

Dark Times

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King Cruithni

Dark Times Staff Writers

Cruithni, the Elder Gangrel, recently awakened from a lengthy torpor, appears to have leapt into the politics of this country at great speed. In a bold move, he has apparently declared himself Prince of a domain somewhere in the region of the border between Scotland and England. The exact extent of this new domain is not yet certain, but the most frequently reported detail is that it encompasses at least part of Dumfries and Galloway, the most southerly county in Scotland.

While this is perhaps not the most contentious of areas for Kindred, with a low population density and reasonable distance from other domains, it does encroach upon the existing boundaries of Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester, with potential to stretch into Edinburgh or York. It will be of great interest to see how the Princes of each of these domains respond as the particulars of Cruithni's claim become apparent.

As of yet, it does not appear that anyone has made contact with the newly declared Prince, although many of the Princes have sent emissaries. Most were simply unable to locate the elusive Gangrel, however the representatives of Queen Anne are rumoured to have disappeared without trace,

implying that the new domain will not be one friendly to London and her expansion.

Other than these rumours however, little is known of Cruithni's political standpoint, or how his new domain will affect the landscape of the UK domains, one which has not incorporated a new domain in 300 years, when the domain now known as Birmingham became a separate entity. In any event, Cruithni's actions coupled with Queen Anne's plans make this a most interesting period in Kindred history.



Monthly Massacre

Dark Times Staff Writers

The Monthly Massacre, which Price Rothsilde had seemed to have stamped out for a time, has returned this month with a deadly outbreak of violence

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occurring in the city centre of Glasgow. 13 people were killed by sporadic gunfire in what police are describing as a gang related incident.

The scene for this month's Massacre was the Club Dolour, the largest Goth establishment in Glasgow, currently closed down and unlikely to reopen again this year. Although a respectable venue on the surface, the club appears to have played host to a group of armed criminals.

Violence is believed to have broken out when some of the gang members turned upon the others, all of them dressed in security uniforms. With the enemies possessing a variety of automatic weaponry, civilian casualties were inevitable, and 5 party-goers were slain, caught in the crossfire as they attempted to flee the building. Dozens of innocents were taken to local hospitals to be treated for both gunshot wounds and trampling injuries.

Police are still trying to ascertain if all the participants died in the club; the bodies of 8 security staff were found in the club, but Meldrum's unit believes there may have been others who escaped in the confusion.

Glasgow Casinos Cheat Punters

Dark Times staff writers

Sources within Strathclyde Police have leaked details of a massive fraud investigation into three of the city's casinos. The investigation is focused on the three Gala brand casinos. Allegations of a "culture of cheating" have been put forward by a number of employees and managers at each of the casinos. They claim that Gala has been "profit squeezing" for a number of years and that it is encouraged by the existing management. While every game is balanced towards the house in a casino these workers suggest that the odds have

been swung by as much as 10% further towards the house than is stated in the published rules. It is unclear at this time who the main beneficiaries of the alleged fraud have been.

In December 2000, the Gala Group made its first move into the casino sector with the acquisition of 26 Ladbrokes casinos from the Hilton Group. This established the Group's leading position within the high volume, low stake sector of the gaming market. Private equity firms Candover and Cinven acquired the Group in February 2003 and in August 2005 a third investor, Permira, bought a stake in the Group. Gala Casinos has 1.3 million members. Roulette is the most popular game by far, accounting for 63% of gaming income. Punto Banco/Baccarat is next with 19.1% and blackjack 11.1%.

These accusations will hit Gala Group hard, especially as they struggle with the after effects of the economic downturn and the run up to Christmas. At a time when customers are feeling the pinch in their wallets, business at the three affected locations is likely to plummet.

A spokesman for Gala Group has called the allegations against his company "ridiculous" stating that "rigorous checks and procedures already in place would prevent such a crime going unnoticed." He continued by saying that Strathclyde Police had not yet been in contact with the company regarding the investigation. A number of confidential sources within the Police have however been eager to confirm that the force is treating this as a serious matter.

Behind the Masquerade – Party Tricks

Mary Jezabelle

Lucky Kindred of Glasgow have been treated to a wonderful and opulent party by Mr Alexander Drummond, whom we all must wish a happy 500th to.

Among the prestigious Kindred gathered were Prince Rothsilde, who seemed most at ease in

the party spirit while indulging his intellectual side with a well fought game of chess. The dashing Messrs Chauncey and Colinson of Clan Tremere seemed also to be having a lovely time, favouring instead poker as their game. Unfortunately for them, so too did Mr Montgomery, and as we all know, no-one can read his p-p-p-poker face. Congratulations sir on winning the tournament.

The entertainment of the event was largely catered for by the Toreador in attendance. Isla and Christine were on top form, but were not, for once, the talk of the night. That pleasure went to cowboy Gangrel Jeb. During the infamous 'Dance Off', this Kindred either chose or was compelled to pop claws and "Rock Out" to Steppenwolf's 'Born to be Wild', thus clearing the room, bar some intrigued or brave Kindred. The toe tapping fuzz ball was luckily talked off the ledge by the talented Miss Eve Harrington-Mitford, showing that beauty, brawn and brains can go hand in paw.

Mr Dave Stone was responsible for the games of the evening, creating such ones as Bead-Mania. Which it really did turn into, but the less said about that the better.

The winner of the game was John Scordia, narrowly pipping Prince Rothschild to the post 55-60, thus becoming the proud owner of a new blood research facility.

Highlights of the game included an auction, Brujah Sam being bought as a rent boy for an empty bag (teehee), Mr Montgomery's canny policy of a bead for a boon and other uses of shennanigary by the participants.

Speaking of shennanigary, our friend cowboy Jeb seems to be well versed in codes, ciphers and riddles. Winning the distinguished prize of blackmail material over a Kindred by completing in record time Mr Stone's Cipher-Game. However, when other participants of the game continually asked for answers to riddles 1-3 he was unable to provide them, claiming instead that he had lost his sheet. Hmmm.

The utter lowlight of the party was the appearance of two pale faced urchins who proceeded to insult most Kindred who looked upon them - and by that I don't just mean by their dress sense. The lovely Mr Scordia and Miss Harrington-Mitford suffered offensive verbal derision from the two ungainly and ill educated youths. Had the sight not been an Elysium and myself a less controlled Kindred I would have quite happily chopped the two delinquents into tiny pieces and hand fed them to Nicolai's circus rats. Tsk, youths of today, I ask you! Luckily for us I do not believe any of THAT ILK will be received at court any time soon.

Music and conversation were the staples of the party running from Renaissance Art vs The Modern School, Game strategies, the non definition art and creativity, Scotwear, and other annoying business to using custard as a Newtonian fluid.

Those among the sorely missed at the party were Tobias Weaver for his conversational flair and Mr Daniel Vega, whom I'm sure, would have brought added spark to the affair alongside the talented Renee Gordel. However, I'm assured the ballet could not quite cope without a prima on the stage for the premiere of The Nutcracker.

I do hope Mr Drummond had a wonderful time at the party and we will be seeing him again soon. Here's to another 500 years.

Mary Jezabelle

Great Britain by Night

Margery Houndsworth-Stone, Clan Toreador, Ancilla, Harpy of London

We live in exciting times. This month even more so than usual. Of course people are still talking about Severn versus London and the apparent deadlock the conflict is currently experiencing, but the word on everybody's tongue these days is Cruithni. Little is known about the Gangrel elder who, according to popular rumour has claimed

southern Scotland and northern England as his domain. A bold and unexpected move that has not only shocked his direct neighbours, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Liverpool? and York, but the entirety of Britain. The timing is curious, right in the middle of the conflict in the south. Perhaps Cruithni simply chose a period during which he believed the other princes too distracted to form a unified front against the newcomer.

With the balance of Britain's political powers being quite so delicate at the moment the leanings of this new domain might be enough to tip the situation in someone's favour. As such I expect all concerned parties will make a concerted effort to tempt the newcomer into their own camp. The major problem with this though is that prince Cruithni has not made public any means on how to contact him and various envoys have returned without being able to find this new prince. Queen Anne's delegation lead by Niall Jefferson childe of the esteemed elder Sir Gillespie Wright has simply disappeared. This bears strong resemblance to the domain of Winchester, which has stayed neutral in all of the recent wrangles. Maybe neutrality is the best Queen Anne can hope for, but having her delegation detained, possibly even destroyed, sends strong signals.

If this Cruithni should indeed be an enemy of London, then Severn will have found a potentially powerful ally in its struggle. It would also test just how far Manchester & Liverpool's loyalty to London stretches. After all Prince Carter has sworn fealty to Queen Anne and as such he could hardly leave an enemy of London exist in peace on his borders, or even worse, inside the territory he claimed previously.

It will also be interesting to see whether Queen Anne will leave the insult of having her delegation detained or murdered lie, thereby admitting that she currently is not in the position to act against this new threat. Before we can say one way or another a few months or years will go by but every night that this insult stands unchallenged will hurt her position in the eyes of

the rest of Britain.

But of course November was not all princes and disappearing kindred, there were also the parties. The more unusual one was Drummond's affair, which I sadly had to miss, and which from all the accounts I have heard, sounded quite exciting. Certainly different from the usual fare we get in London these days. Here we had Marcus Leavenholme's latest effort and while perfectly well executed it lacked the panache and je ne sais quoi that has won him so many admirers in the past. The most exciting guest must have Roland Laughn, an ancilla from Glasgow, who braved the lion's den. As many people here in the capital believe Glasgow to be almost an ally of Severn and maybe even secretly at war with London ancilla Laughn was a good choice as spokesperson. He was accomplished and sensible and even in the face of people almost wanting him to say something controversial he kept on being polite and sincere.

Drummond's 500th anniversary of his death and rebirth on the other hand was the complete opposite. From the accounts I have heard it was refreshingly open and excitingly novel. Of course swapping intrinsically worthless plastic beads and solving riddles and puzzles is not everyone's idea of a good time but for the most part it seems to have worked quite well. It also has brought a new set of names to forefront, people who excelled at the challenges provided and might be people worth to keep an eye out for in the future.

The bead swapping game, a thinly wrapped analogy for the boon system, was won by neonate John Scordia, not a name I had ever heard before, lets hope he has not indebted himself too deeply to obtain those beads. The status deduction game, one I personally would have liked to try my hand at, was won by Christine, a toreador ancilla. Both the spy catching and headline challenge were won by ancilla Eve Harrington-Mitford, who you might remember from her gallery show earlier this year. The code cracking game was won by a Gangrel known as Jed, who figured out that you

need not break the code to get the answer and the casino poker game was won by the Ventrue ancilla Julius Montgomery. Most of the winners are up and coming kindred that have already shown promise and the with the exception of Jed (who according to my sources broke the laws of Elysium, produced deadly weapons and almost frenzied) the newcomers will be people whose progress I will be following. The true winner of the party though has to be David Stone, if the debts he has accrued are anything to go by.

Even if this was all that has happened this month, it would go down in my notes as an eventful month, but alas there is more news before I get to the official section. One titbit of note is the a number of people have claimed to have seen elder Viscount Charles August Aldworth, favourite of Queen Anne and the former prince of Glasgow in both London and York. His return to the scene might provide Queen Anne with an opportunity to reclaim Glasgow and tip and scales in her own favour. Of course elder Aldworth will be faced with stiff opposition in the form of the Tremere Prince Rothschilde and as such it will be extremely interesting to see whether he has what it takes to wrestle the prince-ship from Rothschilde.

One of the main problems we can see there is that while he did manage to clean house and remove much of the roughness of Prince Murillo's court (who can forget the tales of the court of the Lasombra Antitribu who if rumours are to be

believed had the fae, the werewolves and the sorcerers of clan Tzimize at his court), Aldworth was never a particularly popular prince. That very fact resulted in Magnar being the tool of the uprising which some people claim was the doing of the Duchess Montague.

When, and of course if, elder Aldworth returns to Glasgow, it will be extremely interesting to see the nature of his return. Will he be out for blood, blaming Rothschilde who took his position as the mastermind behind the coupe? As always it seems Glasgow, while far too dangerous to dwell in, does have its attractions lined up.

Let it be known that Sam the Brujah, of Glasgow, neonate of the Camarilla is indebted to David Stone, of York, ancilla of the Camarilla.

Let is be known that Thomas Carmichael, Steward of Dundee, elder of the Camarilla has traded the substantial debt of Laurance Redwood, Sheriff of Edinburgh, elder of Camarilla, to Eve Harrington-Mitford, of Glasgow, ancilla of the Camarilla.

Let is be known that Prince Hercule Bastian Rothschilde, Prince of Glasgow, elder of the Camarilla is indebted to David Stone, of York, ancilla of the Camarilla.

Let is be known that William DeMontfort, of Severn, edler of the Camarilla is indebted to David Stone, of York, ancilla of the Camarilla.

**Dark Times is accepting submissions.
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