

# Waterdeep



# Enquirer

Kythorn 1, 1492 DR

*If we don't print it, it might as well never have happened!*

1 Silver



## "THE FALL OF TIAMAT" A SMASHING SUCCESS!

The premiere of "The Fall of Tiamat" last night at the Osvaldo Cassalander Memorial Theatre proved to be a night to remember for all concerned. All those who were able to attend the sold-out performance will surely be the envy of society for many seasons to come; for composer Jank Lempiernk has finally delivered on the promise she showed in "The Keep on the Borderlands" many years ago and delivered her masterwork.

The swaying percussive aria that begins Act Two was perhaps the highlight of the evening. As Tiamat, Queen of Dragons, contralto Ithunn Mist Nagatley held the hearts of all her audience in the palm of her hands, singing a heartbreakingly violent song vowing revenge upon the villainous cloud giant Ralfgerðr who has just betrayed her and allied himself with Bahamut at the close of Act One. Accompanied almost exclusively by a supremely talented percussion section, Nagatley's fierce and powerful voice nearly overwhelmed this reviewer with emotion and, apparently, so captivated at least one audience member that he had to be carried out of the theatre mid-performance from one of the box seats!

After suffering through interminable performances of the dubious and showy works of younger composers, especially the pornographic "Lady MacBeth of the Dock District" and the seductive "The Three-Nib Opera", what a pleasure it is to see a return to the respectable, Classical style. We hope this marks for Osvaldo's artistic director, Wolfgang Revaruna, a wholesale rejection of the populist, vernacular embarrassments he has been foisting upon us of late. "The Fall of Tiamat", steeped in the old traditions of dramaturgy and composition that have served us so well for generations, is a welcome and beautiful breath of fresh air.



## TROLLTIDE IS UPON US!

The annual celebration of Waterdeep's victory in the Second Trollwar has come again and again we are forced to issue our regular warning to all Waterdavians.

Stay indoors today from noon to dusk! Do not subject yourselves to the madness and extortion of the armies of children demanding 'treats' from all they see and threatening 'tricks' should their unhealthy desires go unslaked! Our great city's annual descent into anarchy and violent topsy-turvydom is a relic of a bygone age, a time when the corporeal lusts of the body populace could not be satisfied or controlled and they needed this day of release to keep their obscene desires even moderately in check during the rest of the year.

We say NAY to both TRICKS and TREATS and implore the parents of these delinquents to rein in their beastial impulses.

As is usual, outside the Enquirer's offices, a basket of mouth brushes will be hung to placate the storming hordes of children driven mad by their uncontrolled urges. If you must indulge these miscreants, we encourage you to follow our example and provide only wholesome, nutritious foodstuffs such as celery, beets, and small sacks of dry rice.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH IRBRYTH AUTHAMAUN

As part of our continuing attempts to cover the disruptive and perhaps even dangerous influence that Vajra Safahr is having amongst the Waterdavians, the Enquirer spoke with the eminent historian, Irbryth Authamaun, author of such books as "Language, a Key Mechanism of Control" and "The Constitution of Liberty. Below is an edited transcript of our conversation.

ENQUIRER: Mr Authamaun, you have devoted the greater part of your career to studying Waterdeep. Is the current Blackstaff truly out of the ordinary or have there been others like her in the position before?

AUTHAMAUN: In order to answer that, I should first say that the Blackstaff as we think of it today has been part of Waterdeep only a little over a hundred years. Of course, everyone knows that Khelben Arunsun built the Blackstaff tower in 1150 and that he protected the city from there for more than two hundred years. But during that period, Arunsun was never an official figure of Waterdeep's government. He was simply a man who loved his city and was willing to devote his life to defending it! Unfortunately, when he passed, the people of Waterdeep, who had grown accustomed to having a powerful wizard watch over them, looked to the Lords to fill what they saw as a void. And so began a kind of power-creep of bureaucracy that greatly expanded and corrupted what had been an elegant and simple system of government: small, responsible, devoted to the development of business and commerce, and respectful of individual freedoms. Until now, when we have someone who's effectively a child — you'll have to excuse me — running what for all intents and purposes is a shadow tyranny, a woman with her own private police force, a woman who somehow has the power to scuttle months of commercial negotiations with other cities at the last minute, a woman whose power now rivals that of the Open Lord herself!

In a normal, healthy society, Vajra would be seen as this interesting graduate student who had gotten into some college with a good student loan, hung out a lot and smoked a little haunspein, drank a little grog, had a good time, once read half of a book, knows nothing, and nobody would take her seriously. In a healthy society, she would be a joke. She doesn't know anything. Her views are based on whatever random thought comes in that morning. And her proposals are beyond silly. And she couldn't possibly defend her proposals.

I would love to debate her at any venue on the Sword Coast because I don't think she could possibly defend if we're allowed to actually stick to facts. Now, if all we're going to do is scream and set up deeply emotional heartfelt symbolism, she'll be great. But if you're talking about actually running something, getting something done, leading a city, I think she is totally in a different world.

*This interview continues on the opposite page.*

## MUSICAL FILTH POISONS THE YOUTH AND WEAK-OF-MIND

We are saddened to report that the air in Waterdeep is yet again being polluted, not with the smoke and vapors of productive industry, but with immorality and vileness. We speak of music — or rather what is being called 'music', for to our ears and to the ears of any wholesome Waterdavian it is little more than the scandalous filth of degeneracy and corruption.

The latest offender, which has been insufferably unavoidable lately, is a disgustingly carnal description of private bodily functions being used in an absurd and humorless mockery of combat. We have learned that the author, so to speak, of this travesty is one Matrim Merg, a name that will surely be familiar to our long-time readers who remember other repulsive ditties he has abused our ears with. Far be it for us to propose legislation, but let us express our ALARM and CONCERN about the effects of such 'artistry' upon the youth of Waterdeep and those Waterdavians who are not blessed with characters strong enough to withstand the corrupting influence of these 'musics'. For the good of our city, let these indecent songs be driven from our midst!

## SERIOUS CARRIAGE CRASH ON SUL STREET!

Three draft horses were injured early today, a delivery cart destroyed, and the display window of Aumra's Fine Potteryworks (on west-side Sul north of Zarimtar) demolished by a flying cart-wheel, when an illegal race ended in disaster.

Two men are in Watch custody, but no names have been released pending further investigation. There's talk that the guilty fled, and those arrested were drunks betting on the race, not participants.

The long, straight north-south streets in Sea and North Wards have for years hosted various pell-mell races and chases. Sul Street in particular seems a favored site for so-called "chariot challenges." These are cart or carriage races wherein citizens -- usually young apprentices finished with their deliveries but still in possession of small open carts belonging to their masters -- dash in pairs, almost always from north to south, to an agreed-upon endpoint. Local residents often complain about noisy cartwheels, hooves, and shouts or oaths, but some say the loudest complainers are those who bet on losing racers. Impromptu betting is the norm at such races.

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## ARSON IN DOCK WARD!

A warehouse yesterday was set ablaze by a group of ruffians who, from scattered eye-witness accounts, were unable to restrain their enthusiasm for Trolltide and determined to begin their celebration of the holiday a day early.

Patrons of Etna's Drunk Rabbit Inn report that a drunkard in a long cloak stormed out and forced his way into a warehouse across the street soon after the lunch rush. A few minutes later, an even more inebriated person in what has been described as a very bad troll costume began hacking the door down with an axe and, once he gained entry, joined the cloaked drunkard in setting fire to the structure. Despite the best efforts of the innocent businesspeople working in the building, the blaze could not be extinguished and it was only due to the heroic work of the fire brigade that the whole block did not end up mere ash and cinder.

We spoke with Bobcat-Penis Sheela, a tradesman whose employer had offices in the warehouse and he told us that his entire livelihood had been destroyed, adding, somewhat cryptically, that he 'should have known better than to trust that gas bag.' Perhaps a flammable gas leak added to the violence and speed of the conflagration?

Anyone with information on the identity of the two arsonists is encouraged to contact the City Watch immediately.

## OUR INTERVIEW WITH IRBRYTH AUTHAMAUN CONTINUED

ENQUIRER: Popular rule has never worked, but you're going to get free education, you're going to get free food, free child care, free health care, but you can't buy your own groceries, choose your own nursemaids, employ your own physicians. No more oil and gas. Everything is going to be great. Free retirement, whether you're willing or unwilling to work. It's all — it offers to take away all fears of people. As an historian, has it worked out well because this has been tried before?

AUTHAMAUN: I think it might be useful to take up a fund to ask Vajra if she'd be willing to go to Port Nyanzaru, go to Westgate, visit with people who used to live in under the Shadowvar, go down and try to find a modern bank in Westgate. I mean, these are people who operate out of an emotion-led kind of self-righteous passion with no knowledge. The fact is, not only does popular rule not work, popular rule leads you to a tyranny and leads you to powerful people like Neverember stealing from the people. I mean, look what's happening in Daggerford. And people like Vajra have no answer. None. You say to her — in fact, they believe in mythology. They think, for example, Westgate is just wonderful paradise except, of course, most Westars can't afford to buy a carriage and the only carriages available were made by goblins!

ENQUIRER: Mr. Authamaun, I view it as serious. You've got serious nobles pushing for popular rule. You've got Masked Lords supporting it. That's alarming considering the magnitude of stupidity that is involved in this and destroying the single greatest wealth creating system that's ever been devised. Sometimes, it seems they won't be happy until they see a plumber or steeplejack as the next Open Lord!

AUTHAMAUN: I think the great responsibility we have is to so decisively communicate these falsehoods that by we force Open Lord Silverhand to take decisive action against them. That's our responsibility. That's our challenge. We know they are nuts. Our job is to prove it to the city. The evil of evils in our present politics is that the constituencies can no longer be fully trusted, and that their power is so nearly absolute that they have an almost complete control over the well-being of the city. One of the great divisions of politics in our day is coming to be whether, at the last resort, the world should be governed by its ignorance or by its intelligence. According to the one party, the prepondering power should be with education and property. According to the other, the ultimate source of power, the supreme right of appeal and of control belongs legitimately to the majority of the city told by the head; or, in other words, to the poorest, the most ignorant, the most incapable, who are necessarily the most numerous.

It is a theory which assuredly reverses all the past experiences of civilization. In every field of enterprise, in all the competitions of life, by the inexorable law of nature, superiority lies with the few, and not with the many, and success can only be attained by placing the guiding and controlling power in their hands. That the interests of all classes should be represented in the government, that numbers as well as intelligence should have some voice in politics, is very true. But unless government be essentially different from every other form of enterprise, it must inevitably deteriorate if it is placed under the direct control of the most unintelligent classes. No one can doubt that Waterdeep has of late years advanced with gigantic strides. Yet surely nothing in ancient alchemy was more irrational than the notion that increased ignorance in the ruling body will be converted into increased capacity for good government in general. The day will come when it will appear one of the strangest facts in the history of folly that such a theory was regarded as progressive at all.

ENQUIRER: Do you think that the Blackstaff's political positions have anything to do with her being a woman?

AUTHAMAUN: Most certainly. Women, and especially unmarried women, are, on the whole, more impulsive and emotional than men. They are more easily induced to gratify an undisciplined and misplaced compassion, to the neglect of the larger and more permanent interests of society, more apt to dwell on the proximate than the more distant results, more subject to fanaticisms, which often acquire almost the intensity of monomania.

A due sense of the proportion of things, an adequate subordination of impulse to reason, a sound, sober and unexaggerated judgment — these are elements which already are lamentably wanting in political life, and female influence does not tend to increase them.

With women, even more than men, there is a strong disposition to overrate the curative powers of deliberation and discussion, to attempt to mold the lives of others in all their details by meddlesome or restraining laws. That habit of excessive legislation is one of the great evils of our time, and Vajra has both succumbed to it and nurtured it in her position as the Blackstaff.

ENQUIRER: What ought to be done, then?

AUTHAMAUN: We must move to strengthen the authority of our Masked Lords, who hold the city's best interests in trust by virtue of their anonymity. The future of the city, of any city, is far safer in the hands of men with an assured social position, an hereditary standard of honor, great responsibility, and a large circle of administrative duties. The only alternative to this is a descent, whether rapid or not, into vulgarity, corruption, and immorality.

## NEW SCENT MAKES FACES GLOW!

Yesterday, several Waterdhavian matrons were deeply frightened hours after applying a new scent to their faces. The fragrance, "Waterfall Kiss," is made and marketed by the half-elf Jhamantra Tsathree, of Tsathree's Comforts shop on Golden Serpent Street in North Ward. Jhamantra confirms her first sales were made early yesterday, but insists she was "entirely unaware" that Waterfall Kiss can make faces glow. The fragrance is a secret brew of herbs in water, which creates a clear, strong-smelling, slightly oily liquid used as a facial wash. It removes dirt and "tired skin" and leaves its scent behind.

The glow -- a vivid lime green that comes on suddenly, and lasts for hours -- occurs only when certain rouges and powders are applied to Kiss-treated skin. Most of the startled users were furious (one has reportedly hired a mage to "Do to that trickster what she did to me!"), but several enjoyed the attention.

Young wealthy Waterdhavians are flocking to Tsathree's Comforts to procure their own supplies. Kiss sells for 3 dragons per handbottle -- but may soon be more: street resale prices of 6 to 9 dragons have been reported. A new fad may be in the making, as revelers experiment with making other skin areas glow.