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Minutes of the Meeting to Form the Proposed Ankh-Morpork Federation of Scouts

In the Chair: Captain Carrot. Ankh-Morpork City Watch

Also present: Josiah Boggis (Thieves' Guild), Miss Alice Band (Assassins' Guild), Sergeant Detritus (Ankh-Morpork City Watch), Grag Bashful Bashfulsson (Dwarf Community Leader), Miss Estressa Partleigh (Campaign for Equal Heights), Crysophrase (representing the Silicon Anti-Defamation League), John Smith (Überwald League of Temperance) and Lord Vetinari (Purely as an Observer).

In his opening remarks, Captain Carrot referred to the current problem of delinquency of young people in the City, which has recently been the subject of many articles of the Times.

Miss Partleigh interjected that this was because there was nothing for them to do.

Lord Vetinari observed that in fact there was a vast range of things for them to do, running from petty theft to armed gang warfare, and that therefore the question was finding something for them to do that, if at all possible, did not actually involve the death of innocent, or presumably innocent, bystanders.

Mr John Smith said that perhaps there could be something involving hats. In his experience, hats had a remarkable stabilising effect.

Captain Carrot opined that much of the trouble, even now, was the rivalry between Troll and Dwarf gangs, although there was some welcome evolution in that now some Trolls were joining Dwarf gangs and vice-versa.

Mr Boggis vouchsafed that some effort should be made to teach newcomers to the city the Ankh-Morpork way of doing things.

Lord Vetinari observed that surely the problem was they had gleefully picked up the Ankh-Morpork way of doing things and were doing these things very enthusiastically.

Captain Carrot told the meeting that Sergeant Detritus had put forward an idea based on the ancient Troll tradition Haruga which roughly translated as "Scouts". These were young male Trolls who acted as trackers and lookout men for older warriors. It was, he said, a moral building opportunity and he had wondered if it could be adapted to this problem.

Mr Boggis said that this very much sounded like the street urchins who worked for his guild, and was a promising idea.

Captain Carrot said the object of the exercise should be to give young people of all shapes and sizes an opportunity to meet together in the absence of heavy weaponry.

Lord Vetinari observed that then what did he propose that they do?

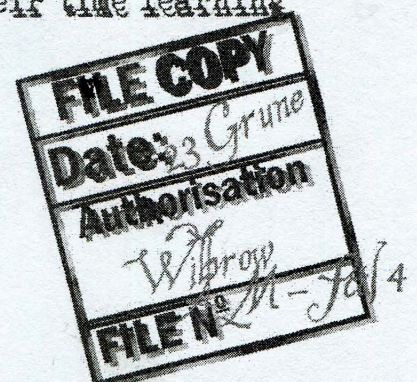
Crysophrase said that he was a scout when he was nothing more than a little lad and it made a troll of him. As he recalled, they spent their time learning tracking and tying knots.

Mr Boggis asked what it was the trolls tracked.

Crysophrase vouchsafed that they tracked dwarfs.

Mr Boggis then enquired what they tied knots in.

Crysophrase said dwarfs.



Lord Vetinari observed that this was probably a good start, but could do with some tweaking of the fine detail. Certainly some activities for some small symbolic rewards might give young people more of a sense of achievement than is engendered by jumping up and down on somebody else's head.

Miss Band pointed out that young Assassins, by the very fact of their job description, did occasionally have to indulge in activities not far removed from that very thing.

Lord Vetinari observed that they will not be allowed to do this while in the scout hut.

Grag Bashfulsson commented it would be very useful if the organisation could promote some moral values to its members, or at the very least, explain to them what these were. It would be nice if the young people could be clean in thought, word and deed.

Sergeant Detritus said that this had been an important part of the troll scouts in order to stop them playing with their clubs all day.

Miss Partleigh said the social background of many of the potential members makes it very difficult for some of them to be clean.

Lord Vetinari observed that this was fine, just so long as they weren't killing people. Personally, he would be happy to accept cleanliness in deed. They could say and think whatever they wanted.

He was prepared to put the backing of the city behind this proposal and looked forward to seeing improvement in the behaviour of young males of all species.

Miss Partleigh asked: what about the girls?

Sergeant Detritus said that girls were strictly not allowed, on account of causing a lack of cleanliness in thought, word and deed.

Grag Bashfulsson pointed out that many modern female dwarfs would wish to be recognised as girls.

Captain Carrot said there was no reason, surely, why a similar organisation could be set up for young women. Obviously given the nature of the dwarf approach to apparent sexual orientation, any dwarf could join wither the boy scouts or girl scouts but not keep changing from one another.

He was certain that people from the guilds and other responsible citizens would be happy to donate their time in setting these young people on the proper path. He would be prepared, along with Sergeant Angua, to teach woodcraft and wilderness survival.

Mr Boggis said that surviving in a wilderness was a piece of cake compared to five minutes in an alleyway in Ankh-Morpork, so he for his part would see that young people could also learn how to get down to the shops with all their teeth intact.

At this point there was considerable discussion among the committee about activities that could be arranged, and it was agreed to hold during the summer, an open air meeting to launch the Ankh-Morpork Scouting and possibly Urban Survival Federation.

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