News From Waterdeep  
Hammer, Alturiak, Ches, Tarsakh  
**1367 DR/Year of the Shield**

[]

**NOTE:** The following material intertwines greater and smaller events that occur within Waterdeep during the year of 355NR (1367DR), nine years after the Time of Troubles. The events herein summarize or add to the many stories of the NPCs within the *City of Splendors* boxed set. These entries come from the following official sources;

*Campaign Guide (CoS), p.32-35  
Running the Realms (2nd Edition box set), p.20 and 24*

**HAMMER 1367DR**

* Furious northern storms hammer the City of Splendors, coating the streets and buildings with thick ice and making any travel dangerous for two tendays (assuming the windows and doors weren’t sealed and frozen shut by the ice and sleet, trapping people indoors). With the bitter temperatures and sheer slipperiness of the streets, the Market becomes more skating rink than commercial center.
* Many Waterdhavians of Southern and Trades Ward are awakened for four consecutive nights at the end of the month by loud explosions heard from the direction of the Rat Hills. While nothing seems immediately amiss (as per the guard and the Dungsweeper’s Guild), some adventurers and members of the Watchful Order of Magists and Protectors are dispatched to investigate.

**ALTURIAK 1367DR**

* Nine hours after their entrance, the assigned party that has ventured into the Rat Hills dies mysteriously within the wasteland. A flurry of spell use and the sound of battle erupts quite suddenly. By the time a guard contingent tracks them down, all the adventurers and mages lie dead; three of their bodies are missing, but little else can be discerned (of their deaths or their attackers) as the garbage heaps catch fire and soon rage out of control! Soon, much of the interior of the Rat Hills is aflame. The fires burn powerfully for two days, but smaller fires smoulder for a full tenday, the efforts of the Watchful Order to quench the entire inferno for naught. Waterdeep is engulfed in thick, choking clouds of smoke and soot from the Rat Hills Conflagration. The guard is kept busy, however, as the fires drive out many inhabitants of the area, including a small tribe of lizard men, a pack of leucrotta, a clutch of sea zombies, and even a previously unknown form of gulguthra (see the gulguthydra MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM entry). After the fires burn themselves out, the Rat Hills are reduced in size by more than 50%.
* A small colony of aquatic elves is wiped out down in the south by a huge horde of undersea predators driven into a feeding frenzy by something; the twelve survivors (nine females, three males; two of each are children) settle with the mermen within Waterdeep’s harbor and petition to join the guard as part of the contingent below. One of the females recalls seeing sharks working alongside sea-wolves and even an ixitxachitl or two!
* Many folk in the city succumb to a mild plague caused by the smoke and debris carried over the city by what is now called the Rat Hills Conflagration. While no one dies of the plague, many in the sea trade get a late start at fixing up their ships in preparation for Fleetswake and the shipping season next month.

**CHES 1367DR**

* Rhalaglingalade, a soft-spoken, bearded archmage who recently settled in Neverwinter, has announced an important new creation: the *sphere of summer*. This enchantment is a series of complicated spells that brings into being a sphere of translucent force in which plants can be grown in warmth and controlled damp throughout the winter. Such spheres also allow the farming of tropical fruits and flowers in northern climes. Since announcing his discovery, the archmage has thrice been attacked by Calishite assassins (notable Thyruin of the White Flowers, who escaped and is though to be wandering the North in a savage mood) and survived capture attempts sponsored, it is whispered, by various merchants of Amn, Luskan, and even Thay. Rhalaglingalade has appealed to the Lords Alliance for protection, and has been assigned a bodyguard of hired adventurers (each of whom is paid 2000gp/month). Several of this guard have been slain already while repulsing attacks, but there seems no shortage of ready applicants, even from among the noble families of Waterdeep.
* Lady Hyara Talmost’s celebratory gala the first night of the Fleetswake festivities is a smashing social success. The only disturbing news involves the disappearance of Jynnia Gundwynd’s handsome but mysterious escort; she claims they were alone and asleep in an upstairs room, “resting to get our second wind for the party,” but when she woke up, he was gone. The only evidence left behind is his coat, stained a bright red on the hem and tails.
* *Fleetswake and the Fair Seas Festival.* The tenday-long festival ends with its usual pomp and pageantry, and the donations to Umberlee’s Cache are extraordinarily generous (roughly 260,000 gold pieces). The high mermaid shaman Thur Aquarvol demanded the money be smelted down and sculpted into an undersea statue for Umberlee. The Lords refused this change, but added a commission for a marble statue next year.

**TARSAKH 1367DR**

* *Waukeentide.* On Goldenight, whether by accident or by Halaster’s design, four aurumvorax exit Undermountain into the Old Xoblob Shop and rampage into the Purple Palace festhall next door. By the time the animals are disabled, three patrons and four festhall girls (wearing naught but gold dust) are dead due to the animals’ attack. The aurumvorax hides are each distributed to the victims’ families (and the festhall) as little recompense. The owner of the Old Xoblob Shop is at a loss as to how the creatures weren’t affected by his usual magical safeguards, suggesting foul play to the watch.
* A one-eyed sailor starts a brawl in a Dock Ward tavern, breaks the arms of four men, and proceeds to swing one man by his ankles, using him as a club. When the watch arrives, the sailor flees with two watch officers in pursuit. The two officers are found three streets down, both badly mauled and one with an arm missing. A trail of blood leads down to Smuggler’s Dock, but the trail disappears and the miscreant escapes. The watch is offering a 50-gold-piece reward to anyone who catches this maniac.
* Ten non-native Cyricists are arrested at the Plinth for disturbing the open religious services. The group of twelve have cast multiple *darkness* spells, surrounding the Plinth with utter blackness at highsun. Normally, this breach of ethics is overlooked and the worshipers are ushered out the River Gate; however, their services are interrupted by a number of devout Tyr-worshipers. The resulting battle of spells and steel ends with the death of two Cyricists and for Tyrites, as well as random damage to surrounding structures including the Plinth. Four Tyrites are arrested but released when their fines are paid. No one has seen the Cyricists since the incident, though they did receive judgement from the Lord’s Court; rumor has it they are now in Undermountain.

Eleint, Marpenoth, Uktar, Nightal  
**1367 DR/Year of the Shield**

[]

**NOTE:** The following material intertwines greater and smaller events that occur within Waterdeep during the year of 355NR (1367DR), nine years after the Time of Troubles. The events herein summarize or add to the many stories of the NPCs within the *City of Splendors* boxed set. These entries come from the following official sources;

*Campaign Guide (CoS), p.32-35  
Running the Realms (2nd Edition box set), p.20 and 24*

**ELEINT**

* An uncontrollable magical fire ravages the northern section of Sea Ward near the Heroes’ Garden, destroying a number of businesses and villas. Investigations later show the cause as a younf mage’s apprentice attempting a fire-based spell beyond his control; he set the central rowhouse of a block afire, consuming himself in the process. Sadly, a number of guardsmen’s homes are also consumed by the fire, the Watchful Order’s fire-fighters proving ineffective against the flames (though they did limit the damage).
* Many new creatures are being encountered in the sewers by the Plumber’s Guild, and they are growing understandably nervous. The newest is quickly being called a sewerm, with its anaesthetic bite and leechlike abilities. The Guild wants someone to go clean out the sewers of such infestations, before any Guild members go missing.
* Many rumors abound through the Dock Ward about the unification and alliance of a number of pirate crews in the past few weeks. Many say the former crews of the Black Admiral are pulling together to attack soon and take over Mintarn just before the winter sets in. Others whisper that the direction of the pirates comes from below (“from some new power in Skullport”).

**MARPENOTH**

* At Higharvestide, the new Knights of the Sword Coast stand collected and exit the city as caravan escorts for Lord Phaulkon’s last trade caravan of the season. Its final destination is Cormyr and, due to the coming harsh winter, the Knights and the return caravan aren’t expected until spring.
* *Gods’ Day.* The morning after the Gods’ Day festivities, four watch officiers and two guard officers are discovered stuffed into the garbage carts of the Dungsweeper’s Guild, all decapitated. Curioualy, the bodies are ston cold and cannot be identified without the heads, but none of the watch or guild posts report any missing patrolers. However, a laundry where some watch and guard members send their uniforms was ransacked the night before and a number of unifoms are missing. All watch and guard civilars and armars are keeping sharp eyes out for any strangers in their garb in hopes of catching the killers.
* Toward the end of the month, the legendary axe *Azuredge* magically returns to Waterdeep. Reappearing apparently in answer to a bard’s ballad, *Azuredge* embeds itself into the main pillar of the Safehaven Inn’s taproom. Many capable warriors try their hands at removing the axe, but none succeeds until some unknown adventurers claim it. The magic of Azuredge proclaims them the Company of the Blue Axe, causing much excitement within the Adventurer’s Quarter.

**UKTAR**

* *Auril’s Blesstide.* The celebrations of the first frost on the 10th of the month are marred by the discovery of three bizarre ice sculptures on the Seas’ Edge Beach. The three nude male figures appear frozen in fear and they are carved from solid ice. No one within the city can positively identify the bodies, although a few folk recall seeing some braggarts in the Fiery Flagon the night before that looked like these men. Speak with dead magics prove useless and no way has been found to restore the men to mobility.
* Each full moon since fire ravaged Sea Ward in Eleint, a sad, lonely phantom appears to remind folk that life and love don’t always end at death. At the former second story level of a villa (which no longer exists), a woman stands by her window, her form and the shape of the window illuminated by the lantern that rests on the sill. Curiously enough, this apparition cannot be seen from the side or behind it, on Stormstar’s Ride, but only when facing it on Phastal Street.
* Khelben Arunsun has an uncharachteristic embarrassment on his hands. Some prankster has manipulated the Walking statue of Waterdeep, walking it from its customary spot at the top of the Cliffride to Blackstaff Tower, and altering its stoic face and pose to that of a weeping child curled up in Khelben’s front courtyard. While the statue was swiftly moved back to its usual location and form, Khelben has yet to track down and deal with the prankster; while many see this solely as humorous, others recognize the danger of some unknown factor being able to control one of Waterdeep’s most powerful defenses.

**NIGHTAL**

* One of the early snows falls on the city, but curiously all the snowflakes are deep green in hue. The following morning, the green snow has evaporated, but the many trees and plants about the city experience large growth spurts and, in some cases, crack surrounding pavement. Though it is the start of winter, all fruit-bearing trees magically produce new fresh fruit overnight for two nights in a row, causing a frenzy at the Market for fresh fruit this late in the season. No other results were noted from the green snows, but some speculate that next year will be a bountiful one due to this sign.
* Several travelers on the road south of Waterdeep have reported seeing a glowing, blue-white unicorn that came out of stands of trees to closely scrutinize them and others on the road. Its hooves made no sound — and one reoprt says they never quite touched the ground! Elzund Glimmercloak, a wandering priest of Mielikki then in Waterdeep, was very excited at the travelers’ tales. He says the unicorn could only have been a manifestation of Mielikki, and that all faithful of the Lady of the Forest must pray to her for some explanation of this sign.

        Glimmercloak has been sharply rebuked by Mhair Nalath, a wandering priestess of Lurue the Unicorn (one of the many splinter faiths known as the Beast Cults). She says what the travelers saw could only have been Lurue, her goddess, and that her appearance marks a rise in power and importance of the Unicorn in Faerun. The adventuring band known as the Blade of the Unicorn, who share Mhair’s faith, agree with her — and have already slain three orc raiding bands and a priest of Malar in the name of the Unicorn to celebrate this sign from the gods.

        In Daggerford, the druid Galass Tholt says the unicorn was merely a friend of his who had fallen afoul of a warding spell that left it aglow with faerie fire, and that it was looking for a kindly wizard to remove the condition. Tholt also says that priests are all too apt to make wild claims about happenings in Faerun before they look about, see, and think — and that much tumult and bloodshed could be avoided if they would all mend their ways, even as the gods did (in the Time of Troubles). Nalath denounced him as just “a crazy old druid,” but several merchants who heard his words replied “Amen to that.” The arguements bid fair to continue for some time.

* At the Lord’s Court on the 15th of the month, one of the masked Lords stands before the people (four noble patriarchs and five guild masters are on hand in the court’s audience) and takes off his helm, revealing himself to be Khelben Arunsun! Everyone, including Piergeiron, is shocked, and in the surprised silence, Khelben says, “My fellow citizens of Waterdeep, I stand before you, revealed as one of the Lords of our fair city. For years, many have speculated that I sat among this August assemblage, and I admit it freely now...as I retire my position as Lord. I also hereby call my successor, who shall take my place among the rulers of the city. Enter, Lord.” With that, the doors to the Court open, and a masked, robed Lord strides silently in, bows to Piergeiron and the other two Lords in council, and finally takes a seat next to Khelben. Within days, the news spreads throughout the city, shocking many; the taverns buzz of no other news, and many speculate whether he has actually resigned from the Lords, or whether he’s just acting out another convoluted scheme to draw out some enemy (since his revelation was not the greatest of his secrets...).

News From Waterdeep  
Hammer, Alturiak, Ches, Tarsakh  
**1368 DR/Year of the Banner**

[]

**NOTE:** The following items report the greater and lesser events in Waterdeep during the year 356NR (1368DR), ten years after the Time of Troubles. They are meant to bridge the gap between the "news and rumors" sections of *City of Splendors* and the 2nd Edition FR Campaign Guide (both set in 1367DR), and the beginning of my Waterdeep Heralds (which start in 1369DR). These news items and rumors should be used as the heresay they are -- only the fall of Zhentil Keep and the campaign in Tethyr are "Realms canon" -- DMs should feel free to modify them to fit their campaigns.

**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.

News From Waterdeep  
Mirtul, Kythorn, Flamerule, Eleasias  
**1368 DR/Year of the Banner**

[]

**NOTE:** The following items report the greater and lesser events in Waterdeep during the year 356NR (1368DR), ten years after the Time of Troubles. They are meant to bridge the gap between the "news and rumors" sections of *City of Splendors* and the 2nd Edition FR Campaign Guide (both set in 1367DR), and the beginning of my Waterdeep Heralds (which start in 1369DR). These news items and rumors should be used as the heresay they are -- only the fall of Zhentil Keep and the campaign in Tethyr are "Realms canon" -- DMs should feel free to modify them to fit their campaigns.

**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.

News From Waterdeep  
Eleint, Marpenoth, Uktar, Nightal  
**1368 DR/Year of the Banner**

[]

**NOTE:** The following items report the greater and lesser events in Waterdeep during the year 356NR (1368DR), ten years after the Time of Troubles. They are meant to bridge the gap between the "news and rumors" sections of *City of Splendors* and the 2nd Edition FR Campaign Guide (both set in 1367DR), and the beginning of my Waterdeep Heralds (which start in 1369DR). These news items and rumors should be used as the heresay they are -- only the fall of Zhentil Keep and the campaign in Tethyr are "Realms canon" -- DMs should feel free to modify them to fit their campaigns.

**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.

**The Waterdeep Herald**

**Hammer Edition**

**1369, Year of the Gauntlet**

[]

* **Hammer 1:** As a result of recent unrest across the North and the general activity surrounding the just-ended Shieldmeet, the city of Waterdeep is playing host to its highest winter-time population in decades. Many merchants, nobles, and others who would have wintered in the southern lands of Amn and Calimshan have stayed in the city, and there is already a high demand for goods and services, especially for high-quality food and drink, and other luxury items.
* **Hammer 5:** The well-known mercinary adventurer Hadrar "Hawksblade" Bruynnis returned to the city today, bringing news of the snowed-in cities to the north. Entering through the Northgate, wearing little more than a half-dozen oversized wineskins and singing dwarven war songs "badly, and at the top of his gods-blasted lungs" (as one unamused North Ward resident was heard to remark), Bruynnis proceeded to regale the crowd gathered at the taproom of the Inn of the Dripping Dagger with stories of his adventures. Of particular note was mention of high amounts of orc activity on the lower slopes of the Spine of the World, and even rumors of goblinoid attacks on the mining city of Mirabar, of well-organized sorties led by a being of fell intelligence. When pressed, Bruynnis admitted he had travelled no further north than Nesme, and only heard the news secondhand from a group of dwarven steel merchants passing through. He also noted that the number of giants plaguing the region around Nesme had dropped recently, and that many seemed to be headed towards the northwest instead.
* **Hammer 7:** Yet another devotee of the gods has been killed near the Plinth today, in a manner similar to several others in the last two months. Uldryn Suraedos, a Tethyrian native and an adherent of Lathander Morninglord, was found crumpled in a doorway off Hunter's Alley, just south of the Trades Ward landmark. Like the others, all priests of various gods, Suraedos' throat was mangled and scarred with blackish strangulation marks, and attempts at contacting his soul by acolytes at the Spires of the Morning inexplicably failed. In recent days, local wags and gossipmongers have dubbed this mystery killer the "Godstalker," due to his choice of victim. The Watch has issued a warning to any visiting priests to take caution when travelling the area around the Plinth.
* **Hammer 11:** Bragaster Raventree, younger brother of Lord Nandos Raventree, has sent runners to Virgin's Square and taverns throughout the city proclaiming a reward of 500 pieces of gold for anyone who can deliver three live, full-grown cathlyre to his townhouse on Waterdeep Way within the next ten days. Apparently, the birds are to be the "guests of honor" (after Lord Bragaster's hired chefs get through with them) at the party the eccentric Raventree is throwing to celebrate his recent divorce from the Calishite shaleira Beljuril Belaerra. Raventree, who shocked the city's noble circles when he married the flashy ex-pleasure girl, and then again when he ended their brief marriage in front of the Lord's Court, calling her a "screeching su-monster," is said to be deeply in debt and all-but-disowned by his family, leaving many to wonder how he is affording the lavish furnishings for his upcoming party.
* **Hammer 14:** A strange mold or fungus has been found growing throughout the city in recent weeks, clinging to the sides of buildings, statuary, and cobblestones alike. Faintly luminescent with a surprisingly pungent odor, the moss seems attracted to magical dweomers and enchantments (such as the polished facade of Halazar's Fine Gems, which has had to have been scraped clean twice already), and has led to a rash of illegal diggings, especially in areas where it has been found growing on back-alley cobbles or on the grounds of the City of the Dead. Would-be treasureseekers are warned, the Watch is taking an increasingly dim view of such antics.
* **Hammer 17:** One of a pair of stone statues flanking the front entryway of the Melshimber villa came alive today, scattering passerby on Grimwald's Way. The statue, a standing griffon carved of pink marble, reared up suddenly, roared once, flexed its wings and then quickly flew off over the rooftops to the northeast. It is unknown what could have caused the incident, as the carvings have stood at the archway since the construction of the villa, some centuries ago. A mage hired by the Melshimber family checked the site for signs of recent dweomers or magical tampering, but found nothing. As a precaution, the family ordered the second stone sentry taken down and demolished, lest something similar occur to it.
* **Hammer 23:** The arrival of a new vendor in the Market today caused quite a stir among shoppers and stall-keepers alike. Waeltho Reldarm, a gnomish merchant claiming to hail from far Lantan, unveiled a large selection of unseasonably fresh fruits and vegetables, including avacadoes, bananas, flamefruit, oranges, and pineapples. After drawing a huge crowd with his wares, the gnome was set upon by several irate vendors who destroyed his stall, claiming the goods were enspelled or cloaked in minor *illusions* to appear so fresh (a tactic sometimes used by shady or unscrupulous merchants). Saved by Watch intervention, Reldarm steadfastly denied any magical trickery, claiming the consumables were kept fresh with the aid of Gondian artifice from the workshops of Lantan. The Watch has sent samples of the foods to the Watchful Order to determine if magical tampering was indeed involved, but Reldarm has already been beseiged by agents of various wealthy citizens, seeking to restock their wintertime larders and dazzle dinner guests.
* **Hammer 25:** The dinner party of Lord Bragaster Raventree took a deadly turn late last night, ending with five people dead and a half dozen more wounded. After dinner and, according to reliable sources, more than a few snifters of firethroat brandy, it was suggested that those in attendance dress as "monsters" and "adventurers" and chase each other around the neighborhood. Somehow, through means still unknown, three of the costumes worn by partiers - an owlbear, a troll, and a troglodyte - were enchanted by fell magic, turning the unfortunates into the very creatures their costumes represented. With their humanity replaced by animal savagery, the three went on a rampage, and were only stopped by crossbow-wielding guardsmen. In death the enchantment was apparently broken, for all three returned to their human forms. Lord Raventree has been cleared of any wrongdoing by the Watch, although the man he claims the costumes were bought from, a streetside vendor in Sethma's Court, has apparently disappeared.
* **Calendar Day - Midwinter:** In taverns and festhalls across the city today, ale flowed freely and roaring hearths blazed brightly as citizens gathered to make agreements for the upcoming trade season, spin tales of heroes long gone and battles long fought, dwell on the latest gossip, and make predictions for the newly-born Year of the Gauntlet. A few notable highlights on the day;
  + In a solemn cerimony, the druids of Seatrees Shrine (the chapel of Silvanus) cut specially-blessed mistletoe from their indoor gardens. Along with Lord Piergeiron and Guardcaptain Rulathon (both bedecked in white-tabardded chainmail), and an honor escort of city guardsmen, the druids made a circle of the city, stopping at each massive city gate to ritually hang sprigs of the mistletoe (a tradition dating back to the days of the Fallen Kingdom, designed to bring peace to all within the city walls for the next year).
  + A madman dressed in beggar's rags wandered the Market today, raving about visions of doom and destruction. He was hauled off by the Watch for accosting a group of young noblewomen but escaped briefly, perching atop the stall of a spiced apple vendor and warning of "the scales and swords that gather in the deep waters," and "a watery death for the fools above." The Watch managed to subdue him once again, and order was soon restored.
  + For the second year running, the bard's school of New Olamn held its Silvertide Festival. Soon after nightfall, Olamn Square was set alight with colored lanterns and softly-glowing driftglobes. Costumed partygoers, wild dancers, Olamnite students and others took part in the wild festivities amid raucous music, pinwheeling Shou fireworks, and a seemingly endless supply of ale and zzar. While still lively, the celebration was subdued at bit after midnight, when the apparition known as the Brown Lady was sighted, walking near what was once the Fair Winds rental villa.

      The Brown Lady is often sighted along the length of Cliffride, a misty figure wearing a brown dress (hence her name) standing out over the waves crashing below in silent watch, or, more infrequently, walking the halls of the rental villas that now house the bard's college. Legend has it that when her beloved went off to fight in the Trollwars, the Lady pledged her eternal love for him. After he was killed in battle she threw herself off the cliff, dying of a broken heart. Her appearance is said to foretell great tragedy to lovers who cross her path, and she has become a frequent subject of many recent ballads composed by New Olamn bardlings.

* **Alturiak 2:** Parts of Castle Ward were afflicted with a strange magical instability today. Effects included rains of fiery-red flower blossoms that materialized and vanished again minutes later, pockets of total darkness and unnatural silence, nimbuses of shimmering colors dancing and playing, blinding all within viewing distance, and harmless clouds of yellow-green and purple smoke rising from the ground. Upon further investigation, the magical chaos was found to be emanating from the Palfrey Lane domicile of Jhoebryn Wonderstars, a local mageling. Wonderstars has become quite well known in the Castle Ward district for her bizarre and often unstable spellcastings, and today's chaos seems to be no exception. The Watch has taken Jhoebryn in for questioning, but the Watchful Order of Mages, ever wary of such unstable "wild mages," is demanding that she be put in their custody.
* **Alturiak 6:** A barrel-race was held last night by the patrons of the Starry Jack and the Blue Snail, the two taverns that face each other across the top of Wastrel Alley. Apparently, after the race was over a fight broke out between the winner, Captain Bhaermul of the privateer *Watermoon*, and the loser, young Tam of House Gralhund.The entourages of the two men fought the length of Wastrel Alley, and by the time the Watch arrived, Tam lay bleeding on the cobblestones, and Bhaermul and his men had fled the scene. Tam's father, Irg Gralhund, has vowed to bring Bhaermul in to stand for the attack on his son. The *Watermoon* has been placed under watch, and Irg is rumored to be hiring men to hunt out Bhaermul and bring him to the Gralhund villa.

      A barrel-race, for those not familliar with the sport, is highly popular with the clientele of many taverns in Dock Ward. During the race, two or more contestants are placed in empty ale barrels and propelled down a hilly street. The first barrel to reach the finish line wins. Barrels that break or arrive at the line without their occupants (both rather common occurences) are disqualified. Barrel-racing is highly frowned on by the Watch, as it tends to be dangerous, both to participants and innocent passerby.

* **Alturiak 10:** Huge explosions and blinding lights rocked the night air around the Field of Triumph yesterday, after two rival mages chose the Field as the place to hold a spellduel. The Watch and Guard were held out by powerful magical wards, and by the time the mages of the Watchful Order could dispel the wards, the altercation had ended. The identity of one of the duelists, Baerelantyr "Blackskulls" of Nesme, is known, as his charred corpse was found on the ravaged field. The identity of any other participants is unknown, although the name of the Dragonmage, Maaril, is being widely whispered across the city.

      Damage to the Field of Triumph was extensive, and both Piergerion and the head of the Watchful Order, Maskar Wands, are said to be incensed over the matter. The normally reserved Maskar was even heard to make the statement that, "such lawlessness and disregard for Waterdeep's monuments will not be allowed to stand, so long as I draw breath in this city."

* **Alturiak 11-12:** Yet another snowstorm has hit the city, bringing with it a blanket of snow two feet deep in most places. Priests of Auril danced at the Plinth in the midst of the storm, drawing ill looks and mutterings from nearby citizens, but none were foolish enough to interrupt the cerimony and risk the wrath of the Frost Maiden.
* **Alturiak 14:** Rumors currently sweeping the snowbound city say that a high-ranking Luskanite official, most often said to be a mage of the Arcane Brotherhood, has fled Luskan for Waterdeep, offering vital information in return for Piergerion and the Lord's protection. Although continuing foul weather makes overland communication with the City of Sails impossible, the mage Nathlue of Spindle St., who maintains a *sending* service with the Luskanite mage Sheldendar "Longshanks," reports that Luskan is currently buzzing with troop and wizardly activities. Neither Piergerion or any of his fellow Lords are available for comment, and it is reported that they went into a secluded meeting mere hours before this rumor first broke.
* **Alturiak 22:** Citizens in Virgin's Square today were treated to a relief from the harsh winter weather. Two illusionists spent the afternoon turning the square into a vision of summer, complete with blossoming flowers, flittering butterflies, and warm smells. The mages, twin illusionists from the Border Kingdoms named Dhenlar and Qualen Carantlann, told onlookers that they were "weary of nothing but bleak, harsh tidings" and wished to bring a bit of their homeland to the city. Members of the Watch were on hand in case something happened, but the day went smoothly, with bardlings from New Olamn joining the crowd in an impromptu party.

      After the show Maskar Wands, ever a proponent of the judicial use of magic, censured the twins, pointing to the "useless waste of magical energies." The Blackstaff, who, with the Lady Laeral, was noted as being among the crowds in the Square, came to the defense of the Borderers, reportedly stating that such diversions were useful to "uplift the spirits of Waterdhavians during the long winters."

      As a side note, after their display Dhenlar and Qualen were approached by several nobles still in the city with offers to work their illusions at various parties among the noble villas, and a minor bidding war started on the spot for their services.

* **Alturiak 26:** The Scarlet Knave has struck again! Last night the villa of the Anteos family, currently wintering with distant relatives in Amn, was broken into by the legendary rogue, who made off with several choice pieces of Lady Anteos' jewelry. Servants and guardsmen in the villa were drawn to the back entrance by the appearance of a rampaging red dragon. By the time the illusion disappeared the Knave, who apparently entered through a high tower window, was gone, along with Lady Ranaya's jewels, including the ruby-and-diamond tiara that her husband gave her as a wedding present. The Knave's trademark red silk mask was left at the scene, the only proof that he was there at all. Several wards placed around the Anteos vault were still intact, leaving the servants to wonder how the Knave managed to enter and leave in the first place. Although the Anteos family won't return from Amn until early Ches, Renthos, captain of the villa guards, has already launched a search for the culprit, along with the Watch.

**DM'S NOTE:** The Scarlet Knave is a notorious rogue known for his daring thefts on almost every noble villa in the city. The Knave is really a gnome known as Ringhalade (CN[G],GM,T10/W[illusionist]11), a flamboyant and devil-may care thief hailing from Cormyr. He left Cormyr shortly after being *cursed* by the mage Entarn of Marsember. Entarn's curse caused Ringhalade to grow to human size, except for his nose, which retained its' gnomish proportions. Ridiculed by friends and family, Ringhalade left Cormyr for Waterdeep, and quickly acclimated to life in the big city. He is likeable and mischevious, as ready to steal from someone as he is to drink with them, but is never cruel or intentionally hurtful. He steals for the thrill of it, and may be baited into a trap by dangling rumors of a particularly tempting prize in front of him.

* **Alturiak 29:** Mother Tathlorn's House of Healing and Pleasure hosted its' first Annual Snowbound Festival tonight, touted as one last celebration before the rest of the city's population returns to Waterdeep from their various winter homes next month. Included in the festivities were dancing, contests of skill and strength, and a pageant to pick the first Lady Frost and Lord Icicle (something akin to "King and Queen for a Day"). Jhentaliya, a stunning beauty and the youngest daughter of Lord Silmerhelve, was crowned Lady Frost, drawing the wrath of her social rival Aalnethe Margaster, who was also in the competition. Aalnethe was heard to mutter several choice phrases as she stalked off the stage, and afterwards there was apparently an altercation between the escorts of the two ladies.

      Aside from this unpleasantness and a few rowdy drunks (who were quickly disposed of by others in the crowd), the night went smoothly, and Mother Tathlorn has promised to hold the Festival again next year.

* **Ches 5:** The first tenday of Ches has seen a lessening of the constant winter storms, opening the way for many of Waterdeep's citizens who spent the winter vacationing in the Southlands to return home. The first nobles to make the return trip, the Hawkwinter family, entered through the city gates on the second and since then there has been a steady flood of arrivals, both citizens and newcomers. As usual, many of the nobles have returned early to begin planning their Fleetswake celebrations for later in the month.
* **Ches 6:** A delegation from the city of Luskan, surrounded by a sizeable mounted guard and not a few members of the Arcane Brotherhood, braved the harsh northen land routes and entered the city today immediately beginning again the rumors of a Luskanite defector and tensions between the two cities that first surfaced last month. The delegation, led by none other than the High Captain Suljack, rode straight to the Palace and were immediately granted an audience by the Paladinson.

      Rumors continue to filter down out of the Savage Frontier about military build-ups and troop movements in the area around Luskan. Many local merchants are holding off on plans to open their trading seasons with Luskan and other northern cities, in case war should break out.

* **Ches 7:** Along with the numbers of returning citizens to Waterdeep is a growing number of adherents of Kelemvor, the new god of the dead. At the Plinth there has been an increase in the number of Kelemvorites in worship and, while still modest, their numbers are believed to have grown to nearly 30, with as many as two-thirds that number having arrived in the past few weeks. The most senior of these priests, the Most Merciful Doomguide Raelar Hosthann, has also recently been seen in conference with Piergerion, arguing that the Doomguides (as the priests of Kelemvor are known) be given control of the City of the Dead and that they supervise all matters relating to the recently deceased in Waterdeep, including the preparation and interrment of citizens.

      The Paladinson declined Raelar's offer, stating that it was the Lord's position to keep the City of the Dead free from control by any one priesthood so that all many have use of it. Before stalking out Raelar reportedly told the Paladinson that stewardship over the deceased was granted to he and his followers by divine right, and that the mortal Lords would do well to remember that. It seems clear that this matter will come up again.

* **Ches 12:** The mercinary company known as the Blackfalcon Raiders returned to the city today after having spent the winter months in the city of Everlund fighting bandits, orcs, and other predators. They immediately sent a runner to Virgin's Square to declare themselves open for hire, and can be contacted at their offices on Tulmaster's Street, at the Sign of the Blackfalcon.

      In recent years the Blackfalcons, led by the ex-Flaming Fist Ghaundar Immelrune, have made a name for themselves in the competitive world of mercinary bands. Although they are a small company, numbering no more than 50 souls at the most, they are all hand-picked by Ghaundar for their experience and talents, and have defeated armies many times their size. The Blackfalcons are all experienced woodsmen and know much of the North intimately. Individual members can be hired out for caravan duty or bounty hunting, but they do not work cheaply.

* **Ches 16:** The patrons of the Yawning Portal were shocked tonight by the sudden appearance of the Lady Laeral in the midst of the taproom. She apparently entered from the depths of Undermountain in some haste, arriving amidst a windstorm that sent small objects flying and blew out all open flames. Said one onlooker, the veteran caravan master Geldorn, "She appeared a vision of towering rage, clad in tatters, her hair tangled and matted and the fires of the Nine Hells blazing in her eyes. She just appeared there, levitating above the lip of the well, surrounded by a maelstrom of swirling debris. ‘Twas truly an unsettling experience."

      The innkeeper Durnan quickly escorted the Lady into a back room, whereupon the chaos in the tap room subsided. Although the Lady Laeral was not seen again that night, Durnan soon emerged alone to stand guard over the well shaft until the early hours of the morning. Despite many curious onlookers and gossip-mongers nothing else emerged from the depths, and business soon returned to normal following dawnbreak.

* **Ches 19:** An increasing number of reports out of Trade Ward state that drow or drow-like beings have been spotted in the back alleys of the Ward. There have been as many as twelve unconfirmed sightings since sometime last month, but no proof. The watch is reportedly considering doubling its' patrols but, until conclusive proof can be found, most dismiss these reports as nothing more than a rumor.
* **Ches 20-30:** Fleetswake celebrations: The entire city has been gearing up for this last tenday in Ches, which is traditionally kicked off by the Annual Shipwright's Ball and then followed by countless nobles balls, guild galas, and neighborhood celebrations. The nobles and festhalls across Waterdeep are said to be spending an unheard-of amount of money on the proceedings, which promise to be the best in recent memory.
* **Ches 20:** The Annual Shipwright's Ball at the Shipwright's House was held tonight, and drew many of Waterdeep's rich and famous. During the celebration Bleskos Wavesilver and Royus Adarbrent, friendly rivals and heads of their respective clans, made a wager to see who could get a ship to the far-off lands of Maztica and back with a full cargo. By some accounts the betting was quite intense, and the wager reportedly went up to 50,000 gold pieces before the two agreed on terms of the bet.
* **Ches 21:** Tespergates Ball: Kicking off a round of noble parties, the Tesper and Dezlentyr families held a celebratory gala tonight, open to all. The party spilled out of both villas and into the street between them, and then onto Mendever Street. The highlight of the evening was the appearance of Silpara and Yulhymbra, the two Ghost Sisters of Tespergates who, as in the past two years, appeared over the table of Lord and Lady Tesper and gave them their silent blessings. All in the hall at the time cheered and saluted both the ghosts and the couple, wishing them all long life and health. After the two spirits took their leave, Corinna, daughter of the Dezlentyr clan, was heard to remark to Lord Tesper that the joint party was such a success that they should hold it again next Fleetswake.

      One other note of interest on the night; Breton Durinbold and Arundel Eagleshield, both thought to be bitter social enemies, were found in a disheveled state in a upstairs room, apparently "patching up" their differences. What this means for Goleria Nandar, Breton's fiancee, is unknown, but it is said that she didn't take the news gracefully, and that Breton is now nursing more than a simple hangover.

* **Ches 24:** The Fleetswake festivities were marred today by another apparent "Godstalker Slaying," as a young priest of Torm, identified as Belmennor of Mintarn, was found dead near the Plinth this morning with the now-familliar blackish strangulation marks on his throat. Two priests of Kelemvor, Daeren of Ordulin and Phulmyn the Scarred, were the first to find the body, and a minor scuffle broke out when Belmennor's fellow acolytes arrived and found the two Doomguides blessing the body in Kelemvor's name. The Watch quickly broke up the altercation and took the body in for further examination, over the objections of both groups. Later in the day the Watchful Order arrived to attempt a magical inspection of the area but, as has been the case before, nothing was found. The priesthoods of the city have been notified, and Piergerion has offered the use of the Watch to the various faiths, to act as guards and escorts.

      For the past four months, the city has been menaced by an apparent serial killer commonly known as the "Godstalker," for his habit of only killing priests. The death-toll so far stands at nine, with two priests of Milil, two Lathanderites, two priests of Deneir, and one each of Gond, Cyric, and now Torm having been killed. Most of the deaths occured in or around the Plinth, and there so far have been no witnesses to the killings. The Godstalkers' preferred method of killing is strangulation, as he leaves horrid, ugly, blackish finger-marks twisted into the victim's throat. It is evident that these killings are magical in nature, as the vicitim's souls are also taken somehow, eliminating any chance of resurrection or magical interrogation of the victim's soul.

* **Ches 27:** Spectators at the Naval Ship Race had a bit of a scare today, when the raker *Waves' Edge* accidentally ran into her sister ship, the *Pride of Waterdeep*. The Pride began taking on water and eventually sunk, but all aboard were safely rescued first. Due to the accident, the remainder of the race was cancelled.
* **Ches 29-30:** Fair Seas Festival: Fleetswake ended amid much pomp and pageantry, leaving the streets empty of all except the members of the Dungsweepers Guild, who were faced with the daunting prospect of cleaning the streets of ten day's worth of debris.

      The donations to Umberlee's Cache were an unremarkable amount this year, 205,000 gold pieces in all, no doubt due to the extraordinary amount of money spent on the celebrations leading up to the Fair Seas Festival.The high mermaid shaman, Thur Aquarvol, reportedly upset with the lackluster donations, demanded that the Lords add in a string of black pearls worth at least 60,000 gold pieces. The Lords are said to be unamused with Aquarvol's continuing additional demands to the Cache, and have sent an emmissary to work out a compromise.

* **Tarsakh 1:** A shocking discovery was made today by members of the Dungsweeper's Guild during the cleanup of the Fleetswake festivities. A headless, unclothed male body was found dumped in a midden near the palace, covered in a layer of refuse. The identity of the body is unknown and its' condition raises fears of a resurgence of the Unseen, a band of dopplegangers thought to have been driven from the city some years earlier.
* **Tarsakh 2:** The Luskan delegation that arrived in the city last month has set sail for home, accompanied by two Luskanite warships that arrived in the harbor last night. Now that land routes are opening to the north, travelers from Luskan are bringing with them reports that the city is under attack by a mixed force of goblinoids and giants under the command of a mysterious figure who calls himself the Ice Bear. Most travelers interviewed thought that the Ice Bear must be some sort of other-planar being or giant shaman of great powers to have gathered such a host of goblinkin.

      Apparently, both Luskan and Mirabar have been under intermittant attack throughout the winter and, now that the weather is stabilizing, the assault has begun in full force. The High Captain Suljack and his delegation made the trek to Waterdeep seeking military aid and supplies, both of which are in short supply in Luskan, apparently due to sabotage and harsh winter conditions. It is unknown what, if any, aid the Lords have promised, but it should be noted that the High Captain was seen to be in a foul mood shortly before setting sail home. Luskan's situation must be worse than thought, if her High Captains are forced to come asking aid of their nominal rival.

* **Tarsakh 4:** A convoy of 10 Tethyrian merchantmen under the guard of the warships *Southward Sun* and the *Wavebreaker* entered the harbor this morning, the first such to fly the flag of the new united Tethyrian nation. On board the Wavebreaker was the new Tethyrian ambassador to Waterdeep, Naelaur Dazlenn, a former member of the Council of Ithmong. The Ambassador was met by Piergerion and the Blackstaff, and escorted to his living quarters in Castle Ward.
* **Tarsakh 5:** As per the bet made by Bleskos Wavesilver and Royus Adarbrent during the Annual Shipwright's Ball last Fleetswake, the caravels *Goldenharvest* and *Sea Nymph's Laugh* set sail for Maztica, in a race to see which one can reach the New World and make it back again first.

      The trip to Maztica is no easy matter under the best of conditions, especially with a rise in piracy reported along the new trade routes, and a gradual lessening of Amn's iron-fisted control over the new territories. Nearly 70% of the ships attempting the voyage never return, although there is an incresing number making the attempt.

* **Tarsakh 7-17:** Waukeentide: Despite rumors of a war brewing to the north, the Waukeentide holidays arrive as usual, and are highly anticipated, especially by Waterdeep's merchant population.
* **Tarsakh 7:** Caravance: Although the first caravans made it into the city yesterday, spoiling the holiday a bit for most merchants, inns and taverns report doing a brisk business tonight, as the populace gathers at such establishments to party the night away.
* **Tarsakh 8:** Strange lights were seen in the night skies to the east tonight, over the general area of the High Forest. The lights, similar in form to a borealis, glowed with eerie blues and greens, and was shot through with lightning-like streaks of red and yellow.

      The light show lasted for almost the entire night, before vanishing with the rising sun. It is not known what could have caused this strange phenomenon, or what its' appearance means, although the taverns of the city are rife with speculation.

* **Tarsakh 10:** Goldenight: Waterdhavians tonight were treated to precipitation of a most unusual sort; just before the stroke of twelve bells a fine mist of golden particles began to rain down over the city, starting in Sea Ward and working its' way south through the city. The golden showers lasted less than an hour, but left many streets and buildings glittering with a dusting of gold.

      It seems that the temple of Mystra, along with several wizards of the Watchful Order, cast a dweomer designed to create clouds that rain down showers of *fool's gold*. This spell was created especially for Goldenight, and was done with the full approval of the Lords and the Blackstaff, who reportedly added in his own personal touch; rumbles of "thunder" that sounded suspiciously like chiming bells and clinking coins.

* **Tarsakh 11:** The Satyr Run Red tavern burned to the ground in Sea Ward early this morning, threatening to set neighboring buildings ablaze as well. The tavernmaster, Suldaphar Rendathyr, and his three daughters were the only people in the tavern when it went up, and they all escaped unharmed. None of the four seems to know how the fire started, and the Watch is looking into evidence of arson.
* **Tarsakh 15:** The multi-guild festival marking the Guildmeet holiday took place today, covering the entirety of the Market, the Cynosure, the Field of Triumph, and all areas in between. New Olamn gave its' students the day off, and many joined in the festivities as well. An impromptu drunken jousting match was formed in the middle of Julthoon Street, but was broken up by the Watch shortly after the young noble Kordanth Lanngolyn fell from his horse and broke his skull open on the cobblestones. He was rushed to the Lanngolyn villa where he was attended by priests of Lathander, but there is no word yet on his condition.
* **Tarsakh 17:** Marking the Leiruin holiday, all guildmembers in the city paid their guild dues today, as their elected heads met with the Lords to renew the guild charters. Shanandra "Manyjangles" Shemarsair, head of the Redlight Movement, was also in attendance as she argued for the Lords to create a new "Courtesan's Guild." The Lords agreed to consider the proposal, which is being fought against by many of the festhall owners in the city (who maintain their own individual groups of such men and women), but is favored by the vast majority of "hard-currency girls" on Waterdeep's streets, many of whom have joined the Redlight Movement.

      Also today, the Lords pilloried twelve men in front of the Palace on assorted crimes related to commerce, including theft or fraudulent business practices. Included among those in the stocks were a group of four men convicted in a notorious land-fraud scheme which robbed many of Waterdeep's weathier merchants and nobles; it is rumored that many of the coppers thrown at these individuals were actually lead covered with copper paint, a last bit of revenge by those they cheated.

* **Tarsakh 23:** Citizens in the streets of South Ward today were accosted by a crazed, robed man who stalked the streets near Caravan Court, wildly waving his arms and preaching the coming of someone or something called the "Forgotten One." When a Watch patrol arrived to take the man into custody, they were killed by strange tendrils of a greenish mist-like substance, that rose from the ground and left searing, pestulant wounds wherever they touched. After the watchmen were killed the robed man, most likely a mage or priest of some dark god, vanished suddenly, leaving behind the ghastly sound of his wild cackling. Neither the mysterious man nor anyone else speaking of the "Forgotten One" were noted in the city afterwards.
* **Tarsakh 27:** A major lightning storm roiled in from the Sea of Swords tonight, damaging several tall buildings in city and sending citizens scrambling for cover. The griffon eyrie atop Mount Waterdeep was especially hard hit, and will require several weeks to repair. Several small fires were also started by lightning, but no serious damage resulted from them.
* **Tarsakh 28:** A potential spellduel in Dock Ward was averted this afternoon by the club of Baerdarth, tavernkeeper of the Bouncing Hippocampus on Pressbow Lane. The altercation apparently started when a deal went sour between two rival mages, Bhaerdoum "The Black" of Athkatla and Emmeldyn Blaskadar, a rumored Zhentarim agent.

      Before spells started flying, the quick-thinking Baerdarth subdued the pair with his club, a huge piece of ironwood that he keeps below the bar. The Watch arrived to take the pair into custody, and the taproom soon returned to normal. It is not known exactly what set off the mages, but nearby patrons say that the pair were arguing about something or someone called "Yuthla, the Eye of the Beholder."

* **Calendar Day - Greengrass: The citizenry of Waterdeep celebrated the Greengrass holiday today, marking the official beginning of spring. Flowers that had been grown in the inner rooms of villas and temples across the city were cast out onto the streets to bring rich growth in the season ahead, and the Annual Flower Fair was held in the Field of Triumph.**
* **Mirtul 1:** The city is abuzz today over news that Alicia, Queen of the Moonshaes, is planning an official visit two tendays from now. The Queen, a favorite among the citizens since her first visit in 1368 DR, is reportedly planning the visit as a "goodwill gesture" towards the city. The servants at the Palace are already making arrangements for a ball, and the Moonshae ambassador's offices are being flooded with nobles seeking to arrange for the Queen to attend their various parties and galas.
* **Mirtul 2:** Mounted Waterdhavian patrols have confirmed rumors of a huge goblinoid force besieging the city of Luskan. A convoy of Waterdhavian supply ships attempted to enter Luskan harbor yesterday, but were driven off by a deadly barrage of boulders thrown by frost and hill giants. One ship was critically hit, and three others suffered heavy damage.

      The leader of the attacking force, the mysterious figure known as the Ice Bear, still remains unseen, although reports from Mirabar indicate that either he or his underlings have potent magical abilities, including the power to summon fiends and elementals to do their bidding. Apparently, the Ice Bear's forces first attacked Mirabar in the depths of last winter but, after taking heavy losses, they moved westward, to the less-fortified city of Luskan.

      Waterdeep's northern patrols are being reinforced, but as of yet there is no indication that the Lords will aid Luskan with anything more than supplies. Said Helve Urtrace, the Senior Armsmaster of the watch, "Luskan is finally getting what it deserves. You'd not see me shedding tears if that whole den of thieves and pirates was run into the ground."

* **Mirtul 3:** Sulphon, a noted sage of the city, sent runners to Virgin's Square and many of the city's taverns today announcing that he is seeking to hire adventurers or mercinaries to procure rare ingredients needed to finish an experiment he is conducting. Sulphon's last two books, one on cryohydras and the other a treatise on the mating habits of remorhaz, were well-recieved by the learned community of the North, and led to Sulphon being awarded the Golden Quill, a high honor from the Vault of Sages in Silverymoon.

      What the ingrediants are, and what type of experiment the sage is working on were not disclosed, but interested parties were directed to Sulphon's domicile, the third door on Gothal Street off Calamastyr Lane.

* **Mirtul 9:** The Waterdhavian raker *Winds of Glory* was sunk today in a pirate ambush off of the Whalebones. Survivors, rescued by a passing Neverwintan merchantman, said they were attempting to help a fishing boat in distress when the ambush was launched. They went on to say that the pirate ships, which numbered three in all, all flew the flag of the Thelark, the self-styled "Baron of the Waves."

      The Thelark, thought to be a native of either Ruathym or Mintarn, is a fast-rising power among the pirates of the northern seas, having amassed a fleet rumored at over 25 ships. His flag, flown at the scene of many pirate raids, consists of a black claw crushing a golden crown (symbolic of the nations along the coast). Either the Thelark or someone under his command posesses magical powers, especially those of the sort used to conceal whole ships, and he himself is rumored to be favored of Umberlee, the Bitch Goddess.

* **Mirtul 11:** Lathanderites across the city today celebrated Rhyestertide, the holy day commemorating the life of Rhyester, first prophet of the Morninglord. Before dawn the Spires of the Morning were set alight with vibrant red and yellow *faerie fire* magics, and the dawnpriests fanned out across the city to help the needy or infirm.
* **Mirtul 11:** Dockworkers this morning found a warehouse full of dead bodies off of Net Street. The corpses, including several identified as Zhentarim agents formerly active in the area around Amn, were scattered throughout the warehouse, and signs pointed to an armed struggle. No evidence of any attackers was found, although most of the gossip currently spreading through the Ward has them pegged as members of Force Grey or the Harpers.

      The crates in the warehouse were apparently smuggled in from the Llorkh area, and contained close to 100,000 gold pieces worth of gold and silver trade bars. Authorities believe that the Zhents planned to use the bars to pay pirates and bandits along the coast to disrupt legitimate merchant traffic. The Lords have sealed off the area to search for further clues, and the crates have been confiscated.

* **Mirtul 13:** Nanthar Tarm, youngest son of the Tarm family, was thrown from his horse near Rassalantar and killed early this morning. The young noble lived for almost three hours after he fell, but never regained conciousness. The two guardsmen accompanying Nanthar say that his horse was spooked by a snake lying in the underbrush.

      Nanthar, a lieutenant in the Watch, had recently become famous for his uncovering of a smuggling ring operating out of the Rheldaryn warehouses, and was commended by Piergerion himself.

* **Mirtul 19:** On three successive nights now, will o' wisps have been spotted in the alleys and back streets around Naingate, the abode of the mage Nain, formerly of the Company of Crazed Venturers. Although they appear nonthreatening and have not yet harmed any passerby, two were destroyed last night by a watch patrol after they allegedly wandered into the nearby walled enclosure of the Melshimber villa.

      Nain himself has offered no public comments on these events, but reportedly had heated words for the Blackstaff on the incident. What the wisps appearance means, and what the mage's involvement with them is, is unknown.

* **Mirtul 20:** After many months of preaching in the market and holding services at the Plinth the Doomguides, led by Raelar Hosthann, have acquired enough money and parishoners (mainly undertakers and embalmers active in the city) to set up a shrine to Kelemvor. The site of the shrine is on Mhalsymber's Way, just opposite the main gate to the City of the Dead.

      Construction on the site (which formerly housed Vhaeruul's Perfumes and Exotic Scents, a now-bankrupt importer), is set to begin next month. Said the Most Merciful Doomguide, "This shrine is just the first step towards legitimizing the worship of Kelemvor in this city. Once we are fully established, the Lords will be forced to see that we, the guardians of the deceased, should hold sway over the City of the dead and its' environs." No comment was forthcoming from the Lords, although they are said to be well-acquainted with Raelar, who constantly seeks audiences with them to further the causes of his religion.

* **Mirtul 22:** Accompanied by two warships and an escort of Waterdhavian rakers, the *Albatross* entered the harbor this morning, carrying Queen Alicia of the Moonshaes and her court. After being greeted at the dock by Piergerion and the Blackstaff, the Queen was taken to the Castle for a closed meeting with the Lords.

      Later that night the Queen was the guest at a social ball at the Palace, which featured Mikhail Zereaid, a famed master composer of sweeping ballads (his "Lost Delzoun" is said to have moved Queen Alustriel to tears when she first heard it performed). Tonight Zereaid performed "The Stand at Freeman's Down," a specially-written tribute to the famous battle fought in the time of Alicia's father, King Tristan.

      The rest of the night saw dancing and feasting, with jugglers, illusionists, and trained beasts performing. Queen Alicia danced with Lord Piergerion, and it was quite evident to those in attendance that the Paladinson's affections for the Moonshae queen are still quite strong, even after her marriage (Alicia's husband, King Keane, remained at Callidyrr to oversee the running of the realm).

      One last note of interest; towards the end of the night the queen was seen talking quite amicably to Lady Bhaeryta Wavesilver, a half-elven noble of the Wavesilver clan whose high- elven skin and flame-red hair are the source of her nickname, "the Lady Rose." Bhaeryta is a recent addition to the Wavesilver clan, having married Andriol Wavesilver just a few summers ago. The wedding was the cause of much gossip, mostly centering around the bride's adventurous past, much of which took place in the Moonshaes. What the two talked of is not known, although endless rounds of speculation ran through the nobles at the ball.

* **Mirtul 25:** A historic meeting took place in Mariner's Hall today, between the Master Mariner's Guild and the Merchant's League of Baldur's Gate. Senior members of both guilds met to begin talks over pooling the resources of the two guilds, to the benefit (and greater profits) of all.

      For many years, the Mariner's Guild of Waterdeep has dominated maritime traffic in the North while the Merchant's League, led by many prominent explorers and trailblazers (such as the ill-fated Dabron and Iliatha Sashenstar), has risen as a strong, organized rival to land-based Waterdhavian costers. The heads of the two organizations feel that the pairing has great promise, especially in regards to the rich, largely-unexplored lands of the New World of Maztica. It is their hope that their combined resources can break the stranglehold Amn has over the new territories.

      It should be noted, however, that this alliance faces great challenges, especially from outside merchants and guild members unhappy with being paired with their nominal trade rivals, as well as Amnian interests, who would like to derail this threat to their monopoly. There have been strong rumors of assassinations at the talks, and security was tripled around the Hall today, with many hired mages of the Watchful Order in attendance.

* **Mirtul 27:** Another Godstalker Slaying rocked the city again today. Lieral Thundermace, an adherent of Tempus visiting the city from Tethyr with several of her fellow acolytes, was found dead, stuffed in a midden off Burdag Lane. As with the other killings there were no witnesses, and not even the guards Piergerion had stationed at the Plinth after the last killing saw or heard anything unusual.

      Lieral's comrades, a group led by the Battlemaster Arthag "Foehammer," vowed to find the killer, even if it meant "overturning every stone in this god's blasted place," but were quickly escorted out of the city by Captain Rulathon and a platoon of armed watchmen. It seems that the Lords were worried that Arthag might make good on his promise.

* **Kythorn 2:** The children of the city celebrated the Trolltide holiday today by running through the streets, growling and snarling like trolls. In recognition of the holiday, many of the city's "body-artists" (artists, tattooists, and minor magelings who specialize in altering a customers various body parts) painted the children's hands and faces with green pigments for free.
* **Kythorn 8:** The adventuring group known as the Swords of the Lucky Lady returned to city in triumph today, after a successful expedition to the ruined city of Ascore. The warrior Elmaedar Snowmantle, leader of the Swords, regaled the crowd in the taproom of the Jade Dancer with tales of fighting a horde of undead and their master, a rotting, cloth-wrapped beholder.

      Apparently, Elmaedar's tales didn't impress a band of Ruathym mercinaries who were among the crowd, for a fight soon broke out between the two groups. Selcharoon Nrim, the Dancer's resident bouncer-mage, managed to force the combatants out the front door, but they continued their fight in the midst of Slop Street until the Watch arrived to subdue them.

* **Kythorn 9:** The reclusive Mage of Stars - rumored to be an incantatar (the rare male form of the incantatrix) - was spotted in the city yesterday. He is rumored to be searching for a female with "eyes of the truest green" for some unknown purpose.
* **Kythorn 12:** A caravan carrying a shipment of gold for the construction of the new shrine to Kelemvor had its' cargo stolen en route yesterday. The caravan, under heavy guard by Kelemvor's faithful, set off from the Tower of Skulls in Ormath last month with a full cargo, but entered the city today empty. Apparently no one saw or heard anything amiss throughout the trip, and the thieves entered and left the caravan undetected with several thousand gold pieces worth of trade bars. The theft sets the construction of the new shrine back considerably, and the head of the city's Doomguides, Raelar Hosthann, is said to have flown into a berserk rage when he heard the news.
* **Kythorn 13:** The Waterdeep authorities placed the Lantanese ship *Queldor Vhul* under guard this morning, after discovering an illegal cargo of *smokepowder* in the ship's hold. The Watch also arrested the ship's crew, including the captain, Gondsman Oralantyr Merelarn. The usual penalty for *smokepowder* smuggling is banishment to Undermountain but, to avoid a diplomatic incident with Lantan, Merelarn will most likely be simply sent home and forever barred from entering the walls of the city.
* **Kythorn 14-15:** According to the latest reports from hard-riding calvalry scouts, the beseiged walls of Luskan have fallen to the hordes of goblinkin surrounding them and fighting is raging in the streets. The city's defenders, on the verge of routing, were reinforced yesterday by a column of Waterdhavian calvalry. The Lords have apparently decided that Luskan is the lesser of the two northern evils. The battle still rages, and yet another column has left for the battlefield as of this writing, along with a matching force of troops marching out of Mirabar.
* **Kythorn 20:** The Nine Mouths of Halaster were spotted in an alley off of Sul Street tonight by two startled passerby. The Mouths, named after the mad mage Halaster, appear at random intervals, and consist of a ring of nine levitating human mouths framed by moustache and beard. They appear insubstantial, although they have been known to solidify on occasion, to bite or snatch up a weapon being wielded against them.

      The Mouths most often do nothing more than make an insane cackling sound, although upon occasion they speak with passerby, imparting cryptic bits of information or the answers to unasked questions. Far more sinister, the Mouths sometimes emit harmful spells (*chain lightning* and the tentacles from an *Evard's black tentacles* spell seem to be its' favorite), or even *teleport* an unlucky soul straight to somewhere in the depths of Undermountain.

* **Kythorn 23:** A rumor currently shaking the ranks of the Guild of Watermen and making the rounds of the taverns in Dock Ward says that Huldarn Braemoryn, lieutenant guildmaster of the Guild of Watermen, is gathering support to make bid for leadership of the guild. Huldarn, long a supporter of the current guildmaster Zzundar Thul, is said to be unhappy with recent activities within the guild, including a reduction of his own powers. Such a struggle could be nasty and drawn-out, and may result in a disruption of the guild's duties on the docks.
* **Kythorn 23:** The Waterdhavian raker *Defender* lived up to its' name today, as it saved two Orlumboran merchantmen from a pirate attack. The Defender spotted the burning sails of the *Lucky Merchant*, one of the Orlumbor ships, on the horizon, and managed to catch a prevailing wind. The two attacking ships, both flying the flag of the self-styled "Baron of the Waves," were engaged and one was critically holed before the attack was broken off. The two merchantmen managed to limp into Waterdeep Harbor for repairs, and the captured crew of the holed vessel was brought in to stand trial for piracy on the high seas.
* **Kythorn 24:** Citizens in Sea Ward today were treated to a manifestation of the goddess Siamorphe. The Divine Right (as she is sometimes called) appeared in the Chapel and Chalice of the Divine Right, her shrine located in the Assumbar villa. She took the form of a ghostly, shimmering chalice which then transformed into a vision of a noble lady. The goddess reached out to touch the brow of Lady Harlaa, who was in service along with several other adherents, and then proceeded to rise up through the roof of the shrine into the air above, where she was spotted by several passerby before disappearing.

      Although she won't give details, Harlaa's aunt, Lady Belkerri, did divulge that Harlaa had been given a vision or portent of some sort by the goddess, and that such a manifestation only served to add proof to her contention that Siamorphe favors the city of Waterdeep and its' citizens, and that all the nobles of the city should look to the Divine Right for guidance and direction.

* **Kythorn 25:** The battle raging around Luskan has ended, with the remnants of the goblinoid army retreating to the north. The High Captains have declared victory, though it is a pyrrhic one, for much of the city of Luskan lies in ruins and the Waterdeep and Mirabar forces have taken heavy casualties. The High Captains, ever distrustful of their neighbors, have demanded that the other cities' forces withdraw immediately, but the commander of the Waterdhavian forces, Chuldroon Sunspear, is reluctant to leave with the still-strong army of the Ice Bear lurking just to the north. Further tensions between the two forces seem likely.
* **Kythorn 30:** The villa of the Anteos family was thrown into chaos today as hundreds of snakes swarmed up out of the cellars and into the villa, spilling out into the courtyard and even onto the nearby streets. It is not known what caused the infestation, as most of the family was out at the time.

      Apparently, the serpents came up out of the deep wells, which connect with the deep ways of Undermountain. The Anteos family escaped unharmed, although three of their servants suffered snake bites, and one later died. The Watch was called in and by the end of the night the villa was cleared of living serpents. However, many of the slithering creatures escaped into nearby alleys and buildings, and it may be a while before they are all hunted out and killed.

* **Flamerule 1:** Today marks Founder's Day, the holiday that commemorates the Free City of Waterdeep's founding. The Field of Triumph is host to illusory shows of the history of the city as well as various martial exhibitions, and many festhalls are sponsoring costume contests. At nightfall the mages of the watchful Order are scheduled to have a display of fireworks and magical pyrotechnics on the slopes of Mount Waterdeep, in commemoration of the victory at Luskan.
* **Flamerule 3:** Bands of humanoids are reported to be raiding farmsteads and small villages in the Ice Lakes and River Mirar regions. These bands are said to be highly-organized and efficient, not the disorganized raiders one would expect after the battle at Luskan, leading many to believe that the Ice Bear still has a firm grip on his forces, and may be gathering supplies for another attack on Luskan or Mirabar. In response to the raids the city of Neverwinter is reportedly strengthening its' northern patrols, and sending troops to join with the allied forces at Luskan.
* **Flamerule 7:** With Luskan in ruins and the northern goblin threat still looming, Mirabar has sent an ambassador to Waterdeep to facilitate military operations between the two cities. The ambassador, Mithril "Ebonhand" Deepshield, arrived this morning along with a full retinue, and was immediately escorted to a meeting in the Palace. With tensions rising between the forces of the three cities encamped outside of Luskan, Piergerion and the Lords are eager for a quick resolution to the whole matter, as they do not want to still be stuck in the mountains hunting out the Ice Bear's goblinoids when the first snows of winter roll in.

      Deepshield, a long-time explorer and adventurer, is famed in the legends of the North as the fourth surviving member of the Company of the Gryphon, the only one to enter the halls of long-lost Gauntylgrym and survive. It was in that delve that he lost his right hand to a remorhaz which, after having it replaced with a fully-functional ebon appendage, became the source of his nickname.

* **Flamerule 9:** The noted warrior and arms-tutor Deriam of the Nine Daggers was killed today on High Street, as the horse he was riding on transformed underneath him into a wizard, who proceeded to blast the old mercinary into nothingness prior to *teleporting* away. The attack occured so swiftly that few got a good look at the mage, but he is described as having a foul, skeletal appearance, with eyes that burned a hellish red color.

      Deriam's killer is thought to be the undead mage Kraelich ("The Undying One" in the old Moonshaen tongue), who lairs somewhere in the isles of the Korinn Archipelago. Deriam was the last of a band of adventurers who plundered the Undying One's crypt some fourty winters ago, making off with several valuable items. Ever since then, their numbers have steadily dwindled as old age or Kraelich's vengeance has fallen upon them.

      Upon hearing the news of their father's death, Deriam's two sons Rundar and Tharbolt vowed vengeance on their father's slayer, and are said to be hiring mercinaries for a planned expedition to the Archipelago. Interested warriors are directed to the Sign of the Bottled Beholder, a tavern off Ship Street in Dock Ward.

* **Flamerule 10:** The Goldenfields, the walled abby of Chauntea northeast of Waterdeep, is reporting an excellent growing season, with a record harvest being planned. Most strangely, the fields of the abbey have been plagued by the appearance of unusual, purplish-white mushrooms amidst the fields. Originally thought to be an ill omen, these mysterious fungi have turned out to be little more than a nuisance, although the attendant clergy at the abbey are said to be mystified as to how they came to grow there. Several bushels have been sent to naturalists and alchemists in Waterdeep to discern the properties, if any, of this new fungus.
* **Flamerule 15:** A monstrous sea serpent was sighted in the waters off Orlumbor two days ago by a passing Amnite merchantman, the *Chanrael Sails*. The captain of the Sails, Borul Chanrael of Athkatla, described the serpent as having scales of a bluish-grey, each "the size of a greatshield" in length, and a ridge of stiff, spiny protuberances along its' back. Since then another ship, the Neverwintan caravel *Seven of Staves*, has reported sighting the beast, again in the waters near Orlumbor.
* **Flamerule 16:** Waterdeep Harbor was graced by a visit today from the *Schooner of the Seas*, a floating temple of Valkur the Mighty. The Schooner, the largest and fastest sailing ship in the Realms, was met by a skiff bearing a group of representatives from the House of the Moon, led by the priestess Ameathra Lhauralynn. The allied faiths held a day-long conference and, although the exact details of their talks are unknown, most speculate that the discussion involved plans to build a temple of the Mariner's God in Waterdeep, perhaps as an addition to the temple of Selune.

      Ameathra and her retinue returned to land at nightfall, although talks are scheduled to resume at the House of the Moon at daybreak, and an additional meeting with the Lords is set for the following day.

* **Flamerule 19:** It was announced today that the recently deceased merchant-mage Blaedarun Sarelgost has left a large number of tomes, scrolls, and objects of art to the college of New Olamn, as well as a generous monentary donation. Blaedarun, who died last month in Zazesspur of a wasting disease, was well-known as a patron of the arts, and was one of the original contributors to the college's construction. The dean of New Olamn has ordered the construction of a marble bust of Blaedarun, which will be displayed in the new Sarelgost Wing of the college's library.
* **Flamerule 22:** Rumors of an assassination attempt against Lord Piergerion swept the taverns and tankard houses of the city early this morning. Unconfirmed reports of an explosion of some sort at the Palace are being tossed about, and it is known that the Palace was closed to all traffic by the Guard shortly after sunup this morning. Talk of the Open Lord's death was quickly stilled, however, when the Paladinson was seen to attend a meeting with the heads of the Dockworker's Guild at the Castle this afternoon.
* **Flamerule 23:** Strange lights, rumblings, and noises emanated from Dragon Tower of the mage Maaril this afternoon. The disturbances lasted for almost three hours before stopping suddenly, leaving nothing but silence. Maaril, a reculsive man by nature (and said by most to be a sorcerer of fell disposition), has not been seen about the city for several tendays, and there have been no signs of activity at the Tower since the disturbances stopped.
* **Flamerule 26:** The commander of the northern Waterdhavian forces was killed yesterday when an inspection of a nearby ford turned into an ambush by the forces of the Ice Bear. Chuldroon Sunspear and his twelve bodyguards held the ford while two mounted scouts raced to warn the camp. By the time reinforcements arrived only three of the guards still remained alive against a force which counted a handful of baatezu among its' numbers.

      Chuldroon's lieutenant, the ranger Aluar Zendos, has assumed command of the northern forces. Aluar, a quiet, unassuming man, first made a name for himself in Waterdeep fighting Myrkul's minions during the Time of Troubles. He joined the Guard soon thereafter, and swiftly rose through the ranks.

* **Flamerule 27:** Three grain warehouses on Dock Street mysteriously caught fire and burned early this morning. The mages of the Watchful Order were on hand, but were unable to stop the warehouses from burning to the ground, as their energies were concentrated on stopping the blaze from spreading to nearby buildings. Arson is suspected in the fire and Sarastul Elphrin, the merchant who owns the warehouses, has claimed that the fire was set by one of his rivals. The Watch is investigating the matter.
* **Calendar Day - Midsummer:** Tonight marks Midsummer's Night, and nobles villas and festhalls across the city are set to throw huge parties in honor of the holiday. The various priesthoods are said to have couples lining up to have marriage cerimonies performed, and the usual sundown restrictions on the City of the Dead is being relaxed to allow couples access to the grounds.

      Also on this night, the temple of Milil is holding a Grand Revel to celebrate the Lord of All Songs. The faithful are invited to gather for a night of feasting, dancing, and singing, and many of the best bards from New Olamn are said to be performing.

      As a footnote to the Midsummer festivities, the candlelit facade of the House of Light (the guildhall of the Chandlers and Lamplighters) was plunged into darkness for several hours tonight, despite the frantic efforts of guildmembers to re-light the assorted candles, torches, and lamps. Nothing the guildmembers tried would get the candles to light, and eventually the Watch and an on-duty mage of the Watchful Order were called in. The mage, Duldoum Blackalbrow, discerned that the wicks of the candles were magically enspelled, most likely with a *cantrip*, to remain damp and unlightable. Students from New Olamn were seen in the area shortly before the blackout, and are suspected of making the prank. The masters of the guild are said to be uniformly unamused, and have sent a messenger to New Olamn demanding an apology.

[] 

[]

* **Eleasias 2:** In a new attack by the forces of the Ice Bear a flight of white dragons swept down out of the northern skies and attacked the armies encamped on the plain outside of Luskan. The wyrms inflicted heavy casualties, although an early warning by Waterdhavian griffon scouts allowed many of the soldiers to escape the hail of frozen death.

      The wyrms, which numbered five in all, were driven off by the mages of the Arcane Brotherhood who unleashed their magical might, sending three of the dragons crashing into the sea. The other two, after making a final pass at the encampments below, wheeled and flew off in the direction they came from. This new attack has shaken the morale of the forces gathered at the city, especially after the recent Luskan demands for a full withdrawal. Fights and confrontations between members of the nominal allies are reportedly becoming more frequent, as are desertions.

* **Eleasias 4:** Castle Ward was rocked today by the news that an unidentified mage, possibly a member of the Zhentarim or some other evil cabal, entered the Spires of the Morning just as dawn services were being held, and unleashed a series of *lightning bolts* upon the faithful gathered there. The man *teleported* away before he could be stopped, leaving several dead and many seriously injured. Many of the Morninglord's priests were injured, and additional clerical healing from the nearby House of Heroes was required. As well as the human cost, the inside of the Spires was heavily damaged, and may take several months to fully repair.

      Ghanthar Emveltarune, an acolyte of Lathander present at the attack, reported that the mage, a man of indeterminate age dressed in plain black robes, shouted words of derision moments before his attack, including a short tirade against "those who support the tyrannical policies of the self-styled Lords of this city."

* **Eleasias 8:** Aleena Paladinstar, the only daughter of the Open Lord of Waterdeep, is currently the subject of wild gossip sweeping the city, from the nobles villas of North Ward to the taverns down on the docks. The Paladinson's daughter is romantically linked with Phaelar Roaringhorn, a young noble of the Roaringhorn noble family. The pair were seen arm-in-arm at the last Midsummer festivities and, according to hearsay, they have since spent time together horseback riding at the Roaringhorn ranch outside of Rassalantar.

      Phaelar, an officer in the Waterdhavian marines and a known fancier of racing horses, has spent much of the last few years at sea avoiding the usual noble intrigues and infighting. Both he and Lady Aleena deny any such romantic involvement, but rumor-mongers point to Phaelar's recent elevation to captain of the raker *Fleetwind* as proof of his favored status.

* **Eleasias 11:** Radaen Thrul, a teacher of history at New Olamn, has apparently disappeared, the third such incident in the last two tendays. He was last seen by acquaintances inside the college two nights ago, and has not been seen since. Sabraela Nurlarn, a long-time friend and fellow teacher, told the Watch that Raedan was intending to spend the night cataloging and researching the contents of the new Sarelgost Wing, donated to the college last month by the deceased merchant Blaedarun Sarelgost.

      Radaen, a quiet, friendly man, was reportedly well-liked by his students and others at the college, and authorities know of no one who held a grudge of any sort against him. Thrul joins an Amnite student named Thandul Vaerelantyr and a custodian named Maelar in having gone missing from the college. All three of the disappearances apparently took place at night, while the subjects were alone, and no hard evidence has been found as to the motives or identities of the killer or killers.

      New Olamn has issued a series of precautionary warnings to students and staff, and has requested that anyone on the campus after dark travel in pairs, for safety.

* **Eleasias 12:** Lhamara Velglar, a priestess of Loviatar, has become the latest victim of the serial killer known as the Godstalker. She was found early this morning in an alley several blocks west of the Plinth. Unlike the previous victims, Lhamara was still clinging to life when she was found. Mages of the Watchful Order, rushed to the scene, attempted to interrogate her, but the Loviatan died of her injuries before long. Before she died, Lhamara reportedly kept mumbling about "the scars" and "black, black claws." Further attempts to magically question her corpse proved ineffective, as with past victims.
* **Eleasias 15:** Aszundar Zul, a noted Neverwintan diplomat and long-time ambassador to Waterdeep, died in his sleep last night. His body is set to be brought back to Neverwinter for burial tomorrow, along with the condolences of the Lords. Said Piergerion, "Aszundar was a rare soul; a man who could discuss troop strengths, harvest quotas, and fine poetry all with expert knowledge. Both Waterdeep and Neverwinter are poorer for his absence." Until a replacement can be sent from Neverwinter, Aszundar's assistant, Mhaurin Geldaunt, will become interim ambassador.
* **Eleasias 17:** Three priests of Kelemvor were arrested by the Watch today as they blocked access to the City of the Dead. The Doomguides were protesting the Lords continuing refusal to grant them control of burial services and the City of the Dead. Raelar Hosthann, head of the Kelemvorites in the city, immediately protested the "unfair incarceration of three men who were only following thier divine mandate," but was reportedly turned down by the Lords, who re-stated their intention that the necropolis remain free to those of all faiths. Piergerion also reportedly remarked to Raelar that, if he kept inciting his followers, he would be swiftly escorted out of the city and permantently banned.
* **Eleasias 21:** Citizens of South Ward today got a bit of excitement as members of the Watch battled two monstrous purple worms along Coach Street. The worms, apparently *gated* in from somewhere, perhaps Undermountain, were reportedly twice the normal size. Although no one was killed, and only two Watchmen injured, much of the southern length of Coach Street was ripped up and trade was disrupted for the afternoon.

      For those interested, the corpses of the two worms are currently on display outside of the Full Cup, the tavern on the corner of Coach Street and Carter's Way. The proprietor of the Cup, Gulth Djanczo, is currently offering a special on "Purple Ale," a brew he claims is made from the blood of the worms (but is most likely just purple-dyed ale).

* **Eleasias 24:** Disturbing rumors have been filtering out of the North lately, of Luskan ships raiding to gain supplies and loot for rebuilding. Small coastal villages north of Neverwinter and along the eastern coast of Ruathym report being raided by ships bearing no discernable flag or device. Luskan authorities decry these rumors, casting them as "propaganda unleashed by the enemies of the city of Luskan and her fair people."
* **Eleasias 26:** The northern allied forces found and destroyed a large force of humanoids encamped in the Ice Lakes early today, scoring a critical victory for the allies. Aluar Zendos, commander of the Waterdhavian forces, sent a griffonrider back to the city with the news that the victory has crippled the Ice Bear's forces, cutting their strength by as much as half.

      Tensions at the main camp outside Luskan, eased since the morning's victory, rose again towards dusk as a pair of emmissaries from the Ice Bear, mounted on a white dragon, swept down into the city and gained an audience with the High Captains. Zendos and Calleron Whitemantle, commander of the Mirabar forces, were denied entry to the parlay, leaving both parties fuming at the continuing lack of Luskanite cooperation.

* **Eleasias 29:** At daybreak this morning, the allied Waterdhavian and Mirabaran forces found themselves surrounded by Luskanites and a large force of southern mercinaries, apparently hired a few days before. The High Captains, led by Suljack, met with the leaders of the other two forces and demanded an immediate withdrawal from "soverign Luskan territory." Also at the meeting was a hobgoblin of unusual stature, one of the Ice Bear's emmissaries.

      Apparently, at the meeting between the High Captains and the emmissaries three days ago, a truce was struck. The commanders of the other two armies, faced with an apparent end to the hostilities, were left with no choice but to begin their withdrawal. When word of the alliance between Luskan and the goblinoids reached the troops, several violent fistfights and other exchanges broke out. The Lords of Waterdeep, upon hearing the news, sent out a strongly-worded missive to the High Captains stating their displeasure with this turn of events and Luskan's treatment of its' erstwhile allies

* **Eleint 3:** Several monuments and tombs in the City of the Dead have been found vandalized this morning. The damages seem to be random in nature, and no distinguishing marks or symbols have been left behind to identify the culprits. Interestingly, some of the structures bear damages similar to those caused by lightning attacks, yet there were no reports of any unusual lights or noises in the vincinity of the vandalism last night.
* **Eleint 4:** The naval barge *Seaworthy* collided with the caravel *Murathann's Magic* in Waterdeep Harbor this morning, holing the Magic and forcing an emergency evacuation. The Magic, registered out of Almraiven in Calimshan, lost its' entire cargo of valuable silks, and the captain of the ship has vowed that his patron, the ruler of Almraiven, will seek reparation for the incident. Naval officials are looking into the circumstances around the collision.
* **Eleint 7:** The wealthy socialite Myrana Jesthrund announced a 10,000gp reward today for the rescue and safe return of her son Borelthann. Borelthann, heir to the Jesthrund shipping fortunes, was last seen descending into the depths of Undermountain with his companions, the noble twins Erol and Cyldan Ilvastarr, five days ago. Yesterday, the twins returned to the city above, telling of fighting manspiders in the depths, and of getting seperated from their companion in the melee and ensuing flight.

      Thus far, the Company of the Flying Sword, the men of Zalantyr's Band, and the noted Underdark-tracker "Brighteye" Deladrier have announced their intentions to descend into the depths to search for the missing heir.

* **Eleint 10:** Violence erupted at a street fair in South Ward this afternoon, killing four people and injuring twelve others, including two members of the Watch. The area of the fair, centered on Caravan Street, has become home to a large number of Tethyrian immigrants, and is commonly referred to as "Little Ithmong."

      The fight was apparently between supporters of two former rival factions to Tethyr's throne, the recently crowned Queen Zaranda and the Baron-in-exile Thanra Alcanthe. Local rumors say that Thanra's faction started the altercation, and that they are backed by the Knights of the Shield, who are rumored to control much of the shadier elements of Little Ithmong. Undercover officers of the Watch are said to be infiltrating the area, in order to locate and root out such criminals.

* **Eleint 11:** The merchants of the city are gearing up for the upcoming gathering of the heads of the Lords Alliance, scheduled for early next month. Security in the city is also being heightened, as various rulers and other dignitaries travel to the city for the council.
* **Eleint 16:** Today marked the sudden end of a four-day rainstorm that battered the city, flooding many cellars and driving the caravan trade to a virtual standstill. The unseasonal (and quite unnatural) rains wreaked havoc with trade, shutting almost all of the stalls in the Market, and forcing both ships in the harbor and caravans outside the walls to wait until today to leave.

      In perhaps another sign of the storm's unnaturalness, no priests of Talos stepped foward to claim it as a sign of their god's divine power, as is usual with such destructive events of nature. In fact, no Stormlords have been sighted in the city since the start of the storm four days ago. A delegation of known Talosians staying in the Gentle Rest Inn near the Plinth seems to have disappeared completely, leaving behind their belongings.

* **Eleint 17:** The hedge wizard and purveyor of potions Veralen Mornd was found dead in his shop on High Street this morning. There was no sign of a forced entry, and the cause of death is so far unknown, but magical means is suspected in both cases. Veralen was known to have recently acquired a sizeable amount of *chardalyn*, a rare and magical mineral highly prized by wizards. A search of his abode was undertaken by the Watch, but the chardalyn seems to have disappeared, most likely stolen by those responsible for Mornd's death.
* **Eleint 23:** Bellmen across the city are announcing the opening of a new play in New Olamn. "The Star and Crescent," a tragedy based on the little-known Harpstar War, is written by the acclaimed bard and devotee of Finder Wyvernspur, Jhelan Sarsorel. Lord Piergerion is said to be planning an opening-night attendance, although Khelben Arunsun is said to be highly unamused with Sarsorel's choice of subject, and has reportedly called the play, "a ridiculous bit of fluff that exists only for Jhelan to call attention to his obscure deity."
* **Eleint 26:** The Baroness Chelthorea Crownsilver of Cormyr arrived in the city today, accompanied by her entourage and her constant companions, two honey-gold tressym. The baroness is in Waterdeep to meet with Lord Piergerion over matters of trade between the city and Cormyr, and to act as Cormyr's liason at the upcoming Lord's Alliance talks.
* **Marpenoth 1:** Tremors rocked part of Castle Ward today, shattering windows and causing at least two buildings to collapse from the vibrations. When emergency crews arrived on the scene they found several bodies crushed in the rubble. According to members of the Plumbers' and Cellarers' Guild, these corpses were of dark-skinned, elf-like humanoids. The site was quickly cordoned off by the Watch, and a guard was posted by decree of the Paladinson. What all this means is unknown, but the Blackstaff and Lady Laeral were seen among the ruins later that same night, surrounded by a ring of glowing *driftlights* and searching through the rubble.
* **Marpenoth 5:** Lord's Alliance meeting. The heads of state and ambassadors of over a dozen city-states arrived at the Palace this morning. Most came by horse-drawn carriage, although the Tyrant of Mintarn, Tarnheel Embuirharn, made a rather splashy entrance, arriving at the Palace on a flying carpet from his ship in the harbor. Security around the Palace was heightened to wartime levels, and access was severely restricted, but several main points of the five-day conference were made known;
  + The main talks centered around a rising tide of banditry and lawlessness in the Western Heartlands, brought on by an increase of trade with Tethyr and Maztica, and of renewed Zhentarim efforts in the area west of the Sunset Mountains.
  + Attention soon switched to the North where (of particular importance to Neverwinter and Mirabar) the alliance between Luskan and the forces of the Ice Bear looms. Mithril Deephand, the Mirabaran ambassador, reported an increase in attacks on trade and isolated settlements south of Mirabar and east of Port Llast. Aluar Zendos, commander of the Waterdhavian forces stationed in Neverwinter, corroborated Ambassador Deepshield's reports, and added that roving bands of hobgoblins and other humanoids have been spotted moving south into the northern portions of the Neverwinter Wood.
  + On the third day, the Tyrant of Mintarn addressed the Alliance, expressing concern about the continued menace of the pirate-lord known as the Thelark. The Thelark, whom the Tarnheel continually accused of being in league with the island-nation of Ruathym, has stepped up his attacks on ships in Mintarn waters, and the island has suffered recently as a result. Lord Piergeiron agreed to shift some of the Waterdhavian naval forces stationed at Orlumbor to Mintarn waters to help fend off future pirate attacks, although Baldur's Gate declined Piergeiron's plan to gather a fleet to hunt down the maritime menace, as the Thelark has not yet struck that far south.
  + On the last day of the talks the representatives of Baldur's Gate and Elturel, whose cities have feuded in recent months over boundary disputes and claims of broken treaties, almost came to blows and had to be physically restrained. The representatives, who had barely spoken to each other the entire talks, went so far as to draw daggers on each other but were immediately restrained by the Blackstaff before blood could be shed. Lord Piergeiron was reportedly furious at the incident, and stormed out of the conference room. The feud between the two cities bodes ill for the stability of both the Lord's Alliance and the entire Chionthar region.
* **Marpenoth 7:** Several figures were found frozen solid in an alley off the Street of Smiths today. The men, apparently Calishite from their dress, were found still sitting on their horses, seemingly frozen in mid-stride. The frozen figures are extremely delicate, and one of the men's arms broke off when the Watch attempted to remove them from the scene. The identity of the men, and who (or what) is responsible for this act is still unknown, although the Watchful Order is currently investigating the scene.
* **Marpenoth 7:** Patrons of the Nine Anchors Tavern in Dock Ward were entertained tonight by Deiron Mhalystar, Berdusk's ambassador to the Lord's Alliance. Deiron, a former adventurer and renowned bard, regaled the crowd with songs and tales of his adventuring days. The ambassador also challenged several of the larger taverngoers to contests of strength and wrestling.

      According to several patrons present at the time, the festivities grew rather boisterous, and the Watch eventually had to be called in to disperse the gathered crowd. Upon leaving, Ambassador Deiron reportedly gave the proprietor a large pouch of gems, more than enough to cover the tab and the incidental damages that were incurred.

 **Marpenoth 10:** The Lord's Alliance talks ended today, as the various dignitaries and heads of state began to take their leave of the city. The Neverwintan ambassador stayed at the Palace, apparently to further discuss northern security issues with the Lords. It is known that Sheiraya Blaskarn, a high-ranking priestess of the Red Knight, attended these later talks, as did Ambassador Deepshield of Mirabar and Aluar Zendos, commander of Waterdeep's northern forces.

      The presence of these figures at the Palace lends credence to rumors sweeping Castle Ward of another military strike to the north, this time against both the city of Luskan and the Ice Lakes region currently controlled by the Ice Bear. Waterdhavian officials worry that, if left unchecked through the winter, the forces to the north could grow too strong to be stopped later in the spring.

* **Marpenoth 12:** The source of a series of strange disappearances and unexplained phenomena in New Olamn has finally been uncovered; an ancient Imaskari statuette recently left to the college by the merchant Blaedarun Sarelgost was discovered to by inhabited by an ancient, utterly evil spirit. It is believed that this malign spirit was responsible for the deaths of several Olamn students and staff, including the late Radaen Thrul.

      The haunt was ultimately banished by the bard Dalcimer Silvernote and his companion, the mage Belshareen "The Breathtaking" Azurean. Due to these events the Sarelgost Wing of the college has been closed pending a more thorough inspection of its' contents by the Watchful Order.

* **Marpenoth 15:** Today marks God's Day, the anniversary of the end of the Time of Troubles and the ascension of the mortals Midnight and Cyric to godhood. All through Waterdeep shops and businesses closed in rembrance of those who died fighting the minions of the god Myrkul, and a military parade of Guard and Watch units wound through the city, along the length of the High Road.

      The Church of Mysteries celebrated the holiday as the rebirth of their goddess in the form of a mortal. A huge festival, a precursor to the Starfall festivities, was held at the Tower of Luck, and ended in a magnificent fireworks display that went on long into the night.

      As usual on this day worshippers of the entity known as Ao gathered at the Plinth to celebrate, and to preach the tenants of their faith. Unlike last year, there were no full-scale riots at the Plinth, although there was a small clash between the Ao-worshippers and a band of Cyricists also present at the shrine. The Watch, alert for any possible disturbances, quickly broke up the fighting, and several members of both faiths were arrested and taken away for trial.

* **Marpenoth 16:** The Old Xoblob Shop, a popular curio store in Dock Ward, was ransacked last night. According to the proprietor, Dandalus "Fire-Eye," nothing of real value was taken. In fact, the only thing that seems to be missing is a foot-tall scepter, chased and worked into a scene of flying birds and leaping dolphins. The scepter bears a minor *everbright* dweomer, and doesn't corrode, tarnish, or react with any substance.

      Dandalus gained the scepter some months ago from a band of adventurers fresh out of Undermountain. It came with several other pieces, which all had greater dweomers on them, but were left untouched by the thieves. The adventurers who sold Dandalus the scepter, the Fellowship of the Nine Rings, are currently out of the city, and could not be reached by the Watch for comment.

* **Marpenoth 19:** The merchant caravel *Endless Horizon* was attacked by two reavers south of Leilon yesterday. The captain of the Horizon, the merchant-mage Enebryl of Tharsult, destroyed one of the attacking vessels with a *meteor swarm*, but his own vessel was also set ablaze as a result. The second pirate ship fled the scene soon after, and the Horizon managed to limp into Waterdeep Harbor by nightfall.

      Enebryl reportedly told guardsmen at the docks that the reavers bore the flag of the Thelark, the self-styled "Baron of the Waves."

* **Marpenoth 21:** Strange opalescent orbs, most about the size of a human head, appeared in Jester's Court this morning, drifting around in a slowly rotating pattern. Although initially harmless, at least half a dozen passerby were injured when they touched the globes, unleashing octopus-like tentacles which shot out and caused horrific burn marks on whatever they touched. The mysterious globes disappeared from the Court at sundown, as suddenly as they had come, and have not been seen since.
* **Marpenoth 22:** Today marks the most holy day of Tymora, the Festival of the Starfall. At the Tower of Luck, the worshippers of Lady Luck gathered to celebrate the date of their goddesses' birth. Jorynn Halstaff, a rising star in the church heirarchy, gave a rousing speech to the gathered faithful in which he charged them with carrying out Tymora's will across Faerun and beyond, and with rooting out and destroying the "foul, blasphemous evil of Beshaba." In apparent proof of Jorynn's divine favor, a shimmering nimbus surrounded the priest at the end of his sermon, causing more than one of the faithful present to drop to their knees in awe.

      After Jorynn's sermon, the zzar flowed freely, and the festival continued with riotous feasting and merrymaking. Hired illusionists worked their Art, turning the courtyard of the Tower of Luck into, among other things, a sunlit forest glade, the deck of a massive ship at sea, and the hall of an elven prince. Rare and exotic beasts, including a pair of snowcats tithed by Royus Adarbrent, were paraded past the crowds.

      Most of Waterdeep's more adventurous and reckless souls were on hand for the festival and, as in past Starfalls, many plans of adventure and exploration were laid by the close of the evening. Adherents of Tymora passed through the millings crowds with tithe plates, and by the end of the night the church coffers were overflowing with donations.

      Other points of note on the night included the eldest sons of the Tarm, Majarra, and Phull families departure immediately after Jorynn's service to "find the Lady's favor in the dark depths of the Undermountain," and a drunken charge into the cold waters of the Trackless Sea. This midnight dip, led by Mirt "the Moneylender," included much of the then-inebriated crowd, and brought a close to the festival.

* **Marpenoth 25:** The sage Methos of Neverwinter is selling a king's tear he gained from adventurers several months ago. The adventurers, the Bold Blades of the Griffon band, reportedly gained the rare gem from a crypt deep in the Neverwinter Woods, in an area known to be controlled by hobgoblins. After selling the king's tear, the Bold Blades traveled north to fight in the recent war against the forces of the Ice Bear, where most of their members were killed.

      King's tears, also sometimes referred to as "frozen tears" or "lich weepings," are rarely found and highly prized. Clear, teardrop-shaped, and harder than steel, they are said to be the crystallized tears of long-dead necromancer-kings. In each gem can be seen that which the weeping king loved long ago.

      The tear in Methos' posession shows a pool of clear, sparkling water surrounded by sward of wildflowers and a ring of ancient oak trees. In the middle of the pool, an incredibly beautiful elven maiden can be seen bathing. The sage is offering the gem for 50,000gp, or highest offer. Interested buyers are directed to his offices in Turnback Court, Castle Ward.

* **Marpenoth 28:** The Watch raided a townhouse in Castle Ward this morning, breaking up a ring of suspected smugglers. The owner of the townhouse, Pharastul Greycloak, was arrested, as was Laenar Osprail, a young noble of the Nesher family present at the scene.

      Pharastul is rumored to be in league with the Kulchak clan, a powerful Ankhapurian noble family with ties to organized crime and several yuan-ti slaving operations. Kulchak activities in Waterdeep gained noterity some months ago when one of their operatives allegedly assassinated a visiting Amnian official in Castle Ward. A mysterious hooded figure that escaped the sting is believed to have been an agent of that family, and is now loose in the city.

      The young Nesher nobles' relationship to the smuggling ring is unknown, although Laenar has claimed himself innocent of any wrongdoing and his family rode straight to the Castle to protest his detainment when they heard the news.

* **Marpenoth 30:** A great dragon was sighted flying low over the coastline north of the city today, creating a small panic and setting off a stampede of livestock at the North Gate. Although the wards placed around Waterdeep by the Blackstaff prevent such dragons from flying directly over the city proper, the Griffonriders of the Watch were mobilized and spent much of the rest of the evening patrolling the skies in case the wyrm returned.

      Several bystanders reported seeing one or more figures atop the dragon's back, although more reliable sources in the Griffonriders have denied any such rumors. The wyrm flew off due north, and talk sweeping the taverns tonight has it as an agent of the Ice Bear, reconnoitering the area for a possible invasion.

* **Uktar 1:** The Baroness Chelthorea Crownsilver of Cormyr was found dead in her chambers at the Silver Rain Inn this morning, the apparent victim of an assassin. Chelthorea, an ambassador of the Forest Kindom, was sent to negotiate trade agreements with Waterdeep, and to act as Cormyr's liason during last months Lord's Alliance talks. She was not known to have any major enemies or rivals who would engineer such a deed, and the assassination occuring right in the shadow of the Palace has raised serious security issues.

      The Baroness was due to leave Waterdeep at the end of the Lord's Alliance talks, but she extended her stay for personal reasons. Rumors making the rounds in noble circles whispered that the widowed Baroness had fallen in love with Zandoun Kormallis, a member of the Kormallis noble family.

      Zandoun, a leading figure in the current Mariner's Guild/Merchant's League talks, is known to have visited the Baroness in her quarters several times, and officers of the Watch have brought him to the Castle for questioning. Scuttlebutt at the Castle revealed that the Watch is questioning Zandoun about several past and present business dealings, to discern if the Baroness' death was in fact arranged by person or persons upset at Zandoun.

      Regardless of the truth of the matter, the assassination of such an important figure is a serious diplomatic matter. Cormyrian officials were immediately notified via *sending* spells, and Castle Ward was swarming with Watch investigators and Diviners of the Watchful Order by mid-afternoon.

* **Uktar 6:** A squad of griffon-riders flew low over the city this morning, trumpeting the arrival of the first winterfrost and the holiday of Auril's Blesstide. The occasion passed without major incident, although the Spires of the Morning, the temple of Lathander in the city, was set alight with vibrant *faerie fire* magics, in apparent defiance of the Icemaiden and her power.
* **Uktar 7:** Citizens in South Ward were sent fleeing in panic earlier today, as a spellbattle erupted between a cloaked spellcaster and a group of armed men. At least seven people were killed and over a dozen more injured when a mage unleashed a flurry of explosive magical meteors in the middle of crowded Coach Street. The Watch, aided by a nearby mage of the Watchful Order, arrived quickly and prevented much of the resulting fires from spreading, but the assailant escaped before she could be apprehended, and is still at large. Several eyewitnesses reportedly described the spellcaster as a female drow or other dark-skinned elf.
* **Uktar 9:** The famed bard Revendar the Far-Traveled visits the city today. He is scheduled to address the students of New Olamn today, and the Open Lord has arranged a banquet for him at the Palace tomorrow night. Revendar is perhaps best known for his poem, "Rhyme of the Road," which he penned in 1357 DR, but he has established quite a body of work in his travels. An early journal of his travels and poems is said to have inspired the infamous bard and travel-guide writer, Volothamp Geddarm. Geddarm is scheduled to introduce Revendar at New Olamn this afternoon.
* **Uktar 11:** There has been a rising tide of assassinations and clashes in the city, as a result of talks between the Merchant's League of Baldur's Gate and the Mariner's Guild. At least six bodies, most of them Amnite assassins, have been found floating in the harbor in the last tenday, and many prominent merchants in the city have taken to hiring extra guards. The merchant Riyataivin, a prominent member of the Waterdhavian delegation, has publicly accused Amnite merchant concerns of attempting to derail the proposed alliance between the two guilds in a recent speech to the Lords.
* **Uktar 15:** The circle of Tyche was found burned into the doors of the Tower of Luck, the temple of Tymora, this morning. No amount of magical or mundane effort could remove the sigil and the doors, twin bronze-banded portals of ebonwood brought from Chult, were immediately taken down by order of the high priestess, Seenroas Halvinhar. It is unknown just how or who placed the brand on the doors, but many underpriests present at the scene believe the mutilation to be the work of agents of Beshaba, the Maid of Misfortune.

      Once widespread in the North, Tyche's Circle has not been used since the days of the Fallen Kingdom. It is primarily found today on old, overgrown plinths and shrines located by forgotten and little-traveled forest trails or mountain passes.

* **Uktar 19:** A raving madman was found wandering the back alleys of Trades Ward this morning. He apparently accosted several nearby passerby and shopkeepers. Those so encountered reported that the man kept raving about something or someone called the "Eye in the Deeps." The witnesses also stated that the man was dressed only in the tattered remnants of noble finery, and that he apparently carried a fistfull of gemstones, which he repeatedly tried to give away.

      The man was eventually apprehended on Book Street by several individuals claiming to be members of the Watch, and has not been seen since. However, an investigation by the reporters of the Herald has discovered that no one at the Castle is aware of any such arrest, nor were any Watchmen near that area when the arrest allegedly occurred!

* **Uktar 23:** The first winter snows hit the city today, bringing a light dusting to the rooftops and streets of Waterdeep. Although the snow was light, no more than a coating in most places, the Spires of the Morning recieved an unusual amount of precipitation. Hail and pieces of ice, found nowhere else in the city, pelted the Morninglord's temple, shattering two windows. The temperature around the complex became unnaturally cold, and many nearby plants and trees died from the sudden frost. It is believed that the bizarre weather around the Spires was the Frostmaiden's revenge for being slighted by the Lathanderites during Auril's Blesstide earlier this month.
* **Uktar 25:** The first nobles left the city today, heading south to warmer climes for the winter. Unlike previous years, Tethyr now seems to be the vacationing spot of choice, as many former refugees and exiled natives seek to re-assert their presence in the newly-united land. Other nobles see the winter exodus as a chance to expand their influence in the realm, and to make new business contacts.

      The Assumbar clan in particular was noted among the first wave of exiting nobles, as Lady Belkirri and her fellow lay brethen seek to meet with the scattered adherents of the goddess Siamorphe in Tethyr, and revitalize the worship of the Divine Right in that land.

* **Uktar 28:** The Kiss of the Goddess has been returned to Waterdeep! Missing for over twelve years, the Kiss was presented to the assembled Lords at the Palace this morning by the new Luskanite ambassador to Waterdeep, Neruudan, who claimed that the gem was captured from a bandit encampment by Luskanite soldiers. Although grateful for the return of the gem, the appointment of Nerrudan as ambassador is seen as a not-so-subtle snipe at Piergeiron and the Lords, who banned the man from Waterdeep several years ago for trying to set up a spy/smuggling ring in the city.

      The Kiss of the Goddess is a great gemstone named for Sune, the goddess of love and beauty. It was originally presented to the Lords in 1356 DR by the archmage Nairith Irizar, the Sultan of Volothamp, in reparation for an attack on a Waterdhavian merchant ship off the coast of Tethyr. Shortly thereafter, the Kiss was stolen from its' heavily-guarded and warded vault in the Castle, and has not been seen since.

      The gem is enchanted with a unique magical dweomer, which is conferred upon anyone touching it when it periodically flares into radiance. The first soul to touch the gem when it glows is healed of all wounds, cured of blindness or illness, and generally left refreshed and invigorated.

      It is thought that the return of the gem on the eve of the Feast of the Moon heralds good tidings for the coming months.

* **Calendar Day - The Feast of the Moon:** Throughout the city today in taverns, festhalls, and private houses alike, the dead are remembered and tales are told of great heroes and valiant deeds far into the night. Also most holy day of Kelemvor, the priests of the Lord of the Dead today gathered in the City of the Dead, to commune with their god and with the spirits of the deceased until the stroke of twelve bells that night.

      As usual on this day, many of Waterdeep's undead denizens rested uneasily, and reports of spectral sightings came in from all Wards. The Ghost Knight alone was spotted by several different citizens.

      However, perhaps the biggest surprise today came at nightfall, when the blue orb of the Moon Sphere winked into existence. Patrons of the nearby Jade Dancer festhall were shocked to see the Sphere already occupied by several dozen people, in various states of corporeality and many of them wearing outdated styles of dress. Miritai Aeouna, the dowager of House Lathkule, was said to have fainted dead away as she recognized one of the dancers as her grandfather, Ultath Lathkule, dead for almost a century! The spirits danced silently until dawn, occupying the Moon Sphere until it faded away, whereupon they did likewise.

* **Nightal 3:** An apparent assassination attempt was made on the life of Rulathon, Captain of the Watch, today. He and several other members of the Watch were making their way towards the Castle when they were ambushed by rooftop snipers in Watchrun Alley. Their assailants used crossbows whose bolts were coated with a particularly virulent poison, widely used among the thieves' guilds of the southern lands. Three Watchmen died from the lethal hail, but Rulathon and two others managed to find shelter beneath a nearby wagon. By the time aid arrived, the assassins had fled, apparently into the sewers underneath the city. The Watch is investigating the incident, and questioning residents in the vincinity of the attack.
* **Nightal 5:** Several bloody, severed human feet were found by a shopkeeper in Watchrun Alley this morning. The feet were found outside of Brazadoom's Sundries, near by the spot where the Captain of the Watch was ambushed only a few days ago.

      Such grisly mutilations, and subsequent public display, are an old form of punishment once used by the Thieves' Guild. That, coupled with the type of poison used in the assassination attempt, have led investigators to believe that the Guild was involved in the attempt on Rulathon's life. It is likely that the assassins were punished for their failure, although what the motives behind the attack were, are unknown.

* **Nightal 8:** One of the last merchant caravans of the year was ambushed north of the city late this afternoon. The caravan, bound for Yartar with a load of textiles and glassware from the city-states of the Chionthar Valley, was set upon and destroyed south of Rassalantar. The marauders removed all traces of their identity, although Waterdhavian scouts found a wide trail of mixed mounted and foot tracks leading westward from the scene, towards the foot of Mount Helimbrar. The Lords have ordered a large unit of Guardsmen to the Mount, to search for and root out any new bandit encampments or goblinkin lairs before the winter snows make such efforts too hazardous.
* **Nightal 12:** A mutilated human corpse was found in a midden off Quill Alley today by members of the Dungsweeper's Guild. The victim was later identified as Rinzoun of Athkatla, an Amnite merchant wintering in the city. The cause of death was determined to be from multiple slashing and gouging attacks, similar to those made by a large predator.

      Although they are still investigating, the presence of a single, bloody bear claw at the scene has led the Watch to look into the possibility that Rinzoun was the victim of a ritual hunt-and-slaying by the little-known Cult of the Dancing Bear, an obscure beast cult whose origins date back before Waterdeep's founding, to the barbarian tribes of the North. The Cultists are suspected in several similar slayings over the past few years, most of them visitors or non-natives of the city. Unfortunately, the Cult of the Dancing Bear was shattered several decades ago, and driven so far underground that they have successfully avoided the long arm of the Watch since then.

* **Nightal 17:** Stallkeepers and patrons in the Market this afternoon were startled by the sudden appearance of a balloon-like contraption in their midst. The craft, which belongs to the mage Amelior Amanitas of Secomber, landed suddenly atop the stall of Harvendhas Drult, a purveyor of Yartaran pottery. Amanitas seemed quite confused as to how he ended up in Waterdeep, and told the Watch that he was last in the Graypeaks, attempting to use "high-altitude air currents as an aid in 'directional teleportation,'" then found himself in the Market.

      The mage and his assistant were arrested, and the balloon impounded by the Watch, but all three were soon released into the custody of the Blackstaff.

* **Nightal 20:** The naval raker *Morningstar* made history today by being the first Waterdhavian naval ship to be outfitted with bombards, a new form of weapon recently developed by the island-nation of Lantan. Similar to a Thayan bombard, the new Lantannan version is less powerful, but more portable. Such devices are already finding favor in the navies of Calimshan and Amn, especially in the New Territories of Maztica.

      The Morningstar fired the bombards at target barges in the Harbor. Piergeiron and Rulathon, on hand for the demonstration, were said to be impressed with the power of the weapon, but will retain the more traditional balefire catapults and ballistae for the foreseeable future. The Open Lord cited high costs, a susceptibility to fire, and high maintenance as the main reasons for his decision.

* **Nightal 23:** The ghost of Chelthorea Crownsilver has been spotted for the third time this month, haunting the site of her death, the Silver Rain Inn in Castle Ward. The Baroness, who appears in undeath much as she did in life, was assassinated by unknown agents last month. Her haunt has so far appeared twice in the room where she was killed, and once at the top of the flight of stairs that leads to the upper bedrooms. Her silver-streaked hair appears disheveled and unbound, and a horrible gash across her throat pumps spectral blood and gore down the front of her nightgown. She is surrounded by a pale golden nimbus, and holds out a hand to any living beings nearby, as if imploring them. Those so encountered report feeling a horrible chill in her presence, and an irresistible urge to flee in terror.

      After her assassination, Chelthorea's two faithful companions, a pair of honey-gold tressym, seemingly adopted the Inn as their new home. Although generally sedate and lazy, the winged felines seem to be able to sense when the spirit of their former mistress is about to appear, and will suddenly give a violent start, hissing and spitting. They then seek to fly out the nearest open door or window, not to return to the building until the spectre has vanished.

      After this latest sighting, Lord Piergeiron has asked the Spires of the Morning to assign a priest of Lathander to the common room of the Silver Rain. The Open Lord hopes to make contact with the haunt should she again appear, so that investigators may learn the identity of her killers.

* **Nightal 25:** The annual Winterride Ball was held at the Palace tonight, and all of Waterdeep's remaining noble or influential personages were on hand. In addition to the attending nobles, there were also officers of the Watch and Guard, ambassadors of various countries and city-states, wealthy businessmen, socialties, the heads of several guilds, and many honored heroes and famous artists.

      The Ball, which marks the ending of the old year and the beginning of a new one, began promptly at sundown. The evening opened with a display of new magics and unusual creatures in the Lord's Court. After that, those in attendance were treated to a massive banquet, complete with musical accompaniment by an orchestra of New Olamn's finest musicians. After the dinner, many danced in the Great Hall, or broke into smaller groups (many of which seemed to congregate around the punch bowl - an amazing sight in itself, being an etched crystal basin large enough to serve as a giant's bathing tub!). The evening ended with an aweing pyrotechnical display by the mages of the Watchful Order, which no doubt lit up the night sky as far away as Neverwinter. A few highlights of the evening;

* + Several new spells were demonstrated in the Lord's Court, under the vigilant eyes of the Blackstaff, Maskar Wands, and a host of Watchful Order mages. Those presenting new magics included Thyriellentha Snome, the Mage Civilar; the enchantress Ololya Blesskill of Turmish; and Gemidan, the young ex-apprentice of the Blackstaff. The wildmage Jhoebryn Wonderstars attempted to display her spells but, due to the unstable nature of her Art, was prevented from entering the Court by Maskar Wands. After arguing unsuccessfully with Wands for a good half-hour, Jhoebryn declared "a pox on the stuffy, small-minded workers of Art that infest this city," and stalked out of the building, much to the relief of the assembled (It should be noted that Jhoebryn is now suspected in an incident outside the Palace later that same night. A bronze statue of the Paladinson standing outside the Palace was altered, changing it into a donkey-headed, overweight Calishite pleasure-dancer).
  + After the Lord's Court and the banquet, the Paladinson was little seen tonight. His attention was kept with the Blackstaff and the Neverwintan ambassador for most of the night, although he did emerge from a private council chamber once to dance with his daughter, Aleena. Indeed, many of the young men present seemed quite smitten with the beautiful Paladinstar, although the constant presence of Madeiron Sunstone, the Open Lord's bodyguard, served to deter most of them.
  + Maledrio Deepwhistle, the Lantanese agent who recently demonstrated Lantan's newest weaponry to the Naval Guard, was seen talking at length to Neruudan, the new Luskanite ambassador to Waterdeep. Although it is unknown what they talked of, it would be most troubling for the city if her nominal rival to the north gained this new Lantannan technology.
* **Nightal 29:** The first major snowstorm of winter hit the city today, bringing the city to a standstill and sending citizens scurrying to the warmth of their fireplaces and neighborhood taverns. The storm, which began around mid-morning and lasted until well into the night, piled almost two feet of snow onto the streets and rooftops, and generally foiled attempts by the Loyal Order of Street Laborers to clear passages through the drifts, many of which were piled waist-high in spots.

      As is typical in such storms, faithful of Auril were spotted dancing through the blizzard, looking like ghostly haunts or spectres, as they wore nothing more than simple white shifts in the freezing temperatures.

* **Nightal 30:** In the aftermath of yesterday's snowstorm comes the news that the Lady Nleera of House Tesper has finally given birth, to not one, but two healthy baby girls. Nleera's long pregnancy, which prevented her and her husband, Armult Tesper, from travelling south for the winter, was long and complicated, and many felt that either she or her children would not survive the birthing.

      According to a reliable source, Nleera actually went into labor in the middle of a dinner party that she was giving for the Blackstaff and his wife, the Lady Mage Laeral. She then had the high honor of having the Lady Laeral as an impromptu midwife! After the twins were delivered, the scene was further blessed by the appearance of the two Ghost Sisters of Tespergates, Silpara and Yulhymbra. The phantom sisters reached out to touch the brows of the newborns, and then silently faded away. In honor of the spectral guardians of the House, and for their part in bringing them together, Armult and Nleera decided to name their two children after the Ghost Sisters.