

A large group from the KVA congregated at Rednow's Rest, a waystation owned by the Valley Merchants Guildleader Rednow Ffuts, for a celebration hosted by the White Retreat. The occasion was Eostarre (pronounced 'E-star'), a yearly commemoration of when the Valley came to Orin Rakatha. We were greeted by Lightfoot Flame, Guildleader of the Red School of Magic, and informed that there would be games and festivities.

Elementals

Lightfoot Flame informed the Red School members present of a recent problem in the area concerning a number of green elementals that had been disrupting trade routes. These had been shepherded into an enclosed area for us to deal with – being affected only by red magic. Assembling a rather large group, we found the creatures and dispatched them with ease.

Kal mentioned that on a recent mission, he had discovered Scale – a prominent member of the Shark Cult – residing in Sector Seven of the Valley Alliance Tower. He had also encountered some Shark Cultists recruiting green elementals to their cause.

Later on, we were surprised by a blue elemental that was pursued for a while around the waystation until its eventual demise.

Ambassadors

Lord Sebastian, Marshal of the Order of King Michel, arrived and requested the waystation be prepared for the arrival of some dignitaries from other Towers. Not long afterwards, ambassadors started to arrive in from the snow, and some light discussion was had before a large meeting was assembled.

Lord Sebastian called the meeting to order and spoke some words of thanks on behalf of King Michel to the representatives present for the way in which the Valley had been welcomed on this Plane. These were echoed by Sky, acting as ambassador for the Valley Alliance Tower. Those from the other towers were invited to speak in turn.

Fel-Grok, a Saldorian, offered a gift to the Alliance of ten percent discount on all red and green potions.

Rupert, from the Shadowsfall, thanked Lord Sebastian for the gracious opportunity to further understand our people. He declined to present a gift.

Ranter de Val spoke on behalf of Mentor Helmscall for Halmadon's Heights. As allies of the White Retreat for a while, the Halmadonians value their friendship. They also recognise the nature of the Kern Valley Alliance, and as such were returning a prisoner of great status to Wolfhold for whom they would "forgive crimes and transgressions". This was to take place within the next day, and it transpired that the person in question was Sin, Assistant Guildleader of the Assassins.

Aristotle of the Reader presented his good regards, and a ten percent reduction on salmon gills. I understand this is a valuable component in the manufacture of alchemical potions. The offer provoked an outraged splutter from the Thissessin ambassador present, who complained that they "would never get such a deal".

Faruk Abdul of the Dai-fah-Dyne spoke of a difficult situation, with much misunderstanding in the past between our Towers. However, he accepted the post of ambassador to the White Retreat, and offered us free passage through the World Window.

Sir Dareth Haginent of the Nature of Shadow from the Chequered Tower then stood. He said that he was here as a reminder that there are peoples and towers who wish to remain alone and keep their business to themselves. They do not wish any sort of contact, and he refused the offer of the post of envoy. He did however present a gift: a book of power, of which it is said "the greatest power is gained by one who holds it but does not open it". The colours of the Chequered Tower are black and white, matrixed in a rectangular chequered pattern.

SastunZuni of the Thissessin said that he spoke for Suthrasessin. Speaking through the Druid Tersius, who could relay his words at a volume audible by all, he said that their gift will allow the bearer to walk across their spawning pools undisturbed. He also accepted the position of ambassador.

Perrington, bursar from the Wizards Concillium, alluded to a strained history. His gift was the means to create a subplane (a pocket dimension), and that the Valley people could specify where this was to be placed. He also issued an invitation for a member of the Yellow Guild to join with Yellow Sorcerers from across the Plane “to discuss matters of import to magic”.

Narsus of the Crimson Feast Legion of the Kalid was the last to rise. Under his arm he carried a large box. He said that he was pleased to be ambassador, and looked forward to the hunts we may have together. His gift was to bring the Oracle, but that we should be careful, for it is a double-edged sword. Taruman went to take the box, but swiftly left the room thereafter. He was followed by a number of people, some from the other Towers, who wished to convey this news to their fellows with all due haste.

Morning Awakening

The waystation was besieged by a large number of undead, including an undead monk of sorts.

The Oracle

The previous evening, I had spoke with Perrington of the Wizards Concillium concerning the nature Oracle. Apparently this being possesses the knowledge pertaining to any question that you might choose to ask. Should this take place in the future, it may also bend reality to take shape around its answer. Each person may only ask the Oracle one question during his or her lifetime.

Lord Sebastian wished to address us on this morning. He was pleased with the diplomacy we had shown to the ambassadors the night before, and recounted that the Kalid gift was the opportunity to host that being known as ‘the Oracle’. He said that many people would wish to visit it, and that we should provide the management to deal with this. The box presented by the Kalid had been examined, and was now an empty vessel which contained the device that triggered the arrival of the Oracle. It transpired that the Oracle had decided to host itself within Taruman, the Seeker Guildleader, and we were informed that the person who opened the box was in good health.

The Oracle spoke: “Be it known that the Oracle is amongst you, to provide you with wisdom. I will give it without restriction. Those who wish to speak must bear a light to cast the gloom of their doubts away from them, and make a sacrifice in a gift to me, to give clarity of answer.”

We were shown the token – a small transparent cube, with a white candle embedded within – that would grant the bearer access to the Oracle. The Oracle was only to be here for twenty-four hours, however we did not know whether that commenced from the morning, or the night before.

Lord Sebastian then announced that he wanted to use this as an example of how the Valley behave, and that as hosts of the Oracle, we should graciously escort those from other Towers to see this being. He anticipated that some groups may be antagonistic towards us. His other point was that we should gather as many tokens as possible, and that Galnin was organising the Seekers to search and map the area – there were mystical statements as to the location of the tokens, and the Seekers were consequently poring over them.

A member of the Druid’s Sect – a representative who spoke for Arbor – said that the druids had cast a ‘ritual of paths’. This ritual would guide those who sought the Oracle to follow a particular approach to the building, although they could chose to ignore it if they so desired. As we would thus expect most people to go this way, we were to set up an outpost where they could meet and be greeted by the more high-stated members of the Valley present. Another group was to wait here at the building, for not all people would follow that path.

Visitors to The Oracle

1. **Shadow Keep.** The first group to arrive was a number of Mor Silvani. As expected, they were hostile, and it was not long before they had beaten an unprotesting Darz’tor Steelflame unconscious. The Valley group tried valiantly to establish a dialogue, before a fight commenced. Their group was wholly slain, including a Skin Shriever who had been accompanied by a number of their Elite Guards.

2. **Kalid.** Judging by the creatures which accompanied these people – a large host of undead, and a hepath – I expect that they hailed from the Dothloadass Legion, though the one I asked declined to comment. A delegation of the group were escorted to the building, and asked their question. As they were leaving, a fight began – the hepath had claimed some of Sky's blood, and he sought to retrieve it – but the woman who had spoken with the Oracle escaped. Interestingly, at some point the hepath went into a form of 'stasis' during which it could not be harmed – this was the point at which the vessel containing the blood was removed from the creature.

3. **Halmadon's Height.** We had removed a token from some towerless people, and Sky decided to give this to a Halmadonian group. I believe that Sir Volminor had directed them towards us, and the Halmadonian group contained the brother of Magellan, High Priest of the Micheline Sect. Apparently the Halmadonians were to ask "what is the nature and the cause of the affliction with the Pax Silvani?"

4. **Raoul Yonus.** We came across a man who could remember naught other than his own name, and that he had woken up in the river this morning to be guided to this place by the token he bore. His accent was reminiscent of the Dai-fah-Dyne, yet he was not dressed in any Tower livery that I could identify. We were seemingly unable to determine anything more about this person, even down to the amount of power within his body, or that he might be spiritually influenced, and so forth.

5. **Kalid.** As darkness fell, a group from the Steelwind Legion arrived, and dined within the waystation. Sky enquired as to whether they could tell us more of the Shendai, but it transpires that they are not allies, and that the information the Steelwind has upon the Shendai is secret to their Legion.

Low Status Group

A group led by Orlando had set out to recover some tokens, the location of which had roughly been determined by the Seekers. They returned later with three such tokens.

Additionally, it seems that they had managed to find the key to the mistweaver's lair. A creature resided within an enclosed triangular area, of which they could ask three questions, to which it would reply either "yes" or "no". A fire mage, who seemed somewhat hostile, had invited the group to ask questions of this creature. The group believe that he had earlier questioned the creature, but failed to determine that which he sought in answer. However, he wandered off after the first few questioning attempts by the group.

It transpires that a mistweaver is held in a lair by the Dymwan, who are experimenting on goblins, hordelings, and so forth. They are apparently trying to create a fleshweaver. The key to the lair is an "exploding goblin", perhaps part of her in some way, but it will nevertheless free her.

This information was relayed by Myrtle, mage of the Red School, who has also passed to me some notes from the Dymwan Cadre that were recovered from a previous mission.

Mid Status Group

Kal led his group to the Aldonar Tombs, which are close by to the Valley Alliance Tower. On this mission, there were two encounters of note.

Firstly, they there came across a number of Saldorians, of the Brotherhood of Purity and Light. The Saldorians had a controlled troll, which the group beat to the ground. When the troll arose once more, it was no longer controlled by the Saldorians and set about attacking the same for a short while. I am told that the Saldorians are in possession of a control mechanism which they use to make hordelings fight on their behalf. The control words are "three-two-one-activate", and then the subject will act in a pre-programmed manner. Wizard Ansell was afflicted by a similar preparatory spell, when he was frozen by a white elemental. The leader of this Saldorian group was a white specialist sorcerer, who used an arcane staff of ice, and unleashed a number of mass freezes. He and his guard escaped the area.

They also met a rank 10 vampire, which is still at large. This vampire had beguiled a number of people, including:

- a member of the Fell Knights of Ushaz (elixired by the group)
- a member of House Morfeaglin (now dead)
- a Dai-fah-Dyne, female (dead)
- a Reader healer (alive)
- a member of the Wizards Concillium (weaknessed to the floor)

I am told that the Reader wanted to ask the Oracle how to heal his “sick master” (the vampire). And another source claims that the Wizards Concillium member also asked how to heal the vampire. The information needs clarifying, but I am informed the vampire was named Roberto, and was a Sorcerer of the Wizards Concillium (Elements of Lightning and Air), Collegium Arcanum, who had been bitten a few too many times. He made his escape by teleporting away.

Sources: Luke, Caradac, Kal.

High Status Group

We remained around Rednow’s Rest, in order to receive visitors. We were attacked by a bloodless ghaki – an undead created by the Steelwind, in their Ritual of Harrowing. This ghaki drained quite an amount of life from High Priest Puke, who was its most virulent opponent. It re-appeared not much later, saying that its body was nearby, and that in its lifetime it had been a Priest of the White Lotus (Good Sphere caster). A Pathfinder later reported seeing a blue elemental teleport away with the harrowed body.

Progressing round the building, we found a larger group of Steelwind, who accused us of being dishonourable. A fight quickly began, and they were all slain. They had with them a blue elemental – the Steelwind presence in the area may explain the other elemental that attacked those within the building on the night before.

Evening Activities

Gilliard Greyarm, Guildleader of the Grey School of Magic, arrived and called a meeting of all

those who study magic. Giles, Assistant Guildleader of the Grey School, had been present with us since we had arrived the previous night. I believe that the Grey School wishes to distance itself from the private tuition offered by The T'an to those of his clan, Clan Eymeric. On a side-note, the Wizards Concillium bursar (Perrington) said that he did not understand these teachings to be in breach of their agreement with our Alliance.

A Shadowsfall Adjudicator stormed into the building, and tried to apprehend Atalante Darkstar, 1st Assassin of House Tumdurgul. The Shadowsfall were obviously well prepared, and powerdrained those of us who fought to stop a Guildleader of our Towers being taken in this way – myself, High Priest Puke, and Thumper of the Iron Guard. The incident was observed impassively by a large presence from the Valley Alliance and White Retreat, who unanimously decided not to involve themselves in this matter. I am told that the Shadowsfall then threatened further attacks with death, and accused Atalante Darkstar of crimes against the Laws of Orin Rakatha.

I was later restored to consciousness by a strange creature, which I could not identify. Its face was veiled, and it was garbed in the sort of attire a water-dwelling creature might wear. I believe that it, too, went to seek an audience with the Oracle.

We were later honoured by the presence of further dignatories from our Alliance, including a number of Members of the Council of Ten, and Sir Arren Hardwicke, Adjutant to Lord Sebastian.

A group of 'wanted' Seekers arrived, wishing to talk with Caradac. These included Mistletoe and Pansy, both known associates of the late Belem de Traverney. They demanded a token for which to see the Oracle; finding none available, they went off to attack a group from House Morfeaglin, whom the low-stated group had earlier decided to leave in peace in keeping with Lord Sebastian's orders. Those present set themselves up to apprehend these Seekers, so they might be brought to justice, but it seems they managed to talk their way out of it, and left.

Sin, Assistant Guildleader of the Assassins, was escorted to the waystation by the Halmadonians. Unfortunately, she was later attacked and permanently slain by unknown assailants.

Taruman Taken

A Herald of the Panther Claw appeared, stating that his territory had been transgressed, and that he had taken prisoner the one who did this. We later discovered that Taruman, the “host” of the Oracle, was missing.

The next morning, a White Seer arrived at the waystation, who is linked in some way to Taruman. Through this link, he could sense his location, although this was rapidly fading. It appears he had been taken to a place of ‘myth and legend’ – the nature of the Oracle being of this place, and Taruman, too, was in this way a suitable host for the Oracle. We assembled at the rift to this world while it still existed, and Sky issued a challenge to the Panther Claw, which was taken up by all those present. One group remained to guard the entrance to the rift, the other travelled within.

The Aldonar

The place was indistinct and misty, deathly silent. We were met by the Aldonar Claw in question; I believe that within a Claw there are those which take on a number of distinct roles. The ‘Ruler’, for example, immediately possessed Sky and turned him against our party. She was slain by High Priest Puke, with a Touch of Death. Other members included a trogamor, who has a split white/black face, and can call weapons to his hands from his opponents’; a red sorcerer; a healer (the key to defeating a Claw being to take out the healer – in the end he was Teroed by Virana, and hunted down by Roban); a number of monks who were seemingly immune to spiritual invocations and could shai off magical attacks.

The Claw defeated, we found we were within a small enclosed space. After a while, a being appeared, his face marked by a large gold circle that encompassed most of his features. He brought with him a thick dark book, written in the Runes of the Night, from which he read the tale of the ‘End of the Aldonar’. The re-enactment was played out before our eyes, until we too became part of these myths and legends. A rough transcription of the story follows:

Once there was a people... North of the North Wind
Gathered, still... A gathering crowd of Aldonar
Cardinaris comes here

They all are here... Necromancer Lords and Elementalists, Voice of Bone
Merchant and Pauper, drawn from the Throne
The Family of All Elements, Searing Flame, Night and Day, and Ancient Lore
The Family of the Dead, the Screaming Soul, the Tomb, and the Family of Old.
A voice is coming (growing stronger, more powerful)
People feel the urge to leave (they tremble in fear but cannot move, transfixed)
All hear his words
I am all that has died and ever will
I am the dead of ages
I am the souls of the forgotten
I am the newly dead and those long forgotten
I am life's enemy
Light is hidden, a creeping doom
The fate of the proud Aldonar... by Sleepless Dead be taken
Those closest to Cardinaris were surrounded
The crowd tries to flee
The Plane of the Sleepless Dead is manifest, animating them as their last breath
They flee to Orin Rakatha, a sanctuary, while volunteers hold back the tide of death...

At this point, we were surrounded by a large number of undead, which were dispatched. A well-directed Humact's Sanction by Priest Khortaz should be noted.

After this, we noticed in the distance, the white figure of Taruman held by a large group of people. A hard battle ensued, in which several were slain – including Tersius and Montezuma – and Taruman was recovered. We departed the rift, and once Taruman was fully healed and had thanked us, he departed.

By my hand,

Eymeric'Dir Kevralyn Soulfire
Priestess of Lloth
15th Sorcerer of House Tumdurgul
4th in Line to the Throne of Annach Morannonil