

Meet Patrick-Thomas
A Character Background
for Heroes of Feonora RPG Board Game
by Josh Graye

As a young lad Patrick-Thomas spent many wonderful afternoons under the tutelage of Uncle Matthew, a quiet (if not somewhat gruff) man who lived out his days in a small, though sturdily-built home. His uncle's appearances gave the first impression of an old warrior, or maybe an experienced traveler who had seen much in long ago days, giving him the look of a time and age much older than he truly was. The story of how Uncle Matthew lost his left eye, so heavily scarred as it was, never seemed to be told the same way twice, whether by Patrick's other older relatives or one of the old-timers who spent long evenings down at the tavern relaying the grandest tales *that seemed to grow grander as the evening wore on*, and it was almost as if no one knew the whole truth about old Matt's eye but felt the need to fill in the details with no small bit of their own imagination. The one time young Patrick mustered enough courage to ask his uncle outright was met with a brief pause, almost as if the man might be considering sharing in a deep secret, only to be followed in a calm and distant voice by a short, "*Protecting my duty lad; now go fetch me another bucket of water before this timber starts to crack*," and Patrick knew then that it was not a subject to be brought up again.

Patrick's father and mother (as well as many of the townsfolk) were quite adamant that Old Matthew had served gloriously in the King's Army, especially during the 5th Great War under General Ambher. But despite their insistence to this supposed fact, Patrick had spent many hours in his uncle's home and seen no evidence of military service, glorious or otherwise...not an old uniform, not a ribbon or decoration or papers of any kind...not even a single piece of armor to indicate that he had once been a serving member of the King's Army. In fact, the only item of note in the entire place (aside from a few pieces of marvelous hand-crafted furniture) was an elaborate sword, worn and sturdy, that Uncle Matt took out during their training exercises. "*You want to be a fighting man do you...?*" said his uncle one day. "*Well then, you'd best learn what that really means, and learn it proper.*" Since then, and only after Patrick had completed his other duties around the place, he and his old uncle would head outside (rain or shine or in the muddy snow) to spend a few hours training in the age-old art of swordsmanship, which was far more than Patrick ever would have imagined and involved a strict code of engagement that stretched far beyond the bounds of mere 'swordplay,' which Uncle Matt gruffly referred to as '*for the rogues.*' It was during these lessons (in which Patrick received, he thought, more than his share of bumps and bruises) that he saw a side of his old uncle that was much fitter and more agile than his normal manner let on. And it was during these times when those fables of his parents' and townsfolk almost seemed real...even if they were surely too fantastic to be believed.

And over the years young Patrick grew in strength and confidence and, thanks in great part to the guidance of his *sometimes peculiar* uncle, his understanding of honor and duty and the importance of a strong 'presence' that could more than often help avoid a fight altogether...matured alongside him. And whenever the lessons were over Old Matt would put away that battered old sword, wrapped in a sackcloth, and placed carefully behind the bookshelf, out of sight of company that, so far as Patrick knew, came rarely (if at all).

It was no small thing when word of Old Matthew's death reached their home. Patrick had been with the man just three days prior, and seen nothing to indicate that his uncle might be readying for a journey. The news came as a shock, as it seemed to many that he would remain a steadfast member of the community, if not a very active one, but someone who, to them, represented an ideal of quiet nobility and longstanding living symbol of the '*soldier's code*.'

Deep in the Forest of Rhinn, near the base of the Rugged Mountains, Old Matthew's bloody and torn shirt had been found, along with a few articles that seemed to identify him as the owner of that ragged mess...including, a short ways off, the unmistakable workmanship of an Elite Orcish Archer's spent arrow. These few small artifacts had been returned to Patrick and his family by the Elves (and not merely messengers mind you), who Patrick (though not his parents) had been surprised to find had known his uncle quite well - though they had little to offer by way of explanation, other than to point out the small note found in a shirt pocket. In scribbled blue ink it simply read, "My dearest Matthew...we need you again. Lily." The name was a mystery to everyone, including Patrick's father; though, as always, there was no shortage of rumor and speculation as to whom this "Lily" might be, *if that were even her real name*. But surely it was Old Uncle Matt who had died in the forest that winter, for he never returned to his small house & workshop, and the old sword that Patrick had become so familiar with was nowhere to be found.

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