



## A record of the Order of Istrado in Cerynus

In the fall of '22 the paths into the Dreamwood were opened enough for an outpost to be established. The outpost, Cerynus, is fairly isolated, and operates under frontier laws. This has resulted in judgements that some deem to be too harsh, but there are not the resources to send every criminal off to Maram for trial, so justice is handled locally. Particularly where banditry and necromancy are concerned.

Prior to my arrival at Cerenus, one of the greater beings, the Gryphon known as Teddy was found, or awoken, within the Dreamwood. By the time of my arrival, he was aiding the town and being aided in turn, so that he could recover his memories. One of the aids he gave the town was investing casters in the greater Earth circle. I was granted the opportunity to be invested, which was a great relief to me as I feel strongly about being able to help souls pass through the circle for healing and, hopefully, resurrection.

During this first year in Cerynus a fledgling healers guild was formed, and a number of adventurers swore themselves to uphold the ideals of the order of Istrado. A smaller number, including myself, began the journey to walk the path of Chivalry. It was heartening to see how many of the outpost seek to fight the corrupting influence of necromancy and hold to the ideal of "*The circle forgives, but does not forget.*" Too often the dual nature of Earth magic tempts casters to taint their souls with necromancy. The purifying effects of the Earth circle were something I was taught from a young age, but I have never seen it in such action as I have here in the Dreamwood.

Another being, who I do not know as well as others among our number, the Vine Lord, seems to be tied to the power of the Dreamwood. He has thus far been an ally in the effort to purge the corruption from this part of the land. In the beginning we did not quite understand what that corruption was, but we would soon learn.

As the first season drew to a close, an expedition pushed north into the dreamwood and found a fort that belonged to the lost house of Akedia. As we wandered along the lost paths we discovered that a necromantic circle was corrupting the Dreamwood. Our choice was to leave it be, thus weakening the Vine Lord and letting the infection continue to spread, or destroy it, and unleash that which it held at bay, but in so doing walk the path to healing the Dreamwood.

Our collective chose to destroy the circle, and thus the flood of undead was unleashed from their prison. House Akedia has truly fallen, in a way that may not be recoverable.

Trying to summarize the events of our second season in Cerynus in only a page will be difficult, but I shall do my best. Please reference other documentation or seek me out for details that cannot be contained in this record.

Much was learned about the Dreamwood this year, particularly the lore surrounding the corruption of the Unicorn, the greater being that represented house Akedia, and the chess pieces that sit above the books we sign our names into. There is much to say about the chess pieces and the being who powers them, but for the sake of time I will merely say, BEWARE the power offered by this being, the purple influence mimics and infiltrates. They play with us like pieces on a chess board and to use its power grants it even more control and freedom from its chains. To jump ahead in time, our season concluded with viewing visions of how this being once infiltrated and corrupted each of the Orders. Do not parlay with this being or their emissary! Do not give in to wrath, as this was the sin of our order.

A few other notable occurrences will be outlined below

During the bitter cold of January many many members of our outpost were affected by a corrupting poison. It was a desperate scramble to gather ingredients and generate a concoction with the help of Boo from Egaria to save our allies from a fate I fear would have been worse than death.

Lord Yoros, once a leader of the Order of Gale, was found to have joined the side of Akedia, along with Kensington and Battenburg. I suspect that at least one ranking member of each Order has turned and now utilizes the title of Duke (or perhaps Duchess?). Among his many other actions, he stripped the Haven of the living off of the tavern. I am torn about this. While having a Haven was good, it was placed by Lilah (sp?) who I suspect has ties to the purple entity. Do not bargain with her! After we caught Yoros he was sent to Maram under guard for trial, unlike Kensington who was sentenced to Obliteration upon his capture.

The Carnival from the east was great fun, but spoiled by the infiltration of the prince of Akedia, who took the place of, and murdered?, their Grand Poobah.

We learned of an order of necromancers who use the title of Dolos. They perform experiments on undead, creating new and more powerful types. I do not know if they have an affiliation with house Akedia, I dread that if they do not, they will be recruited.

I find myself out of space to write, so with this I close my record.

Herald Natalia Rockwood, Order of Istrado, Warden of Blackstone Company