Hammer, Alturiak, Ches, Tarsakh

1368 DR/Year of the Banner

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HAMMER 1368DR

The adventuring mage Therasin of the Three Hands causes quite a stir in the taprooms of the city when he claims to have uncovered the location of Ordock’s Stroll, an ancient Netherese gate-road that leads to the Witherwhen, a safehold and extradimensional refuge reputed to be rich in gems, magic items, and spell-lore. Soon after word of his discovery spreads, Therasin is set upon by at least three ambitious mages seeking control of the gate’s secrets, but seems well-prepared for them, surviving easily and leading some to whisper that he planned the ruse to draw out and eliminate potential rivals. Therasin vanishes from his lodgings within a tenday, but not before dispatching two more spellcasters and three times that number of hired assassins.

Midwinter. The String of Stars, a festhall located in the eastern reaches of Dock Ward, catches fire and burns during the night’s festivities. Local fire brigades are unable to quell the unnatural purplish flames that ravage the building, and all those trapped within are killed. The cause of the blaze is unknown, although more than one finger is pointed at the necromancer (and reputed Cyricist) Stavros of the Skulls, who is known to have coveted the property that the festhall stood on.

ALTURIAK 1368DR

Emerging from the city sewers bearing tales of illicit trade in magical items and human beings, the Hin adventurer Dimvel Stoutkeg and the Tymorite priest Jorynn Halstaff unmask the merchant Minzapur of Volothamp, an importer of rare blacksmoke obsidian from the Tashalar and Chult, as a member of an illicit slaving ring. Minzapur assaults the pair in front of the Lords Court assembly, attacking with the aid of magically animated flying daggers and heretofore unknown spellcasting powers, but is rebuffed with the aid of several black-robes and armsmen in attendance. His attempt at teleporting to safety foiled by wards activated by the Open Lord, Minzapur is struck down by the swordswoman Thazrae Embeldrynn, and his erstwhile slaver contacts at the Docks taken into Watch custody for further questioning. The adventurers also incriminate the Umberlant priest Meiritid Archneie in the illegal activities of the ring, but the Lords clear his name after the intervention of his mentor, Thaeryld Nornagul, the High Trident of Orlumbor.

The visiting druid Janessin Forthright plants himself in the front court of the Quiet Place, transforming into a large maple tree with unusual golden foliage. Upon emerging from his vegetative state some two tendays later, the druid claims to have recieved a vision from Silvanus himself, and a prophecy regarding the treants of the High Forest. After some time spent consulting with the other nature priests of the temple, Janessin transforms into a large raven and flies off over the rooftops of the city, eastwards along the Dessarin river valley.

CHES 1368DR

Fleetswake and the Fair Seas’ Festival. Donations to Umberlee’s Cache are generous this year, and several sightings of a pod of killer whales outside the harbor during the week-long festivities are believed to augur Umberlee’s goodwill towards the seasons’ maritime ventures.

Trumpets blare and pennants fly from the ramparts of the Halls of Justice — the Waterdhavian temple of Tyr Evenhanded — heralding the triumphant return to the city of Harkas Kormallis, the annointed Knight-Champion of the temple. Absent from Waterdeep since the past Feast of the Moon, the holy warrior enters the city gates with a full honor guard of temple acolytes, brandishing aloft the Viverant Warspear of Dughaldrannan, a weapon once bore by one of the human kings of the Fallen Kingdom, and considered a major relic of the Tyrran faith. The Halls of Justice and the Kormallis noble clan throw a celebratory gala for the Knight-Champion, and he is liberally showered with accolades by Waterdhavian adherents of the God of Justice.

TARSAKH 1368DR

Waukeentide. The spring thaws and arriving merchant caravans have brought rumors of the destruction of Zhentil Keep, far to the east, by a horde of giants, dragons, and other monsters. Many in the city gladly receive these tales, as the fell Keep was long known to be the seat of power for the evil Black Network. The following weeks see great chaos in the city as foes of the Zhentarim (especially the Harpers and the Knights of the Shield) seek to take advantage of their misfortune. Backstreet battles, assassinations, and corpses discovered stuffed into middens and left lying in secluded courts become commonplace through the summer months.

The noble swordsman Ethaine Hawkwinter visits the taverns and hire-courts of the city, seeking to raise a host of spellcasters and ready swordarms. He plans to mount an expedition to the far-off land of Sossal, retracing the earlier steps of the ill-fated explorer Dabron Sashenstar. Those interested in signing on to such a venture are directed to inquire with one of Ethaine’s personal heralds (identified by blue tabards emblazoned with the young nobles’ personal crest — a grey hawk flying to the dexter above a crimson many-rayed setting sun).

Greengrass. The highlight of the Greengrass festival is unquestionably the performance put on by two genasi courtesans from the palaces of far Tharsult. The pair, Asandril the Silken Flame and Chelna the Water Dancer, cause quite a stir during the annual Lords Court/Greengrass Ball with their magically animated depiction of the ancient "Dance of the Seasons." Their performance is so rousing, in fact, that a scuffle breaks out between clergy of the goddesses Sune and Lliira in attenance, with each side seeking to claim divine credit for the pair’s talents.

Mirtul, Kythorn, Flamerule, Eleasias

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MIRTUL 1368DR

As the result of a miscast find familliar spell attempted by the wild mage Jhoebryn Wonderstars, the entire region around her Castle Ward domicile is infested with snakes, toads, slugs, and gnats and stinging insects of all kinds, including the rare flying snakes and giant toads. The slimy, slithering creatures and clouds of swarming insects disperse within a tenday, but not before causing much irritation and disruption of traffic.

The noted Mirabaran ranger (and reputed Harper) Tarnshar Stormraven visits the city, bringing tales of a new power gathering strength in the deep reaches of the Spine of the World. The woodsman tells the assembled Lords Court of stumbling across a conclave or gathering of white dragons, mountain orogs, and orcs bearing the colors of the orc king Obould Many-Arrows, and of being forced to flee before the might of a trio of demons summoned from the empty air. Tarnshar also reveals that the Grey Eminence, a mysterious warrior-priest of considerable power, has disappeared, as his cliff-side tower now lies empty and abandoned, sundered almost in half by an unknown force. After hearing the warrior’s tales, the Lords are rumored to send their scouting corps, led by the ranger Aluar Zendos, north to discern the truth of the matter for themselves.

KYTHORN 1368DR

Trolltide. As typical on this day, celebrating Waterdeep’s victory in the long-ago Trollwars, children of the city run through the streets in packs from highsun to dusk, growling and snarling like trolls, and performing minor pranks and other acts of nuisance.

Towards the end of the month, citizens in Alamanther’s Host, a neighborhood of upper Castle Ward, are terrorized by what is called a prowling crag-cat, the fabled "eater-of-men." While never caught, the beast is seen slipping through darkened streets at night, and its’ paw-prints are found on muddy cobbles and dew-damp rooftops alike. Sightings of the creature disappear completely within a few tendays, along with victims, but in their place rise a number of rumors claiming that the feline marauder was actually a shapechanged mage or priest of Malar engaged in wanton slayings for mere thrills, or to please some dark god. Such tavern-tattle, while never proven, is nonetheless given credence by the fact that urban Waterdeep is far from the reclusive cats’ normal habitat.

FLAMERULE 1368DR

Founder’s Day. Festivities celebrating the Free City of Waterdeep’s founding include a military parade down the length of the High Road, as well as day-long competitions at the Field of Triumph involving jousting, chariot races, and archery contests. The jovial mood at the Field is dampened somewhat when two errant arrows strike the famed Ishaari horseback archer Ululynn the Tall and the swordswoman Thazrae Embeldrynn, seriously injuring the former and killing the unfortunate Embeldrynn. The incident is described by the Watch as an "ill-fated accident," although the Tymorite priest Jorynn Halstaff — whom Ululynn stepped in front of right before the arrows struck — insists that the shafts were fired as part of a premeditated assassination attempt.

An adventuring band led by the warrior Thelric "Old-Sword" returns to the city, bearing vicious battle-scars and tales of fighting orc and ogre warriors in and around the ruins of Peleghost, a former mages’ keep of Low Netheril located deep in the Greypeak Mountains. The adventurers, the Men of Thelric’s Fist, arrive in the city to restock on provisions and additional spellcasters, as well as to assess their loot, which includes a number of wavy-bladed scimitars and several surprisingly well-preserved tomes full of strange, presumably magical, writing.

Midsummer. Opening ceremonies are held for the Font of Knowledge, the city’s newly-completed temple of Oghma. The three-story wood and stone edifice is formally sancitified by the High Priest Sandrew the Wise, and the transfer of the temple’s Great Library — previously collected and organized at the Estelmer villa — is completed.

Shieldmeet. The leap year festival sees huge throngs of people converging in the city’s markets, taverns, and courts. Lords Court is convened in the Castle, and a Lords Alliance meeting is held in the city of Silverymoon. Although the population of Waterdeep is nearly doubled, and includes members of nearly all civilized (and semi-civilized) races, the Shieldmeet holiday goes fairly smoothly, and the extra crowds disperse within the next few tendays.

ELEASIAS 1368DR

The Horndulk, a caraval out of Athkatla, is discovered foundering off the coast of Orlumbor. All hands aboard are dead, drained to mere husks by a crimson death found lairing in the ships’ hold. The creature is killed and the ship towed to harbor, where the terrible truth soon becomes apparent: the ship bears a magical curse/plague, which effectively bleeds victims to death and then transforms the unfortunates into crimson deaths. Labeled the "Crimson Death Plague," the disease and its attendant horrors runs rampant through Orlumbor and reaches all ports of call that link to the island, including Waterdeep, Baldur’s Gate, Neverwinter, Luskan, Mintarn, and Caer Callidyrr.

In Waterdeep itself, the plague and the monsters spawned from it claim a number of Dock Ward inhabitants, including almost a third of the members of the Fishmongers, Watermen, and Dungsweepers guilds, and a number of watch and guard officers before it is put to an end.

Eleint, Marpenoth, Uktar, Nightal

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ELEINT 1368DR

The Feather Street manor-house known as The Cascade of Coins (so named for the illusory gold coins that continually stream down the front pillars of the residence, fading from sight just out of handsreach) burns to the ground, despite the best efforts of the watch and neighborhood fire brigades. The residence of Overgold-in-exile Haeleth Emeltharn (former high priest of the Waukeenar temple in Suldophor), the Cascade held numerous ancient tomes and wall-hangings of the Shoon Imperium, as well as mounds of treasure rumored to have been looted from the vaults of the Suldophan temple upon Haeleth’s leaving. Everything inside the building (including the former Overgold himself) is lost in the blaze, although rumors swiftly build that much of Haeleth’s hidden wealth was stolen by whoever set the fatal fire — variously rumored as Shadow Thieves, the infamous Black Viper, the Dragonmage Maaril, or southern assassins sent by the Olanger of Suldophor — and hastily stuffed down ornate corner downspouts and hidden on half-a-dozen rooftops in the ensuing confusion.

Higharvestide. For years, there has been speculation about a hidden heir to the throne of Tethyr. Those rumors prove true at the Higharvestide celebrations. Crown Prince Haedrak of Tethyr arrives in the city amid great secrecy, his presence revealed at a large noble holiday gala in the Market where both Khelben Arunsun and Open Lord Piergeiron recognize him as the last true son of House Tethyr before the assembled noble clans of Waterdeep. For the next four tendays, Prince Haedrak confers with the Lords and with many an ally, consolidating an army that will, as he says, "allow us to support the peoples’ desire for just rulership and peace."

MARPENOTH 1368DR

It is obvious that Crown Prince Haedrak of Tethyr can have no official sanction or aid from Waterdeep as a political entity, but there are many folk within the City of Splendors willing to join or aid him. Lady Perendra Raslemtar is the first recruit and ally. Lord Maernos’ financial backing helps greatly. Lord Arlos Dezlentyr and his daughter, the Lady Corinna, donate their aid and the use of nine full ships and crews — the Lady Dezlentyr proves an excellent captain of the royal fleet, with an uncanny knack for gauging winds and currents. Lady Kyrin Hawkwinter is an expert horsewoman and calvalry instructor; her specialties lie in commanding calvalry and horse breeding. An unassuming druid, Yuldar Ilistiin, is revealed as a true noble of Tethyr and convinced to return to the land of his birth. Lord Holver Roaringhorn brings to the Army 1,000 foot soldiers for troops and 20 seige engineers; Lord Zelphar Thann and his family bring 200 calvalry and 2,000 pikemen. Lord Erktos Thann, Zelphar’s nephew, joins as well and soon proves to be an asset to Tethyr, though only nineteen years old. His grasp of battle strategies, seige engineering, and castle construction make him crucial to the successful seige of Myratma later on in the war.

God’s Day. A holy day for the Lady of Mysteries, celebrating her rebirth and ascension atop Mount Waterdeep. As this marks the ten-year anniversary of the Goddess of Magic walking Faerun in the form of the mortal Midnight, the church is particularly visible. Church coffers are increased dramatically, and numerous magical items are donated to the faith by the city’s resident workers-of-Art.

The Starfall Festival. The faithful of the Lady of Luck celebrate the sundering of Tyche and the birth of their goddess today. A number of new clergy are ordained and paraded through the streets, each bearing the results of a faerie fire or glitterdust spell.

By the third tenday of the month, the combined calvalry forces of Crown Prince Haedrak leave Waterdeep, intent on marching overland to reach Zazesspur in Uktar and joining the rest of the army there.

UKTAR 1368DR

By this time, Crown Prince Haedrak has recieved the backing of the Waterdhavian clergies of Helm, Ilmater, Tyr, Torm, and Tempus, as well as a large number of their faithful who have joined his banner. By early Uktar, a fleet of ships leaves the city amid great fanfare (and much praying), and turns sail towards Zazesspur.

Feast of the Moon. Celebrations in the area around the Plinth are subdued slightly with the discovery of a dead body slumped in a Hunter’s Alley doorway. The corpse is identified as Curthas of Goldenfields, a visiting acolyte of Chauntea, with the cause of death being strangulation. The killing is apparently magical in nature, judging from the blackish finger marks around Curthas’ throat and the failure of efforts to question the dead priests’ spirit, although the Chauntean was not known to have any enemies capable of engineering such deeds.

NIGHTAL 1368DR

Heavy winter snows batter the city, covering everything in deep drifts and thick coatings of ice. The bleak landscape presented inspires the sorceress Belshareen Azurean to sculpt the accumulated precipitation into fantastic ice-sculptures and to summon up carpets of unseasonal bluebright flowers around her North Ward domicile. The fanciful creations are the talk of the city, and make the Lady Mage of Lion Street in high demand among the remaining nobles of the city, who hire her to decorate their end-of-year celebrations.

Winterride Ball. Winterride festivities are subdued this year, due to the large number of influential personages having left the city for the war in Tethyr and more southernly climes. Lord Piergeiron is present at the Ball, and two masked Lords appear before the assembled crowd before the end of the night — a rarity believed to be designed to reassure those in attendance that Waterdeep still stands vigilant and in good order, despite having a goodly amount of her magical and military might left for the battlefields of Tethyr.