

Päap's poetic ponderings – A collection of memories from Gimle

The Golden Empire

Among the various factions, tribes, and more or less loosely connected groups in Gimle, there was not much of cultured sophistication to be found. Certainly, the royal entourages of Westmark carried themselves with some dignity and poise, but even they would not compare favorably to high society back in The Marble City, my sorely missed home. What most other folks in the Gimle region displayed was not so much 'culture', as a sort of organized barbarism, if you will. I did find one exception, though: a newly arrived trade delegation sent out from the far-away eastern Golden Empire. Though not being the first time I met people of that fabled and mysterious land, having had some dealings with a few of their spice and gold merchants through my family's trading company, this was my first opportunity to speak to them at length, and watch them interact in a more social setting.

One could easily recognize them from afar by the soft chiming of the many sequins adorning the garb of most women, or the brightness of color displayed by everyone. With the sense of proper decorum and honorability ingrained in these noble Easterners, as well as a friendliness that seemed genuine even for a trade delegation, the word 'Meraba' - the formal greeting in their own foreign tongue - quickly became a most welcome sound.

Patrons of the arts as they were, a musician or poet could often be rewarded handsomely if the entertainments were to their liking. I assume that more than one trader ended up with a heavier pouch than expected when dealing with them, as well. The 'Golden' part of their empire's name is not simply metaphor, one could say.

They often spoke in reverence of their Empress, a woman or rather an endless series of women, whose perpetually veiled visage her subjects would never see. 'Though a body may die, the Divine Empress is eternal.', one of them told me. Loyalty to their ruler goddess showed not only in their conversations but also in battle, where their skilled and disciplined warriors let any opponents know that even politeness has a limit.

One would hope that their presence in Gimle is more than fleeting. Their exotic songs and enchanting dances surely made the often stressful and violent trade days of Gimle an easier time for all, and as a whole The Golden Empire provided a much-needed counterweight to the ruggedness of most other folks. One of the officers in the guard of the Empire commissioned a poem for himself, paying generously of course, and inspired by the celebration of the birthday of their Golden Empress I wrote another one, the presentation of which caused much applause and even more free drinks. This is indeed a highly cultured people.

The blade of the east

*I once met a nobleman of eastern creed
I knew him as Ari J'wani Rasheed
A champion he was, of an Empress divine
And never have I seen a swordsman as fine
A stern and precise man, who suffered no fool
He'd never been known for defeat in a duel*

*Sworn to the Empress' every need
Was loyal Ari J'wani Rasheed
The heart of this warrior burned with a fire
To serve and empower the Golden Empire
If you stood against him, he would make you bleed
The steely-eyed Ari J'wani Rasheed*

For the Glory of the Empress on her Birthday

*O radiant sunshine who walks on this earth
I humbly proclaim on the date of thy birth
That blessed are all, be they high-born or low
Who bask in thy glorious, wondrous glow
So lucky am I, so lucky are we
To be in thy presence, thy power to see*

*The wisest of rulers, an empress divine
A prosperous leader till the end of time
So wonderful, and if I may be so bold
I dream of your beautiful face to behold
So lucky am I, so lucky are we
The great Golden Goddess, happy birthday to thee*

*By the pen of Pherryginus Pääp
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