

We found an inn in the town. Not the cheapest we wanted to wake up in the morning and be sure that our throats had not been cut or that we had been robbed. This cost us the grand price of 2 silver each. We ordered food. The choice was mutton pie of stake. I chose a nice rare stake, Morkoth chose the stake but well done. The others all went for the lower price option of mutton pie.

We had adjoining rooms with a door between them so we could keep watch through the night. Not that we were paranoid but!!! Mina the young ranger we had discovered the previous day seemed to have regained her wits and remembered her name. Either that or she finally decided that we posed no threat to her and so she gave us her name. Mina took the first watch for two hours and this was uneventful. I took the second watch. By this time the party had ended and all was quiet apart from perhaps a cry or muffled scream. I went to the window not sure if the sound had come from inside or out. I heard the sound again and decided the sound was from outside so I quietly opened the window and listened again. I only heard the sound once more and that was from the general direction of the party and the road to the castle but it was distant and I could not locate the source of the sound any better. I finished my watch listening at the window which I quietly closed at the end of my watch and then woke Igrid. I informed him of what I had heard but the last sound had been quite some time ago. I then went to sleep. We woke early in the morning and went down to breakfast. Steak, eggs etc. I had a stake and egg sandwich. Morkoth listened intently to the gossip over breakfast. Most of the discussion was about the party last night though none of those present had attended. Apparently they knew of a cleric and a tax collector from the town who attended along with some merchants and people with money seeking to gain a title.

We decided to pay Adriana a visit but waited until 11am before going along to the hotel where she was staying. After inquiring at the door we were shown in. Morkoth entered first followed by Igrid. They both caught sight of Melissa Ackerman (the woman who accused Morkoth of murder and now works for Adriana) standing on the balcony looking down at them. Apparently she was waving her arms in a way that could have been casting magic but neither Morkoth or Igrid were sure. By the time Mina and I got in she was gone. The place was a mess. It had not been cleared up from the previous evening. There were playing cards on the tables with drinks and half smoked cigars laying around. We were shown into the smoking room where Adriana was sitting. Igrid thought Melissa had been casting something on Morkoth so when we got into the room he started to cast detect magic. Adriana was not impressed and grabbed his arm and asked him not to cast in this place. Igrid explained what had happened and that he only wanted to check Morkoth nothing else. He would drop the spell immediately after checking Morkoth and look at nothing else. Adriana acquiesced and let Igrid cast detect magic. There was nothing on Morkoth so he dropped the spell or so he told us!

During our chat with Adriana we discovered several interesting items of information. One of which was that the Baron's son is engaged to Viscount Karhouse's daughter. I enquired about the muffled scream that I had heard well after the party last night but no news of any incident had reached Adriana and there was no further news from Bellamy regarding Gillian. We had a brief lunch as would befit a "lady" hosting four smelly outdoors types and then left for our appointment at the castle.

We were disarmed by the guards at the gate house and shown inside by a senior steward of the castle. We walked through the courtyard where we spotted Nathaniel talking to somebody. The steward said that this was the Baron! All the while we walked we were drilled by the steward on manners. Do not sit down even if offered, do not interrupt, do not ask questions, speak only when spoken to, give clear precise answers, do not waffle on. We were shown into a room where a lady was sitting at a desk. She bore a striking resemblance to the somewhat younger woman in the paintings on the wall beside the man previously identified as the Baron. This was the Baroness and there was no sign of the Baron in the room. The lady opened the conversation with the word, "You

seek an audience with us?" This confirmed to me that she was indeed the Baroness. An unexpected turn of events but as it turned out a deliberate political manoeuvre. We explained that Nathaniel was using the title of lord to raise a mercenary army and that as far as we were aware he had no right to that title. The Baroness described Nathaniel as a Lordling entitled to use the title of squire. She made no comment about his use of the title Lord. After some discussions we obtained the following statement more than once. If there is evidence of murder being committed in his name then bring forth the evidence and it will be dealt with. The baroness asked us why we had been in the area of the land clearances. We explained that we had been travelling in the area looking at the old mines and looking for trade possibilities. I am not at all convinced that she believed us. Mina explained her recruitment into the mercenary unit and the justification that it was to kill monsters. This was not what we were told by the captives we had.

The baroness then began to question us about Adrianna. Apparently she is new to town this year. We explained that we had little knowledge of her. She owned a club in Bellamy and had told us that she was looking to expand into Williamstown but we had no knowledge of her prior to our arrival in Bellamy. The Baroness then asked us how we knew Adrianna. We explained that we had met up on the road several times as we travelled on business protecting trade goods etc. We had even fought side by side at one time when we were attacked by Hell Hounds. We left the castle after being told that we had not seen the Baron nor had we talked to him! The Baroness herself never admitted as to who she was. This seemed a deliberate political ploy to distance themselves from us and the new we brought.

We walked back to town contemplating the discussion. It is quite possible that Nathaniel is making a power play. All the evidence of the mercenary army and the land clearances would support this. Probably his biggest rival in Bellamy is Adriana so it is also possible that the coincidences of the hell hounds turning up whenever we met Adriana not because Adriana summoned them but because a rival was trying to remove her. This would also stack up with her employees amassing cold iron weapons as these would improve their chances against summoned creatures.

We arrived back in town some time after 3pm and dropped in on the armourer. He had completed Igrid's knuckle dusters so Igrid paid for them and we left. We discussed what to do next. We could go back to Bellamy and talk to the watch. We could go back to green top and see how the siege had ended assuming it had ended. Getting involved in the siege on either side could lead to serious consequences. So we decided that having Mina with us we would return to Green Top on the pretext of a mercy mission looking for survivors and then return to Williamstown to collect the rest of the weapons. There was still the offer of investigating Gillian's death for Adrianna but that could wait.