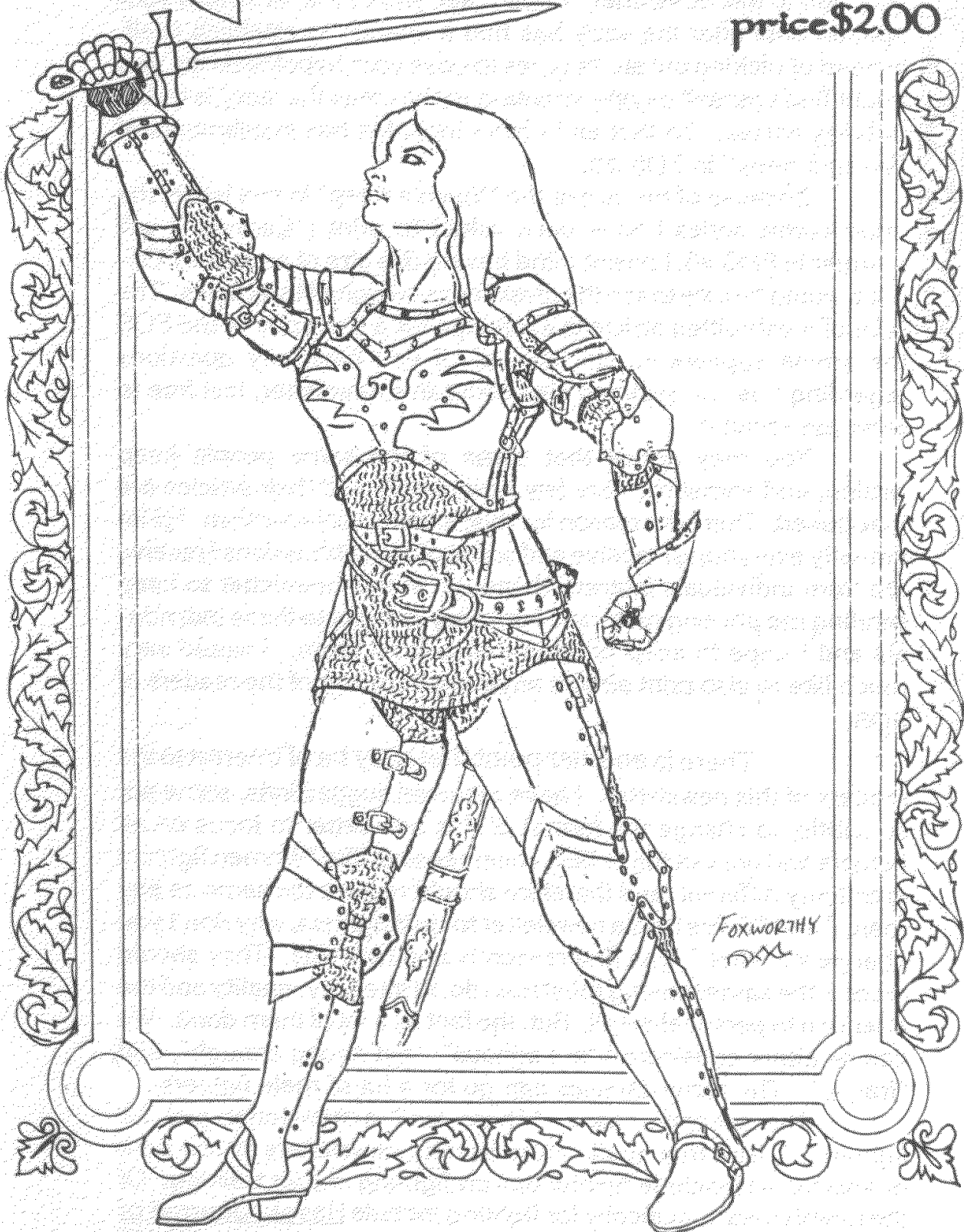




FLOWER OF SOUVENANCE

Issue #5

price \$2.00



Foxworthy
1986

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR;

Greetings unto those subscribers and those who have yet to subscribe.

I guess the biggest development since FOS #4 is the response I have received regarding Lord William Blackfox's series "Vixen's Keep". The response has all been female ranging from waiting to see more for comment to threatening to cancel subscription to this newsletter. I would ask you to wait and form your opinion until after the story has had a chance to establish itself. Instead of picking out stereotypes to base your hypothesis on, you might find yourself paying attention to the ideas the story is trying to bring across. To that end I have included two installments of "Vixen's Keep" in FOS #5.

Because of the size of the "Vixen's Keep" in this issue, the other comic series I have been asked to print ("Caravan") will premier in FOS #6. I do not mind having this size of art in the FOS, but it would be nice to see the graphics outweighed by articles. The offer of a submitted article in exchange for a free copy of the FOS the article appears in, still stands. If you have any questions regarding this, or anything else about this newsletter, feel free to write me about it.

You may notice that some of the same people keep writing, and sometime very few new people and their articles are introduced. There is a reason for this, and it's not favoritism. I print virtually everything I receive and some of the submissions I receive are from individuals interested enough in this newsletter to keep sending me printing material. I am very grateful to these individuals and I hope to keep printing things from them. I would very much like to also print almost anything from any of the readers of FOS.

There is another point that may be of interest to the readers of this newsletter. I have received suggestions, some not so subtle, to change the format of this newsletter to focus on all fighters and not just the ladies. I hear reasons like "Women fighters aren't any different, and therefore should receive the same as any man.." and "There isn't a newsletter for just fighters, why don't you change it to that." The first reason is and isn't true. They should receive the same training most men do, in intensity, quality and the attention to personal detail. But, the fact is, a lot of them don't. We can be either considered "not serious", "not strong enough", and "fragile". The same excuses can go for a lot of male fighters.

The second reason, "There isn't a newsletter just for fighters...", isn't true at all. Most Society newsletters at one time or another will include helpful tips on fighting and/or training. Of the newsletters specifically for fighting include Havok, Journal of
continued 2nd page



I've commanded the Calontir Army from our Principality days. We've had both male and female fighters in the army from the beginning. As a commander, the only fighting differences I've noticed can be much easier explained as a matter of body size and not of plumbing.

As near as I can tell, Calontir has the largest number of female fighters at 25+. The majority of them, like all fighters, are war fighters not tourney fighters.

As far as any weakness as fighters, I'm not aware of any that can be seen in all women fighters. A lot don't have the mass or strength to hold a scutum shield. Some don't have the speed or stamina to keep up with the cavalry. The same can be said of any group of fighters. Body type is a much more useful criteria than sex in assigning someone a position in my army.

There are 4 basic positions to be filled in the Calontir Army. They are Primary (or scutum) shieldmen, Secondary (usually a standard tourney wankel) shieldmen, artillery (long weapons) and calvary (crazy bastards who run around a lot, lightly armored). There is a fifth position, command, but it's intermingled with the other positions.

Of the four main positions, none is without its complement of female fighters. On the primary shield position, stories of brave fighters of both sexes holding the line for hours are common. Sir Syf of Ansteorra held a shield in the line at Pennsic for 3 and a half hours, solid. Mistress Aeruin has served on the wall many times. Both the honorable Lady Raven and the honorable Lady Ariel have served in the line and helped to command it. In the scutum wall, body mass is the most physical attribute; it is not a "must-have", but it helps a lot. Will power and pride are the most important factors in holding the line. These attributes are the same for both sexes.

The secondary position sees more female fighters than any other. This is because women have the majority of the slight body builds. The secondary shieldman position rewards the skinny and is painful for the fat (like me!). In a full dropped scutum line, the secondaries must crouch half way down while their shields are over their heads. They must also not take up too much room from the artillery behind them. In this environment, skinny, strong-willed people are at a premium. Once again, there are legends about female fighters doing well on the secondaries. The first time the wall was set up at Pennsic the entire middle of the secondaries (5 positions) was female. (They were all above me and wouldn't leave my hamster alone!)



The artillery requires a tall strong body to swing repeatedly over the line. Every one does some time in the artillery. It's the place to rest. But most of us are just too short to stay long and not get tired. Lady Raven and Baroness Tion are two very good examples of the advantages of height.

In our army only about 5% are cavalry. The cavalry takes lots of speed, stamina and a healthy helping of dumb ass. A few females have run with them for a while, but, not having enough of the last prerequisite, have come back to the line.

Command in our army is based on respect. At the top is the King who tells the commanders (usually 2 or 3 knights and/or huscarls and myself) what he wants. We then tell the line commanders what we want and they talk to the 3-4 guys they are responsible for. The line commanders are usually huscarls or fyrdmen. Every fyrd and hyrd is expected to help command their piece of the line. It's not their privilege to help command, it is their job and responsibility. Ladies Ariel, Raven, Elinor and Brianne are all Fyrd and do their share of commanding. Some of them have shown a knack for it.

In the Calontir Army all fighters are treated by skill, not sex. While body types put a physical limit on all the fighters, they are free to find those limits themselves.

Babbling as always, Pavel ☐



continued from front cover

SCA Combat published by Lord Nicollo Blackrose, Ansteorra. The Flower of Souvenance has never been a newsletter exclusively for women. There have been men on the subscription list as long as women. Much of the information I have printed can be used for any fighter, specifically those articles by Sir Hilary of Serendip and Sir William the Lucky as well as many others. My point is that women, generally, need more encouragement and information than the men. Personally I feel that we are all in need of specific training to utilize our asset and minimize our disadvantages. That includes men and women.☐



Last March, I journeyed to a tourney in the mountains of these beautiful Outlands. It was by and large a lovely experience, and I did rather well in the tourney, but the trip was marred by only one small thing. It is a thing which had happened to me before, and which is of interest not only to women who fight, but to me as well. I chose to be silent about it before, but now I will speak.

I had won my first three rounds in the tourney, so the numbers of fighters had begun to dwindle, and it was not an unlikely thing that I drew my own dear lord, Centurion Titus Claudius Severus, as my opponent in the fourth round.

He too, was undefeated. Now, we are accustomed to fighting each other, perhaps too much so, as we practice together all the time. It causes us no great emotional stress to fight one another, though we prefer to draw others for the experience. And no matter that he overtops me by a foot and outweighs me by near a hundred pounds; I know his ways, and I defeat him occasionally. But he knows my weaknesses too, so it was likely to be a good fight.

So when the call came, we both took the field, eyeing each other as we would any other worthy opponent. We saluted each other with great reverence, and at the call, set to fighting. I circled round his big scutum, he held his gladius low to thrust. I waited until he moved, and tried for an arm. He blocked. I moved. He followed. The fight moved along like a hundred other fights between us, blow followed blow, we maneuvered for position, as always. I threw a flurry of shots at the right side of his head, to drag his big scutum up. Slowly it moved, and I shot for his leg. But I was so intent on my target that I let my own oval shield drift, and the gladius crushed my helm. I saluted him and collapsed to the ground. He slid to his knees beside me with a bruised grunt.

I lay there a moment, catching my breath, hearing him gasping above me. Ah, well, another lesson learned from the good Centurion. I was about to get up when I heard a voice call from the crowd, "Wife beater!" followed by laughter. I thought it was a man's voice, but I could not recognize it through my helm. Suddenly my blood was on fire. Titus has worked very hard over the last six years overcoming his protectiveness to fight me as an equal, and that is all I have ever asked of him. He has encouraged me, taught me, kicked my ass, and been proud of me. Never once has he treated me as less than a total equal, a dangerous warrior worthy of respect. For that I love him more than anything.

Now, in one stupid jest, someone had made a mockery of

all that, of both of us. I rolled to my feet, sword in hand, and cried, "Don't say that! Never say such a thing!" I tried to find faces in the shifting crowd, over which had fallen a deadly hush. But the voice was gone, and there was no face to put to it. I shouted a few parting cautions, probably unheard through my helm. then I helped my lord to his feet and we left the field.

It had been a good fight; at least I had gotten a piece of him before I went down. But I couldn't feel good about it. Not only had my honor been insulted, but my lord's as well. Titus was no bully and I no victim. No one told me who had said those words; just as well. I am not known for my gentle temper, and it is likely that I would have demanded satisfaction.

The unfortunate thing is that something similar had happened before, and I had done nothing, probably because it was not my own lord involved. Some man had defeated me in a fair fight, and a woman spectator had cried, "You brute!" Everyone had laughed then, too, and I, insecure and underconfident, had said nothing.

Such comments, which I have no doubt are meant in jest, just aren't that funny. They demean the efforts of the woman fighter, who has just gone out there and done her best. there is no dishonor in losing — someone loses every fight, but neither need lose honor.

Worse still, such silly comments make the male fighter feel bad. They remind him of all the stupid propaganda with which he was raised: that women are helpless, delicate, must be protected, are not capable of defending themselves. People have been indoctrinated with that kind of tripe for generations. I have the utmost admiration for the man who can overcome that and all the other macho crap he has been fed, and treat women as true equals on the field. Comments like, "You brute!" make a male fighter feel bad for doing something right. And that isn't fair.

I have fought a lot of people in the last six years, and most of them have been men. A few have gone out with the intention of hurting me, to teach me my place; perseverance and courage from me showed them that my place was on the field. A very few have been excessively gentle, and a some good, hard shots from me usually changed that. But the majority have treated me with the same respect and honor with which they treat all other fighters. I ask for no special treatment, and they give none; it is a matter of common courtesy.

That makes me feel good, about my efforts, and about them. When we are on the field, we are first and last fighters, among ourselves. We must make that obvious to non-fighters as well.



There is no honor gained by demeaning the efforts of others, by calling a man a bully because he has defeated an opponent in fair combat, or by calling a woman a victim because she has met her match on the field. Nor is there any reason to call attention to the opposite situation. A man who is defeated by a woman on the field is no less a man; he just needs some practice. And a woman who wins is not unfeminine; she is the one who's been practicing!

Attitudes are slow to change in the SCA as well as in the mundane world. But they do not change at all unless we change them. Such jests are no longer funny, if they ever were. I encourage all fighters to put a stop to them in a firm, courteous way. It is a matter of honor for all of us. □

A STRANGE POSITION



I have a situation that might be of interest to the readers of Flower of Souvenance. Most people that fight in the SCA must come to terms with the idea of striking another person with their Kingdom's idea of "sufficient force". Men and women face the opposite sex upon the field and must decide if it is acceptable to them to hit the other. For most the idea is acceptable, although it sometimes takes time to work into really hitting someone in an accurate, forceful, and safe manner. I am among those women who have never had a problem fighting men, either in the concept or force required. My position is unique in that I have trouble with the reality of fighting other women. As far as I know this strange position is unique.

As with some men, a women's training begins as a child. We are usually taught, directly or indirectly by our parents. Some men are taught never to hit their female siblings, and therefore not to hit any girl. This can carry on into adult life.

My only sibling is my sister. I am the eldest, and as children

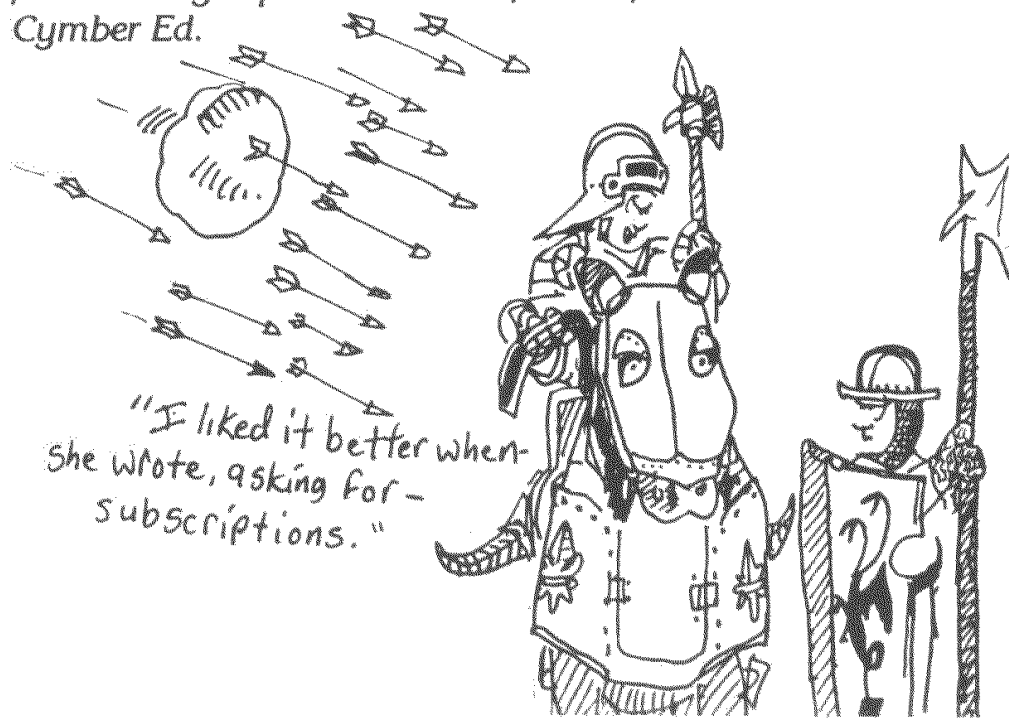
was always the strongest. As we grew up we fought as children do, but with one exception to most siblings; I was the only one not allowed to fight back. We could scream at each other until we turned blue, as long as we did it outside. But, when it came to blows, I was told in no uncertain terms that "if you touch your sister, you'll get popped into next week". To a child "popped into next week" usually means you will be 'killed' or otherwise come to great pain. This frightened me as it would any child coming from an adult. And on the few occasions that her taunting was too much to bear, and I started in only to be caught in the act, I was spanked harshly thereafter associating the reality of pain to the phrase.

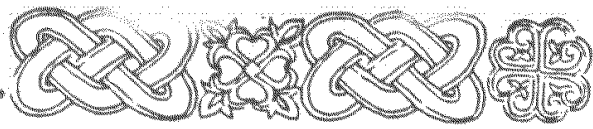
I do realize that that was a long time ago, but there is still some resentment between us to this day. And to this day it is not a conscious thought that forces me to dread any fight I have with another woman, but a now subconscious conditioning.

I cannot help but sympathize with those men who still do not fight women on the field of combat. I do not think it is right to do so, but I can sympathize. I would suggest that they follow steps to correct their problem as I have done, or any smart fighter with a problem specific to them would do. In my case, there is another lady fighter in my area that I have worked with, and talked with about my problem. In addition to her I have spoken with a few men on the subject, as well as my mother. Everything is going slow, but with the encouragement, help and training I am receiving now I can foresee when I will be able to fight women as well as men. All it takes is patience, determination, and the support of good friends that want to see you overcome your fears. □

This lady asked that her name be kept anonymous, but I felt her story is pertinent to the flavor of this newsletter.

Cyber Ed.





With your permission, I would like to comment on the Sexism/Racism editorial by Lady Magdalena van den Oost.

The first sentence of the last paragraph "I hope the men of the SCA will soon grow up enough to meet women on their own ground as equals." undermines her credibility, as that generalization is itself sexist. It bears kinship with saying, to use a technique she suggested, "All Blacks are drug dealers!" The plain fact of the matter is that all people should be judged, in their words and deeds, as individuals and responsible for, and bearing the consequences of, their actions. From an earlier part of her editorial, she doesn't include her lord in that generalization. What about the rest of us? I doubt that the good lady has even met, much less gotten to know a majority of the men in the SCA so that the generalization can be supported by personal experience.

To be sure, sexism does occur, even in the SCA. Sexism is a human failing and we are, whatever else we may be, human. It is to our credit that we, as a group, recognize it as undesirable and work to overcome it. We don't always succeed at making the necessary changes right away, but we keep at it because it will happen sooner or later and we would prefer sooner. It has been my experience, in those places in the SCA that I have been to, that sexism is much less prevalent in the SCA than it is in the outside world. This is not to say that we should pat ourselves on the back and sit on our laurels. But we should not browbeat each other either. Instead, we should take joy in the successes we have achieved and work together to make it better and better.

Perhaps my own experience with the issue of Ladies fighting would be of interest in this discussion:

I attended my first event in April, 1970—right at the end of AS 4—and I put my two cents in whenever the subject came up, including the comments asked for by the BOD when they were formulating the official policy on the issue.

I was against the idea of allowing ladies to fight. I wasn't worried about being defeated by a lady on the field or having my ego bruised by a lady who was a better fighter than myself (my ego doesn't bruise that easily, thankfully) and I had no idea whether there was historical evidence for ladies fighting under other than emergency circumstances. I like to think that it is to my credit that the idea that fighting lady was somehow inferior, never occurred to me.

The problem lay in the motivation for my fighting. I was taught that you didn't fight for yourself but in honor of your Lady. I embrace this idea and extended it; I fought on behalf of my Lady

and through her in honor of all ladies everywhere. The logical dilemma this created was that, to me, raising my sword to a lady on the field was the same as raising my sword against my own Lady, and this was unacceptable! It didn't matter that almost all armor conceals gender quite well. I would know that a lady was wearing it and that was enough.

As I felt that lady fighters were inevitable, in spite of my own desires to the contrary, I was prepared for the premature end of my fighting career. My own sense of honor would prevent me from entering a list (Crown or otherwise) or a melee where I might be compelled to go up against a lady. A List was potentially a nightmare for me. If I went out there and did my best against a lady fighter, win or lose, I felt that I would have dishonored myself and my own Lady and if I should happen to win the List, I would have felt that I was unworthy of the victory. If I were to forfeit a fight against a lady or took a dive, once again dishonoring myself and my Lady, the others fighters would be justifiable upset ("She got a free round, what about me?") and the lady in question would have every right to demand that I be drawn-and-quartered for giving her a victory she hadn't earned, spoiling it for her should she win the List! Assuming an ever-growing number of ladies on the field, I would eventually have to limit myself to an occasional challenge match.

Lady fighters inevitable you say? Yes!

Sooner or later somebody would have sued and lets face it, a ban on ladies fighting is clearly discriminatory. Like it or not, we and our group exist in the 20th century and are bound by it's laws. I shudder to think what such a suit would have done to the SCA.

Eventually, however, I changed my opinion on this issue. in part, this was due to the fact that some people that I respect a LOT, such as Duke Sir Paul of Bellatrix, were firmly in favor of the idea. The real clincher came when someone told me, in effect, "What makes you think that men are the only ones that would win honor for their opposite number on the field? And don't give me that crap that she can do her honor via the Arts and/or the Sciences. Yes, that does happen, but not all ladies can, or want, to go all-out in the Arts and/or Sciences, just as not all lords can, or want, to fight! In honor, would you deny a lady a means, how ever she wants to do it, of doing honor unto her lord?" This is an unassailable position! Suddenly, all of my arguments against ladies fighting went right out the window. The ultimate dishonor would be to deny anyone the right to do honor unto their Lord or Lady.

In retrospect, I'm glad things turned out the way they did. I've met some truly fine lady fighters, such as Countess Sir Fern

(Fernanda de la Foret), a gracious Lady on and off the field. Being able to talk shop, fighter wise, to a lady and have her know EXACTLY what you're talking about is an experience not to be missed! It opens up a whole new level of socializing and camaraderie.

The only problem I have these days with ladies fighting, is that so few of them do it!

So as you can see, attitudes can be changed. Keep at it—it's worth doing.

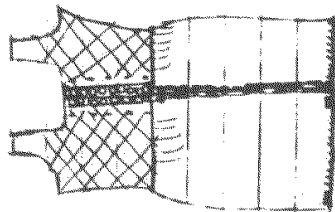
Thank you for your indulgence, Eric

(Please turn to the Editorial section for the end of this article.)

Celeste Cathan, Caid

One lady I talked to said her main objection to lady fighters was that they forgot how to be ladies off the field. She took the time, then and there, to draw a skirt pattern I seemed interested in. So, here are some garb designs which are simple, effective, and will make people notice the fact that we can be ladies both on and off the field:

The bodice and skirt are different colors. The bodice is a heavy cotton, the skirt is a light cotton. They are sewn together on the inside, and beading and pearling all me to wear it as a Court outfit also. The bodice is a typical bodice pattern, (duct tape and a T-shirt, marked and cut to fit), and the skirt length is about three times the size of the waist.



Basic bodice pattern

Materials: 1/2 roll duct tape, (or so, guess-ti-mate), 1 old T-shirt- no holes with arms, 1 magic marker, 1 person with a steady hand to help you.

Put the T-shirt on. Do not have anything on underneath, it may be cut accidentally or may not hold you in the right shape. Have your partner tape you securely, be sure to squeeze the places you want squeezed - or to be pulled tight, or loose, etc. Be sure to overtape the shoulders.

Once you are taped the way you wish to be, have your partner mark the duct tape. I prefer a front lace, so I mark the the front and both sides. Be sure to leave room under the arm, and

ane = trim or bias tape

• = grommets

o = boning

||| = gathering

xx = beads & pearls

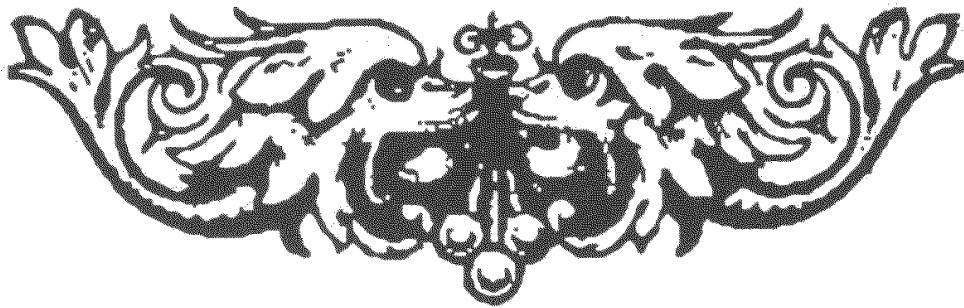
mark the top of the shoulders. Now, have your partner cut the duct tape very carefully.

After you have it cut from you, lay it out on the floor and make sure armhole fits armhole, length of arm to hip is the same on both, and the neckline in the back is comfortable. Now, you have a bodice pattern! Transfer to heavy paper if you wish. Be sure to bone, ever lightly, the fastening area in the front.

Boning reinforces the material and helps hold you up. Smaller women can have plastic. Larger women need metal, and should also have diagonal lines of boning going from the bottom grommet or fastener to the underarm, (close to the seam). Even duct taped spring steel, brass, or plastic on the sides can be used. Plastic on the sides plus light metal in front to make sure the sides don't bunch up.

To make a side laced bodice, put the two front pieces on paper and put them together, with or without a piece in front.

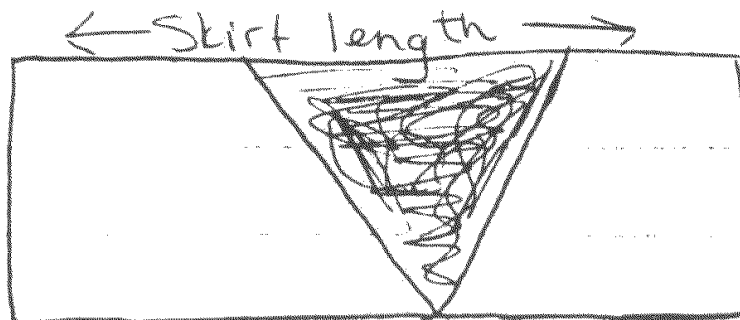
This is your basic bodice pattern. Also, when cutting material, always put seam allowances on and you should have a fairly comfortable bodice!!



If the skirt is made knee-length it is easy to move in, and since I am allergic to skirts, it is not really a skirt so I can wear it.

Also for a dressy occasion a long skirt can be worn under it, or for field garb, baggy pants or tights with nice boots.

A sewing tip for the skirt; cut, gather and trim the bottom before attaching the skirt to the bodice, Cut the wedge out of this skirt and sew together. It has less yardage, and is easier to sew and handle.



Hopefully this will help you with a costume idea. More people will accept women fighters as ladies if we act like ladies, in garb and actions. □

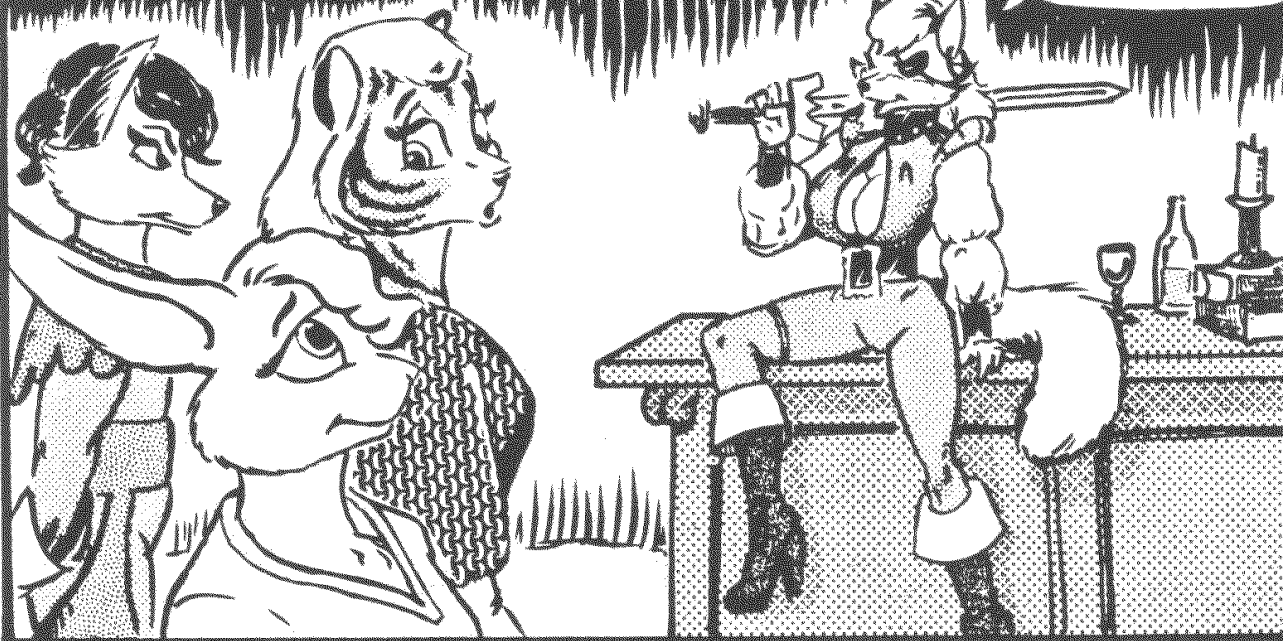
Vixens' Keep™

by H.L. Wm Blackfox

The Sage part 2

SYNOPSIS - LADY ALIX AND HER FRIEND LORELEI ARRIVE AT VIXEN'S KEEP AND ARE INTRODUCED TO THEIR HOSTESS.

YOU ARE THE FIRST OF TWO DOZEN LADIES I HAVE INVITED TO BE A PART OF MY ACADEMY. SINCE WE HAVEN'T TALKED BEFORE, I'M SURE THAT YOU HAVE MANY QUESTIONS.



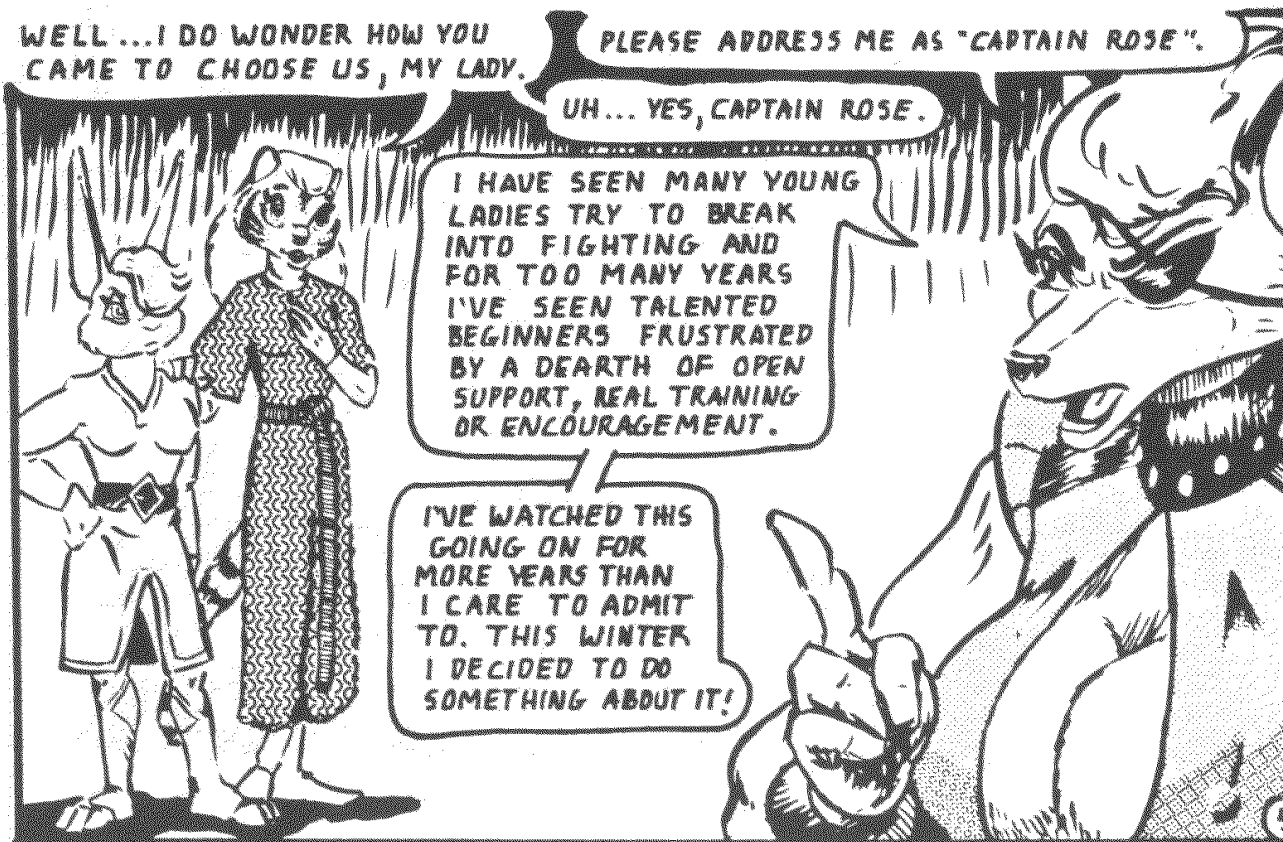
WELL... I DO WONDER HOW YOU CAME TO CHOOSE US, MY LADY.

PLEASE ADDRESS ME AS "CAPTAIN ROSE".

UH... YES, CAPTAIN ROSE.

I HAVE SEEN MANY YOUNG LADIES TRY TO BREAK INTO FIGHTING AND FOR TOO MANY YEARS I'VE SEEN TALENTED BEGINNERS FRUSTRATED BY A DEARTH OF OPEN SUPPORT, REAL TRAINING OR ENCOURAGEMENT.

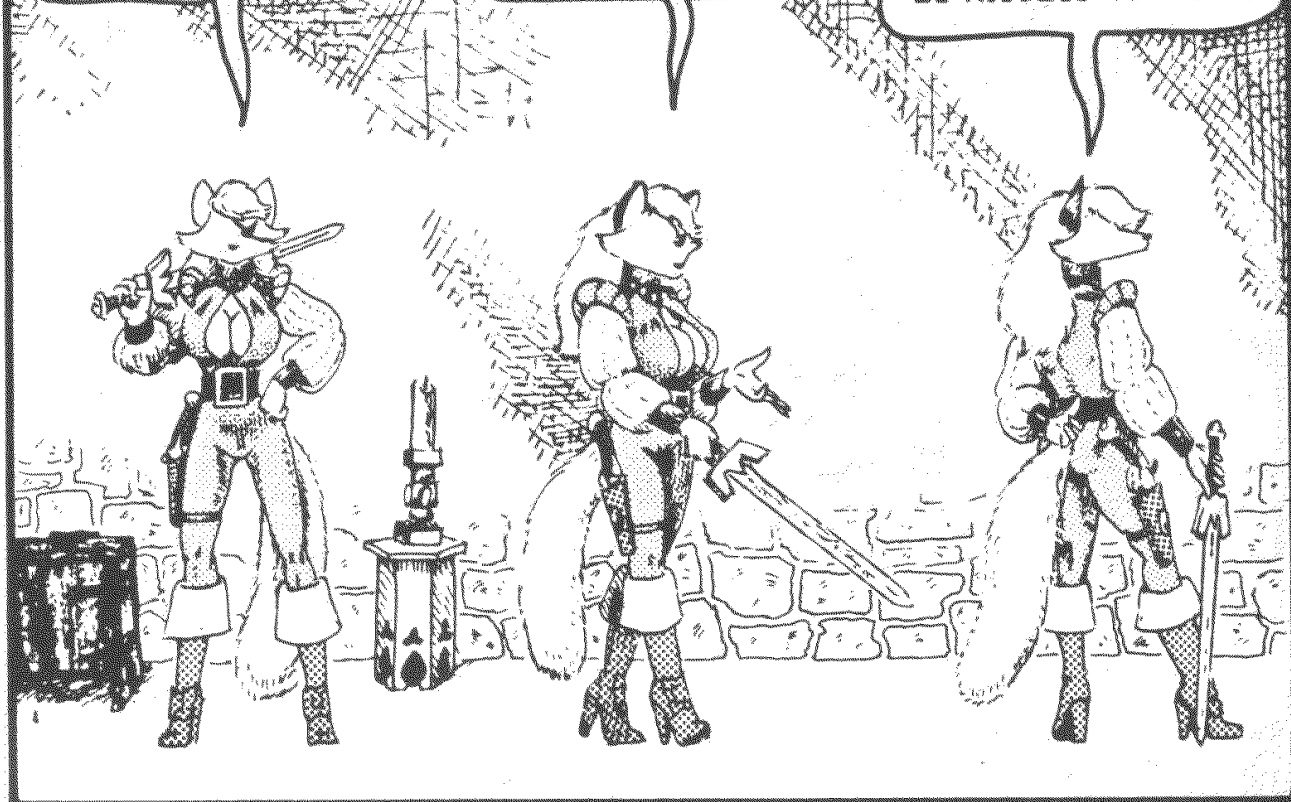
I'VE WATCHED THIS GOING ON FOR MORE YEARS THAN I CARE TO ADMIT TO. THIS WINTER I DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!



I HAVE SPENT THE LAST SIX MONTHS OBSERVING EVERY YOUNG WOMAN I COULD FIND IN THE KINGDOM WHO WAS TRYING HER HAND AT FIGHTING WITH HEAVY WEAPONS.

SOME HAD GROUPS WHICH PROMOTED VARIOUS DEGREES OF TRAINING. SOME, LIKE YOU, LADY ALIX, HAD THE HELP OF A KNIGHT OR MASTER-AT-ARMS.

THE GREAT MAJORITY ARE LEFT TO THEIR OWN DEVICES. DESPITE THE EMANCIPATION AND SO-CALLED EQUALITY OF WOMEN IN WARTHAVEN, MANY MEN STILL HOLD THAT WOMEN SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO FIGHT.



BOTH OF YOU HAVE SHOWN THE TALENT, SPIRIT AND INTELLIGENCE TO BECOME FIRST-RATE FIGHTERS.

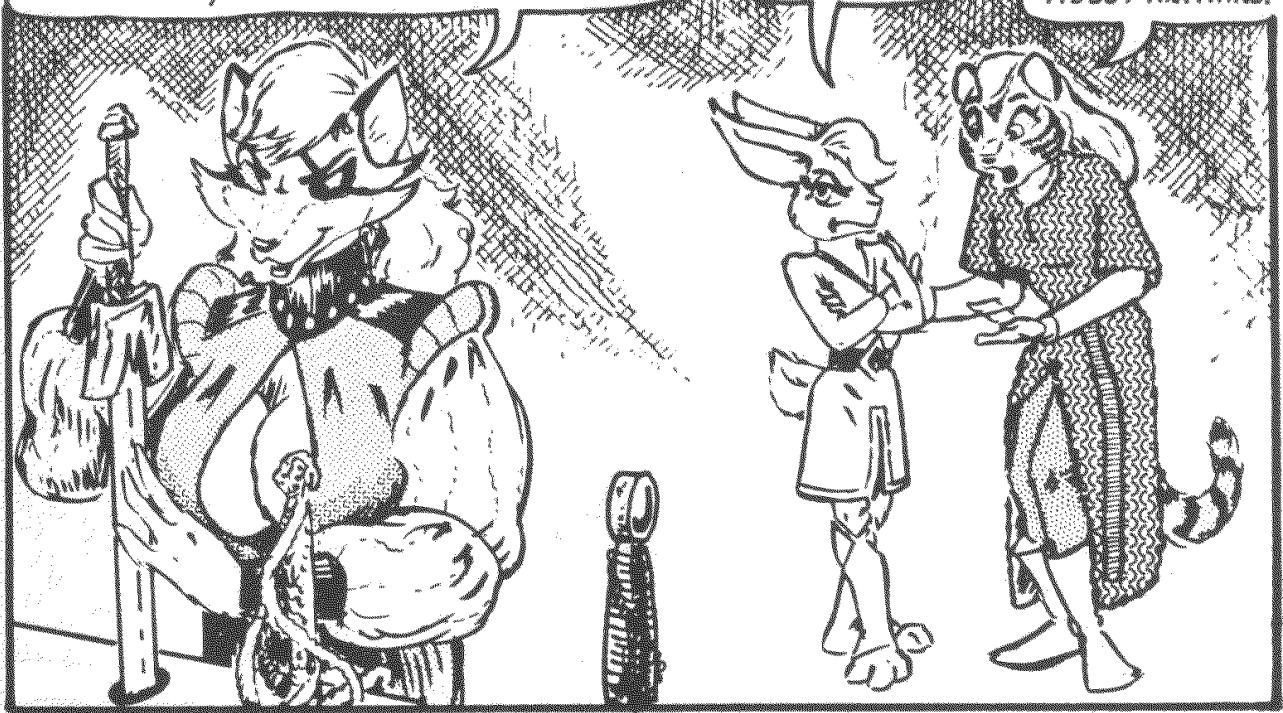
BUT MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT WAS THAT I HAD OBSERVED BOTH OF YOU TO BE PASSING ON WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED TO OTHER MEN AND WOMEN! **THAT** WAS THE ATTITUDE I HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR!



HOWEVER, FIGHTING ISN'T THE ONLY ASPECT YOUR INSTRUCTION HERE WILL TAKE. YOU WILL ALSO BE SCHOOLLED IN COURTLINESS, POISE, LITERATURE, CRAFTS AND CULTURE.

HMPH! I'M AS MUCH OF A LADY AS I NEED TO BE!

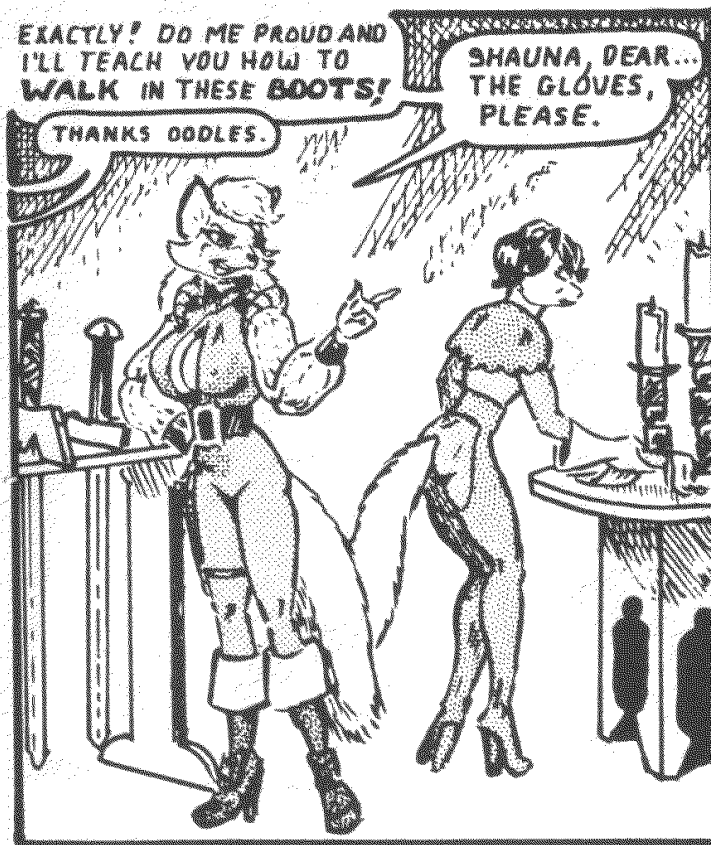
PLEASE, LORELEI! THERE'S ALWAYS MORE TO LEARN ABOUT ANYTHING.



EXACTLY! DO ME PROUD AND I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO WALK IN THESE BOOTS!

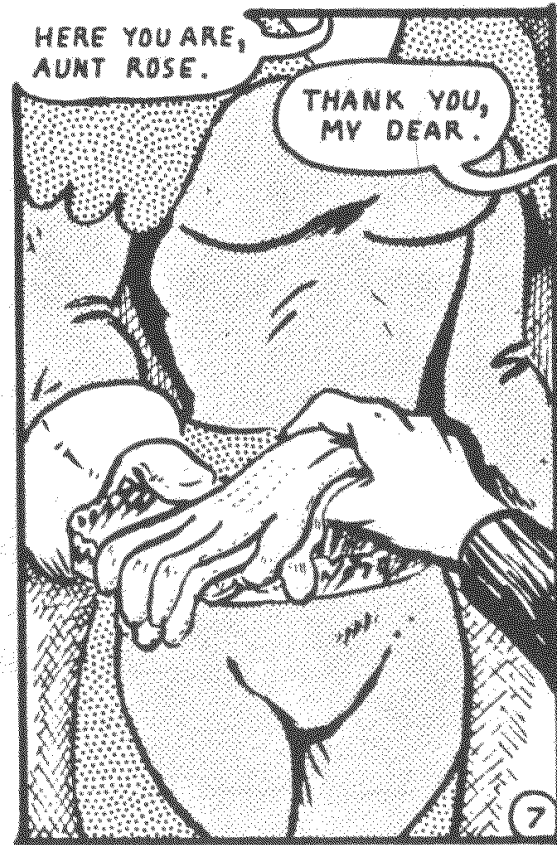
THANKS OODLES.

SHAUNA, DEAR... THE GLOVES, PLEASE.



HERE YOU ARE, AUNT ROSE.

THANK YOU, MY DEAR.



AND NOW... YOUR FIRST LESSON
IN CONCEPTUAL ICONICS.
WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE THESE
OBJECTS REPRESENT, LADIES?

GLOVES, Y' BOOB!

TST!



THOSE WOULD BE FAVORS
TO BE CARRIED BY ALL OF
THE ACADEMY'S STUDENTS!



NOT...

EXACTLY.



End
part
2



Wixens' Keep™

by H.L. W^m Blackfox

SYNOPSIS - CAPTAIN ROSE d'ORR EXPLAINED HOW AND WHY ALIX AND LORELEI WERE CHOSEN FOR THE LADIES' ACADEMY.

SO THE GLOVE ISN'T S'POSED TO BE A "FAVOR" IN THE SENSE WE USUALLY USE?

NO, IT ISN'T. THE GLOVES SERVE QUITE A DIFFERENT PURPOSE.



The party

BUT WHAT OTHER PURPOSE COULD THEY SERVE? THEY'RE CERTAINLY NOT AN AWARD!

CERTAINLY NOT!

THEN....?



Page 3

YOU DO KNOW WHAT A "GAGE" IS, DON'T YOU, LADY ALIX?

YES. IT'S AN OBJECT, SUCH AS A GLOVE, TO BE CAST DOWN AS A CHALLENGE.



JUST SO! THESE GLOVES REPRESENT THE CHALLENGE I OFFER, TO MAKE YOU THE MOST SKILLFUL FIGHTERS AND STILL BE EVERY INCH A LADY!

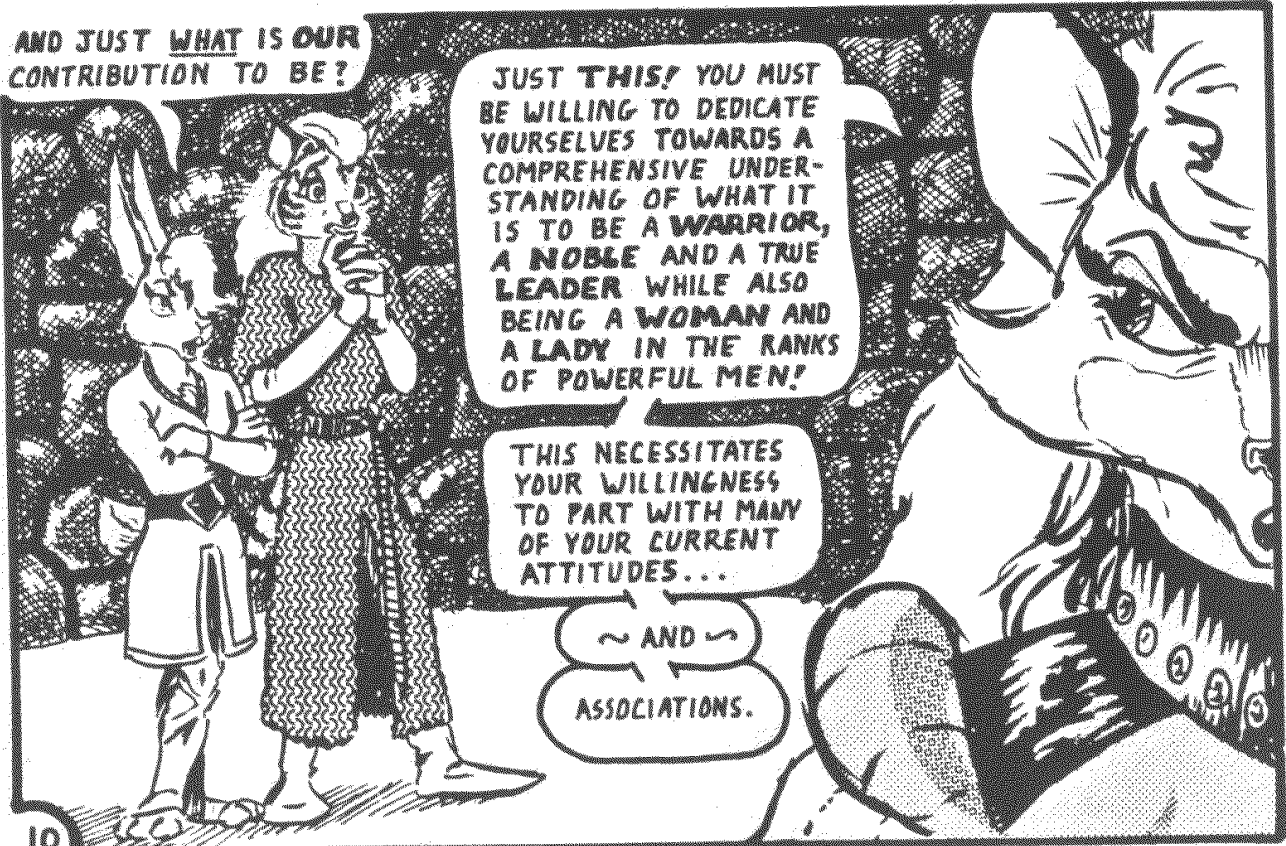


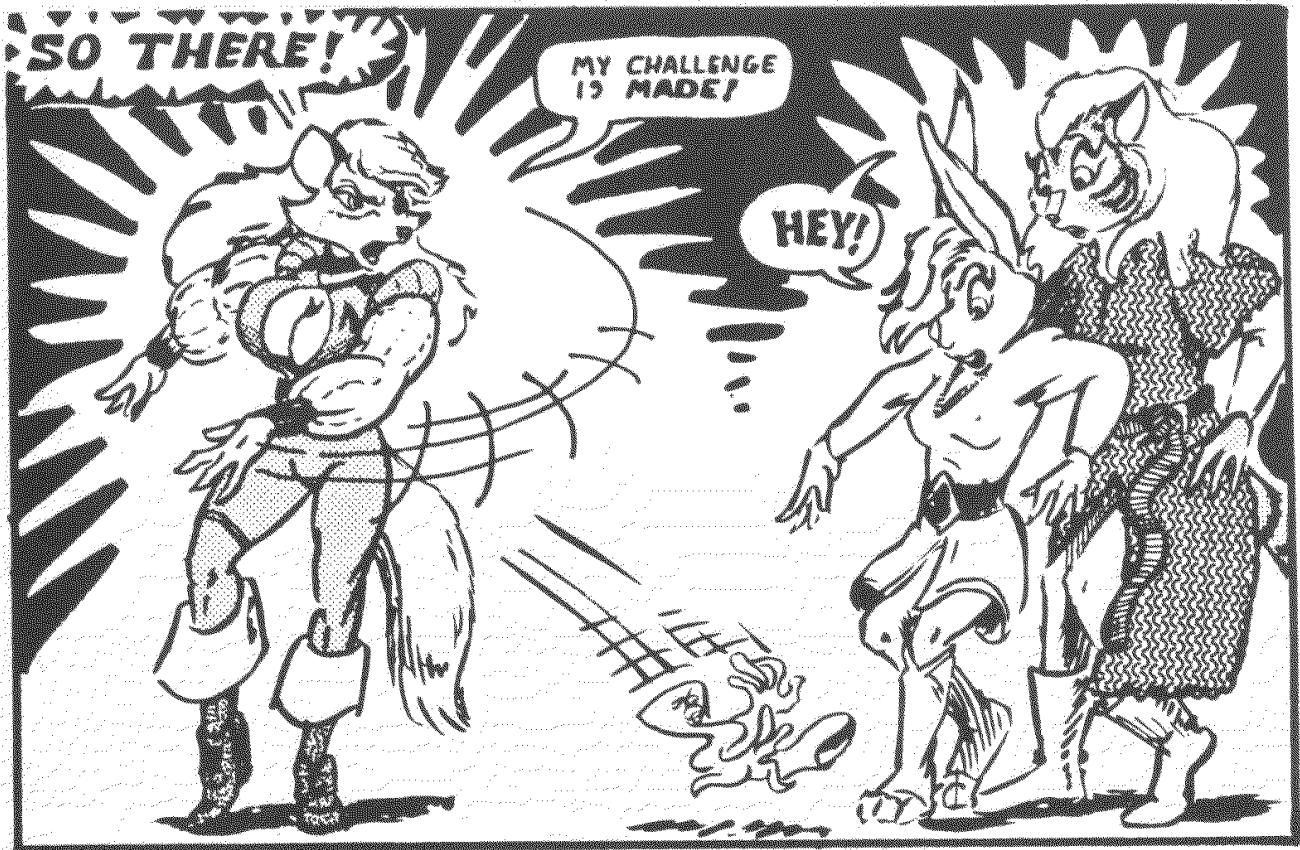
AND JUST WHAT IS OUR CONTRIBUTION TO BE?

JUST THIS! YOU MUST BE WILLING TO DEDICATE YOURSELVES TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IT IS TO BE A WARRIOR, A NOBLE AND A TRUE LEADER WHILE ALSO BEING A WOMAN AND A LADY IN THE RANKS OF POWERFUL MEN!

THIS NECESSITATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PART WITH MANY OF YOUR CURRENT ATTITUDES...

~ AND ~
ASSOCIATIONS.



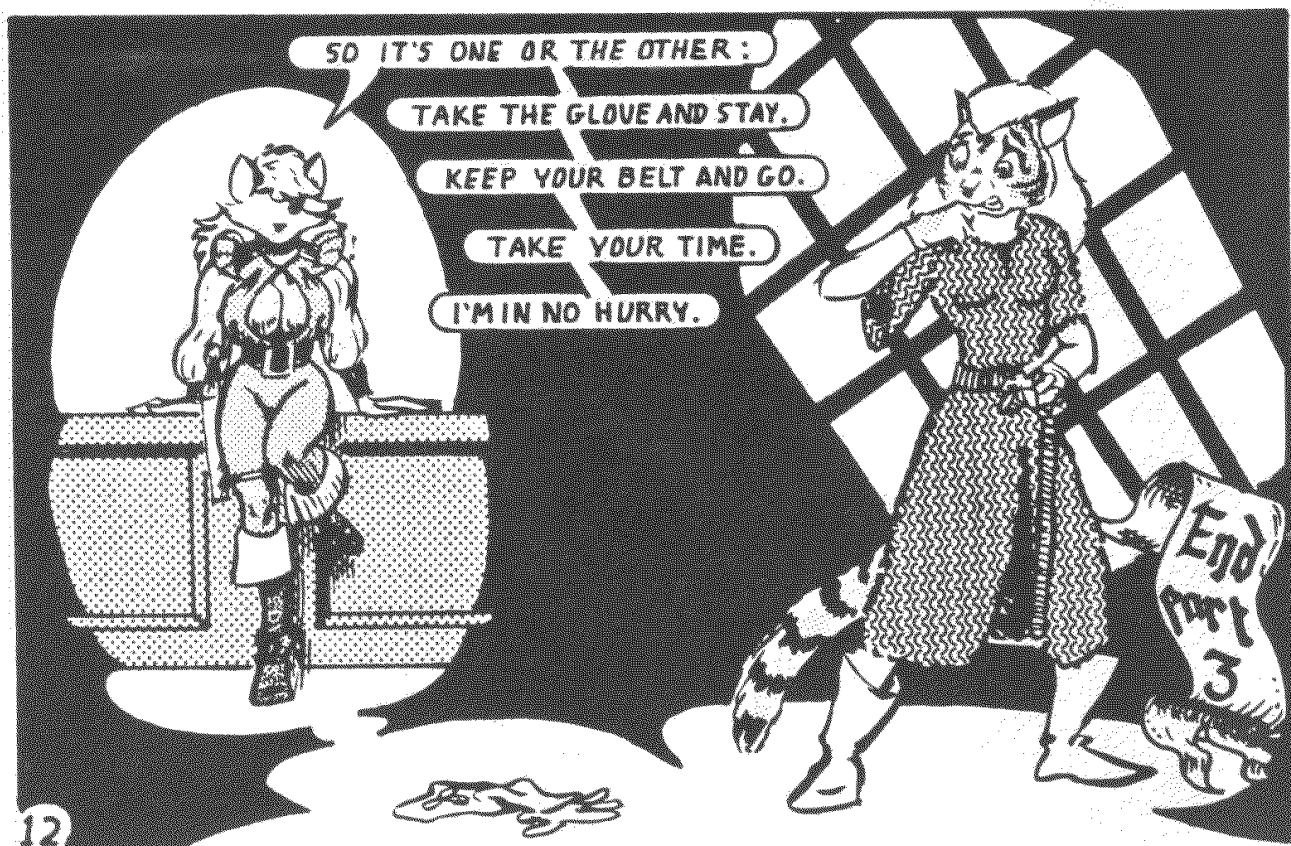


LORELEI! HAVE YOU GOT THE GUTS TO BECOME AS MUCH A LADY AS YOU ARE A SCRAPPER?

ME? SUUURE!
I WANNA' SEE YOU
FIND THE GOWN
THAT FITS MY
SHOULDERS!

BESIDES... I'VE
NEVER REFUSED
A CHALLENGE
BEFORE, SO
WHY CHANGE
NOW?





EDITORIALS

In the most recent T.I. Duke Aaron's last letter to the populace through T.I. there existed a rather offensive quote. I asked around, to make sure that I was not the only one offended and/or angered, then wrote to him the letter you see below.
Cymer Ed.

Duke Aaron Breck Gordon
c/o Bruce Cohen
11628 Foxfire Dr.
Hudson, FL 34669

June 19, 1989

Greetings unto His Grace Duke Aaron Breck Gordon from Countess Cymer of the Darkwater, Chronicler of the Kingdom of the Outlands, Editor of The Flowers of Souvenance, Holder of the Outlands Flower of Chivalry, Member of Queen Layla's Guard.

Your Grace,

Please allow me to make comment upon your letter in T.I., Summer AS XXIV, Issue 91.

For the most part I found it to be an excellent article on a problem most marshalls will face at one time or another. As I have been a warranted marshal for several years now, and once held position as Baronial Marshall of Caerthe, I am familiar with this problem, but not so much the rectifying of such. Your article proved informative, explicit, and helpful in it's suggestions of dealing with fighters not calling blows.

As I read through your article I was once more impressed by your intelligence and competence you have excercised in your role as Society Marshall. This was, however, squelched once I turned the page to read the quote from Duke Baldar Langstriter:

"Murder and rape are crimes of passion and can be forgiven, but not calling your blows is a disease of the heart."

Needless to say I "thought about it" as you bid your readers to do after the quote. Several things came to mind of which I will only print the non-profane.

First: How someone of your obvious intelligence can rate murder and rape below the crime of blow calling stuns me.

Second: Did Lady Rosalinde, the editor of TI, call you regarding the quote and the propriety of publishing it in an Official publication of the SCA. I should hope so.

Third: Did you think about the above?

I have had friends, some close, some not, some female, some male, who have been raped. It is NOT a crime of passion, but of violence, as is murder. Incorrect blow-calling can be a safety hazard, but it is NOT as mentally and physically damaging as rape or attempted murder. As Queen of the Outlands, I once felt it necessary to call a Shire's Chronicler to print a retraction for publishing a song that seemed to glorify the act of rape. This is how strongly I and many others feel about it.

I would suggest that you also print a retraction either apologizing for the quote, or if you somehow agree with it say it is only your opinion and not that of the SCA's in general. It is my feeling that in such an official publication the Society must be prepared to back up the decisions of it's National Officers. In this case, I must say that if it does, I have been working with a delusion regarding what the SCA stands for.

The only other suggestion I might have for you, Your Grace is to attend a Rape Crisis Center for a hour or two, or to look in the dictionary under "murder" and I'm sure you will realize your faux pas.

Please write if you have any wish to further correspond.

In Service,

I remain,

Countess Cymber of the Darkwater

LETTER TO THE EDITOR FROM AN TIR

Regarding your Oleander editorial in issue #4...Great editorial. Yet I feel I must speak up about something. Forgive me if I sound accusatory or insulting, for that is surely not my intent.

Anyway, you mention a "young excitable lady from An Tir" and how her area was "rather lacking in ladies upon the field." I don't know how An Tir compares with other Kingdoms in terms of lady fighters. I have not yet been fortunate enough to visit other kingdoms. But I am concerned that the rest of the Known World does not get the wrong impression of An Tir. While there may not be that many lady fighters in An Tir, women are not discouraged from fighting. What I'm trying to say is, while we may not have many lady fighters, it is not due to any negative attitudes or behavior from male fighters.

Denise Williams, An Tir



REGARDING 'VIXEN'S KEEP'

To Her Excellency Countess Cymber,
Greetings from Deirdre O'Siodhachain

I write you as editor of the "Flower of Souvenance". I subscribed to the newsletter because the idea of a forum for women who fight is most appealing. It is important to share our knowledge of our particular needs as fighters, such a differences in armor and physical technique. Articles like Sir Hilary's "Talking to Your Sword" provide needed background in the basics of fighting that even the best teachers I have encountered often miss.

This issue of the "Flower", however, proved to be a major disappointment. I refer to the publication of "Vixen's [Keep]". I am surprised that a newsletter whose function is oriented towards women who fight should print such a (for want of a better word) sexist cartoon. The portrayal of major characters who (I assume) are supposed to be fine warriors as wearing spike heeled boots and costumes that look like rejects from a Victoria's Secrets catalog does not seem to me to reflect well on what the author thinks of women in the real (read SCA) world. I dislike the premise of the story as explained in the initial paragraph; the connotations of the word "vixen" to the modern reader needs no elaboration. Is the world presented in the cartoon really what your readers enjoy? I think most women who fight would prefer to see characters functionally garbed and interacting as the comrades-at-arms that we are to most men in the SCA. I am sufficiently offended by this cartoon that if I see any more installments in future issues I will probably ask that my name be removed from the mailing list. Women have arrived as fighters in the SCA. It is no longer a question of acceptance, but of improvement.

Sincerely, Deirdre O'Siodhachain

EDITOR'S RESPONSE

Unto Deirdre O'Siodhachain from Countess Cymber,
Outlands Flower of Chivalry, Member of the Queen's Guard, Editor
of Flower of Souvenance, Greetings.

I was happy to receive your letter, as editors go, and I am happy to receive feedback of any kind to my publication. I was glad to see that you are receiving some benefit from Sir Hilary's articles. However, I must disagree the latter part of your letter.

It is my belief that one of the fundamentals of learning to fight is learning a sense of humor about ourselves. Lord William Blackfox and I collaborated extensively over the phone and in the mail about his concept of "Vixen's Keep" and it's denizens. He has

also had the benefit of the opinion the those women fighters in his kingdom who have helped him with the strip.

I, as a large breasted (DD) functional fighter who sometimes wears spike heeled boots, can find some sexual connotations in this cartoon. Sex is a part of life. Of the Four characters introduced in the first installment, one has large breasts, two have high-heeled boots, two are flat-chested and of very warrior-like manner. "Vixen" refers to the female fox, as one of the main characters in this strip is. I prefer it to other female counterpart names, (ie "bitch"). As editor, I have no problem with this strip. Most of the arguments you are presenting were mine also, before I had read the entire set of the first four installments. I would suggest you also read the entire first story before passing judgement. I think you will find that it does have something pertinent to say about SCA life, and possibly quite touching, if you can get past the first impression. (ie A Queen who seems to have larger breasts than brains, and ends up helping run the Kingdom very well, thank you.)

Also, before you carry through with your intention to quit your subscription to the FOS if I do not drop the strip, I would ask what you use to "work out" in. Is it sweats, a half "T", a muscle supporting bodystocking like spandex, or something you are comfortable in wearing that everyone else might not approve of? I am sure that it is something of which you are very comfortable in, as the character Capt. Rose is comfortable in practicing in what she wears. If you are going to treat this strip of humanoid-animals as a real-life sexist threat, please consider the part of life it is imitating. If you do that before deciding to censor this publication with a boycott, maybe you will find the humor, and the imitation of real life it can present.

For your perusal, I have included the next two installments of "Vixen's Keep" in the FOS(#5) with hopes that you will concentrate on the message in the story it is trying to present, instead of the connotations you are trying to derive from it.

In Service to the Society, and the Kingdom of the Outlands, Cymber

SEXISM/RACISM RESPONSE

Master Cadfan ap Morgan Godrudd, Ansteorra

I read Lady Magdalena von den Oost's editorial in the latest Flower of Souvenance with pleasure and great interest; I had hoped my own letter would attract thoughtful and articulate comment, and I am glad to see that it has done so. I hope you will

allow me to add my own thoughts to the issues she raised.

First, on the matter of "femininity on the battle field"; I think if the lady will reread my letter she will note I specifically stated that I did not think it was necessary or desirable for women to suppress their femininity in combat. What I went on to say was that physiological cues in a male fighter's female opponent may, in the heightened stress environment of a full contact sport, trigger an instinctive and subconscious reaction against striking said opponent. I suggested that any fighter that suffered this reaction might be weaned away from it if the lady chose to conceal those cues temporarily, until the gentleman managed to convince his subconscious that it was alright to hit this lady under the given circumstances. What I did not state, in the interests of brevity, was that this suggestion presupposed that 1) the gentleman was perceptive enough to realize the cause of his hangup, and honest enough to admit it to the lady, and that 2) the lady was understanding enough to hear the gentleman out, and generous enough to go the extra mile in helping him overcome the problem.

I might mention in passing that "femininity" involves more than bust or waist measurements ; Your Excellency, [Countess Cymber], is of Junoesque proportions, while my erstwhile Laurel Mistress Aeruin (with whose help I developed the above mentioned theory) quite frankly describes herself as "flat-chested". I will tell the readership of FOS that I consider both these ladies to be very feminine both on and off the field, regardless of what their armor may or may not conceal.

Secondly, on the matter of racism as compared to sexism; it is currently very fashionable to equate the two, but I think this is somewhat like saying that pneumonia is identical to rabies. It's true that both diseases are caused by viruses and both can kill you, but heaven help you and your patient if you use that as a basis for treatment! I've known wife-beaters who got along perfectly well with other races and creeds, and bigots who would never dream of striking a woman. I agree that the element of "I'm-stronger-than-you-so-there" is common to both phenomena, but I doubt that is the entire cause of both problems.

By the way, I couldn't help but notice that Lady Magdalena's suggested self-test for sexism replacing "woman" with "black" in the statement "I couldn't do that to a woman"—only works for white males; blacks don't hesitate to hit other blacks any more that whites hesitate to hit other whites. The black community also has problems with battered women. This "test" takes neither fact into account.

Finally, Lady Magdalena suggested that, if a male fighter concedes a bout to a female fighter because of her sex, the female

fighter should publicly taunt him with the statement "I hope next time you will consider yourself strong enough to fight me". That is about the worst thing a female fighter could do. If a male fighter were ever to concede a bout to a lady for that reason in the Society of AS XXIV, he would automatically have proven who the more gentle and chivalrous fighter on the field was—and it damn sure wouldn't be him! It would be ungenerous and ungallant of the lady to rub her opponent's nose in his own lack of courtesy—just as it would be unforgivable crass for a fighter of either sex to mock a fallen opponent's lack of strength and/or skill.

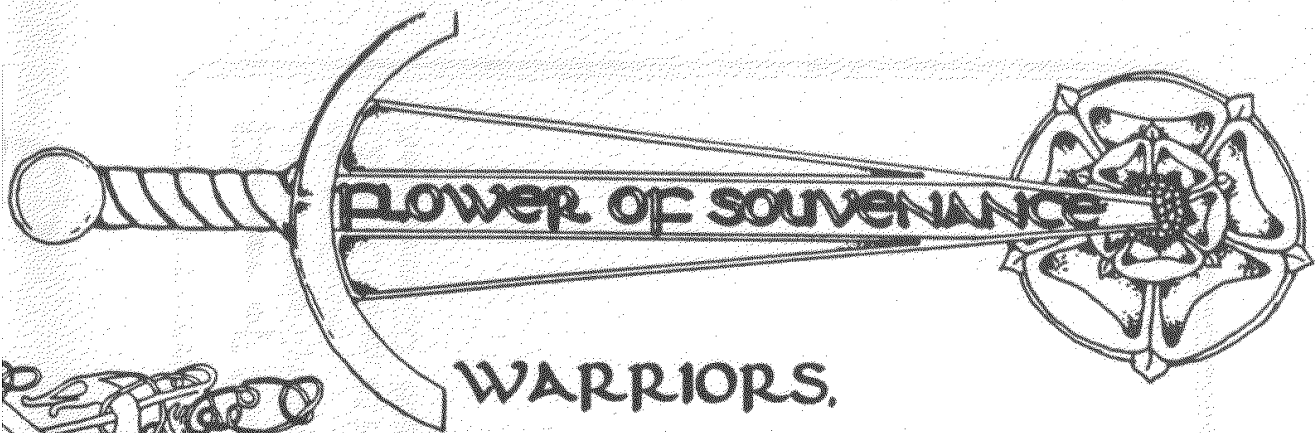
There is a saying in the 9th-century Triads of Ireland: "Three rude ones of the world: a youngster mocking an old man; a robust person mocking an invalid; a wise man mocking a fool." Read "woman" for "man" and I think it's no less true.

The opinions I expressed in my letter were not reached in a vacuum; a good number of my best friends in the SCA (including my former Laurel) are lady fighters, while my mundane career brings me into daily contact with female technicians, engineers, and even female astronauts. I have also known a good many female victims of abuse (my mother, a Registered Nurse, was once beaten up in the Emergency Room of the hospital where she worked by one of the MD's; she sued the bastard and won, but that's another story...). All my experience has lead me one conclusion; the problems encountered between any two groups of human beings will not be solved by having these groups invent elaborate "—isms" to hurl at one another; they will be solved when the members of both groups work together with good will, patience, imagination and industriousness. That, in four words, typifies the attitude of lady fighters in the SCA, and that is the spirit which Countess Cymber, to her very great credit, is attempting to encourage in FOS.

Lady Magdalena's letter raises a good many issues which must, as she so rightly says, be considered long and carefully by all. I hope my correspondence has done justice to these concerns.

RHEINHAUSEN CONTINUATION

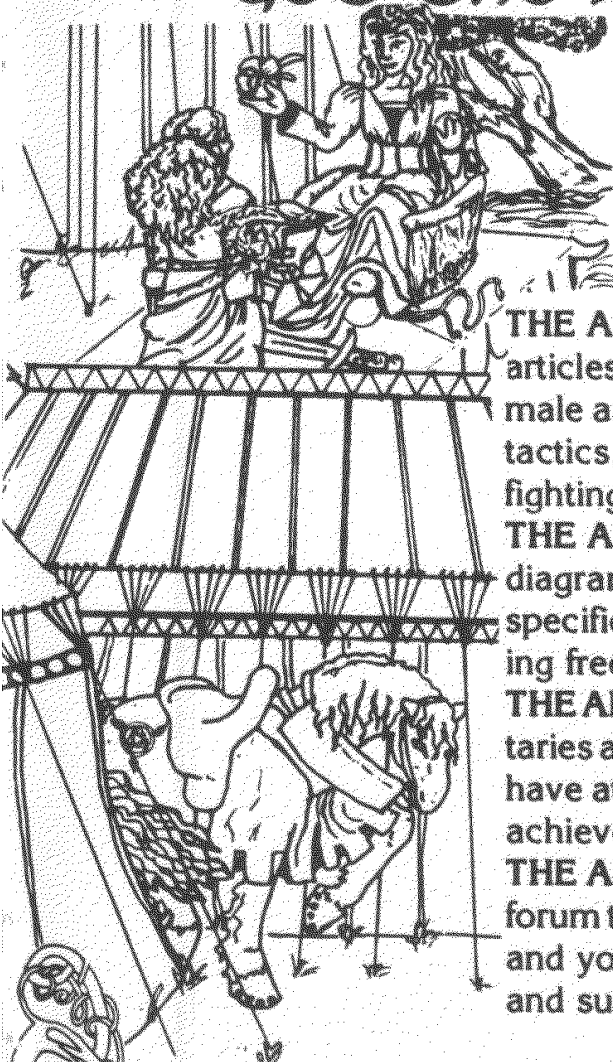
I have some final questions on the subject of fighting ladies: If a Lady and her Lord both fight, can they both enter the list? What happens if they come up against each other in that list? I would be interested to know how this is handled in different Kingdoms. Does Custom and/or Law require that only one of them enter the list (is that fair?) or do they both enter and trust to the luck of the draw, fighting whoever they must (what happens if they both get to the finals?)



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