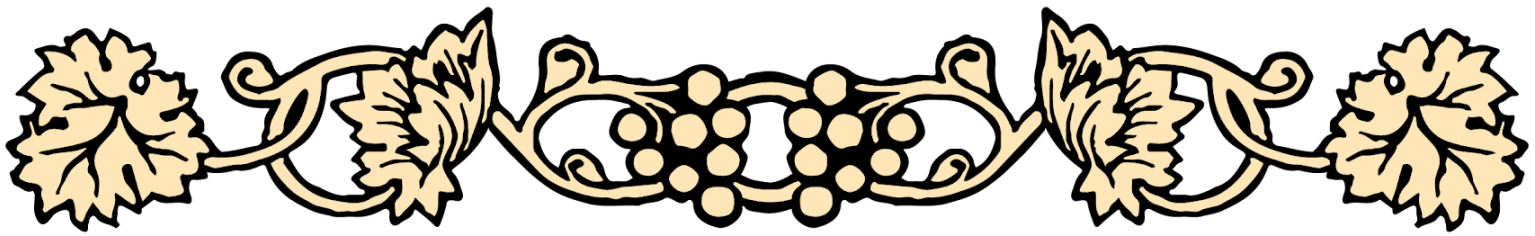




Official
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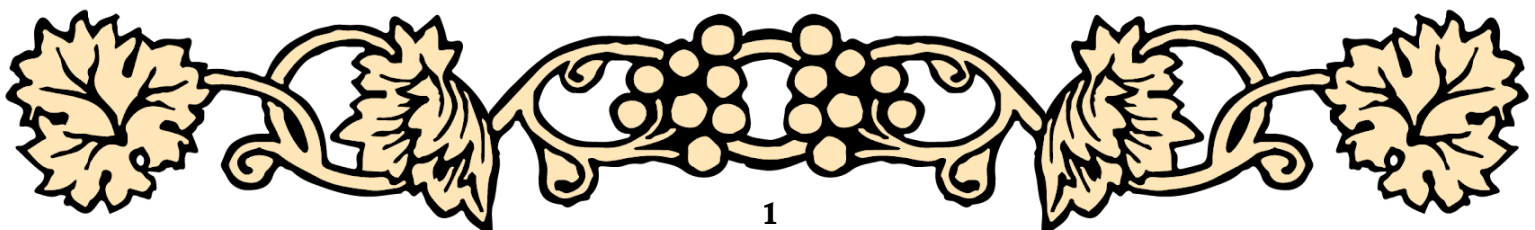
A DANCE OF
RIBBONS II

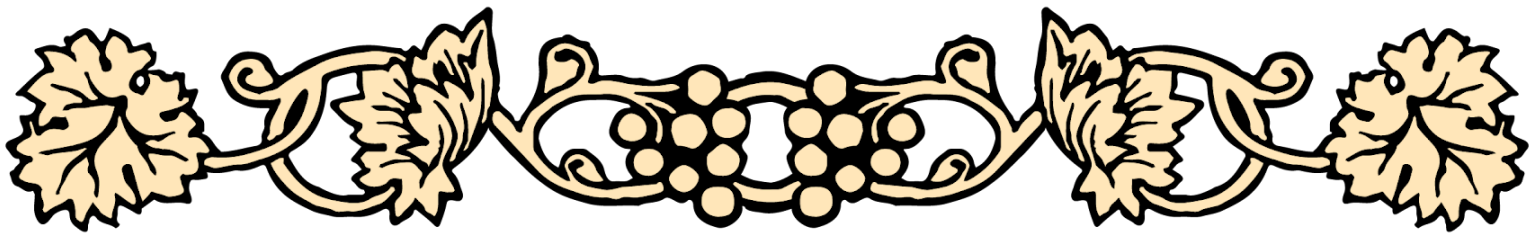
The Dance of the Swept
& the Last Five Years



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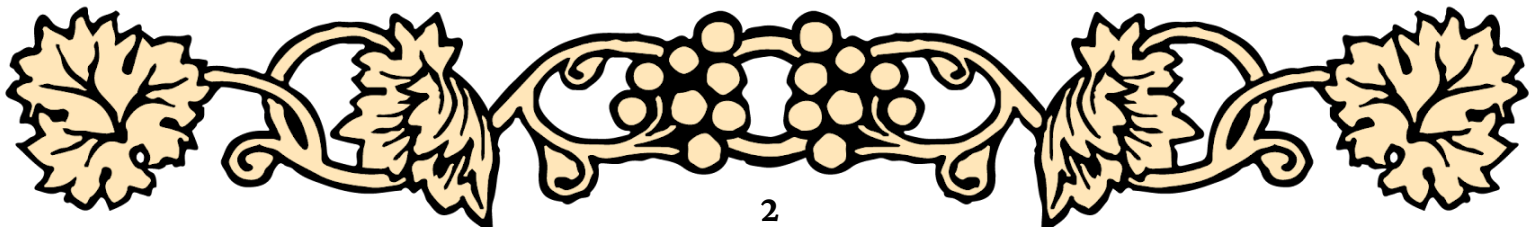
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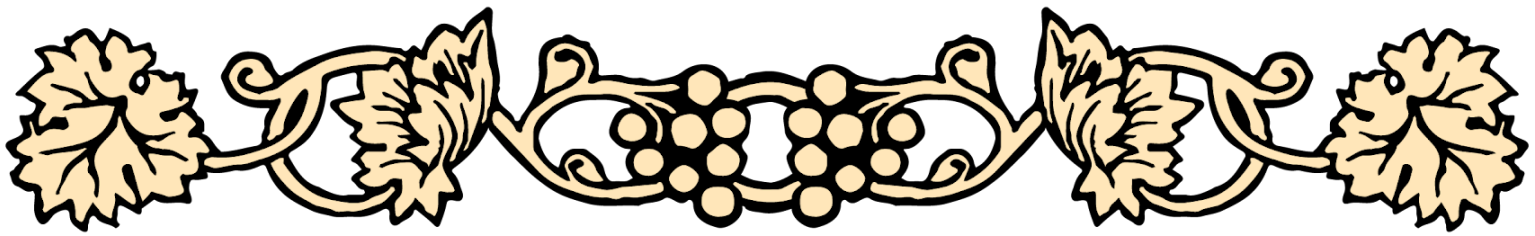




*‘With all that is transpiring before us, I think,
now more than ever, we must look to our Sidhe for guidance.
And perhaps ask for Io’s forgiveness, too.’*

– Gawain, Woaden to Kilkern





The Events of the Dance

Countless stories are told of that historic Dance of the Swept five years ago. A brief record of the more common accounts of that fateful Dance is presented herein. These are recorded in the hopes of contributing to our understanding of what this age of endless spring means for Garmont and Vicaria.

The Cult of Blackthorn

Under the leadership of Moroz, a malevolent cult attempted a ritual to awaken Arawin. Although Moroz was slain and the ritual disrupted, it allowed a dark shadow to seep into the land.

Possession of the May Queen

Genevieve the May Queen was possessed by a malevolent spirit related to the consuming darkness on the second night. This night ended with terror as spirits inhabiting the land rose and attacked all the festival goers. Genevieve was never seen again.

Those who were Swept

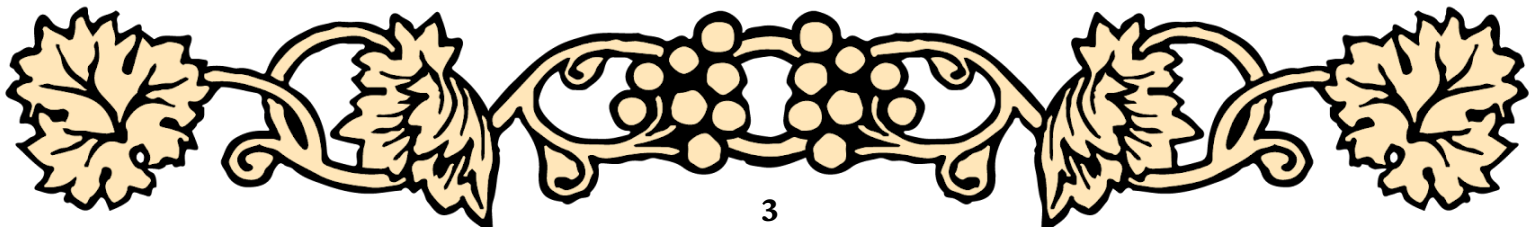
The final ritual was one of sacrifice. Faewyn the White Hart, Yewan, Skuld, Crem, Arawn, and Rho Kell were swept away, and taken by the land never to be seen again.

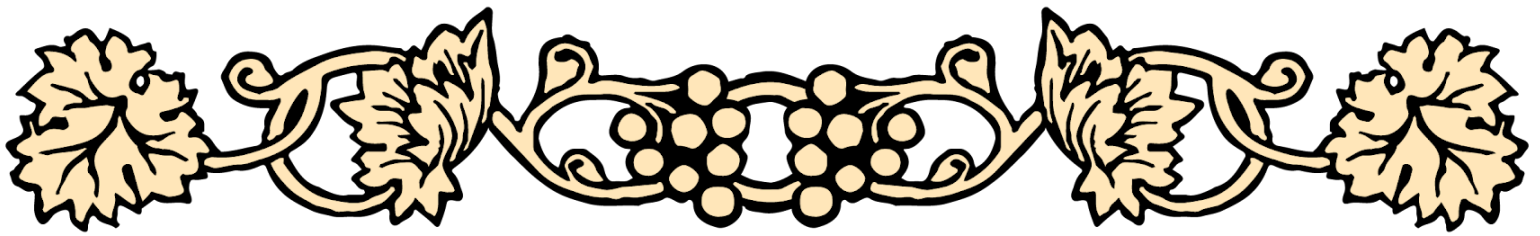
The Church of Io and The Sidhe

Following a spiritual revelation experienced by Ioites and adherents of the Sidhe during the festival, Mother Verity and the Church of Io have agreed to investigate potential historical wrongs inflicted upon the Sidhe when Garmontians first arrived centuries ago.

Io the Nine

Phillip the Bard, now an advisor to the Lade of Straussland, underwent a spiritual awakening. They perceived that the nine Sidhe were manifestations of Io and commenced efforts to propagate a new religion of Io the Nine throughout Garmont.





Kilkern's Acceptance of the Clanless

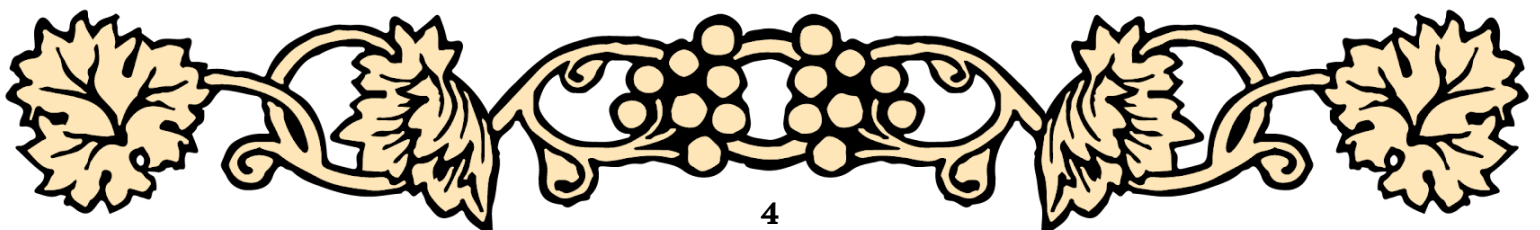
A unanimous decision by Kilkern led to the integration and acceptance of the Clanless, a group of exiled Vicarians.

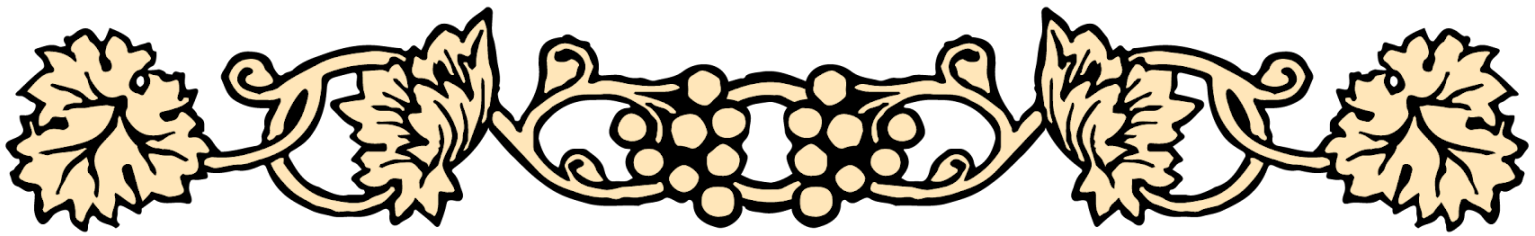
The Emorian Murders and The Evil Eye

Don Solace and Delfina Solace were victims of murder. The four perpetrators were cursed with "The Evil Eye". How much longer must they endure before facing justice?

The Withdrawal of Francia

Following their observation of the events at the Dance, Francia deemed the lands of Vicaria too problematic for conquest and consequently withdrew their efforts.





Garmont

A new High Ruler of Garmont has been elected: Carafina Ascari. Ties have been strengthened between cantons and clans. However, new religious openness and beliefs, such as those of Conrad Heilgard of Vaud, may cause tension.

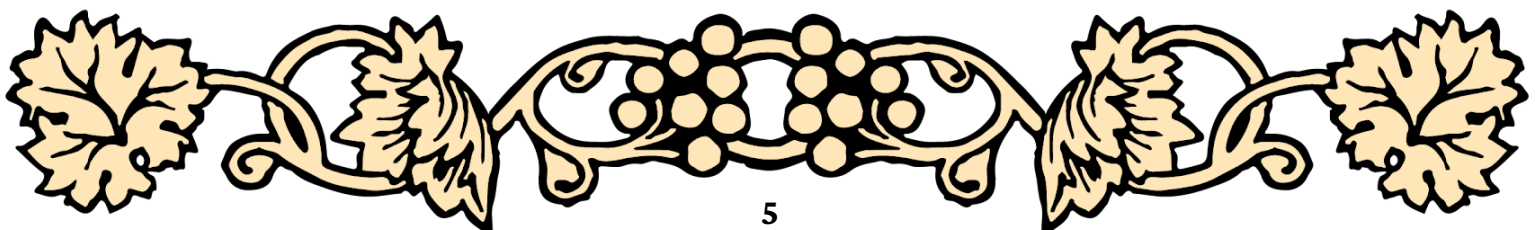
Straussland

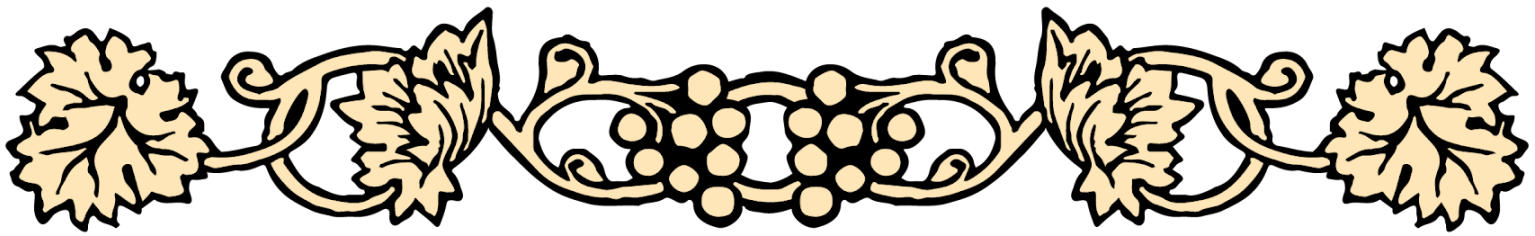
Straussland, like all their Garmontian brethren, underwent major change as a result of the Dance. Majordomo Gaspard, a trusted advisor, was revealed to be a Francian mole, and Straussland narrowly avoided becoming a puppet state of the Francian Empire. Straussland was thrown into turmoil and their old Lade was ousted. Their new Lade, Guillaume de Laroche-Beaucourt, has decided to accept Vicarians who wish to cross the border and live in Straussland. Phillip the Bard, advisor to the Lade, has been hard at work spreading the doctrine of Io the Nine, and worship of the Sidhe is accepted, if not celebrated.

Beneath this seeming peace, however, dark things brewed. In the first year after the Dance, a Lord of Straussland was found sleeping at his dinner table, his dinner half-eaten and his wine half-drunk. He only waited, chest rattling, unable to ask for release. He remains that way, even four years on. In another town, far away, a couple was blessed with eternal youth on the night of their wedding and they have not aged in four years. They are beautiful to look upon, but their neighbours turn away, scared to witness whatever magic is at work. Every Strauss can tell you a story like these, for Straussland seems caught in a terrible Slowing of time. Worry is spreading that these events are punishments from Io for straying from her righteous path.

Gottenburg

Gottenburg strengthened their network of knowledge, with friendships and uneasy alliances built across the cantons and clans. The Lade of Gottenburg, Carafina Ascari, rose to High Ruler of Garmont. She promised to be a unifying force, with an understanding of and presence in each canton. The leadership of Gottenburg is much changed. Scythia Agnet, a lowly farmer, became advisor to the High Ruler. Giorgio Solace was given a noble title within Carafina's court and is now known as the Count of Emor. Madame Adesso, Steward of Gottenburg, narrowly avoided being swept, and Lavinia the Astrologer is dabbling in dangerous magics. Gottenburg is newly elevated, and could rise to greatness or fall to ruin.





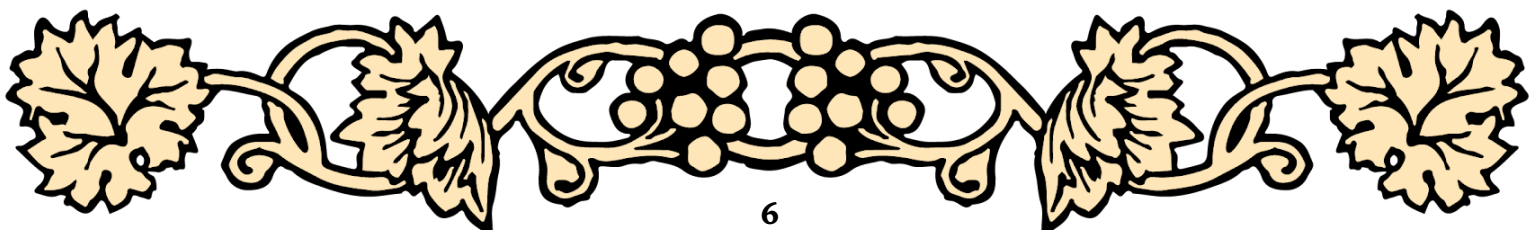
A year after the Dance, in a quiet town, folk began dancing and singing. It started with a single jig, but spiralled into unbridled movement. They would not stop. They could not stop. And those that watched could not help but join. This dancing sickness spread from township to township. Countless feet wore away to bone, dancers wept yet could not stop. Young and old alike dropped dead from exhaustion. Then as suddenly as it arrived, it stopped. To this day, people are shy – to sing, or dance, or even skip – too scared to reawaken the madness that had taken hold of them. A fearful silence has settled over the land, as people pray never to see the dancing sickness return.

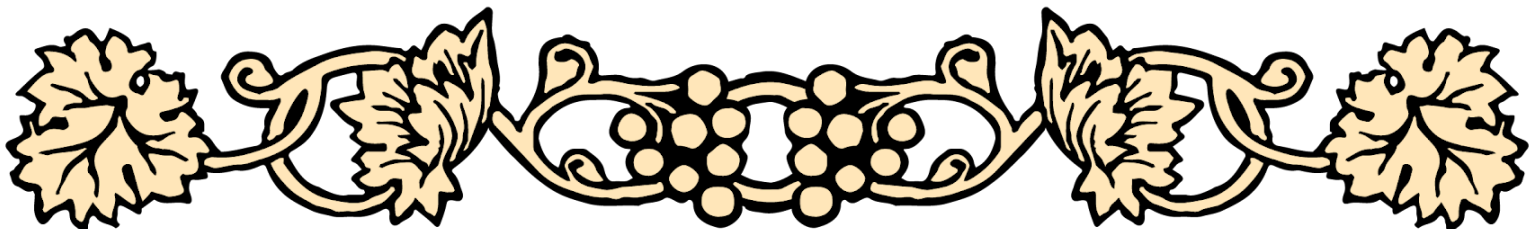
Vaud

Vaud came to the Dance with scores to settle. The Lade of Vaud, Conrad Heilgard, made it his mission to hunt down the Vicarians who killed his wife. After much negotiation, Vaud now has an alliance with Hathwood, and is also allowed to hunt Clanless on Dun land. There is still significant tension with Kilkern, as the Clanless have been accepted into Kilkerni society and Vaud has no free passage through Kilkerni land. Despite this, Vaud is more open to both Vicarian culture and worship of the Sidhe.

Conrad has become a follower of both Celumnous and Io, and if the Inquisition comes to Vaud, they will be turned away.

Three years of the great spring passed, and the lands were overrun by wildlife. Elk, rabbits, foxes, and boar tore away at the countryside. Vaud began a Great Hunt to cull the booming animal population. But no matter how much blood was spilt, the beasts still multiplied. More and more Vaud joined the Hunt. Carcasses filled the rivers, damming streams with fur and flesh. No animal was spared – and why should they be, when with each new day new animals sprung forth? As Vaud's Hunt continues, rumours swirl that, in isolated villages, they hunt more intelligent game.





Vicaria

Opinion on the Clanless has shifted. Despite the provocations of the League of the Thistle, Keldas have started conversations on how to reintegrate Clanless into Kilkerni society.

Kilkern

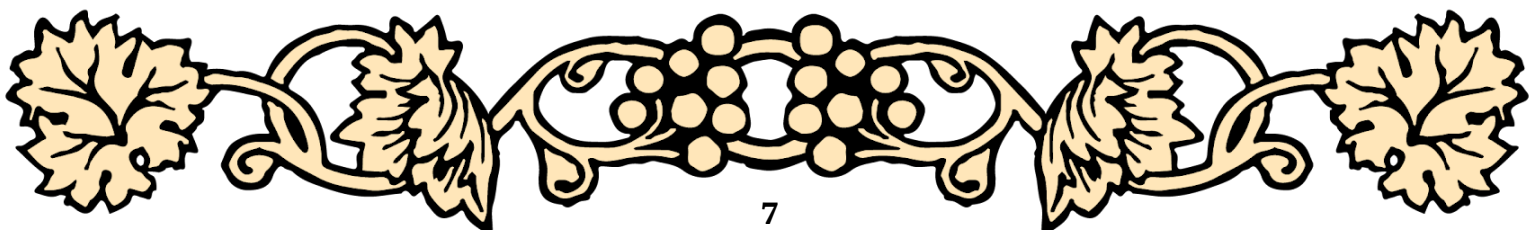
Kilkern welcomed any and all to their tavern, the Whirling in Silk. Many members of the clan participated in Moroz Blackthorn's ritual. The clan cast a protective spell over their tavern that served as a haven on the night of the May Queen's possession. The Kelda of Kilkern, Moira, left with hopes to build ships for trade and exploration and that Clanless would be given a second chance. Cillian was cursed with the Evil Eye for his murder of Delfina. Conrad Heilgard of Vaud declared his disapproval when Kilkern offered safety to Ardith after he was made Clanless. An Emorian ambassador has been dispatched to the growing shanty town.

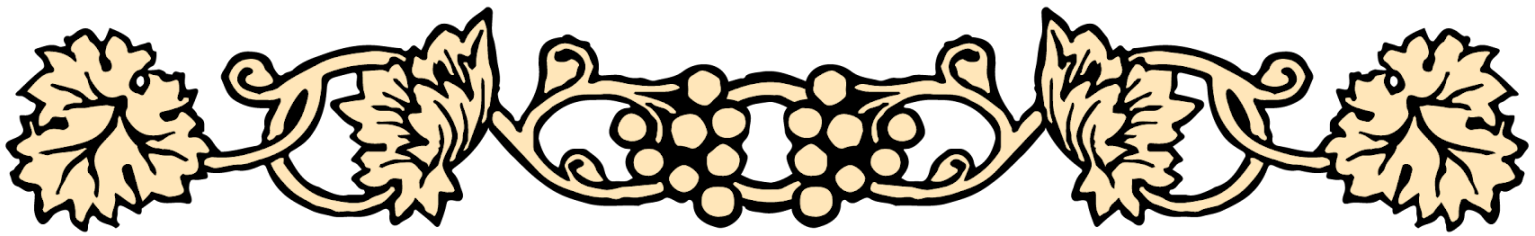
After a unanimous decision to allow clanless back into Kilkern, the young clan quickly became known as the clan of second chances. In the year following the Dance, Clanless from all the hidden corners of Vicaria flocked to the humble coastal settlement of Kilkern. The shoreside infrastructure of Kilkern was woefully under-prepared for such an inundation of people. It swelled rapidly into a bustling port city with shanty-towns on its edges and, below the surface, a lethal undercurrent of organised crime. Trade boomed, but between the wash of culture that rolled in with ships from Garmont and the poorly-integrated Clanless, the Kilkerni identity grew blurry.

In the past year, a strange curse has settled over the clan. Any ship that leaves the port, no matter how full or how empty with goods and sailors, is doomed to sink just off the coast. All pleas to the Sidhe for answers have proven futile.

Dunmoore

Dunmoore tended to internal turmoil for much of the Dance, with many members being secretly associated with the League of the Thistle. Their Woaden, Broccan, perished on the night of the May Queen's possession and Cianat (Ci) was named Woad in Broccan's absence. Woad Ci sustained corruption after casting a protection spell over the Dunfolk to keep them safe during Moroz's ritual. With the help of the witch Aunt Niamh, Woad Ci pleaded with Kayew and managed to stem the spread of their corruption, a feat which had never been seen before in Vicarian history. Such gifts are not given without consequences, however, particularly from the Mad God himself...





The Hunger began sometime in the third year after the Dance. Chefs were ordered by the dozen to brew, bake, and boil around the clock. The Dun ate and ate and ate. But when the stores ran empty, the people still Hungered for more. One of the halls had eaten a month's worth of food in an afternoon, so they moved away from food. They ate the mice, the dogs, the cats that howled. They ate the forks, the knives, the bowls. Eventually, they ate the gems, the silver, the gold. After a month of eating, as abruptly as it had arrived, the Hunger ended. All the riches they had acquired had disappeared in a matter of months, and now the strongholds are destitute. Although the Hunger has ended, each Dun feels their stomach turn and churn with the echoes of wanting more.

Hathwood

Hathwood established their camp as a site for ritual and tradition. Their Woaden, Talibus, was tried for assisting Moroz and was banished from the clan, only to later return transformed by corruption. An alliance was formed between Hathwood and Vaud: 'The Stag and the Wolf will now hunt together.'

The five-year spring has swollen Hathwood's verdant landscape. The people first rejoiced in this great Flourishing. Trees bloomed and bore fruits never seen before on Hathwoadian branches. The local stags shed their velvet and it gave way to iridescent moss. Animals ate the foreign fruit until they bloated and died, and yet more flora sprouted from their carcasses. Grave mounds pushed bodies and bones back up to the surface in a macabre dance of abundance and death. The thatched roofs of their homes became gardens for oozing fungus and noxious-smelling flowers. Now the landscape must be cut back each day lest it overgrow all Hathwoadian camps. Beneath the ripened skin of the clan, what rot may have set in?

