A Pair of Gloves

By Vaidenon of Hustan, Warden of the Inkhorn Fellowship

markets, market days, tolls and taxes in Melderyn, followed from a Tarial calf to a glover's shop in Cherafir

> "Save-K'nor counts, Peoni rests, and the market does both, Warden. It simply does them on different days."
>
> — Obiris of Ueld, Deor Ishar of Save-K'nor, to the author

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I have before me, as I write, a pair of gloves. They are of calfskin, the colour of good bread crust, so fine that I can feel the grain of this paper through them, and stitched so small that I took them at first for a single piece. I bought them in Cherafir in the spring, on the morning of the thirteenth of Peonu, from the shop of Meril of Yulmenar in the Shambles, for twelve pennies, which is more than I have ever paid for anything I wear on my hands. I had come to the city to read in the temple of Save-K'nor, the oldest house of that god in the Hârnic Isles, by the leave of its primate, and in the council hall's library of more than a thousand years of records. I came home knowing less about the records than I had hoped, and a great deal more about gloves.

For a pair of gloves, it turns out, is a short history of a kingdom. Before it reached my hands, mine passed through a manor, a hundred, a market, a slaughterhouse outside the walls, a tannery, a currier's bench, a city gate and a guild shop, and every one of them had a law, a custom or a tax to say about it. Some of these I learned from the surveys of Columbia, which describe Cherafir better than any other city of Lythia is described anywhere. The rest I learned from the people who make Cherafir's laws and keep its markets, who were kind enough to explain them to a foreigner asking questions about his gloves. (Inkhorn)

Credits

Writer: Vaidenon of Hustan

Set down by Lesli of Bifel and his homunculus, Claudin

With the help of Meril of Yulmenar, glover; Sarin of Eyloch, alderman; Nela of Hune, market warden; Feya of Ubar, clerk to the Treasurer; Fryda of Gevrael, Pelnala; Obiris of Ueld, Deor Ishar; and the tanners of Halain; and of Lesli of Bifel's correspondence on the markets of Terra. See Sources and Additions.

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How Sure I Am

Certain: Columbia Games' published works say so.

Near certain: the officers or guildsmen who keep the custom told me so, and the published works do not contradict them.

A fair guess: I have put two things together myself, or followed a Terran custom where Hârn is silent.

The Market and Its Days

Cherafir is the largest market on Hârn. Its general market in Toron Square opens at dawn and closes at noon, every day of the year. Certain. That last phrase puzzled me, for I knew that the country folk of Melderyn come to town on fixed days, and I could not see how a market open every day could have days at all. It was **Nela of Hune**, the city's market warden and weigher, who set me right, standing at her beam with a basket of eggs in the scale.

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> *The square is open every morning, master, for the city must eat every morning. But the country comes on the morrow of the Sapelah. Look about you tomorrow and you'll not find room to set down a goose.*
>
> — Nela of Hune, market warden and weigher of Cherafir

The Peonian lay mass, the Lesser Sapelah, falls on the fourth, twelfth, twentieth and twenty-eighth of every month, and on those days the villagers of Melderyn rest from the fields. Certain. The Church keeps its masses in the early evening, and the lay mass is no exception. Certain. The villagers hear it in their own chapels as the light goes, sleep, and set out before dawn on the morrow, driving their beasts and carrying their baskets, so that they are at the market cross when the bell rings. So the great market days of Melderyn are the fifth, thirteenth, twenty-first and twenty-ninth. The large towns keep all four, and the little seat towns two of them. (Inkhorn)

I asked why the market did not simply meet on the holy day, when the people were free. **Fryda of Gevrael**, Pelnala of the Balm of Joy and an alderman of the city, answered me with great patience.

> *Because Peoni asks the day of them, and the market would take it. A woman who has walked six miles to sell her cheese has no thought left for the lady. Let her come to the mass with her hands empty and to the market with them full. Both are better done that way.*
>
> — Fryda of Gevrael, Pelnala, alderman of Cherafir

There are days when no market meets at all, and days when it meets but sells no beasts. They are set out at the end of this account, with the market days of every kind of town in the kingdom. (Inkhorn)

Lesli of Bifel, who once sang for his bread and very nearly took the vows of one of Terra's great churches, keeps a singer's memory for holy days. He tells me that Terra's kingdoms went the same way, more slowly. Their markets once met on the holy day itself, and their priests preached against it for two hundred years before the kings forbade it and the markets moved to the morrow. (Terran sources, by Lesli of Bifel)

The Calf

My gloves began, Meril told me, as a calf of Tarial, the hundred-moot manor of Tarial Hundred in Cherfinshire, whose people bring their beasts to Cherafir because the hundred's market is the city's own. She knew it because the tanner told her, and the tanner knew it because the slaughterer told him: a chain of hands I came to admire. I did not meet the villein whose calf it was, nor the herder of Tarial who counted it among the lord's beasts and the villeins' in the spring of 719. I did not need to. The custom of the manor told me enough. (Inkhorn)

A spring bull calf that will not be wanted for the plough is a calf to sell before the winter, when every mouthful of hay matters. A villein of Tarial may not sell a beast off the manor without the reeve's leave, for the lord has an interest in every beast on his land. At Tarial the reeve is Staphane of Rynton, and the manor is held for the sheriff by the Bailiff of the Hundred, Ranas Yanar. In Halane, the month for selling surplus beasts, the calf went to Cherafir with the reeve's leave and the morrow-of-Sapelah crowd. (Inkhorn)

It did not go to Toron Square. The livestock market of Cherafir has been held in Halain Square, outside the walls, since the city's present walls were built five centuries ago and the beasts, the butchers and the slaughterhouse were banished beyond them. Certain. There Nela of Hune's men take stallage on each beast, a farthing a calf, and weigh what needs weighing. There, too, they keep the market's own peace. (Inkhorn)

> *A quarrel over a beast is settled before the beast is cold, master, or it is never settled at all. I hear it at the beam, with two honest men beside me, and the watch to see it kept. A man who wants an alderman's court for a calf can have one, in a month, for more than the calf is worth.*
>
> — Nela of Hune

Lesli tells me that Terra's market towns kept just such a court, and gave it a name I have grown fond of: the court of the dusty feet, *pieds poudrés* in the old tongue of their lawyers, which plainer mouths wore down to "piepowder". It sat on the market floor, on market days, for the pedlars and travelling dealers who still

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had the road on their boots and could not wait a season for the king's justices. The steward or warden of the market was its judge. He heard the broken bargain, the short measure, the theft and the brawl, and gave judgement the same day, "within three tides", Lesli says, and always before the dealer moved on. Some towns held it at the weighing beam itself, as Nela holds hers. The last of them, in a sea-port Lesli calls Bristol, outlived every reason for it by some centuries and was not put down by law until what his reckoning calls the year 1971. He asked me to forgive him the date. He cannot turn his years into ours, and I am not certain he could tell me the year in any house but his own. (Terran sources, by Lesli of Bifel)

His letter on the subject came, as his letters always come, without a speck of road-dust on it, which Claudin thought a better joke than I did. Claudin had the whole account of the dusty-footed courts set out for me before I had finished asking for it. I made it go back and tell me where every piece had come from, which it did, a little sulkily. I have found that a necessary habit with Claudin, and one I do not intend to break. (Inkhorn)

Outside the Walls

The slaughter of beasts is forbidden within Cherafir's walls. Certain. So the calf was killed in Halain, by **Perlam of Cilta**, who kills and butchers several dozen beasts each day to feed the city and supply its salters, and sells most of the hides to the tanner Veral of Hiltex nearby. Certain. Halain is a village of freemen, fishermen and the trades the city's ordinances have pushed out over the centuries for being too smelly, noisy or loathsome, and it pays a property tax a fifth or a quarter lower than the city's for the privilege. Certain.

Sarin of Eyloch, the litigant and landlord who drafts most of Cherafir's new laws, told me how such an ordinance is made, over a cup of wine at her table in the Old Quarter.

> *Nobody banishes a trade, Warden. One makes it cheaper to be elsewhere. The slaughterhouse went because the walls went up around a square that stank, and the council of the day had the sense to tax what was inside the walls more than what was out. The tanners followed the butchers, because the hides were there. Nobody has had to make a law about tanners since.*
>
> — Sarin of Eyloch, alderman of Cherafir

Veral of Hiltex's tannery makes every grade of leather from fine, supple suede to hard-wearing rawhide, and it needs, the survey says, vast amounts of oak bark and of urine, the latter gathered by his apprentices from the city's chamber pots. Certain. I visited it once, briefly. I will say only that the survey does not exaggerate, and that Veral, who is a courteous man, met me at his gate rather than ask me in. A calfskin for gloves lies in the bark through the winter. Mine went into the pits in Savor and came out in Nuzyael. (Inkhorn)

From the tannery the skin went to **Londis of Kalindar**, a currier, who dresses leather and shaves it thin and even for fine work. The Hideworkers' Guild of Cherafir is a dozen crafts under one charter: the slaughterer, the tanner, the currier and the glover are all its members, and the skin passed from hand to hand within the guild without a penny of toll or tax at any step. (Inkhorn)

Through the Gate

Everyone who brings goods into Cherafir enters by the Rylian Gate, where honest declarations are expected, wagons and packs are often searched, and the City Watch takes the proper tolls and fees. Certain. The other gates admit only those on foot or riding. Certain. So Meril's dressed skins came in by the Rylian Gate. I assumed she had paid for them there, and said so.

> *Pay at the gate for my own skins? I'm a freemaster of this city, master Vaidenon. I carry my own trade's goods through my own city's gates. A stranger pays; a mercantyler bringing skins from Thay to sell pays; I don't. That's what the freedom is for.*
>
> — Meril of Yulmenar, glover

I learned later that this freedom, which every master of a Cherafiran guild enjoys, is one of the oldest privileges of the city and appears in no charter I could find. It is simply known, and the watch at the Rylian Gate knows the city's masters by sight. (Inkhorn) Lesli tells me that Terra's chartered towns gave their freemen the same

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exemption from their own tolls, and prized it above almost anything. (Terran sources, by Lesli of Bifel)

The Shop in the Shambles

The Shambles grew up around Toron Square, where the livestock market used to be, and it remains the artisan quarter of Cherafir, where most of the city's laborious hand-made goods are made and mended. Its houses are narrow, half-timbered and roofed in clay tile, their upper storeys jutting over the lanes, and some of the old alleys survive as covered passages between them. Certain. **Meril of Yulmenar**'s shop is one of those narrow houses, three lanes from the square: a window that opens down into a counter, a workroom behind it, and above, the rooms where she lives with her son. She is a freemaster of the Hideworkers' Guild, the best glover in the city by common report, and twenty-nine years old. (Inkhorn)

I saw the gloves on the counter on the morning of the thirteenth, between the bell for the market and the noise of it. Meril asked fourteen pennies. A good pair of gloves is eight pennies in any honest market of Hârn, but hers were not a good pair; they were the best pair I had ever held. I offered ten, she said twelve, and I was too pleased to argue. (Inkhorn)

I asked her afterwards, rather boldly, why she sold from her own window and not from a stall in Toron Square, where the whole city passes.

> *Because a stall is the bondmaster's and a shop is mine. Anything sold in the square pays the hawking tax, fifteen in the hundred on the goods' value, and the bondmaster's man stands there with his tally to see it paid. What I sell across my own counter I pay for in other ways: the city's tax on my house and shop every year, nine in the hundred of what they are worth, and my dues to the guild. You paid for those too, master. You just didn't see them.*
>
> — Meril of Yulmenar

The rates she named are the survey's: fifteen in the hundred for hawking, nine in the hundred a year on business property, eleven on a house. Certain. **Feya of Ubar**, a clerk to the Treasurer, who keeps the city's tallies under Uthelren of Onparin, added the distinction I had not seen.

> *The hawking tax falls on what is cried and sold in the open, master: in the square, at the fish market, in the street. A guild master's shop is assessed, not hawked. The city takes its share either way. The difference is only whether it takes it at the stall in the morning or at the assessor's door in the spring.*
>
> — Feya of Ubar, clerk to the Treasurer of Cherafir

There is a third rule, which Meril mentioned only in passing and which I think the most important of all. A master of the guild may sell only what her own shop makes, and may make only what her own craft allows: Meril may not sell shoes, nor buy gloves from Thay to sell as her own. The guild holds that monopoly for all its masters under a charter of the Mangai, and the Mangai's own court settles any quarrel between guilds over where one craft ends and another begins. (Inkhorn) That is why there are no glovers' stalls in Toron Square at all: the masters will not hawk, and nobody else may make gloves.

Out of the Kingdom

I left Melderyn by Thay. Goods bound for the other cities of Hârn need the bondmaster's export permit to pass Thay's gates. Certain. I had none, and had not thought to need one, until the man at the gate looked at my hands.

I had, as it happens, a note. Feya of Ubar had written it for me before I left Cherafir, without my asking, in a fair clerk's hand: that the bearer, Vaidenon of Hustan, a scholar of Tashal, wore one pair of gloves of Cherafir make, bought for his own use, and that they were not goods for sale. The gateman read it, gave it back, and wished me a good journey. I have kept it in the left glove ever since. (Inkhorn)

What a Pair of Gloves Knows

I set out to read a thousand years of records and came home with twelve pennies' worth of calfskin and the conviction that the gloves knew more about Melderyn

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than the records did. Every hand that touched them answered to someone. The villein answered to his reeve, the reeve to the bailiff, the bailiff to the sheriff and the sheriff to the king. The market answered to its warden and the warden to the council. The tanner, the currier and the glover answered to their guild, and the guild to the Mangai. And all of them, villein and alderman alike, answered to the temple calendar, which said when they might work and when they might sell. None of these governments knew or cared about the others, and yet the gloves passed through all of them in a year and came out on my hands without a single law broken. I can think of no better proof that Melderyn is well governed, nor of a better reason to buy one's gloves there.

My pupils, in the seasons when I have any and they have paid, hear one rule from me more often than they would like: there is no useless learning, only learning that has not yet been introduced to its use. A young man who calls a thing trifling has told me where his curiosity stops, not where the thing's worth does, and I send him back to it until it has told him what it is for. I have spent more of my years in Melderyn than I care to admit to a Kaldoric reader, and I thought I knew the kingdom. It took a pair of gloves to teach me how it is governed. I do not expect them to be the last trifle that schools me.

For the Game Master

Melderyn's market days

These are the market days of Melderyn. The holy days are those of the Calendar of Columbia's religions; the markets that follow from them are the Fellowship's. (Inkhorn)

Place	General market	Beasts
Cherafir and Thay	every day, dawn to noon (Toron Square in Cherafir)	the morrow of each Lesser Sapelah: the 5th, 13th, 21st and 29th (Halain Square in Cherafir)
Large towns (Nurisel, Harden)	the morrow of each Lesser Sapelah: the 5th, 13th, 21st and 29th	the same days
Seat towns (Gythrun, Ontur, Shenap, Karveth, Menio, Chyrefal)	the 5th and 21st	the same days
A hundred's market village	once a month, on the day of the hundred moot	the same day
A shire town	a fair of three days at each quarterly shire moot	the fair

Days without a market

Day	Why	What closes
Nuzyael 1	New Year's Day	every market and every shop
Peonu 4	the Restoration Festival of Peoni	every market; guild shops at their masters' will
Larane 17	the Feast of St. Ambrathas	the cities' markets; others at the lord's or mayor's will
The Greater Sapelah (14th–17th)	Peoni's days of purification	no closure, but no livestock is sold

The gloves' road

Each step from calf to hand: where it happened, what happened, what was paid and to whom, and how sure we are of it (Certain: the published works; Inkhorn: the Fellowship's; Both: the step is published, the detail ours).

Where and when	What	What was paid	Sure
Tarial, Halane 719	a villein's bull calf, a spring calf not wanted for the plough	leave to sell off the manor from the reeve, Staphane of Rynton; nothing paid	Inkhorn
Halain Square, Halane 13	sold at the livestock market, the morrow of the Lesser Sapelah	stallage on the beast to the market warden, Nela of Hune	Inkhorn

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Where and when	What	What was paid	Sure
Halain, outside the walls	slaughtered by Perlam of Cilta; no beast may be killed inside the walls	none at the block	Certain
Halain	the green hide sold to the tannery of Veral of Hiltex	a sale between guildsmen: no toll, no hawking tax	Both
Veral's tannery, Savor 719–Nuzyael 720	tanned in oak bark and the urine of the city's chamber pots	Veral's business property tax (lower outside the walls)	Certain
Londis of Kalindar's shop	curried and shaved thin for fine work	his own dues to the Hideworkers' Guild	Inkhorn
The Rylian Gate	the dressed skins carried into the city	no toll: a freemaster of the city carries her own trade's goods free	Inkhorn
Meril of Yulmenar's shop, the Shambles	cut, sewn and finished; sold on Peonu 13, 720	no hawking tax (a shop sale, not a market one); her business tax and guild dues lie behind the price	Both
The gates of Thay, Peonu 720	carried out of Melderyn on the author's hands	no export permit: worn goods are not trade goods; a clerk's note to say so	Inkhorn

Who rules what at a market

Level	Who	What it rules
The manor	the lord, or his bailiff; the reeve	who may sell a beast off the manor, and when
The hundred	the Bailiff of the Hundred; the hundred moot	the hundred's market, its peace and its disputes
The shire	the sheriff (for Cherfinshire, Sir Clyve Lydel, at Shenap)	the quarterly moot and its fair; the king's peace on the roads
The Crown	the Exchequer Royal and its toll collectors	tolls on roads and bridges; tariffs at the ports
The city	the Lord Warden, the aldermen, the market wardens, the assessors, the City Watch at the gates	the market, its hours and weights; property and hawking taxes; gate tolls
The guild	the guildmaster and the masters of the guild	who may make what, and where; apprentices and journeymen; the quality of the work
The Mangai	the chapter at its hall [D19]; its court in the Alienage	guild charters; disputes between guilds; foreign trade in the Alienage
The temples	the priests and their calendars	the holy days, and so the market days

Running a Market Day at the Table

The morrow of the Sapelah fills the town: lanterns on the roads before first light, beasts in the lanes at dawn, the bell at the market cross, and everything sold by noon. The afternoon belongs to the cookshops, the hucksters and the pickpockets.

Stallage is a farthing a beast or a penny a stall, paid to the market warden. **Hawking tax** is 15% of declared value, paid to the bondmaster's men at the stall (Certain for Cherafir).

Forestalling, buying goods on the road before they reach the market in order to sell them dearer, is an offence against the market. The warden fines it on the spot, and a second offence goes to the alderman. (Inkhorn; it is a Terran crime as well.)

No selling within five leagues of most towns except at the town market; the least penalty is confiscation. Certain.

A guild master's shop pays no hawking tax and sells only its own work. A shop is the place to buy quality; a stall the place to buy cheap.

Disputes on market day go to the warden at the beam, at once. Anything worth more than a few pennies goes to an alderman.

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Hooks

A villein of Tarial has sold a calf at Halain without the reeve's leave. The reeve wants it back; the buyer has already sold the hide.

Someone is buying hides on the road to Halain before dawn on the morrow of the Sapelah. Nela of Hune wants the forestaller found before the alderman hears of it.

A stranger's gloves, sold as Meril of Yulmenar's, are turning up in Toron Square. They are not hers, and the guild is furious.

Tamis of Rikarben, the tanner the Alienage calls "Skinner", was nearly hanged six years ago for dealing unknowingly in human skins from Lythia (Certain). A new lot of fine Lythian leather has just come through the bonding house.

A character leaving Melderyn by Thay with a pack of fine Cherafiran goods and no export permit. Feya of Ubar does not write notes for everyone.

Skills

Hideworkers: Hidework (the guild's craft), with the specialty named: slaughterer, tanner, currier, glover. A glover of Meril's rank works at ML 81 or better (Superior, four stars), and her gloves sell at half again the price list's.

Market wardens: Mathematics for the beam, Law, Rhetoric and Awareness. **Clerks:** Mathematics and Script.

Buying well: Rhetoric against the merchant's Rhetoric to haggle; Awareness to know a forestaller or a false mark.

Sources and Additions

This section is set down plainly. It lists what in this account comes from Columbia Games' published works, and what the Inkhorn Fellowship adds; the Fellowship's additions are marked (Inkhorn) in the text.

Published sources

- Columbia Games, *Cherafir*: the largest market on Hârn; the general market in Toron Square, dawn to noon daily; the fish market; the city's taxes (property 11% and 9% a year, hawking 15%, bonding 3% a month); the Shambles; the slaughter forbidden within the walls; Perlam of Cilta [H5], Veral of Hiltex [H8] and Tamis of Rikarben [E4]; Halain and its lower property taxes; the Rylian Gate and its tolls; the City Watch; the council (Sarin of Eyloch, Fryda of Gevrael, Uthelren of Onparin); the Temple of Save-K'nor [B4] and Obiris of Ueld; the council hall's library; the Hall of the Mangai [D19] and the Mangai court of the Alienage.
- Columbia Games, *Thay*: the bondmaster's export permit at Thay's gates.
- Columbia Games, *HârnWorld* and *Cities and Towns*: town markets and the five-league rule; the hawking tax.
- Columbia Games, *Kingdom of Melderyn*: the shires and hundreds; Cherfinshire and its sheriff at Shenap.
- Columbia Games, *Guilds*: the Hideworkers' Guild; freemasters, franchises and the Mangai.
- Columbia Games, *Religion* and the religious calendar: the holy days of Peoni and Larani.
- Columbia Games, *HârnMaster*: the Craftsman Ratings; the price of gloves.

Terran sources

- Lesli of Bifel's correspondence on Terra's markets: the moving of markets off the holy day; the market court of the dusty feet; forestalling; the townsmen's freedom from their own town's tolls. Paraphrased; no Terran work is quoted.

The Fellowship's additions

- The words of Meril of Yulmenar, Sarin of Eyloch, Nela of Hune, Feya of Ubar, Fryda of Gevrael and Obiris of Ueld, which are the Fellowship's.
- Melderyn's market days and closed days; the reeve's leave to sell; stallage; the market warden's court; the freedom of the city at the gates; the guild rule that a master sells only her own work; the worn-goods note at Thay; the gloves' road and its dates; the hooks.

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