

## *The Tale of Jeremiah Cerrig Thay*



### *The Beginning*

On a dark night in the year of Sho-Caudal 3469, on the outskirts of the city Miedrinth, a baby was born. His name was to be Jeremiah. The local Imam read the heavenly bodies and the flow of the isho on that stormy night and quietly declared that such signs had never been seen before in his lifetime. He said that he would grow to become more than could possibly be expected of someone of his caste and that he may even come to affect the greater events of the divine time-flow. He gave the blessings of Tannis to the child and left the poor mother to tend for him.

Jeremiah grew up to become a strong young boy in spite of his mother's poverty. As the customs was among the tribe less workers, they did not have a surname. Instead children were simply named "son of" or "daughter of", and their father's name. However, Jeremiah did not have a known father. Despite many eager questions to his mother, Mirella, he would never get an answer. She diplomatically avoided the question and said: "Jeremiah! You are a gift to me from the stars." The young boy was puzzled by the answer and quietly grew in curiosity.

His early years were rather happy, even though he took a few blows for being fatherless. His mother made a living as a weaver of the Bohod klade and, unknown to him, made a few extra links as a prostitute.

### *Orphaned*

When he reached the age of twelve his mother grew suddenly ill with the Jungle fever. Too poor to buy the necessary limilates to cure her, she had no way to fight the disease. After two weeks of agony she died, leaving him with nothing but a shelter to live in. But on her deathbed she said to him: "Jeremiah! You shall not have to starve. I have taken steps to make sure that you will make it through in this world. Imam Izogaf will see to that. I promise you... I promise you." And with those words she entered shyee.

Oddly enough, her promise proved to be true. Imam Izogaf contacted him after his mother's death and declared that he would be put in school and given an allowance to live on. So it was, but the Imam never told him where the money came from or why.

### *The school years*

Said and done. Jeremiah was sent to a boarding school in the wealthier klade quarters of Miedrinth. As an unknown outsider the other kids treated him with suspicion. It was during these years he got his surname Gerrig after the habit he contracted of chewing the raw leaves from the wild plant gerrig as a stimulant. In lack of any other, he chose this as his real surname when he signed in as a tauther after having passed the Chieez-ritual by the age of fifteen. This was a mere formality and something that all of his fellow students undertook. Unlike his classmates, he could not count on having contacts and relatives sign his challisk to give him easier access to drennship.

As a student he was promising, though. Even if he lacked a strict linguistic or mathematical sense he showed an affinity for biology and mechanical science. So much so that he actually got approved for studies at the University in Miedrinth when he turned nineteen. In the back of his mind was always the fact that he had been unable to save his mother from her disease. As a result he was very interested in the field of limilates.

He stayed with the University for three years and studied the fields of Limilates, Pod-creature science and Dharsage silver. But as his exam he wrote an essay on the origin of pod creatures, which was not received well by his professor Dhar-Iscin Abdallah Kur-Ahmal. He argued that even hinting on the fact that pod creatures were anything else than the divine gift of Pteor, star-god of nature was a blasphemy. Jeremiah's point was that these creatures were actually engineered by the very same humans that created the Dharsage silver. Abdallah took the issue all the way to the supreme sacral court of High Priests and managed to get him expelled from the university without a degree.

### *A new life*

Broken by the injustice, Jeremiah resorted to a bohemian life of drinking and partying. His money was steadily flowing in from his anonymous benefactor. By the age of 23 he had managed to get married and being thrown back out on the streets due to his heavy drinking habits. Soon after they divorced, but she gave him a daughter named Mariah who Jeremiah has almost never seen.

Suddenly one day his monthly allowance ceased to be paid by Imam Izogaf. He left his incelep one day with a heavy hangover to go to the temple to sort the issue out, when he found out that Izogaf was dead. None of the other Imams could explain where the money he had received came from. They only told him that a standard sum had been paid through the Helna klade each month to Izogaf and that he had administered the sum to Jeremiah. However, they gave him a bunch of letters that were in Izogaf's possession that gave some clues to the origin of the money. The letters themselves only contained simple arrangements but they were posted by a man named Gustavos Jhay in Aylon, Jasp.

Broke and unable to follow up on this evidence, Jeremiah resorted to a life as a Jungle runner (or Jer as they are commonly known). At least he had a chance to make some use of the limilate and pod creature skills he had acquired at the university. He was taken up as a member by the Neerol klade and given a mentor named Zhia Kur-Hamad. A scarred man in his late forties that had more in-depth area knowledge of the East Trinnu jungle-lands than anyone else. Together they travelled the jungles for almost two years until he got his own license. Zhia taught Jeremiah many things about wilderness survival. He also taught him the forbidden knowledge of the Cleash language. A secret heavily guarded by a select few jers.

### *The battle of Baysis*

In the late Crith of 3492 Cleash raids from the East Trinnu Jungle-lands had become more than a nuisance. Several towns and villages in both Anasan and Sobayid had been raided so the Dharsage of Burdoth issued a call to arms. Since jungle-runners where needed for reconnaissance, Jeremiah enlisted. He was put to the test at the battle of Baysis where he proved his fortitude.

The cleash attacked with a weapon that had never before been seen, the blood-boiler. A terrifying organic weapon, against which no armour seemed to protect. A band of twenty troops was put together under the leadership of Drenn Frederyc of Ardoth. It was at this point Jeremiah first got to know some of the adventurers who later were to become his most trusted friends and companions: Khaine Johennon, Lucazail Laholahan, Snogard the Doctor and others.

The small troop managed to infiltrate the closest cleash outpost and destroy the blood-boiler. This was a heavy blow on the Cleash, but evidence also indicated that some cleash general may have acted on his own and revealed the dreaded weapon prematurely. Information that never would have been uncovered had it not been for the secret knowledge of Jeremiah Gerrig.

### *The quest for the father*

Jeremiah was duly rewarded for his accomplishments in the war (or minor skirmish as it would be called in the annals of Miedrinth). In fact he even received copras from the Chells of Miedrinth and Baysis. With his newfound confidence and money he decided to finally find out who his anonymous benefactor was.

He went to the Jaspian Skyport in Miedrinth and bought a ticket on a crystal schooner to Aylon in Jasp. After a lot of work, having some difficulties since he didn't speak the language, he found the home of a Gustavos Jhay. But to his regret he also found out that Gustavos had been dead for almost three years and his living wife refused to see him. In fact she was suspiciously angry when he met her at the door where he explained his errand and showed her the letters.

Jeremiah was broken, but firmly decided to find out the truth. After many hardships he managed to get in touch with the late Gustavos brother Khalajos who decided to tell him the true story.

Khalajos and Gustavos had during their younger years been companions in a lot of adventures. One of their travels had brought them to Miedrinth where Gustavos had met a beautiful young lady named Mirella, who he immediately fell in love with. The two had spent a year together but when she announced that she was pregnant Gustavos had been terrified since he was already married to a woman in Jasp. He shared no feelings for his wife but if he would acknowledge his new son it would mean an embarrassment to him that would lead to him losing his social status. Something he would not risk, so he decided to leave her.

A few years later a letter had arrived from a man of the clergy named Izogaf of Miedrinth. It explained that his beloved Mirella had died and left an orphaned son named Jeremiah. Gustavos was struck with grief. Still unable to sacrifice his social standing, he took pity on the boy and decided to provide for him since he was now a wealthy man.

Jeremiah listened to the story and understood that he had not only discovered who his benefactor was but also uncovered the secret of his anonymous father. Khalajos said that he would help Jeremiah to reclaim his name if he wanted to, but thought that the chances were slim of a legal success since Gustavos' wife would deny Jeremiah with all that stood in her power, and she was a rich and influential woman.

Jeremiah decided that it was not worth the effort and the public outcry it would cause if it were known that Gustavos Jhay, who was a reputable man, had a bastard son. However, he decided to stay with Khalajos for a while to get to know his family. Eventually, Khalajos and he became rather close friends and Khalajos took pity on Jeremiah and adopted him as his son, so that he would at least have his true family name.

### *The quest for Meg-aleisha*

Later that spring Khalajos took up an old dream of his from his adventuring days, and decided to mount an expedition for the fabled lost shanthic city of Meg-aleisha. Jeremiah who, in his heart desired for adventure, decided to join along with several of his cousins that he recently had gotten to know.

They travelled by crystal schooner to Anasan where they got on a ship bound for Tan-Iricid. The city of Meg-aleisha itself where supposed to be located in central Drail and Khalajos had during his earlier adventures acquired a map that was said to show the way. However, he decided to stop by at the Mountain Crown to gather additional info and recruit more people for the expedition.

It was there he found his long lost friends from his adventures with the Cleash of the East Trinnu jungle-lands. There, in an ordinary inclep sat Khaine Johennon and Lucazail Laholahan. When they heard the tale of Meg-aleisha and it's riches they immediately decided to join in for a quest of fame and fortune... and the rest is history.

But... suffice to say, their adventures brought them across the continent of Drail where they in competition with many other adventuring bands found the long lost city. It was a two-sided victory, though. It was soon discovered that it was no longer abandoned, but again inhabited by the regenerating Shantha.

Also, on their way home many adventures brought them in more conflict with Cleash who strangely had made an entry on the south continent. Later they came in league with human pirates but were betrayed and put to slavery. Sold to the south sea Ramian gire, Jeremiah and his friends served for one year as slaves to the Ramian lord ??????, until they finally made their escape. By sailing their ship through a warp they eventually they made it home to their homeland Burdoth. But that is another story...

*... To be continued*