

The Torn Page

*The Lord Conal MacNachtan
June 10th, A.S. XXXIX*

*In Memory of Ashley Falk,
Known to her friend in the SCA as Ashley of the Bear
January 24, 1991 - May 31, 2004*

Not so long ago, in the Kingdom of An Tir, the King looked up as one of his advisors approached him with tearful eyes. "What is it, my trusted friend?" said the King. "What brings you here in such distress?"

"I have grievous news for you, your Majesty. Terrible news," said the Advisor. "A page has been torn from the Grete Book of An Tir."

The King sat silent for a time, and then told his advisor, "This is indeed sad news; the Page is lost to us then?"

"Gone. Torn away and never to be seen again. A great loss for the Kingdom your Majesty," came the reply.

"This is true. But is the knowledge truly lost? Does no one know what was written on that page?"

"Your Majesty, many knew the words of that page. You yourself have spoken of them in your court. The words of that page were written gently, in flowing letters. Though written quietly, they were heard by many, and often repeated - and spoken loud. They spoke of Service. They spoke of Honor. They spoke of learning and growing. They foretold of a great future for An Tir."

The King sat silent again, and bowed his head. He spoke again, with mournful words: "I know the page of which you speak. Know you that there were other words written upon this page, words written faint and not yet whole - They looked to be the words of an apprentice, or perhaps of a protégé. I could almost see the words of a Knight, or of a Laurel, perhaps of a Pelican. Maybe they were those of a Royal Peer. They spoke of deeds, of service and art. They spoke of duty, of caring, and giving. Faint they were, but perhaps among them I saw the words of a Lion of An Tir."

After a moment, the King spoke again: "This page is gone, and its passing will touch us all. Those faint words not yet fully formed upon it will never be completed. But does not the Grete Book of An Tir have many pages in it?"

The Kings advisor shook her head and said "Sadly, your Majesty, we have but few pages left. There are few to care for them, and all too often they are left untouched, and never written upon."

The King looked up, his course decided. "Then we must add new pages to the Grete Book of An Tir. We will find those to care for them, and to see that that which is written upon them speaks to all of the Greatness of the Kingdom of An Tir. The words of this torn page will not be lost to us!"

The Dean of the College of Pages looked up to the King with a smile and said, "I have here an application from a candidate, seeking admission into the College of Pages..."