



**Special Report
Part Six:
The Domme
Pony**



Ponizei Agents Investigate Curious TT Helicopter Crash

Mysterious Crate Recovered From Scene



The helicopter crash site has Ponizei agents scratching their heads [Photo: Cookie]

It appears that some very strange things have happened on our cozy little island over the past days. Several citizens reported a deafening explosion in the middle of the night, just off the coast at Pike and the Gazette's mailbox has been flooded with photographs of a crashed helicopter.

To add to the mystery, a number of citizens described strange noises coming from the vicinity of the site, as if someone was screaming and shouting for help, yet no one has yet been able to pinpoint where this came from.

A major incident like this couldn't have come at a worse time given the recent Ponizei penny-pinching to help fund landscaping work in Pike which has led to dramatic budget cuts.

This has left the TT force unable to properly police the lanes and bridleways of TT and their chief is still missing in action. However, loyal and hard-working Ponizei cop Danna and her K-9 unit "Cookie" went out and about to investigate and followed clues from several citizens. Your Gazette was right on their heels.

There is indeed a wrecked helicopter crash site, and the Ponizei were in a hurry to secure a mysterious crate with unknown content.

Ponizei cop Molly Lacroix has confirmed that this investigation is priority number one for the

Ponizei and the safety of TT ponies and citizens are their primary concern.

The Gazette received an anonymous tip that the Captain's shoe collection and wardrobe were actually higher priority than suitable investigation equipment, but we have so far been unable to confirm the source.

"The leader of Ponizei has gone missing, we have at this moment no indication that this crash is in any way connected to the case of our missing chief Axelle Beorn. We ask all citizens to assist us in this investigation to find the missing pilot and keep our island free of criminal scum and outlaws!"

Following accusations of Ponifia involvement, the leader of the local charity organisation, Tricky Trouble, issued the following statement:

"Stranger things have happened but this does look like a terrible accident which has nothing to do with our noble charity organisation. We will continue to offer helpful advice and assistance to everyone, even the Ponizei, but please understand it is not appropriate for me to comment further on an ongoing investigation."

- Names withheld

The Domme Pony

In short, this type of pony holds a bucket load of ponies on her leash.

Quite often these ponies are also often bouncing or fake ponies (discussed in previous editions).

The domme pony may have honest and good reasons to be dominant in tack and be dictated by good intentions and the will to provide fun to the others. However, this approach dilutes the pony's experience not only for the domme pony but also for those that she dominates.

Usually ponies prefer to be trained by trainers rather than ponies and the dominating pony won't have a chance to switch to a subby mindset.

Do you see a pony that teaches the other ponies flower dressage? This is domme-pony that comes from bouncing.

Do you see a pony that holds the leashes and calls you "darling"? This is Fake Pony.

In the first example, the best thing to do is just to gag the domme pony and train them both on flower. In the second case, the recommendation is just to ignore and let it be.

- Tricky

Ponizei Captain Axelle to return to lead helicopter crash investigations

Ponizei cop Molly Lacroix hosted an impromptu press conference yesterday to address rising concern and alarm amongst Tall tails citizens at the apparent lack of progress into investigations around the helicopter crash.

In a shocking development that raises even more questions about this whole affair, she proclaimed that 'nefarious elements' are using ponies as experimental lab rats. She also announced that Ponizei boss Axelle Beorn will be recalled from holiday to lead the high profile investigation.

Here is her statement in full:

"After the initial investigation into the helicopter crash by officer Danna and K9 unit Cookie, it has been brought to our attention that nefarious elements within Tall Tails are using ponies as experimental lab rats.

While the Ponifia shipping and logistics division has assured us that they have had no involvement



Ponizei cop Molly addresses an impromptu press conference, raising even more questions. [Photo: Molly]

with the supplies the Ponizei has recovered, we will continue to investigate.

Captain Axelle is being recalled from her holiday to the Louvre bathrooms to help lead the Ponizei in the coming weeks.

Sadly, there will be no reimbursement for her missed holidays.”

The Ponizei seem to know more than they are revealing and the urgency of this investigation is underlined by the apparent imminent return of their boss. The more that Ponifia involvement is denied the more suspicion it appears to create.

- Ponizei Press Office and Devi

Q&A with the Pony Caravan Directors

On 10th September, reporters Devi and Agni were joined by Pony Caravan Directors Loren, Magic and Sadal to answer questions about the Pony Caravan.

Devi: Thanks so much for agreeing to talk to us. You have just hosted your 12th Pony Caravan right? and it remains very popular and we all love the fact that different stables all come together in this cross-community event. We can only guess what work goes on behind the scenes to prepare these events so we are very curious to understand! How did this all start?

Magic: Yes - on 2nd October we will host our 13th Pony caravan since the first one that took place on 6th February 2021. People seem to like it and it's a real reward to have them so well attended with upwards of 50 people at each one! Sadal is best placed to explain the first one.



Magic! [Photo: Agni]

Sadal: The 6th of February 2021 was a terrifying day for me. This started as an FFF event but was open to all. I always liked the idea of us doing this as one community. I typed to the start location and found over forty people waiting for me...

Magic: Oh yes, that week of the first caravan Loren came to me and said look what FFF is organising...lets join with TT carts. Loren arranged TT ponies and drivers and in the end we had a crazy event with lots of crashes and fun. We had so much to learn but in the end we were excited to do this with others from other stables. We then had the idea of an after ride party and we poked Sadal to see if he wanted help.

Magic: It was a steep learning curve! At the first caravan we noticed its simply not possible to start all in one sim or parcel which is why we now use three start zones.

Sadal: Loren and Magic helped with designing the routes from the second Caravan onwards.

Devi: So you are the three Pony Caravan Directors. What is involved in setting up a caravan and how do you divide the roles and tasks?

Loren: We agree a route idea where it can be fun to cart, then we have to find three regions next to each other with a rez zone. Then we make the navhud, review it, improve it, check all the regions for lag, file tickets for the worst ones, perfect the notecards, include the landmarks. The poster takes a bit of time and needs a lot of people to pose, then it needs editing. The party has to be organised, particularly if we do it in another stable, along with the DJ's. Finally, we do all the announcements and organise the guides a few days before the caravans in each start zone. I think that's it...

Loren: But yes, each director usually takes care of different things, but each one of us can do everything if the others are busy in RL, just takes more work and time.

Magic: Sadal had the original idea and hosted the first. Like Sadal, Loren has lots of Mainland experience so both are good with the route ideas and navigation huds, while on my side is the discord server and the posters.

Devi: The other role is Caravan guide right? So what are their responsibilities? Do people get special training to hold the sign in the air?

Magic: Well if all goes well and no one gets lost and no one starts racing, the guides can lead a group until the end.

Loren: Yes the original idea was that Guides would stay in their groups, but as we do more Caravans, we realise this is harder and harder, especially if lag is high. Guides help people rez and prepare their carts in a neat line and get ready for the start, then they are a helping hand for people who crash or have trouble along the route.

Devi: Are there things we as participants could do to make your life easier?

Magic: Yes!

Loren: Yes!

Magic: Well the teaming up takes time - the ponies finding driver and driver finding ponies.

Loren: Oh yeah, each caravan takes about 10 to 20 min to get ready.

Magic: And we learned much about script weight and for that we encourage light tacks to ease with sim crossings but sometimes it seems we can't reach everybody and we see ponies and drivers crashing and unable to steer when they have 3-4 times the number of scripts than others.

Loren: Yes, the Caravans take place in mainland, and mainland, as good as it is, has also limitations. A tack modded to have less scripts and be less heavy helps immensely, especially when you consider we have about 30 ponies per caravan. Also, it seems that the ideal amount of ponies is either 1 or 2 per cart, 2 ponies can tackle a bad region and survive. Phaetons are a bit of a problem, they are more clumsy and seem harder to control in laggy regions, especially when they have 4 ponies on them with unmodded tacks.

Devi: Which particular favourite personal Caravan highlights would each of you like to call out?

Sadal: I will say again: the first one because I had to take care of a lot of things and I had almost 30 IMs at the start! One of the most stressed days in my life! *laughs*



Sadal! [Photo: Devi]

Magic: One of the biggest highlights for me was the moment we needed to raise the avatar limit of a sim to allow people to attend an after-party. We had 70+ joining a Caravan which was overwhelming. To have so many from different stables joining a non competitive event all sharing the same kink, to have fun together with people coming together from different stables, now that to me is the sign of a great community!

Loren: I enjoy creating something so others have fun, it's very rewarding, and doing that through mainland for a community which is still experiencing SL travel in bulk I find very fulfilling. At the start I'm the one who floats around all zones, trying to pair lone ponies with lone drivers and talking with the guides at the same time so no one is left behind, and then I give the start to each zone. The start is the most critical moment, everyone is together, the regions really do strain under all that pressure, so making sure each zone starts when they should and not before...just to reach the end an hour later and know everyone has made it...that's really a highlight for me.

Devi: I am aware of the large sailing community and flying community but are you aware of any other community events that travel the LL roads like this? Or is this the only one?

Loren: Yes, sailing is the biggest by far, flying is about two-thirds of the sailing, at least in size and there is the 'Drivers of SL' group. They have weekly drives, but they have evolved into a mini adventure that involves roads, sea and air. It's a very different format and thing to what we do. We are more your standard sailing cruise adapted to a road.

Devi: So who has won the Pony Caravan race most times? *grins mischievously*

Loren: It's not a race!

Devi: Gotcha! *laughs*

Loren: Okay so we still have a problem with that, people racing. In the beginning the concept was... people together, keeping speed and enjoying the company. But over time we have seen some people just need to go at speed 3, and others at speed 2.

Magic: The thing is, some overtake but when both carts reach the crossing at the same moment the issue is doubled which causes issues.

Loren: Some don't pay attention to the sim borders they are approaching, and often crash into a cart that is still in the crossing process. It can be very nasty as both carts suddenly are into each other, and as you know, this can lead to being pushed a region or two away, with force.

Loren: There is a 'Caravan Etiquette' somewhere that we kinda stopped using, we could review it and add it again to our Caravan notecards, at the end of the day we can only encourage, but we can't really impose things.

Devi: Let's think about that for a future gazette article.

Devi: Some sims we pass through have really bad lag... even if we have not crowded it. Do you encourage these sims to be reported to LL?

Magic: We learned depending on the performance of a region or sim its okay to go with 5 carts so we spread out with our start zones and we need to take care what happen in the sim in front of us and a guide could hold and wait and tell people to slow and keep distance but in reality, that's easier said than done.

Loren: The bad region topic is really complex. We can and do report when a sim is doing really badly and LL will come and restart, either through a support ticket or live chat. Restarting the sim gets

rid of some residual lack of performance, but never 'cures' a region to the fullest.

Loren: Mainland is not rented, it is owned land, so unless you rent in the region and are very persistent to LL over weeks, they usually don't come and actually remove the stuff that is burdening the region.

Magic: Well once the source of crazy lag was bunch of breeding bunnies!



Laggy breeding bunnies! [Photo: Loren]

Magic: You see, when parcel owners have script intensive stuff there is not much you can do even when it effects a public road.

Loren: When I told LL we were having a group of about fifty residents going through, they told me to use livechat right before the caravan for another fresh start. We still had issues with that region on the day of the caravan, but it could have been much worse.

Devi: What one development or policy change would you like Linden Labs to focus on which would improve carting on mainland roads?

Loren: *laughs* Better performance for all regions! But seriously, some roads need some more rez zones added. Some have a rez zone every sim, others every five, and others don't have rez zones except at start and end.

Magic: Personally, I miss some road connections for nicer routes and sometimes roads cross sims in the corner which is problematic and one of the hardest crossings with the highest risk of crashing. I guess roads were built when noone could imagine the issues we have today.

Agni: Would a railroad caravan be feasible, if appropriate carts were available?

Loren: Absolutely! *smiles*

Devi: Keep working on it Agni! *grins*

Devi: Can you reveal any future plans for the caravan?

Magic: So on my wishlist... involve more stables to continue to grow us working together as a joint community. But it's not easy, the events are huge and it needs to be a full region/sim to have 70+ people. The after-ride parties are a great chance for every stable to present themselves.

Loren: Couldn't agree more.

Sadal: *nods*

Magic: Also on my wish list, is to involve more guides in preparing a route. It's a lot of work and when its spread throughout the team, its less work for each.

Loren: We are always looking for help, one Caravan was made by Sunset members. I taught

them how to handle the navhud tool and they did it, I only had to check it was fine and boom, route ready!

Loren: If we had a sailing cart, or some sort of pony powered boat that retains the pony-driver relationship we could really do some awesome intercontinental trips, so I'm hoping someone dares to get on that project at some point!

Devi: Will a point be reached where you will have to start repeating previous routes?

Magic: Part of previous routes maybe. We aim for seasonal routes like going to the Snowlands in the winter months, but SL doesn't have many Snowlands.

Loren: That Snowlands caravan was so good... I kinda want to repeat it one day.

Magic: Winter is Coming! *grins*

Devi: Had the SL move to Amazon Cloud WS happened when you ran the first one and do you think mainland carting is better or worse since the move to Amazon?

Loren: This is an unpopular opinion along mainlanders, but in my eyes the Amazon move didn't improve anything. The move happened around November and December 2020 so yes all the caravans have been on Amazon servers.



Loren! [Photo: Devi]

Loren: The biggest improvement came from a coding update to sim crossings, a nearly 'from nothing' thing, that was tested and then deployed around August 2020. To me it seems some regions got a bit worse, others a bit better, but overall, same.

Loren: That said, the code update was the life changer for mainland with much better crossings, I had tears in my eyes when I tested it with my helicopter.

Devi: I hope you run another tack workshop soon to help people reduce their script count and could they be opened up to all stables who take part in the Caravan?

Loren: It hasn't been so far, as it's been fundamentally a TT thing, but it's a good idea and we will think about it, I can't promise right now!

Magic: It's for sure worth to consider.

Devi: Thank you all so much for your time and your fascinating insights into the inner working of the Pony Caravan!

-Devi