOW RULES

Autumn 1907: Italy nmr, GM retreats a ven otb.

Winter 1907: Austria builds f tri; France scuttles f tun; Germany builds a mun, a kie; Italy nmr, "plays" one short; Russia builds a war & a mos.

SPRING 1908

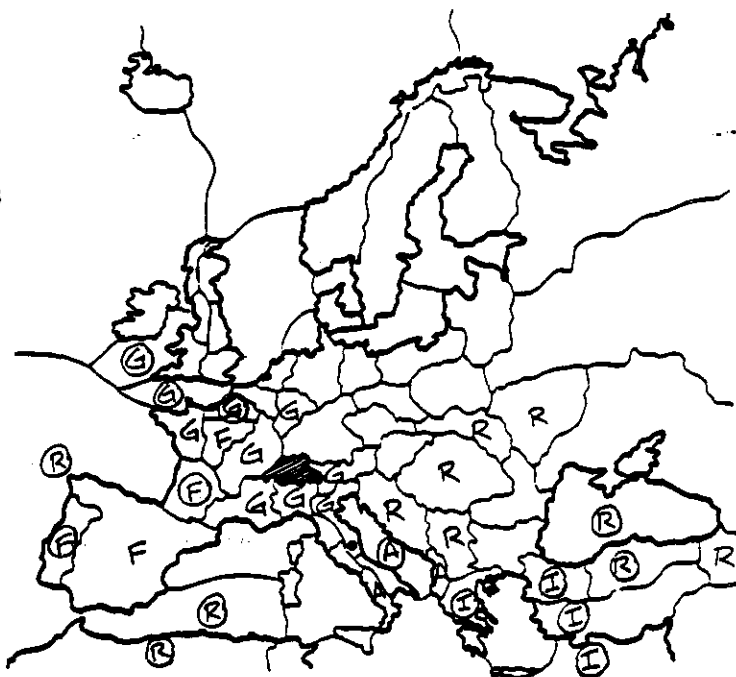
Austria (Ed Henry, 32150 45th Place SW #C-5, Federal Way WA 98023***): a alb-tri (a ven s) /a vie r tus rom apu otb/, a rom-nap, f tri-adr.

France (Tom Hise, 4568 Black Rock, Dallas TX 75211): f gas-bre (a par s), a spa h (f por s)

Germany (Greg Ellis, see above): f iri s Rf nao-mid, f pic-bre (f eng s), a bre--gas, a ruh-bur (a mar s), a kie-ruh, a mun-tyo, a tyo-ven (a pie s).

Italy (Matt Kazur???, Box 5492, Washington DC 20016): nmr. f con, f smy, f eas, and f gre all hold.

Russia (Pierre Touchette, 1 rue Georges, Masson Quebec, Canada J0X 2H0): f mid-naf (f wes s), f nao-mid, a mos-ukr, a war-gal, a vie--tri (a bud s), a rum-ser, f sev-bla (f ank s), a arm s f ank.



***please note Ed Henry's COA. Standby for Italy is (please) Mark Frueh, 4729A Morganford Rd #6, St. Louis MO 63116. G/R draw fails--nobody voted except R (yes). In view of that, your

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GM repropose the G/R; there are no other proposals. Please send retreat, Fall 1908 moves, and draw vote before 9pm CDT, Sunday 28 JULY 1985. All the press is from Ed this month...

Austria to Italy: Cute? I prefer "getting even."
UTA to Austria: Or getting Italian centers, eh?
Austria to GM: Very small breaths, I see.
Austria to Russia: Very funny.

1984W - Woz

BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Autumn 1906: Italy retreats f ion otb.
Winter 1906: England builds a lon, f lvp;
Germany builds a mun & f kie; Italy builds
f rom; Turkey scuttles f eas.

England (Pat Conlon, Box 16047 LSU***, Baton Rouge LA 70893): a tus-rom, f naf-tun (f wes s), f por-spa/sc, a bur-mar /r pic par gas otb/, f lvp-iri, f nwg-nwy, a hol-bel, f bel-eng, a lon-hol (f nth c).

Germany (Rob Wittmond, 2723 Vanderbilt Ln #5, Redondo Beach CA 90278): f bot-swe, a stp u, a mos-nwy /nsu/, a sev-arm, a ser-bul (a rum s), a bud-ser, a tri ms a ven, a ber-kie, f kie-hel (f den s), a mun-bur (a ruh s).

Italy (J.R. Baker, 3100 Meadow Ln, Dickinson TX 77539): f rom-tyn, f tyn-lyo, f apu-nap.

Turkey (John Walker, 4819 Corian Oak, San Antonio TX 78219): f ion-adr, f alb-tri, f bul/ec h (f gre s), f arm-sev.

***Please note, Pat has moved into a new PO Box (does this one have a kitchen, Pat?).

Concession to Germany: E no, G nvr, I yes, T yes, fails. E proposes E/G draw; I proposes E/G/I/T draw. Please vote on both draws, with your Fall 1906 orders (and the English retreat) before 9pm CDT, Sunday 28 JULY 1985.

Rome to Rob: Well, actually, it was the lesser of three evils...but I had hoped you would be more generous.

All you need now is three "easy" centers; HOL, BEL, and MAR?

Don't you wish you had my help against Turkey now?

UTA to Rome: There are no easy centers in this game; ask Pat.

London to Ufacik: Your press last season amused us greatly. So, you feel you cannot hold us off forever?! Had you been holding us off? Funny, we never noticed it. Perhaps that had something to do with our lack of offensive in the Med. Your recent comments re: throwing centers to the Germans have made your silly statement a self-fulfilling prophecy. Now you shall be attacked. Now all will see just how long you can hold us off!

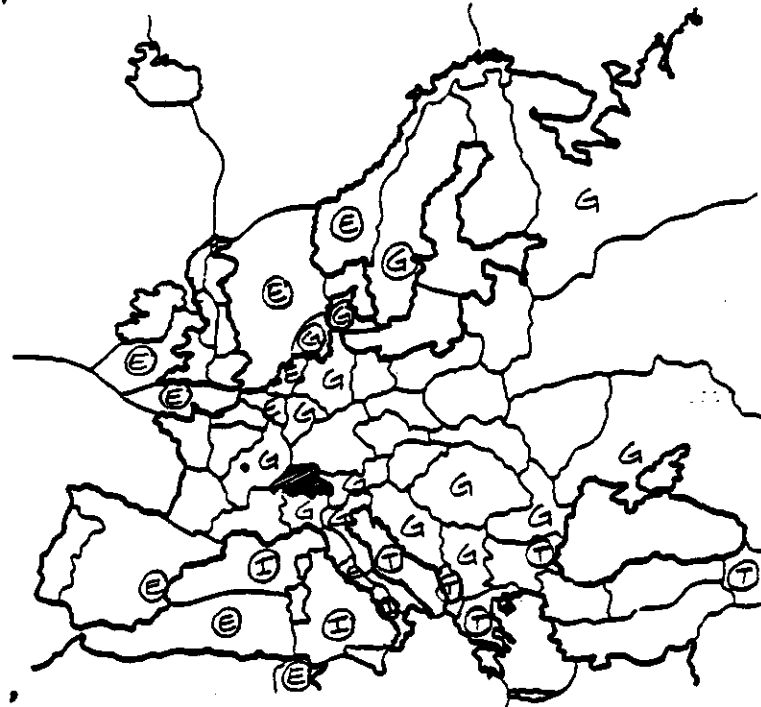
GM/HEC/USC to GM: Let's see you make something of my new, longer acronym. That's "General Motors/Hughes Electronics Co./USC". Bleah.

GM to HECKler: Bleah to you. No other GMs allowed.

SoHo Surpriser to Hack and Slash: Looks to be touch and go, but with a little nerve and verve, the E/G will triumph. By the by, keep the mad little bugger alive down there in Istanbul. That's delightful gibberish he writes.

UTA to SoHo: He didn't write any this time. Instead, you get to hear from the Kraut...

Munich: Although tolerated, the French government in exile, led by President Froggé, has never been popular in this fair Bavarian city. Not only is it the last remnants of a power once hostile to Germany, but it is an annoyance to Germany's English ally. Suddenly, however, all this has changed. M. Froggé's perennial call for a "Free French" army to "liberate France from her English oppressors" is being met by hordes of young men who are sus-



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iciously unfamiliar with the French language. These men are being equipped with the best the German army has to offer, and appear to be almost ready to march. As one Municher remarked, "Those English are sure going to be sorry they cut us off from the Burgundian wineries!"

ASF3 Okar

RACE TIGHTENS UP AS THUVIA'S SCORE IS DISALLOWED...turn two

An error last time led to three extra points for Thuvia: you may not collect ammo on the path, so her Dirigible is no good. Also, remember you can only carry up to two sb, or one di.

The Leshy nmrs this time, and is gone from here on out.

Segment One: Thuvia and Loki are on the run, trying to get better position on their enemies...but Loki stops smack in front of Slimy Snake, whose Demon creams him. Ignoble Yeti tosses an easy Rattler at The Leshy as TL backs into the kitchen for good. Snow Lord and Little Narc swap Demons, but SL misses by a mile as the Narc sidesteps his throw.

Ajustments were made to some orders so they would be permissable under the rules...

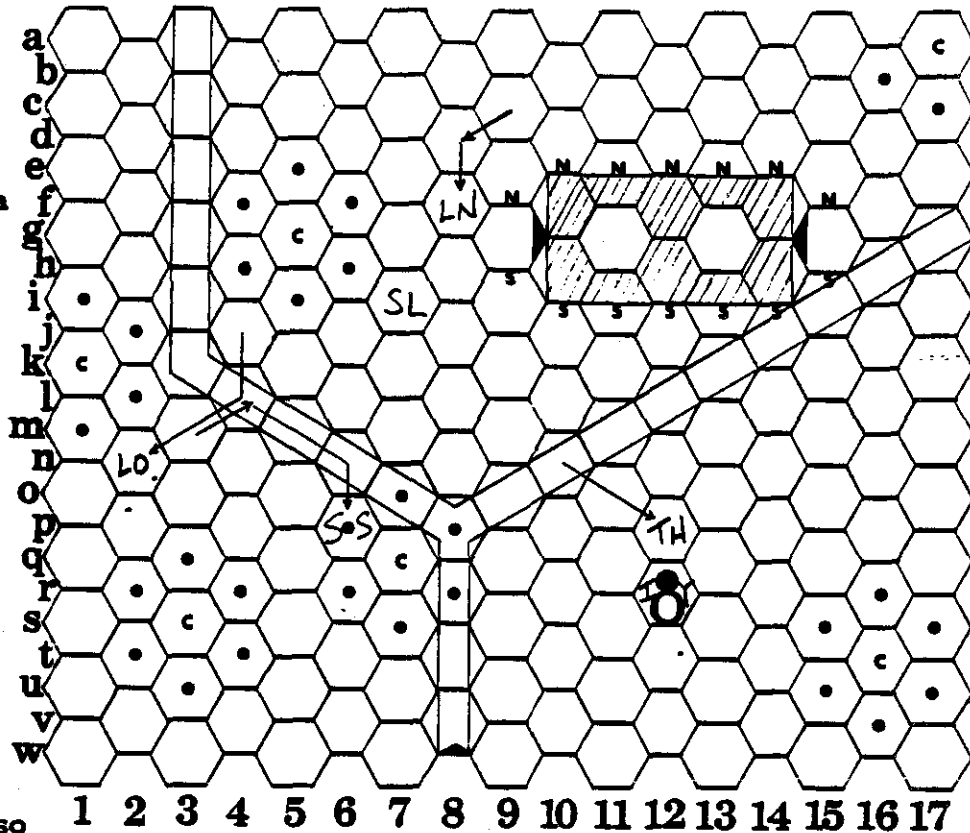
fighter	loc	starting	attacked by	hp/vp	hp/vp/ammo
Ignoble Yeti	R12	9/ 0/ 8sb		/1	9/ 1/ 7sb
Little Narc	D8	10/ 1/ 2	de/SL/60/--	/1	10/ 2/ 1
Loki	N2	8/ 2/ 1	de/SS/75/**	1/	7/ 2/ 1
Snow Lord	I7	9/ 1/ 3	de/LN/45/**	1/	8/ 1/ 2
Slimy Snake	M3	8/ 1/ 2		/1	8/ 2/ 1
Thuvia	P12	10/ 1/ 1		/	10/ 1/ 2
The Leshy	W9	10/ 0/ 2	rr/IY/105/**	1/	9/ 0/ 2

over and notices that Snow Lord is preoccupied--so he launches an ICBR (Inter-Continental Ballistic Rattlesnake!) that hits square. In turn, the Yeti is snowed by Thuvia's Demon.

Ignoble Yeti	R12	de/TH/70/**	1/1	8/ 2/ 6
Little Narc	H8	de/SL/70/**	1/	9/ 2/ 2
Loki	N2	de/SS/85/**	1/	6/ 2/ 3
Snow Lord	I7	rr/IY/65/**	1/1	7/ 2/ 1
Slimy Snake	L4		/1	8/ 3/ 0
Thuvia	P12		/1	10/ 2/ 1

LN and LO use the infamous Barnard Bolero attack! LN chooses Loki and Snow Lord as his targets (missing SL) and hits LO because LO is busy hitting SL and missing Slimy Snake! The Snake has slipped under a conifer to pick up some new ammo. Meanwhile, Thuvia hits Ignoble Yeti again (has he noticed yet?) while the Yeti, from his not-so-safe spot behind the snowman, is attacking Snow Lord once more.

Stats for Segment Three are on the next page. Players are reminded to get orders in before Sunday, 28 July; take advantage of the press, people, it may be the only way you hit someone. Weather (in the game) was clear this time, but cloudier than last month. Storm brewing soon? Some of you may already want to consider stepping inside to make up some hp...



TURN TWO

Segment Two: Four more attacks--and this time they all succeed. Little Narc and Loki scramble to collect some more snow, so Snow Lord and Slimy Snake (respectively) both drop Demons on their heads. Ignoble Yeti glances

Segment Three: And we finally find out what dastardly intentions Little Narc and Loki have for all that snow they picked up last time! As complete chaos breaks out,

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fighter	loc	attacked by	hp/vp	hp/vp/ammo	for turn 3
Ignoble Yeti	R12	rr/TH/100/**	1/1	7/ 3/ 5	sb
Little Narc	H8		/1	9/ 3/ 0	
Loki	N2	bb/LN/50/**	1/1	5/ 3/ 1	
Snow Lord	I7	rr/IY/65/** bb/LN/40/-- bb/LO/25/**	2/1	5/ 3/ 0	
Slimy Snake	P6	bb/LO/30/-- de/SL/40/**	1/	7/ 3/ 1	
Thuvia	P12		/1	10/ 3/ 0	

Thuvia to SnowMaster: This white, cold material is fun. On Barsoom we have something like it, only it is yellow and smells of bananas.

Snow Lord to Little Narc: Now is the time to test your mettle in battle. This is a field of conflict for warriors to gain honor and glory. So child! prepare yourself for battle.

SnowMaster to Snow Lord: You would hit a little kid?

Little Narc to Pop: Hey, Snow Lord is fighting nasty! He is using yellow snow balls!

Pop to Little Narc: I hope you kept your mouth closed.

Snow Lord to Slimy Snake: Prepare to face the wrath of the Snow Lord!

Loki to Snow Lord: Was that nice?

Snow Lord to Loki: Having an Asgard god as an ally would be advantageous. I will hold off all hostilities until I hear a reply. Until then your enemies are my enemies.

Thuvia to Yeti: To the kitchen with you, Ignoble Beast. If you don't know enough to throw the head, you belong inside with the young ones. Better yet--go climb that conifer over there.

Little Narc to Slimy: Gee, this is kinda fun--like shooting fish in a barrel. Aren't you the one who put the dead horny toad in Mrs. White's dress in recess Tuesday?

SS to LO: Begone, evil one. Show thy face in Asgard nevermore.

Loki to SnowMaster: Hey! Slimy Snake is putting rocks inside his snowballs!

SnowMaster to Loki: Who said that was illegal?

Little Narc to Pop: Mmghh--I don't like this game. I showed Snow Lord though--that last snow ball he got had a rock in it.

Slimy Snake to SnowMaster: Now boring! I liked Snowfort better.

SnowMaster to SS: Tough. It was confusing the readers for the gm to have two datelines.

By the way, I've set up a special section for Thuvia's suitors (do they know she's married?)

Loki to Thuvia: I'll meet you behind this here tree, after...

Snow Lord to Snowy [SM]: Is the city Helium as beautiful as Thuvia is?

SnowMaster to Snow Lord: NOTHING is as beautiful as Thuvia; but Helium is a gorgeous town.

Snow Lord to Snowy: It really is? Sounds like a good place for a summer home. Send me there now!

SnowMaster to Snow Lord: Well, I'm kind of tied up just now. Besides, you have to finish the battle.

Snow Lord to Snowy: I should not expect an inferior to be able to do it. After this battle I will travel to Helium with Thuvia. She has great style, unlike some inferiors I know.

Thuvia to SnowMaster: When you are through here I will take you home with me to Barsoom.

You can stay in the palace of the Warlord, my father-in-law.

SnowMaster to Snow Lord: I should also point out that nobody has such good taste as Thuvia, either. [p.s. did you want me to use those proverbs as press, or were they just for my edification?]

Odds and Ends

Steve Knight (11905 Winterthur Ln #103, Reston VA 22091) has produced a new Dipzine, It's A Trap! He has grey-press and white-press Dip openings (\$5 gamefee plus \$5 per NMR), and is starting another league of United, Alan Parr's postal soccer (NMR fee only). Steve is definately computer-oriented, likes the cartoon Eyebeam, and is a graduate of St. Olaf's College in his home state of Minnesota.

IT looks like a solid, steady zine, but if it continues the way #1 is set up it might not excite anybody. Not many graphics (though the print is excellent), and only a hint of features to come (win free issues right off by many different qualifications). But I see enough promise that I've already subbed.

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Eine Kleine Nachrichten

News in Briefs

Razorcon, James Early's ftf gathering, has been postponed to August 17-18. James will need a \$10 donation from each player to cover the cost of renting the Community Room at Town Square Mall in Pasadena, TX. (That fee might be \$5 for out-of-towners, James' note is not clear.) The locals hope for a three-round tourney and open gaming (whew!). Contact James Early, 3705 Uruguay Dr, Pasadena TX 77504.

James says "It will only be a success if a lot of people will come down from around the state." Well, I had thoughts of attending until the date got moved, since Dipcon is the very next weekend. At least four Texans will be at Dipcon, though I don't know how hard it will be for the others to set aside two weekends in a row.

Magus (Steve and Daf Langley, 2296 Eden Roc Ln #1, Sacramento CA 95825) is getting to be the best resource for Dip-wide news. Almost every issue lists half a dozen cons and several of the hobby's Custodians. Steve's latest project (newer even than his post on the Dipcon Committee) is a letterzine. The Not For Hire will print exactly what is sent to it. This is designed to fill a gap left by cutbacks at No Fixed Address. Subs to TNPH are 75c/issue.

DIPCON UPDATE: Plans are going well; for details sub to Ecotopia. However, the latest news is that advertising will be sold in both the Player Handbook (tournament houserules) and the Souvenir Booklet, published after the con. If you want to buy an ad, send your photo-ready copy to Terry Tallman (7239 Sandpoint Way NE #308, Seattle WA 98115) with the following fee:

	<u>one publication</u>	<u>both publications</u>
1/4 page (5 1/2" vert. x 4 1/4" horiz.)	\$2.00	\$3.00
1/2 page (5 1/2" vert. x 8 1/2" horiz.)	4.00	7.00
full page (8 1/2" vert. x 11" horiz.)	6.00	11.00

Deadline for the Player Handbook will be August 15; for the Souvenir Booklet, August 31. We expect the Souvenir Booklet (which will cost \$2) to reach fewer Dipcon players and more postal Dipsters; the Booklet should run 20-26 pages.

THE ALL-STAR GAME is July 16. Be sure to check the sports pages to see how your player is doing in the contest for Perelandra issues. (Also, check out the new contest elsewhere in this issue.) It's too bad they have to play the All-Star Game in that miserable handbox they call the Metrodome. The infield and lighting are not major-league at all.

BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, Mike Colandro will be a married man. In writing to tell me about all the arrangements they'd made, Mike also commented on the Runestone Poll (see Op-Ed page). Yeesh. Get a guy hooked on Dip and nothing breaks him from it. Congratulations, Mike and ???; hope you enjoyed the Dip-less honeymoon in Mexico City!

Tom Hurst is the latest Dipster to start a Dipzine directory, Diplomacy Zines In Print (DIP ZIP). Tom promises to make it the most accurate by publishing every four months (Robert Sacks' is every six months, Roy Hendricks' is yearly). I really don't think we need more than one directory, guys.

Apparently, The Runestone Poll has drawn a new record for ballots--something over 230. That kind of turnout can't be attributed to publicity alone (even though the Feud kept the Poll in the news). Bruce Linsey's fame and contacts are surely the major factor...but more when the results are published.

I am trying to arrange a face-to-face Dip party here in Arlington (ArlingCon II?) for some time this fall. Late September weekends and early October are possibilities. If you could make it one of those weekends please let me know. I'd like to see 50% out-of-towners.

GAMES

DIPLOMACY A regular game of Dip is available for \$20 US (includes subscription for the length of the game; \$10 refundable if you're eliminated before Winter 1906. Signed up and paid are John Crosby, Brian Bailey, and Mike Colandro. Game will be no-standby at the discretion of a majority of the players.

LITERARY QUIZ A new feature in Perelandra. Every month two questions will be printed. The harder of the two will score one point for every correct answer; the easier question will only score one point for the first answer sent in (earliest postmark). From time to time an additional, extra-hard, two-point question will be offered. Only subscribers are eligible.

Five points will be worth one issue of Perelandra. In addition, the first player to reach any multiple of five will win one issue--but must then subtract five from his/her score (in this I acknowledge cribbing from Conundrums in a certain West Coast zine).

Most of the Lit Quiz questions will be drawn from reference works I have, but I will accept answers other than those given "by the book" if documentation is provided.

Here are the first two questions...

EASY (earliest correct answer wins): A famous American author was born when Halley's comet appeared in 1835 and died, as he had predicted, when it appeared again in 1910. "It will be the greatest disappointment of my life if I don't go out with Halley's Comet," he had written. "The Almighty has said, no doubt, 'Now here are two unaccountable freaks; they came in together, they must go out together.'" Who was he?

HARD (all correct answers win): What famous American writer foretold his own suicide in a semi-autobiographical novel?

SCRABBLE? Next issue I will open up one more game: Monopoly, Uno, or Scrabble. Mark Lew has sent along some suggestions for how to set up postal Scrabble:

"Rather than send players lists of their tiles separately, all tiles are published and in plain sight of players and observers. Observers are encouraged to kibitz by sending orders for the current turn. All interesting plays are published and discussed. If one of the kibitzers' plays is clearly superior to the player's play, that kibitzer becomes the player for that rack, and the ousted player may continue as a kibitzer (perhaps even taking over his erstwhile opponent's rack). There is no winner in the strict sense; the gm uses his judgment for things like "clearly superior". If two or more plays are about equally good but different, the current player's play is used; or if his isn't one of the roughly equal moves, one is chosen randomly. A designated player is free to comment on his opponent's turn, but cannot [immediately] take over the other rack.

[Another aspect of play:] "No need to show more of the other guy's rack than necessary--just don't replenish the rack until right before the player's next turn. Example:

"Turn One: print player A's letters; player A puts down a 5-letter word.

"Turn Two: print player B's letters. Everyone knows what two of A's letters are but you don't pick his other five out until after B has gone."

One way or another I think I could make this work. I'd need two original players and two or three kibitzers (Mark will participate).

Uno is a card game that can be fairly boring if you don't spice it up. The object is to discard everything--and/or to make others pick up cards by playing certain cards to them. I play a variant known as "Chaos", where anyone may intercept the play; instead of going 1234561 in order, you might wind up with 12312615432... This is for those of us whose ability with words is somewhat restricted. I honestly don't know whether there are enough Scrabble players out there to run that, so Monopoly and Uno are the alternatives.

I really want to hear from you on this one.

BASEBALL CARDS Remember you have to send me your card to claim the prize!

Herelandra the Op-Ed Page

Two responses to last month's talk about gm interference. First, Evans Givan:

First, there is no way a normal person, in a normal frame of mind, could think your comments about stabs were GM interference. They weren't even necessarily correct. For example, I didn't stab Greg. Not in my heart, anyway.

An example of GM interference is when Stephen Wilcox accused me of cheating in a gunboat game. That is GM interference. His accusation was based on his opinion that gunboat players should not know who each other are. He had no house rule on which to base his opinion or his accusation. He made the dastardly statement in the press of the game.

Now you're coming out with a gunboat game and you are forbidding the players to know each other. I can't help but think this comes from Stephen's experience. Conrad objects. He was in the game with me that Stephen GM'ed. Well, I happen to think, very strongly, that half the fun and maybe the only reason to play in a gunboat game is to try and find out who the other players are. Sneaky deals and taking advantage are part of Diplomacy. But, if the GM wants to run one forbidding this sneakiness, that's his right. He'll never be able to enforce the rule, though. And anyone who doesn't like the rule shouldn't sign up.

Pete here. My gunboat game has that rule because I want to see what a game is like without negotiations. Maybe I need to eliminate press, too (Greg Ellis is doing that in FF--at least he gets a whole game year and a map on one page!). On the other hand, if the demand is for a gunboat game where you may give yourself away, or try to discover who the others are, then I'll run one like that. Gunboat players, what do you want?

I can see where Stephen's statement was interference. But the GM insulting a player (and this hardly even qualifies for that) is meager interference.

Now, Kathy Byrne:

[talking about the headlines I use] They will not affect the game. The GM is just making observations, based on moves that are available to everyone. I've seen GMs say "Russia stabbed by Germany" only to find out two seasons later that Rus and Ger purposely made those moves as they wanted everyone to believe it a stab.

The GM comments on what he sees; any Dip player would. I know I love trying to figure out what is going on in the games I run. I mean, the GMs are entitled to some fun. Every GM gives some form of analysis in the headlines, but why not--a true Dip player knows what is fact and what is guesswork. [emphasis mine--editor]

Me again. I think I'll let both games run out, with the conclusion speaking loud and clear for the players' intentions. Thanks for writing.

~~~~~

And a note here about the Runestone Poll. Bruce called me last week soliciting my vote, in order to push the vote total over 256 (I think), which would be twice the previous high. I thought this was silly, but Bruce typically concentrates on records and big numbers. As I had told Bruce before, I chose not to vote and not to plug the Poll. I will probably want to see the results, but it will take reader demand for me to publish them (I didn't do it the last two summers either).

Now that the Poll is over, I hope some of the arguments can die down. However, I also hope our Custodians learn how sensitive the hobby is. Poke it in the wrong place and it screams. We lost some great Dipsters to this Feud (Beyerlein, Walker and maybe Peery), a major reason why I tried to keep out of it.

I'll say right now: all three Zine lists are included in my personal file. Both game-opening services are in it; so are both "novice packets".

~~~~~

Not much else to say now. We're into the worst part of the Texas year now. Every day is up over 90°. Still, Leben goes on, and sunshine heals as much as it burns.

Grüss Gott, *Pete*

The Last Word

from John Jakes "Storm in a Bottle"...a barbarian must win his freedom:

As he stole barefoot toward the peg where Xeraph's sword-sabbard hung, Brak tried to remember the position of the hilt--about half way up the wall, wasn't it? He kept moving, cautiously--

Another pace.

Another. Three more to go.

Then two.

He froze.

Soldiers were crossing the courtyard below the balcony. Three or four of them, he couldn't be certain. They were singing an obscene barracks ditty.

At last a heavy door closed. Brak moved again...he lifted his hand, groping for the hilt of the shortsword. But somehow, while his attention had been distracted by the noises below, he had lost his precise sense of distances in the dark. Reaching out, he felt the back of his right hand collide suddenly with the hilt while his fingers closed on empty air. The scabbard knocked the wall. Loudly--

For a moment he held absolutely still, breath sucked in. But the damage was done. Wakened by the noisy thump against the intervening wall, Xeraph muttered a questioning monosyllable.

Brak didn't debate with himself for long. There would be no arguing with Xeraph. The captain would forbid what he'd planned. He jerked the short-sword from the scabbard, heedless of the racket his chain made. Again he cursed his bad luck. He could tell the blow was mis-aimed as Xeraph rushed from the darkened apartment. ...

Brak faced a terrible decision. Remain--and fail. Or go on, and leave Xeraph to be discovered. Minus his prisoner. The barbarian knew what Xeraph's punishment would be--

In the hot darkness, Brak's face hardened. He would try to complete his night errand swiftly. Come back to Xeraph in time. But if he failed--

Well, better not think of that.

Xeraph was a decent, kindly jailer. But something deeper and darker within the huge barbarian swept that consideration aside. Something deeper, darker--and as heavy as the chains between his wrists.

The doorkeeper hammered outside Xeraph's apartment. Xeraph, a fallen lump, stirred. Groaned. Brak's face was pitiless, a mask for his regret as he swung his other leg over the balcony and dropped into the courtyard.

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