

The Temple of the Four Winds had invited representatives from all Towers to view the artefacts of the Temple and witness the power of the Oracles at an open meeting to be held in the Tavern Waystation, close to Fortunes Keep.

A significant presence of adventurers and forestals was out in force in the area, to ensure the safety of our visitors. We were expecting five groups: Halmadons Heights, Kalid, The Halls of Sutekh (about whom nothing was known), Wizards Concillium, and Shadowsfall.

My group included Baron Lancorin Bloodcall, 6th Assassin of House Drannath, Khandis Greycoil, 12th Sorcerer of House Drannath, High Priest Kylar, High Priest Nathan, the Warrior Gob, and Theran Shendolan, Druid Priest. While Nathan and Gob were investigating another avenue of approach, we made our way to the waystation. We first encountered a significant force of elementals who were unleashing many mass slow spells, and one whose every blow slowed those it struck. Following that, we met some hepaths pursuing a Pathfinder.

Having liberated the Pathfinder, we were next invited to speak with some senior representatives of the Dymwan, who had a message for Dreadlord Araikas concerning the Cataclysm. The representatives appeared to be gold-faced Dymwan, which suggested they were of the Dark Pass. They sought to join Lord Mian in the Oasis of Souls. His opponent, Calex Wraithspawn, had last been seen driven towards Last Gate Wood with a group of undead, suggesting that Mian currently has the upper hand in the battle for control of the Tower. We agreed to pass this message on, and shortly afterwards, entered the waystation.

Towards the back of the room, we could see a dark figure holding the Sword of the Dark Wind aloft and seemingly performing a ritual – Baroness Kiara, Oracle of the Dark Wind. The room was unexpectedly, otherwise empty. As we approached Kiara, a Shadowsfall suddenly appeared in the middle of the waystation, and called out a phrase: “In Momento Mori!”

A Step Back In Time

We found ourselves back at the gate where we had been but an hour before. However, this time we were assailed by a group of Bethelim complaining that the Valley had stopped them getting a second tower. It was reminiscent of the stories one encounters on the Sativa, yet we were clearly not upon the Plane of Myths and Legends. Retracing our steps to the waystation, we came across barbarian wolf cultists that I suspected were aligned with Ravanon, and my suspicions were confirmed when we arrived at the waystation to be greeted by the notable Ravanon cultist Prince Sardonyx and his Michelene retinue. They interacted with us as they would other friendly members of the ‘Good Camp’, which suggested they did not see three Drow and an Evil High Priest/Aspirant Knight before them.

While it was tempting to try to jump Sardonyx there and then; given the Ravanon Cultists had some power over the Sphere of Time, as have members of the Shadowsfall demonstrated in the past, I was initially concerned that we might be changing our own history.

However, these concerns were allayed when Dreadlord Araikas appeared to us shortly afterwards, as he keeps an eye out for his Barons. He informed that the Shadowsfall had indeed cast a trap upon us and several other groups in the area, somehow projecting the stories from the Sativa onto Orin Rakatha, something previously unheard of. The Dreadlord informed us were caught inside a story ‘bubble’, and the way to break free was to kill the main antagonists or “power behind the throne” figures within the story, or significant figures, which would mean we were either weakening the trap, or potentially killing actual Shadowsfall powering the ritual who were masquerading as story figures. He reassured us that the Temple

had acted to protect Baroness Kiara, so that she was safe.

Dreadlord Araikas also clarified a number of things around the next Conjunction, that only the Good Sphere via Sir Danus, or the Evil Sphere via himself, could be in Ascendancy – the neutral sphere is not an option. Additionally, that the Cataclysm is inevitable no matter which Sphere is in ascendancy.

We therefore anticipated we would need to find and kill Valley cultists including Asphall Farlight (Head of the White Path), Kleinmort Ironfirst (Head of the Grey Gauntlet), Prince Sardonyx (Head of the Red School), Giovanni (a Dark Seer), and potentially Sorcerer Spark.

The next morning we destroyed Giovanni and Kleinmort Ironfirst. The latter fight was made more interesting by Ironfist almost breaking bones at will, and our group without any Good Sphere casters.

A Halmadonian Visitor

At lunchtime we had another projection into our 'bubble', this time from High Priest Andrew, Head of the Watchers Sect at Halmadons Height. We had a fairly cordial chat to inform him of what was going on, and to inform him that we were seeking to work against it. He told us that he could detect several such 'bubbles' in the area, but ours was the only one he had been able to penetrate, as it had been weakened (by our killing of two story anchors).

High Priest Andrew also discussed some Halmadonian politics with us. Sir Leon, Grand Knight of the Knights of Virtue, Knights Commander of the Order of St Michel has arrived upon Orin Rakatha, so now Halmadons Heights has two Grand Knights within its ranks – the other being its tower leader, Sir Danus, Grand Knight of the Order of Purity. Sir Leon was originally intended to be the Halmadonian Tower leader.

High Priest Andrew also confirmed he was aware that the Cataclysm was inevitable regardless of Evil or Good Sphere ascending at the next Conjunction, and that he had tried to inform Sir Danus of this, however Sir Danus had chosen not to hear him. This is not the only occasion where Sir Danus has attempted to dismiss the wisdom of his greatest Seer, which High Priest Andrew seemed well aware of and somewhat resigned to under the current regime.

High Priest Andrew demonstrated an interesting power in that he cast at vocal length a Heal while in his vision form on one of the black-and-purple-wearing Evil High Priests in our group, before he left.

Revisiting the Ravanon

In the afternoon, we followed a trail that eventually led to Asphall Farlight – who proved himself adept at repeatedly lying – and Prince Sardonyx. We also learned that we needed to fight the Nar Serbitar.

Before we engaged with him, we saw an interesting vision showing the 1st Supplicant of Kamenyati the Undying informing the Nar Serbitar that their paths were going in different directions. The 1st Supplicant was wearing a black tabard trimmed with gold, the like of which I have seen before – but to that later. I had anticipated that the Nar Serbitar would be joined by a member of the Knights of our Dark Lady, as they had had previous connections to the Ravanon, but this was not they. In any case, the Nar Serbitar – who was showering ritual evil power in all directions – was fortunately only accompanied by two wolves, but he did (as expected) use his abilities to travel back through time and fight us afresh though our resources were depleted.

Once he was slain, a Shadowsfall appeared and mock-applauded, despite coming under a

heavy barrage of blows. He declared that he would have to send us “further back”, unleashed another “In Momento Mori” invocation, and disappeared.

The Time of the Shendai

We returned to the waystation, where we found Nathan and Gob inside, somewhat merry and in good spirits. It transpired they had been drinking sake all day, and we were now all within a story dating back to the Shendai – far before the time of the current Alliance. We checked our food for poison, but it was not us that keeled over, but rather the Shendai Lord while he was negotiating with me. Initially we were accused of poisoning him, but later his wife decided that as honoured guests who had travelled a long way to meet him, we would not have done such a thing. Suspicion then fell upon the alchemist, who had served the Lord his food, had some knowledge of poisons, and had disappeared unexpectedly during the meal.

We travelled out to the Alchemist’s laboratory, and attacked all those within the building. One of the people accompanying him blasted us with psionic powers – when we broke free of the story, it became apparent that she was a Shadowsfall Archivist who had been trapping us inside.

The area was still mysteriously free of normal activity when we retired.

A Shadowsfall Ally

The next morning, Judge Hawson of the Shadowsfall visited the waystation. He had broken free of his ‘bubble’ too, and could detect ‘weak points’ in the remaining bubbles, that we would be able to enter. He directed us into the Halmadonian bubble, where we saw their tale set in this area: the story of the Aldonar. Alternating between fighting Aldonar and Halmadonians, we defeated the Lord of the 3rd House of the Aldonar, who was highly skilled in the wielding of evil power.

Eventually, we tracked down the Halmadonians who we could see were with a Shadowsfall, though to them he appeared as another Halmadonian. High Priest Andrew had informed us that he had sent some of the more intelligent members of the Tower, who would not seek to fight us (so no Knights of Purity). With our knowledge of current politics - such as the fact that they had come here to visit the Temple of Four Winds, and had recently spoken with High Priest Andrew - we managed to convince them that we were not part of the stories but who we said we were. The Shadowsfall masquerading as a Halmadonian tried to convince them otherwise, but somewhat satisfyingly the Halmadonians turned on him as one and we all quickly slew him - another psionist. We were then beneficiaries this time of a Halmadonian Mass Heal. The Halmadonians thanked us for our assistance and departed, intending to visit the Oracles later. We reconvened with Judge Hawson, who had freed one of his two groups (which were Wizards Concillium and Halls of Sutekh). He observed that despite our breaking out of the individual ‘bubbles’, there was still an effect over the whole area that meant we were not quite in phase with our true physical surroundings. We collectively hoped that by breaking the remaining bubbles, the effect would wane and we would be properly returned to Orin Rakatha.

While present, Judge Hawson removed the Shadowsfall contract from High Priest Kylar, who had apparently assisted one of his Adjudicators a few weeks earlier. He also collected evidence from us as we sought the removal of further contracts, which he would then judge later. By removing the mark from Kylar, he was taking the mark onto himself, and would need to be able to justify to other Shadowsfall, particularly Judges, why he had done so.

The Kalid and the Taranor

Judge Hawson then provided directions to the weak entry point for the Kalid story, and we spent the next few hours alternately fighting story-Kalid and story-Taranor. Finally, we came across a member of some kind of Kalid intelligence branch, who recognised us as Valley. He hinted at some tensions between the Cabiti and Trueblood Legions within the Kalid tower. The ones that he travelled with were Stone Panthers, and they unfortunately saw us as a mix of Kalid and Taranor. Behind the Kalid leader was again another Shadowsfall, this time masquerading as his Kalid superior. We spent a while trying to persuade the real Kalid that we were Fortunes Keep - occasionally we would say something that caused our glamour to flicker, but not enough to fall away completely.

In the end, the Kalid leader decided that only a duel between one of our group and his "Kalid leader" (the Shadowsfall) would settle the matter and prove who we said we were. Kylar, as an aspirant knight, nobly volunteered, but I opted for Baron Lancorin, knowing that he could quickly dispatch our opponent - who turned out to be a psionic monk. Lancorin duly defeated the Shadowsfall - at that moment, all the Kalid disappeared.

More Shadowsfall Discussions

We returned to the waystation, which was still unusually empty and silent. Judge Hawson rejoined us, having freed the last of the other Tower groups from their trap, and we waited for the overall 'bubble' to dissipate, its anchors having been destroyed. Judge Hawson was most displeased about the activities of the Shadowsfall involved, particularly that they had had the gall to turn on one of their own Judges. I pointed out that these Shadowsfall were breaking the Laws of Orin Rakatha by pretending to be from other Towers, and he said he would be taking this information back with him to the Towers.

He hinted at two likely candidates who could have been involved; one of these was Archivist Amos. At this time of uncertainty, with the impending Cataclysm, Shadowsfall individuals were looking for guidance, and were being swayed to follow those of a strong and directed opinion such as Amos.

Hawson also regretted that the Shadowsfall had taken so long to act over the Four Winds, while there had been an opportunity to do so. Apparently Shadowsfall decision-making is a slow process and requires buy-in from many Judges. He said that Judges are roughly equivalent in Shadowsfall terms to our own idea of Guildleaders, both in relative stature and number.

He was cagey about revealing anything of the Halls of Sutekh - even down to whether they are an old or new tower - as apparently they have done some deal with the Shadowsfall to remain undiscussed.

Hawson said that he had decided to assist or "shepherd" Fortunes Keep through the time of the Cataclysm. He said that the Shadowsfall had lost their way and needed to atone for their mistakes over the years; this would be part of that.

While we were speaking, the air shimmered and suddenly we could see Baroness Kiara and the Temple artefacts in their original places: we were back. Kiara was somewhat disoriented by what had happened, as the protection of the Temple had taken her to a safe place elsewhere. Additionally, she was currently embodying all 4 Winds, which has a somewhat strenuous mental impact.

We were interrupted by a group of elementals, similar to that which we had encountered two nights before; casting many mass slow spells.

Visitors to the Temple

Over the next few hours, a number of individuals came to visit the Oracle in peace. Sorcerer Khandis has recorded their words, so I shall not repeat them here, except to note that I thought the Oracles had "no further wisdom" rather than "no words" for the Shadowfall, but perhaps I am recalling the interpretation. In addition to the expected towers, we also had visits from the Dymwan, Reader and Dai-fah-Dyne. All those who inspected the artefacts and received the wisdom of the Oracles acknowledged that they agreed that the Temple's claim was real. Most interestingly, we had a visit from a figure that I recognised from the vision yesterday: 1st Suppliant of Kamenyati the Undying, who was from the Halls of Sutekh. He was accompanied by some snakes and men-hadim (poisonous creatures). So these are the Tower that were trying to protect the Hierarchs of the Blood Wind from being corrupted by the Dymwan all those years ago. When High Priest Shard, at the time, scried the tabard we recovered from one of their (dead) defenders, it came back as 'an occluded tower'. I met their forces at various points over the years while recovering artefacts of the Winds. The 1st Suppliant asked if we had any questions about their Tower, but most of my questions - such as, what are their links to the Knights of Our Dark Lady - were met with the reply "it is not written in the scriptures for you to know this at this time".

It is worth noting that the 1st Suppliant, in addition to being accompanied by snakes, was also wearing snake-emblem bangles around his wrists. Recall that we had seen him in a vision with the Nar-Serbitar, saying that they were parting ways. When I travelled upon the Crusade for Law, the Rakshassa (who had long worked against the Ravanon) told us that there were always two parts to the Ravanon cult: the wolf, and the snake; confirmed by others who fought against the Ravanon many years ago. Just some food for thought.

Assault from the Sativa

Back to the waystation; just as all seemed safe, a large and extremely powerful psionic storm took hold within the waystation, forcing everybody out of the building, where we were faced by a large retinue of Shadowfall, led by Archivist Amos. He wasn't interested in inspecting the Temple artefacts to examine their validity, nor speaking with the Oracles, nor would he listen to protests that the Shadowfall - via Judge Hawson - had already acknowledged our rightful claims. Instead he said that we spoke falsely, and directed his men to attack Baroness Kiara. Kiara was already under the mystical protection of the Temple itself, so she was not impacted, but the Archivist himself was a formidable psionist and after a good deal of combat, both forces were still standing.

Kiara calmly started reading from some scrolls, embodying the power of the winds into Sorcerer Khandis, Gob and Theran, granting them a significant edge in battle. The fight turned in our favour, and I lured off/dispatched a couple of Shadowfall on contract, presumably mine. As Khandis, Gob and Theran brought the Archivist to his knees, he used some power to transport himself away from the fight. I am sure we will meet him again.

The Temple is True

The remainder of the night was uneventful, but we had succeeded in our goal. Other Towers bore witness to and acknowledge the power and the claims of the Oracles and the Temple of the Four Winds. **Notes** □

[Sutekh-ian Scroll recovered several years ago](#) By my hand, Kevralyn Soulfire 1st Sorcerer of House Drannath

Baron of Darkhome