



Moresca

Clothing & Costume

Lena Dan

DEAR FRIENDS AND PATRONS,

Let me tell you a Faire story.

Everybody's met John. We think he's a decent, predictable guy. Nothing special. He, in fact, has always gone to great lengths to signal this to us with his language and his attire, which is also a language. He is in his thirties, or perhaps fourties, or fifties. He drives the right cars, has the right job and house, his kids go to the same right schools he went to. His wife, Mary, is everything he is. He is not devoid of courage, honour or uniqueness, but nothing in his behaviour or appearance makes you think of those things. He carries this country, such as it is. He pays the bills. He knows he's missing something.

One day he walks into my booth at a Ren. Faire.

"I don't know why, but I should like to try this on", he mutters handling a long, hooded cloak in dark red. Mary is hot and thirsty and the daughter is running ahead, about to get separated. John can't let go of the heavy, dark red wool cape. Someone shouts: "Try it on!" Now he is in front of the mirror. The shorts and Lacoste shirt are obliterated. A face from the chronicles looks back at him. A man from some story. A man IN a story. His story. It makes him think of courage, honour, of being like nobody else.

He can't remember where he's seen that face before, but it's an old friend. He wants to bring him home.

The son, who is maybe thirteen, has now come into the booth. The son sees the epic man standing there, takes ten seconds to adjust, and utters: "Dad! That is so cool!" Mary's head appears from the glare outside. She is still hot and thirsty. "Great," she says, "where are you going to wear that?" "I don't know," says John, "but I think I'm going to get it."

Lightning fails to strike him as he digs out his credit card. He is amazed at himself and a little embarrassed, but not too much. He gives a fleeting, lighthearted thought to the closet at home where, among the predictable suits, he will keep John, the man in a story. Safe.

Carrying his heavy paper bag out into the rowdy, dusty sunshine full of colour and music, he passes Nancy, who is in front of the mirror. She has a long green gown on over her T-shirt. Their eyes meet in a brief complicity. Nancy's boyfriend has a beer already, but he wants to move on: "Where are you going to wear that!?" "I don't know," says Nancy.

Our recent open house shows at the factory, (our next one is after Thanksgiving), have, literally, brought home revelation: we're onto something here.

Whatever it is, may it prosper. For John and Nancy and for all of us. Because each one of us is in a story. Our story, which includes everything we think and feel and dream. Possibly it's all we have. Possibly it's not only sufficient, but spacious, generous, magnificent. Worth telling, worth hearing.

So, someone is bound to say, do you have to be in costume to be in your own story? Dear friends and patrons, we already ARE in costume. Period costume. The interesting part is; what are we saying it with? Whose story are we telling?

Other animals have no option here. They are always telling the same story: "I am a peacock, I do peacock things", I am a mouse, I am a lion, I am a robin. We can cover that range in a day, with this extra language we possess. Why?



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OUR 1992 SEASON,

once our July home show is over, begins in earnest with:

STERLING FOREST

The New York Renaissance Festival opens on August 1., and runs weekends through September 20., including Labor Day. Hours are 11 AM to 6 PM. We're in our usual corner near the Star Poole Tavern. For info. call (914) 351-5171.

MARYLAND

The Maryland Renaissance Festival opens on August 29, and runs weekends through Oct. 18, including Labor Day but not Columbus Day. Faire hours are 10:30 AM to 7 PM. We are in the same location as previous years, on Valley Meade just down from the Wine Garden. For info. call (301) 266-7304

CARVER

King Richard's Faire in South Carver, MA. opens on Sept. 5, and runs weekends through Oct. 25., including Labor Day and Columbus Day. Faire hours are 11 AM to 6 PM. We're in our usual location, booth 51, across from the dance stage. Call (612) 922-0777 or (508) 866-5391 for info.

GEORGIA 93

is on. The Georgia Renaissance Festival opens on April 24 1993, through June 6. "School days" are tentatively May 4. & 5., and there may be an eighth weekend June 12. & 13. For info. call (404) 964-8575.

OPEN HOUSE DEC. 92

We're planning our third Home Show for Nov. 27, through Dec. 6, with hours 11 AM to 6 PM all ten days. Invitations should be out well in advance.

OPEN HOUSE APRIL 93

Tentative dates are April 3, through 18, same hours daily, if response continues positive.

FULL COLOUR CATALOG SPRING 93

The success of our April open house and the tremendous expense and energy involved in doing Ren. Faires at distant locations have encouraged me to invest at home. A colour catalog has been my dream for years! We should have it by April 93. It will feature all our current stuff since 87, when our present catalog was printed; monk cowls and wizards, wool clowns, slashed, early and pane doublets, starmites and breech, kerchief skirts and wool skirts, peplum, steel bone, taffeta and other bodices, kid capes, and, of course, all the new items of this season:

"MEGAMEDIEVAL" DRESS, our first major production dress besides the Juliet Robe. It laces tight to the waist over a shift or undergown. The skirt is a full circle and can be worn with or without hoops. The sleeves are huge, open along the top and tied every five inches. We have all sizes in eight deep gemtones in heavy cotton, trimmed with welt and piping. A winner at \$175-.

"CROW COSTUME", is our "budget mercenary", black, tied tabard and pants and a wide-brimmed hat, all with strips of slashes attached all over. For the complete "Rennie Ninja", the whole thing is \$100-.

COLOUR COTTON CAPE. Our bestseller, the black cotton cape, is now available in the same eight colours as the "Megamedieval" dress. Beautiful! And still at \$85-.

"STUPID HATS", HOODS AND BLOUSES, are among the other novelties you'll see at our Faire booths this season, along with plentiful, exuberant replenishment of all our other stock.

I don't know how many of you read my fliers, but I love writing this annual letter to you. Language, may be our greatest asset as a species; I think we only become dull or dangerous when we don't communicate. It's hard to remain angry with, or uninterested in a person once you know THEIR STORY.

A gothic cathedral is one vast story in stone. I think the job of any art, including clothing, is telling a story, well.

Have a happy summer, and see you at the Faires!

Lena Dun

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